



Borealis

NORTHERN MICHIGAN MENSA

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JANUARY 2005



“SURF’S UP, DUDE”

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN JANUARY

BRUNCH - Saturday, 8 January, 2005, at 11:00 a.m. We will meet at Cottage Café, located at 420 Munson Avenue, Traverse City. We will hold our gathering in the Papa's Den which is on the right as you enter the front door.

GAMES NIGHT - Will not be held this month. More commentary in next month's issue.

TGIF - Friday, 28 January 2005 at 6:00 p.m. We will meet at Horizon Shine Café, located in the lower level of Horizon Books, 243 E. Front Street, Traverse City. Coffee, soft drinks, sandwiches, wraps, and desserts are available for purchase.

{For those of you who missed it, note that the dates above are for the year **2005** - how many checks have you misdated so far?}

Cover photo: Purportedly a tsunami approaching some shore in southeast Asia, sent to me via the Internet. Other photos/images in the set are more graphic than what you have seen in the printed media. No credit was given to the photographer or his/her agency, so we can not pass along a name. The caption may seem casual, but my reaction and first thought was not fit for the tender eyes and sensitivities of the readers of *Borealis*.



DIBS AND DABS

Lots of stuff this month, most of it “imported.”

First off, though, is best wishes to you and yours for a happy, prosperous, challenging, mind-tweaking two double naught five.

Welcome to new member Robert Miller of Gaylord and welcome back to member Michael Brinkman of Alpena.

You will note that annual dues have increased, passwords are obsolete, and a few other things – read on.



Colloquium 2005, *EARTH IN MIND: FUELING THE FUTURE*, is to be held in Tucson, AZ, on 4-6 March 2005. Info and registration at . The basic theme is exploring the issues surrounding renewable energy.

The “big easy,” New Orleans, is the venue for the ’05 Annual Gathering. Check www.ag.us.mensa.org for details.

The *Mensa Research Journal* has “an aggressive international campaign” to promote the Journal and increase subscriptions. A form for your use is in this issue.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER – FINIS

Herewith the answers for Part 2:

1-f; 2-c; 3-h; 4-a; 5-b; 6-i; 7-e; 8-g; 9-j; and, 10-d.

Put away your encyclopedia and Audubon books; this is the end of the exercise. No “embarrassing” to “excellent” scales have been set up, so evaluate yourself.

Again, thanks to Richard Mallery (aka Dick E. Bird) for providing the inspiration and substance for this *Borealis* featurette.

NMM BOOK CLUB NEWS

The inaugural meeting of the new book club was on Saturday, 4 December. If mere numbers were the determining factor, the first meeting would be considered a success! Nine members arrived with book in hand. We worked through the dynamics of protocol for future meetings, obtained suggestions for possible names of the club, and book titles for future reading. After getting the necessary business of a new group out of the way, we were on to an enjoyable discussion about the book *Snow in August*. For a first meeting, I think this went very well. Each member was given an opportunity to provide their insight and opinion which was followed by open discussion. This particular book is about a Catholic boy whom is befriended by a Rabbi. It tells the trials and tribulations of growing up in Brooklyn as well as the growth that comes with discovery of other peoples and cultures. The book allowed for discussion about religions, bigotry, cultural understanding, evil behavior, mysticism, as well as the mechanics of writing. Each meeting will have an assigned "presenter" who will relay background information about the author and any other pertinent information about the book that may help enlighten the group.

Since anyone interested in a book club is always looking for another good book to read, a book exchange will take place at each meeting. Each member is encouraged to bring unwanted used/previously read books to the meeting for other members to take home to enjoy. We will hold our meetings every other month on the first Saturday of the month. Therefore, the next meeting will be held on Saturday, 5 February and future meetings will be held in April, June, August, October and December. Details of the club will be posted on the webpage and in *Borealis*. The book selection for February is *Under the Skin* by Michel Faber. Once we settle on a name for the club, I will register the club with Horizon Books. This will allow members to receive a 10% discount for the books scheduled for the upcoming year of book club discussions.

This club is open to all members of NMM. You are welcome to attend every meeting, or you can come to only those meetings where the book you want to read is being discussed. I think this will be a rewarding venture for avid readers. Come join us!

-NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

Mensa National Office Staff

The holiday season is here and, as a member of Mensa, you're probably already making your list of resolutions for the coming year. If you haven't started yet, here are a few we hope you'll add to your list.

1. I will renew my membership.
(<http://www.us.mensa.org/renew>)

Get out your membership card. If it reads "Valid Thru 3/31/2005" and you haven't renewed recently, it's almost time to renew. You can do so before December 31 at the \$49 rate. After that, dues will be \$52 for a single year membership. If you've already renewed or are a Life Member, thank you and we look forward to the coming year with you as a member.

2. I will reset my password on the Mensa Web site.
(<https://secure.us.mensa.org/members/resetmypassword.php>)

The password included in the Mensa Bulletin is only good through December 31. After that, you'll need your member number and password to access the Member Resources section of the American Mensa Web site, and we have a number of exciting things planned for the coming year. If you have your PIN or have reset your password already, you should be good to go!

3. I will reconnect with old friends.
(https://secure.us.mensa.org/members/memb_dir_entry.php)

Visit Mensa's online member directory to contact a Mensa friend with whom you haven't talked in the past year. Say hi, reminisce about old times, make plans.

4. I will attend at least one Mensa event.

The 2005 Annual Gathering (<http://ag.us.mensa.org>) in New Orleans is a great place to start. Join your fellow Mensans, friends and family for the greatest (and smartest) party the Big Easy has ever seen! Registration rates go up January 1. You might also consider the 2005 Colloquium (<http://colloquium.us.mensa.org>), Mind Games (<http://mindgames.us.mensa.org>) or a Regional Gathering (<http://www.us.mensa.org/gatherings>).

5. I will lend my support to the Mensa Foundation.
(<http://foundation.us.mensa.org>)

In 2004, the Mensa Education and Research Foundation gave nearly \$55,000 in scholarships to more than 140 college students. This is a great opportunity for an end-of-year tax deduction!

6. Play more games, have more fun, meet new people.

We certainly hope that 2004 was a great year for you and that 2005 will be even better.

{A bit dated, we know, but the *Borealis* is a monthly, not daily, publication - so anything received mid-month . . . ed,}

Mini Minutes of the American Mensa Committee Meeting December 4, 2004 in Orlando, Florida

Appointments: Robin Crawford, Communications Officer; Jim and Barbara McIntyre, American Mensa 60th Anniversary Coordinators; and Keri Guilbault, Gifted Children Outreach Coordinator.

A Records Retention Policy was adopted.

A Planning and Review Committee was established to poll AMC about perceptions of how American Mensa is functioning, and to recommend changes and involve the AMC in planning arising from annual surveys. This committee will conduct the annual evaluation of the Executive Director's performance, with feedback and information from the AMC. The committee will also be available to advise the Executive Director on staff-related issues and concerns.

The Policies and Rules Governing the Conduct of Hearings, the Procedure to Implement Regional Hearings, and the Dispute Resolution Guidelines were amended for clarification and to conform to the bylaws. Regarding regional hearings, calling a hearing is discretionary, certain sanctions may be imposed only by the AMC, and if the person with whom a complaint is filed (RVC or 2nd Vice Chair) chooses not to call a hearing, the complainant may appeal to the First Vice Chair.

National Publications Guidelines were adopted, clarifying roles and responsibilities and consolidating print and internet policy for our national publications.

A uniform policy regarding SIG funds was adopted.

SIGs are the result of the personal efforts on the part of volunteer SIG Coordinators and their designees. Participation in a SIG is at the discretion of the particular SIG's Coordinator. Disputes over SIG membership may be taken to the SIGs Officer for mediation.

The following candidates are nominated to run for the specified offices in the next Mensa International election: Chris Leek, Chairman; Jim Werdell, Director of Administration; Stacey Kirsch, Treasurer; Willem Bouwens, Director of Development; Tim Knights, Director of Development.

Central Alabama Mensa's bid to host the 2007 AG in Birmingham was accepted, pending legal review of the hotel contract. Bids are especially encouraged for the 2008 AG from Regions 1, 7 and 8.

The World Gathering 2006 core committee was approved.

The resignation of Oscar Zeiger, chair of Project Inkslinger®, was accepted with regret.

MindGames® 2006 will be hosted by Oregon Mensa in Portland.

The next meeting of the AMC will be in Columbus, Ohio on March 19, 2005.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Vasiliauskas, Secretary AMC

ROAMING THE REGION

Hi, everyone! Alan Baltis here, your Assistant RVC for Region 3. Charlie Bruce asked me to write a column this month while he's traveling to exotic Buenos Aires and such.

I just wanted to share a few observations I've had over the last few years. Though a long-time Midwesterner (with a couple-years break when I went west, young man, pursuing my dot-com fortunes in the Bay Area), I am relatively new to Cleveland, having moved here in 2000 to be with my sweetheart (now wife) Colleen. In the 4 years that I've been here, I've seen Cleveland Area Mensa become more and more Mensa Done Right.

I'll admit I was spoiled, coming from Chicago, where we had a group more than 4 times as big, and a packed calendar every month, and many well-attended events (often 10-40 people) and a Monthly Gathering of 75-125 people that felt like a mini-RG each month. Games and Conversation would often start before the Business Meeting, and go late into the night.

Cleveland's Monthly Gatherings, by contrast, would often break up soon after the speaker was done, with no one hanging around for further conversation, not even to discuss the topic we had just shared. I have always thought that the lifeblood of Mensa membership was, indeed, the members, and having everyone be relatively passive and "making curfew" often left me feeling dissatisfied.

Happily, Mensans enjoying each others' company seems to be on the upswing in Cleveland. A monthly event, Dining with De (hosted by our dynamic Membership Director, De Freshwater) regularly draws 20-30 members, and conversation lingers and laughter explodes often for hours after we're done eating. The monthly gatherings draw similar numbers, and have more and more become opportunities to connect with friends each month. And new events such as Movie Nights and Games and Conversations have been added.

The graying of Mensa? Ha! Cleveland Area Mensa may have become a bit set in its ways over the years, but new members, especially new younger members (meaning: anyone younger than me) have brought new vigor and creativity to the group. Our Executive Committee has transitioned from steely veterans to mostly energetic newbies over the last few years.

The magic formula? Nothing startling, nothing that we don't already know, but it's important to occasionally remind ourselves. Embrace your volunteers. Become one of those embraceable volunteers yourself. Experiment. Take our responsibilities seriously, but not ourselves. Have fun!

Happy New Year, everyone!

VANITY (OR INANITY?)



Spotted this vanity plate on a Jaguar XJ-6 in my neighbor's driveway and it got me thinking about something for stuff to fill white space.

Mentioned it to my bride and in a day or two, she saw

RW FSTR

on a "vanilla" Chevy in downtown Beulah.

So, if you see an interesting vanity plate, drop an email to the editors with details and it might just fill up a line or two in *Borealis*.

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The words "I am . . ." are potent words; be careful what you hitch them to. The thing you're claiming has a way of reaching back and claiming you. -- A. L. Kitselman

You can observe a lot by just watching. -- Yogi Berra

And a personal thought: What would Florida look like if the Federalo EPA, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Sierra Club, the Nature Conservancy, et al, been around a century or so ago?

NORTHERN MICHIGAN MENSA

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