



Borealis

The Monthly Journal of Northern Michigan Mensa



Volume 13 Number 2

November 2014

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 15th of the month before the month of publication. Submissions received after that time may be considered if time and space permit.

Email submissions to:

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nmborealis@yahoo.com

Northern Michigan Mensa

Executive Committee



Northern Michigan Mensa

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Go high-tech! Get Borealis emailed to you. It's easy. Just email nmmborealis@yahoo.com and put "change delivery method" in the subject line. You'll get it faster, and in color!

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

ON THE COVER: Fall: Anywhere in Traverse City. Photo by Stan Cain

November Calendar

Mensa Test - Saturday, 1 November 2014 at 9:00 a.m.

Because several people were not able to attend our testing session in October, we will be offering another Mensa Test on **Saturday, November 1**. NMM Mensans, please let any of your intelligent friends or relatives know about this chance to take the test. The test will be at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Traverse City and will cost \$20 (reduced from the normal \$40). Call Jack Schultz at 231 275-6735 for details.

Brunch - Saturday, 8 November 2014 at 10:30 a.m.

We will meet at the **Bay Town Kitchen** (formerly the Cottage Café), 420 Munson Ave., Traverse City. Look for us in the far dining room. How do you sell 1 million of your books? Our speaker will tell us how. She is our own Mensan, Carole Eberly, owner of Eberly Press. Carole started her publishing company in 1977 when she couldn't find a taker for her first book, "Michigan Cooking ... and Other Things." A political reporter turned publisher turned professor, she will explain how she continued her business while working her day job(s).

Dining Out - Wednesday, 19 November 2014 at 5:30 p.m.

We will meet at the **Grand Traverse Pie Company**, 525 W. Front Street - the one near Division St., **not** the one by the State Theater - in the back room (a nook, really). It's located in the strip mall one-two blocks east of US-31. Since this is Thanksgiving month, we will enjoy each other's company and eat a light dinner. Check out their menu on Google. You can get other items besides pie - although a pie for dinner sounds pretty good. First one there, grab a table.

And, Coming up in December...

BOOK CLUB - Saturday, 6 December 2014

The December Book Club selection will be ***Men to Match My Mountains*** by Irving Stone, presented by Heather Gruenberg-Seger. Check out the summary on Page 7

Brunch - December 2014

We may have a surprise speaker!

Member News

Happy November Birthday

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Roberta 'Bobbi' A Walker | 14 Stephanie Quist |
| 13 Kimberly Lohr | 16 Robert B Pierson |

Mensa Membership Milestones

(Years of Continuous Membership)

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 20 Roger Meintz | 7 Stephanie Quist |
| 12 Donald L Curtis | Roberta 'Bobbi' A Walker |
| 9 Stephen H Quick | 5 Richard B Thibeau |
| 8 Robin E Wottowa | 1 Kathryn Hansz |

September 2014 Statistics

	<u>AML</u>	<u>NMM</u>
Total membership	51,042	81
New and reinstating membership	429	0
Offers of membership	278	0
New members since April 2014	1539	0
Reinstating members since April 2014	1412	1

Membership directory information is based on data from American Mensa records as of 9/30/2014. If you would like to change the privacy releases on file, use www.us.mensa.org and click on "Member Login". Then click on "Profile Update" and "PDQ Update"

News from the RVC3

9/6/14 Board Meeting

Full minutes of the September Board meeting will likely post online before this goes to print. In short, the Board was addressed by the firm doing the technology assessment for our organization. Deficiencies and suggestions for improvement were noted. A motion to raise dues was rejected. A motion to allow non-member parents of current young Mensan's to serve roles in local group gifted youth programs, subject to certain conditions, was adopted. The Revitalizing Local Group Task Force proposed (motion passed) formation of a roster of volunteers skilled in various roles to serve on teams to assist local groups in need of, and agreeable to, outside mentoring and assistance. Two proposed bylaw amendments were passed to referendum for the 2015 election..

And, the Board met in an extensive closed session to review personnel matters. A statement was issued following closed session, is available on line in Appendix 4 of the Minutes.*

9/30/14 Board teleconference

Minutes should be posted soon. We approved Indianapolis as the site for the 2018 Annual Gathering subject to final review of the hotel contract. A new motion on the agenda for a dues increase was postponed until the December Board meeting.

Upcoming elections

The Nominating Committee has finished its task and petition season begins for anyone else wishing to run for national office. You may sign or create a petition online from the Lead tab / Board of Directors / Elections / 2015 Board Elections / Candidate Petitions. You may sign petitions for multiple candidates for the same office. The only petitions you may not sign are the RVCs outside your region.

Next Region 3 Gathering will be:

Cincinnati Area Mensa

December 5-7, 2014 - PATTERNS

Adult Registration: \$75 till 11/1/14, \$80 till 12/4/14, \$85 at door

Teen (12-20): \$40 till 11/1/14, \$45 at door

Child (5-11): \$20

Check payable to: Cincinnati Area Mensa RG

Mail to: Drew Wagers, 6010 Meadow Spring Ct., Liberty Twp., OH 45011

Or Paypal at www.cincymensa.org

Atrium Hotel & Conference Center

30 Tri-County Parkwy, Cincinnati OH 45246

(513) 771-7171, \$69 Mensa rate / code "RG"

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*** Minutes for the American Mensa Board of Directors Meeting, 9/6/2014 Appendix 4 Statement following closed session.**

Following a lengthy closed session to review personnel matters, the Board issued the statement below incorporating both the results of the personnel discussion and the review of technology matters which took place in open session.

Statement after September 6, 2014 closed session

The Board of Directors of American Mensa has ultimate responsibility for making sure the organization works as well and smoothly as possible. That responsibility includes the operation of the national office. While there are always complaints regarding national office operations, some justified and some not in our opinion, the number and intensity of complaints have increased over the past year or more. This statement addresses two aspects of national office operations.

Technology.

The use of technology, both internally and externally, is key to American Mensa's continued vitality. But are we using technology appropriately? To that end, in July, Executive Director Pam Donahoo hired an outside company, Delcor, to assess our use of technology. Delcor has been doing technology assessments for thirty years, for the last 24 years exclusively for non-profits. (More information about Delcor is available on its web site, www.delcor.com) The lead Delcor representative who assessed our technology discussed findings at the September 2014 Board meeting in open session. He has committed to have his full report to us by the end of this month.

Delcor found we were using some very old technology. Our membership database, while flexible enough to lend itself to programming to serve many purposes and answer many questions, is written in Access 97. The name tells how old it is. It is no longer even supported by the manufacturer. One of our servers is controlled by Windows NT 4.0 software, another 1990s technology that is no longer supported. Our workstations run Windows XP, a quite stable operating system that is also no longer supported (though that non-support started fairly recently). He also pointed out several other software and hardware issues in his presentation.

In addition to old technology, some of our internal processes have been holding us back. The problems have been diagnosed, and some internal solutions have already begun; now we have to decide how best to continue to bring our technology and processes up to date to serve our needs.

Personnel.

Even more important than appropriate use of technology is appropriate use of personnel. If the members of the Board of Directors were in the National Office every day, we would be able to see what staff members do and how they interact at work every day; but we are not, so in August the Executive Committee – that is, the five nationally-elected members of the Board – independently of the national office staff, hired an outside company to survey the staff, both current staff and five who have until recently worked there. The outside company is The Growth Company, which has thirty years of experience with what they call a “360 appraisal.” The Growth Company has not done any prior work for Mensa nor had any prior connection with any of its staff or with ASAE. (More information about The Growth Company is available on its web site, www.thegrowthcompany.com.)

The Growth Company designed the survey, including writing all the questions and analyzing the results. The Executive Committee provided e-mail addresses for the people to be surveyed, and gave each survey participant an opportunity to change the e-mail address he or she wanted to use. There were numerical-score questions and free-form comments related to each of those, and some questions that required narrative answers. The report ran to 73 pages across two documents. The Board saw the reports and discussed them in closed session at the September 2014 Board meeting, as is appropriate for personnel matters.

A panel of the Executive Committee also extensively interviewed by telephone several senior employees – some currently work at the office, some have recently left – and the Board saw and discussed summary reports of those telephone interviews as well during the closed session. We also considered written comments from a recent former staff member.

What we learned from both the 360 and the interviews was that, as in any workplace, there were a variety of opinions about just about everything. But there are some definite areas that need improvement. And no, we cannot talk about them. Personnel matters have to remain confidential. That includes the reasons that several staff members have left recently, other than to say that some were voluntary and some were not.

The Executive Committee and the Board now have information they have not

historically had about national office operations. Some of what we’ve learned has really pleased us. Some of what we’ve learned has concerned us. Some changes have already taken place. Other changes will become apparent in the near future. The Board remains committed to ongoing engagement with these matters.

Conclusion.

The Board recognizes that some service levels from the National Office have been less than what we, or the membership, should be able to expect. There are some new people on staff, and technology changes are coming, but we commit to each other and to the membership that service levels will improve, and that we will make great strides together.

Each of us serves Mensa because we love the organization and want to see it prosper and grow, and we will do all in our power to make that happen.

Please Take Note !

**By Stan Cain
Editor, Borealis**

Borealis will be moving to a new method of emailing the newsletter soon. My plan is to make the transition in time for the mailing of the January 2015 Borealis.

I currently maintain a list of email addresses for sending out Borelais. This is a holdover from when emailing was done using our own website. Due to changes made on the National Office servers where our website is hosted, this no longer works and I currently email Borelais using my own list.

This list is time consuming to maintain and usually out of date. Therefore, I will be shifting to using the email addresses on file with all your other data with the National Office. However, many of the email addresses I currently use are not on file with the National Office and therefore will no longer work once the new system is in use.

Therefore, all members who want to receive Borelais by email need to make sure that the email address that you currently use to receive Borelais is on file with your other data with the National Office. To check or change this information, you can use the link:

www.us.mensa.org then:

Click on “My Mensa”.

Click on “Member Profile”.

Then check/modify the “Local Group publication delivery” method.

October Hike

We had beautiful weather for the hike along the Boardman River. A small group of Mensans found the fall colors not quite at the peak but some spots were definitely beautiful.



We hiked south from the Oleson Bridge trailhead for about a half mile to the Keystone bridge and then returned. All were up for more hiking so we crossed the river on the Oleson footbridge and then took a half mile loop trail on the other side of the river.



Photos by Stan and Dorothy Cain

Men to Match My Mountains Bibliomensans' Book for December By Irving Stone- 576 pages

Our most acclaimed author of biographical and historical fiction has turned his magnificent talent to telling America's most colorful and exciting story-the opening of the Far West. Men to Match My Mountains is a true historical masterpiece, an unforgettable pageant of giants-men like John Sutter, whose dream of paradise was shattered by the California Gold Rush; Brigham Young and the Mormons who tamed the desert with Bible texts; and the silver kings and the miners who developed Nevada's Comstock Lode and settled the Rockies. America called for greatness ... and got it. There is nothing else in history to match the stories of these men who braved a wilderness to bring a new nation to the shores of the Pacific.

Northern Michigan Mensa Bank Reconciliation and Income Statement For the period 1/1/14 - 10/19/14

Fund	1/1/2014	10/19/2014	Change
Friend Fund	\$ 150.00	\$ 80.00	\$ (70.00)
General Opns	\$ 3,750.19	\$ 3,500.15	\$ (250.04)
Add:Outstanding Chks	\$ -	\$ 189.68	\$ 189.68
Sub:Outstanding Deps	\$ -	\$ (333.74)	\$ (333.74)
Total Checking	\$ 3,900.19	\$ 3,436.09	\$ (464.10)
Savings	\$ 103.67	\$ 103.67	\$ -
Total	\$ 4,003.86	\$ 3,539.76	\$ (464.10)

Income	Budget	Year To Date	Remaining
National Office Alloc.	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 686.97	\$ 313.03
Testing Fees	\$ 150.00	\$ -	\$ 150.00
Interest Income	\$ 5.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 3.64
Fund Raising	\$ 245.00	\$ -	\$ 245.00
Total Income	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 688.33	\$ 711.67

Expenses	Budget	Year To Date	Remaining
Newsletter	\$ 450.00	\$ 200.29	\$ 249.71
Office / Incidentals	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ -
Activities / Programs	\$ 200.00	\$ 173.59	\$ 26.41
Publicity	\$ 25.00	\$ 24.49	\$ 0.51
Scholarships	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ -
Proctor / Testing	\$ 50.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 35.00
Stipend-Reg/Ntl Events	\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ 50.00
Membership	\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ 100.00
Total Expenses	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 938.37	\$ 461.63

Total Income			
Less Expenses	\$ -	\$ (250.04)	\$ 250.04