



# Borealis

*The Monthly Journal of Northern Michigan Mensa*

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**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. Bad jokes are allowed. Northern Michigan Mensa recognizes that the newsletter is addressed to both minors and adults; material printed will be appropriate for distribution to minors.

All matters submitted to the editor shall be subject to editing for content, style, and space limitations, except that if a person submits material with a restriction that it be published "as is or not at all." That a person has written and submitted something to the newsletter is not, in itself, sufficient reason for its publication.

**Submissions** are not only welcome, the editor will buy you a coffee at the next TGIF if you help him out.

Members of Northern Michigan Mensa may send their original writing submissions to *Borealis*.

*Please do not send the work of others unless such submissions are accompanied by written permission and release of copyright from the author.*

### **Writing:**

1. Submit writing that can be edited for length and clarity, but not content. *This will be the default editorial assumption unless the author indicates otherwise.*

2. Writing may be submitted to be published only as it is. If writing is submitted "as is or not at all" it will not be edited in any way, and if published, will appear with an editor's note indicating it is wholly the work of the author.

3. Writing that is rough and needs major editing may also be submitted. If you have written something but don't have time to polish and edit it, you can still submit it and, at your request, I will give it extra help.

ALL. Writing and letters may be submitted by email as an attachment or as the message body itself. Typed pages and letters can be mailed.

### **Photographs:**

Photographs and other scanned artwork can be submitted via email as JPEG or GIF files. Data should be at least 3x5 inches at 200 PPI. Digital camera files may be sent right from the camera; they will be processed for publication.

Flat art or photographs can also be mailed, but please do not send originals. Please label each piece submitted with your name and address.

Email: [kachadurian@chartermi.net](mailto:kachadurian@chartermi.net)

US mail: *Borealis*

Thomas Kachadurian

P.O. Box 3434

Traverse City, MI 49685

## Northern Michigan Mensa

# February 2004 Calendar

## Monday, February 9

### **Games Night - Borders Books, Traverse City 7:00p.m.**

Borders is located near Wal-Mart at 2612 Crossing Circle (off S. Airport Road) in Traverse City. We will meet the second Monday of each month at the same location. Borders closes at 10:00.

Each games night we will try a different game theme. What would you like to try? Email [tom@kachadurian.com](mailto:tom@kachadurian.com) to throw in your \$0.02. February will be Scrabble or word games night. Tom will bring one board. Bring yours and join the fun.

## Saturday, February 14

### **ExComm Meeting - 10:00a.m.**

### **Brunch - 11:00a.m.**

### **Cottage Cafe, Traverse City**

The Cottage Cafe is at the Days Inn in Traverse City at 420 Munson (US-31 North). It's on the south side of the road between the Northwestern Michigan College entrance and 8th Street. All Members are welcome to the Executive Committee Meeting. We will be meeting in the Papa's Den situated to the right as you enter the front door.

## Friday, February 28

### **TGIF - Horizon Shine Café, Traverse City 6:00p.m.**

The Horizon Shine Café is located in the lower level of Horizon Books on Front Street in downtown Traverse City. There are wrap sandwiches, soft drinks, and desserts on the menu.

## Deal Me In

IN THE SUMMER OF 1970 I played hearts with my 12 year-old contemporaries almost daily. The game moved from house to house, settling wherever there was a mom who would serve us refreshments while we played.

As a freshman at Wayne State University I learned to play euchre from a woman I dated whose friends played between classes. It wasn't much of a relationship, but I kept my seat at the euchre table long after she transferred to another school. In Graduate School I joined a squash league with a group of medical students (we chose squash because there were courts that nobody used). After squash we ate Mexican food and they taught me to play bridge.

At Walsh College, my first real job, I spent every lunch hour solving the day's crossword puzzles with three of my colleagues. We started with the *FreePress* before we ate, solved the *Detroit News* puzzle over our sandwiches, and did our best with the *Sunday Times* puzzle until it was time to get back to work. There were euchre tournaments too. It was at Walsh that one of my friends suggested I join Mensa. It took me more than ten years to follow his advice.

When I moved to Traverse City I found my first friends in co-workers who got together for Trivial Pursuits (the game). Two years ago my father died. As you would expect, I grieve losing him in many ways. But one of the things that very few people understand is how much I miss the best pinochle partner I will ever have. We had no signals, no spoken strategy, but we so understood each other's thinking that we played into each other hands as if we had discussed each card before it hit the table.

I don't think histories like mine are unique, and I'm certain that people who share this sort of history can be found in Mensa. Friendships can be quickly formed at the game table. Cards, board games, and trivia all engage our minds which allow us to meet people and see how they think. While we may not find friends in every Mensan, we will meet people who share our passion for using our minds.

That's why I proposed and organized the monthly games night at Borders Books. Join us on the second of each month at 7:00. Come play. Learn a new game or teach us your favorite. You might make some new friends.



JACK SCHUITZ

Playing hearts at NMM first Monday games night.

## A Mystery in France

*The DaVinci Code*, by Dan Brown

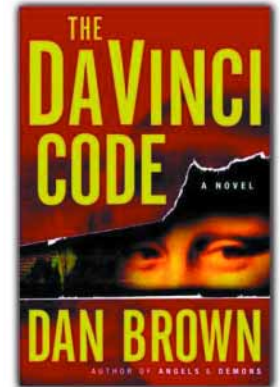
MICHIGAN WINTER IS A TIME FOR READING a good book. What kind of novel do you like to read? Do you like intrigue, fast action, interesting characters, a murder mystery, unusual settings for the story? I like all those features in a book and want it to be a story that grips my attention from the very beginning and keeps those pages turning. This month I read my first novel by Dan Brown, *The DaVinci Code*, which has been on the best seller list for many weeks. I will certainly read another novel by this talented writer.

*The DaVinci Code* kept me interested and on the edge of my seat. This story begins at The Louvre in Paris with the murder of the curator of the museum. Before he dies he leaves a clue at the murder scene. Enter the characters in this story: the French detective; the heroine Sophie, a cryptographer and granddaughter of the murder victim; and the hero, a Harvard professor named Langdon, who is in Paris for a speaking engagement. The hero and heroine immediately begin to try to decipher the clues left by the victim, while the police detective determines that they committed the murder. The adventure continues as the hero and heroine go on the run to escape the police. They also are hunting for further clues to help them find the underlying item they are seeking.

They determine from the code that it is the Holy Grail and set out to find it. Their travel takes them to a bank with a numbered Swiss account, and finally the item that contains the final clue in the search for the Holy Grail. The clue has been protected for centuries from the time of Jesus Christ and reveals a secret that will change the world. They then learn that not only was there one murder that night but three others all connected with the subject of their search and the secret of the Holy Grail. On the run, the hero and heroine escape to the castle of a British knight who befriends them and helps them on their escape and further search for the Holy Grail. The story continues to take them and twists and turns right to the end, while you are trying to figure out each connection a new character brings to the story, and to the surprising ending.

This was a great read. I recommend *The DaVinci Code* to anyone who can't take the time to read this adventure.

from Margaret Scott



## Join the Fun

MY FIRST YEAR IN MENSA has been very interesting. I originally took the test for an ego boost, but the rewards that I have reaped are so much more than just the initial charge of excitement upon receiving the acknowledgement letter. The next step was accomplishing my 2003's New Year's resolution: to become more social. I can now actually tell people that I have completed at least one New Year's resolution. Mensa has so much to offer that I feel that I have only scratched the surface in this first year.

Membership renewal is quickly coming up. In fact, I received my information in the mail today. Renewal can be done online at [www.us.mensa.org](http://www.us.mensa.org) or by mail. The ID's and passwords are listed in the latest Mensa Bulletin on the inside cover. The ExComm has been discussing compiling a public membership roster that will be shared with all members. We will probably be waiting until after renewal to work on the list. Be sure to fill out the Personal Data Questionnaire (also can be updated on-line). While filling out the PDQ, be sure to mark what information is available for public distribution and what information you wish to keep private (birthdates, phone numbers, addresses, etc.) At this point, we are not sure what information will be included, but would like to honor your wishes.

If you still haven't voted on the Proxy issue, please take a second to vote. A yellow postcard is included with your renewal information. You will need your membership number and the ID/passwords to access the site for online voting. We are currently running neck-and-neck with Borderline Mensa (72.2%), and we (65.6%) have recently lost our lead to them. It would be nice to retake the lead. Anyone who hasn't voted yet, please help put us back in the lead. If you vote online, check out what a great turnout we have had compared to other groups. Other Mensans, both regional and national, have noticed what an active group we have.

Three cheers for Stephen Siciliano, Tom Deering, Olivia Gillham, and Jacob Norton for qualifying in round one of the Michigan Math Scholarship. Good luck on the next section.

I hope that every one is excited about the new year. Challenge yourself to make at least one event this year, whether it be a games night, brunch, TGIF, or any event that perks your interest.

*-Melissa J. Rennie*

## Too Many Camels

*From Ben Stout (pbstout@coslink.net)*

No. 9. Two boats started separately at the same time, from opposite sides of a small lake. They traveled constantly but at different speeds. They met and passed without stopping at a point 700 yards from one shore and continued on across the lake. When they reached the other side of the lake, they immediately turned and started back across the lake. They met and passed each other again 300 yards from the opposite shore. How wide was the lake?

No. 10. In Arabia a man died leaving 17 camels to his sons as follows; the eldest was to receive one-half of the camels, the second son was to receive one-third, and the youngest was to receive one-ninth. The sons met and pondered how they were going to make this division of the old man's estate with the animals he had.

A traveler, on a camel was passing by, and they sought his help in figuring out what to do. The traveler thought for a minute or two, then said he thought that he could help them. He got off his camel, turned it in the lot with the 17, then told the sons to to ahead and divide the animals according to the wishes of their father. So they gave the oldest son nine camels, the second son six, and the youngest son two. He then mounted his own camel, which was left in the lot, and continued on his way. How was this possible?

ANSWERS Some of these puzzles are original or modified by me, so the answers in may be subject to correction. Here are my solutions to last month's items:

No. 5: Thursday

No. 6: \$11,312.21

No. 7: 32 miles per hour

No. 8: This is a little complicated; I'll try to make it understandable. Remember that the test must be fair: All contestants must have an equal chance, and that all three of the contestants are intelligent. With these facts in mind, it can be seen that all of them must see the same thing when the blindfolds are removed. So all of the marks must white so that each one sees two white marks. Contestant A reasons as follows: If my mark were red, then both of the others would see a red mark and a white one, and one of them would figure that if his were red also, then the third contestant would hold up his hand immediately, for he would be sure that his was the required white one. Since the man has not held up his hand, then contestant A or B has to reason that his mark cannot be red, so it has to be white. A variation of this puzzle has one of the men thinking this out and before he is even blindfolded, he tells the king that he knows that his mark will be white, because having even one red one would give the solution to the one with the red mark.

## The Land of the Aurora Borealis

By Margaret Scott

IN OCTOBER I TOOK A TRIP TO ALASKA because I had the wonderful opportunity to do so at a reasonable price (\$560 round trip airfare from Traverse City to Anchorage!). It was absolutely vast and beautiful. I stayed in Anchorage, but we rented a van and took side trips in various directions and enjoyed the spectacular scenery. We went to the town of Talkeetna, in the Talkeetna Mountain range and were very fortunate to see Mt. McKinley. The weather was beautiful so we saw the mountain. Many tourists go there and never get to see the mountain if it is cloudy or the weather not clear. Also, Talkeetna is a wonderful little town where there is not much of anything (this town is the basis for the TV series Northern Exposure which was popular for four or five years) except a couple of little restaurants, a store, an old run down hotel building where President McKinley once visited, a museum and some tourist trap gift shops. From Talkeetna you can take a plane ride to Mt. McKinley if you want to see it from the air.

Other interesting items I enjoyed included attending a meeting where the speaker was Libby Riddles, an attractive middle-aged woman, who simply didn't look tough enough to have won the Iditarod sled dog race of more than 1,000 miles across Alaska four times. She is going to try for one more win because one man has won the Iditarod five times. Libby was wonderful as she told of moving from the states as a young woman to live alone in northern Alaska and have an adventure. As a single, beautiful blonde woman she was the subject of lots of attention. And she told us that with the ratio of men to women that "The odds are good" that you could get married if you were interested, but her remaining comment was that on the other hand, "The goods were odd!" with many strange and eccentric people making up that population. I took her picture and purchased her book "Race Across Alaska," which I had her autograph for me.

I also had the opportunity to hear the legal and practical discussions of the possible drilling for oil at ANWAR. After hearing both sides and various legal issues, I came away with a definite thought: "Hurry up and get with drilling in the Anwar-they have perfected the process so that there will not be excessive

damage to the environment, the resources are definitely there, and without such steps we will be under the thumb of OPEC for many years to come. The area would only be some 2,000 acres further along the sea than the North Slope drilling and only a very small part of the millions of acres that comprise Anwar." The current pipeline has been a boon to Alaska people, (every man, woman and child received money from the state each year as their part of the distribution of state income) has done no particular damage and in fact the wildlife, mostly the reindeer herds, etc. have fared very well and in fact the herds have increased along the pipeline areas. So although the discussion continues, I am convinced.

A wildlife cruise on Resurrection Bay was the opportunity to see all kinds of wildlife, especially the birds and it was a total pleasure as the cruise captain maneuvered around to get us close to the cliffs along the mountains for a close look at everything!

Now, the best part. I saw the wonderful Aurora Borealis while I was in Alaska. The hotel had a walkway on the top floor and out there you could view the sky over the mountains, and see the wonderful color show. I have seen the northern lights from here and they have been high in the sky and usually white in appearance, but there they were the most vivid colors you could imagine. We spent hours in the middle of the night watching the color show.

Sound like a travelog? Well I guess maybe it is. Everyone would love to visit that beautiful wilderness state.

## Roaming the Region

by Charlie Bruce (aka Gloater)

I'd like to take this opportunity to personally invite you to the Region 3 Leadership Development Workshop (LDW) to be held in Columbus, Ohio on February 27 - 28, 2004. This is an excellent opportunity to meet with the movers and shakers of your and other Mensa groups in our region and to receive information and training that could help improve your Mensa involvement. Not only will this LDW be beneficial to current officers and coordinators of our group, but it would also help other members who will eventually become our future leaders. The current schedule is dual-tracked and has something for everybody. Presentations will be in the following areas:

- LocSec
- Membership
- ExComm
- Gifted Children
- Editing
- Public Relations
- Group websites
- National Office
- Proctoring
- Operations

We also have a special track scheduled for Saturday afternoon on Food Safety. This is a 4-hour course concerning the cooking of quantities of food for groups, including the problems that lead to food-borne illness and how they can be prevented. It will be presented by a licensed sanitarian from the City of Columbus Health Department. This course will benefit everyone who chairs or helps out in Hospitality at Regional Gatherings or group parties.

Additionally, we are having a Mensa testing session Saturday afternoon. Any Proctors who need to meet monitoring requirements are more than welcome to sit in, and if you know of any potential members interested in taking the test, bring them along.

We will have soup, sandwiches, and socialization on Friday night, and the dual-track presentations will be all day Saturday following a continental breakfast; we will break for lunch (provided). We will finish up Saturday evening with a local Games Night, so feel free to stick around after the official LDW for some fun and games. This will be your chance to also beat me at my own game - Double Deck Cancellation Hearts. For more information, check on the Region 3 web site at <http://region3.us.mensa.org/>, or email me with any questions. I look forward to seeing/meeting you there. If you're driving, bring some friends, share a room, and cut your costs even more.

The LDW will be held at: Best Western - Columbus East, Reynoldsburg, OH. 614-864-1280, Mensa rate of \$45 (+ tax). There is no registration cost for the LDW, however, for us to have an estimate of the number of attendees to expect please RSVP to [gloater@columbus.rr.com](mailto:gloater@columbus.rr.com) or call me at 614-237-4228.

## Northern Michigan Mensa Executive Committee

### VOTING MEMBERS

Local Secretary:	Sherry McNamara	231-933-9272	kikiwon@hotmail.com
Deputy Local Secretary:	Susan A. Styles	231-943-4349	seas@umich.edu
Treasurer:	Ellen Monahan	231-929-9281	emonahan@chartermi.net
At-Large Member:	John D. Schultz	231-275-6735	nwoodpc@chartermi.net
At-Large Member:	Melissa Rennie	231-889-0892	renmeij@yahoo.com

### APPOINTED MEMBERS

Membership Officer:	Melissa Rennie	231-889-0892	renmeij@yahoo.com
Proctor Coordinator and Proctor:	John D. Schultz	231-275-6735	nwoodpc@chartermi.net
Scholarship Coordinator:	Lotus Young	231-843-8479	ldwyong@chartermi.net
Publications Officer and Newsletter Editor:	Thomas Kachadurian	231-947-4328	kachadurian@chartermi.net
Program Coordinator:	Sherry McNamara	231-933-9272	kikiwon@hotmail.com
Publicity Coordinator:	Susan A. Styles	231-943-4349	seas@umich.edu
Recording Secretary:	Kelleen S. Bingham	231-258-8753	kellbing@localnet.com
S.I.G.H.T. Coordinator:	Ralph K. Hillquist	231-882-0233	rkhillquist@chartermi.net
Ombudsman:	Peter J. Turkus	231-941-8321	petencheri@chartermi.net
Webmaster:	Joshua L. Ockert	269-762-0500	torstenvl@yahoo.com
Assistant Webmaster:	Stephen C. Siciliano	231-947-1480	mrtak9@ameritech.net

Regional Vice Chairman	Charles Bruce	614-237-4228	rvc3@us.mensa.org
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check out our website at: [www.nmm.us.mensa.org](http://www.nmm.us.mensa.org)



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Northern Michigan Mensa

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1229 Corporate Drive West  
Arlington, TX 76006-6103