

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.

Advertising:

Borealis accepts only short, "classified"-type advertisements from individual members.

Notices should be of a non-commercial nature and include contact information.

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.

Email submissions to:

Stan Cain
nmmborealis@yahoo.com

Northern Michigan Mensa Executive Committee

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

ON THE COVER: At a depth of 1200 feet under Detroit, a worker drills into a salt bed prior to placing an explosive charge. See story on page 3.

April Calendar

BOOK CLUB - Saturday, 2 April 2010 at 11:00 a.m.

We will meet at the Cottage Café, 420 Munson Avenue, Traverse City. The book for discussion will be **Matterhorn: A Novel of the Vietnam War** by Karl Marlantes. The presenter will be Richard Hopfner. All are welcome to join us even if you have not read the book. A description of the book appears on page 6.

BRUNCH - Saturday, 9 April 2011 at 11:00 a.m.

The March Brunch will be held at the Cottage Café, 420 Munson, Traverse City. There will be a speaker who will be announced via email and on the web site prior to the event.

CULTURE QUEST - Sunday, 10 April 2011 at 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Our one team will meet at the house of Stan Cain. Team members should plan to arrive at least **15 minutes early** since the event starts promptly at 4:00. Call 231-938 1506 for directions. Afterward, at about 6:00 p.m., the team and any other interested members will meet at Ruby Tuesday, 1764 U.S. 31 North in Traverse City, to hash over the results and relax.

T.G.I.F. - Friday, 29 April 2011 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!

Member News

Happy April Birthday

10 John G Swartout 22 Randall R Arnott
11 T Kachadurian 23 P F Curtiss

Mensa Membership Milestones

(Years of continuous membership)

46 Years Norma Hastings Feeley 9 Years Marc Batway
27 Years Cheri Marie Gabriel 7 Years Carol J Crawford

21 Years Thomas MacNeill Barnhart 5 Years Kymberli A Wregglesworth
12 Years John D Schultz 3 Years M V LaSusa
J P Suchoski

10 Years M Barton 2 Years Thomas C Remsperger
1 Year T Kachadurian
Alan T Kohler
Greg D Toprak

February 2010 Statistics

| | AML | NMM |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-----|
| Total membership | 56227 | 101 |
| New and reinstating membership | 713 | 0 |
| Offers of membership | 180 | 0 |
| New members since April 2010 | 2296 | 5 |
| Reinstating members since April 2010 | 3689 | 8 |

Membership directory information is based on data from American Mensa records as of 2/28/2011. 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 BUDDY SYSTEM

By Bobbi Walker, Program Coordinator

WHAT IT IS:

A contact point for members who want some company to attend an event or take a trip.

HOW IT WORKS:

You email me at bobbiraw@att.net with the information on what you want to do and I will put it on the net for responses. For instance... I would like to take a day trip to Beaver Island sometime this summer; anyone interested in joining me can contact me. You can be more specific about date, time, etc... Of course, it is understood that this is a share expenses venture.

A Day in the Salt Mines

By Stan Cain

About 400 million years ago, most of Michigan's Lower Peninsula was a large basin with, at one time, warm salt-water oceans pouring into the area to create a vast salt lake. Later, the lake evaporated leaving behind huge salt deposits. Over time, glacial deposits covered the salt layers until today they lie 1200 feet below ground.

Salt mining in Detroit began in 1896 with the sinking of a 1,100-foot shaft, but the investors went broke. The Detroit Salt Co. acquired the mineral rights and operated the shaft until 1907 when International Salt took over and drilled down to 1,200 feet. During the early days of Detroit Salt, the product was used mainly for homemade ice cream and cattle licks. Later, the usage changed to industrial purposes and for ice and snow control for Michigan roads. In 1983, the International Salt Mine Company, which was operating the mine at that time, halted production due to falling salt prices. Currently, The Kissner Group, a leading manufacturer of blended de-icing products, has acquired the Detroit Salt Company and resumed mining operations.

In the early 1980s, the Engineering Society of Detroit offered a tour of the salt mines under the city of Detroit. Being a native Detroit, I had always heard of the mines, so I jumped at the chance to take a tour.

The Detroit mine uses the room-and-pillar method of removing salt from the ground. In room-and-pillar mining, salt chunks are broken up and crushed after detonation engineers have blasted a section. This creates huge rooms separated by pillars of salt. This method requires that about half of the salt be left behind as pillars for roof support.

The entrance to the mine was (and is) located on Detroit's near west side. For the tour, we don protective coats and hard hats. Access to the mine is through a six by six foot elevator shaft. It's a long ride down the shaft and we ask, "What happens if the elevator breaks down or power fails?" The answer is that it is possible to take a long walk out of the mine using the sloping conveyer belt, which moves crushed salt to the surface. Fortunately, we did not have to try this out.

At the bottom of the shaft, we board a large trailer towed by a diesel-powered tractor for our tour. We wonder how all this large mining equipment got down that small shaft. The guide says that all the

equipment was disassembled and brought down in pieces and then reassembled below. He said the most troublesome item was getting the big seven-foot diameter tires down the elevator shaft. After much discussion about how to do this, the tires were tied across a diameter and squeezed to allow them to go vertically down the shaft.

The mine covers an area of about 1,400 acres with 50 miles of roads. It has been estimated that there is enough salt in this deposit to last 70 million years. The entire salt bed spreads out over 170,000 square miles under Michigan, Ontario, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and West Virginia!

Some of the cavernous rooms are dimly lit by electric bulbs and the headlights of the tractor. Others, off to the side, are very dark. We note that the walls of the rooms are, strangely, not white but black! Our guide comments that when the salt is freshly exposed, it is pure white, but soon turns black due to the diesel exhaust fumes. (I now wonder if I am still carrying a thin layer of soot in my lungs from the tour.) Hopefully by now, they have replaced the diesels with electric motors.

We drive through what seems like miles of identical looking roads and rooms. I can't remember if there were any "road" signs but it would be easy to get lost in there if you don't know where you are going. The tour covers an area where freshly blasted salt chunks are being broken up and loaded into trucks carrying 40-ton loads to the crusher and conveyer. The air is very dry and somewhat warm.

I thought this was a fascinating tour, but was just a little happier when the elevator made a successful ascent to the surface and we were once more back in the sunlight.

The Salt Mine People Mover



SEMMantics 2011 Speakers

By Jean Becker

The speaker lineup for SEMMantics 2011 has something for everyone. We are featuring some local members as well as a celebrity and someone who may very well become one. We promise that you will want to hear what they have to say.

In no particular order, we are featuring Charlie Langton, the legal correspondent for Channel 2 in Detroit, speaking on Law and the Media. He has covered the Kwame Kilpatrick trials and the Tamara Greene case. He will be giving us a wide-ranging discussion on legal topics, which may include the Wikileaks controversy and other late-breaking legal news. He is always a spirited and entertaining speaker and has agreed to take questions as well.

Another exciting speaker is Dwayne Hendricks. Many of you may not know him but he is a local Mensa member, originally from Detroit, who has spent the better part of the last thirty years being a self-described "serial entrepreneur" working out of Silicon Valley and extending his work all over the globe. He has recently returned to our area. In 2002, Wired magazine dubbed him the "broadband cowboy." Dwayne will be covering the history and development of the "Maker" movement, all about harnessing and deploying innovation on both large and small scales. He will bring this home to what is happening now with this movement in helping to bring back the Detroit area.

We are also featuring Michelle Foster, with a panel of colleagues, speaking about "Time Banking." This is a movement to encourage sustainable community development by sharing information and services, all at the local level.

We are also proud to have local member John Blinke, whose regular column in the Bulletin, "Supplementally," earned him a national Mensa service award a few years ago. John will be departing from his usual format of news from all areas of science to concentrate on a single topic, "Ice Planets." John's talks are always both accessible and enlightening.

Long-time local member Jim Draper, in addition to running the Mensa Bowl, will give us an insight on his unusual journey from a career as an engineer for GM to becoming a successful artist, exhibiting in juried shows. Jim will have a few original pieces of his work there, as well as a

multimedia presentation. As he says, "it is just another way of looking at things except now I get to add color."

Nanotechnology is becoming more and more important in today's world. The fast-moving developments in this area will be covered by Frank Dolinar in two presentations. The first will be an introduction to the subject area. The second will cover current applications and perhaps give us a glimpse into the future of the field.

As Mensans, we all enjoy looking at the world from different perspectives. Toronto-area Mensan Brian Katz will give us his rather oblique perspective on American history and culture as seen from the North Country. If you have never heard Brian reflect (lovingly but hilariously) on the similarities and differences between the cultures, you are in for a treat.

We have many other speakers and activities planned, many more than can be highlighted. Don't miss the biggest and best Mensa gathering this year!

Matterhorn: A Novel of the Vietnam War

Bibliomensans' Book for April

By Karl Marlantes 592 pages

Intense, powerful, and compelling, *Matterhorn* is an epic war novel in the tradition of Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead* and James Jones's *The Thin Red Line*. It is the timeless story of a young Marine lieutenant, Waino Mellas, and his comrades in Bravo Company, who are dropped into the mountain jungle of Vietnam as boys and forced to fight their way into manhood. Standing in their way are not merely the North Vietnamese but also monsoon rain and mud, leeches and tigers, disease and malnutrition. Almost as daunting, it turns out, are the obstacles they discover between each other. But when the company finds itself surrounded and outnumbered by a massive enemy regiment, the Marines are thrust into the raw and all-consuming terror of combat. The experience will change them forever.

LIFE IN THE 1500'S

Submitted by Margaret Scott

The next time you are washing your hands and complain because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things used to be. Here are some facts about the 1500s:

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May and still smelled pretty good by June. However, they were starting to smell, so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor. Hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying: Don't throw the baby out with the bath water.

Houses had thatched roofs- thick straw, piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained, it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence the saying: It's raining cats and dogs.

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying: Dirt poor. The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on the floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they added more thresh until, when you opened the door, it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entranceway to hold the thresh inside. Hence the saying: A thresh hold.

And that's the truth...Now, who said History was boring !!!

Editor's Note:

Due to space limitations this month, please read Betsy's column, **reMark**, online at the Region 3 web site - <http://www.region3.us.mensa.org/> Yahoo gp. - <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AMR3/> Facebook gp. - <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=71515809887>

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.

NWY MKX TKFQ TWHQ SHZQXLC ZX

GRW TWXGBC ON OQMWTZXJ TWHQ

ZXGQHQCGL ZX WGBQH DQWDVQ GBKX

NWY MKX ZX GRW NQKHC ON GHNZXJ

GW JQG DQWDVQ ZXGQHQCGL ZX

NWY . -- LKVQ MKHXQJZQ

The answer will be in next month's issue.

Answer to last month's Cryptogram:

To be a real philosopher all that is necessary is to hate some one else's type of thinking.—William James
