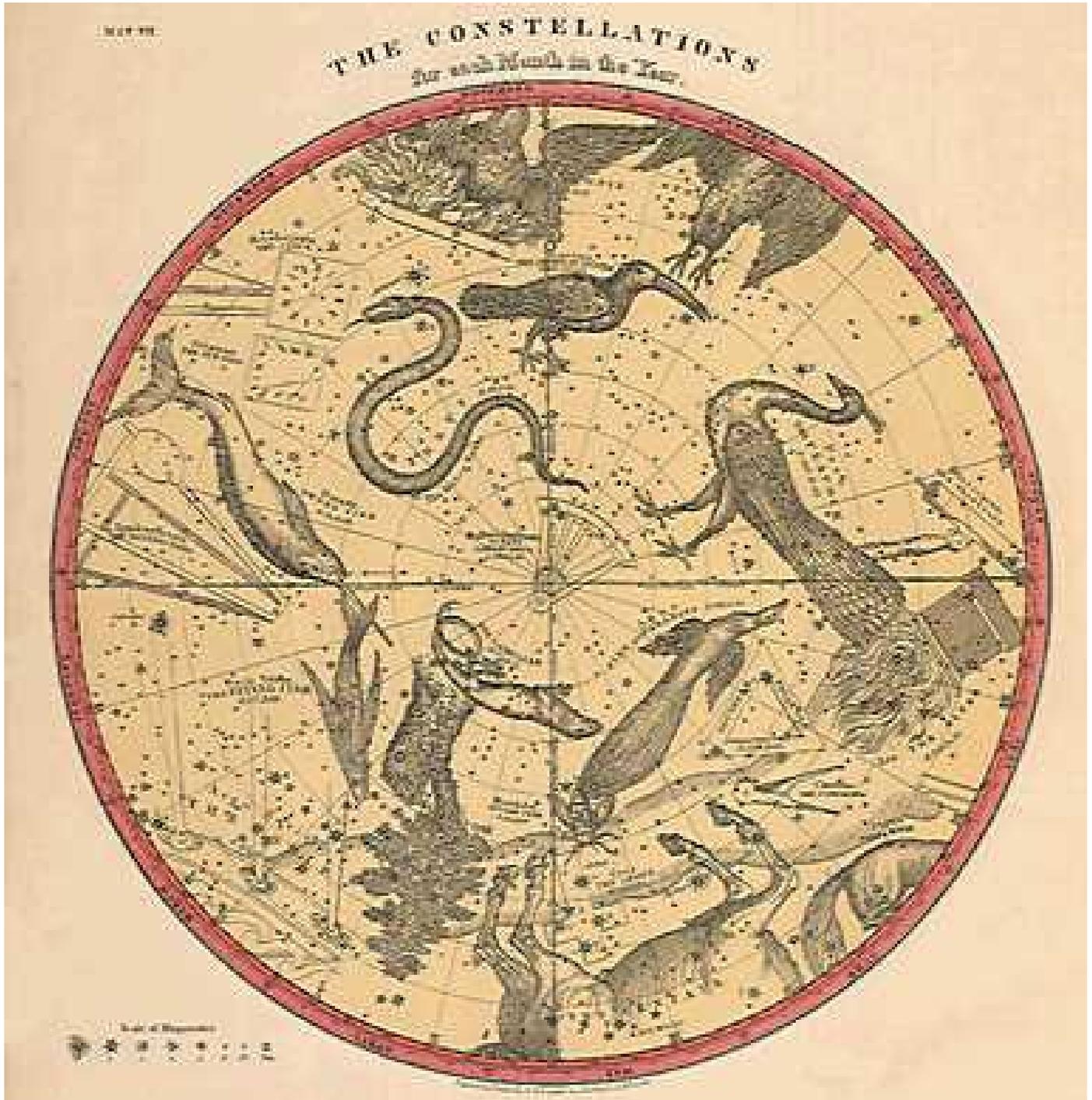


Armadillo Literary Gazette

A Publication of Lonestar Mensa

Volume XXX Number 3

March 2003



A Word to the Wise

-by John Neemidge, President

March Madness

Before telling you all the great things we've got planned for March, and the various volunteer opportunities we have for you, I wanted to remind you that March 31st is the renewal deadline. If your membership expires this year, please take the time right away to send your renewal. It's easy to renew -- you can mail back the renewal form Mensa sends out (you probably got it in December or January), you can phone the National Office at 817-607-0060, or renew from the national web site at <http://www.us.mensa.org>. With everything going on, both locally and nationally, there's more reason to renew than ever.

We do have another busy month. I'll let the calendar speak for itself, mostly, but we've got something nearly every weekend -- Movie Night, the Monthly Meeting, the Oscar Party, and Games Night, plus TGIT and the Waco group. I hope you'll come to at least one of these events, if you can -- we'd really like to see you there. Mensa, especially at the local level, is really all about meeting other Mensans, and the best way to do that is to come out to events.

There is another way to meet Mensans at the local level, though -- our chat email list. If the National Office has your accurate email address, you've probably already had a chance to join the chat list. However, if it doesn't, we probably don't have you on either the chat list or our low-traffic announcement and reminder list. The easiest way to fix this is send me an email (at neemidge@usa.net) and let me know if you want to be on the lists (or just the announcement list, if you're not a fan of chat lists). You can (and should) also update your email address with the national office -- and make sure it's not withheld from local groups. We'd really like to get each and every one of you on the announcement list -- that way we can remind you of what's coming up, and also announce changes to events (such as the speaker change we had in February).

Our February speaker, Barbara ten Brink of the Austin Area ScienceFest, gave a great presentation on the ScienceFest. She also talked to us about volunteering to judge ScienceFest projects. We're looking at volunteering, and we hope other Lonestar Mensans will volunteer as well. If you'd like more information about the ScienceFest and volunteering, see their web site at <http://www.sciencefest.org> or call Barbara at 512-464-5077.

Speaking of speakers, we're still looking for people interested in joining the program committee. We need

people to contact potential Monthly Meeting speakers and coordinate with the rest of the program committee to continue bringing great speakers to our Monthly Meeting. It's not a big time commitment and we'd really appreciate the help.

There are lots of other ways you can help out -- host an event, write for the newsletter, volunteer at one of our volunteer events, take an office in the group -- but the easiest is just come to events. Like I said before, Mensa at the local level is really all about meeting and enjoying the company of other Mensans. We can't meet people who don't come to events -- I hope you'll come out and join the fun!

A Happy Birthday MARCH for:

- 3 Andrew Nierengarten
- 4 Lynda Boots
- Charles Alvis Hale
- Erika Walsted
- 5 Mr David B Miller
- Ms Barbara Jean Szalay
- 6 Ms Mary Dunlap Young
- 10 Joshua Benjamin Chlapek
- 11 Marcy Goodfleisch
- 12 Mr William K McKoy
- 14 Eric J Hammack
- Joseph Santandrea
- 15 Henry Arthur Powell
- 17 Scott J Schwaitzberg
- Mark Andy Smith
- 18 Charles L Fahy Jr
- Ms Marilyn Gardner Ford
- 19 Kyle Simpson
- 20 Mr Paul Anderson
- Jason Cezeaux
- 21 Jon Etkins
- John D Southard
- 22 Judi Buonaguidi
- Amy M Feller
- Ken A Finn
- 23 Mr David P Conley
- Ms Mary Seabol
- Ashley Wollscheid
- 24 Ms Lydia Ann O'Neil
- 25 Ms Trudy L K Loper
- 27 Madeleine Z Mercier
- 29 Ronald Massey



Raising the Boom

-by Barbara Bartlett

I've been pondering one of life's great mysteries; I wonder why it is that opposites attract. Obviously, it happens because those of us who like to sleep with the window open marry people who cannot sleep at all unless the window is not only closed, but locked. Those of us who like salty, and marry folks who crave sweets. And, some of us are pack rats, and we marry people who will throw away anything!

But, even more divisive, cat people marry dog people! I was raised with cats. Cats in the barn. Cats in the yard. Occasionally cats in the house. Oh, sure, there were sometimes dogs around, too, but the dogs tended to come and go while the cats—or at least their descendants, were around forever.

Growing up on a farm, there were always barn cats. I can remember my granddaddy milking the cow every morning, and always squirting fresh milk into a pan kept in the pen for the purpose of providing a treat for the barn cats. These cats were always too wild to be petted or played with. Of course, there were always a few of the barn cats that grew brave and ventured up to the house. Those guys would warily gather on the back porch and wait for my grandmother to put out the "cat scraps", and occasionally let me touch them.

All of those wild, and half-wild cats, are stored in my memory as a group ...none stand out as individuals. But, there are a few who had such an outstanding personality that they created their own memory in my mind. One big yellow tomcat with a huge head and ragged and scarred ears learned to slip his foot under the screen door and pull it open. Then he would prowl around the house, getting into all kinds of trouble. Once discovered, he would let out a yowl, and beat a fast track the way he came. He was so big, and so strong, that when he hit the screen door at a run, it swung open and he was halfway back to the barn before we knew what had happened. That sure scared my grandmother on several occasions!

Then there was the mama cat that she called "her baby". With coaxing, Mama Cat would come into the house. She always seemed scared; she moved around the walls of a room, keeping her eyes on the humans. If she was so scared, what was she doing in the house? She loved oatmeal, and Grandmother lured her in with that. At first, she ate it on the back porch. Then outside the kitchen door. Then inside the kitchen. Finally, Mama Cat learned to stand in a kitchen chair, her back feet on the seat, and

her front feet propped up on the back, and eat oatmeal out of a spoon while my grandmother talked baby talk to her.

No wonder, then, that I became a "cat person". The roll of beloved cats includes Tom Cat, Beauregard, BobbieSue, Delilah (now there was a mean cat!), Scarlett, and of course Rhett, Each had his own personality. Tom hated dogs and never failed to chase them out of his yard. BobbieSue had a real fascination with feet. Rhett was the only cat I ever knew who liked to go for car rides! And then I married a "dog person"! More next month.....



March ExComm Meeting Minutes

February 8, 2003

Attending: John Neemidge, President; Margaret Wofford, Vice President; Geri Neemidge, Membership Chair; and Mark Kres, Member at Large.

John convened the meeting at 10:25.

John informed attendees that the hotel contract for the next RG had been received and that it was the same as the previous contract. Moved, Geri, to accept the contract as written; seconded by Margaret. Passed unanimously.

John reported that Midge Kocen, Treasurer, purchased two nine-month \$5,000 CDS rather than one six-month and one nine- or twelve-month as planned because the rate was better. She will stagger the renewals if the rate improves.

John reported that Helen has ordered colored tabs for the newsletter to improve visibility for the hardworking folding/labeling volunteers, but that she will have to pull non-bar coded labels (maybe 10 labels per month) in advance because colored tabs can foul up the USPS's bar code machinery. Helen ordered 1,000 red tabs and 1,000 black tabs which will give us a three month trial period to decide if we like colored tabs.

Geri gave a status report on upcoming programs. Attendees discussed the open Program Chair. John has asked for volunteers for the position.

John reported that he had changed the software for both the e-mail chat list and the announce list.

John adjourned the meeting at 10:45.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret Wofford
Vice President

Hello Region 6!

-by Dan Wilterding, RVC Region 6

Think about your newsletter Editor for a bit. What is involved in the job, what sort of person makes a good Editor, and what does an Editor need?

What's involved is relatively simple:

An Editor must be detail oriented without losing sight of the big picture; they must be able to stay within or under budget for most months in order to allow for the occasional large or enhanced issue. Editors are responsible for finding and printing items of interest to the local members and doing so in a manner that appeals to both hemispheres of the brain; they are charged with avoiding libel and unsuitable subjects; they need to be able to present a newsletter that is timely and balanced while being thought-provoking and occasionally humorous. The Editor must know when an absolute deadline can be slid and when it cannot. A good Editor is a diplomat, able to coax a rewrite out of an author that has submitted "the perfect piece"; and to tactfully decline submissions that are just not right for the venue. They maintain a stock of articles that may be used as needed to supplement a particular subject or when the issue is just a little short on content. The Editor knows that their newsletter is often used as an introduction to Mensa and that it is very often the only contact a member has with their local group, and knowing this strives to present the group in a manner that is both accurate and interesting.

There, I told you it was simple. Describing the sort of person that makes a good Editor is even simpler: A good Editor is a person that can (and will) do all of the above - and more, as needed.

Care and feeding of an Editor:

Your Editor needs interesting articles submitted by his readers; having a regular and dependable columnist or two in the ranks greatly eases the burden. Occasional submissions are always welcome. "Letters to the Editor" regarding previous newsletter contents demonstrate an interest in and involvement with the group -- Be Interested! Be Involved! An Editor needs to be kept current with monthly activities -- write-ups on those that have happened and notification of those pending; the newsletter calendar is a vital part of the newsletter. To that end the members need to host and attend such events as their interest and abilities allow. Sometimes to have a party you need to make a party; same thing goes for other types of gatherings. A pat on the back when deserved and offers to help out when necessary are also ways to make your

Editor happier.

Next time you pick up your newsletter take the time to really *read* it and appreciate the work that goes into the production each month. Say "Thanks" and offer to help when you can. For the good of your group -- Support your Editor!

Comments, anyone?

Dan Wilterding - RVC6
rvc6@us.mensa.org
dtwtech@swbell.net
817-573-4454
504 West Atchley Drive
Granbury, Texas 76048

Don't forget:

Mind Games

April 11-13 in Houston, Texas

Registration: \$65 to 3/31 (cutoff)

Checks payable to Mind Games 2003, send to
American Mensa, Ltd.

1229 Corporate Drive West
Arlington, Texas 76006-6103

mindgames.us.mensa.org

817-607-0060 x- 122 (visa or mc)

No on site registration

SynRG 2003 - "It's Not Easy Being Green"

May 23-26, 2003

www.gcmensa.org

COLOMBIA

by me

fire in the sky lighting....

fire in the morning sky,....

sadly lighting the way
to infinity....

alas.....

-by Nova Powell

Howdy To!

-submitted by Geri Neemidge, Membership Chair

Eric J Hammack

Eric is 28 years old. He is engaged and planning a Las Vegas wedding this April. He works in home building and land development. Eric has two dogs, one cat, one bird and no children. He is more or less a Taoist and also a decent guitar player (who can not sing). Eric is also a rock climber and pro legalization. He says he joined Mensa for intellectual stimulation, perhaps to improve his chess game, and he figured it couldn't hurt his resume either.

Amelia Kendrick

Amelia is a 21 year old UT senior originally from Peoria, IL. She'll be graduating with a Finance degree in May. Amelia is not married and does not have any children or pets. As far as hobbies go, she plays the violin and loves all kinds of music.

Mandy Mercier

Mandy is a musician in Austin. You can hear her play locally at Momo's and other venues around town. She's pretty busy with her music and her part-time law firm job but she is looking forward to making new friends and having interesting conversations.

Allen Pooley

Allen is married with three daughters, 2, 9, and 22. He is the Assistant Principal at Canyon High School in New Braunfels as well as President and head technician of Horizon Telecom and founder of A.S.A.P. Communications and also a farmer with his Dad when time allows. Allen is also taking some classes at SWTSU. His hobbies include Amateur Radio - W5CTX and assistant basketball coach for his middle daughter.

Jason Speros

Jason is single and in his 20s with no children or pets. He enjoys splitting his time between visiting with friends (watching movies, playing games, talking, etc.) and doing things on his own (reading and photography fill a lot of his time alone). Jason also enjoys trying things he has never done before. He recently started taking classes in fencing and papermaking. Jason joined Mensa after a year or so of deliberation. The more he found out about what the organization had to offer, the more motivated he became to take the test and join.

Hari Thummalapalli

Hari has been married to Rosalinda since September 2001. They do not have any children or pets. Rosalinda is preparing to take her CPA exam this May. Hari graduated

with a Master of Science from the School of Aerospace Engineering at Georgia Tech in 1995. He held both engineering and computer related jobs at various companies till January 2001 when he started Thummas Corporation here in Austin. He is currently in the process of changing the business model and launching Small Biz Niche, a technology services company aimed at small businesses in the Austin area. Hari loves motorcycle racing, car racing, tennis, hiking, taking photos, watching movies at the theater, reading anything that's printed on paper and interacting with people. Hari joined Mensa to make new friends, and he hopes to be able to when he is not working so hard on his new business venture.



Corner(Ed)!

-by Rachael Stewart, Editor



Home un-wrecking defines the word "stiff" in my humble and educated opinion. As some of you may know, I purchased a house. A fixer-upper I bought for it's location (central Austin, with bike trails) rather than for the shape the place was in. Many months later, it's almost ready for furniture. Were Walter not the renaissance man he is, I'd never have dared try this. Instead, I'd probably be living out in Hutto, against which I have nothing except the commute and lack of a late-night bookstore. (Ladies, if your husbands, or as in my case, betrothed, are not highly knowledgeable as electricians, carpenters, plumbers, painters, tilers, etc, hire out. Unless, of course, you are the person with all this valuable experience.) February's great adventure was flooring. Lovely stuff, hardwood and tile. In the process of prepping for it, carrying it, and finishing it out, I have deduced the presence of at least 50 previously unknown muscle groups. And all of them are complaining. Still and all, I love the results.

Now you know why I've fallen off the face of the earth.

P.S. What gods do french bakers worship?

I don't know, but I'm told they have a pan-theon.

What's Happening in March

Thank Goodness It's Thursday

Central Market Café

Every Thursday

6:00-8:00pm

4001 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin

(512) 206-1020

Meet us in the Café after work for fun, conversation & food. Prospective members welcome. Central Market Café is located in the Central Park shopping center on the east side of Lamar Blvd between 38th and 41st Streets. Central Market is the anchor store. Central Market Café is adjacent to Central Market on the south side. We meet upstairs.

Movie Night

Saturday, March 1

7:00pm

The Neemidges

1807 Messick Pl., Round Rock

(512) 310-7863

In honor of Texas Independence Day and Sam Houston's birthday, this month's theme is Texas movies (set in or filmed in Texas or starring Texans, and preferably more than one of those). Bring your favorite on DVD or VHS and we'll pick a couple to watch. Snacks and desserts are always welcome!

From Mopac/1325: Follow 1325 to the intersection with Wells Branch Parkway/Howard. Turn onto Howard. Follow it 2.5 miles to McNeil-Round Rock Rd (follow the signs pointing to McNeil Post Office). Follow McNeil-Round Rock past the Austin White Lime plant. Eventually a wooden fence will appear on your left. Take the first left, which will be Messick Loop West. The third left on Messick Loop West is Messick Place.

ExComm Meeting

Saturday, March 8

10:00am

Austin Public Library

University Hills Branch

4721 Loyola Lane, Austin

Contact John Neemidge at (512) 310-7863 to get an item on the agenda. All members welcome.

Take 183 to Manor Rd. exit; go west on Manor Road past the HEB; turn left at the next light, which is Loyola. The library is on the right, less than one block up Loyola.

Monthly Meeting

Saturday, March 8

11:00am-1:00pm

Austin Public Library

University Hills Branch

4721 Loyola Lane, Austin

March's speaker TBA. Take 183 to Manor Rd. exit; go west on Manor Road past

the HEB; turn left at the next light, which is Loyola. The library is on the right, less than one block up Loyola.

Waco Area Mensa Get-Together

Wednesday, March 19

7:00pm

Barnes & Noble Café

4909 W. Waco Dr., Waco

Prospective members welcome. RSVP to Jerry Lenamon, (254) 399-9450.

Fold & Sticker

Thursday, March 27

(at TGIT)

Help us assemble the newsletter! See Thank Goodness It's Thursday for directions.

Oscar Party

Sunday March 23

6:00pm

The Neemidges

1807 Messick Place, Round Rock

(512) 310-7863

Join us for the 75th annual Academy Awards. The official broadcast begins at 7:30 pm -but come early so we can take pot shots at the stars as they arrive. In honor of Hollywood we'll also be hosting an homage to Mann's (neè Grauman's) Chinese Theatre - a take-out Chinese food buffet. Bring enough food for you and some to share from your favorite Chinese take-out spot. Hooray for Hollywood! From Mopac/1325: Follow 1325 to the intersection with Wells Branch Parkway/Howard. Turn onto Howard. Follow it 2.5 miles to McNeil-Round Rock Rd (follow the signs pointing to McNeil Post Office). Follow McNeil-Round Rock past the Austin White Lime plant. Eventually a wooden fence will appear on your left. Take the first left, which will be Messick Loop West. The third left on Messick Loop West is Messick Place.

Potluck SIG & Games Night

Saturday, March 22

6:00pm

Kelly Wagner & Steve Harsch's Home

1001 E. Riverside, Austin

(512) 443-9650

Theme: March 21st is the first day of spring, and March 22 is the anniversary of the day Tennessee outlawed the teaching of evolution. Food theme: items with spring vegetables and/or bananas in them.

Directions from Riverside Dr between IH35 & Congress Ave: the house is on the SE corner of the intersection of Travis Heights Blvd & Riverside Dr. There is a traffic light at the intersection. Park on Travis Heights & enter the house at the back door. Do not attempt to park on Riverside Dr.

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Local chapter of the Cancer Prevention Coalition (www.preventcancer.com) forming now. Contact Lori Barr, M. D. at lbarr@austin.rr.com

Mensan Realtor

Austin area. Free referrals to other areas.

Shelley Sundermann

JB Goodwin Company

(512) 913-3108 (800) 900-9115

shelley@jbgoodwin.com

March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Movie Night
2	3	4	5	6 TGIT	7	8 ExComm & Monthly Meetings
9	10	11	12	13 TGIT	14	15 <i>'Dillo deadline</i>
16	17	18	19 Waco Area Mensa	20 TGIT	21	22 Games Night
23 Oscar Party	24	25	26	27 TGIT <i>Fold & Sticker</i>	28	29
30	31					

2003

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