

Armadillo Literary Gazette

A Publication of Lonestar Mensa

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January 2008



'Everything's Cricket' at the Ornamental Metal Museum in Memphis TN -*photo by Rachael Stewart 2006*

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Lonestar Mensa Officers

Web Site: <http://www.lsm.us.mensa.org>

Executive Committee Members

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Treasurer: Patty Drumtra

512-291-0315

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Janet Kres

512-836-5773 jmkres@sbcglobal.net

Kathie Blair Lawler

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Recruitment Chair: Mark Kres (see Membership)

Membership Officer: Mark Kres

512-836-5773 jmkres@sbcglobal.net

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New Member Coordinator: Carla Young

512-586-7524 carla.x.young@gmail.com

Lapsed Member Coordinator: Vacant

Leadership Roster Coordinator: Vacant

Testing Coordinator: Mark Kres

512-836-5773 jmkres@sbcglobal.net

Testing Facilities Coordinator: Vacant

Awards Coordinator: Vacant

Nominations Committee Chair: Vacant

Communications Chair: Vacant

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512-310-7863 neemidge@usa.net

Record Manager: Vacant

Symposia Chair: Vacant

Programs Officer (Meeting Coord.): Todd Shaw

512-423-1252 txpioneer@hotmail.com

Symposia Coordinator: Vacant

Symposia Publicity Coordinator: Vacant

Education Chair: Vacant

Education Funding Coordinator: Vacant

Scholarship Chair: Claudia Harbert

512-238-0205 mensascholarships@gmail.com

Education Publicity Coordinator: Vacant

Gifted Children's Coordinator: Michele Vaughan

512-388-5970 lonestar.gifted.children@gmail.com

Subgroups Program Chair: Vacant

Bryan-College Station Coordinator: Robbie Fraser

214-240-4439 tampabuc47@yahoo.com

Univ. of Texas Student Coord.: Vignesh Prakash

512-740-2592 vignesh@mail.utexas.edu

Waco Coordinator: Vacant

SIGHT Coordinator: Steve Vaughan

512-388-5970 svaughan@austin.rr.com

LonestaRG Chair: Ellen Lukasik

elukasik@sbcglobal.net

RG Registrar: Jane K. Thompson

512-335-4196 jane12125@austin.rr.com

RG Hospitality Chair: Anne So

RG Programs Chair:

RG Facilities Chair: Ellen Lukasik (see RG Chair)

RG Publicity Chair: John Neemidge (see V.P.)

RG Drawings, Prizes, and Awards Chair: Vacant

RG Treasurer: Don Drumtra

512-291-0315 drumtra@aol.com

RG Raffles: Helen Siders (see Newsletter Coord.)

Arbiter: Kathleen Holiman

(512) 250-5488 gkholirman@sbcglobal.net

Ombudsman: Kathleen Holiman

(512) 250-5488 gkholirman@sbcglobal.net

If you are interested in helping with LSM activities in any of the vacant positions listed above, please contact Janet Kres, via email jmkres@sbcglobal.net, or phone 512-836-5773.

Regional Vice Chairman (RVC)

Ralph Rudolph

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From The President

-by Ron Edelstein, LocSec

Welcome to the New Year, Lonestar Mensans,

First, I want to thank those who cared enough to vote on the recent Lonestar Mensa elections and who have trusted me to lead the organization for the next year. I feel the election had one of those “good news-bad news” sort of situations. The good news is that I’m told we had the best turnout ever for LSM, with 17 people voting. But on the flip side, out of nearly 600 registered members in the region, only 17 cared enough to vote?!!! That means that the management of this organization was decided by about 3% of the members. I guess that means that if the rest have any complaints, you can just go into the bathroom and look in the mirror to see who’s to blame. Unfortunately, this same low participation is also reflected in the number of people willing to roll up their sleeves and take on a responsibility for doing something. So when something goes well in the next year, please try to take a moment and let the person who planned it, executed it and made it happen know that you enjoyed it and how much you appreciate their efforts. If you don’t like the way something happened, take that trip to the Magic Mirror and get involved. If you see something that you think you could have done better, then get involved and DO it better! Since none of us are getting paid, I can’t imagine anyone would think you are taking their job away from them, grabbing glory or otherwise object to you helping out or taking over.

This region covers a lot of geography. I realize that many people out of the city can’t make it in to Austin to participate in weeknight events. It’s hard enough to go from one side of town to the other. But the simple solution to that is to start something in your territory. That would be a great way to meet other Mensans who live near you and do some recruitment--encourage people to bring guests to events. Ideas for this sort of thing are welcome and solicited. We may have some restraints on some things that may be offered for insurance reasons, but mostly the floor is open. Let me know what you’d like to see.

Next year I’d like to see at least two candidates for every elected position and people feeling that they “could do it better” and stepping up to take on something. If you look at the list of officers in the front of the bulletin, you will see many of them are vacant. Many of the critical jobs are done by someone doubling up and doing

more than one job. We have many of the “old hands” still slugging along and a couple of new faces getting involved. One in particular is Ellen Lukasik, who, in addition to being this year’s RG Chair is also tackling some other assignments. I’m sure she’d love any ideas and assistance anyone can provide. So pick a project or program and join the fun. You’ll be surprised at how much more fun Mensa can be when you are helping run the train instead of just sitting and watching the scenery go by!

Ron Edelstein

Report on the December 1st AMC Meeting

-by Ralph Rudolph, RVC6

What happened? Very little. The motion on changing the name of the local group leader from LocSec to “chief executive officer” was removed from the consent agenda at my request and then was then withdrawn when I argued against it. The rest of the consent agenda was approved. The motion to change the method of electing RVCs was postponed. The suggested reform of the NomComm to be a search committee was defeated. AMC stated that it was not in favor of underage drinking at Mensa events (Doh!). A “Vision Statement” was adopted. I voted against it as “smoke and mirrors”. A plan for the next two years was adopted. I abstained for similar reasons. A dispute resolution procedure was adopted. Members with disputes against Mensa must follow this. Nothing much new here, just better stated. I don’t know how much good it will do folks who don’t read the ASIEs. That’s \$12,000 worth of work.

Tom Ehrhorn, our Regional Scholarship Chairman for MERF, needs a bit of volunteer help to judge scholarship essays. If you can spare a few hours, please email the Ehrhorns at Elaine@TheEhrhorns.org. I do it locally, and it’s not very difficult and is rewarding in knowing that we’re helping aspiring students to get scholarships. Do a good deed!

East Texas Mensa won an award for the most people tested for a group their size on Mensa Testing Day. Congratulations! They must be doing testing right as they won the award last year as well.

The North Texas Mensa RG was very pleasant. I met some nice people. I held a rap session but little was discussed besides how to get more Gen-X involvement. My wife Penny (Pennyrudolph.com) did an hour and a half talk on novel writing which was very well received.

Engineer's Corner

- from Todd Stahlnecker

Sonic Footwear for the Elderly: Years ago, it was discovered that a signal could be amplified by adding "noise" to it. For example, an unintelligible audio recording could be made understandable when enhanced with some "white noise." The random noise would fill the sub-threshold void below which the ears can hear the signal. That noise would serve as a pedestal for the signal - elevating it to the point where it could be heard. This seemingly obscure phenomena would eventually find an unusual application in aiding elderly people to prevent falls.

Elderly people are prone to lose their balance and fall. One would assume that the inner ear is the culprit for this loss of balance but research has found that the instability is actually caused by a loss of feeling in the extremities - primarily the toes and soles of the feet. A person's ability to keep their balance is easily quantifiable by placing a reflector on their shoulder and asking them to stand as motionless as possible. A computer "watches" the sensor with a special camera as they attempt to stand still. The less the reflector sways around, the more stable that person's balance is. It's impossible to hold perfectly still. Your body naturally sways and the center of pressure on the sole of your foot is constantly shifting to keep you upright. Elderly people become less stable when their feet begin to numb and lose feeling. The feet are not able to sense the shifting of weight and make the necessary compensations as easily as they once did. Enter the obscure phenomena of a signal to be amplified by adding "noise."

Researchers found that, if they fitted shoes with tiny vibrating motors, they could cause an elderly person's stability to improve by stimulating the soles of the feet. The vibration would stimulate the nerves in the feet and toes which would cause them to become "aware" of the lost signal of shifting weight and balance by getting the signal above the threshold where the receptors begin to work. Tests have shown that an elderly person's balance was able to match that of people in their early 20's by use of this technology. Given that, each year, 1/3 of all people over 65 fall, this has the potential to greatly improve the quality of life for many seniors. Diseases such as diabetics can also blunt the mechanical awareness of a person's feet.

The company which did the R&D on this technology and patented the work, Afferent Corp, expects to be

able to bring it to market in a few years. They have some hurdles to overcome in getting the finished product small enough to fit into a shoe. The primary problem is a power supply thin enough and flexible enough to power the devices. Ideally, they are shooting for a gel insole that could be placed in your shoe. The maker could more easily fit a shoe with the equipment if they manufactured the whole shoe which would allow them to place batteries in the heels. However, manufacturing the whole shoe means having to take fashion into account. Men's shoes wouldn't be too bad but women's shoes would be much more challenging since they have less bulk to work with and come in far more designs.

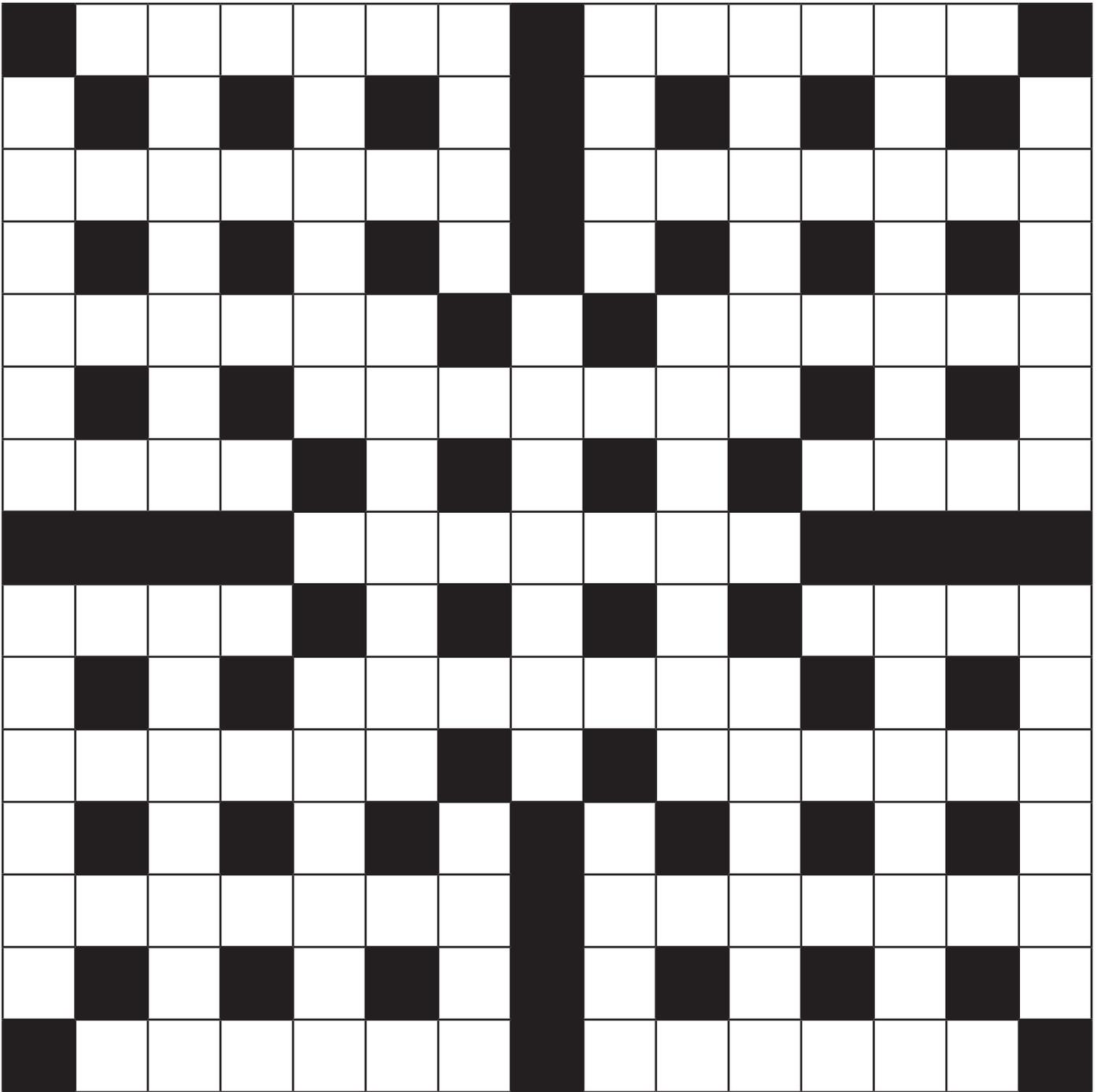


Across

1. Lethargic
5. Caused by lack of Vitamin C
10. Polypeptide hormone produced in pancreas
11. It sails on runners
12. When fertilized, becomes a seed
15. Transition from larva
16. Reduces chromosomes to haploid
17. Assert as fact
18. _____ porridge hot
19. Absorption
20. Feathered flyer
22. Follows function
25. Intoxicant
27. Fat-breaker enzyme
28. Biologic signal carriers
31. Undulating locomotion
32. Not created by man
33. Egg-carrier, in most animals
34. Ululate

Down

2. Ambiguous
3. Food conductor in vascular plants
4. Bother!
5. Outer layer
6. Womb
7. Defile
8. Champagne cocktail
9. Emphasize
14. Get steadily worse
20. Full of gumption
21. Cold-blooded animal
23. Principal surface, as in a coin
24. Group of tissue that performs physical work
29. Hillside
30. Alimentary canal terminus



Bylaws Committee

-submitted by Don Drumtra, Chair, Bylaws Committee, drumtra@aol.com

Last month we asked for Ideas on Bylaws and volunteers for the new committee. We are fortunate that four more LSMs volunteered to become committee members, each bringing unique skills and experience to the six member committee:

John Neemidge, neemidge@usa.net, provides long time experience in establishing Lonestar Mensa and living through it's various bylaws. He knows what has worked and what hasn't.

Lu Russell, luruss@austin.rr.com, brings a great deal of experience with bylaws and credentials of a Professional Registered Parliamentarian to the committee.

Helen Siders, xlartemis@gmail.com, provides detail experience from her past computer programming work and recent experience meeting in getting our publications through the printers and postal service on time. She brings first hand knowledge of what is needed where the rubber meets the road.

Steve Skelton, steve_skelton2000@yahoo.com, provides experience in Web and computer communications. He brings a knowledge of Secure Socket Layer (SSL) and Data Base design that be needed to secure votes and prevent multiple voting entries. He will keep us straight as we discuss the possibilities of electronic voting.

In addition, our newly elected President, Ron Edelstein, aduana@mindspring.com, automatically serves as an ex-officio committee member. He provides years of experience in the Navy and senior company leadership in addition to serving on the ExComms of other Mensa organizations. He brings knowledge of how rules should be written to allow folks to get things done. He will participate in our discussions as needed and review our work as it progresses.

The meetings will be open and you may participate in the meetings or follow along through the Committee Webpage, <http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~drumtra/website/LSMBylaws/> . We welcome your ideas and comments as we progress. We have requested the National Office set up a discussion forum for us but meanwhile, you may provide these in person at the meetings or to committee members or via email to committee members or me. Meeting times and locations will be

posted on the Homepage of the Website.

Our first meeting is tentatively scheduled in conjunction with TGIT from 7:15 to 8:15 PM, Thursday, January 10, at Central Market, 4001 N. Lamar, 4001 N x 1000 W on the Austin grid. All LSM members are welcome to participate.



January Monthly Meeting

As a Thinly Veiled Emulation of the Famous "Soap Box" in a Corner of Hyde Park, in London England, the Local Lonestar Group of Mensa, offers it's own version of that Hyde Park Classic:

"THE LONESTAR MENSA SOAP-BOX"

Who Is Presenting? Generally, each month, the Lonestar Group of Mensa has an outside speaker or program presenter who is accomplished in His or Her field. However, Once each year, from six to eight members of the Local Mensa Group are allowed up to TEN Minutes to Present Their Views or Ideas on any subject they prefer. Because of the time limits, only about six to eight presentations will be possible.

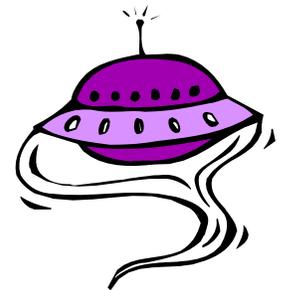
Any subject is acceptable EXCEPT:

- Political Speeches,
- Religious Evangelism
- Attacks On Any Religious Group
- Attacks On Any Other Person

Attn Lonestar Mensa Holiday Party Attendees

Through an oversight, the following meals were not paid for at the Lonestar Mensa Holiday party.

\$11.95 Polo a la Crema
\$14.95 Campechana
\$2.95 Diet Pepsi
Subtotal \$29.15
Tax 2.40
Tip 6.00
Total \$37.55



If these were your meals, please send a check, payable to Lonestar Mensa, to Treasurer Patty Drumtra, 3206 Twilight Trail, Austin, TX 78748.

Thank you!

What's Happening in January?

Thank Goodness It's Thursday

Every Thursday 6:00-8:00pm

Central Market Café

4001 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin (512) 206-1020

Meet us at 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's is adjacent to Central Market on the south side. We meet upstairs.

ExComm Meeting

Wednesday, January 2 6:00pm

Northwest Recreation Center, Arts & Crafts Room

2913 Northland Drive, Austin

Contact Ron Edelstein at (512) 491-9881 to get an item on the agenda. All members welcome.

1st Saturday Bridge Night

Saturday, January 5 7:00-10:00pm

Mark and Janet Kres' house

11708 Prairie Hen Ln, Austin (512) 836-5773

Please RSVP so we will know how many bridge players we will have. Instruction will be provided. Beginners welcome. This is "party bridge", not duplicate bridge.

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, January 8 7:00pm

Austin Public Library -- North Village Branch

2139 W. Anderson Ln, Austin (512) 491-9881

See page 6 for details.

Bylaws Committee Meeting

Thursday, January 10 7:15-8:15pm

At TGIT.

See page 6 for details.

Games Night North

Friday, January 11 7:00-10:00pm

Pete and Penny Guy's house

704 Sheila, Cedar Park (512) 219-8723

Come north for your gaming fun! We have Scrabble, Trivial Pursuit, many Mensa Mind Games and more. Amenities include one very affectionate cat, snacks, and drinks. No smoking, please.

Directions: We are just west of Lakeline, between 1431 and Cypress Creek. Buttercup Creek is a traffic light on Lakeline Blvd. From 183 north: Take the last free exit. Go through one traffic light. Turn left at the second traffic light onto Lakeline Blvd. The fifth traffic light, 3.1 miles, is

Buttercup Creek. Turn left onto Sheila, we are next to last on the left. ## From 183 and 620 (if you are so unfortunate) go north on the access road for two traffic lights, where you turn onto Lakeline Blvd as above. Turn left onto Buttercup. The second left is Sheila Dr.

3rd Saturday Poker Night

-- Moved to 2nd Saturday for January --

Saturday, January 12 7:00pm-???

Laura Shankland's house

11300 Bunting Dr., Austin (512) 297-8344

lolas@laurashankland.com

Third Saturday poker will be on the second Saturday, January 12, because of the three-day weekend that falls on our usual third Saturday. Please RSVP so we know how many to expect. Nickle ante; dealer's choice; BYOB.

Duplicate Bridge

Thursday, January 17 7:00-10:30pm

Pete and Penny Guy's house

704 Sheila, Cedar Park (512) 219-8723

We can accomodate 3 tables, or ten players in addition to ourselves. We will need to have those who want to play contact us by Tuesday January 15, so Penny & I can be sure everyone has a partner, that we have enough to play, and not too many. We will send out directions to our home early on Wednesday morning. We will confirm requests as soon as we get them.

Scholarship Essays Judging Party

Saturday, January 26th 1:00pm until finished

Claudia Harbert's home

4 Forest Mesa, Round Rock (512) 238-0205

Please join us for an intellectual afternoon! Usually there are approximately 30 essays of 500 words each. You'll read each one and grade it 1-10 in such categories as "grammar," "supporting statements," and "your reaction." You'll have company and munchies! If you'd like to bring food to share, that would be great!

RSVP when you decide, so we'll have some idea of how many to expect. Use maps.google.com or call for directions. Near the Dell Diamond.

Fold & Sticker

Thursday, December 27 6:00pm

Central Market Cafe, Austin

4001 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin (512) 206-1020

Meet us at the Café after work to help assemble the newsletter. See TGIT entry for directions.

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January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 ExComm	3  TGIT	4	5 1st Saturday Bridge
6	7	8 Monthly Meeting	9	10  TGIT Bylaws Comm.	11 Games Night	12 3rd Saturday Poker
13	14	15 <i>Dillo Deadline</i>	16	17  TGIT Dupl. Bridge	18	19
20	21	22	23	24  <i>Fold & Sticker</i>	25	26 Scholarship Essay Judging
27	28	29	30	31  TGIT		

2008