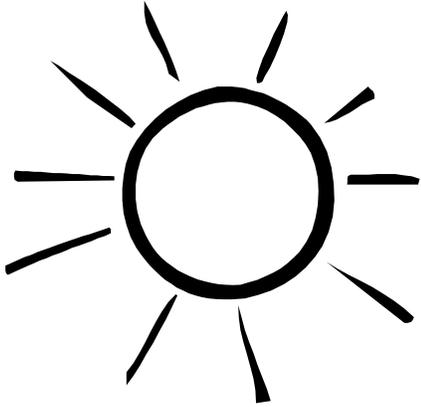


Armadillo Literary Gazette

A Publication of Lonestar Mensa

Volume XXX Number 1

January 2003



Wish your loved one a Happy Valentine's Day! See page 7 for details.



A Word to the Wise

-by John Neemidge, President

Ring In The New Year

Welcome 2003! I'm looking forward to the new year, which I think will be another big year for LSM. Starting off, we have a new ExComm this year, composed almost evenly of members with many years of ExComm experience and newcomers to the ExComm (though not to the group -- everyone's been active for a while). Together we hope to plan a great year for all of you!

One big change this year, both for me personally and for the group as a whole, is that this is my last term as LSM President after holding that office for four out of six years. It's time to pass the job onto someone else. I've very much enjoyed it, and I hope my successors will too. The group is in great shape going forward, and there are many great people involved both as officers and as active members. Of course I intend to be one of them -- just because I'm not group president doesn't mean I'll be less active, it just means I'll be active in other ways.

We're starting to get busy planning this year's LSM Regional Gathering, LonestaRG V. Very few groups can match the success we've had with starting and building LonestaRG. LonestaRG V will be both a time to look back (the theme is Five Year Reunion) and a time to look forward as well. When we first started planning LonestaRG I -- during my first term as LSM President -- the idea that we'd reach LonestaRG V at all was controversial. Today, with the interest we have every year, the number of active members and volunteers, and the way the group is growing, I can look forward to LonestaRG X and beyond and feel like that's a reasonable idea. If you'd like to be one of the group who'll put together LonestaRG V -- or VI, or VII, or... -- talk to me or send me a note and let's talk about it.

Combining the themes I've just been talking about, one thing that always changes is our mix of group activities. We'd love to see people add events to the calendar. There are so many possibilities for events -- parties, of course, but also movie outings, lunch or dinner groups, book groups... whatever you can think up that you think other Mensans might enjoy. We'd be happy to help get you started, if we can. Again, if you've got an idea for an event, talk to me or send me a note -- I'd like to hear about it.

One particular change of note is with our Monthly Meeting schedule. Starting in January we're trying to move to

second Saturdays. We hope this'll make it more convenient to many members who have trouble with evening meetings on work nights or otherwise don't like night events. We're also combining the Monthly Meeting with the ExComm meeting; all members are welcome to come participate in the business of the group before hearing the speaker. We're still looking for a permanent venue for Monthly Meetings; in January we'll be at the place where we've been for the past year, the University Hills Branch Library.

Since many of you will receive this (and hopefully read it!) before New Year's Day, make sure to join Geri and I, and Paige and David, for our New Year's Eve Slumber Party. We've had a great time at previous New Year's Eve parties, and I think this one will be a blast. For details see your December 'Dillo, watch the lsm-announce email list, or give me a call or send a note. Any which way, we hope you can be here -- even for just an hour or two.



1/9/02	Maud Ann Reddehase
1/11/02	David Allan Young
1/13/02	Joshua J Jones Scott Peitzer Larry Scarborough
1/15/02	Brian Fox
1/19/02	Derek M K Valz
1/23/02	Mick Henniger
1/24/02	Leilani A Rose Derek Saunders
1/25/02	Mr Harry D Keirns Kristin Richardson Mr James George Zimmerman
1/26/02	Mr Michael Armstrong Claude Harmon Garrett IV Joseph L Rotunda
1/30/02	Mr Mark Curtis Newman

Holiday Party A Hit

-by John Neemidge

Lonestar Mensa's 2002 Holiday Party was a big hit. Over forty members, family, and friends came out to Zilker Clubhouse on Sunday December 15th to celebrate the holidays. We served up many tasty finger foods and desserts, hot cider, eggnog, and soda, plus a turkey and ham brought by Brian Corcoran and Leona, respectively. Strings of rope lights and a lighted sign welcomed partygoers, twinkling lights hung from end to end of the large clubhouse room, the tables were covered with festive paper, and both fireplaces were crackling. A lighted tree served as a centerpiece for a table loaded with presents for the gift exchange. Holiday music filled the air, both from recordings, and later John Young playing his banjo and Rachael Stewart singing.

The gift exchange was a lot of fun. We had gifts ranging from speakers to software, books, candles, a bell, a six-legged alligator, several sets of tea, and a gift cleverly wrapped as a white elephant (concealing a full picnic set). Some of the gifts were clearly prized, judging from the way they were stolen. Amy Fox established herself as the best gift-picker by virtue of having the most items stolen from her, but managed to defend her third choice, a tea and oriental dining set, by putting on a pouty face anytime anyone looked towards her prize. A "Buns of Steel" video won by Carolyn Blake may have gotten the biggest laugh -- or perhaps it was the two romance-writers manuals Gene Holiman received. A swan ballerina figurine provoked a round of theft to end the game.

Lots of people helped out. Margaret Wofford, Rachael Stewart, and Walter Stewart busied themselves in the kitchen; Margaret, Rachael, Midge Kocen, and Brian Corcoran helped decorate and set up; and Margaret, Rachael, Walter, Midge, Brian, Leona, and Paul Pierce helped with cleanup (it's possible I missed someone in all the activity, and if so I apologize). Thanks to everyone who made the party such a success, by attending as well as by helping out!



Fodder for the White Elephant Gift Exchange.

-Photos by Geri Neemidge.



Paul Pierce, Paige Neemidge, David Neemidge, Harley Blake, Carolyn Blake, and Kelley Saveika

People enjoying the festivities and the company.

Regrettably, the Editor is unable to identify all of the persons featured in these photos. She humbly begs the forgiveness of those unnamed.



-Photos by Geri Neemidge.

January Monthly Meeting

January's speaker will be from the Austin Monorail Project. The Austin Monorail Project is a nonprofit organization that believes that the current direction of Capitol Metro's Rapid Transit Project, i.e., that of favoring light rail, is the wrong solution for Austin, and that educated citizens can make a difference in getting Austin on the right 'track' for a rapid transit solution.

Please note that the date and time of the meeting have changed this month. The meeting is now on the 2nd Saturday of the month - e.g. January 11 from 11:00am to 1:00pm.

Member News

-submitted by Geri Neemidge, Membership Chair

Our esteemed Armadillo Literary Gazette editor, Rachael Stewart, and our super LonestarRG prize collector, Walter Stewart, are engaged! (Surprise - they are not already related). They are planning an Autumn wedding.

Hello Region 6!

-by Dan Wilterding, RVC Region 6

The hustle & bustle of the holiday season is past (barely), and now many of us start once again working for Uncle Sam and the credit card companies. As far in debt as many tend to get at this time of year we are indeed fortunate -- both to be able to incur the debts and to be able to recover from the excesses.

Recruiting and retaining -- What is the best thing that your group does to retain members? Is it weekly meetings for lunch or dinner? How about themed outings such as Opera SIG or Shoot SIG? Is your group big on making newcomers or longtime absentees feel truly welcome on their first (re)exposure, and then again on the next? Do you have discussion groups that meet independently of the "main" monthly meeting? Our best means to ensure a successful recruiting program is to see that the members we have now are enjoying the experience; talk gets around, you know.

On a strictly recruiting note: The home test - sort of a preview that can be taken by prospective members on their own - is available for \$18.00 to interested parties. This same test is available to local groups for under \$10 so that they may have the tests available for resale (at the regular price) at various functions such as RGs and other public venues. Having a few tests on hand is an easy way to immediately satisfy serious inquiries and add to the local treasury at the same time. Call or write the national office (listed below under Mind Games) for more information.

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: \$60 to 1/15, \$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

Mensa Around the Nation

St Louis Regional Gathering -- Crime and Punishment February 14 - 16, 2003

Come to the St Louis Regional Gathering!! This year's theme is Crime and Punishment. What better way to celebrate President's Day and Valentine's Day. The festivities start Friday and wrap up Sunday night (but those of us who get President's Day off plan to continue on into the next day). You get seven meals, including Saturday evening banquet! Masquerade and karaoke dance afterwards (for anyone who didn't get enough punishment). Grab-a-Gift game, crockpot cook-off, 24-hour hospitality, team trivia contest, intriguing programs (terrorism, barbed wire, insurance fraud, Attila the Hun, forensic crime detection), plus lots more!!

Great hotel, with indoor pool & hot tub, and free shuttle to airport and Westport Plaza! Best Western Westport Park, 2434 Old Dorsett Rd. (Dorsett & 270), Maryland Heights, MO; 314-291-8700. SR/DR/TR/QR only \$56 + tax. Room rates guaranteed to 1/30 (or until our block fills up); mention Mensa.

Registration \$65 to 1/31; \$70 after. (Saturday evening banquet included) Registration form may be downloaded from <http://www.stlouis.us.mensa.org/RG2003Reg.pdf>. Make checks payable to: St Louis Area Mensa. Registrar: Stan Ward, 1033 Lanawood Ct, St. Louis, MO 63031; 314-550-4873; registrar@stanward.net. The webpage for the event is <http://www.stlouis.us.mensa.org/stlrg.htm>.

**Gathering
at Sea**

ORANGE COUNTY MENSA HOSTS A
3 DAY ROUND TRIP CRUISE
LOS ANGELES, CA TO ENSENADA, MEXICO
OCTOBER 10-13, 2003

ABOARD THE ROYAL CARIBBEAN SHIP MONARCH OF THE SEAS
JOIN FELLOW MENSANS FROM ACROSS THE SOUTHLAND,
AND PLACES BEYOND, FOR 3 NIGHTS OF FUN AT SEA.
WITH A FULL DAY IN ENSENADA. SPECIAL MENSA ONLY EVENTS WILL OCCUR
THROUGHOUT THE WEEKEND.

PRICES BEGIN AT \$340 A PERSON, DOUBLE OCCUPANCY +PORT TAXES

FOR RESERVATIONS & INFORMATION CONTACT:
BONNIE CHRISTY, AMERICAN EXPRESS TRAVEL
351 SO. STATE COLLEGE BLVD, BREA, CA 92821 (714) 671-6967
FOR MORE DETAILS ON THE CRUISE LINE VISIT WWW.ROYALCARIBBEAN.COM
MENSA COORDINATOR: JOHN OLSEN - CRUISE@JOHNNYAUTOMATIC.COM

What's Happening in January?

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.

ExComm Meeting

Saturday, January 11

10:00am

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, January 11

11:00am-1:00pm

Austin Public Library

University Hills Branch

4721 Loyola Lane, Austin

Please see the announcement on page 5 for meeting details. 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, January 15

7:00pm

Barnes & Noble Café

4909 W. Waco Dr., Waco

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

Movie Night

Saturday, January 18

7:00pm

The Neemidges'

1807 Messick Pl., Round Rock (512) 310-7863

Theme: Based on a True Story (ex: *Apollo 13*, *Titanic*). Bring a favorite on VHS or DVD!

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.

Fold & Sticker

Thursday, January 23

(at TGIT)

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

Potluck SIG & Games Night

Saturday, January 25

6:00pm

Kelly Wagner & Steve Harsch's Home

1001 E. Riverside, Austin

(512) 443-9650

Theme: Finger food. Please call ahead so we know you're coming and can make sure we won't have six of the same munchie.

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.



Let the 'Dillo print your *Happy Valentine* to your loved ones! Send me (your beloved Editor, who will happily accept Valentines) a Valentine's Day wish for the special person in your life. Notes, photos (small), and artwork (also small, please) will all be accepted. Please remember that flowers, while enthusiastically endorsed, do not print well. Deadline: January 15, 2003.

Email or mail your Valentine to:

Rachael Stewart

506 Canon St

Austin TX 78752

bookbird@yahoo.com

Mensan Realtor

Austin area. Free referrals to other areas.

Shelley Sundermann

JB Goodwin Company

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

shelley@jbgoodwin.com

January

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

2003

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