



Borealis

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SPRING COMES TO BENZIE COUNTY

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN APRIL

BOOK CLUB - Saturday, 2 April, 2005 at 12:30 p.m. We will meet at the Omelette Shoppe, 1209 E. Front Street. The book discussion this month will be on Middlesex, by Jeffrey Eugenides. This group is open to all members, attendance can be each meeting, or only for those books that you have an interest.

BRUNCH - Saturday, 9 April, 2005, at 11:00 a.m. We will meet at Cottage Café, located at 420 Munson Avenue, Traverse City. We will hold our gathering in the Papa's Den which is on the right as you enter the front door.

CULTUREQUEST - Sunday, 10 April, 2005 beginning at 4:00 p.m. members who previously paid to participate will be meeting at several homes to play CultureQuest.

CULTUREQUEST DINNER - Sunday, 10 April, 2005 following the games ALL members of NMM are welcome to meet with the CultureQuest teams at 5:45 p.m. at South City Limits, 1407 S Division St, Traverse City, for socializing and dinner. Reservations are made under the name Mensa.

GAMES NIGHT - Tuesday, 12 April, 2005, at 7:00 p.m. We will meet at Borders Books and Music, located at 2612 Crossing Circle, Traverse City. Bring your favorite game and a willingness to have fun! Coffee, soft drinks, sandwiches, wraps, soups, and desserts are available for purchase.

TGIF - Friday, 22 April, 2005, at 6:00 p.m. We will meet in the Horizon Shine Café, located in the lower level of Horizon Books, 243 E. Front Street, Traverse City. Coffee, soft drinks, sandwiches, wraps, and desserts are available for purchase.



DIBS AND DABS

Ralph Hillquist

Well, the cover notation would have been timely if this issue had arrived on April 1st. Woefully and shamefully so, it did not. The image was taken by my semi-nomadic brother somewhere near Lost Wages, Nevada, and transmitted electronically for this use.

But my brief ramblings about the area suggest that spring has sprung in Northern Michigan. Croci and daffodils starting to pop out and the fisherpersons are using boats. Can the orange barrels on our by-ways be far behind?

Welcome to new members James McDermott of Interlochen and Anthony Rinehart and Richard Hopfner, both of Traverse City. And welcome back to Graham Bateman of Traverse City.

Timeliness. Content. Inextricably locked together in publishing a periodical. And quite often a bone of contention between management and the editorial staff.

The editors of two national automobile marque clubs I belong to, in their March issues, had contrasting comments. One bemoaned the fact that he had little input to deal with. The other exulted that he had lots of stuff to be sorted out. Timeliness. Content.

In about the same day's mail of the above, I received the November/December issue of a technical society journal. Content was good, but one would question timeliness.

To more specificity, the ExComm has called me to task for the lateness of *Borealis* - with the ultimatum that publish by a certain date whether or not you have material (often the case, and AML is as guilty as anyone) or "take a hike." Some few hours ago, as this is writ, I submitted my resignation to the ExComm. This has been accepted.

This has been an interesting, if not always fun, experience. I would hope that it has been a factor in the continued growth of Northern Michigan Mensa.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Melissa J. Rennie

That time is quickly approaching - renewal time. As March 31 quickly approaches, we once again may drop below our target 100-member mark. (*Ed. Note: This was intended for the March issue.*)

As of Jan. 31, we currently have 102 members and dropped many last year, due to late renewals. Keep in mind that the National office has raised the yearly fee this year.

Another thing to keep in mind is the Friend's Fund. Northern Michigan Mensa has a limited number of stipends available to members who are experiencing extreme financial hardship. To qualify, contact an ExComm member of your choice or our treasurer, Ellen Monahan. Contact information is located in the Borealis or online at our website, www.nmm.us.mensa.org.

Another event quickly coming up is South Eastern Michigan Mensa's regional gathering - SEMMantics which is scheduled April 29 to May 1. (Dayton Mensa also has a RG at the beginning of April.) It is a great opportunity to see what an RG is all about. You can meet other Mensans, the majority from the Region 3 area. I know that I will be attending, along with several NMM members that have either already committed or are seriously considering attending. Keep in mind, that meeting a large group of Mensans at one time, especially for the first time, can be an intense experience. It is also a great opportunity to see what a Special Interest Group (SIG) is all about. I know of at least two SIGs that will have a fair representation at SEMMantics.

The first is the SIG that is present during many RG's in Region 3 - HellsM, also known as the party SIG of Mensa. The SIG that I am active in - GenX SIG - will also have a fair number of individuals from across the country descending on the Detroit area to catch up with each other in person. Many RG's tend to attract an older crowd (many of the HellsM range in age from 50-60), but the GenX SIG has discovered that they are great ways to bring people together and target RG's that are easier for many members to attend.

GenX Mensans is a SIG of individuals born between 1961 and 1981, and since by my calculations, almost a third of NMM falls into this age range, I thought that it was a great opportunity to point out a wonderful opportunity to meet Mensans within the GenX age range, along with Mensans of all age ranges that have discovered what fun an RG can be.

A national effort is also being made to start up an even younger SIG - GENY

SIG. It is still getting off the ground, but is based loosely on the GenX SIG. If anyone is interested in learning more, feel free to contact me offline and I can get you more information. The age ranges of GenX SIG and GenY SIG do overlap by a couple of years and because it is an adult SIG, they ask members to join after they reach the age of 18.

I am also keeping my fingers crossed that SEMMantics planners will request that Michelle Wojtaszek, the Bulletin cover girl for November/December, to speak at their RG. National has suggested that she attend area (she is the LocSec for Mid-Hudson Mensa, New York) events after the controversy stirred by her appearance on the "Generations" cover. I have had a couple of online discussions with Michelle in the SIG forum over the years, and I am hoping to meet her soon, the AG seems too far away.

More information about SEMMantics can be found at SEMM's website www.semm.us.mensa.org or you can contact the registrar, Betsy Y. Mark at BetsyYMark@aol.com.

Some Mensans only belong to Mensa to partake in RG's and AG's. Keep in mind that Mensa has a niche for every Mensan, you just have to find the niche that fits your needs.

COLLOQUIUM 2005

John Porter

This year's colloquium, "Earth in Mind: Fueling the Future," was held in Tucson, AZ, on 4-6 March 2005.

Colloquium 2005 served three functions for me. Deciding to attend forced me to schedule an overdue mini-family reunion and an obligatory visit with my father for his 85th birthday, it provided some respite from family interactions during that visit, and it allowed me to earn academic credit applicable to my graduate study in Earth Literacy.

Richard Heinberg, a human ecologist and author of the highly-acclaimed *The Party's Over: Oil, War and the Fate of Industrial Societies*, presented the opening salvo after the Friday evening dinner. His wide-ranging exploration of oil history, geopolitics, economics, and energy alternatives provided plenty of discouraging projections that the following speakers were challenged to confront.

John Turner explained barriers and possible pathways for the implementation of hydrogen into the energy infrastructure. Judy Knox focused on the role of the individual in confronting, complicating and solving environmental crises. Her mantra was "there is no THEY to blame or do this work for us". An author and NPR consultant shared examples from Latin America which he feels illustrate the viability of sustainable development. An official with the California Energy Commission presented information about the establishment of appliance energy efficiency standards which have helped contribute to California using only 7% of the country's electricity while it has 12% of the country's population. A marketing official from General Motors explained its three-pronged effort to contribute to energy efficiency.

After hearing the presentations which seemed to attenuate Heinberg's gloom and doom, shocking data and poignant observations were thrown at the audience by David Orr, ecological design guru. Orr unknowingly included in his power point presentation some of the same information Heinberg used. Among his most salient points, in my opinion, were the sobering statistics that on this earth, in any one hour, 1875 people will die of malnutrition, 5.4 species will disappear, and 1,500 acres will succumb to desertification as 18,000 tons of topsoil are lost.

The Colloquium's presentations and discussions led me to the startling hypothesis that all science is ultimately social science. That is to say: having the knowledge and the capacity, we lack the will and the political rationality to implement known solutions.

The next MENSA Colloquium, dealing with emerging new perspectives on cosmology, is targeted to take place in upstate New York in the fall of 2006.

NORTHERN MICHIGAN MENSA

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