

# Borealis

The Monthly Journal of Northern Michigan Mensa



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February 2011

 Borealis  
Northern Michigan Mensa

[www.nmm.us.mensa.org](http://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.

## 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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  
[nmmborealis@yahoo.com](mailto:nmmborealis@yahoo.com)

# Northern Michigan Mensa Executive Committee

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

ON THE COVER: A grey January day in Central Lake, looking south over the north end of Intermediate Lake. Photo by Mark Styles.

## February Calendar

### BOOK CLUB - Saturday, 5 February 2011 at 11:00 a.m.

The book this month is Major Pettigrew's Last Stand, by Helen Simonson. We will meet in the Papa's Den at the Cottage Café in TC.

### BRUNCH - Saturday, 12 February 2011 at 11:00 a.m.

The monthly Mensa Brunch will be at the Cottage Cafe, 420 Munson, TC. We have no speaker for this month, so it will be a chance to shake off that cabin fever and relax and enjoy some stimulating conversation.

### T.G.I.F. - Friday, 25 February 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!

## Coming Up in 2011

by Bobbi Walker, Program Coordinator

### CULTURE QUEST XXII

It's that time again!! As usual, we are desperate for help in the biological and physical sciences. CQ will be held on Sunday, April 10th, and we have to have our application in before March 31st. **REMEMBER THERE ARE NO MORE FEES FOR YOU TO PARTICIPATE!!!!** So send me your name and Mensa membership number and sign up for a fun time. Also tell me whether you would like to have a potluck or just adjourn to a neighborhood watering hole to cry in our beer! Contact me at [bobbiraw@att.net](mailto:bobbiraw@att.net) or call at 231-932-1473.

### INLAND SEAS TRIP

The best rate is \$32.00 each, if we can get 25 people to sign up. As they are booked up far in advance, we may not be able to choose what day we'll have or we may not be able to book for this year at all. This event is open to all members, their families and friends. So if you are interested, let me know at [bobbiraw@att.net](mailto:bobbiraw@att.net) or call me at 231-932-1473. The next alternative is going individually at \$40/adult and \$35/child, and the same conditions apply as to date. Bookings are for June 13th and later.

## Member News

### Happy February Birthday

6	Greg D Toprak	25	Jerome D Smith
14	Peter J Turkus	26	Carol J Crawford
18	Brenda S Irish Heintzelman		

### Mensa Membership Milestones

(Years of continuous membership)

<b>31 Years</b>	P F Curtiss	<b>3 Years</b>	Heather J Gruenberg
	Rufus S Teesdale		Robert Hawley
<b>10 Years</b>	J E Dasef		C Philport
<b>8 Years</b>	Louis O Isabell		Sherry L Saites
<b>6 Years</b>	Jim H McDermott		Erik A Snyder
<b>5 Years</b>	Julie L Hill	<b>2 Years</b>	Nancy Dady
<b>4 Years</b>	Richard R Hopfner		Brett A Pharo
	John G Swartout	<b>1 Year</b>	Richard D Shaul
			M D Stevenson

### December 2010 Statistics

	AML	NMM
Total membership	54540	101
New and reinstating membership	496	0
Offers of membership	210	0
New members since April 2010	2379	5
Reinstating members since April 2010	2420	8

Membership directory information is based on data from American Mensa records as of 12/31/2010. If you would like to change the privacy releases on file, go to [www.us.mensa.org](http://www.us.mensa.org) and click on "Member Login". Then click on "Profile Update" and "PDQ Update".

## Trivia

I was on the front page of Wall Street Journal at the end of December. I saw my photograph, but I couldn't read the article, as I cannot read or write. Like the WSJ, I was born in New York City, Hell's Kitchen. This is where the World Trade Center was located. My Dad died and my mother moved to Indianapolis, where she married a man called William Bonney. He was a stage coach driver and I used his name. My real name was Henry McCarty. You would know me better as?

Answer on Page 7

## Top 50 Web Sites

Did you know Mensa has a list of “best” websites, chosen by members? Nominations for 2011 are open! From the national website:

*Tell us about the treasures you've found on your (Web) surf-in' safari! Visit [www.us.mensa.org/top50sites](http://www.us.mensa.org/top50sites) to nominate your favorites for consideration as American Mensa's Top 50 Web Sites in 2011.*

The only catch is, the following “Web Legends” are no longer eligible; they have appeared in previous years and AML wants additional ideas.

<u>Site</u>	<u>Content / Purpose</u>
Bing	Search engine, email, etc.
Google	Search engine, email, etc.
Yahoo	Search engine, email, etc.
Amazon.com	Shopping, reviews
eBay	Auctions, unique items
Facebook	Social networking
LinkedIn	Professional networking
YouTube	Entertainment videos / how-to
Hulu	Free online TV shows / movies
Pandora Internet Radio	Customized music selections
PBS.org	News, culture, science content
The Onion	Satirical commentary on issues
Drudge Report	News and politics
About.com	Expert articles about everything
Dictionary.com	Dictionary, thesaurus, and more
How Stuff Works	Explanations, schematics, etc.
IMDb (Internet Movie Database)	Info on movies, TV, actors, etc.
MapQuest	Maps & directions
Snopes.com	Debunks urban legends/myths
Wikipedia	THE online encyclopedia
TED	Speeches on great ideas
National Geographic Society	Geography & science
Nat'l Geographic Picture of the Day	Beautiful/fascinating pictures
Astronomy Picture of the Day	Space photos and information

You can also view the 2009 and 2010 lists (for 2010, change the end of the url for 2009) or the list of nominees so far, for ideas or inspiration. The deadline for nominations is not listed, so be quick!

## Culture, Anyone?

**Sue Styles, Guest Editor**

For anyone who hasn't tried CultureQuest and is at all a fan of trivia, odd facts, or things you remember that make “normal” people look at you funny... it's about time you gave it a shot. CultureQuest is so typically Mensan, it seems like every Mensan should try it at least once.

I have been on at least two CultureQuest teams, as evidenced by the copies I kept of the tests. There might have been a third. I vividly remember our excitement the first time NMM participated in CultureQuest, and our discussion afterwards.

To provide a little bit of background, this is a trivia test of sorts, written each year by a different local group, and taken across North America at the exact same time by teams of up to five Mensans. We obviously rely on the honor system to trust that the test is not opened until the start of the 90-minute period, no help is received or references used, and all work on the test stops when the time is up. Then begins the agonizingly long wait to find out how you did. And yes, money is involved!

Back to that first test, which I believe was in 2002. How hard could it be, really? We were so naïve, we thought we could seriously kick some tail (as on almost any test most of us had taken our whole lives). We strategized about the varied educational backgrounds and generations we should have on a team, debated the many ways we could “divide and conquer”, brought our favorite brain foods, etc., all without any real clue to what we would be facing. When that 90 minutes started, with our pencils sharpened, we all spread out with our share of test pages... and sat, stunned, at how few questions we could answer on our own. Completely stuck, answers piling up on the tips of our tongues like cars in 6 inches of snow in Atlanta, we rejoined the group one by one, deciding that the best approach was to go through the questions as a group so we could help each other guess as many answers as possible.

We truly needed the planned debrief session afterwards, because there is no time for “discussion” during the test. Did I mention the tests I have contain an average of 350 questions? To be answered in 90 minutes? Four questions a minute? When we got together with other NMM members after the test, the general consensus was, “it's impossible.” We

spent some time trying to help each other pull out answers that just wouldn't come earlier in the afternoon, but after that the conversation turned to, "We could do a better job! Let's apply to write the test next year! We'll be the smallest group ever to do it! Yeah, go NMM!"

Well, we all know what happens to the best laid plans of busy, intelligent people. Maybe the best way to give you a taste or tempt you to join would be to list some questions from previous tests. Here goes...

- How many grams to the shekel?
- Dobson units are used to measure what?
- The level of body armor that will defeat a 9mm SMG round:
- What is the speed of light in furlongs per fortnight?
- List the four major festivals of the NeoPagans, in order.
- How many feathers on an adult Mallard duck?
- What region of the planet Mars is in the same location as Polynesia on Earth?
- When hitching up a dog sled, where should the strongest dogs be put?
- What did the P-T event separate?
- Who discovered [the planet] Pluto?
- Only one U.S. President has ever been granted a patent. What for?
- Name the three weapons used in Olympic fencing.
- What would be burning in a "Class D" fire?
- What did Mary Worth do during the Great Depression?
- Insects have the most species, but what multicellular animals have the most individuals?
- James Bond the secret agent was named for a real person; what was that person's actual profession?
- The flag of Ethiopia has a blue circle in the center. What is inside it?
- What do you do with Strega?
- In paintings, what does a square halo indicate?

I'm running out of room, but I hope you get the idea. And yes, I know it is cruel to give you the questions without giving you the answers. I will provide them to Stan to be printed in next month's issue. Google away!

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AN ONLINE FYI:

You've matched wits with the smartest, but can you figure out stupid? To try go to [TruTV.com/trupidity](http://TruTV.com/trupidity) and take the quiz! Can't find that perfect piece of decor to set off your room or looking for the perfect gift for someone? Try [uncommongoods.com](http://uncommongoods.com)

By Betsy Yvonne Mark, RVC3

Remember those little green buttons with the words My First Time? East Central Ohio Mensa has brought them back, and has them for sale to Region 3 Local Groups. They are \$30/100 pins with a shipping fee of \$5. The shipping fee will be waived if alternate delivery can be arranged. Please contact John C. Schmidt, President of ECOM, at [nasmen@hughes.net](mailto:nasmen@hughes.net) to get pins for your local group. They are great to give to first-timers to let others know who is new at RGs, monthly gatherings, dinners, any event where a new member is present.

It's membership renewal time. Renew today! This is an election year and you want to be able to vote for those who will represent you on the AMC. Re-up as a Life Member and avoid the hassle of yearly dues. You can renew on-line: [https://www.us.mensa.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Membership\\_Renewals&Template=/customsource/cfauthnet\\_sim/forms/renewal/renewal\\_1.cfm](https://www.us.mensa.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Membership_Renewals&Template=/customsource/cfauthnet_sim/forms/renewal/renewal_1.cfm)

I urge you to register for Dayton Area Mensa's RG -- 24 Karats! April 1-3, 2011. Information about this great RG can be found at [www.dayton.us.mensa.org/index\\_files/RG.htm](http://www.dayton.us.mensa.org/index_files/RG.htm). Register for Southeast Michigan Mensa's RG, SEMMantics XXXII, The SEMMinal Event of 2011, April 29-May 1. Information about this great RG can be found at [localsemm.com/semantics/](http://localsemm.com/semantics/).

#### National Events:

Register now for Colloquium 2011, Electronic Gaming and Its Impact on Society: [colloq11.us.mensa.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Register\\_Now\\_4](http://colloq11.us.mensa.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Register_Now_4) to be held February 18-20 in Austin, Texas.

Mind Games, April 15, Albany, NY: [mindgames.us.mensa.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Player\\_Registration&Template=/CustomSource/cfauthnet\\_sim/forms/mindgames/players\\_1.cfm](http://mindgames.us.mensa.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Player_Registration&Template=/CustomSource/cfauthnet_sim/forms/mindgames/players_1.cfm)

And, don't forget the Annual Gathering in Portland, Oregon: A Great Journey West, June 30-July 4: [www.ag2011.us.mensa.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Register\\_Online7&Template=/customsource/cfauthnet\\_sim/forms/ag11/ag\\_1.cfm](http://www.ag2011.us.mensa.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Register_Online7&Template=/customsource/cfauthnet_sim/forms/ag11/ag_1.cfm)

I am getting ready to spend some time in Florida with long time friends. On the way there I will be having dinner with Mensans in both Louisville and Lexington, Kentucky. As of penning this, Kentuckiana Mensa has yet to finalize February's monthly gathering. If the meeting is as regularly scheduled on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month, you will find me at their speaker meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup>. If their meeting is held on a different day, I will be having dinner at Mark's Feed Store at 6pm on the 19<sup>th</sup> and would love to have your company. The next day (Sunday the 20<sup>th</sup>) I will be having dinner at the Golden Corral, 185 E. New Circle Road, Lexington, at 5pm with Bluegrass Mensans. If you are in the area, join us.

Déjà vu! The next American Mensa Committee (AMC) meeting is scheduled for March 26 in Atlanta. If you are traveling in that area, please join us. I will be driving there on my way home from Florida. If you have items you wish to see on the agenda, let me know as soon as possible - the deadline for the agenda is February 18 - and I will try my best.

LLAP and Peace,

Betsy

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Yahoo group - <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AMR3/>  
Facebook group -  
<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=71515809887>

## CLASSIFIEDS

For Sale: 1 bottle of 1980 Chateau Belair, St. Emilion, 1st Grand Cru. Has been properly stored. \$150. [bobbiraw@att.net](mailto:bobbiraw@att.net)

\*\*\*\*

Trivia answer: Billy the Kid. The Governor of New Mexico refused to give me a pardon at the end of 2010.

## 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.

AJWQTCV JC PJ ZCVRY TN WTHR  
VYZNUTCV Z AJP XJZW GTPA PAR  
TCPRCP JO PAYJGTCV TP ZP  
NJSRJCR RWRN; LJI ZYR PAR JCR  
GAJ VRPN DIYCRQ. -DIQQAZ

The answer will be in next month's issue.

#### Answer to last month's Cryptogram:

Whenever a man's friends begin to compliment him about looking young, he may be sure that they think he is growing old. - Washington Irving

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By the way, for those of you who are curious about the CultureQuest questions on a previous page, of the 19 questions, we successfully answered two of them. That is how random and hard the test is. We all felt very average and un-smart after taking it. But it was still fun.