

# Borealis

The Monthly Journal of Northern Michigan Mensa



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 Borealis  
Northern Michigan Mensa

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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.

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ON THE COVER: The Boardman River near Keystone Pond. Taken near the location of the cover photo of last month, this picture shows the effects of the three-foot lowering of the pond. See other photos on pages 7 and 8. Photo by Stan Cain.

# Northern Michigan Mensa

## April 2007 Calendar

### **BIBLIOMENSANS - Saturday, April 7, 2007 at 12:30 p.m.**

We will meet at the Cottage Café, 420 Munson Avenue, Traverse City, in the Papa's Den. The book for discussion this month is *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith* by John Krakauer. Jack Schultz will do our presentation. This group is open to all members; attendance can be each meeting, or only for those meetings that present books in which you have an interest.

### **BRUNCH - Saturday, April 14, 2007 at 11:00 a.m.**

We will meet at Cottage Café, 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.

### **TGIF - Friday, April 27, 2007 at 5:30pm.**

We will meet at Another Cuppa Joe, 1200 West 11th Street in old Building 50, Traverse City in the cafe area. They have many beverages, sandwiches, soups, pastries and cookies available.

### **Culture Quest - Sunday, April 29, 2006 at 4:00 pm.**

We have two teams of five each and two alternates for this competition. Team McNamara consists of Sherry McNamara, Jim McDermott, Jack Schultz, Pete Turkus, KC Mowrey, and alternate Steve Quick. Team Vogel consists of Dorothy Vogel, Margaret Scott, Julie Hill, Joan Dasef, Stan Cain, and alternate Tom Barnhart. Even if you are not on a team this year, please come and celebrate after the event at 6pm for dinner, location to be announced.

### **BRUNCH - Saturday, May 5, 2007 at 11:00 a.m.**

#### **Followed by the Spring Wildflower Walk with Jack Schultz.**

We will meet at Cottage Café, 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. The location of the walk will be determined closer to the time of the walk.

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# Member News

## Happy April Birthdays

7	John Douglass Whyte	18	C M Beemon
10	John G Swartout	22	Jonathan D Nelson
16	Dorothy Vogel	23	P F Curtiss

## Mensa Membership Milestones (Years of continuous Membership)

<b>42 Years</b>	Norma Hastings Feeley	<b>6 Years</b>	R K Hillquist
<b>23 Years</b>	Cherie Marie Gabriel	<b>5 Years</b>	Marc Batway
<b>17 Years</b>	Thomas MacNeill Barnhart	<b>3 Years</b>	Carol J Crawford
<b>8 Years</b>	John D Schultz	<b>1 Year</b>	Robert R Nelson
<b>6 Years</b>	M Barton		Kymberli A Wregglesworth

## Welcome to Northern Michigan Mensa

John G Swartout

## Welcome back to Northern Michigan Mensa

Richard R Hopfner

## February 2007 Statistics

	AML	NMM
Total membership	53380	96
New and reinstating membership	863	2
Offers of membership	331	0
New members since April 2006	4514	9
Reinstating members since April 2006	3486	14

Membership directory information is based on data from American Mensa records as of 2/28/2007. If you would like to change the privacy releases on file, go to [www.us.mensa.org](http://www.us.mensa.org) and click on "Member Login". Then click on "Profile Update" and "PDQ Update".

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## Regional Vice Chair

### RVC Thoughts

Let me begin by thanking all members of our Region for allowing me the opportunity to serve as your RVC for the next two years. At first I thought it was a set-up job - all of you getting together and letting me run unopposed. Then I said to myself "no way, with almost 5,100 members in the region, there couldn't have been a conspiracy." Or was there? In any event, thanks, and I hope personal and career constraints, not apathy, prevented you from running for RVC. I am looking forward to continuing to work with local group officers and members and appreciate your confidence in me.

I do ask all of you to vote in the Mensa national elections during April and May. Even if you are an inactive member, your vote really does count in shaping the future course of Mensa. Let this be your one activity for the year - it is that important. You active members know how important voting is, please make sure you do. The chairman, second vice chairman, treasurer, and secretary positions are all contested. Sometimes the outcomes of these elections are surprisingly close; your vote can swing a victory or defeat. If every member of Region 3 voted, that would be a larger number than the usual number casting votes across the whole nation. It is so easy and user-friendly, there is really no excuse not to. Just watch your Mensa Bulletin for candidate and balloting information. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me and I'll help out or at least put you through to someone who can.

I really am having second thoughts about my RVC conspiracy theory not having merit. I just have to figure out how all 5,100 of you communicate so effectively.

Seriously though, I really would love to hear from you on any Mensa topic you are concerned or confused about. The more input I have from you, the more confidence and zeal I have in expressing and pursuing our goals. These can be anything: more local group support, less interference with local groups, less bureaucracy, better representation - whatever you deem important. Just let me know. Thank you all again for your continuing support.  
Dave Swanka

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## Scholarship Program

Ed. Note: The following is a letter sent to Dorothy Vogel who was our Scholarship Awards Chair two years ago when the award was given to Lydia Sanok.

Dear Ms. Vogel,

I just wanted to write you regarding something that my sister did that I believe was truly heroic. She won one of your scholarships and she is attending University of Michigan's nursing program.

My sister Lydia, my wife Christina, my mother, and I were volunteering in Jolivert, Haiti this past summer. As well, a young lady named Melissa joined us from New York, to help us at a medical clinic. My wife and I left after volunteering for 10 days; however, Lydia, my mother (MaryEllen), and Melissa stayed for another week.

On one of the mornings after my wife and I left, Melissa and my mother both ate a mango. Later in the day, they both started to feel sick. In the afternoon, Lydia was reading a book in the living room, when out of the corner of her eye, she saw my mother pass out and fall to the cold cement floor. Lydia, a nursing student at University of Michigan, quickly ran over to help my mother. She had a large cut above her left eye and was unconscious. Lydia told Melissa to go get help.

When asked about her feelings, she said that at first she was scared, but immediately went into a very focused mode. Melissa came back, and told Lydia that she couldn't find anyone. Lydia told Melissa to wait with my semi-conscious mother while she ran for help.

In Jolivert, our group was working at a rural medical clinic run by Missions of Love, a US non-profit agency. The clinic is advanced for Haiti, however, it is much different than clinics in the U.S. Lydia returned and some staff were coming with her. My mother was somewhat conscious when Lydia returned. She instructed staff to help her to move a mattress to the bedroom floor, so that she could get off of the floor. Further, Lydia assessed my mother for shock, and followed all appropriate procedures. Despite Lydia being less trained than the nurses or other clinic personal, they all kept asking her what to do. She told me, "I can't believe that they kept looking to me to lead, I had to...I didn't know what all was happening. Mom kept acting delusional." Lydia took my mother's blood pressure and found it to be nearly non-existent. She said it was 60/80. She instructed Christophe, the Clinic Director to go into Bossem-Blu, the closest

town, to get one of the Cuban doctors. At this point, Lydia had controlled most of the bleeding, and my mother was speaking to Lydia. However, she kept asking the same questions over and over, "What happened?" "Oh, my head is bleeding!" "What's going on?" Lydia was patient and gave my mother the same answers each time she repeated the question.

Melissa asked Lydia if she wanted to pray, but Lydia, despite being highly spiritual, told Melissa, "Not now, I have to keep my mother alive and talking."

Although there were many medical personal that were available, the Haitian nurses and administrator kept asking Lydia what needed to be done next. In looking back on the situation, she has described it as, "More responsibility than I've ever had...it was scary, but it taught me a lot about myself."

When Christophe returned, he stated that due to his visa, the Cuban doctor could not leave his home to perform job duties. Therefore, my mother, Lydia, Melissa, and several other people loaded into the back of a truck to get to the doctor. You see, there are no ambulances in rural Haiti. The roads have potholes the size of cars that often flood with muddy water, and donkeys, children and chickens run through road. Lydia kept my mother awake and talking on the ride to the Cuban doctor. As well, she kept taking her vital signs, and instructed others in what they needed to do.

The Cuban doctor was able to give my mother stitches, however, when she returned back to the United States, she had to have follow-up surgery. Today, she has a small scar above her left eye.

Thanks to Lydia's strong leadership, comprehensive medical skills, and ability to think straight under pressure, my mother only has a scar. She could have had numerous other things happen had Lydia not stepped up and lead an entire group of Haitians, an American, and a Cuban in what needed to happen. Thanks to Lydia's heroism, we have a safe family, with an amazing story, rather than a mother who could have sustained more serious injuries.

Thank you,  
Joseph R. Sanok

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## LOOKING FOR MR. RIGHT-ABOUT-EVERYTHING

By Ruth Minshull

My son and I were riding in the car as he engaged in his favorite pastime--asking me questions. At the age of four, he couldn't soak up information fast enough. Although it was tiring, I always tried to give him a reliable answer. One day, however, he asked me a question that stumped me completely; I had to say, "I don't know."

In genuine surprise he asked, "You mean you don't know everything?"

Laughing, I replied, "No. No one knows everything."

I could see that he found this surprising and, perhaps, a bit dismaying.

Many times since then I have observed that some people spend a lifetime searching for a person who knows everything.

We love confidence. If someone acts very sure of himself, we want to follow him--whether he's a used car salesman, a politician, a preacher, or that guru of herbal cure-alls (today's snake oil salesman).

Doctors cultivate this confidence. That's how they get patients to believe they know what they're doing. Preachers exude it, especially TV evangelists, who convince their believers to send them millions of dollars.

People *want* to believe--in something--in somebody. They *love* believing. We all do.

I used to wonder why politicians always declare, "I will lower taxes. I will create more jobs," etc. They never say, "I'll try" or "I'll do my best" (which is all they really *can* do). Since we don't have any public office that permits dictatorship, no one person has that kind of power. Still it's nothing new for politicians to make false promises and, unfortunately, it's nothing new for the public to keep voting them in on the basis of those unfulfillable vows.

Sometimes I see an actor interviewed on TV. It may be someone who plays dynamic heroes on the screen, but without makeup, a script and background music, the actor is obviously just an everyday person, maybe even a bit of a wimp. I once saw a TV interview with Laurence Olivier. I was disappointed to find that he was a dull, nondescript person making petty complaints about a fellow actor. He was a person with an immense talent, but he was not an immense person. I chided myself for expecting him to be that big-screen presence in real life.

We don't want our heroes to have feet of clay.

With any luck, every person should be able and confident in some areas, but if we encounter an individual who is confident about *everything*, be wary. He's not only bogus, he's a nut case.

I've often wondered why we admire certainty so much.

I suppose it's because we grew up with parents who always displayed confidence to us. They answered our thousands of questions; they told us what

to do and what not to do. Naturally, they hid their own anxieties and uncertainties while they helped us through our own. So we expected to acquire the same infallibility ourselves as soon as we grew up.

When it doesn't happen, we look for that certainty in others.

As the politicians start to warm up their campaign machines once again (more than a year ahead of time!) as they exercise their practiced smiles, their warm handshakes, their glib promises--I realize they are preparing to offer us what we all want: the Big Kahuna who knows everything, can do anything. Who will bring peace on earth, riches to all and take care of us for life.

We're just looking for that nice warm lap to crawl onto, a kiss on the forehead and assurance that all will be well.

Daddy! Daddy! Where are you?

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## KEYSTONE POND REVISITED

Following are several photos taken on March 25, 2007. The pond lowering has been initiated to relieve pressure on the dam. Some plans call for three dams on the Boardman River to be removed. Photos by Stan Cain.



The floating dock on Keystone Pond has dropped since our winter hike in February when it was nearly level.



The Boardman River South of Keystone Pond



Water roars through the spillway at the Cass Road dam which forms Keystone Pond.

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