

Borealis

The Monthly Journal of Northern Michigan Mensa



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 Borealis
Northern Michigan Mensa

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Northern Michigan Mensa

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ON THE COVER: "Quillwork" by John Porter. This is not a photo, it is a "scanograph" made with a scanner. It was juried into the "30th Annual Photography Exhibition" at the Crooked Tree Art Center in Petoskey this past spring.

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
nmmmborealis@yahoo.com

June Calendar

BOOK CLUB - Saturday, 4 June 2010 at 11:00 a.m.

We will meet at the Cottage Café, 420 Munson Avenue, Traverse City. The book for discussion will be ***The Genius in All of Us: Why Everything You've Been Told About Genetics, Talent, and IQ Is Wrong*** by David Shenk. The presenter will be Jack Schultz. All are welcome to join us even if you have not read the book. A description of the book appears on page 10. This should be a particularly interesting discussion for Mensans.

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

The March Brunch will be held at the Cottage Café, 420 Munson, Traverse City. Our speaker will be **Fleda Brown**, who will give us some helpful hints on getting started on poetry. There will also be a session of general conversation.

T.G.I.F. - Friday, 24 June 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 June Birthday

04	B G Halliday III	23	Sherry L Saites
23	William Earl Hagan	29	Bernard Hanchett

Mensa Membership Milestones

(Years of continuous membership)

25 Years	J Haberstroh
9 Years	Corinne Kass-Hillard Mowrey
8 Years	Stan Cain
6 Years	Judith W Lindenau

April 2011 Statistics

	<u>AML</u>	<u>NMM</u>
Total membership	47674	81
New and reinstating membership	547	0
Offers of membership	394	0
New members since April 2011	219	0
Reinstating members since April 2011	328	2
Members Leaving		1
Lapsed		20

Membership directory information is based on data from American Mensa records as of 4/30/2011. 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".

Recent Brunches

Our brunches have become much more than friendly chitchat sessions lately. A series of interesting speakers has enlivened the discussions and given us much food for thought. Many thanks to our Program Chair, Bobbi Walker, for organizing the brunches and warm thanks to our recent guest speakers, Nan Worthington and Nancie Thole.



The March Brunch featured Nan Worthington (third from left) a WICCA practitioner who spoke to us about Earth based religions. Photos by Stan Cain



At our May brunch, Nancie Thole (second from left) recounted her many travels and experiences in Southeast Asia including many off the beaten track locals such as Bhutan and northeast India.

Something Old

With the recent Royal Wedding in England, perhaps its time to rerun this article that was originally printed in Borealis in April 2006.

The Queen and I By Ruth Minshull

Although I'm a WASP, I have never felt privileged or influential--and I have certainly never felt British. If I have any family pride at all, it's in the fact that my ancestors were among the earliest settlers in this country, rather than in the fact that they came from the UK.

While I disclaim any other Anglophilic leanings, I will admit that I have always been mildly interested in the queen.

This is because we are the same age. That is, we were born the same year--she a few months ahead of me. (I think it shows a little around her eyes, too).

I never heard of Elizabeth until I/we were ten years old. That's when her uncle Edward shucked it all and ran off to play house with Wally, leaving his brother George to mind the throne. This put Princess Elizabeth next in line and brought her almost constant media attention as she grew up. I saw pictures of her at the races, riding horses, attending official functions, reviewing the troops. Every time I heard or read about her, I was fascinated by the fact that we were the same age (twins-across-the-sea) yet our lives were so different. Now and then I wondered what it would be like to change places. At first, the idea of being a princess seemed quite glamorous, but gradually I realized how little freedom she had.

In 1952, at the age of 26, her papa died and she had to quit playing around and settle down to the serious job of being the queen. *Now you've totally lost your freedom, Liz, I thought. Will there ever again be any joy in your life?*

She did get married and have children, but after a brief time-out she always had to go right back to that hard throne, the rubber chicken circuit, the meaningless ceremonies and, of course, those interminable troops that always seem to need reviewing.

For the rest of her life, her every moment seems to be planned for her. All schedules, all meetings, all menus must be cleared in advance with the proper authorities. There's no room for spontaneity in her life. She even has weights sewn into the hems of her dresses so they won't blow up and reveal too much of the royal legs. As an added precaution, no one is allowed to photograph her when she's eating. (Thus, you never see a shot of her with a blob of lettuce stuck in her teeth.)

And people who meet her are expected to curtsy. She must end each day, her mind numbed by this throng of pates: healthy, bald, comb-overs, black-rooted blonds and white-rooted browns. Perhaps even the occasional errant wig, dislodged by all that bowing.

And there can't be much privacy. When she's not out nodding to the mobs she still has all those ladies-in-waiting – waiting around. And those footmen doing whatever footmen do.

Despite her enormous riches, she's missed out on some of life's most delectable experiences. I'm sure she can't eat a piece of fried chicken with her fingers--let alone a sticky sparerib, a hot dog, or a stringy slice of pizza.

Has she ever had the messy delight of licking a dripping ice cream cone? Surely not--it's much too unqueenly.

Instead, she must shake millions of hands, endure the palaver of toadying subjects, listen to countless boring speeches. She's never known the thrill of finding a hot bargain at a garage sale for two shillings. I doubt if she ever hears a raunchy joke or sits on the floor and sings with a gang of friends.

And, if she looks as if she has a chronic headache, think of what the regal head must support. If it isn't a weighty tiara or a jewel-encrusted crown, it's one of those hideous matching hats.

In the end, after all the pomp and stuff, what does she get out of being queen? She is never allowed to make any significant decision. She's merely a figurehead. As a child, did she really want to be an artist? A hairdresser? A belly dancer? Unthinkable! Her job is to make nice to everybody, while the Prime Minister and the parliament actually run the country.

Since I have an extremely low tolerance for small talk (not to mention God-awful headgear) and I can't even imagine having to review those tiresome troops (Why *do* they need so much reviewing anyway?) I'm thankful that she's over there handling her job – while I get to be me.

Something New

SEMMantics XXXII Review

By Stan Cain

The Southeast Michigan Mensa Regional Gathering was held the last weekend in April and was well attended. (See also Betsy Mark's write-up below.) Since I tend to be a technically oriented guy, I gravitated toward two presentations that were especially interesting to me.

The first was "Ice Planets", presented by John Blinke (whose regular column "Supplementally" appears in the Mensa Bulletin.) This talk described the planets and other bodies in the solar system on which water is found, usually in the form of ice. In some cases such as Mars, there was enough gravity to support an atmosphere at one time, which allowed the temperature on the surface to be warm enough for the presence of liquid water in large enough quantities to cause surface erosion. Other bodies, such as asteroids and comets also have water that has been recently detected.

The second presentation "Indistinguishable from Magic" ("**Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.**" -- **Arthur C. Clarke**) was by Frank Dolinar, president of nanoSteps in East Lansing, MI. After an introductory session, Frank went on to describe the more recent advances in the field of nanotechnology – the creation and use of very small particles to produce applications and effects that can be "Indistinguishable from Magic" to one not familiar with the science behind them. For example, clothing that can shed water and soil and invisible sun screens for skin that reflect harmful solar radiation. There are also nano capacitors, which have the capability to replace batteries and nano scale machines that can remove plaque buildup from arterial walls. Many of these applications are in the research or testing stage but some such as clear coat scratch resistant paint since have been used on all Mercedes automobiles since 2006. In addition, you can be sure that the military is not standing still, what with the possibility of rendering objects invisible by conducting light around them.

In addition, there were other RG attractions like food and games, providing a chance to interact with other Mensans – a good RG.

Some Things Borrowed

Spring Song By Nancy Berk

[Reprinted from "PlainsPeaking", newsletter of Plains and Peaks Mensa, May 1997; Don Erickson, Editor]

The colors of the sunrise sing across the dour mountains
My heart takes up the melody to greet the dawning day.
Joy wells up within me like a laughing, bubbling fountain
That spills a wealth of diamonds in widely scattered spray.

The goddesses of springtime give promise to the Earth
With soft and greening traceries of newly-budded trees.
Warm breezes coax the blossoms into sweetly scented birth
To nod, and dance, and curtsy while flirting with the bees.

This is no time for loneliness, no time for feeling sad;
There's only time for happiness – to be alive, to sing!
The birds, the buds, and all of us have gone a little mad.
Can't you feel it in the air? Don't you know it's Spring?

Growing Old Is Cool By Phil Kline

[Reprinted from "Head Line", newsletter of Mid-Michigan Mensa, November 1997; John H. Garrison, Editor]

Just by using the word "Cool", I'm admitting that I am old. I'm old enough that only old women smile at me anymore. (Except for one.) But I don't really mind being old that much because there are some real benefits.

When I was young I was constantly buying stuff that I didn't have. Now I don't even have to think about being rich someday because if I had the money to buy anything I wanted I wouldn't know what to buy. I already have everything I want. I never buy clothes anymore. Anyone want a few real fancy ties?

One of the finest benefits is that I don't have to move. I used to hate moving from one house to another. I not only hated moving every

couple of years but I hated it when friends were moving and would call me to help them. I've been in this house for twenty years now and people don't ask me to help them move anymore because they are afraid I will get hurt and sue them.

I am glad I am not young and so up tight about making sure I dress like every other young person. I would rather stay in my basement than go out wearing a baseball cap backwards or wear an extra-extra large jacket and long baggy shorts that are about to fall down and look stupid. (When they're barely up, not when they're down.) I don't want to be so immature that I would have to learn to talk dirtier to prove that I am grown up. Not only do I not want to be one of them, but I'm glad I don't have any of them hanging around the house for the next eighteen years.

I can be crotchety as hell. In fact, the word "Crotchety" was invented for old people. Young people who act like I do are called negative or ill-mannered. I can make all sorts of inane remarks at a party and people accept it as part of my aging process. I always tell them I am about twenty years older than I really am, and they compliment me on how young I look.

One of the most important benefits of being old is that I can be what I want to be and do what I want to do. I am beyond trying to be a normal member of society, doing what I am supposed to do and acting the way I am supposed to act.

Today I gave my nine year old granddaughter a Chinese papercut in a frame. I then gave her a piece of magic paper and asked her to write on it what she would like to be when she grew up. She wrote, "I want to go to college to become a doctor." I asked if she really meant it and she said, "Yes." I put the magic paper in the frame behind the paper-cut and told her that if she always remembered it was there, that it would someday come true. She did what I asked her to do.

That is another nice thing about being old. My granddaughter thinks I am wise. ----- And I am.

..But Nothing Blue !

(After all, this is a family publication)

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.

U JMSUF UF; U' S J

BTRAZBAXMDUJZ. WIF U SJXJLC FA

ZAXFDAG UF OUFB J RGJZCWA. -

MCXXUN SUGGCD

The answer will be in next month's issue.

Answer to last month's Cryptogram:

Just last week some guy pulled a knife on me. I could see it wasn't a real professional job. There was butter on it. --Rodney Dangerfield

The Genius in All of Us: Why Everything You've Been Told About Genetics, Talent, and IQ Is Wrong

Bibliomans' Book for June

By David Shenk, 320 pages

With irresistibly persuasive vigor, David Shenk debunks the long-standing notion of genetic "giftedness," and presents dazzling new scientific research showing how greatness is in the reach of every individual.

DNA does not make us who we are. "Forget everything you think you know about genes, talent, and intelligence," he writes. "In recent years, a mountain of scientific evidence has emerged suggesting a completely new paradigm: not talent scarcity, but latent talent abundance."

Integrating cutting-edge research from a wide swath of disciplines—cognitive science, genetics, biology, child development—Shenk offers a highly optimistic new view of human potential. The problem isn't our inadequate genetic assets, but our inability, so far, to tap into what we already have. IQ testing and widespread acceptance of "innate" abilities have created an unnecessarily pessimistic view of humanity—and fostered much misdirected public policy, especially in education.

The truth is much more exciting. Genes are not a "blueprint" that bless some with greatness and doom most of us to mediocrity or worse. Rather our individual destinies are a product of the complex interplay between genes and outside stimuli—a dynamic that we, as people and as parents, can influence.

This is a revolutionary and optimistic message. We are not prisoners of our DNA. We all have the potential for greatness.

reMark

By Betsy Yvonne Mark, RVC3

This is going to be short and sweet. I have been very busy since returning home from Florida with my duties as Registrar for SEMMantics XXXII, the Seminal Event of 2011, Southeast Michigan Mensa's Regional Gathering. A fabulous event it was. There were attendees from the entire region, as well as from California, Florida, Illinois and our neighbors to the south, Canada. I heard wonderful things about Dayton's Regional Gathering and was truly sorry to have missed it for the first time in years. If you have never attended a regional gathering, please do so soon and attend one in our region. I've attended gatherings across the nation and Region 3's are the very best! See the list below.

Register Now! The price is going from \$100 to \$110 after June 15 for the Annual Gathering in Portland, Oregon: A Great Journey West, June 30-July 4. Tour announcements and other information may be found at: <http://www.ag2011.us.mensa.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Sitemap1&Template=/CM/SiteMap.cfm>. The registration form can be found at: http://www.ag2011.us.mensa.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Register_Online7&Template=/customsource/cfauthnet_sim/forms/ag11/ag_1.cfm

I will be there and hope to see you at the Region 3 Meet and Greet.

Register now for the following Region 3 events:

*July 29, 2011 - July 31, 2011 - Columbus Regional Gathering; The Write Stuff in Columbus, Ohio. Enjoy the pool, games, speakers and family track. Guests: NYT best selling authors William H. Keith and Kenneth Sewell. All meals included with registration; complimentary hot breakfast with room reservation. Ramada East Airport Hotel, 4801 E. Broad St., Columbus, OH 43213; 614/861-0321. Contact Julia at psibernaut@yahoo.com

*September 2, 2011 - September 5, 2011 - Western PA Regional Gathering; The Birds and the Bees in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Programs, Tournaments, Games, Food, Friends and Fun - pool and hot tub. Two catered meals included in registration. Radisson Hotel, Pittsburgh (Greentree), 412 922 8400 or 800 333 3333 ask for Western PA

Mensa rate. Contact: Marty Flowers, auntkitti@aol.com WPAM website <http://wpam.us.mensa.org>

*December 2, 2011 - December 4, 2011 - Cincinnati Regional Gathering; Just for Your CAMusement! in Cincinnati, Ohio

I am looking forward to seeing you soon.

LLAP and Peace,
Betsy

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Facebook gp. - <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=71515809887>

Membership Renewal

By Stan Cain

Hey, lapsed members. Yes you, you know who you are. You who have not renewed your Mensa membership. There were twenty of you who had not renewed your membership by April first. Sure, there are some who were a few days late or had just forgotten completely but intend to send in that renewal real soon. Normally, membership slowly rebounds throughout the year by late renewals and the addition of new members.

And then there are those who don't intend to renew for one reason or another. If it is because you found nothing that interests you here, let us know how we could improve our activities to retain members like yourself. I suspect there are those who have never even tried attending any activities and maybe we can't do much about that. And, if there is a financial problem, remember our Friend Fund, which may be able to help. In any case, we hope you will reconsider and rejoin us.
