



# Borealis

The Monthly Journal of Northern Michigan Mensa

## Northern Michigan Mensa

Borealis is published by Northern Michigan Mensa (3/496) once each month under the auspices of its Executive Committee.

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

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## Calendar

### JANUARY

#### Brunch – Saturday, 14 January 2017 at 10:30 a.m.

Since our December meeting was so well attended, the January brunch will again be held at Denny's, 880 Munson Avenue, in Traverse City. We have reserved a big table to the right of the entrance. See you there!



## The continuing saga of the New Mensa Database...

As I wrote last month, there are ongoing problems with our method of using the National Office website to send out the electronic version of our newsletter.

The mailed version will still be sent out using labels supplied by the N.O. and our website, [www.nmm.us.mensa.org](http://www.nmm.us.mensa.org) containing Borealis and Events, etc. is still working.

Last month, the emailed version was sent out by me using an incomplete email list and some of you may have not received your copy. This month, the list has been updated and hopefully all who have opted for electronic delivery will receive the emailed version. I am also sending out last month's issue again so everyone should receive both issues.

In addition, the N.O. has revised its criteria for supplying mailing labels to editors. **The rule now is that anyone who has an email address on file with the N.O. and has not explicitly requested a printed copy, will receive an emailed version.** So, if you have been getting a printed copy and don't get it this month, log on to the national website and change your newsletter option to print.

Stan Cain  
Editor, Borealis

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## Personalities and French Rap

By John Porter\*

Traveling from Port Townsend into the Olympic Peninsula's rain forest is more of a cultural experience than you might expect. This historic, artsy town is known for a uniqueness that attracts tourists, escapees from Seattle's congestion, and those who love boats and boating. Its proximity to rain forest environments is certainly one of the highlights of any tourist's visit but other surprises will prove to bring the traveler back for other visits.

On my most recent trip to Port Townsend I had tea with Bill Porter whose mother came from Calumet in Michigan's Copper Country. Having a Yooper for a mother is not exactly a claim to fame. However, my having lived in Marquette for thirteen years struck a cord with him. Bill's "claim to fame" is the body of translations and writings that he has created. He is a widely read Buddhist scholar. Most people outside Port Townsend know him by his pseudonym "Red Pine". He was leaving his Port Townsend home for his familiar China in two days. I'm not sure if that is the primary reason he invited me to his home the day after I wrote or if it was because we shared the same last name. He mentioned both as relevant facts.

Only a few days later I attended a book presentation and signing which was the featured event of an annual library celebration. Speaking before an audience of 500 was a local hero who resides part-time in Port Townsend, Daniel James Brown. His fame is the result of writing a book about a local hero of the past, Joe Rantz, and his teammates, members of the most highly acclaimed University of Washington rowing team from back in the day when rowing was the premier sport of private college preparatory schools and of universities. Not only Brown's writing but his understanding and popularizing of the cultural underpinnings of Joe's and his team's success are now, as a result of his book, the talk of northwest Washington. When the movie appears, the entire country will be aware of the back woods boys who stunned the elites of California and the east coast with their victory over Hitler's favored rowers in the 1936 Olympics. An hour-long PBS special about the team aired earlier this year but aficionados are waiting for a movie about the Olympics to match 1981's "Chariots of Fire". Brown was asked to write the story by Joe's daughter, not too long before Joe's memories were lost to antiquity by his death, except those captured in Brown's notable book. \*\*

These personalities and others, famous and not so famous, found in this area provide human interest stories within the context of an unusual natural environment. Those familiar with the north woods of the upper Midwest would find the features of the nearby rain forest as intriguing as are the stories of famous local personalities.

Every Boy Scout raised in the Midwest has been told that moss grows mostly on the northern-facing sides of trees. And that it is important to remember

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\* John Porter is an NMM member who lives in Presque Isle, Michigan.

[\*\* *Boys In The Boat: Nine Americans And Their Epic Quest For Gold At The 1936 Berlin Olympics*, by Daniel James Brown]

this if one's compass is lying on the table at home. More often than not, in a rain forest entire surfaces of tree limbs and trunks are covered with heavy, thick moss. More moss than a Midwesterner could imagine. Nature magazines can't do the proliferation of moss justice because they cannot convey the aroma of pungent, damp moss. The forests are thick and the skies often overcast so you cannot always see the sun to fix your direction. You definitely need to stay on the many trails in the Olympic National Park and not leave that compass at home.

To be continued next month.

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## BIBLIOMENSANS READING LIST 2017

Following are the books that will be discussed at Bibliomensans book club meetings on the following dates:

### FEBRUARY 4 - **Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes**

Author: Robert Louis Stevenson  
Presenter: Sherry McNamara

### APRIL 1 - **The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde**

Author: Robert Louis Stevenson  
Presenter: Jack Schultz

### JUNE 3 - **Kidnapped**

Author: Robert Louis Stevenson  
Presenter: Stan Cain

### AUGUST 5 - **Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain**

Author: Maria Rosa Menocal  
Presenter: Heather Gruenberg-Seger

### OCTOBER 7 - **Go Set a Watchman**

Author: Harper Lee  
Presenter: Greg Baker

### DECEMBER 2 - **Wicked Takes the Witness Stand: A Tale of Murder and Twisted Deceit in Northern Michigan**

Author: Mardi Link  
Presenter: Jim McDermott

## Northern Michigan Mensa Executive Committee Meeting of December 10, 2016

**I. Call to Order** 10:49 a.m.

**II. Roll Call** Voting Members: Sue Styles, Bobbi Walker, Carole Eberly-Quorum present

Non-voting Members: Stan Cain, Bernie Hanchett

**III. Minutes of the Previous Meeting-** none

**IV. Treasurers Report-** \$3599.49 balance, income coming in as planned, still money left in newsletter and programs budgets

**V. New Business**

#### **Vacant positions**

**Voting member of ExComm** - Brett Pharo resigned - unable to attend ExComm meetings. Stan Cain agreed to be nominated as member-at-large. Approved unanimously.

**Ombudsman** - Pete Turkus resigned - other commitments. ExComm chose not to fill position for the time being, because use of this position has been very rare; also, the right person depends on the people involved in the situation. ExComm will appoint someone as necessary for a particular situation.

**Due to low participation/interest in positions, Bobbi will look at the bylaws to see what positions might be able to be combined. There are several positions available if anyone is interested.**

**Scholarships** - We will have a scholarship program for 2017; Jack Schultz will coordinate.

#### **Speakers for brunches**

**Stan** has some speaker ideas

**Bobbi** asked about whether we can pay for a room to have a more private / suitable atmosphere for a speaker. Proposal was a cost of \$50 or less. Members agreed this was within her authority as Program chair. Those present were also ready for different food choices than what the Mi Grille has available.

Possible options:

Cottage Inn (now called **Mi Grille @ Days Inn**, or "**The Cottage**" just down the street, owned by former owners of the Cottage Inn?) seats 20+ people in their private room but wants a guarantee of \$90 in food sales or we would make up the difference. We should be able to meet that if we have a speaker, if not the difference would be small.

◦ **Bob Evans?**

◦ **Park Place/Minerva's** - room is not private; they have put other groups in there with us and they aren't always compatible with our activities.

◦ **Omelette Shoppe** - used to use, not private and sometimes noisy

◦ Bobbi will keep checking around, suggestions welcome.

**VI Old Business-** none

**VII Adjourn-** 11:07 a.m.

**Financial Statements**  
**Northern Michigan Mensa**  
**January 1, 2016 through December 10, 2016**

<b>Fund</b>	<b>1/1/2016</b>	<b>12/10/2016</b>	<b>Change</b>
Friend Fund	\$ 10.00	\$ 510.00	\$ 500.00
General Operations	\$ 3,729.86	\$ 2,985.78	\$ (744.08)
Add: Outstanding Checks	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Subtract: Outstanding Deposits	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Checking</b>	<b>\$ 3,739.86</b>	<b>\$ 3,495.78</b>	<b>\$ (244.08)</b>
Savings	\$ 103.67	\$ 103.67	\$ -
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,843.53</b>	<b>\$ 3,599.45</b>	<b>\$ (244.08)</b>

<b>Income</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Year To Date</b>	<b>Remaining</b>
National Office Allocation	\$ 850.00	\$ 737.26	\$ 112.74
Testing Fees	\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ 50.00
Interest Income	\$ 2.00	\$ 1.69	\$ 0.31
Fund Raising	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 902.00</b>	<b>\$ 738.95</b>	<b>\$ 163.05</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Newsletter	\$ 450.00	\$ 229.09	\$ 220.91
Office / Incidentals	\$ 25.00	\$ -	\$ 25.00
Activities / Programs	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 153.94	\$ 846.06
Publicity	\$ 25.00	\$ -	\$ 25.00
Scholarships	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00	\$ -
Proctor / Testing	\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ 50.00
Stipend for Reg/Ntl Events	\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ 50.00
Membership	\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ 100.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 2,300.00</b>	<b>\$ 983.03</b>	<b>\$ 1,316.97</b>
<b>Total Income Less Expenses</b>	<b>\$ (1,398.00)</b>	<b>\$ (244.08)</b>	

Submitted by Sue Styles  
Treasurer, Northern Michigan Mensa

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**ON THE COVER:** . "More often than not, in a rain forest entire surfaces of tree limbs and trunks are covered with heavy, thick moss. More moss than a Midwesterner could imagine." Photo by John Porter.

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