

# Borealis

The Monthly Journal of Northern Michigan Mensa



Volume 7 Number 8

June 2009

 Borealis  
Northern Michigan Mensa

[www.nmm.us.mensa.org](http://www.nmm.us.mensa.org)

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

Go high-tech! Get the Borealis  
emailed to you. It's easy. Just email  
[nmmnewsletter@hotmail.com](mailto:nmmnewsletter@hotmail.com) and  
put "change delivery method" in the  
subject line.  
You'll get it faster, and in color!

## 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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](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	John D. Schultz	231-275-6735	
	<a href="mailto:nwoodpc@chartermi.net">nwoodpc@chartermi.net</a>		
Deputy Loc Sec	Stan Cain	231-938-1506	<a href="mailto:sdcmn@yahoo.com">sdcmn@yahoo.com</a>
Treasurer	Susan A. Styles	231-264-6193	<a href="mailto:seas@umich.edu">seas@umich.edu</a>
At Large	Jim McDermott	231-943-7792	
At Large	Penny Novarro	231-264-8807	<a href="mailto:pennypnorth@earthlink.net">pennypnorth@earthlink.net</a>

## APPOINTED MEMBERS

Membership			
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			
Publicity	Bobbi Walker		<a href="mailto:bobbiraw@att.net">bobbiraw@att.net</a>
Web Contact	Priscilla Walmsley		<a href="mailto:pwalmsley@datypic.com">pwalmsley@datypic.com</a>
Scholarship Chair			
SIGHT Coordinator	Melissa J. Rennie	231-889-0892	<a href="mailto:renmeij@yahoo.com">renmeij@yahoo.com</a>
Financial Overseer	Thomas Barnhart	231-946-3242	<a href="mailto:tmb@mac.com">tmb@mac.com</a>
Petoskey Area Subgroup			
Coordinator	Jennifer LaPoint	231-330-8489	<a href="mailto:water375372000@yahoo.com">water375372000@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>
	Melissa J. Rennie	231-889-0892	<a href="mailto:renmeij@yahoo.com">renmeij@yahoo.com</a>
Regional			
Vice-Chairman	Dave Swanka	716-833-5549	<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: Mark and Keegan Styles walk through a field of wildflowers at the May wildflower hike. Photo by Sue Styles.

# Northern Michigan Mensa

## June 2009 Calendar

### EXCOMM MEETING - Tuesday, 2 June 2009 at 11:30 a.m.

We will meet at the Cottage Café, located at 420 Munson Avenue, Traverse City. The main topic will be any additional scholarship awards that we may want to provide to the existing winners. All members are welcome to attend.

### BOOK CLUB - Saturday, 6 June 2009 at 11:00 a.m.

We will meet at the Cottage Café, located at 420 Munson Avenue, Traverse City, in the Papa's Den. The Bibliomensans book for June will be *My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey* by Jill Bolte Taylor. The presenter will be Sherry McNamara. Please plan to attend for another lively discussion! Note: See the book description on page 5.

### MEET AND GREET the New RVC - Friday, 12 June 2009 at 6:00 p.m.

Our new RVC (Regional Vice Chair), Betsy Mark, who lives in southeast Michigan, will be in town. We will meet with her at Scalawag's White Fish and Chips, 303 E. State Street, for dinner. It is located on the street level of the parking deck between Front and State streets in downtown Traverse City.

### BRUNCH - Saturday, 13 June 2009 at 11:00 a.m.

We will meet at the 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.

### TGIF - Friday, 26 June 2009 at 5:30 p.m.

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

\*\*\*\*

## Coming Events

Mark your calendars now for our Annual Picnic. This will be held from 1 to 5p.m. on August 23, 2009, at the pavilion of the Boardman River Nature Center on Cass Road in Traverse City. More details will be provided in future issues.

\*\*\*\*

## Member News

### Happy June Birthday

3	Heather J Gruenberg	23	William Earl Hagan
4	Bartholomew G Halliday III		Sherry L Saites
6	Jennifer L Cassidy	29	Bernard Hanchett

### Mensa Membership Milestones

(Years of continuous Membership)

23 Years	J Haberstroh	4 Years	Judith W Lindenau
7 Years	Corinne Kass-Hillard Mowrey		
6 Years	Stanley D Cain	1 Year	Sara L Quigley

### Welcome to Northern Michigan Mensa

Thomas C Remsperger

### April 2009 Statistics

	AML	NMM
Total membership	46952	85
New and reinstating membership	898	1
Offers of membership	370	0
New members since April 2008	405	1
Reinstating members since April 2008	493	0

Membership directory information is based on data from American Mensa records as of 4/30/2009. 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".

\*\*\*\*

## **The LocSec's Login**

**By Jack Schultz, Local Secretary**

### **HAVE YOU ASKED....?**

Mensa's membership year ended on March 31. As usual, quite a number of our members had not renewed by that date (more than 20). I'm sure, as the renewal date approached, most asked themselves, "What am I getting out of Mensa? Is it worth the expenditure when there are so many other ways I could spend \$50 or more?"

Let's look at that. Do you find the Bulletin worth reading, or are you like many of us who put it on a table somewhere with the intention of "getting around to it" sometime? And then "sometime" never comes because the next issue arrives. Same goes for Borealis. It always amazes me when someone tells me he/she didn't know we had such-and-such an event scheduled...and yet, one of the first items in each issue of our newsletter is the listing of events coming up during that month.

While we continue to have reasonable showings at most of our activities, the heyday of having 20 to 30 people attend is long gone for the most part. Does this indicate a loss of interest in what our group might be doing? I suspect not, but it is at times discouraging to realize that we may not be offering just the kinds of activities that most members desire. When we know what members would like, we can respond and plan accordingly. C'mon, folks, let us know what you'd like NMM to offer you!

### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

While it may seem too far in the future to be concerned, we need to be thinking about a slate of officers to be nominated for the two-year period that will begin next January 1. That said, I welcome volunteers to serve on our nominating committee. If you would like to do your share as a member, please contact me by phone or email to let me know your interest in serving on that committee. This year, if nominations are made early enough, we will try to provide an opportunity in Borealis for nominees to give some information about their interest in and commitment to making NMM an organization that better serves its members' interests.

### **WILDFLOWER HIKES**

This has been one of northern Michigan's unusual springs. We never knew if it would finally arrive...until it arrived quickly. Our local group

held two hikes to view "spring ephemerals" and we weren't disappointed in what we found. Well, yes, maybe there might have been a greater variety of flowering plants at Traverse City's Hickory Hills natural area, but the Dutchman's breeches, dog-toothed violets (also called trout lily or adder's tongue), and spring beauties were nicely on display. And...what a grand showing of trilliums we found at Arcadia Dunes on May 16!

Back to "spring ephemerals" in case the term eludes you. These are plants which flower briefly in the spring; that's where the ephemeral comes in. Look it up!

### **GREENER AND MORE GLORIOUS**

Joanne and I are going to western Canada from June 5 - 16 and will be enjoying the grandeur of the Canadian Rockies...from Banff National Park to Jasper National Park in Alberta, on the boundary with British Columbia. Some of you know that we lived in Alberta for nearly five years back in the 1970s, and we never could get enough of those magnificent mountains. I'll be taking my digital camera with me and will plan to share views of that beautiful area on a screen at one of our brunches this summer or fall. So, please do check out our monthly listing of events in the next few issues of Borealis to see when that showing will occur.

\*\*\*\*

## **SUPER SUPERLATIVE**

**By Ruth Minshull**

There's a local radio host who often precedes a break by saying, "We'll be back in a couple of moments."

Now, I'd like to know just how long that is.

My dictionary says that a moment is a tiny portion of time.

So, does that mean that a couple of moments are twice as tiny or twice as long? In any case, how exactly do you halve or double a tiny indefinite portion?

What's wrong with people that they want to modify an already indeterminate amount? They also like to improve on superlatives. I used to know a woman who often said that something was "very excellent." The dictionary claims that excellent refers to something of the highest or finest quality.

I think the hair spray people have carried this farther than anybody. They started out with only one kind of spray. Then they offered greater

and greater degrees of holding power, which they gave such ambiguous names as "EXTRA HOLD," "ULTRA HOLD," "SUPER HOLD," "MEGA HOLD," (in some order or other). By the time they get to INDUSTRIAL STRENGTH HOLD, no one will understand the meaning of superlatives. So several companies have begun showing a number on the canister, starting with "1" (that's the weakest--and very hard to find) and going on up. I don't know what the highest number is right now, but it's for people who never plan to comb their hair again. I suppose they'll have to saw it off when they're done with it.

Then, we've all heard the commercial that calls its product the "very best." Since best means "excelling *all* others" how much better is the *very* best? Maybe these people are in on a secret that the rest of us missed.

Could it be that you can also get bigger than the biggest? More than the most? Is there something beyond infinity?

If so, then I'd better restate my goals so that they are more perfectly clear.

I would like to have an ultra, super, magna, mega life with the very most of more than everything--and I want it in half a moment.

\*\*\*\*

## ***My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey***

**June Book Club Selection**

**By Jill Bolte Taylor - 192 pages**

Jill Bolte Taylor was a 37-year-old Harvard-trained and published brain scientist when a blood vessel exploded in her brain. Through the eyes of a curious neuroanatomist, she watched her mind completely deteriorate whereby she could not walk, talk, read, write, or recall any of her life. Because of her understanding of how the brain works, her respect for the cells composing her human form, and an amazing mother, Jill completely recovered her mind, brain and body. In *My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey*, Jill shares with us her recommendations for recovery and the insight she gained into the unique functions of the right and left halves of her brain.

Based upon her academic training and personal experience, Jill helps others not only rebuild their brains from trauma, but also helps those of us with normal brains better understand how we can 'tend the garden of our minds' to maximize our quality of life.

## **SEMMantics XXXI Wrap-up**

The southeast Michigan RG, known as SEMMantics, was held May 1-3 at the Holiday Inn in Farmington Hills. Over a hundred Mensans and guests were registered and a number of interesting speakers were scheduled.

One topic was the current state of planning for the 2010 AG to be held in Dearborn, Michigan (see next article). In addition, there were presentations such as:

- The current dismal state of electronic equipment "recycling" by Ken Grundberg. A film made by the Basel Action Network ([www.ban.org](http://www.ban.org)) was shown which documented how electronics from developed countries all over the world are taken to various African countries to be repaired and resold. In reality, many are stripped for valuable components such as copper wire (by burning off insulation). These activities have been linked to a higher incidence of cancer in Nigeria. It was also pointed out that many of the hard drives in the computers dumped still had readable sensitive financial and personal information on them.
- A fascinating talk by Ernest DuMouchelle about the activities of the DuMouchelle Auction Galleries in Detroit. He stressed the importance of knowing the provenance of the piece to be auctioned and how this factor can affect prices. He told a number of stories about auctioning art from the estates of some rich and famous Michigan personalities.
- A talk by John Sharp, who discussed the status of the federal estate tax in 2009 and future years.
- A presentation by Chris Nordin and Michelle Plucinsky describing the glass creations produced at their Furnace Design Studio in Dearborn, Michigan. They talked about the history of glass making and the steps needed to make the intricate glass artworks that they produce.

AND, good food and drink, conversation, games and movies.

\*\*\*\*

## “Who's the Genius who Picked Detroit? American Mensa 2010 Annual Gathering!”

-Detroit CVB ad slogan

### 2010 AG Planning By Melissa J. Rennie

As the 2009 Annual Gathering (AG) in Pittsburgh draws near, the 2010AG committee has realized that we have roughly a year to throw together an amazing gathering for over 2,000 Mensans. The 2010AG committee held its first official meeting over the SEMMantics RG weekend and came away with some great ideas and plans. We have met and communicated throughout the last two years, but it has been more strategic or meet-n-greet type meetings. It was nice to finally roll up the sleeves and see what we can accomplish over the next year.

For those unfamiliar with a Gathering, it is a time set aside for a group of Mensans to get together and enjoy one another's company through a hospitality room, games room, and a variety of speakers. Regional Gatherings (RGs), such as SEMMantics, are held in different regions throughout the year and attract from 50 at smaller RGs to over 500 at Chicago's HalloweeM. The AG is held once a year, usually in July, at a different location every year. The 2010AG will be a joint AG with Mensa Canada, celebrating 50 years of Mensa in North America

The 2010AG will be held in Detroit (technically Dearborn) at the Dearborn Hyatt from June 30 through July 5. Programming and hospitality will run into Monday, due to the Fourth of July being on a Sunday. The decision with the quickest impact is to take advantage of a low price for individuals who register through July 31 of \$65 (registration begins after the 2009AG concludes). After that, the price of registration will increase gradually until the at-the-door registration of \$110. There is a cancellation fee of 5 percent (at least for this year), and the process is very simple as I had to cancel my registration for this year's AG for a variety of reasons.

The 2010AG website will go live during the 2009AG. From that site or the main American Mensa site ([www.us.mensa.org](http://www.us.mensa.org)) one will be able to register for the AG. The 2010AG yahoo group has also started up and one can register for this online message board at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/m-us-ag-2010/>. The yahoo group is not officially affiliated with American Mensa.

I am the Program Chair and have started the process of lining up speakers for our tracks. The tracks include: Lions, Tigers, and All Things Sports; Politics and Borders; History in Motion (industrial track); Motown Motion (music track); Diverse Detroit; Mensa Gold; and Cadillac Pontchartrain (catchall). There will also be a Kid's Trek, LDWs, AMC and Canada Mensa business meetings. If anyone has ideas for the Programs, please feel to contact me at [melissa.2010ag@gmail.com](mailto:melissa.2010ag@gmail.com).

Hospitality will be run by Desiree Sagrey from LA Mensa. The plan is to incorporate the diversity track and offer a variety of ethnic meals -- ranging from Middle Eastern, Polish, Greek, Mexican, to anything that we can do at a reasonable cost. Tournament chair is Adam Smargon and he already has plans for the following tournaments: euchre, hearts, cribbage, Sudoku, and, since Texas Hold 'em poker is a favorite pastime of the committee chairs, I imagine that the tournament will be very interesting.

If anyone has any questions about the 2010AG, feel free to drop me a line at the above email address. I may have the answer or if not, can find it for you.



### 2010 AG Pep Rally

Shown above are (Left to Right): Maria Sawczuk (Delaware Mensa), Jason Knight (Boward County, Florida Mensa) and Melissa Rennie (NMM), giving a status report of the planning for the 2010 AG. Photo by Stan Cain

\*\*\*\*