



Borealis

The Monthly Journal of Northern Michigan Mensa



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March 2022

 **Borealis**

Northern Michigan Mensa



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SPREAD THE WORD
NMM YOUNG POETS CONTEST
SEE INSIDE THIS ISSUE, EMAIL
POETRY@NMMFRIENDS.ORG
OR CONTACT THE EDITOR.

Borealis, the newsletter of Northern Michigan Mensa (Region 3, Group 496), is published once each month under the auspices of its Executive Committee.

The newsletter contains mandatory items; the rest of the content 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 welcome! The editor may even reward you with a coffee, or potentially another treat by mutual consent (bagels, anyone?). 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. Writing you submit may be edited for length and clarity, but not content. This is the default editorial assumption.

2. If you don't want your work to be edited at all, you may submit it for publication "as is or not at all." It will not be edited in any way. If published, a note will indicate that it is wholly the work of the author.

3. You may also submit work that is rough and needs major editing. If you have written something but don't have time to polish and edit it, you can still submit it and, at your request, we 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 artwork can be submitted via email in JPEG, PNG, GIF, WEBP, or other standard formats. Flat art or photographs can also be physically mailed, but please do not send originals. Please label each piece submitted with your name and address.

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Northern Michigan Mensa

March/April 2022 Calendar

CultureQuest XXXIII

Facing questions that range from film to politics, from literature to geography, from music to history and further afield, Mensan teams of up to five members gather in their neighborhoods on a single day across the U.S. and Canada and, for 90 minutes, compete for cash prizes and cultural literacy bragging rights.

Important Deadlines & Dates

March 31: Deadline for entry fee and team roster

April 13: Last Day to add/drop team members

April 24: CultureQuest XXXIII!

Register or learn: <https://www.us.mensa.org/attend/culturequest/>

Bibliomensans (Book Club)

April 2, 2022

Remote meeting via Zoom

The meeting starts with the presenter giving background or other pertinent information about the book, the author, and/or the subject matter. The discussion goes round-robin style until each member has had an opportunity to speak; then ensues free-flowing discussion by all members.

In April we will discuss *Lincoln in the Bardo* by George Saunders, an interesting (some might say fascinating, others "gloomy") mix of fantasy, Tibetan Buddhism, Christianity, and history.

Contact Sherry McNamara at sherrymcnamara@hotmail.com for information or invitation.

April 20, 2022

Michigan Association for Gifted Children

2022 Spring Conference

Ottawa Area ISD, 13565 Port Sheldon St., Holland, MI or Zoom

www.migiftedchild.org

See related article on page 2.

Who Helps The Gifted Child?

Back 'round the 1960s, my mom, not typically a great supporter of causes, did join the MAAT (Michigan Association for the Academically Talented), explaining that they worked to support gifted children. Wondering if they still existed, and what they're up to, I found that a couple of name changes later, they're now called the Michigan Association for Gifted Children (MAGC). From their website (www.migiftedchild.org/) I learned of their Spring Conference in Holland on April 20, that "Michigan is at the bottom in our nation for providing and incentivizing gifted education", and that "Policies and funding for gifted students in Michigan were eliminated from the School Aid Bill in 2009." Perhaps bowing to events, the MAGC now advocates for "gifted education for every child in Michigan."

As the new Local Secretary, I'm getting to know NMM members; finding out your interests, needs, opinions, ideas, etc. Some NMMers want more than just a social club for smart people: perhaps things like advocacy and support.

It's good for a numerically small organization such as NMM to identify and meet allies. A trip south isn't out of the question - I may attend the MAGC conference. If I do, I figure I'll meet people of good will, trying to do the best they can given the circumstances. Let me know if you'd like to come along.

Times have changed in the 50+ years since my mom supported the MAAT. We have other options and technologies; we also have more experience. I personally have enjoyed "sharing the wealth" - many resources and techniques do work well with, and may be enjoyed by, all sorts of learners, not just the gifted and talented. Yet, as anyone who's worked with that latter group can attest, teaching, enabling, supporting, and tailoring experiences to them, is different. Designing a learning experience for talented youth, and then rolling it out to the general population, has both limits and natural consequences.

I mentioned technologies. Some families can just 1) Google "Khan Academy" and 2) proceed to homeschool. That and some other things picked up along the way, can and does actually work - but not for all. Some kids do need help.

A small band of NMMers - a minority group - will not be able to move mountains. Advocacy and support are honorable goals, and many of us remember "being that kid". We would like to help - the question is, "how?"

It's not a rhetorical question. Some of us have answers and experience, some of us have ideas, needs, hopes and dreams. It is conceivable that we as Mensans could reach others like us (just younger), give 'em a hand, let 'em know there are others like them, introduce them to those other persons, maybe do some good. Maybe even have some fun in the process.

Annual Financial Report

Northern Michigan Mensa

Period: 1 January 2021 – 31 December 2021

Prepared by: Sherry McNamara, Financial Overseer

The financial records for the time period stated above were reviewed.¹ John Porter, Treasurer for Northern Michigan Mensa (NMM), provided all bank statements from Traverse Bay Area Credit Union for the previously stated time period for this review. Also, provided was a copy of the Local Group Annual Financial Report dated 4.7.21 compiled by Richard Thibeau, prior NMM Treasurer.

Findings:

1. A month-by-month review of each income transaction was analyzed and compared to the statement balance and all were found to be properly recorded.
2. There was a total of three expense transactions, two for postage stamps and one for the scholarship award. Each were reviewed and appear to be normal and properly recorded.
3. Direct deposits of funds from the National Office are occurring on time and with appropriate documentation as to breakdown of amounts.
4. A review of the Local Group Annual Financial Report was found to contain some minor mathematical errors.

Conclusions:

1. Records indicate that the group has operated at a net profit for the period audited.
2. Documentation is kept in an orderly fashion and appears to be complete.

Recommendations:

1. Submit the corrected/revised Local Group Annual Financial Report to the national office of American Mensa.

¹This review was not conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards and was limited in scope.

Bibliomensans Having Fun



Bibliomensan books for 2022

Artwork: John Porter

NMM's book group, the Bibliomensans, meets monthly. Every other month we discuss a book; on off-months we socialize. Since Covid we have been meeting remotely and attendance is up. So is interest. For example, an author who presented their book enjoyed the experience and our group, and wanted to join. When this happens we explain the testing and in-lieu-of processes.

Each year we nominate and then vote on books to read. That way we get a chance to read books we normally would not, but we also have a way (voting) to keep from getting stuck with the choice of reading something we hate, versus letting the group down. A group like ours is only fun because others participate. "Dead wood" can make for "deadly dull" in a book club.

That isn't a problem for Bibliomensans! The discussions are so much fun that on alternate months we just get together and chat. It's all via Zoom, and probably will remain that way even as the pandemic subsides. We "play well remotely" - enjoying our time, the books, the insights, the good company.

We meet on the first Saturday of February, April, June, October, and December, but the second Saturday of August. Off-month meetings are typically the first Wednesday of the month at 6:30 PM.

Give us a try! See if you like us. We'll see if we like you back. So far our track record has been great.

Puzzle

As I was going to St. Ives,
 I met a man with seven wives.
 Each wife had seven brats,
 each brat had seven cats.
 Cats, brats, husband, wives -
 how many journeyed to St. Ives?

Answer

It's a trick question - or rather a riddle.

The riddler was the only person journeying to St. Ives. The others whom he met were going in the opposite direction. Therefore the answer is "one".

Discussion

Key to this puzzle is the word "met". If the rhyme said "Along the way I encountered, going the opposite way - that is, away from or leaving St. Ives" then there would be no riddle. Likewise, if the rhyme said, 'As I was journeying, I overtook a group also journeying to the same destination.'

But we don't generally talk like that - long-winded, pedantically. If we did, we might be accused of talking down to the listener. So we just say "met", and leave it at that, despite the potential ambiguity.

I don't know how old the rhyme is, nor the potential shifting of meaning of the word "met" that may have been happening back then. I do know that terms of direction and place have changed in meaning and/or usage. How many people do you know who have no idea which direction is north?

It isn't only direction. Other words have changed in meaning and usage during a typical lifespan; for example, "mom", "baby", "liberal", and "died". Have you noticed this? How do you feel about it? Obviously we must accept that language changes, yet "change" implies not only gain and new meaning but also loss and cessation. Can we resist a change of meaning and usage? Should we? If not, what takes the place of an old word with a new meaning?

Getting Acquainted

Hi! My name is Heather Gruenberg-Seger, new editor of the *Borealis*.

I've been a member of Mensa for some 5 years. I found out about it in the 1990s from a coworker who thought I should try testing in. After moving to Traverse City and needing to meet more people, I did so - both sending in my GRE results and taking the Mensa proctored test. I didn't enjoy questions like "who sits next to whom and who can wear red when standing next to the person in green", but either way I was in. Never did make it to grad school (yet) but being a member of Mensa has been good for me and I enjoy it. I hope you do, too.

This is your newsletter; I'm here to facilitate. Please send questions, complaints, suggestions. You can reach me on my landline, 231.932.9501, or via email, britajax@gmail.com. Please put BOREALIS in the subject line. I find the "search in the subject line" function to be pretty handy.

I would like to ask you readers of *Borealis*:

- U-M or MSU?
- Pets or no pets?
- Do you talk about Mensa in daily life or no?
- When did you join?
- Why?

Also, I welcome your comments: on *Borealis*, NMM, Mensa, or anything else. If we get enough interest and good comments, we'll post them in a comments section - with your permission of course.

We would like to bring back an old *Borealis* tradition - puzzles, games, riddles, that sort of thing. They don't need to be particularly hard - this isn't a contest - or they can be challenging, but most important of all, they should be fun.

Please contact me with any ideas, or offers to help or contribute. We look forward to continuing to share with you an enjoyable *Borealis*.

The illusion is comfort, stability

In truth every grain of Creation pulsates

The caravan of form never rests

Every instance a fresh manifestation of its glory

You think Life is the mystery; Life is but the rapture of flight.

- Allama Iqbal

(Pre)Announcing the NMM Youth Poetry Competition

Northern Michigan Mensa will soon be pleased to announce a new youth poetry competition. One winning poem will be published each month in *Borealis*. Each month's winning author will receive a \$50 prize, provided by an anonymous benefactor. Funds are committed for an initial one-year trial period, after which progress will be assessed.

The competition is open to both Mensans and non-Mensans who reside in a ZIP code matching those of NMM. Poets must be under the age of 18 at time of submission. Poets may be schooled, unschooled, homeschooled, employed, or unemployed. Poets' names will be published (making them bona fide published authors) unless they request anonymity.

Besides helping youth, this is an opportunity to let folks know of the existence of NMM, make connections and alliances, gain publicity, and recruit.

Please be ready to help us spread the word, and expect an NMMer to ask you for help and ideas.

Watch this space! Look for more information in next month's *Borealis*.

Mitchell's Musings

One of the things Region 3 is known for is our Hospitality. We feed guests better than anyone else at RGs, and a large percentage of our events are food-and-beverage related. We're known for being welcoming, and I bet a lot of you reading this have brought cookies (or your great-aunt's secret casserole, or a special soup) to an event. Perhaps we secretly live the words of Peter Farb: Food to a large extent is what holds a society together, and eating is closely linked to deep spiritual experiences. Being active as a social chair planning dinners out, and the connections of being a RG Hospitality Chair, have been much of what has led me to my current leadership position.

I think, also, that missing the fellowship of breaking bread together is what many of us miss the most during this pandemic. As a high risk person who is involved in education and outreach in my community, I've had to make a lot of tough choices for the safety of myself and others. The result of that has been that I have missed the presence of many friends, new and old, and the opportunities to make friends.

The reality is, though, that like many historic events, this has given us the opportunities to grow and change, and to adapt. In a way, it's becoming a form of social Darwinism: when presented with environmental changes, we grow new ways to maintain those connections.

What we are starting to see is that the chapters who are adapting and becoming resilient in the changing world- using technology and reimagining meetings for example- are maintaining fitness and excitement within their groups. In many cases, they are even drawing from other groups. And it's wonderful to see that kind of growth and excitement.

The reality is, the world is changing around us anyway. Fewer hotels were allowing organizations to bring in food, and alcohol access has safety and liability factors.

Members want to feed their brains every bit as much as they want to feed their tummies. I love an opportunity to learn something new, and it's even better when I get to do it with all of you.

Important timeline notes: March 31 is the registration deadline CultureQuest XXXIII, being held April 24th. Region 3 represents well for this!!

Looking ahead, dues are due on April 1; Mind Games is April 28-May 1 in Maine. And one of my favorites, MensaCares community service, is April 18-24. I really look forward to hearing about how your chapter is making a difference.

Elected Members

Local Secretary	Leo Hesting	231-465-5111	leo@pevex.com
Deputy LocSec	Heather Hollick	919-360-1532	heather@heatherhollick.com
Treasurer	John Porter	231-499-9662	porterjm17@gmail.com
At-Large Member	Stan Cain	231-313-2480	sdcelk@yahoo.com
At-Large Member	Jaeger Griswold	313-690-4867	jaegergriz@peoplepc.com

Appointed Members

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Ombudsman	Josh Ockert	231-288-0125	lee.ockert@gmail.com
Scholarship	K. Wregglesworth	989-370-4023	kwregglesworth@oacsd.com
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Graphics Editor - Seeking volunteers			
Program Coordinator - Seeking volunteers			
Publicity Coordinator - Seeking volunteers			
Website & Communications Coordinator - Seeking volunteers			
Testing Coordinator, proctor, proctor coordinator - Seeking volunteers			

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Check out our website: www.nmm.us.mensa.org