



# Borealis

The Monthly Journal of Northern Michigan Mensa



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**Borealis**  
Northern Michigan Mensa

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

Stan Cain  
[nmmmborealis@yahoo.com](mailto:nmmmborealis@yahoo.com)

# Northern Michigan Mensa Executive Committee

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

ON THE COVER: What would a fall issue be like without a colorful leaf picture? Photo by Stan Cain.

# November Calendar

## BRUNCH - Saturday, 13 November 2010 at 11:00 a.m.

We will meet at the Cottage Café, located at 420 Munson Avenue, Traverse City, in the Papa's Den.

## T.G.I.F. - Friday, 19 November 2010 at 5:30 p.m.

This is our monthly, Friday get together to unwind and chat. We will meet at 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. Join us! **Note new day this month to avoid Thanksgiving weekend conflict.**

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## Member News

### Happy November Birthday

1	Bobbi Walker	16	Robert B Pierson
13	Kimberly Lohr	26	L Jonson
14	Stephanie Quist	28	Gary L McWhirter
15	Richard R Hopfner		

### Mensa Membership Milestones

(Years of continuous membership)

40 Years	Ruth Minshull	4 Years	Robin E Wottowa
9 Years	P Walmsley	3 Years	Stephanie Quist
8 Years	Donald L Curtis		Jerome D Smith
	C K Hulse		Bobbi A Walker
5 Years	Stephen H Quick	1 Year	Michael H Lancashire
			Richard B Thibeau

## Welcome to Northern Michigan Mensa

Michael B Cardwell

### September 2010 Statistics

	AML	NMM
Total membership	52659	100
New and reinstating membership	493	1
Offers of membership	201	0
New members since April 2010	1511	5
Reinstating members since April 2010	1621	7

Membership directory information is based on data from American Mensa records as of 9/30/2010. 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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## The LocSec's Login

### Masks, Disclosures, and Other Misdirections By Richard Hopfner, Local Secretary

As you read this two things will be true: our Halloween party will be very very soon, or just over; and it will have been the season of the Mask, which to me is one of the most interesting things ever.

You can guess, maybe, that Halloween is one of my most favorite holidays. For when else can we both hide and express ourselves? Since it is possible to do so, we can hide in plain sight and watch our fellows around us.

How do we hide? What do we choose to hide behind when we do? How much of what is inside do we show through our choices?

As some that I've talked to personally may know, I enjoy playing Massive Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games. (MMORPG if you really like awkward acronyms...) These are online - only games that are a simultaneous interaction with all players that are online. They are big, addictive, and offer much, good and bad, that would be impossible to

duplicate with a solo game. One of the reasons I enjoy it is that every day is Halloween!

How so? Well, when you start you must choose a visual representation for yourself in this game-space - i.e., an avatar. You choose how you look, up to and including gender. Halloween on steroids!

So, why is that interesting? Well... for starters, people will often spend lots of time trying to decide this, so you can bet that how they end up looking is significant to them. You, of course, won't know why, but you know there often is a why. And? Hm... I'd expect since it is a role-playing game that many people would adopt a persona that would be different from their normal actions/thoughts/behavior. Wouldn't that be a reasonable guess?

From what I've seen though, they don't. The honorable still behave that way, as will the dishonorable. The bullies bully, the caring help. Extroverts gather, introverts separate. People brag, strut, and hook up with each other like you'd see anywhere else.

So what we have is a virtual world where any behavior is possible, and people mostly act like they would unmasked. You can learn of the person behind the mask by watching the movements and mouthing of the very mask that should hide. I have read and am tickled by the idea that future psychologists will set up virtual shop to treat the real people behind the virtual facade. When given a mask maybe people are freer to act normal. It's fascinating to me.

But in the physical world? How do we mask ourselves and our lives beyond Halloween when only the skin of our face and thoughts relayed by our lips stand between us and a kind or hostile world? This is the aspect of being in Mensa that spurred me to write as I have today, and I'm speaking mostly of my personal experiences, which no doubt must be different from your own. I'm not ashamed in any way of belonging to our group. Why I'm proud of it would take a longer explanation than I have room left for. But what I am, when I talk about our group, is cautious.

Since I don't like bragging, I'm sensitive to the fact that in my eyes, even mentioning that I belong to it feels like bragging. So, I deflect. "What's Mensa?", someone might respond to something I've said. "Oh... It's a high IQ group... but... I just got lucky on one test." I have said. "But look at some of the neat things that they do... imagine this..."

Deflect, parry, and move on. Cover the perceived negative with something else.

But what does it tell me about myself? Am I being honest or am I really ashamed somehow? Why is it so complicated to talk about to people that don't know that this group is part of me? Today, thinking about this as I write, I am truly unable to say.

What about you? How have your experiences in Mensa and beyond shaped the way you present it and yourself to the outside world? Does it feel like a mask?

If this finds its way into your hands, virtual or otherwise before our Halloween event, I hope to see you there, in mask or without.

Best autumn regards.

**Editor's Note:** If you read this issue before the end of the month, you have time to attend the Halloween party, which will be held the night of October 30<sup>th</sup> at Nancy Dady's home. See the web site or Call Nancy for details at 947-1642.

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**Your ExComm at Work!**

The September ExComm meeting was held at Short's Brewery in Bellaire. Present were: (L to R) Jack Schultz, Stan Cain, Richard Hopfner, Eric Snyder and Bobbi Walker. Not present were ExComm members Dwayne Bean, Bernie Hanchett and Judith Lindenau. Photo by John Porter.



# Puzzle Page

## CRYPTOGRAM

Submitted by Ruth Minshull

The cryptogram consists of a simple substitution code. Each letter has been replaced by another. No letter represents itself, and substitutions remain consistent throughout the puzzle. For example:

ORAB AB ZK WLZSXHW GU Z YGIW.  
THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF A CODE.

**B DKNW AWWU OALRA K FWUMLA YL ZBNW YL**

**CW LAW DVAGUWG KAG CW UWTKUOKCZW XLU**

**KAPYDBAQ WZMW.—ILMD CBZZBAQM.**

The answer will be in next month's issue.

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### Answer to last month's Cryptogram:

The human brain is a wonderful organ. It starts to work as soon as you are born and doesn't stop until you get up to deliver a speech.—George Jessel

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## What Would it Take? By Stan Cain (Editor, Borealis)

Just some rambling thoughts for a late fall day....

Sometimes, those in leadership positions in NMM bemoan the fact that only about ten percent of the membership ever attend any of our functions, most of which are centered in the Traverse City area. There are, of course, a number of valid reasons for not attending: conflicting work and vacation schedules, the sometimes long traveling distances involved in our region, lack of transportation, health issues and probably many more.

Often the leaders speculate on what purpose a Mensa membership serves if members never associate with their fellow Mensans. Well, there is the subscription to the national magazine, *The Mensa Bulletin*, which is interesting reading. Then there is the local newsletter, *Borealis*, also (I like to think) good reading, with more local news items and pictures. Also, there are SIGS, which, to some members, provide a link to others with shared interests. I know of one member, living at some distance from Traverse City, who subscribes to the Isolated Ms SIG (a group for those who are far from the center of local activity.). Other reasons for joining Mensa and to keep renewing one's membership? Some people take the test just to see if they could pass and then find they like it and get involved.

Let's face it, many of our activities are social in nature and most of our members have other friends and family with whom to socialize. Some of our better attended functions have involved something more special like a presentation at one of the brunches by a local author or a tour of an interesting local attraction (I remember the tour of the Grand Traverse Distillery drew a large crowd.) These have been much better attended than the purely social functions. Some members seem to show up more at outdoor activities such as hikes and canoe trips. I think this points out that we are a very diverse group and that no one type of activity can attract all the members all of the time.

But what if we really wanted to get everyone out to, say, the annual picnic. What would it take? What if money were no object (think Bill Gates as Local Secretary)? Would everyone show up if all expenses were paid and hundred dollar bills were party favors? I bet a lot of people would attend and bring family members too. Well, don't get your hopes

up. But what about a really famous speaker? Bill Clinton? Sarah Palin? Again, don't get your hopes up.

So what does that leave us with? Perhaps we should try to schedule more intellectual get togethers, and functions that involve activities other than socializing. Would **you** members out there like to tell the planners what kind of event **you** would like to see? It's **your** group. And, with **your** help, it can be even better than it is. Contact our program chair, Bobbi Walker, with your ideas.

\*\*\*\*

## Bug News (Battle Creek Revisited)

By Sherry McNamara

The Adopt-A-Stream team was outside and enjoying nature on a beautiful fall day in early October. Nancy Dady and her husband Kurt Bowden and Stan and Dorothy Cain were in charge of the fall testing session on Battle Creek. Jim McDermott and I were on-hand to offer moral support. This time the team decided to add a potluck to the day, so, rather than classifying the macroinvertebrates on site, we took the samples to the Cains home and set up a make-shift bug lab in the middle of their kitchen! Everyone took part in identifying the different bugs and it was again an educational and very interesting event. Later in the afternoon, we were joined by Heather Gruenberg and her partner, George. Bobbi Walker also came, as did Bernie Hanchett and Jalene Moore, and the group had a pleasant meal together.

This past week some of us also attended the "Bug Bash" at The Watershed Center in Traverse City. It was a large gathering of about 65 people; pizza and treats were served, a bug movie was playing in the viewing room, and bug samples and identification cards were available for inspection in the library. Two years ago there were only six teams doing testing - which did not make a dent in the 1000 square miles of watershed area - and this year there were 29 teams. But, of course, there are so many tributaries in the watershed that more teams are needed to completely test the region.

I was pleasantly surprised to see the vast majority of those in attendance were children and teenagers. All of them were participants in testing this past year. It was amazing to hear them talk about their findings and they were all very excited about bugs! As a bonus, we were given t-shirts for our work this year. The front was printed with a dragonfly motif and all the sponsors were named on the back. Even

though NMM did not fund this project, they listed our team as "Sherry McNamara and Mensa Friends," and that was on all the shirts given out this year, so we are receiving some recognition from this project.



**Top: Jim (with bucket) and Kurt collect samples and Bottom: Sherry and Kurt identify bug samples while Nancy looks on.**





At the Pot luck: Top (LtoR) – Bobbi, Nancy, Kurt, Sherry and Jim. Bottom: (LtoR) Jalene, Bernie, George, Heather and Dorothy. Photos by Stan and Dorothy Cain.

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## Fall Photo Roundup

Photos by Jack Schultz and Stan Cain

Time to catch up with all those photos that looked good, but somehow never made it into Borealis this year.

Photos from top: The October book club meets to discuss *Deer Season* by Aaron Stander; Richard Hopfner and Margaret Scott discuss Mensa organization with RVC Betsy Mark; and Boat parking at the Cherry Festival (well attended despite new boat anchoring regulations.)



# reMark

**By Betsy Yvonne Mark, RVC3**

Pittsburgh's Regional Gathering and Cleveland's RG were just wonderful events. The programming, hospitality and camaraderie were just the very best. I took time out from Cleveland's RG to attend East Central Ohio Mensa's regularly scheduled Final Friday dinner/speaker meeting. Another great time! I encourage you to join your fellow Ms at your own local events and at events throughout the region. I am so impressed with the quality of speakers! The attendees are incomparable.

The next RG in Region 3 will be CAMping in December in Cincinnati, December 3-6, presented by Cincinnati Area Mensa. It's going to be at the DoubleTree and NOT outside! There is plenty of time to register in advance and walk-ins are always welcome. Check out the website: [http://www.cincinnati.us.mensa.org/gatherings/2010\\_rg/rg\\_2010.html](http://www.cincinnati.us.mensa.org/gatherings/2010_rg/rg_2010.html)

The deadline for the "Leaders of Tomorrow" Leadership Exchange program has been moved up to November 11. Please let me know if you are interested in participating so that I can forward your name to the Leadership Development Committee.

Although the opportunity to run for National office with Nominating Committee endorsement has passed, if you wish to run for Chair, 1st Vice Chair, 2nd Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer or Region 3 Vice Chair, the petition process has begun. The Election Committee has finalized the 2011 Code of Election Procedures. The Code will be provided separately to all current nominees and to petition candidates upon their approval. It is available on the American Mensa Web site at [www.us.mensa.org/election](http://www.us.mensa.org/election) and will also be published in the January Mensa Bulletin.

In accordance with Art. VI, Sec. (4) of the Bylaws of American Mensa, Ltd., nominations for candidacy for office in American Mensa may be made by petition. Each petition must contain the signatures of 50 members of American Mensa in good standing as of December 1, 2010. Petitions must be submitted on official petition forms. Each petition

candidate must also submit a completed Acceptance of Nomination form and a completed Candidate Information Form.

Petition forms, Candidate Information Forms and Acceptance of Nomination forms may be downloaded from the American Mensa Web site or may be obtained by contacting the National Office at [Operations@americanmensa.org](mailto:Operations@americanmensa.org). You also can start an online, members-only petition via the Web site. All petition candidates should review the 2011 Code of Election Procedures before beginning the petition process. Members wishing to sign available online petitions may do so via the same link.

Candidate petition forms must be received by 11:59 p.m. central time on February 1, 2011. Send completed forms and petitions to [Operations@americanmensa.org](mailto:Operations@americanmensa.org), fax to 817/649-5232, or mail to Elections, American Mensa, Ltd., 1229 Corporate Drive West, Arlington, Texas 76006-6103.

All forms, links and information are available online at <http://www.us.mensa.org/election>. Any questions regarding the election or the election process should be addressed to Election Chair Maggie Truelove at [ElectionChair@us.mensa.org](mailto:ElectionChair@us.mensa.org).

May your Thanksgiving be filled with all good things. I send you my very best.

LLAP and Peace,  
Betsy

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