



Borealis Mini

The Newsletter of Northern Michigan Mensa

Greetings and updates

Last issue I mentioned scheduling some Mensa Admission Tests (MATs) in the month of October. That's done and the tests are scheduled:

- October 5, 2024, 1:30 PM - Scottville, Scottville library - Community Room, 204 East State Street, Scottville, MI 49454
- October 12, 2024, 12:30 PM - Marquette, Peter White Public Library - George Shiras Room, 217 N Front Street, Marquette, MI 49855
- October 19, 2024, 11:00 AM - Gaylord, Otsego County Library - Multipurpose Room, 700 South Otsego Avenue, Gaylord, MI 49735
- October 26, 2024, 10:00 AM - Traverse City, Main Library - Thirlby Room, 610 Woodmere Avenue, Traverse City, MI 49686
- November 2, 2024, 10:30 AM - Cadillac - Cadillac Wexford Public Library - Meeting Room, 411 S Lake St, Cadillac, MI 49601

November 2 of course is not in October but the responsible staffer in American Mensa's National Office, has OK'd the extension of the 50% off offer on the MAT until that date.

I have gotten some help from Northern Michigan Mensans but I could use more. To repeat from last time:

1. Getting the word out. Contact local press, get a newspaper article placed. Agree to be interviewed if this is possible and you're willing. Use other forms of communication, e.g. social media, posters.
2. Assist me on the day of the test. A single person can proctor a test alone but it is better and safer to have two people on hand. Also I'd like to meet you!

If you live in or near one of the above, expect to hear from me via email and/or telephone. If you don't want me to bug you for help, just let me know - an email will do.

Report from the Western Pennsylvania Area Mensa (WPAM) Regional Gathering

I mentioned in the previous issue that American Mensa is both aging and shrinking, but not everywhere, and that "best practices" exist. In an effort to learn more I attended the WPAM Regional Gathering, held this year just outside Pittsburgh. It was interesting and I learned a lot - primarily, that the aging/shrinking problem is scarily, even shockingly real. The RG surfaced another aspect I hadn't thought of; attendees there had been "regulars" for decades; in some cases 3 or 4 decades. Therefore they all knew each other and kind of had established roles, relationships, habits, and patterns. Every attendee I recall, was friendly

and willing to be welcoming, individually. But "breaking in" to what resembles a static pre-existing setup or web of relationships, could be an issue. One potential member, an invited guest of about 35 years of age, looked around and said "there's nobody my age here". Not to mention folks in their 20s, or teens.

ExComm report

The Executive Committee (ExComm) met on September 17, 2024. We heard the Treasurer's report, reiterated our previous offer of reimbursing the charge for the MAT if 1) they pass and 2) they join NMM. We discussed the long-standing NMM policy of subsidizing an NMM member's annual membership dues in case of financial need. We also considered whether to reimburse a new member for their first year's membership dues but did not decide to do this - if it comes up we will review each case individually. We voted to authorize the Treasurer to make routine expenditures such as the annual Zoom membership for Bibliomansans, stamps, etc.

I (Leo) also reported the same findings about the WPAM RG, summarized above. We on the ExComm have previously discussed revitalizing the/our club, recruiting, etc. In light of the above I proposed that we more or less abandon any strategy of integrating new/younger members into NMM as it exists today. Instead I suggested that if we are able to recruit at all, we should do so with an eye toward, basically, completely replacing ourselves and the club that exists. In other words forming a new club with younger members that will take over after we existing NMMs shuffle off this mortal coil. There was general agreement.

Treasure report

As of September, 2024, NMM has a Checking balance of \$2,508.67; a CD balance of \$3,069.90; and a mandatory Credit Union account balance of \$103.67.

Activities, socializing

Summer is well over and even that delightful period of early fall. Many people enjoy the mid-fall season not only for the change of weather, color, and season, but also because life resumes some normality. The lazy, crazy, hazy days of summer are done, so is the period of so many free concerts - many of them quite good, at least where I live - that you can't begin to attend them all. The crammed social schedule eases and we have some free time.

In chatting with NMMs I find that fairly often just the personal chat is most welcome. I was surprised to find how highly some NMMs prized a simple phone call/chat - who knew? The obvious factor limits - many of us don't pick up/answer if we don't recognize the caller's phone number - quite understandable. In a way it makes sense and I shouldn't be surprised. I myself am hugely overinundated by "media" pouring my way, and all I use is email and web browsing! For those who're less old-school, and also use/consume/are pursued by social media, TikTok, et cetera, the overload could be even greater. Paradoxically making the simplest connection - a phone call - stand out by comparison. Maybe there's some kind of theory there to be discerned/arrived at. For now it gives me the idea of an old-fashioned "phone tree" - perhaps appropriately modified. I wonder if and how that might work?