

Armadillo Literary Gazette

A Publication of Lonestar Mensa

Volume XXXV Number 3

March 2008

Monthly Program Survey

To better serve the interests of our group please take a few minutes to think about what topics you would like to see included in our monthly presentations.

* What areas are of most interest to you?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Diet & Exercise | <input type="checkbox"/> Food / Cooking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Finances | <input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Growth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Topics | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology / Science | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Interest / Events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genealogy | <input type="checkbox"/> Current Issues / Politics | <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Literary / Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Historical | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion / Philosophy |

* What specific issues in a topic and / or other areas that are not listed?

* Do you know a contact person for this topic?

Please contact the Program Coordinator
with your suggestions and ideas:

Todd Shaw
512-423-1252
txpioneer@hotmail.com

La CARTE

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Lonestar Mensa Officers

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

Executive Committee Members

President: Ron Edelstein

512-491-9881 aduana@mindspring.com

Vice President: Don Drumtra

512-291-0315 drumtra@aol.com

Treasurer: Patty Drumtra

512-291-0315 drumtrapa@aol.com

Members at Large:

John Neemidge

512-310-7863 neemidge@usa.net

Janet Kres

512-836-5773 jmkres@sbcglobal.net

Kathie Blair Lawler

512-267-1843 Kathie.Lawler@dshs.state.tx.us

Recruitment Chair: Mark Kres (see Membership)

Membership Officer: Mark Kres

512-836-5773 jmkres@sbcglobal.net

Current Member Coordinator: Vacant

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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512-799-6985 xlartemis@gmail.com

Newsletter Advertising Coordinator: Vacant

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Publicity Officer: Paul Anderson

512-259-7824 wrdslngr@swbell.net,

Elist Coordinator: John Neemidge

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 Coord.: Paul Anderson (see Publicity)

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

Bylaws Comm. Chair: Don Drumtra (see V.P.)

Bryan-College Station Coordinator: Robbie Fraser

214-240-4439 tampabuc47@yahoo.com

Univ. of Texas Area Coord.: Vacant

Waco Area 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: Ellen Lukasik (see RG Chair)

RG Facilities Chair: Ellen Lukasik (see RG Chair)

RG Publicity Chair: John Neemidge (see M. @ L.)

RG Treasurer: Don Drumtra

512-291-0315 drumtra@aol.com

RG Drawings, Prizes, & Awards Chair: Helen Siders (see Newsletter Circulation)

Arbiter: Kathleen Holiman

(512) 250-5488 gkholirnan@sbcglobal.net

Ombudsman: Kathleen Holiman

(512) 250-5488 gkholirnan@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

As we have mentioned before, we are always looking for things to do that are of interest to Mensans of the LSM area. I recently received a call from a member who expressed a desire for more outdoor activities. As always in Mensa, the best way to get something going that you like is to volunteer to host it. This request suggested several activities of interest to the outdoor types of the group. Suggestions were camping, bicycle hikes, boating or shooting. Austin is a particularly good place for those kinds of things. Those who like the more challenging kind of biking can take advantage of the Hill Country roads and trails, and by mutual agreement of the participants, you can make these as long or short as you like. My boss at my last company was an avid biker and thought nothing of a 50 mile run on a Saturday morning. For the less hardy types, there are some large parks for shorter tours. For the boaters, there is rafting or boating on the Colorado River, or down to New Braunfels for river rafting through town. (Be mindful of good manners and don't be so boisterous that it alienates the local people and don't dump trash in the river.)

Other suggest possibilities are camping, outdoor cooking or travel.

Personally I'm partial to the shooting idea. I have a collection of handguns that haven't been worked out in a while and would be open to a trip for the shooter types to one of the local ranges. I have both modern pistols and a couple of old black powder revolvers that I'd be willing to bring along for anyone who wants to shoot but does not have a weapon of their own. You supply your own ammo. Most ranges have ammunition for sale on the site. I have .38 and .45 caliber weapons and the black powder are .36 and .44 caliber. Someone who has not handled a pistol or revolver before but would like to learn is welcome to come along.

So, for those interested in the outdoor activities, please let us know--you can call me directly or Todd Shaw, our Programs Officer at txpioneer@hotmail.com so we can get it on the calendar. Or contact Sheldon Kohan at kohan_s@hotmail.com who has expressed an interest in these sorts of activities. Keep in mind that such activities are done at your own risk since there is always the chance of injuries. Mensa does not have insurance to cover you. Safety first!

Ron Edelstein
LSM President

February ExComm Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Lonestar Mensa Executive Committee was held on February 6, 2008, at 6:00 PM, at Northwest Community Center, 2913 Northland Dr., Austin, TX, the President being in the chair and the Vice-President and regular Secretary. Attending were President: Ron Edelstein; Vice-President and Bylaws Committee Chairman: Don Drumtra; Treasurer: Patty Drumtra; and Member at Large: John Neemidge.

The President reported that on February 6, 2008, he reviewed the February, 2008 bank statement, selected two checks at random, and compared them with supporting documentation. No discrepancies were found.

The Treasurer provided a report consisting of spreadsheets summarizing program revenue and expenses for January, 2008, and the account balances for January 31, 2008, copies of which are maintained in the Treasurer's records and are available to members by request. The report was approved without debate.

The Bylaws Committee Chairman reported that monthly Bylaws Committee report was published in the January Armadillo Literary Gazette 35, no. 2: 6. The next committee meeting was scheduled for Thursday, February 14.

Lonestar Mensa received a letter announcing that local group participant registration for Culture Quest XIX must be submitted to the American Mensa national office by the end of March. LSM has participated before and some members might want to participate this time. The President agreed to ask for Lonestar Mensa volunteers.

Messages to the announcement list were being used to compensate for the errors in the January newsletter calendar and the Library was asked to look out for members who might have mistakenly appeared for the general meeting on February 5. The ExComm members agreed we need to help each other to ensure the information we send to the newsletter editor is accurate.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.



Engineer's Corner

-by Todd Stahlnecker

Earthquake Prediction

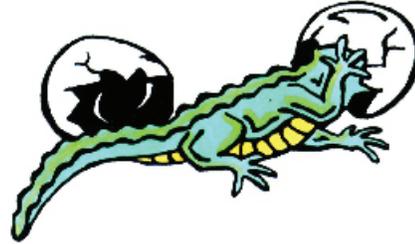
Throughout history, many lives have been lost to earthquakes. Although we've made great strides in early warning systems of tsunamis, tornadoes, hurricanes, heat waves, and blizzards, little headway has been made to get a reliable method of predicting earthquakes. With one hour's warning, people could evacuate high-risk buildings, dangerous or expensive industrial processes could be safely halted, first responders could be put on alert, and trains could move out of dangerous areas and stop safely. With a day or two warning, gas lines could be shut off to buildings, emergency supplies could be mobilized and staged, and cities could be evacuated. Regrettably, predicting earthquakes with any reliability has proven to be out of our reach until now.

Scientists have long known about disturbances in the ultra low magnetic field prior to an earthquake. Stories abound about odd lights being seen such as the 23 reported sightings of a 4 mile long blue glow or haze near the ground and extending some 600 feet high in the hours before the 6.9 magnitude earthquake which hit Kobe Japan in 1995. The 1989 quake which hit the San Francisco Bay area was one of the most documented quakes ever. Dr. Anthony Fraser-Smith of Stanford University happened to have one of several low frequency magnetic recorders buried in what turned out to be a spot about 4 miles from the epicenter of that quake.

He found that the device recorded a 20 fold increase in ultra low frequency magnetic field noise about 2 weeks prior to the quake. This jumped to a 60 fold increase about 3 hours before the quake. Current theory is that tremendous amounts of electrons are released when a rock is crushed under the pressure present at a fault. It appears that these electrons move downward into the underlying magma at about 670 mph while an opposite wave of positive charges move up to the surface. The positive charges moving up result in at least four measurable phenomena.

The first is the ultra low frequency magnetic noise Dr. Fraser-Smith's instrument detected. The second is that these charges ionize the air when they reach the surface. This ionized air results in the unusual glowing lights often reported. This ionization is most easily detected by an instrument which measures the conductivity of the air. The third item is that a pulse of infrared light is given off when molecules of air ionize to fill

the positive charged holes as they reach the surface. This infrared light can be seen by satellites. And finally, the ionosphere gets pulled in above these positively charged areas and this can be measured by several different means. With continued research, advancement, and investment, these findings may soon lead to an early warning system deployment in high risk areas.



Party Report: Scholarship Contest Judging

-submitted by Claudia Harbert

The judges had everything they needed: pencils, clipboards, 4 copies of each essay, judging forms, tables, chairs, food, and drinks. And all the judges read all the essays, and they rated them in all the categories, and they started with neat packets of papers and ended up with papers everywhere, and they filled cups and bowls and plates and emptied them, and most even liked the chocolate chip cookies with the dark chocolate chips and almost not enough sugar. It was a most interesting and congenial Mensa afternoon! The essays kept us entertained, inspired, impressed, touched, and laughing! We found plenty of chances for divergent conversation, just not quite as much as you might find at a less focused Mensa party. It was especially wonderful to gather Mensans at our home, which is somewhat far out in Round Rock. The judges were John and Vera Louise Pfeiffer, who recently moved to Cedar Park after being in the thick of Mensa activities in California for many years; Jim Mangum, who had not been to any other Mensa activities and who I think would have a great time at any Mensa gathering; Barbara Wilson, who recently joined Mensa at the suggestion of a friend from another city and who lives in North Austin and must go to lots more Mensa activities; and Ron and Linda Edelstein, who also helped judge last year and have done so much for our local group! Thanks to all the judges and to those who volunteered but couldn't be at the party. See y'all next time, I hope! And thanks to my husband, Alan, who hosted while I added up columns of numbers. Our chosen winning essays arrived at the regional Chair's address today. Judging will take place at the regional and then national levels. Look for results in the Armadillo Gazette, probably in the July issue!

Annual Financial Review Report

Lone Star Mensa

For the period January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2007

Prepared by Mark Kres, Member in Good Standing;
Lonestar Mensa

Member in Good Standing, Texas Society of Certified
Public Accountants

The financial records for the above-cited time were reviewed with the current Treasurer. The review was not an audit conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards, and was limited in scope.

Findings:

1. Policies and procedures in effect for the chapter treasurer were reviewed. The transactions reviewed were in compliance with the policies and procedures.

2. A sample of income transactions was reviewed to source documentation and all samples were found to be correct.

3. A sample of expense transactions was reviewed to source documentation and all samples were found to be correct.

4. All bills examined were being paid on a timely basis.

5. A sample of checks was reviewed to verify that all the checks examined were signed by someone other than the payee. This procedure has been followed.

6. All deposits of the Local Group Support funding from AMC which were examined were received on a timely basis.

7. The current Treasurer has implemented double-entry bookkeeping practices. They are supported by Microsoft Excel software. This has enabled him to provide more detailed and accurate information on a timely basis to the membership.

Conclusions:

1. Preliminary financial statements indicate that for all activities (including the RG), revenues were \$10,485 and expenditures were \$8,276, a surplus of \$2,209. The surplus has been primarily used to fund scholarships, deposits for the 2008 RG, and certificates of deposit to earn interest for future cash needs.

2. All source-level documentation is kept in an orderly fashion and appears to be complete.

Recommendation:

1. That the current bookkeeping practices should continue to be used.

RVC6 Report (mid February)

-by Ralph Rudolph, RVC Region 6

The National Office has embarked on a study of testing by our local groups. An initial report will be given at the March AMC meeting. Results to date seem quite variable and will probably need further study, but they indicate that groups are testing less than they did in the past. In fact, some local groups (including some larger ones) have not given any tests in years!

The N.O. does have data on members who could easily become proctors in each local group, if insufficient proctors are the problem. We did a check recently in New Mexico and quickly found several new ones. One, in fact, was a former proctor we didn't know about who has now recertified.

I've asked the N.O. to also look into whether new Gen-X members drop out sooner in local groups where there are few (if any) activities that might interest them. This is of concern because more and more of new members are Gen-X (or younger) yet our LG leaders and activities are aging. Yes, some LG leaders say, "If Gen-X wants activities, let them put them on!" In my personal opinion, that's not very encouraging. You're slitting your collective throats. Seriously.

There will be an AMC meeting in San Francisco at the end of March. No agenda is available, so I can't say much. I expect a proposed new method for replacing RVCs to be introduced.



December ExComm Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Lonestar Mensa Executive Committee was held on December 5, 2007, at 6:05 PM, at Northwest Community Center, 2913 Northland Dr., Austin, TX, the President being in the chair and the Treasurer acting as Secretary. Attending were President and Member-at-Large Elect, Janet Kres; Treasurer and Vice President Elect, Don Drumtra; Member-at-Large and President Elect, Ron Edelstein; Circulation Manager, Helen Siders; Treasurer Elect, Patty Drumtra; and Member at Large Elect, Kathie Blair Lawler.

The President congratulated the new officers and reported that she had sent an email to the Northwest Community Center to confirm our reservation of the meeting room for 2008, that Mark Kres, CPA, agreed to do the financial review of the 2007 financial records, that there would be no testing in December, that she purchased recruitment and Symposia supplies for 2008, and that the transition to the new officers would take effect on January 1.

The President reported that on December 5, 2007, she reviewed the December 2007 bank statement, selected two checks at random, and compared them with the supporting documentation. No errors were found.

The Treasurer reported that at the end of November, 2008, our financial results continued to be strong and our membership continued to grow; our revenue for all programs exceeded estimates; our expenses continued to be below budget; and our recruitment program was significantly above estimates due to the two previous strong months of testing. He thanked Mark Kres and our volunteer proctors for their successful testing activities. He provided spreadsheets summarizing program revenue and expenses for November, 2007, and the account balances for November 30, 2007, copies of which are maintained in the Treasurer's records and are available to members by request. The report was approved without debate. The Treasurer moved "that at the end of 2007 allocate any unallocated interest to the Education Program." The motion was adopted with debate.

The Treasurer proposed a resolution for a standing rule that the newly elected President and Treasurer be given direct access to Lonestar Mensa bank accounts and be authorized to sign checks upon assuming office. The resolution, after debate, was adopted as follows: "Resolved, That the Lonestar checking account and two CD accounts shall be established in the name of the Organization with Guaranty Bank ('Depository Institution') under the rules and regulations as prescribed by said Depository Institution, wherein may be deposited any of the funds of the Organization, whether represented by cash, checks, electronic transfer, notes or other evidence of debt, and from which deposit withdrawals or transfers are hereby authorized in the name of the Organization upon orders signed or otherwise authorized by any one of the individuals below: Janet Kres, John Neemidge, Donald Drumtra, Ronald Edelstein, and Patricia Drumtra." (ASIE 2007-12-1).

The previously tabled motion to set RG rates was taken up. Ron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with Janet not voting. The motion, after debate and amendment, was adopted as follows: "That RG rates for 2008 RG be set as listed below. The ExComm notes that it is within the authority of the RG committee to change the rates and to provide short term adjustments to support registration incentives.

\$30 through September 30; \$40 through December 31; \$50 through February 29; \$55 through April 30; \$60 through June 30; \$65 through July 31; \$70 through the start of the RG; \$75 at the door. Children 8-17 are half price. Children under 8 are free."

The Circulation Manager reported that she was encountering problems meeting the new postal system guidelines and planned to provide more detail at the January meeting.



The meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM.

Bylaws Committee Report

- by *Don Drumtra, Bylaws Committee Chairman*

The Bylaws Committee met for the 2nd time 7:15-8:15pm, February 14, 2008 with all five members present and two guests. We finished work on setting up the committee, approved the remainder of the "required wording" portions of the Bylaws, and moved on to the fun stuff—answering the questions listed in the Ideas Webpage on our Website, <http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~drumtra/website/LSMBylaws/> The minutes and other details of our work are also posted on the website.

In this meeting we completed discussion on the first idea (actually question)--what we should call our governing body? It is currently the Executive Committee or ExComm but the American Mensa standard allows us to choose board, committee, or other deliberative assembly. So we referred to Robert's Rules for guidance. The Rules seem to say that committees usually have a narrower scope and responsibility than boards do. Also committees normally do not have other committees under them or regular meeting times. Since our ExComm is broad in scope, has committees, and meets regularly, it appeared that "board" was a better term to use. The rules suggest Board of Directors, Executive Board, Board of Managers, Board of Trustees, and the like. To us, these all seemed too grandiose and bureaucratic for our group of officers. So in the end we approved "Board of Officers," which we would refer to simply as "the board."

At the future meeting we plan to take up questions like what should our leader be called-- LocSec, Chairman, President, Chief Bottle Washer? How many officers should we elect for the Board? How many, if any, appointed officers should be on the Board. Who should vote on the board? Should our leaders be chosen by direct or indirect vote? Should terms overlap? Which of our officers should be defined in the Bylaws (rather than in ASIEs)?

Is this fun or what? The next meeting will be at the TGIT on Thursday, March 13, at Central Market TGIT. The meetings are open and you may attend.



What's Happening in March?



ExComm Meeting

Wednesday, March 5

6:00-7:00pm

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.

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, March 11

7:00-8:45pm

Austin Public Library -- North Village Branch
2139 W. Anderson Ln, Austin (512) 491-9881

Topic: 'Actual Lives' www.actuallives.org

Presenter: Dr. Chris Strickling

Actual Lives, as a flexible tool for developing autobiographical performance by people with disability, was the brainstorm of nationally acclaimed deaf performance artist Terry Galloway. Now in its eighth year under the direction of Dr. Chris Strickling, as a sponsored project of VSA arts of Texas, the award-winning Actual Lives ensemble is a motley crew of disabled performers who make comic yet thoughtful theatre from the raw material of everyday life. Trying hard not to be inspirational, Actual Lives' "crip theatre with attitude" pokes fun at things that are supposed to be serious, speaks publicly about things that are usually private, critiques popular culture, and generally tries to stir things up.

Dr. Strickling's presentation highlights the group's unique process, chronicles its difficulties and successes, and explains preparations for a May 2008 show funded through the National Endowment for the Arts.

TGIT & Bylaws Committee Meeting

Thursday, March 13

7:15-8:15pm

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

See page 6 for details.

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.

3rd Saturday Poker Night

Saturday, March 15

7:00pm-???

Laura Shankland's house
11300 Bunting Dr., Austin (512) 297-8344

lolas@laurashankland.com

Please RSVP so we know how many to expect. Nickle ante; dealer's choice; BYOB.

Ethnic Eats

Thursday, March 20

6:30pm

Host: Ron & Linda Edelstein (512) 491-9881
Buffet Palace, 2601 S I35, Round Rock 388-9600
We're going to try visiting a different ethnic restaurant each month. Suggestions of your favorite place for Japanese, Thai, French, or any other cuisine are welcome. Ron and I will be there, whether anyone joins us or not, but so that we can ask the restaurant to set up table space for a group, I'd like a phone call by the Tuesday before telling me if you plan to join us. Please phone Linda or Ron at 491-9881 by March 18 if you plan to come.

Saturday Bridge Night

Saturday, March 22

7:00-10:00pm

Karen McMackin's house
7211 Lakewood Dr #123, Austin (512) 497-7211
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.

Longhorn Lunch

Thursday, March 27

12:00 Noon

Student or Staff at UT? Join fellow Longhorns on campus for lunch. Meet on Main Steps of UT Tower at Noon sharp. Please RSVP to carla.x.young@gmail.com so we don't leave without you.

TGIT Fold & Sticker

Thursday, March 27

6:00-8:00pm

Central Market Café, Austin
4001 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin (512) 206-1020
Meet us at the Café after work to help assemble the newsletter. 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.

Games Night

Saturday, March 29

7:00-10:00pm

Linda & Ron Edelstein's House
1439 Dapplegrey, Austin (512) 491-9881
We've got Scrabble and several other word games, plus board games or bring your favorite. Light refreshments.



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March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5 ExComm	6	7	8
9	10	11 Monthly Meeting	12	13  TGIT Bylaws Comm.	14	15 Poker Night <i>'Dillo Deadline</i>
16	17	18	19	20 Ethnic Eats	21	22 Bridge Night
23	24	25	26	27 Longhorn Lunch <hr/> TGIT <i>Fold & Sticker</i>	28	29 Games Night
30	31					2008