

Borealis

The Monthly Journal of Northern Michigan Mensa



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February 2010

 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.

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.

Advertising:

At this time, Borealis does not accept advertising from either members or non-members.

Email submissions to:

nmmnewsletter@hotmail.com

US mail:

Borealis
Stan Cain
3584 Village Circle Dr.
Traverse City MI 49686

Northern Michigan Mensa

Executive Committee

VOTING MEMBERS

Local Secretary	Richard R. Hopfner	231-946-7204	locsecnmm@gmail.com
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At Large	Judith W. Lindenau	231-947-2050	judith@judithlindenau.com
At Large	Dwayne A. Bean		doofus@dbiwebsites.com

APPOINTED MEMBERS

Membership	Jim McDermott	231-943-7792	
Ombudsman	Peter J. Turkus	231-941-8321	petencheri@chartermi.net
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Proctor			
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Program	- vacant -		
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SIGHT Coordinator	Melissa J. Rennie	231-889-0892	renmeij@yahoo.com
Financial Overseer	Thomas Barnhart	231-946-3242	tom_barnhart@sbcglobal.net
Petoskey Area Subgroup			
Coordinator	- vacant -		

As the ExComm is working to fill vacant positions, please let any voting member know if you are interested in a position or willing to help in any capacity!

OTHER MEMBERS

Proctors	John D. Schultz	231-275-6735	nwoodpc@chartermi.net
	Susan A. Styles	231-264-6193	seas@umich.edu
	Melissa J. Rennie	231-889-0892	renmeij@yahoo.com
Regional			
Vice-Chairman	Betsy Y. Mark	734-434-5757	RVC3@us.mensa.org

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

ON THE COVER: "Trapper's Cabin", photo by Jack Schultz.

February 2010 Calendar

BOOK CLUB - Saturday, 6 Feb 2010 at 11:00 a.m.

We will meet at the Cottage Café, located at 420 Munson Avenue, Traverse City, in the Papa's Den. The Bibliomensans book for February will be **The Alchemist** by Paul Coelho. The presenter will be Nancy Dady. Please plan to attend for another lively discussion! Note: See the book description on page 4.

BRUNCH - Saturday, 13 Feb 2010 at 11:00 a.m.

We will meet at the Cottage Café, located at 420 Munson Avenue, Traverse City, in the Papa's Den, which is on the right as you enter.

TGIF - Friday, 26 Feb 2010 at 5:30 p.m.

This is our monthly, Friday get together to unwind and chat. We will meet in 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 upstairs.

Member News

Happy February Birthday

14	Peter J Turkus	25	Jerome D Smith
18	Brenda S Irish Heintzelman	26	Carol J Crawford
24	Thomas Rasmussen		

Mensa Membership Milestones

(Years of continuous membership)

30 Years	P F Curtiss Rufus S Teesdale	3 Years	Richard R Hopfner John G Swartout
9 Years	J E Dasef	2 Years	Heather J Gruenberg Robert Hawley C Philport Sherry L Saites
7 Years	Louis O Isabell		Erik A Snyder
5 Years	Jim H McDermott	1 Year	Nancy Dady Brett A Pharo
4 Years	Jennifer L Cassidy Julie L Hill		

2010 Statistics

	AML	NMM
Total membership	*	99
New and reinstating membership	*	0
Offers of membership	*	0
New members since April 2009	*	7
Reinstating members since April 2009	*	8
* National data unavailable this month		

Membership directory information is based on data from American Mensa records as of 12/31/2009. 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".

ExComm Meeting

At the January Executive Committee meeting in Bellaire, the newly elected officers made the following appointments:

Financial Overseer - Thomas Barnhart
Membership Chair - Jim McDermott
Newsletter Editor - Stan Cain
Ombudsman - Pete Turkus
Proctor Coordinator - Jack Schultz
Publicity Coordinator - Bobbi Walker
Scholarship Chair - Margaret Scott
SIGHT Coordinator - Melissa J. Rennie
Web Contact - Priscilla Walmsley

We are still working to fill the last open position - Program Chair.

Editor's Desk

First, I want to thank Sue Styles for filling in as editor while I was in Florida for the past month or so. Sometimes it's good to step back from something you have been doing for a while (editing Borealis) and see how someone else approaches the same challenge.

While in the Naples area, I was able to attend a couple of Southwest by South Florida Mensa (SWSF) meetings. They have a group which is similar in size to ours, spread out over an area centered on Naples. They have a dinner meeting at a different, inexpensive, restaurant each week as well as other events such as a Wassail potluck party in December where I was able to meet a new group of interesting Mensans

In addition to Mensa meetings and beach activities, I also had a chance to observe a small sugar cane harvesting operation.

Most sugar cane grown commercially is harvested by first burning the field of mature cane to get rid of the leaves. Then machines are used to pull up the cane stalks and load them into cane hauling trucks for transport to the mill. The stalks are then washed and then run through rollers and the cane juice is squeezed out. Then the liquid is heated (by burning the leftover crushed stalks) to evaporate the water. When the concentration becomes high enough, the sugar crystallizes out. The crystals are washed and separated into various sizes and then sent to packagers for shipment to consumers.

The operation I observed involved perhaps a half acre of cane harvested the old-fashioned way - largely by hand. This is done by cutting the stalks near the ground with cane knives and loading them by hand to a crusher to extract the juice. The old crusher was designed to be turned by mules, but in this case, a tractor was used to turn the rollers. Then the juice was concentrated by evaporation into a sweet syrup. Rumor had it that final processing involved fermentation and distillation.

In times gone by, in the southern U.S. and Islands in the Caribbean such as Haiti, these operations would have been performed by slaves.



January Brunch

A pretty good-sized group turned out for our January brunch. Both new and old friends ventured out on a sunny Saturday morning. Photo by Jack Schultz.

THE ALCHEMIST

**February Book Club Selection
By Paul Coelho, 208 pages**

Paulo Coelho's enchanting novel has inspired a devoted following around the world. This story, dazzling in its simplicity and wisdom, is about an Andalusian shepherd boy named Santiago who travels from his homeland in Spain to the Egyptian desert in search of treasure buried in the Pyramids. Along the way he meets a Gypsy woman, a man who calls himself king, and an Alchemist, all of whom point Santiago in the direction of his quest. No one knows what the treasure is, or if Santiago will be able to surmount the obstacles along the way but what starts out as a journey to find worldly goods turns into a meditation on the treasures found within.

The LocSec's Login

By Richard Hopfner, Local Secretary

There was a young man from Japan
Whose limericks never would scan.
When asked why this was,
He replied, "It's because
I always try to fit as many syllables into the last line as ever
possibly I can."

-Author Unknown

How shall we know our identity as a group?
Is there deep within us the seeds for heroism, waiting for expression so it
may be born?

"...One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

- "Ulysses" Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Is our goal to live up to the words in the stated purpose of Mensa?: "...to
identify and foster human intelligence for the benefit of humanity, to
encourage research in the nature, characteristics and uses of intelligence,
and to promote stimulating intellectual and social opportunities for its
members."

Is it more common, rarer, selfless, selfish, accessible, or enigmatic?

Is it something private, personal, and unique to each of us? Like that
limerick above that stuck in my head and seemed very appropriate to me
right now, a way I see a situation or myself, that perhaps has a mocking
smile inwardly directed making perfect sense to me, but probably won't
to you, not without a lengthy explanation, and maybe not even then?

What we are is important to who we are. Who we are determines how
we act towards those of us that make up this group we call Northern
Michigan Mensa. As a person that is given a chance to voice thoughts to
you in our monthly journal, right now, it is me sending to you, but in the
end I am one person and this is one person's vision alone.

That is what I will ask of everyone reading this month's note here.
Think about what it means to you to be here. Then help to define "who"
we are by stating "what" we are. You can do that by communicating with
us, your executive committee, and telling us what you would like to see
Northern Michigan Mensa doing for you. If we are already doing
everything you want to see us doing... well... fine. I am pleased; but if
there is something that you would like to do, something you think
would excite your mind or is something you would enjoy doing in good
society, consider this: Maybe it would be the same for us. Your idea
might bring us the same pleasure and at the same time help make NMM
into who we are.

We will help you do this. This month one of our outstanding members is
asking you to send him these thoughts. Pete Turkus is a determined
Mensan, and he wants to know your thoughts on activities, events, or
gatherings that would spark your mind.

I am both interested and curious to find out what my fellow members
would like to do, because together we define this group, and we all
contribute. I sincerely hope that you add your voice to our dialog.

Richard Hopfner,
LocSec NMM

Editor's Note:

Due to space limitations this month, please read Betsy's column, **reMark**,
online at the Region 3 web site at <http://www.region3.us.mensa.org>.

2010 Budget

Income

<u>National Office Allocation</u> – Estimate based on past history and current number of members.	\$1050
<u>Testing Fees</u> – The proctor coordinator’s estimate of what we might collect in testing fees throughout the year.	\$200
<u>Interest</u> – Estimate based on current bank balance, projected bank balance, and past history.	\$ 50
<u>Total Budgeted Income</u> –	\$1300

Expenses

<u>Newsletter</u> – This fund will be utilized for expenses associated with the production of the monthly newsletter. This will include expenses for postage, paper, and other production costs.	\$500
<u>Office/Incidentals</u> – This fund is used for the cost of incidental office expenses.	\$ 25
<u>Activities/Programs</u> – This fund is to be utilized by the program chair for fees/expenses associated with activities and programs.	\$500
<u>Publicity</u> – This fund is to be utilized by the publicity chair for costs associated with postage, flyers, or other materials for publicity.	\$ 25
<u>Scholarship</u> – This fund is intended to provide a scholarship to area students who applied for the Mensa Education and Research Foundation scholarships. The budgeted amount also allows for postage and expenses related to soliciting applications.	\$ 800
<u>Proctor/Testing Expenses</u> – This fund is to be utilized at the discretion of the proctor coordinator for fees/expenses associated with renting space, publicity, postage, etc. for testing purposes.	\$100
<u>Stipend for Regional/National Events</u> – This fund is intended to help defray the expenses members may incur when traveling to regional or national events sponsored by Mensa.	\$200
<u>Membership</u> – This fund is to be utilized by the membership chair for expenses related to increasing membership: welcoming new members, encouraging former members to rejoin, etc.	\$ 200
<u>Friend Fund</u> – The intention of this fund is to supply the cost of a membership to a member who does not have the finances to renew his/her membership. The fund is generally supported by member donations. In 2009 the fund ended the year with a balance of \$30 in donations. Additional money is budgeted from group funds for 2010, if requested, to pay a total of two memberships.	\$88
<u>Total Budgeted Expenses</u> –	\$2438
<u>Budgeted Net Income</u>	-\$1138

Purpose

By Sue Styles, Guest Editor

I may write a book someday. Not a novel, as some of our recent speakers have done. It's wonderful how many creative writers we have in this area, but I don't aspire to be one of them. No, I will write a non-fiction book, and my message will be for parents who think there might be something wrong with their children.

Maybe it will end up being "just another one" of those books where people recount their story of struggle and how they came through it, but I figure if I have a point and keep that in mind, it could be more than just a true story that will touch some people's hearts. It might actually help some parents, and that would be really worthwhile to me.

I want parents to know that if they suspect something is not quite right with their child, they should keep asking questions and keep trying to help. There are so many institutions and people potentially involved, but each of them has their own angle, their own reason for helping, and their own reason for drawing the line where they do or giving you the answer they give. Parents shouldn't be discouraged by the answers they receive; **they should see them as leading** to more questions, the ones that will finally help you find out what you need to know.

As hard as it has been, fighting for my son has been worth it for more than just the progress he has made. It takes a kind of instinct and intuition that is very different from the kind of intelligence we all share in Mensa, something I didn't know I had in me. Finding it has been a valuable discovery. I want to tell other people to trust that instinct.

Our journey also restored my faith in “the system” to a certain extent. There are agencies and people out there to help, if you keep looking. We didn’t always get what we asked for, but if you keep your heart and mind open I believe you can find a good solution.

As we all go through life, wondering what it all means, sometimes it just hits you that "maybe **this** is why I am here. Maybe **this** is why these things have happened to me." If you see my name on the cover of a book someday, you will know I have found my purpose. I hope some of you have or will find yours as well.