



Borealis

The Monthly Journal of Northern Michigan Mensa



Borealis is published by Northern Michigan Mensa (3/496) once each month under the auspices of its Executive Committee.

After mandatory items, priority in the newsletter is given to matters appealing to members of the group which relate to their membership in Mensa. The content of the newsletter shall appeal to the general membership of Northern Michigan Mensa.

The newsletter shall not include matters which are indecent, scandalous, libelous, or invade someone's privacy, nor shall copyrighted material be used without the permission of the owner. Ethnic, racist, sexist, or religious slurs shall not be printed. Bad jokes are allowed. Northern Michigan Mensa recognizes that the newsletter is addressed to both minors and adults; material printed will be appropriate for distribution to minors.

All matters submitted to the editor shall be subject to editing for content, style, and space limitations, except that if a person submits material with a restriction that it be published "as is or not at all." That a person has written and submitted something to the newsletter is not, in itself, sufficient reason for its publication.

Submissions are not only welcome, the editor will buy you a coffee at the next TGIF if you help him out.

Members of Northern Michigan Mensa may send their original writing submissions to *Borealis*.

Please do not send the work of others unless such submissions are accompanied by written permission and release of copyright from the author.

Writing:

1. Submit writing that can be edited for length and clarity, but not content. *This will be the default editorial assumption unless the author indicates otherwise.*

2. Writing may be submitted to be published only as it is. If writing is submitted "as is or not at all" it will not be edited in any way, and if published, will appear with an editor's note indicating it is wholly the work of the author.

3. Writing that is rough and needs major editing may also be submitted. If you have written something but don't have time to polish and edit it, you can still submit it and, at your request, I will give it extra help.

ALL. Writing and letters may be submitted by email as an attachment or as the message body itself. Typed pages and letters can be mailed.

Photographs:

Photographs and other scanned artwork can be submitted via email as JPEG or GIF files. Data should be at least 3x5 inches at 200 PPI. Digital camera files may be sent right from the camera; they will be processed for publication.

Flat art or photographs can also be mailed, but please do not send originals. Please label each piece submitted with your name and address.

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Northern Michigan Mensa

April 2004 Calendar

Saturday, April 10

ExComm Meeting 10:00a.m. — Brunch 11:00a.m. Cottage Cafe, Traverse City

The Cottage Cafe is at the Days Inn in Traverse City at 420 Munson (US-31 North). It's on the south side of the road between the Northwestern Michigan College entrance and 8th Street.

Monday, April 12

Games Night - Borders Books, Traverse City 7:00p.m.

Borders is located near Wal-Mart at 2612 Crossing Circle (off S. Airport Road) in Traverse City. We will meet the second Monday of each month at the same location. Borders closes at 10:00.

Each games night we will try a different game theme. Your Game Keeper, Tom Kachadurian will be out of town, so the field is open. Bring cards or games and get something started.

Friday, April 23

TGIF - Horizon Shine Café, Traverse City 6:00p.m.

The Horizon Shine Cafe is located in the lower level of Horizon Books on Front Street in downtown Traverse City. There are wrap sandwiches, soft drinks, and desserts on the menu.

“Excuse me. What did you say?”

By Joan Dasef

AS ALL WHO KNOW ME ARE AWARE, my hearing has been on a steady down hill slide. I got my first pair of hearing aids about fifteen years ago. I am now on my fourth pair. Each new pair has been stronger, with greater capabilities to enhance what is left of my hearing. Their cost has also increased, so that my latest pair, which are digital and state of the art as hearing aids go, required a bank loan to fund. When worn they increase my hearing from horrible to merely very bad.

I was therefore delighted, shortly after Christmas, to receive a letter telling me that my application had been accepted and I would be receiving a new pair of ears in about one year. This is rather unusual news, but these are unusual ears. They require no batteries, have about a ten to fifteen year life expectancy, and will cost me only a \$100 dollar good faith deposit which will be returned to me one year after receiving my ears if all goes well.

There are some expenses involved in maintaining these ears. They will need to be fed and exercised, receive regular medical checkups and I am required to continue their training. My ears will come equipped with four legs, a tail, and a desire to work for me and to provide me with love and companionship. How's that for a bargain?

The letter telling me I qualified to receive my ears was the final step in a lengthy application process that began the day I went to my mailbox and found an application from Dogs For the Deaf. My daughter, Kathy, who leaves no stone unturned when it comes to looking for ways to make my life with diminished hearing easier, had come across their web site and requested and application in my name.

I filled out the initial application and sent it in. About a month later I received a second application. This one was about ten pages long and required me to include copies of my last two or three audiograms. In addition to a detailed history and personal overview they also asked what kind of a dog I wanted, and what kind of a dog I did not want. I sent in application number two and received a letter saying I had met their criteria and would be

receiving a home interview as the final stage in the application process. This took place in early November, lasted several hours and included taking photographs of me, my house, my yard and my cat.

My final acceptance came about three weeks after Christmas.

Dogs for the Deaf was founded in 1977 in Central Point, Oregon, by Robin Dickinson. She had a double mission, to rescue dogs slated for euthanasia and to provide assistance for the deaf and hard of hearing. All the dogs are selected from local humane society shelters. They look for dogs between six months and a year old that have suitable temperments. The staff and its many dedicated volunteers then train the dogs. Along with basic obedience training the dogs learn to respond to a variety of sounds and alert their owners to them. My dog will alert me to the telephone, doorbell, someone knocking, calling my name, kitchen timers, smoke alarms, and alarm clocks. All the dogs are sponsored by donations, which is why the cost to the recipient is so low.

Now I must wait, but I do so knowing that out in Oregon a dog is being sought, or possibly by now located that will fit my requirements. It will be a dog that requires only the amount of exercise that a somewhat arthritic lady can give it. It will like children and be able to accompany me when I go into schools as a mentor or storyteller. It will also tolerate, if not actually like, my cat (How my cat will feel abut this is probably another story.). By law the dog can accompany me any place a Leader dog for the blind can go. When the waiting is over I will happily introduce you to my new ears.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

One way from the century mark

February saw the addition of two members, bringing us closer to the 100 mark. We currently stand at 99 members. This may change after April 1, when the renewal period ends. This is a last minute reminder to renew if you haven't already. The easiest way to renew is online at www.us.mensa.org.

The new members are Mark Morand, from Maple City, and Gary Myles, from Traverse City, who decided to reinstate his membership.

Two individuals who were tested in January have also qualified for membership, Joshua Bostwick and Anthony Rinehart. Joshua Bostwick will not be joining our group, because his employer transferred him soon after he qualified. Sue Styles and Jack Schultz administrated another test on March 20, so we will see if we will be able to add more members to your growing group.

Good luck to all the teams in CultureQuest. We had a huge turn out again this year. It goes to show you that Mensa offers many different things to different people.

-Melissa J. Rennie

Cherry Festival

Last summer we were pleased with the opportunity to earn \$350 by volunteering for a few hours at the National Cherry Festival in Traverse City. We were assigned to the Ice Cream and Pie Pavilion, and were responsible for providing six people for a total of 5 hours on a Sunday evening. We split up the shifts and had great fun selling treats and talking to our customers! Those who volunteered got a little sticky, but made a lot of people smile and got to be part of the festival without being a "tourist." I am ready to fill out the application again this year if you all would like to help again. I don't need a firm commitment, just an idea of whether you expect to be available and willing to work. We won't know the task or the exact time until the beginning of June, so you will have time to plan and we can firm up the commitments then.

This year's Cherry Festival is Saturday, July 3 through Saturday, July 10. If you would like to help, please let me know:

1) Days and/or times you would NOT be available: weekdays, weeknights, weekend, etc.

2) Any preference for or against the following events: Bingo Tent, Brat Tent,

Pepsi Tent, Souvenir Tent, Ice Cream & Pie, Festival Clean-Up (July 10-11?), Races (usually weekdays), Parade Clean-Up, Waste Collection.

3) Any other information that might affect our assignment, like things you can't or don't want to do, or things you would really like to do. We can definitely indicate a preference not to do something like clean-up that would require much bending or picking up, if the people who are willing to work aren't really into that kind of activity! I think any of the "tent" activities where you are helping to sell refreshments or participate in entertainment are pretty good assignments. I have done some of them as an individual volunteer and my fellow volunteers have been nice, motivated people.

4) If you are under 18, please let me know because you can't work in the Bingo Tent. However, we might be able to have two separate groups of volunteers working different events, or we'll just do something you can help with, too.

The application is due April 30, so I would like to hear from everyone by April 20 so I can put everything together. You can call me at 943-4349 (h), or e-mail at seas@umich.edu.

Keep in mind, we are kind of competing against other groups for a volunteer slot, so we don't want to restrict ourselves too much. At the same time, though, we should be able to have some fun working together, so we don't want to stretch too far. The money we earn is directly related to the number of labor hours we provide. I am hoping to get 12-15 names so we can be confident of filling 5-8 slots of 2-3 hours each. But that's just a ballpark - surprise me!! And thanks in advance for your help!

-Sue Styles

A Cup of Coffee

YOU WILL NEVER LOOK AT A CUP OF COFFEE THE SAME WAY AGAIN. A young woman went to her mother and told her about her life and how things were so hard for her. She did not know how she was going to make it and wanted to give up. It seemed as one problem was solved a new one arose.

Her mother took her to the kitchen. She filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire. Soon the pots came to a boil. In each she placed something different: carrots, eggs and coffee. She let them boil without saying a word. After about 20 minutes she turned off the burners. She put the eggs, carrots and coffee each into separate bowls. Turning to her daughter, she asked, "What do you see?"

"Carrots, eggs, and coffee," her daughter replied.

The mother brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots. She did and noted that they were soft. The mother then asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard-boiled egg. Finally, she asked her to sip the coffee. The daughter smiled as she tasted its rich aroma.

She asked, "What does it mean, mother?

Her mother explained. Each of these objects had faced the same adversity—BOILING WATER — but each reacted differently. The carrot went in strong, hard and unrelenting, but it softened and became weak. The egg had been fragile. Its thin outer shell had protected its liquid interior. But, after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened.

The ground coffee was unique. It had changed the water. "Which are you?" she asked her daughter. "When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a carrot, an egg, or a coffee bean?

Which are you? Are you the carrot that seems strong, but with pain and adversity, do you wilt and become soft and lose strength? Are you the egg that starts with a malleable heart, but changes with the heat? Did you have a fluid spirit, but after death, a breakup or some other trial, have you become hardened and stiff?

Or are you like the coffee bean? The bean actually changes the hot water, the very circumstance that brings the pain. When the water gets hot, the coffee releases the fragrance and flavor. If you are like the bean, when things are at their worst, you get better and change the situation around you. When the hours are the darkest and trials are their greatest, do you elevate to another level?

-Submitted by M. Teri Daunters, from an unknown source.

Trade-Ins Welcome

by Ben Stout

I HAVE BECOME INTERESTED in the things possible with the English language; it is so rich in snyonyms and other possible flights of fancy. But I have also found that there are problems as well. I give as an example the following.

A friend of mine came the other day and said that he was shocked to find that it is possible in Traverse City for a young couple who have a new baby which they are not too enthused about to take it in to a sort of station where an organization or some government agency will help them trade it in for a different child more to their liking. I told him that I didn't know of any such thing going on, but he went on to say that it must be true, for the source was reliable. He was told that the actual exchange could be made in the Traverse City Public Library, and he intended to follow up on it and check it out.

When I saw him a few days later, he said that he had gone into the Library and explored into some rooms he had never seen. Sure enough, he soon spotted a prominent sign which said "Baby Changing Station," with an arrow pointed to the right. He looked in that direction and saw a sort of counter on the other side of the room with a sign saying very plainly, "Change Babies Here".

He said that he could hardly believe his eyes, and was standing there dazed when a young woman carrying a child came into the area. It was obvious that she was not happy with the child, for she carried it very gingerly almost at arms length as though she wanted nothing to do with it. The baby looked as though it had been crying, he said, and it was obvious that neither the mother nor the baby were satisfied with each other.

She went into the room where the arrow pointed, and my friend was going to follow her to see how the actual exchange took place, but the lady closed the door firmly behind her, and he had to wait there until she came out to see for himself what had happened. He said he noticed a strong odor from the child as she passed him.

He told me that she came back out in a little bit, and it was obvious that it was a different child than the one she had taken in, for she was smiling and cuddling the baby up close to her and kissing it on the head, while the baby was smiling and seemed to be perfectly content.

He was amazed at how quickly the exchange had been made and how successful it seemed to be.

Oh, yes, he said that this child had a much better odor than the other one.

REGIONAL VICE CHAIRMAN

Roaming the Region

by Charlie Bruce (*aka Gloater*)

The Region 3 Leadership Development Workshop (LDW) was held this weekend in Columbus, Ohio. The big attraction appeared to be the 4-hour Food Safety Course that addressed cautions in the preparation of food for groups and also covered the 12 most unwanted food pathogens. There were 52 attendees at the LDW with additional local members coming in Saturday evening for our monthly Games Night. If you missed this LDW, maybe your group should start thinking about hosting one next year. Get your bids in early. Those of you on the regional fringes might also consider combining resources with your adjoining region; I'm willing to share.

Just a quick comment on ProxyQuest - Region 3 is still kicking proxy butt. Regions 2 and 4 are getting close to catching us, but we have 2800 proxies which is almost 56% of the region. You guys make me proud to be an RVC. (And if by chance you don't know what this paragraph is about, please contact me and I'll be glad to explain it.)

Renewals are now in full swing, but on March 31 the Mensa membership year ended and all who didn't renew were dropped from the roles (along with the proxies they may have submitted). If you or any of your Mensa friends are in that category, please get your renewals submitted. This can be done easily at the national web site: http://us.mensa.org/member_resources/prerenewalform.php.

I would also like to announce to the region that at the March AMC meeting in Charlottesville, VA, I requested the appointment of an Assistant RVC for Region 3. Alan Baltis from the Cleveland Area Mensa will be assisting me as needed. Alan, have I told you about notifying members about ProxyQuest? :)

Northern Michigan Mensa Executive Committee

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check out our website at: www.nmm.us.mensa.org



Borealis

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