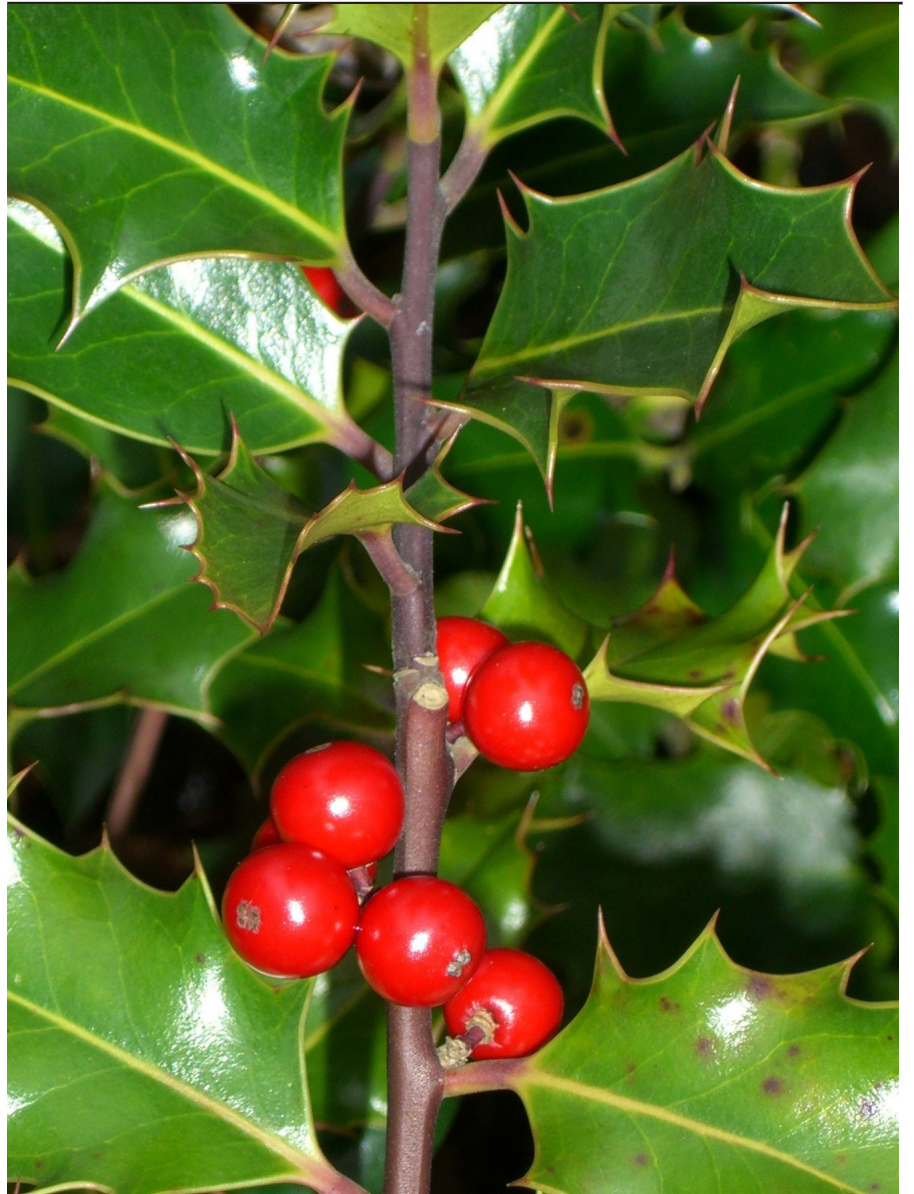


Borealis

The Monthly Journal of Northern Michigan Mensa



Volume 23, Issue 11

November-December 2023



Borealis

Northern Michigan Mensa

Send address corrections c/o

American Mensa, Ltd.

1315 Brookside Drive

Hurst, TX 76053

Borealis, the newsletter of Northern Michigan Mensa (Region 3, Group 496), is published 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! Members of Northern Michigan Mensa may send their original writing submissions to Borealis.

Please do not send the work of others unless such submissions include 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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Announcements

Upcoming ExComm Election

American Mensa bylaws require local groups, like Northern Michigan Mensa (NMM) to have an Executive Committee (ExComm) that serves for a maximum of two years. NMM's own bylaws state that our ExComm serves for 2 years beginning in even years.

Historically, ExComm positions have not been "hot properties" and in fact it's been hard to find NMMs willing to volunteer, to fill all 5 ExComm positions. So there is generally no contention - no campaigning, no runoffs, no debates, politicking, etc.

Our bylaws, allowing for and/or anticipate this. In case the Nominating Committee finds only 5 candidates for the 5 available ExComm positions, that slate of candidates automatically becomes the new ExComm, come January 1. The goal in elections past: find NMMs willing to serve, and let them take office per this provision.

The ExComm is elected at large, but since folks like to know what they'll be getting themselves into, in practice, the positions are laid out in advance. This year's slate of candidates:

- Leo Hesting, Local Secretary or LocSec
- Thomas Irish, Deputy Local Secretary
- Richard Thibeau, Treasurer
- John Porter, at large
- Jim McDermott, at large

If for any reason you (an NMM) object to any of the above NMMs being seated in the 2024-2025 ExComm, or if you think you or another NMM would do a better job, et cetera, just let any current ExComm member know. We'll forward your alternate nominations to the Nominating Committee.

Otherwise, the above slate of candidates will automatically take office on January 1, 2024, and serve for 2 years.

Avenues of Service

As this issue goes to press, the new ExComm slate has formed, so things look good for NMM's continued existence in 2024-2025 - we won't be non-compliant with Mensa requirements.

However, the ExComm is not really the most important NMM group. True, the new ExComm will be responsible for overseeing anything NMM does in the next two years; so in the sense of keeping things from going off the rails, that's important. But the lion's share of work actually gets done by other persons or roles.

The Proctor Team will be critical. NMM, like some other smaller groups, hasn't had a proctor for a while. Though many Mensans join based on "prior evidence" (results of other g-loaded psychometric tests), having proctors go out into the community not only vets candidates; it's also outreach, advertising, and a boost to public awareness. Ideally we should have 3 more proctors.

The Testing Coordinator will work with the proctors and the Membership Coordinator. This is the person who does the nuts-and-bolts "secretarial" or administrative work. Scheduling, communicating, answering questions, balancing workloads, etc.

The Membership Coordinator will generally be responsible for trying to retrain and recruit members. Specific tasks will include, reaching out (along with the Local Secretary and/or deputy Local Secretary) to new members; welcoming them, trying to get them involved. Also working with others to schedule and hold events.

The (new) Communications Officer's position is largely described on the next page (page 3). We will need to work with the National Office to see whether we can formally re-name the Publications Officer, but even if that doesn't happen, the duties will involve more than, and be rather different from, the current position/role. There will be a lot of room for invention and innovation in this position.

Other Mensa groups find other roles useful. What with trying to boost membership, and possibly revitalize or even re-invent our club, these positions described here, will be a good start.

From the Publications Officer

If you are reading this, you're in a pretty small minority. I don't mean just "the 2%" - I'm referring to how you receive and consume information.

Actually even that's old language. Many of us don't just receive and consume; we also forward, post, excerpt, quote, interpret, comment, and target. We may do these things directly: e.g. cutting out and sending a couple of paragraphs. My dear old mom and her friends would do that: cut out a newspaper article and send it via U.S. Mail. "Just thought this might interest you." That's forwarding. But when we cut/forward just a portion, that's editing, selection - maybe even slanting.

We may also affect the information stream indirectly, just by following links, viewing videos. Tracking tools are used to develop a profile of you, to figure out what else might interest you; also others like you, your friends/acquaintances/"connections". So just by viewing/reading, and even without forwarding or commenting, we indirectly steer others.

We at NMM don't use tracking tools, so if you're reading this, nobody knows it. But we can make some general (-ly informed) guesses. The percentage of people who even use email at all; much less download-and-print/read a PDF, is pretty darned small. And not just among very young demographics, as the centerfold (pages 4 and 5) demonstrates.

Beside that spread I happen to read in the November 1, 2023 issue of The Wall Street Journal, an article titled "Wall Street Faces Texting Dilemma." Passages such as "Wall Street firms are facing a problem that is growing more difficult by the day: how to capture staff communications as required by regulators while the ways their employees talk to each other keep changing," "[T]he ways people communicate have changed since the regulations were first enacted, with almost everyone texting about almost everything these days," and "The evolution of how people communicate, such as the use of reaction emojis in messages, as well as the spread of messages that disappear upon receipt, mean that record-keeping compliance will continue to be a headache ... going forward."

At NMM we can't coerce. Therefore if I want to communicate, I need to use the channel "that works for you." We need to use communication tools (and strategies) that reach people, and invite them to participate.

Doing (and researching, planning, and executing) this will be an important part of the Communications Officer's job over the next 2 years. We at NMM may actually be pioneers in this area. Stay tuned! (How's that for old-fashioned language?)



ON MY PHONE

Sarah Dorsett

The apps the CEO depends on to stay ahead



Sarah Dorsett, chief executive of high-tech baby-monitor company Nanit, is always plugged in—just don't send her any emails. She is often on her iPhone 13, using it for everything from messaging with friends and co-workers to monitoring Nanit's sales on Shopify. According to a recent sampling, Dorsett spends an average of two hours and 50 minutes each day on her phone. Here were some of her top apps.

—Corrie Driebusch



Dorsett's company, Nanit, makes baby monitors.

This article excerpt (from the Saturday/Sunday, October 28 - 29, 2023 issue of a Wall Street Journal) points out that this busy go-getter executive doesn't use email, and lists the various communications tools she uses instead. Note:- she's a grown woman (not a "teen", nor "tween"); also, the mix of communication tools she uses is somewhat eclectic and likely to change both over time and between users.



Messages

48 minutes a day

Before taking the lead role at Nanit, Dorsett spent years in e-commerce, scaling e-commerce businesses for large-scale retailers like Bloomingdale's and Century 21. During that time she said she signed up for promotional emails from dozens of retailers, and her inbox is now flooded. "I'm a terrible emailer. I check my email a few times a week," she said. "Instant messaging has become my religion, it's become my love language." She said she texts with everyone in her life, from employees to moms' groups, from her husband to her nanny.



Waze

21 minutes

Dorsett has lived in New Jersey for years, but the Mid-western-bred executive said she doesn't drive anywhere without using her Waze directions app. "I'd be lost without it," she said.



YouTube

15 minutes

Dorsett doesn't take credit for this one showing up in her screentime stats. "That's my 7-year-old daughter stealing my phone to watch what she calls 'YouTube shorts,'" said Dorsett.



Slack & Mail

14 & 12 minutes

When Dorsett opens up her mail app on her phone, it's for the purpose of deleting messages, not reading them. Employees know to text her or message her on Slack. "Almost no one emails me at the company," she said.



Messenger

13 minutes

Since friends and co-workers know sending her an email to Dorsett is sending a note into the void, they seek out other methods. Dorsett said she finds Messenger, the Meta app, more manageable than traditional email.



Shopify

6 minutes

When Dorsett opens her Shopify app, she's looking at Nanit's sales metrics, and watching exactly what people are ordering and when. Dorsett is a data person, and she loves looking at analytics. She said she has memorized what a "normal" day of sales looks like for Nanit and likes to check in to see how sales are trending compared with her baseline. "I've always loved to look at sales in real time," said Dorsett. "It's peace of mind." In the early days, when Nanit launched a new product, she said she'd sit in the office and listen to the "ka-ching" sound the Shopify app makes when a sale is completed. "That sound was very gratifying."

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For a small group, Northern Michigan Mensa's *Borealis* has, at times in the past, been a pretty good publication. I've heard it said that *Borealis* was "a good, interesting literary journal." This was before my time, so I don't know.

A goal I had when I unexpectedly found myself in the role of "layout editor and Publications Officer" was that the *Borealis* continue to be more or less at least as good as it had in the past. And, during the past two years, we have had some successes - some good NMM member contributions, including photos. However, it's clear that *Borealis* readership is pretty low; so have contributions.

Elsewhere in this issue are some discussions of what kind of presentation works best for current-day members. Our bylaws specify only that we publish a "newsletter", that publishes semiannual financial statements, advance notice of elections, decisions made in meetings, etc. Nowhere is it specified, how often NMM needs to publish. Publishing quarterly (as some other local groups do) is OK; so would be semiannual publication.

Nor is it specified how long or in what format the newsletter is published, though there is a requirement that members may request a printed newsletter.

The new ExComm, which will be naming a Communications or Publications officer, will be making decisions as to periodicity, length, content, and form of our newsletter, going forward. Contact them if you're interested.

Whither Mensa?

This is not the first time I've posed this question; perhaps even in the pages of the *Borealis* (I don't actually remember). During the past two years, I've learned just a little about Mensa specifically, and of course we all know of the changed and changing landscape for membership organizations in general - they dwindle as people find other ways of communicating, having fun, and socializing.

Like many organizations, NMM seems to have members who vary in our opinions of what NMM should be:

1. "Not just a social club for smart people," or,
2. "A social club for smart people is just fine by me."

A typical way to address these two, is to offer both social activities and "do-gooding" opportunities. In Mensa specifically, we as an organization do a fairly decent job of recruiting and inducting younger members, but we don't do such a good job of offering those younger folks, things of interest to them. With an aged and ageing club, we need to take this into consideration; for example possibly offering opportunities of Young Mensan events. Such events and efforts are well-supported by Mensa America.

As for "do-gooding" opportunities; they exist. But given that Mensa is a minority (2%) organization, building relationships with others, and then working with them, is likely to be a "most effective best practice."

We can expect to see a lot of opportunities for growth in the 2024-2025 timeframe. It will be good to see, what we will be able to make of those opportunities.

Membership

Happy November/December Birthday!

David	Montgomery	8-November
Lindsey	Lipke	21-November
Gary	McWhirter	28-November
Josh	Ockert	7-December

Mensa Membership Milestones (Years of continuous Membership)

November:

Jaeger	Griswold	4
Richard	Thibeau	14
Robin	Stanley	17
Stephen	Quick	18
Roger	Meintz	29

December:

Bartholomew	Halliday	15
Benjamin	Anderson	17
Vicki	Carpenter	17
Abby	Hayes	25
John Howard	Reed	32
Howard	Konetchy	45

Thanks to outgoing Membership Coordinator Jim McDermott for providing this information for the past 2 years.

Contact Northern Michigan Mensa

Elected Members

Local Secretary	Leo Hesting	231-465-5111	leo@us10.org
Deputy LocSec	Heather Hollick	919-360-1532	heather@heatherhollick.com
Treasurer	John Porter	231-499-9662	porterjm17@gmail.com
At-Large	Jaeger Griswold	313-690-4867	jaegergriz@peoplepc.com
At-Large	Seeking volunteer		

Appointed Members

Membership	Jim McDermott	231-943-7792	jhmcdermott@yahoo.com
Ombudsman	Josh Ockert	231-288-0125	lee.ockert@gmail.com
Scholarship	Seeking volunteer		
SIGHT	Melissa Rennie	231-889-4198	renmeij@yahoo.com
Financial Overseer	Sherry McNamara	231-313-2769	sherrymcnamara@hotmail.com
Bibliomensans	Sherry McNamara	231-313-2769	sherrymcnamara@hotmail.com
Newsletter Editor	H. Gruenberg-Seger	231-932-9501	britajax@gmail.com
Graphics Editor	- Seeking volunteers		
Program Coordinator	- Seeking volunteers		
Publications Officer Pro Tempore	- Leo Hesting		
Website & Communications Coordinator	- Seeking volunteers		
Testing Coordinator, Proctor, Proctor Coordinator	- Seeking volunteers		

Regional Vice Chair Lora Mitchell 614-450-0170 rvc3@us.mensa.org

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

NMM general message #: (231) 480-1488