

Armadillo Literary Gazette

A Publication of Lonestar Mensa

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Mr. Bruce Byron, President of the Navy League of the United States, receiving a Mensa cup for his super presentation on the history of the Navy League and its four goals. The Navy league provides education of national leaders, support of men and women of US sea services, assistance to sea service families, and support of Navy League youth programs. Mr. Byron shared League activities related to the four sea services: US Navy, US Marine Corps, US Coast Guard, and the US Merchant Marine. Ron Edelstein, LSM President, presented the cup.

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Lonestar Mensa Officers - 2009

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Waco Coordinator: Vacant

Education Chair: Vacant

Education Funding Coordinator: Vacant

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Ombudsman: Vacant

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

LonestarRG Chair: Carla Young (see New Member)

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RG Hospitality Chair: Vacant

RG Programs Chair: Vacant

RG Facilities Chair: Vacant

RG Publicity Chair: Vacant

RG Treasurer: Don Drumtra (see V.P.)

RG Drawings, Prizes, & Awards Chair: Vacant

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)

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LocSec's Corner

-by Ron Edelstein, LSM LocSec

Well, March has come and gone and we are now into April and its new growth of greenery and flowers. I was out of town for a couple of weeks during March, out to the Left Coast, where it was cooler than Austin. Whilst I was gone Austin had several days of good, soaking rain. When I returned, the bare poles of the trees were sprouting green and the sere, brown, dry grass had turned lush and green and the flowers were exploding on the scene.

A thought occurred to me as I was writing this column on the Ides of March: that a month from now is that great American non-holiday, Tax Day. My sometimes warped mind came up with the idea that maybe we ought to move it up to 15 March. That way we could celebrate the death of a dictator by rendering to Caesar in celebration of Caesar's death. OK, so we probably wouldn't be ready a month sooner, but if it came around every year at the same time we could just plan for it. But then, the deadline of the ALG comes around the same time every month and I'm not usually ready for that either, so I guess we'd better keep it the way it is.

Here's an idea I've been mulling over ever since I became LocSec and I've discussed it with a few people. I'm going to toss it out for general comments. For some reason, several years ago, before I came to Austin, it was decided by the then ExComm that LSM members could not be speakers at the monthly general meeting. I have been told why this is, but I think it should not serve as a complete bar for such things. We have a lot of members who have done, or are doing, some very interesting things that others might be interested in hearing about. I just got back from an annual conference of a trade association for people in my line of work. We are the international trade compliance professionals, the people who manage the international trade regulatory compliance for multinational companies and the service providers, such as customs brokers, freight forwarders and carriers. Most of what we do is a complete mystery for people not involved in our line of work. There are plenty of other Mensans who are involved in other esoteric professions as well. Now I don't want to do a presentation on the esoteric mysteries of tariff schedules and export control regulations, and if an electrical engineer wants to explain how to make memory stack calls to a microprocessor, you could do it in any of several languages and I'd still be no better off when you

finished. But there should be some way that some of us, particularly those who have skills in teaching and public speaking, to make some of what we do interesting to others. We also don't want to see a slide show of your last vacation to Maui or Cancun, but if your vacation is engaging in an archaeological dig in Mayan ruins or diving a wrecked treasure ship or walking the Great Wall of China and you can put it together in an interesting presentation, why not? After all, we ARE Mensans and should have something interesting to say.

Think it over and let me know your opinions, yah, nay or something else. You can send me your comments to my email address at: aduaana@mindspring.com. This is not a formal survey or a vote, just let me have your opinions. We'll see where it goes from there.



Ron Edelstein, LSM President, presents the official name tag signifying Paul Anderson's election as a Member-at-Large to the LSM Executive Committee.

Welcome New Members

Quintin T Anderson
James Hamilton
Katherine 'Kate' Cahill
Margaret 'Meg' Cahill
Claire Cahill

Welcome Back Members

Barry L Wilkinson
Laurie Frick
Mark Frick
Maria Maegan Priscilla Navarro Quejada
Scott Timothy Lilleboe
Tim J Beauregard
Bryan Kern
Codie Smith
Deidre Brightman

Welcome to Region 6, Lonestar Mensa

Maria M. Crompton
Steven Neill
Steve Roberts
Rodney Appling
Bill Taylor

Engineer's Corner

-by Todd Stahlnecker

Abstract Math... What Good Is It?: For several years, I taught an adult education class in Nebraska for people in various trades such as house wives, truck drivers, or brick layers wanting to learn to be electricians. The school sent me to classes where teachers were exposed to the different ways in which people learn. The ideal student, around which our educational system is based, reads the assigned chapters out of a book, takes a test, and has learned the information. Others, however, learn better by seeing the process demonstrated. Others need to have the information spoken to them. Still others need to do it themselves.

In the course of this teaching job, I found that many of my Omaha area adult students didn't know how to read a ruler or a tape measure when it came time to bend conduit. Each year I had to explain what a "square foot" was when determining how many light fixtures were needed to illuminate a room. Many of these mathematically challenged adults were otherwise intellectually gifted people. They told me that there was no motivation in school to take any more than the mandatory rudimentary math classes. That made electrician work a tough road for them because electricity can't be readily seen or measured by conventional means. You can't smell it and you generally don't want to feel it. It is best understood in mathematical terms such as Ohm's Law.

Engineering and math are tightly integrated. A recent IEEE article expressed concern that US school systems are losing potential future engineers at an early age by allowing students with mathematical aptitude to fail in discovering their talent. The key, it was thought, was that schools and teachers don't always show students the practical every day usefulness of math. Math remains an abstract to them.

Experiments were done with young Brazilian street vendors who could quickly calculate how much to charge for combinations of several coconuts based on their knowledge of the cost of one. Given the same problem as an abstract classroom-style math problem, they couldn't solve it. I recall my own education where I learned general math, algebra, trig, and calculus and how there was little emphasis on using this math to solve real world problems. Our study of matrixes, for example, never revealed how in the world one would ever need to use matrix math. Teachers then and to this day were teaching the students to memorize procedures

rather than teaching the student the concepts behind the steps. If you take away the steps of the procedure, as what happens in the real world, the student is at a loss as to how to solve the problem.

All of us have a need and inherent motivation for math and numbers. We make monetary purchases, are concerned with school grades, compare batting averages, and memorize addresses and phone numbers. Somewhere there's a disconnect between this real world motivation and the abstract classroom math. Perhaps, though, progress is being made. My 7 yr old step daughter is learning math in a variety of methods which show the kids that addition is to combine and subtraction is to compare. The concepts of prime numbers and squares are being taught with blocks placed into arrays. Things they can see, touch, and grasp spatially. Google "TIMMS Study" to find information on how the US student population is doing in math and science as compared to other countries or go to www.nctm.org for information on teaching methods.

On April 19 at 6:00p.m. in the Sanctuary of Austin's Congregation Agudas Achim, on the Dell Jewish Community Campus, 7300 Hart Ln, the Austin Jewish Community's Holocaust commemoration will feature the debut of a new composition by Lonestar Mensan Aaron Rabushka. The piece sets an inscription from the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation in Dallas, exhorting Jews & Christians to work together to make sure that horrors of WWII are remembered.

American Mensa Membership Milestone

-submitted by Don Drumtra, Vice-President

Russ Bakke, Chairman, reported that as of March 12 American Mensa had 56,935. This is our highest number ever, surpassing our previous peak of 56,929 members in 1989. He thanked all members who volunteered their time and talents making Mensa a thriving organization and is proud to know that record numbers of people have found friendship, intellectual challenge, and personal growth through their memberships.

Last month Lonestar Mensa reached 602 members and we expect to beat our last years high of 604 members at the end of March this year. Hooray! Congratulations to us all.

As we look toward March 31, please check that you've renewed your membership so that you'll have non-stop access to the benefits of membership. To renew, visit <http://www.us.mensa.org/renew> or give the National Office a call at 888/294-8035 ext. 199.

March ExComm Minutes

-submitted by Don Drumtra, ExComm Secretary

The regular monthly meeting of the Lonestar Mensa Executive Committee (ExComm) convened on March 4, 2008 at 6:00 PM, at Northwest Community Center, 2913 Northland Dr., Austin, TX. Attending were: Vice-President Don Drumtra, Chairman and Secretary; Treasurer Patty Drumtra; Members-at-Large Paul Anderson and Kathie Lawler and Circulation Manager Helen Siders. The ExComm approved without debate the February minutes published in the March Armadillo Literary Gazette (ALG) page 5.

Patty reported that revenue met expectations with the exception of membership, which was low due to a lack of testing in January and February. Expenses were below budget. The ExComm adopted the report without debate. Monthly financial reports are available to members online and by request. Quarterly reports are also published in the ALG.

The Membership Committee did not submit a report.

Kathie, Communications Chair, reported that the ComComm still had vacant positions to be filled. She reported that the ComComm was developing a standing rule (ASIE 2009-Draft, LSM Monthly News Cycle) providing a list of tasks and due dates for getting monthly news to the members.

Don reported for Symposia Committee (SymComm) that there was a critical need for a volunteer to develop programs for our general meetings and other intellectual and social activities of the group. Helen agreed to host a picnic sometime in April suggesting April 18 or earlier as a date for consideration. Don reported that there is consensus that there will be three TGITs each month. The first two will be held in the second and third Thursdays of each month through the remainder of 2009 and that dates for the third TGIT are still under consideration.

The Education Committee did not submit a report.

Don, Bylaws Committee Chair, reported that the February Bylaws Committee report was published in the March ALG page 6. The committee has extended regular meetings to 90 minutes to speed completion of the draft. The next Bylaws Committee meetings were scheduled for Thursday, March 12 and April 9 with TGIT at Central Market North, all are welcome. Details of Bylaws meetings are provided in the LSM Website.

The LonestarRG 2009 Committee did not submit a report.

At the March 3 general meeting, Ron Edelstein, LSM President, presented Paul the first of the new officer nametags. The Secretary will order nametags for new officers as they are appointed.

The next regular monthly ExComm meeting was scheduled for 6-7 PM April 1 at the Northwest Community Center Multipurpose Room. ExComm meetings are open and all Mensa members may attend.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.



Bylaws Committee

March Monthly Report

-submitted by Don Drumtra, Bylaws Committee Chair

The fifteenth meeting of the Bylaws Committee convened 6:00-7:25 PM, March 12, 2009, with TGIT, at Central Market North. We approved the last month's minutes with corrections and all other prior work, and the drafts for the remainder of the bylaws with the exception of Article VI, Elections, which is still being drafted. The minutes and other details of our work are posted on our Website, http://lonestar.us.mensa.org/bylaws/bylaws_committee/

We are very happy to report that we are close to finalizing a coherent set of bylaws that will support our currently business practices but still allow us flexibility to change things if we want. The committee plans to finalize the bylaws at the next meeting, so now is your last chance to suggest any changes before it goes to the ExComm, scheduled for May 6, and then the AMC Bylaws Committee for approval. After that approval, we all will have an up or down vote on it -- portions cannot be changed at this point without going through the approval process again. If you do not want to submit comments online, you are welcome to come to the final Bylaws Committee meetings and stay for the rest of TGIT. Our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 12, 6-7:30 PM; TGIT will meet 6-8 PM. Bylaws Committee meetings are open and all may attend.

The RVC Report

-by Roger Durham, RVC Region 6

Greetings & most sincere best wishes from your new Regional Vice Chairman. While some of you may already have heard at least part of the story, I feel it is only fair that I begin by explaining why I am writing this column in place of Ralph Rudolph.

Last fall, Ralph published a comment that had been made in confidence in an AMC-only e-mail. Ralph says this was inadvertent, & I have no reason to doubt him, but nonetheless this was a violation of AMC rules, & resulted in disciplinary actions that Ralph felt would compromise his ability to represent the Region effectively. When the other AMC members declined to reverse these actions, Ralph considered it a vote of "no confidence" & resigned both his office & his candidacy for re-election.

Now, since Ralph was seeking re-election as our incumbent (& popular) RVC, no one had filed as a candidate to run against him. When his resignation was announced, there were only four days left in the filing period for election to office for the term beginning in July of this year. As soon as Ralph's resignation became known, I received a call from a long-time friend, TJ Lundeen of Central Oklahoma Mensa, suggesting that I run for RVC. I immediately authorized the posting of a petition on the national website, & began e-mailing people to ask for their support.

No one else chose to run, so under American Mensa rules, when I was the only candidate at the end of the filing period, I was automatically declared elected. Then, since I was the duly-qualified RVC-elect, & the office was currently vacant, the AMC allowed me to take office early, thereby avoiding the necessity to appoint a non-voting representative to serve until July.

Now, about me: I am a 62-year-old attorney & part-time municipal judge, married (for 21 years) with no children. I joined Mensa in 1974 in Houston, where I served as a Board member & RG chair in 1983, but have spent most of my time in Dallas, where I have been LocSec (6 times), RG chair (several times) & AG Co-Chair (in 2001). I am a life member of Mensa, as well as a proctor, & currently serve as treasurer of North Texas Mensa's local Scholarship Foundation. I am not, however, under the impression that I know everything about Mensa, & I would welcome your help, suggestions, & constructive criticism. I look forward to meeting many of you in the course of the next two years.

A Brief Biographical Sketch of Paul Anderson

At age 16, I became a legally licensed Pilot for fixed wing, single engine airplanes. My family had been flying since I was 7 years old. I taught Water Safety (Swimming) and Flying part time for over ten years.

I joined The North Texas Group of Mensa in 1965. The geographical area of this group, at that time, consisted of all North Texas from Waco to the Red River and the Louisiana Border to about half way between Fort Worth and Abilene. I was elected as a Vice President of Communications in that group in the Spring of 1966.

I took over the Communications job by transforming the single sheet monthly News Letter to Members into a four page news briefing and submitting brief notices to the newspapers. I named it "M-AURA". That name has endured for 43 years.

In 1967, while searching for alternate employment in the wake of the Anti-Trust suits brought against General Dynamics, I learned of a small electronics manufacturing company in Austin seeking a Sales and Marketing Manager. After a few weeks of touring the plant and haggling over pay, I was offered and did accept the position of 'Manger of Marketing and Sales' for DÉCOR ELECTRONICS CORPORATION of Austin. I moved to Austin in September, 1967.

A letter and call to Mensa National revealed that there was NO Mensa group operating in Austin. I was given the names of two members who met for drinks in a restaurant in near downtown Austin on Thursdays at 5:00 PM. I showed up the next Thursday at 'The Iron Gate' Bar & Restaurant and met the two members. We contacted National and got a member list of about 23 in the Austin area (including Bryan-College Station). We petitioned National for a Group Designation, and using the By-Laws of the North Texas group, we established the Austin Group of Mensa. Our first meeting took place on the third Friday in January, 1968. The Austin American Statesman, published the first meeting notice. It was well attended.

I have done the publicity 'off and on' for most of the time that Austin Mensa, now Lone Star Mensa, has existed. I have been President and Local Secretary (and Newsletter Editor) a few times in that period too.

Paul Anderson, Member At Large

Clean Livin' Paul Who is
A Texas Word-Slinger & A Ghost-Writer

What's Happening in April?

Bridge -- Date TBD

If you are interested in playing party bridge (not duplicate bridge), please contact Janet Kres at 512-836-5773, or JMKres@sbcglobal.net.

ExComm Meeting

1st Wednesday

Wednesday, April 1

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.

Monthly Meeting

1st Tuesday

Tuesday, April 7

7:00-8:45pm

Old Quarry Branch, Austin Public Library
7051 Village Center Drive, Austin
Southeast of the intersection with Far West Blvd.
Theme: Soapbox Night

Members may register with Ron Edelstein (aduan@mindspring.com) to give a 10-12 minute presentation. Subject can be anything of your choosing EXCEPT religion promoting a specific religion, politics, or anything generally recognized as offensive for public speaking. Nor can the soapbox be used to attack or denigrate a person, either Mensan or otherwise, or a public organization.

Thank Goodness It's Thursday (TGIT)

2nd, 3rd & 4th Thursdays (Moved on Holidays)

Thursday, April 9 at Central Mkt North

Thursday, April 16 at Central Mkt South

Thursday, April 23 at Central Mkt North

Central Market Café **6:00-8:00pm**

Central Market North at Central Park
4001 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin (512)
206-1020

Central Market South at Westgate
4477 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin (512) 899-4300

Meet us at the Café after work for fun, conversation, and food. Prospective members welcome.

Central Market (North) Café is located on the south side of the Central Market grocery store in the Central Park shopping center east of N. Lamar between 38th and 41st Streets. We usually meet upstairs but if there is party, look for us downstairs or outside. Central Market (South) Café is located on the east side of the Central Market grocery store in the Westgate Mall on the south side of S. Lamar

access road (the south access road of I-290/SR71) between Westgate Blvd. and Frontier Trl. Look for the Mensa sign. or folks with Mensa shirts.

Bylaws Committee Meeting

2nd Thursday

Thursday, April 9

6:00-7:00pm

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.

South Austin Diners

Thursday, April 9

6:00pm

Italian Garden, 415 N. LBJ Drive, San Marcos

Host: The Fortins (512) 754-8956

Please feel free to bring family, significant others and friends. We enjoy meeting new folks and learning more about this area of Texas. Following dinner, some may choose to go to a movie, some may not. We have chosen the Italian Garden, just north of the Courthouse. LBJ Drive is one way, north. This is a BYOB restaurant, with no corking fee. So bring wine or beer if you would like.

We had a wonderful evening Thursday, March 12th. After sharing Woody's BBQ family meal, the group decided to head to the movies. We recommend "Taken"; be prepared, we were all exhausted when the movie ended. Comments ranged from "I need to go home and take my blood pressure medicine" to "I need to catch my breath." A good time was had by all.

If you need directions, call The Fortins at 512.754.8956 or email fortin_associates@hotmail.com.

Fold & Sticker

Thursday, April 23

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.

Coming Up in May

Lonestar Mensa Spring Picnic

Mark your calendar for the 2009 LSM Spring Picnic, 4PM on Saturday May 30, at Beverly S. Sheffield Northwest District Park in north central Austin. Details will be in the next newsletter; if you have ideas or want to help, contact Geri & John Neemidge (badgers@neemidge.net) or Helen Siders (xlartemis@gmail.com or 512-799-6985).

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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.

Commercial: 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.

<i>2009</i>	<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
<i>April</i>				1	2	3	4
				ExComm Meeting			
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
			Monthly Meeting		TGIT North Bylaws Mtg South Diners		
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
				<i>'Dillo Deadline</i>	TGIT South		
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
					TGIT North Fold & Sticker		
	26	27	28	30	<i>May</i> 1	2	3