

# Borealis

The Monthly Journal of Northern Michigan Mensa



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 Borealis  
Northern Michigan Mensa

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Send address correction c/o  
American Mensa LTD.  
1229 Corporate Drive West  
Arlington, TX 76006-6103

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**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. 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 when a person submits material with a restriction that it be published "as is or not at all". In such cases, it will include an editor's note stating it as such.

That a person has written and submitted something to the newsletter is not, in itself, sufficient reason for its publication. It is the editor's discretion whether to publish any submission, with the exception of mandatory items.

**All submissions** are welcome and encouraged. They may be sent via email or snail mail. They may be sent as attachments or in the body of the email.

Submissions requiring major editing are also welcome. If requested, the author may approve the editing before the article is published.

**Photographs** are also welcome. Please include a brief description of the photo, and the name of the photographer. You may also include an entire article to accompany the photo.

Email: [nmmnewsletter@hotmail.com](mailto:nmmnewsletter@hotmail.com)

US mail:  
Borealis  
Stan Cain  
3584 Village Circle Dr.  
Traverse City MI 49686

# Northern Michigan Mensa Executive Committee

## VOTING MEMBERS

Local Secretary	Sherry McNamara	231-933-9272	<a href="mailto:kikiwon@hotmail.com">kikiwon@hotmail.com</a>
Deputy Loc Sec	Don Hennig	231-258-2654	<a href="mailto:dhennig@sbcglobal.net">dhennig@sbcglobal.net</a>
Treasurer	Susan A. Styles	231-264-6193	<a href="mailto:seas@umich.edu">seas@umich.edu</a>
At Large	Stan Cain	231-938-1506	<a href="mailto:sdcmem@yahoo.com">sdcmem@yahoo.com</a>
At Large	Melissa J. Rennie	231-889-0892	<a href="mailto:renmeij@yahoo.com">renmeij@yahoo.com</a>

## APPOINTED MEMBERS

Membership	Jim McDermott	231-943-7792	
Ombudsman	Peter J. Turkus	231-941-8321	<a href="mailto:petencheri@chartermi.net">petencheri@chartermi.net</a>
Editor	Stan Cain	231-938-1506	<a href="mailto:nmmnewsletter@hotmail.com">nmmnewsletter@hotmail.com</a>
Proctor			
Coordinator	John D. Schultz	231-275-6735	<a href="mailto:nwoodpc@chartermi.net">nwoodpc@chartermi.net</a>
Program	Carol Crawford	231-938-3330	<a href="mailto:carolcrawford@charter.net">carolcrawford@charter.net</a>
Publicity	Judith Lindenau	231-935-4962	<a href="mailto:judith@taar.com">judith@taar.com</a>
Webmaster	Stephen Siciliano	231-947-1480	<a href="mailto:mrtak9@ameritech.net">mrtak9@ameritech.net</a>
Scholarship Chair	Dorothy Vogel	231-947-1700	<a href="mailto:vogeld@chartermi.net">vogeld@chartermi.net</a>
SIGHT Coordinator	Melissa J. Rennie	231-889-0892	<a href="mailto:renmeij@yahoo.com">renmeij@yahoo.com</a>

## OTHER MEMBERS

Proctors	John D. Schultz	231-275-6735	<a href="mailto:nwoodpc@chartermi.net">nwoodpc@chartermi.net</a>
	Susan A. Styles	231-264-6193	<a href="mailto:seas@umich.edu">seas@umich.edu</a>
Assistant Editor	Don Hennig	231-258-2654	<a href="mailto:dhennig@sbcglobal.net">dhennig@sbcglobal.net</a>
Regional			
Vice-Chairman	Dave Swanka		<a href="mailto:RVC3@us.mensa.org">RVC3@us.mensa.org</a>

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT [www.nmm.us.mensa.org](http://www.nmm.us.mensa.org)

ON THE COVER: A hang glider soars over the dunes at an overlook in the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. Photo by Stan Cain

# Northern Michigan Mensa

## August 2006 Calendar

### BOOK CLUB - Saturday, August 5, 2006 - 11:00am

Cottage Cafe, Traverse City (NOTE THIS IS AN EARLIER TIME DUE TO SUMMER SCHEDULE.) We will meet in the Papa's Den at the front of the restaurant to the right as you enter. The book for discussion this month is *The Quiet American* by Graham Greene. This group is open to all members and attendance can be at each meeting, or only those meetings that present books in which you have an interest.

### BRUNCH - Saturday, August 12, 2006 - 11:00am

Cottage Cafe, Traverse City. We will meet in the Papa's Den at the front of the restaurant to the right as you enter.

### TGIF at the Ballpark - Friday, August 25, 2006 - 7:05pm

Wuerfel Park, Traverse City. We will meet on the lawn behind first base near the children's play area. Bring your own chairs, blankets, etc. and enjoy the summer evening. Tickets for the lawn are \$6.00 each and can be purchased at the box office or online at [traversecitybeachbums.com](http://traversecitybeachbums.com). The game is against the Chillicothe Paints and the first 1,000 fans will receive Souvenir Program #4. Autographs and fireworks after the game! Please also bring your suggestions for a new location for TGIF beginning in September.

### ANNUAL PICNIC - 4th Anniversary Celebration - Saturday, September 9, 2006 - 12:00pm

2260 NW Bayshore Drive (Highway M-22), Suttons Bay (Jill Daniels' home)

(Ed. Note: The annual picnic will be held in September this year rather than August. Look for complete details in the September issue and see the article by Jack Schultz below.)

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## Member News

### Welcome Back

Welcome back to reinstating member **Floyd Fitzsimmons** of Free Soil. We're glad to have you back.

## Happy August Birthdays

- 1 Mark L. Banker
- 9 Donald Hennig
- 12 Corinne Kass-Hillard Mowrey
- 13 Lynn A. Durling
- 15 Delberta Windiate
- 21 Robert E. Miller

## Mensa Membership Milestones (Years of continuous Membership)

### 4 Years

John Porter

### 3 Years

Lynn A. Durling  
Margaret Ellen Gustafson  
Carola "Penny" Pollard Novarro

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## Last Month's Brain Teaser - Answers Submitted by Margaret Scott

For the following series:

4 8 12 2 1 7 6 3 5 11 10 9

The numbers represent the months of the year in alphabetical order. April, the fourth month, comes first alphabetically; September, the ninth month comes last.

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## July Brunch By Stan Cain

In addition to providing good food and stimulating conversation, the July brunch also involved the presentation of the Northern Michigan Mensa Local Scholarship Essay Contest prize of \$500 to Monica Schmit. Monica is pursuing a nursing degree at Northwestern Michigan College.

The other essay scholarship recipients, Marie Sweetman and Sara Karpinski, were unable to attend the brunch. Congratulations to all of them and good luck with their future studies.



Pictured from left to right are: Rose Merica, Monica Schmit, Melissa Rennie, Patty Paternel, Carol Crawford, Sue Styles, Don Hennig and Jack Schultz. Photo by Stan Cain.



Monica Schmit accepts the scholarship award from Don Hennig watched by Melissa Rennie and Patty Paternel. Photo by Jack Schultz.

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## NMM's SUMMER PICNIC... A Brief History By Jack Schultz

With the end of summer fast approaching, it's time for us to do a little reminiscing about how we in Northern Michigan Mensa celebrate the founding of our local group.

Many members know that we are an offshoot of Western Michigan Mensa, but did you know that the separation of our local group is a relatively recent thing? For many years, we were known as the Traverse City Area Subgroup of Western Michigan Mensa.

In the winter of 2000, a large group of Mensans who call northern Michigan home met for brunch at the Flap Jack Shack in Traverse City to consider the merits of seeking to form a separate local group. A straw vote taken at the time showed only one who thought it a bad idea. A subsequent written ballot was mailed to all Mensans in the area which now constitutes Northern Michigan Mensa, and only three who responded voted against the idea.

In August of that year, we held a picnic/potluck supper and about 25 people met at the home of Jack and Joanne Schultz. Rick Magnus, Regional Vice-Chairman of Mensa for our region, was a guest that evening and he presented information pro-and-con about forming new local groups. We'd essentially made the decision to proceed even before Rick's comments, but I distinctly remember Lotus Young poking Rick in the chest and asking him if he'd help us or hinder us in our efforts to move forward. He didn't have much choice but to say he would back us.

The following August (2001) another large group met at the Schultz home and we knew that things were under way to seek approval from Mensa's national organization to form our own local group. A set of tentative bylaws, modeled after the document provided by the National Office, was ready for consideration and Rick Magnus, again a guest, offered suggestions for refinement and clarification.

August of 2002 saw a very large group of us--nearly 30 people--assembled at the home of Sherry and Ed McNamara to witness the official recognition of Northern Michigan Mensa as the newest of Mensa's local groups. Rick Magnus presented us with our initial charter and approved the new set of officers.

As you can see, August has become the month in which we have met annually to set the stage for recognition of our group, to share in congenial relations while enjoying good food, and, later on, to celebrate the anniversary of the group's founding. We met at the Schultz home again in 2003 and 2004 to celebrate the 1st and 2nd anniversaries of the establishment of Northern Michigan Mensa. Then, in August of 2005, we met at the home of Jill Daniels to celebrate our third anniversary as a local group. The superb setting at Jill's home on West Grand Traverse Bay allowed for both indoor and outdoor activities. Good food and convivial discussions were again the norm.

As the fourth anniversary of our founding approaches, we're making a slight change. We'll meet once again at Jill's home but it will be on Saturday, September 9 rather than in August. The waters of Lake Michigan will be a bit cooler, but the beautiful setting remains the same and we look forward to another good time. DON'T MISS IT!!! Details will be found in the September issue of Borealis and on our NMM web site.

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## BABY-ON-THE-POOL-TABLE

By Ruth Minshull

I consider that a book has been worth reading if I take away one or two nuggets of knowledge or insight.

In the early 1980's a friend and I both read a book called "Blue Highways" (by William Least Heat Moon) in which the author described a cross-country trip on lesser roads (the blue highways) rather than on expressways.

In one backwater town, a woman told him that in a place where nothing happens, anything is news.

I often recall that observation when I hear some of our locals chatting on a village corner, or when I read our weekly newspaper. It doesn't take a mind-blowing incident to be a hot item around here.

Conversely, the bigger the city, the more drama is needed for something to be newsworthy. In New York City, even murders don't get much attention unless they're spectacular: multiple deaths, serial killings, a famous person involved or some bizarre twist.

Speaking of bizarre, I remember a New York Times headline that read, "Guardian Sought for Fetus of Retarded Floridian." I never did read the article; but for some time my mind wrestled with the memory of that incongruous headline.

Several years ago, I was reminded of how little it takes to make the news here in Northport. I had ordered a mattress to be delivered by truck. Since I didn't know the exact arrival date, and whether I would be home, I arranged for it to be left with a friend who owned a shop in town. When the mattress arrived, another friend picked up the carton, tied it atop his van, delivered it to my house and placed it on my new bed frame.

The next day, a village official arrived at his (the van-owner's) door and asked him if he was the person who had left a mattress at the village dump. "No, I didn't," he replied. Curious, he asked, "Why would you think that anyway?"

## Simple Gifts of Life

Submitted by Margaret Scott

“Someone saw you with a large box on top of your van and assumed it was a mattress.”

“Well, I did have a new mattress on my van, but I delivered it to a friend.”

“What did you do with the old one?”

“There wasn’t one. She bought a new bed for a room that was just finished.”

“Oh. Well, you do know that it’s illegal to leave mattresses at the dump?”

“Yes. I do now...”

When he related the story to me, we both marveled at the provincial life in a small village. Someone had to notice the box, deduce that it was a mattress, learn that a mattress had been left (illegally) at the dump, and then make a report to the village bigwigs. Actually, there could have been several people involved with relaying this heady news item.

I never learned whether they found the culprit guilty of the mattress caper, but with a village full of people having little to do—where anything that happens is news—I would guess that they probably did. Someone surely ratted on the miscreant.

Another incident in the “Blue Highways” book concerned a pregnant woman working in a small bar at a Nevada truck stop. She told the author that when she was ready to deliver her baby she wanted to have it on the pool table, but her husband insisted on taking her to the hospital. “Why would you want to do that anyway?” Moon asked.

She answered that her daughter would then be different from everyone else. She’d always have something special she could tell people about herself.

Since then, whenever we see a person who has opted to do something outrageous (such as wearing a tiara and marching in the dog parade or painting their house a garish purple) my friend and I nod at each other knowingly and say, “Yup. It’s the baby-on-the-pool-table syndrome again...”

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Take time to remember the simple gifts that can and do bring joy into our lives:

Sleeping on a rainy day

A good book

A letter from your best friend

Favorite old songs on the radio

Chocolate

Family gatherings and holidays

A favorite chair

Laughing out loud

The smell of fresh rain

A hot bath

Cooking

Not having to cook

Your pet’s welcome when you turn the key in the door

The support of a spouse

Stroking a purring cat as he snuggles on your lap.

Unconditional love

Forgiveness

Laughing out loud

No pain!

Sharing childhood memories with your grandchildren

A call from someone just to say “I Love You.”

Lying in bed and listening to the loons call to each other out on the lake

Splashing in the waves on the beach

Savoring a big juicy cheeseburger

A down comforter on a cold winter night

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