

# Armadillo Literary Gazette

A Publication of Lonestar Mensa

Volume XXXII Number 10

October 2005



A view of the North Kaibab Trail, Grand Canyon National Park (North Rim) from muleback.  
Photo by: Rachael Stewart

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## Publication Information

**POSTMASTER:** Please send change of address to:

### ARMADILLO LITERARY GAZETTE

c/o American Mensa, Ltd., 1229 Corporate Dr West, Arlington, TX 76006-6103

The *ARMADILLO LITERARY GAZETTE* (USPS 554-650), the official publication of Lonestar Mensa, Group 786 of American Mensa, Ltd., is published monthly at 506 Canion St, Austin, TX 78752. Periodical Postage Paid at Austin, TX.

Mensans who are not members of Lonestar Mensa may subscribe for \$10.00 per year. Send subscription requests to the publication address.

Submission Information: Submissions of all types will be accepted. The deadline is the 15th of each month. Submissions may be by email (ASCII/text format only) to the newsletter editor or by snail mail in typed format. Anonymous submissions are not accepted, although the author's identity may be withheld upon request. The editor reserves the right to edit for clarity and length. Items in this newsletter may be reprinted in other Mensa publications, with credit given, except for those works copyrighted by the author.

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Commerical: Business card sized (2" x 3") ads are \$10 for one month, \$25 for three months, and \$40 for six months. Publication may be delayed due to space considerations. Ads must be camera-ready, and should be submitted electronically if at all possible. We reserve the right to edit for content if necessary. Rates for other sized ads or other time periods are available upon request. The deadline for ad submission is 5 days before the general newsletter deadline.

Please submit ads to the newsletter editor.

## From the President

*-by Janet Kres, President*

Karen Werner has resigned her position as president in September. The Ex Comm would like to thank Karen for all of her efforts on behalf of Lonestar Mensa. I will serve until December 31, 2005, and the installation of a new President.

The RG was wonderful!! A special Thank You! to our LonestarRG VII Committee: John Neemidge, Danny South, Geri Neemidge, Ray O'Connor, Margaret Wofford, Paul Pierce, and Mark Kres. It was a wonderful RG, and we are looking forward to next year and LonestarRG VIII: Music to the Ears – September 1 – 4, 2006. We also tested nine prospective applicants at the RG – so we should be seeing some new faces at our gatherings.

Lonestar Mensa will be participating in National Testing Day – Saturday, October 22. If you know of someone who would like to take the Mensa application tests, please have them contact membership chairman Mark Kres at 836-5773 (Austin) or email [jmkres@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jmkres@sbcglobal.net) Reservations are required for the testing session.

Our October 11 program will be “Take a Walk on the Outside” by Todd Shaw. This will be on the fun of hiking and camping – and will look at some of the wonderful places and sites we have to explore here in Texas.

October 15, 2005 is the deadline for postmarking and mailing or hand delivering your completed ballot on the proposed amended bylaws for Lonestar Mensa. Please write your Mensa ID number on the envelope. (If you write your name or ID on the ballot proper, the ballot will not be counted.)

Halloween Party at the Neemidge's on Saturday, October 29! Please bring beverages and munchies – and enjoy the wonderful costumes!

Our nominating committee will be compiling a slate of officers for your consideration. The nominating committee (Paul Anderson, Danny South, and Ron Theriault) will be glad to speak with anyone who would like to consider being on the slate.

See you at future gatherings –

Janet Kres



## Pizza & Debate

*-Don Jarvis*

Time to shut down vacation and get back to didactic pizza consumption. Last time the focus on geezerhood left pregeezers feeling unwelcome. I apologize. All who are interested in discussion are welcome. Also, I discouraged introduction of topics other than those I proposed. Again, I apologize. All things may be considered.

Because I have a Friday afternoon class and will be there anyway, I will host two meetings in October, the 14th and 28th, at 6pm. Opinions on any subject will be fair game. I would like to hear a sample of opinions as to which side in the controversy over the existence of god(s) has the preponderance of objective evidence or if objective evidence exists for any side.

I hope to see you October 14 and October 28, 6pm, at Mr Gatti's Pizza, MLK @ Guadalupe. Look for a library book under a railroad spike.

Don Jarvis [djarvis2@austin.rr.com](mailto:djarvis2@austin.rr.com) 926 6391



## Picnic at Balcones District Park

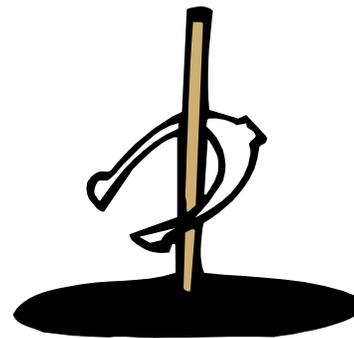
*-Charity Smith*

Saturday, October 8

From noon to 3:00 we'll picnic at Balcones District Park. Croquet, horseshoes, bocce, badminton, frisbee, waterguns, etc. will be available.

From downtown, go approximately 9 miles north on Mopac/Hwy 1, left on Duval for .5 miles, then right on Amherst. Look for Charity, blonde in mid-thirties, and one-year-old Ben. Bring the whole family!

Contact Charity at (512) 835-8990 or [charitysmith@hotmail.com](mailto:charitysmith@hotmail.com) if you can bring food or otherwise help.



## **August ExComm Report**

*-submitted by Janet Kres (then Vice-President)*

August 3, 2005

Northwest Recreation Center

Members attending the meeting were Karen Werner, Margaret Wofford, Michael Tolbert, Midge Kocen, Janet Kres, and Don Drumtra.

Karen called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Karen informed the ExComm that Kathie Blair has resigned as treasurer. Karen has appointed Midge Kocen as Lonestar Mensa treasurer. Karen has appointed Don Drumtra as member at large for the rest of the year. During this meeting the required bank forms for signature authority were completed.

Karen stated that the semi-annual accounting is needed, and will need to be published in the newsletter. Midge said that she would complete the balance sheet and email it in pdf to the ExComm members for review. The semi-annual accounting report must be approved by the ExComm before publication in the newsletter. Margaret has received the new password for PayPal, and it will be shared with Midge. Karen reported that the Chapter received \$225 from the testing sessions. Karen also reported that the checking account is \$837.35 ahead of expenses.

Janet gave Karen a list of the high schools for Austin, Round Rock, College Station, Temple, and Waco. This list will be used by the scholarship chair. Karen will receive information from National concerning the previous year Lonestar Chapter winner, so that funds may be distributed.

Janet reported that the Mensa application tests will be given Saturday of the Regional Gathering at 9 a.m. at the hotel. John Neemidge also suggested offering a \$5.00 discount off the registration fee (all weekend or one day). The ExComm approved the discount. Mark will notify applications of this testing session, and the discount for the RG.

Karen and Midge will change the password at the bank. As treasurer, Midge will also need to keep the chapter equipment list. ExComm members did not remember any equipment for the chapter.

Midge proposed that the newsletter "fold and staple" session be scheduled for the third Thursday of the month, so that members will know that 'fold & Stale is the 3rd TGIT, and so that Midge could deliver the newsletters to the post office on a Monday, instead of Friday. Friday is very busy at the Post Office. Karen said that this would not be possible

because articles are submitted late to the editor. The editor has to have the articles 10 days before the newsletter goes to the printer. Midge said that she would use her judgment concerning delivery of the newsletter to the post office in a timely fashion for mail out before the first of the month. Margaret suggested that labels be put on first, then fold the newsletter.

Don suggested that each volunteer receive acknowledgement from Lonestar for volunteering. The ExComm agreed with his suggestion. Karen stated she would acknowledge Kathie in her column.

Midge stated that the website needs to be updated to reflect changes in officers, including the RVC for Region 6. The directory will be inserted in the October newsletter.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.



## **September ExComm Report**

*-submitted by Janet Kres, President*

Northwest Austin Recreation Center

September 7, 2005

Attending the meeting were Karen Werner, Janet Kres, Midge Kocen, Michael Tolbert, Don Drumtra, Danny South, Mark Kres, and John Neemidge. Karen called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. Karen stated she had sent emails to members concerning an Action Still In Effect (ASIE) relating to the structure and operation of the Regional Gathering (RG), which John believes is still in effect and which she does not. The ASIE states that the "RG Chair shall appoint an RG Committee to plan and execute the RG. RG Committee members serve at the approval of the RG Chair." John handed out copies of the RG guidelines under discussion.

Karen said that the length of an office appointed or elected is from January 1st to December 31st. Karen said she considers that the ASIE (RG Structure document) has been null and void for a full year. Karen appointed Danny South as the 2005 RG Chair, and John as Co-Chair. The 2006 RG Chair will be the decision of the incoming Lonestar president. Karen said she does not want the RG chair to have the powers listed in the ASIE (RG Structure document). The issue is that Mark Kres, not John Neemidge, is the registrar for LonestaRG 8. The registration form for LonestaRG 8 must be revised to remove John Neemidge's name and replace it with Mark Kres.

Don stated that he needed more time to review the

information received concerning the ASIE (RG Structure document) and make a decision. Michael wondered if the issue was so urgent that a decision must be made tonight. Don suggested that John and Mark work together for another month. Mark and John both expressed a willingness to work together.

Karen stated that her agreement with John when she appointed him RG co-chair was that he would resign at the end of this 2005 RG. John stated he will not resign until a decision has been made concerning the structure and operation of the RG. Don suggested that if the ExComm did not participate in any agreement for John to resign, it was strictly between John and Karen. Other ExComm members present confirmed that the ExComm did not participate.

Karen said the issue was whether the power of the RG committee sits with the RG chair or with the ExComm. She stated that no one remembered the ASIE from 2003. Janet stated that she remembered the ASIE and the development of the RG guidelines, and perhaps could find them in her papers. Janet will look for these papers. Midge, who was treasurer in 2003 said she did not remember the discussion about the RG guidelines.

John stated that the issue is if the RG chair can run the RG with the chair's committees. The document lists how the RGs are to run in the Region. Danny had authority as RG chair to pick John as registrar for the RG. When the RG is over, the committees are dissolved. The RG chair then appoints new positions.

Danny asked if, according to Karen's interpretation, he is to sit and do nothing for 3 months?

Don stated that the RG chair is an appointed officer but does not serve on ExComm. John stated that the ASIE document specifies the authority of the RG chair and provides for a reasonable set of authority. Danny did provide updates on the RG. John responded to requests for information on the RG from the ExComm. The ExComm always has the discretion to fire the RG chair. The RG chair buffers the RG from micromanagement, which is part of the responsibility of the RG Chair.

Karen stated she did not want the RG chair to have carte blanche.

John stated that the RG chair does not have carte blanche. There is a certain amount of financial authority and responsibility needed to run the RG. John stressed the need for structure for the RG. John again stated that he would resign when the RG structure is determined.

Don said that it was important to keep the ASIE (RG Structure document) in effect for the 2005 RG, so that our previous financial actions would be within the rules. The issue is the successor to this document going forward.

Karen stated she did not want the ASIE (RG Structure document) in effect going forward. Don said that Danny would have no financial authority to do anything going forward without such a document.

Karen stated she wants the ExComm to approve the hotel contract. Janet stated the RG chair should handle the hotel contract or let the ExComm do the contract. She has negotiated contracts with hotels for other gatherings, and it is better to have one person interacting with hotel staff.

John suggested that if there are revisions to the ASIE (RG Structure document) that Ray O'Connor should review the document. Don stated that if Karen has a problem with parts of the document, it could be changed to have the RG chair sign the contract with the approval of ExComm. John said that the guidelines should also provide that minor revisions to the hotel contract do not have to go back to ExComm for approval before enactment. There could be a determination of what constitutes minor.

Midge asked if the fund is part of the \$10,000 set aside to fund the RG. She suggested that only if the contract differs materially from the year before would it go to ExComm. Don stated that the approval of the contract or proposal could be done by ExComm. Midge stated that ExComm should know the large overview of the RG.

Don suggested that Karen, Janet, and Danny meet to revise the ASIE document concerning the RG structure. Janet suggested sending out the minutes and having the group revise. Revisions to the ASIE (RG Structure document) or RG structure motion would be based on comments received.

Don stated that the interpretation of the bylaws is that ExComm has final authority over appointed officers, the president appoints and the ExComm confirms. John stated that ExComm can remove appointed officers. Don suggested that the ASIE (RG Structure document) specify that the RG chair has authority to appoint, with approval of ExComm, not just the president.

Karen stated that ExComm cannot override the president's appointment. John stated that the ExComm does have the authority to remove an appointed officer by majority vote.

Midge asked if the amount for the RG fund should be decided by ExComm, it is now \$2,500 and capped at \$5,000. John stated that the funds are there and any extra

earned from the RG is written as a percentage, so you know what was made in previous years.

Don said that the issue is one of appointment. Janet said that she would collect comments on the draft RG structure document and sent it out for review prior to the next meeting.

Karen said the next agenda item is the appointment of a nominating committee and an election committee. She said the following members have agreed to serve on both committees in the following capacities: Paul Anderson, chair; Danny South, and Ron Theriault. Don moved and Karen seconded that the committee members be approved. Motion passed.

The ExComm reviewed Midge's treasurer's report. Michael and Don had questions on the budget and reports, which Midge and Karen explained. Mark also assisted with interpreting the balance sheet and income statement. The group thanked Midge for her work.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.



### **Letter to the Editor**

The members of Lonestar Mensa are being asked to vote on a bylaw revision (published in the July 2005 issue of the Armadillo Literary Gazette). I am urging all of you to vote against the proposed bylaws. There may be good reasons for an update of our bylaws (such as adding new elements of the national Minimum Standard Bylaws). However, while the proposal makes several minor changes that aren't of as much concern, my opinion is that one change is so troublesome that we need to vote no on these bylaws and start over. In the interest of full disclosure, I worked on the previous bylaw revision (in 1999). However, I'm not writing this to defend those bylaws, but rather to head off what I think is a step backwards for the group.

The proposed bylaws remove Membership Chair from the Executive Committee (ExComm). This creates a six-member ExComm, and thus makes it possible for there to be ties which cannot be broken in a normal manner. While it is certainly possible for there to be a tie with our current seven-member ExComm due to absence, office vacancy, abstention, etc., such ties can always be tabled until the problem is remedied. This is not the case with a six-member board. The bylaws are vague as to how such a tie would be broken. There is no reason to change the bylaws in such a way as to create such a tie, when the current bylaws with an seven-member board have been serving us well for years. A

case could be made that Membership Officer is not the appropriate officer to be a voting member, or that all ExComm members should be elected, but these proposed revisions do neither of those things.

Since I think this change is in the wrong direction for this group, I'm voting no on these bylaw changes, and I urge you to do the same. This doesn't mean that we couldn't use an update to our bylaws, and I and others in the group are looking into ways to make that happen. But in the meantime, let's stick with the bylaws we have now instead of taking a step backwards with this change.

John Neemidge



### **Region 6 Report**

-Ray O'Connor RVC6

October 2005

October 22 is National Testing Day. Consider offering your time to help your local Proctor team to have a successful testing day. Challenge your friends to take the test. Contact me at [rv6@us.mensa.org](mailto:rv6@us.mensa.org) to volunteer or for more information.

The September AMC Meeting will be history when you read this. There are several important issues that are being addressed. The most important, in my opinion, are the proposed Angel Fund and how can we help Mensa victims of Katrina. The Angel Fund is proposed as a vehicle to provide financial help to members maintain their membership in times of financial stress. The biggest concern is that we have members who may take inappropriate advantage of such a fund. My opinion is that the benefit to those truly in need is so great that I'm willing to be scammed by a few. What are your opinions?

How can we help our Mensa family that has been so devastatingly hurt by Katrina? That is not as easy a question. We can send money to the National Office and it will be pooled and given to the Salvation Army or Red Cross. That seems to me to be too impersonal. I want to help specific Mensa members. I know many who, like me, offered their homes to our homeless members. Those we've contacted so far have been with family or are starting new lives elsewhere. We can ramp up Project Inkslinger. We know that sooner or later books will be needed. What other projects do you recommend?

(Be careful. There is a very small line between a suggestion and a volunteer.)

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OCTOBER?

### **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 38<sup>th</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup> Streets. Central Market is the anchor store. Central Market Café is adjacent to Central Market on the south side. We meet upstairs.

### **GenX Pub Crawl**

**Saturday, October 1**

Host: Danny South

(512) 371-3894

dsouth@stewart.com

7:00-7:45 Molotov Lounge 719 W 6th

8:00-8:45 Little Woodrow's 520 W 6th

9:00-9:45 Ginger Man 304 W 4th

10:00-10:45 Bitter End 311 Colorado

11:00-? Lovejoy's 604 Neches

### **ExComm Meeting**

**Wednesday, October 5**

6:00pm

**Northwest Recreation Center**

2913 Northland Drive, Austin

Contact Janet Kres at (512) 836-5773 to get an item on the agenda. All members welcome.

### **Picnic at Balcones Park**

**Saturday, October 8**

Noon - 3:00pm

Host: Charity Smith

10217 Amherst Dr, Austin

(512) 835-8990

See page 3 for details.

### **Games Night**

**Saturday, October 8**

7:00pm

Danny South's

615 Nelray #218

(512) 371-3894

Bring munchies and/or your favorite games. BYOB.

### **Monthly Meeting**

**Tuesday, October 11**

7:00pm

**Austin Public Library, North Village Branch**

2139 W. Anderson Lane, Austin

Please see page next column for details.

### **Pizza w/ Don Jarvis**

**Friday, October 14 and October 28**

6:00pm

Host: Don Jarvis

Mr. Gatti's, MLK @ Guadalupe, Austin (512) 926-6391

Please see page 3 for details.

### **Fold & Sticker**

**Thursday, October 27**

(at TGIT)

Help us assemble the newsletter!

### **LSM Mustelid Mansion**

**Tenth Annual Halloween Extravaganza**

**Saturday, October 29**

7:00 pm

**The Neemidges'**

1807 Messick Place, Round Rock

Geri and John's annual Halloween party turns the big one-oh this year! Join your fellow ghouls, goblins, witches, ghosts and spooks and see how many decorations one house (and yard) can hold! Thrill to automated creatures talking to you from darkened rooms! Be tempted by the terrifying trinity, Cheesehead, Meathead, and Diphead! Drink in the party spirit with Geri's famous witches' brew! Win acclaim in the costume contest! Bring your friends! Bring your family! Bring along some beastly beverages, potent potions, devilish delights and terrible treats to share!

## October Monthly Meeting

Come join in a discussion on the fun of exploring the outdoors. Todd Shaw, an avid hiker and camper since family vacations as child will share his knowledge gained from tripping over a rock or two, his experiences wandering a few miles, and a look at some of the wonderful places and sites we have to explore here in Texas.

From afternoon walks, to picnics, to hikes, overnights, and expeditions we'll focus on the essentials that everyone needs to have and know, as well as the 'extras' that turn a simple walk into a fun and exciting event. We'll talk about equipment, orienteering, first aid, making healthy and nutritious snacks and meals, and setting a camp. We'll also talk about bringing other hobbies and knowledge along with you that enhance everyone's experience. And we want to know everyone's favorite places to go as we highlight local hiking opportunities.

Todd is a native Texan from the Houston area now living in Georgetown.

He is one of those schizophrenic Texans who has completed degrees from both Texas A&M and UT Austin – one in architecture and a couple in adult education. In between those academic pursuits he left to live his 'Beau Geste' fantasy and served as a sergeant in the US Army paratroopers.

Since then he has built a career involving projects focusing on organizational development, total quality management, systems theory, and professional training & development with companies and organizations throughout the state. Presently he works for the Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General.

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October						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1  GenX Pub Crawl
2	3	4	5	6  TGIT	7	8  Picnic Games Night
9	10	11  Monthly Meeting	12	13  TGIT	14  Pizza w/ Don	15 'Dillo Deadline
16	17	18	19	20  TGIT	21	22
23	24 	25	26	27  Fold & Sticker	28  Pizza w/ Don	29  Halloween Party
30	31					

2005