

Armadillo Literary Gazette

A Publication of Lonestar Mensa

Volume XXXV Number 8

August 2008

*Don't Miss Out!
Sign Up Now!*

LonestarRG Decadence: A 10th Anniversary Celebration



- Planned speakers and workshops on massage, exotic dance for women, chocolate, wine, genealogy, gemstones, literature, aromatherapy, energy, and more
- Kids' Program including wildlife rescue, karate, Game Camp, chess, more
- Dance & Casino Night
- Tastings including chocolate & cheese
- Decadent Dessert Contest
- Games & Contests
- Champagne Toast'n'Roast
- Prizes
- And much more!

Celebrate 10 years of LonestarRG in decadent style with us! LonestarRG X will be held in Austin over Labor Day Weekend, Aug 29-31, Sep 1, 2008. Bring the whole family!

Registration is only \$70 until Aug 15 and \$75 walk-in. Children 9-17 are half price, 8 and under are free. Send registrations to Jane K. Thompson, Registrar, LonestarRG VIII, 2305 Monaco Drive, Cedar Park, TX 78613 (jane12125@austin.tx.com). To register online via PayPal or a printable registration form, and for hotel information, pictures from last year's RG, and more, see the web page at <http://www.lsm.us.mensa.org/lonestarg.htm>.

Our RG hotel is the St Michael Plaza (new name, same hotel), located at the intersection of IH-35 and US-183 in Austin. Our room rate is \$77/night S/D (+\$8 for third or fourth adult). The room rate includes a hot buffet breakfast. For reservations call 1-866-661-6611.

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 kathieblair@yahoo.com

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: Helen Siders (see Newsletter Circulation)

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: Kathie Lawler (see M@L)

Newsletter Editor: Rachael Stewart

PO Box 349 Brownfield TX 79316

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Newsletter Circulation Manager: Helen Siders

512-799-6985 xlartemis@gmail.com

Newsletter Advertising Coordinator: Vacant

Webmaster: Geri Neemidge

512-310-7863 gneemidge@usa.net

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

phil_anne_so@yahoo.ca

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 Ron Edelstein: aduana@mindspring.com or 512-491-9881.

Regional Vice Chairman (RVC)

Ralph Rudolph

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Histerical Meanderings

-by Ron Edelstein

Anyone familiar with horse racing knows the terms “win”, “place” and “show”. For the benefit of those who do not, these refer to the horse that wins the race, the one that comes in second and the one who comes in third. Mostly this is important to people who are betting on the race. It also has significance for national politics in the United States. Everyone knows who the President and the Vice President are (and if they don’t, they shouldn’t be voting in an election!) Relatively few people know who is in the “show” position. In the past few years that may have increased somewhat with the fact that, for the first time in history, a woman has been Speaker of the House of Representatives. But only a few years ago the Capital Steps, a political satire singing group based in Washington, D.C. had a song that satirized the fact that few Americans knew who Dennis Hastert was and the fact that he was “third in line for the throne” because of his position as Speaker.

How serious is consideration of the Number Three position? Only once in history has this been a really serious consideration. That was when Vice President Spiro Agnew was forced to resign for criminal activity, leaving the U.S. with no VP. When the clouds gathered around President Richard Nixon, he must have guessed that the result would be his own resignation. He had to appoint someone to the VP position so there would be an orderly succession. Nixon appointed Gerald Ford, the House Minority Leader as the new VP. A year later Ford became President upon the resignation of Nixon. Had Nixon not made an appointment, due to the vacancy the succession would have passed on to Carl Albert, then Speaker of the House. The Speaker is elected within the House to the position, but represents the popular vote of only one Congressional district. Gerald Ford is remembered as the President who never won a national election to office (including his own attempt at a second term!)

Back to the “place horse”. Along with this basic ignorance of our own governmental system, people should pay more attention to who the vice presidential nominee is for the party they wish to vote for. This includes the party candidate for President! Often the VP person is selected to “balance the ticket”, meaning someone who will appeal to a different demographic than the Presi-

dential candidate to sweep a wider net to collect more votes. Often little thought is given to their capabilities as the person who is “a heartbeat away from the Presidency.” Can you imagine the U.S. Government run by Dan Quayle? How about Dick Cheney? One might argue that some presidents have been protected from assassination by consideration of who would replace them if they died!

So, when you vote, consider not only your party choice or candidate choice, whichever you use to determine your vote, but also consider, at least a little, who is in that “heart beat from the Presidency” position. What would happen if the President were to die or be incapacitated and the VP had to step up? Is this the person you could expect to continue with the policies and programs you were expecting when you voted? Do they have the strength and leadership ability to do the job? Do they represent sound judgment on the part of the presidential candidate for that position?!!! Maybe that is something to consider when you step into the voting booth.

* * * * *

In Memoriam --Vignesh Prakash

Recently we received the stunning news that Vignesh Prakash has passed away. You remember Vignesh -- the tall, handsome young man. The quiet, competent member of Lonestar Mensa -- who as a new member cheerfully accepted running as a candidate for Member at large - and won and was a great asset to the Ex Comm. It was Vignesh who reactivated the University of Texas at Austin Mensa student organization (after a lapse of over 20 years) and served as its president. You remember Vignesh - who attended Chapter meetings, and made some really great parrot toys during that Gifted Children’s meeting -- probably came naturally to a Mechanical Engineer student. At the University of Texas Vignesh participated in numerous organizations on campus, including as an officer in UT ASME -- leading the Rube Goldberg Project for the last two years. He was to have begun graduate studies in mechanical engineering at Cal Tech this coming fall. We remember Vignesh -- and we will miss him.

* * * * *

AUGUST

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- 01 Marion Alpern
William J Worthington IV
- 03 Betty L Wolverton
Eugene LaMar Guyon Jr
- 05 Audrey Diane Aucott-Meyers
- 08 Martyn John Hitchcock
Rudy S Apodaca
- 09 Allen E Boyles
Jeff White
Jerry Dike
- 12 Kyle Patrick May
Sandra A Meros
- 13 James T Nicholopoulos Jr
- 14 Keith R Babola
Ronald E Garner
- 17 Gilbert Wildin
Harry A Hunnicutt
- 18 Jennifer D Rider
- 19 William D McCarty
- 20 James B Robinson
Michael E Legatt
- 21 Laura Helen Christie
- 22 Ann C True
- 23 Matthew C Lawrence
Paul R Snavely
- 24 Megan E Hair
Patrick McShea
Paula Blessing Beard
- 25 Keith Wilson Loring
Scott Hauptmann
- 27 John R Strohm
William Allan Besselink
- 28 Daniel Rivera
Donna Woodwell
Lucille S Russell
Patrick Stallings
Steve Young
W Randall Strahan Jr
- 30 Glenn R Mautner
Helen Ruth Siders

Werd!

I'd like to take a card from the Washington Post's deck. (See <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/26/AR2007012600879.html> to read about the mythical "Mensa Invitational").

To wit: take any word from the dictionary, alter it by adding, subtracting or changing one letter, and supply a new definition. Send the result to bookbird@yahoo.com with "WP word game" in the subject line.

Examples*:

Beerd -- alcohol induced facial feature.

Vermincelli -- rat-tail pasta

The produce of your (insert adjective here) minds will appear in next month's ALG.

Rachael Stewart

Editor, Lonestar Mensa Armadillo Literary Gazette

* (Needless to say, your's truly has food on the brain. Such a focus is not necessary to consideration for the newsletter; just don't make me run from my computer screaming 'my eyes, they're burning!!!!')

Bylaws Committee Monthly Report

-submitted by Don Drumtra, Bylaws Committee Chair

The Bylaws Committee met for the seventh time 7:15-8:20 PM, July 10, with TGIT at Central Market. We approved last month's minutes and other prior work, discussed questions and answers from the Bylaws Workshop at the 2008 Annual Gathering, continued work on the ideas and questions that we need to answer. The agenda is posted our Website, <http://lonestar.us.mensa.org/bylaws/archives/index20080710.html>.

More specifically the committee approved officer titles of LocSec, Vice-President, and standing committee chair titles—Communications Chair, Education Chair, Recruitment Chair, and Symposia Chair; Coordinator. It also approved the four standing committee titles with the same names (Communications Committee, etc.). More detail is provided in the minutes on our Website, <http://lonestar.us.mensa.org/bylaws/minutes.html>.

At our next meeting we plan to take up election methods and what officers we want to identify in the Bylaws and ASIEs. Come to the Bylaws Committee meeting and stay for the rest of TGIT. Our next meeting is 6-7 PM, Thursday, August 7, and TGIT will meet 6-8 PM. Bylaws Committee meetings are open and all may attend.

RVC 6 Report

-by Ralph "Rudy" Rudolph, RVC Region 6

July 7th

The Annual Gathering (AG) broke our attendance records, with over 2000 members. It appeared to run very smoothly with few cancelled programs or glitches. TV cameras abounded as "60 Minutes" or some similar program taped us in action. We hope it turns out to be good publicity.

The Annual Business Meeting (ABM) produced few surprises. A motion by Jared Levine to restructure the National Hearings Committee passed after a few revisions and will be put to a referendum next year. The Hearings Review Committee will be putting forth their own motion(s) this fall.

Items of note at the American Mensa Committee (AMC) meeting include:

1. The initial report by Tecker Consulting (quite a few hours) identified AMC's major problems as being too bogged down by Administrivia (such as debating minutes for a half an hour), being primarily reactive rather than proactive, having a less-than-ideal amount of teamwork, and having no coherent long term strategy. They appear to be doing a comprehensive analysis. AMC will attempt to develop a cohesive long term strategy accordingly.
2. AMC voted to increase our dues to \$59 starting next year due to rapidly increasing costs in all operations. Members can avoid some of these increases by opting for one of our multi-year dues plans before December 31st.
3. AMC accepted the National Hearings Committees' recommendations and expelled Barry Levine from AML membership.
4. Permian Basin Mensa was awarded the "Innovative Owl Award" in recognition of "outstanding membership retention". Great job, folks!
5. Central Oklahoma's editor Nancy Park's newsletter Mensokie won PRP Awards in five categories (!): Overall presentation, Overall entertainment, Outstanding Newsletter, Calendar, and Owl (overall excellence). It truly has been an outstanding newsletter and Nancy is to be congratulated for her superb efforts.

6. Gulf Coast Mensa's Lorraine Crews won a website award for best calendar.

7. Central Oklahoma's TJ Lundeen won a PRP award for "humor" for her story "A Fish Tail".

8. I had the chance to meet some of our Regions Editors & LocSecs both in Hospitality and my "Meet your RVC Session". I also had the chance to meet some real asshole Gen-Xers at my session. It made me appreciate nice Gen-Xers all the more.



Scholarship Award Essay

-submitted by Claudia Harbert, Scholarship Chair

The essay below won a scholarship at the National level, officially a Grosswirth-Salny scholarship! This essay is by Sarah Kline from Plano. The essay speaks for itself. I apologize in advance for any typographical errors I may make and miss, and I also apologize for the error I made in the previous essay last month, leaving out a zero in 40, thus having the essay start with a mid-life crisis at age 4.

Winning Scholarship Essay by Sarah Kline

In December 1993, my family adopted a female beagle named Lucky. She sparked not only my love for animals, but also my interest in their well-being. Ever since, I have aspired to become a veterinarian and open my own veterinary clinic.

At the beginning of the summer of 2000, I applied for a job at a veterinary clinic. I began working for Dr. Shawn Messonnier, DVM, a holistic, exotic, and small-animal veterinarian. I started as a volunteer, since I was only 15, and was offered a part-time position for the following summer. With Dr. Messonnier, I learned how to assist in surgery and appointments, run lab work, manage the front office, and work in the kennel. Also, he taught me about treating diseases and problems with a homeopathic approach (treating the animal as a whole – not just the current problem) and how to use holistic and complementary medicine together. After 4 years of experience at his clinic, I decided to work for a different veterinarian to experience work at another clinic. The summer after my freshman year of college, I worked full-time for Dr. Tiffany Shurtz, DVM. Through Dr. Shurtz and Dr. Scott Grant, DVM,

July ExComm Meeting Minutes

-submitted by Don Drumtra, VP

the veterinarian I currently work for, I have seen the more traditional approach to veterinary medicine and have strengthened my technician abilities. After almost 8 years of technician experience, I fully understand how a vet clinic really works and the time and energy required to build a successful business.

This past fall, I applied for admission at Texas A&M's College of Veterinary Medicine, and I will find out mid-March if I have been accepted [she was accepted]. I received an interview in December, and I feel confident that it went well. Having already attained my Bachelor's of Science degree in biomedical science in 3 years, I am currently enrolled in a non-thesis Master's in Veterinary Science degree program at Texas A&M University, with a concentration in physiology. If I am accepted to veterinary school, I will finish my masters this summer and begin veterinary school in the fall. If I am not accepted, I will finish my degree in the fall/spring.

While my primary goal is entering veterinary school and attaining my DVM, I also have thought past vet school graduation. Last summer, Dr. Grant offered me a partnership at his veterinary clinic when I graduate from veterinary school. He expressed interest in my taking over the surgical aspect of the clinic and incorporating my knowledge of alternative medicine into his practice. Also, I want to work not only with small animals, but also with exotics. I am eager to take electives in veterinary school that will allow me to confidently treat exotic animals. Another goal of mine is to work with the Houston SPCA as a veterinarian. My passion is helping animals, including ones that have no owner looking out for them. I hope to dedicate volunteer and on-call time each month to treating these animals and sending them on the road to a new life.

Since the age of 7, I have planned and prepared for a career as a veterinarian. I know that veterinary medicine is in my future. Who would have guessed that adding a dog to our family would have inspired my career choice?



The regular monthly meeting of the Lonestar Mensa Executive Committee (ExComm) convened on July 9, 2008, at 6:05 PM, at Northwest Community Center, 2913 Northland Dr., Austin, TX. Attending were: President Ron Edelstein as Chairman, Vice-President Don Drumtra as Secretary, Treasurer Patty Drumtra, Member at Large Janet Kres, and Newsletter Circulation Manager and Lapsed Member Coordinator Helen Siders. The ExComm approved without debate the June 10 ExComm minutes as published in the July Armadillo Literary Gazette (ALG), page 8.

Ron reported that he reviewed the original checking account statement comparing all checks written against the supporting documentation in the Treasurer's books, that there were no discrepancies, and that the documentation fully supported the expenditures. He reviewed a printout of the June account statements for CD 1 and 2 and determined that the interest was properly posted to the CDs.

Don reported the main topics discussed at the Local Secretary's Workshop at the Annual Gathering. The topics included the LocSec email list, merging chapters, video taping meetings, local group leader title, and records management. Of particular interest was a topic discussing chapters who have large amounts of accumulated funds and whether those funds should be saved or spent. The American Mensa Committee (AMC) has chartered an ad-hoc committee to look at how local groups use the resources they have been given.

Patty reported the revenue and expenses for June and the first half of 2008 and the account balances as of June 30. LSM is financially sound but that expenditures continued to be below expected levels. The ExComm adopted without debate the second quarter financial report for publication in the ALG. Financial reports are available to members by request.

Janet reported for the Recruitment Committee that the new member party was a success and that Texas testing sessions have been scheduled for Round Rock on July 12, for Austin at 9 AM on August 30 at the LonestaRG, for Austin on a September date to be determined, and for Round Rock on October 18. Helen reported that she mailed reminders to all lapsed members using labels from the National Office.

(Continued on page 11.)



**Lonestar Mensa 2008
Regional Gathering
August 29 – Sept. 1, 2008
St. Michael Plaza Hotel
Austin, Texas**

RIDE SUPERSHUTTLE TO AND FROM THE AIRPORT

Price as low as \$24.00 roundtrip!*

You do not need a reservation. When you arrive at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport follow signs to the SuperShuttle ticket counter, inside, just past baggage carousel 1. Purchase your ticket to the hotel for \$15.00* per person one way or \$28.00* roundtrip; pay with cash or credit card. Schedule your return shuttle from the ticket counter or later by calling 512 or 800 BLUE VAN (258-3826); 24-hour advance notice is recommended.

GROUP DISCOUNT FOR RESERVATIONS MADE ON-LINE: We are happy to offer your group an additional \$2.00 discount for those who make their prepaid roundtrip reservation on our website. *Prepaid roundtrip reservations made in advance on the website are just \$24.00 per person roundtrip. Discounts are subject to availability and may vary.

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www.supershuttle.com

*Price subject to change without notice. Depending on fuel prices there may be a fuel surcharge in place (2008). Check current rates at www.supershuttle.com. Website discounts valid for roundtrip reservations made on the website, provided for credit card travel August 29 – September 1, 2008. Excludes the airport and Downtown Austin hotels (201-387-9888). If you have any questions about using the discount code please call Austin Group Sales at 512-925-9400 and if during regular business hours.



*** * * * ***

RG Volunteers Needed

We need help with registration, hospitality, games (including dealers for Casino Night) and more! If you are interested in supervising a children's event, hosting a contest, or introducing speakers, we need you. This is a great way to meet fellow members, make new friends, and earn extra raffle tickets. Contact Ellen at elukasik@sbcglobal.net and thanks in advance for your support!

The RG is Coming to Town!

Lonestar Mensa's 10th RG, Decade of Decadence, is coming soon! Our biggest event of the year is August 29th-September 1st and we have something for everyone! Scheduled programs include private genealogy consulting, Harpist Kela Walton (once for adults and once for children), Travis County Libertarian Party Chair Rock Howard, Aromatherapy, Hypnosis, former Secretary of the Air Force and Deputy Administrator of NASA Dr. Hans Mark, and much more. RVC6 Ralph Rudolph, Dr. Evan Carton, Hugh Brown, and Ron Edelstein will be sharing with us too. Adults can enjoy an Erotic Dancing workshop (for women only-sorry, no spectators), Bob's Bargain Bondage, Casino Night, Fishbowl, and Massage with Ray. We are having chocolate and cheese tastings, as well as a high-end liqueur tasting hosted by GenX Sig coordinator Jeff Dommonge (additional fees apply). Scheduled games include Jeopardy, Name that Movie, Carnelli, Jigsaw Puzzle Contests, and Werewolf. Two new conference rooms will host children's programming, arts and crafts, games, and movies. Wildlife Rescue, the Austin Society of Karate Demo Team, and Game Camp will be there, plus the President of the North Central Texas Chess Club will conduct a 3-hour interactive workshop and exhibition just for kids! We'll have ice cream making, water wars, bingo with Spencer, and a special kids only tasting. Enter the Decadent Dessert contest on Friday night and enjoy a glass of champagne as we kick-off the start of the RG. We are bringing back the Soapbox and offering admission testing on Saturday morning. See the website for program descriptions and plan to attend the entire event. You won't want to miss any of this!

We are at the same hotel as last year but the name has been changed. Make your reservations at the St. Michael Plaza Hotel (intersection of IH-35 and US-183) before August 15th by calling 1-866-661-6611 (or 836-8520) and requesting the "Lone Star Mensa Labor Day Rate." That's \$77/night and includes a hot buffet breakfast, wireless Internet, and free parking. They have an outdoor pool, exercise room, and a hot tub plus they're pet friendly! If you are not planning to stay at the hotel but would like to join us for breakfast, show your RG name badge for a \$1 discount on the buffet served daily from 6:30-10 am. Use code "NPBWR" for discount round-trip transfers from Austin Bergstrom International Airport on SuperShuttle.

Register for the 2008 RG in advance for \$70 or at the door for \$75. Daily rates are \$20 for Friday, \$40 for Saturday, \$40 for Sunday, and \$10 for Monday. Kids 8 -17 years old are half price, ages 8 and under are free. Registration forms and PayPal link are available at <http://www.lsm.us.mensa.org/lonestarg.htm>.

Treasurer's Report
Second Quarter 2008

-submitted by Patty Drumtra, Treasurer

With the end of the first half of the year, Lonestar Mensa was in sound financial condition. As may be seen from the top of the of the Cumulative Program Activity table, we should have accumulated 50 percent of our expected revenue and spent 50 percent of our budget. We are close on the revenue side at 49 percent. However, we have spent only 30 percent of our budget. This leaves room for more activities in the second half of the year. Looking at the Balance Sheet table, one can see \$1845 in the escrow account. This is mostly the 46 registrations for the RG that we hold until the RG actually happens. The Balance Sheet also shows that most of our money is in CDs, providing revenue for education and scholarship funding. Unfortunately, the

interest rate is currently less than 3 percent. We hope to use some money from the RG raffles to help in this area. The Lonestar Executive Committee approved this report on July 9, 2008.



Lonestar Mensa
Balance Sheet
 2008 June 30

Assets	
Current Assets	
Cash	\$-
Checking Account	1,834.44
Certificates of Deposit	18,000.00
Less Funds and Obligations	(15,000.00)
Accounts Receivable	408.40
Interest Receivable (Allocated)	30.88
Prepaid Expenses	<u>637.00</u>
Total Current Assets	\$8,019.47
Long Term Assets	
Funds	15,000.00
Equipment	300.00
Other Long Term Assets	-
Total Long Term Assets	<u>15,300.00</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$21,329.45</u>
Liabilities, Approp., and Net Assets	
Liabilities and Appropriations	
Accounts Payable	\$280.30
Escrow Accounts	1,844.82
RG Reserve	385.17
Eqmt Replacement Appropriation	141.00
Other Liabilities and Appropriations	-
Total Liabilities and Appropriations	\$2,631.30
Net Assets	<u>18,698.07</u>
Total Liabilities, Approp., and Net Assets	<u>\$21,329.45</u>

Certificate of Deposit 1 GB CD 1, 2.97%, 9 mo, 2008 Jan 22
 Certificate of Deposit 2 GB CD 2, 2.72%, 5 mo, 2008 Sep 22

**Lonestar Mensa
Cumulative Program Activity
2008 January 1 - June 30**

	2008 Budget	Actual to Date	50%
Recruitment Program			
Total Revenue	\$800.00	\$345.00	38%
Total Expenses	900.00	38.75	4%
Communications Program			
Total Revenue	3,800.00	1,822.75	51%
Total Expenses	3,800.00	1,833.88	45%
Symposia Program			
Total Revenue	900.00	450.00	50%
Total Expenses	900.00	98.12	11%
Education Program			
Total Revenue	480.00	240.00	50%
Total Expenses	480.00	63.81	13%
Subgroup Program			
Total Revenue	300.00	150.00	50%
Total Expenses	300.00	-	0%
Common Activities			
Total Revenue	150.00	75.00	50%
Total Expenses	150.00	40.20	27%
All Programs			
Total Revenue	6,330.00	3,082.75	48%
Total Expenses	<u>6,330.00</u>	<u>1,872.84</u>	30%
Total Programs	-	1,209.91	
LonestarRG			
Total Revenue	4,200.00	-	0%
Total Expenses	4,000.00	-	0%
Total Disbursements	200.00	-	0%
Undistributed Rev and Exp			
Total Revenue	780.40	234.28	31%
Total Expenses	-	-	
Total Contributions	\$760.40	\$1,444.19	

Welcome New Members

Leigh-Anne Brown
Jeff M. Merritt
Calvin Colby
William Allan Besselink
William R. Gold II

Welcome Back Members

Robert Wittenmyer
Keith Wilson Loring
Radhakrishna Dasari
Thomas Cloyd
Richard J. Williams
Michael Clinton Moyer
Vaughn E. Akins
James Daniel South
Glen Morehead
Lesley Carol Morehead
Albert W. Neff III
Paul Palmer

Nancy Hester
Frederick Charles Bothwell III
Dewey G. Parker
Rachael D. Roe
Cynthia Bourland
Angela Bevin Martindill
Lawrence Weinman
Reid L. Allen
Natalie L. Waring
William Richard Jones CCP

Welcome to Region 6, Lonestar Mensa

David T Silvey
David Luna
Brian E. Bloch
Craig Crossland

Engineer's Corner

-by Todd Stahlnecker

Spectacular Software Failures Office Max sells a copy of Windows XP Pro for \$299.99 and a copy of MS Office Pro for \$449.99. Does that seem like a lot of money? At least these programs will work after you install them. What if you paid that much and the programs couldn't be used? Welcome to the world of large software projects. Windows XP has about 40 million lines of code. Some large software projects, like those used at the IRS, have hundreds of millions of lines and cost hundreds of millions of dollars to develop. Somewhere on the order of 20% of these monster software programs will fail and be abandoned before, during, or after they are deployed. Some examples:

Ford Motor's purchasing system was abandoned after deployment costing \$400 million. McDonald's information purchasing system was canceled after \$170 million was spent. Kmart's supply chain management system was canceled after \$130 million had been spent. The IRS canceled its' tax modernization effort after \$4 billion was spent. The state of Washington canceled a DMV software system after \$40 million was spent. The United Way's administrative processing system was canceled after \$12 million was spent. Washington DC abandoned a new city payroll system after deployment costing \$25 million. Fox Meyer Drug went bankrupt after abandoning their \$40 million ERP system after deployment. The FAA canceled its' advanced automation system after spending \$2.6 billion. The state of California canceled a new DMV system after spending \$44 million. Allstate Insurance abandoned an office automation system after deployment costing \$130 million. The FBI's virtual case file system was abandoned after deployment costing \$170 million.

Why do such large multi-million dollar software projects fail so frequently? There are many factors. Poor communication between the software engineers and the client, unrealistic project goals, engineers taking on projects that are too complex for their firms, trying to implement an immature technology, and poor project management are among the most prominent. These are well known established reasons that have been well documented. So, why do they continue to occur? It's similar to auto accidents—we know why they happen and how to prevent them (drinking, driving too fast, inexperienced drivers). Still, we continue to shun the practices that could avoid them.

It seems that as long as people will be people, we will have to live with millions of dollars of wasted effort on buggy, useless, poorly written software. Getting quality software projects completed on time, within budget, and within design parameters just doesn't seem to be a priority with many companies and governments. Despite the fact that many of these software projects are of vital importance to a company's future, management often fails to understand what's at stake and see to it that proper resources are assigned to these projects to prevent them from failing.



* * * * *

August Monthly Meeting

Topic: "Lee Harvey Oswald's Last Words"
Presenter: Fred A. Bieberdorf, M.D.

The only person who heard Lee Harvey Oswald's last words was Fred Bieberdorf, M.D. Dr. Bieberdorf was a senior medical student at U.T. Southwestern in November 1963. He was moonlighting at the Dallas jail when Oswald was brought in as a suspect in the shooting of President John F. Kennedy.

Find out from Fred, the attending physician, what really happened in the late morning of November 24, 1963 when Jack Ruby shot Lee Harvey Oswald in the Dallas jail. Fred will recount the events that happened in the jail when Oswald was shot and his ambulance ride to Parkland Hospital.

* * * * *

What's Happening in August?

ExComm Meeting

1st Wednesdays

Wednesday, August 6

6:00-7:00pm

Northwest Recreation Center, Arts & Crafts Room
2913 Northland Drive, Austin

Contact the ExComm Secretary, Don Drumtra, at drumtra@aol.com, 512-291-0315 to get an item on the agenda. Officers are encouraged to attend and all LSM members are welcome.

Thank Goodness It's Thursday (TGIT)

1st & Last Thursdays (Moved on Holidays)

Thursday, August 7 & August 28 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, and 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.

Bylaws Committee Meeting

1st Thursday

Thursday, August 7

7:15-8:15pm

Central Market Café

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

The Bylaws Committee meeting is open to all LSM members. See the Bylaws Committee Report for more information on our progress. See TGIT above for directions.

2nd Saturday Bridge Night

Saturday, August 9

7:00-10:00pm

Home of Jeanne and Duncan Stewart

13106 Bidwell Dr, Austin (512) 335-4409

The bridge group decided to move to the Second Saturday.

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, August 12

7:00-8:45pm

Austin Public Library -- North Village Branch

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

Topic and Presenter: "Lee Harvey Oswald's Last Words" - Fred A. Bieberdorf, M.D.

See page 10 for details.

3rd Saturday Poker

Saturday, August 16

7:00pm

Home of Laura Shankland & McCartney Taylor

11300 Bunting Dr, Austin

Dealer's choice, nickel ante. BYOB. Please RSVP so we know how many people to expect. RSVP to lolas@laurashankland.com or call 297-8344.

Eclectic Eats

Wednesday, August 20

7:00pm

Host: Ron & Linda Edelstein (512) 491-9881

Location: Shanghai Restaurant, 6718 Middle Fiskville Rd. Style is Hong Kong Dim Sum. Please r.s.v.p. by August 18 to Linda Edelstein (ledelstein@mindspring.com) or 491-9881. R.S.V.P.'s essential to plan for seating at this restaurant.

Fold & Sticker

Last Thursday

Thursday, August 28

6:00-8:00pm

Central Market Cafe, Austin

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

Help fold and label the newsletter. Prospective members welcome. See TGIT for directions.

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... ExComm Minutes Cont'd.

Helen reported for the Communications Committee that the Quick Print received the ALG copy on time and thanked all submitters for making this possible by submitting articles and calendar items to the Editor and Communication Chair by mid June.

There were no reports from the Symposia and Education Committees.

Don reported for the LonestaRG Committee that registration forms were handed out at the Annual Gathering, that they are available on the LSM Website, and that there were 46 registrations for the LonestaRG at the end of June, up from 23 registrations at the end of May.

Don, Bylaws Committee Chair, reported that the monthly Bylaws Committee Report was as published in the June ALG, page 9. The next Bylaws Committee meeting was scheduled for Thursday, July 10 at Central Market, all are welcome.

The next regular monthly ExComm meeting was scheduled for 6-7 PM July 6 at the Northwest Community Center. ExComm meetings are open and all may attend. The meeting adjourned at 6:50 P.M.

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

Submission Information: Submissions of all types will be accepted. The deadline is the 15th of each month. Submissions may be by email (ASCII/text/.txt format preferred) 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 restricted by the author.

Advertising Rates and Policies:

Non-commercial: Lonestar Mensa members may submit 2 per year at no charge. 4 line maximum, subject to editor's discretion as to date of publication.

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.

August

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