

# Armadillo Literary Gazette

A Publication of Lonestar Mensa

Volume XXXII Number 3

March 2005



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Larry Scarborough *Lemon 13*, page 7

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Please submit ads to the newsletter editor.

## Listen Up!

*-by Karen Werner, President*

DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP BEFORE MARCH 31. You can renew by e-mail or by snail mail. If possible, please use the national web site. That address is [www.us.mensa.org/renew](http://www.us.mensa.org/renew). You can now pay by American Express, Discover, Visa, MasterCard and check debit options. Renewing online saves valuable staff time and allows for quick renewal processing. If you don't renew before March 31, you will stop receiving the newsletter and the Bulletin, and you'll miss out on a lot of fun and varied scheduled events.

Spring's around the corner, and we're gearing up for the Spring Party and lots of outdoor fun. My life is running a little behind this year, so the annual Spring Party will be in April rather than March. Look for the announcement in the April newsletter. Last year's party was a big success, so we are repeating the theme: an authentic cajun crawfish boil with all the fixins. (Other food choices will be on hand for those who are timid or who simply don't appreciate fine dining.)

Charity Smith, our newly appointed Gifted Children's Coordinator, has volunteered a host a family friendly picnic at the zoo this month; see page 7 for details.

Hugh Brown has volunteered to host a picnic and overnight campout on his property in Lexington in May. He has a boat and a pond/lake stocked with fish and suitable for swimming. Come for the day or stay overnight. Additional details will be in the April and/or May newsletters.

Be next to volunteer to host something: dinner at a restaurant, concert in the park, picnic at the lake or a city park, movie night, etc. Contact me by phone or e-mail to find out how little time and effort is required to host the event of your choice.

If you want to receive e-mail reminders of upcoming calendared Mensa events and haven't yet signed up for the announce list, visit our web site, [lsm.us.mensa.org](http://lsm.us.mensa.org), and follow the instructions for the announce list. This is a list reserved solely for announcements and reminders of scheduled Mensa events (the local calendar items, Texas regional gatherings/special events or unique non-Texas RGs (rare, once in 2004), and National annual events. So, if you want to be reminded that the Monthly Meeting is two days from now, or that Games Night is this Saturday, sign up for the announce list by visiting the Lonestar Mensa web site. If you want to unsubscribe at any time, just follow those directions on the web site, or e-mail me and I'll take care of it for you.

## March Monthly Meeting

Both the Old Quarry Library and the North Village Library are closed for renovations. We have, therefore, again moved our location. Starting in March, our meetings will be held on the 4th Monday of each month at the Howson Library.

The March Monthly Meeting will be held on Monday, March 28, 2005, beginning at 7:00 p.m., at the Howson Library, 2500 Exposition Blvd. February's meeting yielded a record turnout of attendees. We hope for the same in March. Both talks were suggested to me by fellow Lonestar Mensans.

Our speaker will be Mark Tanner, Principal Engineer and Vice-President at Mechanical & Materials Engineering. He will talk about his work on the Shuttle Columbia Accident Investigation. He talk is titled Columbia Reconstruction and Debris Assessment.

At Mechanical & Materials Engineering, Mr. Tanner performs failure/forensic analyses, mechanical analyses, and metallurgical examinations on a variety of industrial equipment. Mr. Tanner also conducts on-site investigations of components at a range of facilities, including chemical, petrochemical, utility, heavy manufacturing, and food establishments. Over the last 10 years, he has primarily been involved in large failure investigations that require extensive on-site investigation, and often reconstruction of the failed components, to determine the origin of failure. He also provides assistance in the area of risk assessment of complex industrial equipment.

Mr. Tanner received his B.S. and M.S. from Texas A&M. He is a registered professional engineer and ASM International - Member (former Failure Analysis Committee chairman), ASME - Member (Post-Construction Subcommittee on Inspection Planning - Risk Assessment). He has authored or co-authored 17 technical papers and given eight invited technical presentations.

Mark this meeting on your calendar. You won't want to miss it.



# I Don't Like Barbeque, Anyway

-by Jane Thompson

For 35 years, I lived in one of the country's largest cities. For the past three months, I have lived in a small Texas town. There have been many changes in my life, and I am just learning about small-town life and how different it can be. Like, you really can't look forward to the movies on the weekend--since there's no movie theatre. And no computer stores. And no mall. And I could go on like that for a while. However, I'm sure no expert on living in small towns--the only other time I did it was when I was in college and I had no car at the time, so I didn't stray far from campus. I was not so much a small-town person then as I was a college person.

One thing I have learned and that I have no explanation for is the complete and utter lack of ability of small-town people to give coherent directions. In Dallas, if I had to give directions to someone, I gave very careful directions. Like: "Go west on LBJ, that's 635, until you get to the Josey exit. Exit there and stay in the right lane until you get to the light; then make a right turn and go two blocks to Skyler street; turn left and go to the fifth house on the left. There will be a green car in the driveway." In Dallas, if I had to go somewhere, I was more likely to ask someone how to get there than to consult a map. A person who knew the way could keep you away from pitfalls such as lanes that suddenly ended or streets that unaccountably changed names.

So, when I moved to this town, I consulted a map to get the layout of the town and when I had that down, I automatically asked people how to get to places. And I was completely stonkered by their replies. I asked a neighbor how to get to the hospital so I could schedule a procedure. She said, "Oh, it's just over there," pointing off into the distance. I said, "Well, how do I get there?" Her answer, "It's no problem, you just drive over there." Pointing, again. I couldn't pin her down any closer than that. When I did check the map, I discovered that the hospital was on the next street parallel to mine but across the highway. Easy, indeed. I just didn't know enough to drive around until I hit it.

Shortly after I moved here, I needed to meet someone at a restaurant. The problem was that I didn't know which restaurants were good. So, I started asking. A neighbor told me about a new barbeque place that had opened. "Where is it?" "Oh, you can see it from the access road." "Which access road?" "The one by the highway." "Which exit is it close to?" "Oh, I don't know, just drive down the

access road until you see it." Believe it or not, I spotted it a couple of days later but couldn't see how to get to it. I asked at the grocery store down the road.

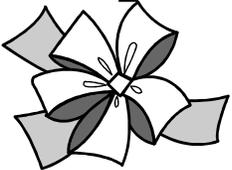
"You just go down the street until you get to a little street and you turn off there. It's right there." "What's the name of the street you turn off on?" "Oh, I don't know. It's just a little street. Doesn't have a street sign. But you can't miss it. It's right by the KFC." Frustration creeping into my voice, I said: "But I don't know where the KFC is." "Well, it's just down the street, behind some trees."

I gave up on the barbeque place. Someone told me about a place downtown, on the square. Well, it wasn't really on the square, it was more catty-cornered from the Ford dealership, which was behind the Courthouse. I have never found this place. Or even the Ford dealership. Good thing I didn't need a car.

Finally someone mentioned a restaurant that I regularly drove past on my way to the grocery store. Aha! I knew how to get there. They assured me it was a good restaurant, too. It has become just about the only place I go in town, because the food is good, I know how to get there, and I can give reasonably good directions to it.

I may be starting to sound a little small town myself. The directions start off: "Exit at Leander Road, turn left and drive to the first light. Now, there's no street signs here, but don't let that bother you..."

## Happy Birthday!

- 
- |    |                       |    |                       |
|----|-----------------------|----|-----------------------|
| 1  | Chelle Bell           |    |                       |
|    | John Davis            |    |                       |
| 2  | Mrs. Joanna J. Newnam |    |                       |
|    | Devin Vitone          |    |                       |
| 3  | Thomas Jackson        | 17 | Susan Gibson          |
| 4  | Brandon Greene        | 18 | Charles L. Fahy, Jr.  |
|    | Charles Alvis Hale    |    | G. David Higginson    |
| 6  | Ms. Mary Dunlap Young |    | Lance S. Kinney       |
| 8  | Jane Thompson         | 19 | Kyle Simpson          |
| 9  | Mark L. Manson        | 22 | Ken A. Finn           |
| 12 | Mr. William K McKoy   | 24 | Ms. Lydia Ann O'Neil  |
| 14 | Eric J. Hammack       |    | Ryan Sarsany          |
| 15 | Henry Arthur Powell   | 25 | Mr. Gary Paul Davis   |
|    | Terry Rodgers         |    | Ms. Trudy L. K. Loper |
|    |                       | 27 | Madeleine Z. Mercier  |
|    |                       | 29 | Chris Hilton          |
|    |                       |    | Joe Hinder            |
|    |                       | 30 | Cheryl L. Kane        |

**MAJESTY**

## Hello, Region 6!

-by Dan Wilterding, RVC Region 6

This month we have, for the first time in a few years, a Leadership Development Workshop (LDW) being held in Region 6. This event, conceived and hosted by the members of Gulf Coast Mensa, is intended to inform and enrich local officers, potential officers, or even just interested members and will take place in Houston on the evening of March 11 and all day on the 12th (Friday & Saturday). Topics to be covered include website development, issues concerning newsletters, the advisability of having a budget, and basic operation of an ExComm. There's more, but you will need to contact Cat Sterrett-Thorstenberg for that information. Reservations are required to facilitate pre-planning (now \*there's\* a concept!) so please call or email Cat today... well, tomorrow might be OK but don't wait any longer than that.

Comments, anyone?

Dan Wilterding - RVC6

rvc6@us.mensa.org

dtwtech@swbell.net

817-573-4454 (before 9 P.M.)

504 West Atchley Drive, Granbury, Texas 76048

\*\*\*\*\*

In the next few days:

Region 6 Leadership Development Workshop

Hosted by: Gulf Coast Mensa ("GCM"), Houston, TX

Hyatt Regency Hotel at George Bush Intercontinental Airport, 15747 John F. Kennedy Boulevard, Houston (281) 987-1234

March 11 and 12, 2005

Cat Sterrett-Thorstenberg: 713-339-2445,

catsterr@aol.com

In New Orleans:

MensAGumbo

Fun for Both Sides of Your Brain!

July 6-10, 2005

Join us at one of the most spectacular locations on earth for an Annual Gathering designed to satisfy your every want, need, and expectation. Expect speakers beyond belief, astounding entertainment, and more! Adult pre-registration rates are \$75 by 4/8; \$80 by 7/1; and \$90 after 7/1. Adult daily rates are \$20 per calendar day by 7/1 and \$25 per calendar day when purchased onsite. Young Mensan registration rates are free for ages 4 and under; \$30 for ages 4 - 12; and \$50 ages 13 - 20. Young

Mensan daily rates are \$10 per calendar day by 7/1 and \$17 per calendar day when purchased onsite.

Contact: AG2005, American Mensa, Ltd.

1229 Corporate Dr. West

Arlington TX 76006-6103

Online registration at [http://ag.us.mensa.org/registration/ag\\_reg1.php](http://ag.us.mensa.org/registration/ag_reg1.php)

## February ExComm Meeting Minutes

-submitted by Janet Kres, Vice President (2005)

Attending: Karen Werner, President, Janet Kres, Vice President, Kelly Wagner, Member at Large, Steve Harsch, Member at Large, Margaret Wofford, Member at Large, and Kathie Blair, Treasurer. The ExComm met at the Northwest Recreational Center on Wednesday, February 2. Karen called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. Margaret passed around an ExComm contact list for updated information.

Karen informed the group that starting in March the regular meeting will be the 4th Monday of each month, at the Howson Library, 2500 Exposition Street. The February meeting will be at Old Quarry, February 7, with Dr. Puthoff as the speaker.

Kathie passed out the treasurer's report. Kelly will be auditing the past year's finances shortly. Kathie will order a minimum number of checks, since so few are used. The group reviewed the budget statement. Kathie will add a footnote with the date of printing. Kelly moved to increase the host reimbursement for expenses based upon receipts to \$150 per party. Kathie seconded. Motion passed. Margaret moved to increase the scholarship award to \$500 for the next cycle, which starts September, 2005. Kelly seconded. Motion passed. This year's scholarship amount was set in earlier minutes. Kelly requested volunteers to read the essays currently submitted.

The budget for 2005 will follow the template of the past year, subject to increases in the scholarship award and host reimbursement.

Karen informed the group that Charity Smith's application has been approved as Gifted Children coordinator.

Kelly will send an announcement to the newsletter, requesting a new games night host, with information on parameters.

The projected date for the Spring party is the first part of April.

Meeting adjourned at 6:55p.m.

## Needed: New Hosts for Games Nights

*-submitted by Kelly Wagner*

Kelly Wagner and Steve Harsch, who have hosted Games Night for over 10 years or so, are moving in June (to the Baltimore area). By May, most of our furniture will be in storage! So a new host is needed for Games Night by May. It would be even better if someone else could do April, as we will be in the middle of repainting at that point, and the house may be a mess and smell even funnier than usual.

What is Games Night?

\*One of Lonestar Mensa's longest-running events, Games Night has traditionally been on the 4th Saturday of each Month, at someone's home, and entails playing any sort of group game imaginable, as long as it's legal and can be completed in one evening. This includes everything from cards and Scrabble to mystery jigsaws, Trivial Pursuit, and Name That Tune. Board games, word games, trivia games, nonsense games (Dilbert Corporate Shuffle is popular...) Games Night has had only two host families for the past 25 years or so: Steve and Kelly for over 10 years, and Ginny Leininger before that, before she moved to Colorado.

\*Also traditionally accompanied by Potluck Supper beforehand, although this is not a requirement. Potluck usually has some sort of theme, such as an ethnic food group.

What are the minimum requirements to host Games Night?

\*A reasonably large living room or dining room, that will hold a dozen people.

\*At least two tables - they can be folding tables - and at least 12 chairs - they can be folding chairs - because attendance can vary widely from 1 person coming to 15.

\*Enough clear, clean counter space in your kitchen to set up soft drinks and munchies, most of which attendees will bring themselves. Although we have traditionally provided iced tea and several kinds of soda and always have some kind of cheese and crackers or chips and dip, the hosts do not have to provide that much. The hosts should, however, have cups and napkins.

\*The ability to provide at least one room and/or piece of furniture that is not covered with pet hair, so that people with allergies can put up with the environment for at least a short period of time. (We have a pet-free room, plus constantly circulating HEPA air filters; having no pets would also accomplish this.)

\*A location that is fairly easy to find; preferably fairly central, and has places to park on-street for the attendees (if 15 people show up in 10 cars, can they all park within a 1-block radius of your home?) Inside the city limits of Austin is helpful, so that you are not too far north for

people who live south or vice versa, but not required. Well enough lighted streets that people can find your home after dark.

What DON'T you need for Games Night?

\*You don't have to have many games - attendees bring lots. A deck of cards, a set of Apples to Apples, and a Trivial Pursuit board will do. As a bonus, if you take over Games Night as of April, rather than May, I will donate several of our games to you for your permanent enjoyment, including a Monopoly set, a couple of board games, and a couple of trivia games.

\*You don't have to have fancy surroundings or a flawless, spotless, elegant home. Just spacious enough for people to sit around a table. Your fellow Mensans will understand if you have had other hobbies besides dusting the knickknacks, and that your furniture money has been spent on bookcases rather than on marble tables and leather sofas.

Interested? Call Kelly at 443-9650. I'll be happy to provide more info on what Games Night has entailed, and to help you set up your first one!

## News from the National Office

### Mensa World

Issue 1 of Mensa World is now online at:  
[www.us.mensa.org/mensaworld](http://www.us.mensa.org/mensaworld).

### Mind Games 2005

Don't forget to register for MindGames(R) before it's too late. MindGames 2005 will be in Tampa on April 15-17, but you need to register ahead of time.

We'll have:

- lots of brand new games to try
- loads of fun-loving people to meet
- meals (except Saturday dinner) included in registration
- 24-hour Hospitality
- free games to take home afterwards
- all this for only \$65 registration!

The hotel will be the DoubleTree-Westshore Airport (813-879-4800). To get a discounted hotel rate, tell them you're with "MENSA". \*\*The hotel's CUT-OFF DATE is MARCH 15.\*\*

To register for MindGames:

visit [www.mindgames.us.mensa.org](http://www.mindgames.us.mensa.org) or call 817-607-0060 ext.122 using your Visa or MasterCard.

Hope to see you in April!

# 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 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.

## ExComm Meeting

Wednesday, March 2 6:00pm

Northwest Recreation Center

2913 Northland Drive, Austin

Contact Karen Werner at (512) 291-4677 to get an item on the agenda. All members welcome.

## GenX Pub Crawl

Saturday, March 5 7:00pm

Host: Danny South

(512) 670-3470

dsouth@stewart.com

7:00 Gingerman 304 W 4th  
8:30 Fado 3rd and Lavaca  
9:30 Bitter End 310 Colorado  
10:30 Lovejoy's 6th and Neches  
11:30 Casino el Camino 517 E 6th

## Zoo Outing for Mensans and Families

Saturday, March 12, Noon

Host: Charity Smith

(512) 835-8990

charitysmith@hotmail.com

Mensans with kids will meet at the Austin Zoo picnic area for a picnic lunch at 12 p.m. on Saturday, March 12th. We'll view the animals afterwards. Bring the whole family & a sack lunch. Admission prices: \$4.00 for kids 2-12 yrs. and \$ 6.00 for ages 13 and up. Look for Charity (blonde in 30s), Burt (big, dark-haired guy in 30s), and baby Ben (7 mos. old). Contact Burt's cell (512)589-3159 if you don't see us.

Directions

From downtown Austin: (1) S Mopac 4.2 miles, (2) Take US 290W/ Johnson City/TX 71/Llano .5 miles, (3) U.S. 290 W 4.9 miles, (4) R onto Circle Dr. 1.4 miles, (5) R on Rawhide Trl. Zoo is at 10807 Rawhide Trl. Austin, TX 78736 & Zoo's # is (512) 288-1490.

## Poker Night

Saturday, March 19

7:00pm

Ted Alexander's House

4007 Granada Drive, Georgetown 78626 (512) 864-9566

Penny ante poker; fun times guaranteed. Please RSVP to Ted at ted.alexander.cq0j@statefarm.com or 512-864-9566 by Friday evening. Bring munchies; BYOB.

Directions:

Take I-35 north to Georgetown. Exit FM 2338, which is Exit 261A. Turn left over freeway. Go approximately 2.7 miles to the third stop light, which is Serenada Dr. Take a right. Go about 1.1 miles to the first four way stop. Proceed through intersection. Take next left, which is Granada Dr. 4th house on the right is 4007 Granada Drive. Off white brick house with dark green trim. Lights will be on in front.

## Waco Area Mensa Get-Together

Wednesday, March 16

7:00pm

Barnes & Noble Café

4909 W. Waco Dr., Waco

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

## Fold & Sticker

Thursday,

(at TGIT)

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

## Potluck SIG & Games Night

Saturday, March 26 6:00pm

Kelly Wagner & Steve Harsch's Home

1001 E. Riverside, Austin (512) 443-9650

Theme: Irish, of course! Please make the dishes low-sodium if possible. Salt shakers will be available. Please call and let us know what you're bringing! Thanks.

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.

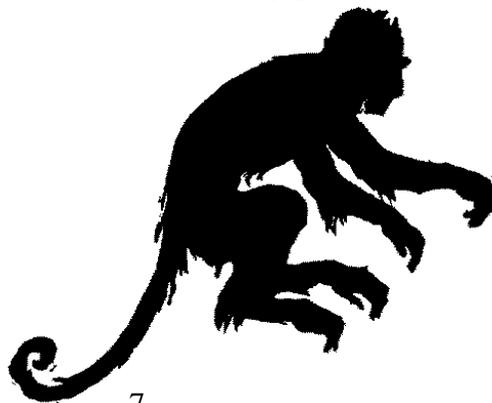
## Monthly Meeting

Monday, March 28 7:00pm

Austin Public Library, Howson Branch

2500 Exposition Blvd., Austin

Please see page 3 for details.



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<b>March</b>						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
			<b>ExComm Meeting</b>	<b>TGIT</b>		<b>GenX Pub Crawl</b>
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
				<b>TGIT</b>		<b>Zoo Trip</b>
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
		<i>'Dillo Deadline</i>	<b>Waco Area Mensa</b>	<b>TGIT</b>		<b>Poker Party</b>
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
				<b>TGIT</b> <i>Fold &amp; Staple</i>		<b>Potluck and Games Night</b>
27	28	29	30	31		
	<b>Monthly Meeting</b>					

**2005**