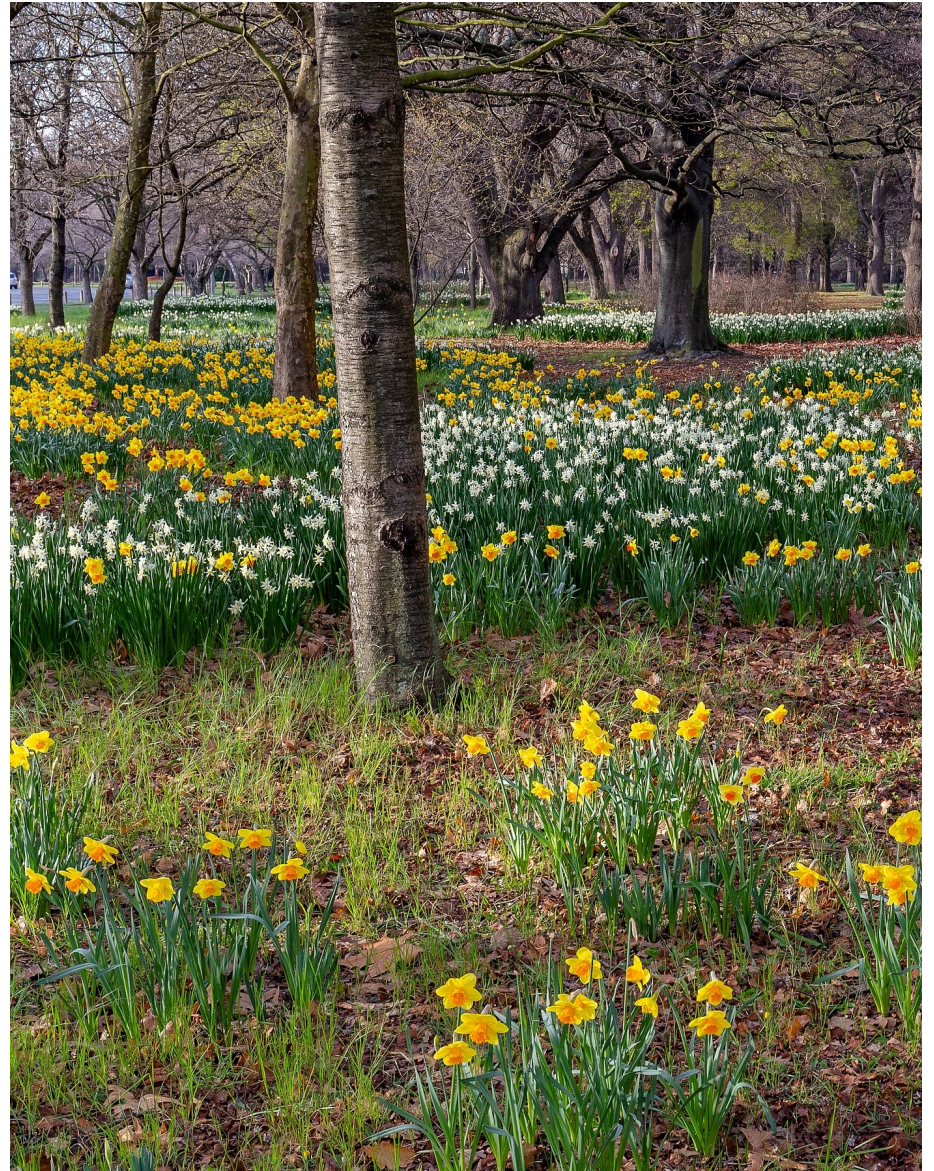




# Borealis

*The Monthly Journal of Northern Michigan Mensa*



Volume 22, Issue 4

April 2022

**Borealis**

Northern Michigan Mensa

send address corrections c/o  
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April 20, 2022

Michigan Association for Gifted Children (MAGC)  
2022 Spring Conference

Ottawa Area ISD, 13565 Port Sheldon St., Holland, MI or Zoom  
[www.migiftedchild.org](http://www.migiftedchild.org)

See related article in last month's *Borealis*

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April 20, 2022 from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Local Group Marketing

The Mensa Marketing Committee has launched sessions called "Office Hours", which seems a bit odd given the time o'clock they're being held. Shouldn't they be called "After Hours"?

Nitpicking aside, this is actually a good time slot for anyone planning to attend the MAGC meeting in Holland (see above).

The Marketing Committee will entertain and answer questions, and introduce upcoming marketing resources that we may use.

This will be a remote meeting held via GoToMeeting. The URL is <https://meet.goto.com/276787685>, or you may dial (571) 317-3122 and enter Access Code 276-787-685. For more information, email Tabby Vos at [tabbcat@yahoo.com](mailto:tabbcat@yahoo.com).

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In-Between Bibliomansans

A presentation, discussion and social hour

May 4, 2022 at 6:30 PM via Zoom

Bibliomansans discuss 6 books each year; on off months we do other fun things. This month, Northern Michigan Mensa member, John Porter, will give us an introduction to the utilitarian uses of birch sap and birch syrup. After John's presentation we will have time for questions and socializing.

See page 4 for more information. Contact Sherry McNamara at [sherrymcnamara@hotmail.com](mailto:sherrymcnamara@hotmail.com) for an invitation.

**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.

Email: [britajax@gmail.com](mailto:britajax@gmail.com)

US mail:

Borealis  
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## Saying "no" to moms who want to hear "yes"

Do you enjoy working with people smarter than you? I sure do. Like when I worked at the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory. To get to work with the equipment - to "get time on the machine" as they said - a physicist had to be really smart, very determined, and pretty good at working within and between organizations. Working with those guys and gals was a lot of fun.

Another time I got to work with very smart folk, was teaching in the Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth at Arizona State University, or JHU/CTY for short. Students in grades 7 and 8 gained admittance by taking the SAT and scoring at around the college freshman level, so they were about 5-6 years ahead of their age. The program was said to serve youth of IQ 160 and above. Though that may have been an exaggeration, mastering a non-dumbed-down college-level computer programming course in 6 weeks (it was a residential summer program), was quite a feat. Especially since the students simultaneously studied multiple other topics, such as Great Books.

I enjoyed the experience and learned a lot. For example, that high-IQ teens were quite skilled and comfortable socially. Any misconception that high IQ correlates with "uneven development" or lack of social skill, was quickly dispelled. I learned also some social dynamics as moms tried to get their kids into the program. Some who didn't qualify were bright, a pleasure to work with, even "gifted" - but with ordinary test results. Some moms were unwilling to accept this. The potential for disappointment, or even conflict, was clear.

We of NMM could find ourselves facing such a situation when recruiting young people. How do we find them? One way is via their moms. Mothers can be great supporters of a group that in turn supports their child. The risk of course is alienating kids' moms who hear "No - your child does not qualify."

As we look forward, if NMM is to have a future, we'll need to stem the decline in our membership. That seems to mean we will need to recruit. But Mensa by design is a small minority group, and recruiting can be a big effort. To accomplish much, we could use some allies. Such as moms of smart kids.

The term "tiger mom" hadn't been coined when I worked with the CTY program, but anyway these moms weren't that - just starry-eyed, a little inaccurate as to the nature of their kids' giftedness, wanting to find them a good, healthy, positive learning and social environment.

I remember, but lack, our director's skill in deflecting moms who resisted a "no" answer. Do you have experience in this area? How can we make allies with the larger community upon which we depend? Specifically, how might we enlist moms without raising and then dashing hopes?

This year was the second year I volunteered to score Mensa scholarship entries. The experience was significantly different from my previous scoring experience in 2020.

In the first place, all the entries that I read in 2020 were submitted by students residing in Northern Michigan Mensa counties. This judging effort was part of the first phase of the essays' evaluations. The essays' content suggested to me that almost all of them were submitted by current high school students. That is, a few seemed to lack students' enthusiasm, or were poorly constructed, or were minimally responsive to each of the three areas for which an entry is judged: essay form (up to thirty points), essay content (up to forty points), and judge's impression (up to thirty points). Only a few of the forty-five essays I read in 2020 warranted scores in the 95-100 points range.

On the other hand, content of the entries that I read in 2022 suggested that they were submitted by students living in Ohio or West Virginia. These entries were in a second round of review rather than the first round as in 2020. About one-quarter to one-third of the entries were submitted by students who had already finished several college courses so were already accumulating college credit hours. A few who submitted entries had bachelor's degrees so were planning to begin graduate schools this fall.

I saw one essay from a current high school student who will have completed two years of college credits by the time the student graduates from high school this spring. Dual-enrollment in both one's high school and the local community college makes this possible. Quite a few entries were submitted by students who were dually-enrolled, but only one claimed that the student would have junior status in a college upon graduating from high school!

This year virtually all the submissions I read exceeded the best of those I saw in 2020. I was brought to tears by three specific entries of the thirty-five that I judged and would have written checks to the students had I known their names and addresses.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE UTILITARIAN USES OF BIRCH SAP AND BIRCH SYRUP

PRESENTER: John Porter

May 4, 2022 at 6:30 PM - See Page 1 for more details

This discussion will focus on the culinary aspects of utilizing birch trees for their sap. Much can be said about working with birch bark as a hobby and as an art. Examples of those aspects will be shared. The process of tapping birch trees to extract sap which can be used for consumption and for processing into birch syrup will be explained.

John has been exploring the harvesting of birch sap to make syrup for the last ten years. This effort has been guided by local maple syrup producers and officials of Cornell University's Sugar Maple Research and Extension Field Station in Lake Placid, New York.



It doesn't have to look fancy...

Life Up North

... and how did we get here?

Here's my story:

My father, a general surgeon, was a member of the Midwest Surgical Association. Every other summer they had, and still have, a conference at the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island. During the day the doctors had their classes and lectures, while the spouses and kids would tour the island, swim in the pool, and nap. (Remember, I was a kid.) At night there were dinners in the dining room, movies, and the game room. (Remember, I was a kid).

I had my first Shirley Temple there. I had my first shrimp cocktail there. I learned how to ballroom dance by standing on my dad's feet and being danced around the dance floor. But we didn't live there. We lived in the Detroit suburbs, and never summered up here. So how did I get here? Twenty-one years ago they were closing my Royal Oak apartment complex and making it into condos, and my then-boyfriend/later-husband said "I'm moving to Traverse City. You could come with me."

So I did. Welcome to the neighborhood.

Some of you might have similar stories. What was your first experience of life "Up North"? Were you born here? Were you born in Michigan? Or were you born in another state and moved in? Tell us your story! Write for the Borealis!



## Honey Garlic Glazed Salmon

### Salmon

- 4 (6 oz each) salmon fillets
- 1/2 tsp kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1/2 tsp smoked paprika (or regular paprika)
- 1/4 tsp blackening seasoning (optional)

### Sauce

- 3 Tbsp butter
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 6 cloves garlic minced
- 1/2 cup honey
- 3 Tbsp water
- 3 Tbsp soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp sriracha sauce, or other hot sauce like Valentina's Mexican or Frank's
- 2 Tbsp lemon juice

### Directions

- Pat salmon dry, then season with salt, pepper, paprika and blackening seasoning (if using). Set aside. Adjust oven rack to middle position, then preheat broiler.
- Add butter and oil to a large, oven-safe skillet over MED-HIGH heat. Once butter is melted, add garlic, water, soy sauce, sriracha, honey and lemon juice and cook 30 seconds or so, until sauce is heated through.
- Add salmon, skin side down (if using salmon with skin), and cook 3 minutes. While salmon cooks, baste frequently with sauce from the pan by spooning it over the top of the salmon.
- Broil salmon for 5-6 minutes, basting with sauce once during the broil, until salmon is caramelized and cooked to desired doneness.
- Garnish with minced parsley if desired.

This recipe works very well when broiled in a small toaster oven.

'Tis Spring, my love, 'tis Spring,  
 And the birds begin to sing:  
 If 'twas Winter, left alone with you,  
 Your bonny form and face  
 Would make a Summer place,  
 And be the finest flower that ever grew.

I love Spring's early flowers,  
 And their bloom in its first hours,  
 But they never half so bright or lovely seem  
 As the blithe and happy grace  
 Of my darling's blushing face,  
 And the happiness of love's young dream.

- John Clare,

Excerpts from 'Tis Spring, My Love, 'Tis Spring.

## NMM Youth Poetry Competition - Update

Initial response has been positive; a working group is forming to iron out details. So far we have discussed:

- Promotion, including mailing flyers to schools.
- Preliminary handling. What happens if dozens or hundreds of candidate poems come in?
- Judging. Should we apply criteria or standards other than "I like that, it resonates with me"? If so, who has these skills?
- Categories. Should we specify particular forms, e.g. sonnets?

Do you love poetry? Want to help kids and NMM? Please let us know.

## Mitchell's Musings

It's April, and you know what that means!

April Fool's. Income Tax Day. Mensa Cares. Earth Day. Culture Quest. Local Group financial reports due. Mind Games. National awards nominations deadline.

I've mentioned Mensa Cares in previous newsletters. And I'm pretty sure no one actually wants me to talk about Tax Day.

So what about that Culture Quest? CQ is the ultimate group trivia contest, with questions ranging from the fun to the obscure. Teams of 5 members complete a ridiculous number of questions in 120 minutes. Due to the pandemic, it will be held virtually again this year. Region 3 has always been well represented: in 2021 we had 3 of the top 20 teams and in 2020 we had 5 of them. Both years we also had the highest ranked Youth team. It's one of those ongoing annual fun things that brings out the smarts and the competitiveness. You can read about CQ here: <https://www.us.mensa.org/attend/culturequest/>

Mind Games is a highly recognized event where Ms gather together and play - and rate - new games. We provide manufacturers highly valued feedback, and the best of the best are awarded the highly coveted Mensa Select award. That denotation is practically a guarantee of a game's success: past winners include games like Scattergories, Fluxx, Quirkle, Apples to Apples, Rush Hour, Magic the Gathering, and Trivial Pursuit. We were among the first to play them. Mind Games 2022 is held in Portland Maine but it travels around. <https://www.mensamindgames.com/>

One of the most important things that we do is to recognize volunteers. Any member can nominate someone for National Service, National Appreciation, Lifetime Membership, and Distinguished Service awards. If there is someone you'd like to recognize, please send an email to [nationalawards@us.mensa.org](mailto:nationalawards@us.mensa.org). There are so many deserving people who have given so much time to Mensa. I may not know them all personally, but you do. Help me thank them.

And that's no April Fool.

-Lora Mitchell, Mensa Region 3 Vice Chair

## Elected Members

Local Secretary	Leo Hesting	231-465-5111	<a href="mailto:leo@pevex.com">leo@pevex.com</a>
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Treasurer	John Porter	231-499-9662	<a href="mailto:porterjm17@gmail.com">porterjm17@gmail.com</a>
At-Large Member	Stan Cain	231-313-2480	<a href="mailto:sdcelk@yahoo.com">sdcelk@yahoo.com</a>
At-Large Member	Jaeger Griswold	313-690-4867	<a href="mailto:jaegergriz@peoplepc.com">jaegergriz@peoplepc.com</a>

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