

Borealis

The Monthly Journal of Northern Michigan Mensa



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 Borealis
Northern Michigan Mensa

www.nmm.us.mensa.org

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Mensa:

Mensa's constitution lists three purposes: to identify and foster human intelligence for the benefit of humanity; to encourage research into the nature, characteristics, and uses of intelligence; and to provide a stimulating intellectual and social environment for its members.

Mensa accepts individuals who score at or above the 98th percentile on certain standardized IQ tests, such as the Stanford-Binet.

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 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.

Deadline:

The deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month before the month of publication.

Submissions received after that time may be considered if time and space permit.

Advertising:

At this time Borealis does not accept advertising from either members or non-members.

Email submissions to:

nmmnewsletter@hotmail.com

US mail:

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT www.nmm.us.mensa.org

ON THE COVER: Climbers scramble 450 feet up the sand dune at the Lake Michigan overlook in the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. Photo by Stan Cain.

Northern Michigan Mensa

June 2008 Calendar

BOOK CLUB - Saturday, 7 June, 2008 at 11:00 a.m.

We will meet at Cottage Café, located at 420 Munson Avenue, Traverse City in the Papa's Den. The Bibliomensans book for this month will be *The Rape of Nanking: The forgotten Holocaust of World War II*, by Iris Chang, presented by Melissa Rennie.

BRUNCH - Saturday, 14 June, 2008 at 11:00 a.m.

We will meet at Cottage Café, located at 420 Munson Avenue, Traverse City in the Papa's Den, which is on the right as you enter the front door.

CAMPING WEEKEND - Friday, 20 June through Sunday, 22 June, 2008.

Northern Michigan Mensans and their families and friends are invited to join us on a special camping weekend to be held from Friday, June 20 through Sunday, June 22, 2008. The event will take place at:

**Cedar Creek Campground and Liberty Park, 9696 12 3/4 Rd., Manton MI.
(231) 824-9318 E-MAIL: CEDARCREEKCAMP@AOL.COM**

Cedar Creek Campground offers accommodations ranging from primitive campsites at \$15 per night to fully equipped cabins at \$55 per night. Reservations can be made by contacting event host Susan Kraus at 231/510-5672 or smag66@yahoo.com.

The park has laundry and restroom facilities, including showers. There is a swimming hole with a sandy beach, a playground for the kids, and an on-site general store. A limited amount of firewood will be provided free of charge. If you would like to camp but do not have the necessary gear, please contact Susan, who will be able to provide some basic equipment such as tents and sleeping bags.

If you are only able to participate for an evening or a day, please feel free to join us at any time during the weekend. Contact Susan Kraus for directions, to make reservations, or for answers to your questions. We hope to see you there!

TGIF - Friday, 27 June, 2008 at 5:30 p.m.

This is our monthly, end-of-the-week get together to unwind and chat. We will meet in the Horizon Shine Café located in the lower level of Horizon Books, 243 Front Street, Traverse City. They have coffee, soft drinks, sandwiches, wraps and desserts available.

Member News

Happy June Birthdays

3	Heather J Gruenberg	23	William Earl Hagan
6	Jennifer L Cassidy		Sherry L Saites
11	D L Waldron	29	Bernard Hanchett

Mensa Membership Milestones (Years of continuous Membership)

22 Years	J Haberstroh	3 Years	Judith W Lindenau
6 Years	Corinne Kass-Hillard Mowrey	2 Years	Floyd Erin John Fitzsimmons
5 Years	S D Cain		

Welcome to Northern Michigan Mensa

Michael V Lasusa

Welcome Back to Northern Michigan Mensa

Alan T Kohler

2008 Statistics	AML	NMM
Total membership	46897	91
New and reinstating membership	813	2
Offers of membership	311	1
New members since April 2007	331	1
Reinstating members since April 2007	482	1

Membership directory information is based on data from American Mensa records as of 4/30/2008. If you would like to change the privacy releases on file, go to www.us.mensa.org and click on "Member Login". Then click on "Profile Update" and "PDQ Update".

The LocSec's Login

By Jack Schultz
NMM LocSec

As you may recall, last month I wrote that the number of members of NMM stood at 103 when Mensa's membership year ended (March 31). I was pleasantly surprised when the end-of-April tally came out for we did not "lose" as many members as usually occurs; we had 91 members in NMM. Several new members joined and a great many renewed. So...thanks to all for your loyalty to Mensa and our group in particular.

Members have so many choices open to them in Mensa and it may not hurt to mention a few again in case you've forgotten. Regional and national "gatherings" (RGs and the AG) are several-day-long events which attract many members because of the wide range of activities that occur at them--special talks/presentations, seminars, games, socializing opportunities, etc. The AG, for example, has attracted several NMM members. Stan and Dorothy Cain plan to go to Denver this month, as do Jim and Sharon McDermott, Carol Crawford and her family, and Melissa Rennie. Our group will be well represented.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) offer all Mensa members the chance to pursue any number of unique subjects. I really have no idea how many of our members belong to such groups...or even which SIGs.

Culture Quest, Mensa's annual trivia game, challenges those who participate. This year we again fielded two 4-person teams that are now waiting to learn how well (or poorly) they did.

And of course, our own "program" can provide social chances for people to learn from each other. We have, for several years, had more than 40 separate events for members of NMM to get something out of their membership. A TGIF and a brunch each month add up to 24 events alone. Our book club (Bibliomensans) meets six times during the year and all members of NMM -- even those who may not have read the book for a particular month--are welcome to sit in on the discussion for that month. The movie discussion group did meet every other month but interest in that activity seems to have flagged. Maybe something will take its place, or maybe interest in movies will resume. Outdoor activities beckon to some of us and our annual canoe trip is always fun, as is the challenge of being out in the cold for a winter hike.

This month we'll see how many decide to go camping--near Manton--for all or part of the weekend of June 20-22.

Last month only two showed up to join me for our annual spring wildflower hike. Erik Snyder, one of our newest members, came from Gaylord and brought his friend, Madonna. We had a nice hike at the Empire Bluff Trail in Sleeping

Bear Dunes and a relaxing chance to learn some botany while seeing some lovely scenery.



May Brunch

There was a good turnout and a lively discussion at the May brunch and ExComm meeting. Shown above are:

At the table, clockwise from left - Susan Kraus (facing camera), Bobbi Walker, Tom Barnhart, Sue Styles, Dwayne Bean, Jack Schultz, Jim McDermott, Joan Dasef, Penny Novarro and Bernard and Mary Lee Hanchett.

Standing - Sandy Bean and children Peter and Karla.
Photo by Stan Cain

SEMMantics XXX

By Stan Cain

In addition to the usual good food, drink, games and conversation, there were a number of interesting presentations at Southeast Michigan Mensa's Regional Gathering in Farmington Hills in early May

Travels in China - Melissa Rennie

Melissa spoke on her experiences and travels while on foreign study in the People's Republic of China during 1990-91. Accompanying the talk was a slide presentation showing many of the popular sites as well as sites that were not open to foreigners.



Melissa Rennie at SEMMantics XXX

Nano Technology - Frank Dolinar - (Web site: nanosteps.net)

Frank described the fascinating (and perhaps sometimes frightening) state of research in the field of nanotechnology.

Nanotechnology is the understanding and control of matter at dimensions of roughly 1 to 100 nanometers (nm), where unique phenomena enable novel applications. Encompassing nanoscale science, engineering, and technology, nanotechnology involves imaging, measuring, modeling, and manipulating matter at this scale. (National Nanotechnology Initiative)

This relatively new field utilizes the unique properties of materials (particularly carbon nanotubes) when the materials are present at a very small scale.

Areas using nanotech materials:

Current uses:

Automobiles, tires sports equipment, electronics, clothing, and cosmetics (sunscreen)

Future uses:

Medical devices, water purification, self-cleaning windows, photovoltaic roofing and building glass.

Ed mentioned that this is a \$32 billion/year industry and growing rapidly.

He also mentioned that the CDC is doing research on possible risks. One recent concern was that of sunscreen containing a nano material, which was found to be able to pass through skin into the body. No harmful effects have been shown but concerns caused the manufacturers to discontinue this use.

The Future of Automotive Propulsion - Dr. Ed Becker

Ed's presentation described the future of auto propulsion systems in general and in particular from new products from General Motors.

Ed mentioned the research that is occurring and vehicles being developed. The research involves propulsion systems such as hybrid, flex-fuel, electric, fuel cell and others.

He said that many new vehicles would be coming to market in the next few years, which will take advantage of the new technologies to provide increased fuel efficiency and features.

Programs and Publicity

One of our newer members, **Susan Kraus**, has generously agreed to chair both the **program** and **publicity** functions. Please send any program or publicity suggestions to her at smag66@yahoo.com.

THE HOT TOPIC

By Ruth Minshull

One blustery winter morning here in Michigan I was talking on the phone with my son in California. He mentioned that he had just concluded a heavy discussion with his ten-year-old son about global warming.

"Well," he'd said to his boy, "I'm about to call your Grandma. Why don't you talk with her about it?"

"I can't do that."

"Why not?"

"Well, Dad, it's OK if I argue with you, but you *can't* argue with Grandma. After all, she's Grandma."

Later, I talked with my grandson and he did broach the subject. "Grandma, do you believe in global warming?"

I laughed, "Well, I certainly don't today. It's two degrees here and the wind chill factor is forty-seven below zero."

Later, recalling our conversation, my attention was caught on his question, "Do you believe in...?"

How, I wondered, had this issue become a matter of *belief*? That sounds more like religion than an observable condition. Global warming should be a matter of scientific fact.

On the one hand, we are told that the ice shelves are melting; forests are disappearing and we're creating deadly gases that are destroying the ozone layer. We must conserve our resources, recycle our paper cups and bounce to work on a pogo stick. We've got to go green.

In fact, some months ago Sheryl Crow stated that the government should restrict the use of toilet paper--allowing only one square for each visit to the loo. (*Heck, why not put an old Sears catalog in there, as they once did in the outhouses?*)

Meanwhile other pundits pooh-pooh the whole idea, calling it the "fraud of global warming." They tell us that the warming trend is simply part of a natural cycle and is neither caused by humans, nor can it be reversed by human efforts.

A number of scientists say that if we do go green to the utmost, the impact on the global climate will be almost infinitesimal.

Everyone seems to have an opinion. I've read that the proponents consist of 15% who are scientists; the other 85% include politicians (*Now, there's a good source for truth*), journalists (*ditto*), rock stars (!), Hollywood twinkies (*What can I say?*) and persons-on-the-street.

So when our leaders, the authorities and assorted "experts" can't agree on the subject, how are we--mere laymen--supposed to discern the truth?

There's no question in my mind that we are a wasteful society. We're even cluttering outer space. We certainly should cut back on our throwaway tendencies--if only to build character. And, we can obviously benefit by reducing pollution and making more energy-efficient vehicles. Furthermore,

alternate energy sources are, no doubt, a wise idea. Any computer user has learned the value of making backups.

But, just how green-friendly do we need to get? How important *is* going green? Could we maybe just do chartreuse? Turquoise?

Also, in the midst of this raging controversy, we should ask the question first posed by Cicero: "To whose benefit?" (Well, he actually said, "Cui bono?" but most of us wouldn't.) Could it be that some people stand to make money or gain political power if we are all persuaded to green up?

One congressman said recently that a pending climate change bill would cost six trillion dollars. Well, we all know who would pay for *that*--but who would *get* the money?

Having stumbled blindly through this blizzard of assertions, pseudoscientific facts, speculations and conflicting opinions, I have at least emerged with one absolute truth--one solid, irrefutable fact--which I offer for the benefit of all mankind:

You *can't* argue with Grandma!

Mind Games 2008. Mensa Select Winners By Catherine Barney

More than 210 Mensans gathered in Phoenix in April for Mind Games 2008. During the three-day event, members played and rated 54 board and card games. The top five games have earned Mensa Select distinction and may use the Mensa Select seal on their games.

The winners are:

AmuseAmaze (HL Games, www.hlgames.com)

Eye Know (Wiggles 3D Inc, www.eyeknowgame.com)

Jumbulaya (Platypus Games, www.platypusgames.com)

Pixel (Educational Insights, www.educationalinsights.com)

Tiki Toppie (Gamewright, www.gamewright.com)

Mind Games 2009 will be held April 24-26 in Cincinnati. To register, visit www.mindgames.us.mensa.org.
