

# Armadillo Literary Gazette

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Volume XXXVI Number 3

March 2009



*Guarding the Goats* -- Dixie Dude Ranch

-photo by Rachael Stewart 2008

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# Lonestar Mensa Officers - 2009

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**Membership Chair:** Vacant

**Current Member Coordinator:** Vacant

**New Member Coordinator:** Carla Young  
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**Historian:** Vacant

**Symposia Chair:** Vacant

**Programs Officer (Meeting Coord.):** Vacant

**Symposia Coordinator:** Vacant

**Symposia Publicity Coord.:** Paul Anderson (see Publicity)

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512-754-8956 [fortin\\_associates@hotmail.com](mailto:fortin_associates@hotmail.com)

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**Waco Coordinator:** Vacant

**Education Chair:** Vacant

**Education Funding Coordinator:** Vacant

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

**LonestaRG Chair:** Carla Young (see New Member)

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512-335-4196 [jane12125@austin.rr.com](mailto:jane12125@austin.rr.com)

**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](mailto:aduana@mindspring.com) or 512-491-9881.

## **Regional Vice Chairman (RVC)**

Roger Durham  
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## LocSec's Corner

*-by Ron Edelstein, LSM LocSec*

March Madness, the Ides of March, March hares, “In like a lion/lamb, out like the opposite”... all the mystique of the third month of the solar calendar. So why do we have these expressions? March, named for Mars, the Roman god of war, falls at the time of year when the seasons change. On the 21st we have the spring solstice, when winter ends and spring begins. The world emerges from the cold and chills and in more northern zones, the ice and snow, to rains, flowers and greenery emerging from the ground. It is also the time when hares and other creatures begin their spring rites to carry on their species and, as the expression goes, “a young man’s (and some older ones!) turns to love”. (A state that many young women have been trying to get across for some time, but were frustrated by the football season!)

So why “March madness” and what’s special about the March Hare? Well, as just mentioned, March is the time when hares, at least in Europe, and rabbits in the Americas, start acting strangely. They box with each other, leap into the air and do other odd sorts of things which have no apparent connection with getting food or hiding from predators. In fact, they attract the attention of the predators...and hopefully eligible female hares! The March madness is simply a more generalized expression for the behavior of the March hares. (The Hatter, who was the March Hare’s partner at the famous tea party described by Lewis Carrol in Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland was mad for a different reason. As we now know, people who worked in the hatting industry were often exposed to large amounts of mercury (a different Roman god) and suffered from brain damage.)

Whence cometh the Ides of March? Well, any high school student who had to suffer through inept teachings of Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar in tenth grade will recall that he was warned to beware of the Ides of March, though few of us at the time had any idea what the “ides” were. The Romans had the quaint concept of naming the days of the month instead of numbering them. (When you consider their numeral system, it’s not hard to imagine why!) The ides of any month were what we would call the 15th today. It was the middle day of every month on the Roman calendar—they all had 30 days—and it was a good day to remember to do business, like getting rid of unwanted dictators. Julius thought of March as his lucky month. Well, bad is

luck!

So, until the April showers, have a great March

Ron Edelstein  
LSM LocSec

### ***Welcome New Members***

Weyland Wilder  
Michael McCown

### ***Welcome Back Members***

Charles Wayne Smith  
David J Burgett  
Joseph Powell  
Kenneth V Mosher II  
E Normal Jefferson  
Eric J Hammack  
Erik W Mulloy  
Heather N Martin

### ***Welcome to Region 6, Lonestar Mensa***

James H Hord Jr  
Leslie Ann Hoobler  
Ralph Monroe Buels

### **A Word from the Webmaster**

*-by Charles Wilson, LSM Webmaster*

Hopefully everyone has noticed that the web site is undergoing some changes. I’m in the process of bringing the site into compliance with current web and accessibility standards. I’ve also been moving some pieces around to make them easier to maintain in the future. One of the new features already in place is the google calendar of events. This allows you to see events not only for the current month, but also for the future and past. The ALG back issues pages has been reinvisioned. You can now see all the available back issues in a compact format and can download not only individual issues, but entire years. Hopefully you’ll also be seeing much faster page load times and cleaner presentation of information.

There’s a lot of ground to cover in the update, but you should see the more improvements over the next few months. If you have any question or notice incorrect information on the site, please send me an email. Be sure to note the URL of the page in your email.

Charles Wilson, webmaster (lonestar.mensa.webmaster@gmail.com)

## Being There

### **Mensan Stan Peyton participates in Presidential Inauguration**

We were on the Yellow Line of Metro when the call from the Congressman's office came in letting us know that they had two more tickets to the Inauguration for us. This was the night before the big event, and they said they would wait at the Longworth House Office Building for us to pick up the tickets until 8:00 p.m. At 8:12, they were in our possession - we would be able to see this incredible event up close (with 240,000 of our closest ticketed friends).

You have seen the news coverage of the Inauguration, so I would like to make a stab at how it felt to be there.

There was such a feeling that we are all in this together - I felt completely free to speak to anyone in the crowd. And they always responded warmly, with a twinkle in their eye (this included the law enforcement folks). This made everyone unfailingly polite. If you dropped your cap, two people would bend down to pick it up before you could snag it. Basically, our Texas ethos of helping neighbors was extended to the Nation's Capital, and we all bathed in the luxury of it.

It was a very handsome assemblage. A goodly number of the African Americans in the crowd were wonderfully tastefully dressed, while the rest of us were dressed solely for warmth. But even when dressing for warmth, a large number of people displayed subtle social cues by wearing jackets by North Face or Patagonia (both of which make excellent, but pricey, clothing).

As an aside, it was jarring to see the ball bound get on the Metro in their tuxes and gowns. Had a hard time wrapping my mind around that, for some reason.

The organization and security were the best I have ever seen. Think about it, how do you make plans to move almost 2,000,000 people and keep them safe? I saw police there from the Port of Newark Authority to the Florida Highway Patrol, and they all played active roles. But they were never heavy handed, and never rude.

Sure, it was cold, and there were times we had to wait. These things didn't matter. In the words of a whip smart 27 year old, "Being there made me realize, for the first time ever, that by working together we can reverse the trajectory toward decay that our country has been on for far too long. I no longer will assume that my life won't be as good as my parents."

## Engineer's Corner

*-by Todd Stahlnecker*

**Electricity + Heat = \$:** Modern homes and businesses require multiple utilities to function. These include water, sewer, storm drainage, fire protection, electricity, heating, cooling, and telecommunications. Two of these items can be combined in a way that results in wonderful efficiency and more resourceful use of our planet's natural resources. These are the need for electricity and the need for heat.

The electricity we use in Omaha is normally generated at a coal or nuclear generating plant. The majority of energy used in generating this electricity is rejected as heat and more is lost as heat while traveling to your building via power transmission lines and transformer. The total efficiency of the operation can be as low as 30%. In the meantime, your home or business also needs heat for the space as well as hot water. Is there a way to put that wasted heat to good use?

There is a line of products out that are high efficiency generators which capture the heat of the engine to either heat water or the space. These products allow up to 85 or 90% of the fossil fuel's energy to be put to constructive use. On the commercial side, engineers have the micro-turbine available which I first saw in use at a utility office in Nebraska several years ago. A micro-turbine is a turbine engine normally powered from natural gas. The turbine's rotor rides on compressed air so that there are no bearings. The turbine runs a generator that produces power for the building while the exhaust from the turbine is then routed thru a heat exchanger to provide hot water for the facility. These have proven to be perfect for hotels which use massive amounts of hot water for showers and laundry. Units are available at 30 and 60 kilowatts.

On the residential side, there are the micro-CHP (combined heat and power) furnaces. These use an internal combustion engine to run a generator. Heat produced is then routed to the home's forced air furnace system to achieve the efficiency. One such system is the Honda Freewatt system. This micro-CHP unit produces 3.26 kilowatts of heat and 1.2 kilowatts of electricity. Climate Energy, a partner with Honda in this endeavor, is running a test pilot program of 25 installations in the NE United States. A similar micro-CHP has sold 45,000 units in Japan.

You can read more about the micro-turbine at

www.microturbine.com and the Freewatt unit at www.hondanews.com/categories/1060/releases/4880. Models are becoming available that run on many different forms of fuel and that can heat, cool, and produce hot water all while generating electricity. These units usually result in a 30% reduction in the total amount of carbon dioxide normally produced to achieve the same results. The additional benefit is that you produce this power and heat on-site so that a power outage doesn't leave you in the dark.

Agricultural Tidbit: Using Donkeys as  
Herd Guardians for Sheep & Goats

<http://www.boergoats.com/clean/articleads.php?art=61>  
[http://www.agr.state.tx.us/agr/main\\_render/0,1968,1848\\_5329\\_7078\\_0,00.html?channelId=5329](http://www.agr.state.tx.us/agr/main_render/0,1968,1848_5329_7078_0,00.html?channelId=5329)

## **February 4 ExComm Minutes**

*-submitted by Don Drumtra, ExComm Secretary*

The regular monthly meeting of the Lonestar Mensa Executive Committee (ExComm) convened on February 4, 2008 at 6:00 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; and Members-at-Large Paul Anderson and Kathie Lawler. The ExComm approved without debate the December and January minutes printed in the February Armadillo Literary Gazette (ALG) pages 6 and 7 respectively.

Ron reported that he had appointed Gloria Fortin as San Marcos Coordinator for 2009 and thanked her for volunteering. He also announced that he had received a letter from Mark Kres, CPA reporting his independent review of the LSM 2008 Financial Records. A copy was published in the February ALG, page 5 and will be on the Website. In summary, our 2008 records were in good shape. The ExComm adopted a motion to commend Mark for volunteering his time to conduct this review.

Patty reported that January had slightly lower than expected revenue and way lower than expected expenses. We had a net gain for January; however, there were some January expenses deferred to February because of late reporting. 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.

Ron reported for the Membership Committee (MemComm) that no volunteers had come forward for Membership chair or other committee positions, but that testing has been scheduled for March 7.

Kathie, Communications Chair, reported that the ComComm still had vacant positions to be filled. She also reported that the committee planned to meet after the ExComm meeting to address other items on the agenda.

Don reported for Symposia Committee (SymComm) that the Hays County Lunch Bunch event sponsored by Ron and Gloria Fortin was a success with six attendees. (The county has a total of about 17 LSM members so this was an excellent turnout). Ron reported that he was still looking for a volunteer

to coordinate programs for the monthly meetings. Don reported that he was still working to get agreement for TGIT meeting dates for the rest of the year.

Don reported for the Education Committee (EdComm) that the Scholarship Judging Committee met January 31 to select scholarship winners. The results had not yet been released.

Don, Bylaws Committee Chair, reported that the December and January Bylaws Committee report was published in the ALG pages 3 and 5 respectively. 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 Bylaws Committee Website.

There was no report from the LonestarRG 2009 Committee.

The ExComm generally approved a design for officer name tags to be purchased locally under ASIE 2003-12-01. Don agreed to finalize the design and send it to ExComm members for consideration.

The next regular monthly ExComm meeting was scheduled for 6-7 PM March 4 at the Northwest Community Center Multipurpose Room. ExComm meetings are open and all Mensa members may attend.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM.

## New South Austin TGIT

*(Thank Goodness it's Thursday)*

Hello, South Austinites. We will be meeting at 6:00pm Feb 19, 2009 (and every third Thursday) at Central Market South at Westgate, 4477 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin, phone 512.899.4300. We will eat at the Central Market South CAFE for fun, conversation and food. Look for a Mensa sign. Questions call Helen (799-6985), Don (291-0315) or Patty (291-0361)

## South Austin TGIT Attracts

### New Lonestar Mensans

*-by Helen Siders*

Eight people gathered around a huge round table at the South Austin Central Market. We were maybe 75% South Austinites. The majority seemed to be PHD's, or candidates for a PHD. We introduced ourselves. We talked briskly for two hours. There were some new people, two of whom I am highlighting in this post.

Patsy Graham, formerly of Houston-Bay Area Mensa, has relocated to the northern part of Austin. This is the Patsy who has chaired several of the Houston RG's to great success. Patsy has grown children living here. Also she has always wanted to live in Austin. As soon as she gets the chicken coops built, she will relocate her flock of chickens to her new home, being careful to follow all the city codes and regulations.

Sheldon Kohan has lived various places around the globe such as Australia, spending the last twenty years in China. Not a shy man, Sheldon has been everywhere and done everything. When Sheldon decided to retire, he considered several US locations and chose Austin. Sheldon and his spouse are now in South Austin. They are fixing up old duplexes for the rental market. Doesn't sound like retirement to me.

## Poker Night Needs a New Home

We have had fun hosting the monthly Lone Star Mensa poker night for the past year and half, but our schedules are such that we are looking for someone else to take over after the February 21 poker night. It's a pretty easy job--just email out an announcement and have a few drinks on hand. If you think you think you might be interested, just send us an email at [lolas@laurashankland.com](mailto:lolas@laurashankland.com).

## Judgment Day

*-by Claudia Ellis Harbert, Scholarship Chair*

Eight Mensans spent a special afternoon together on January 31st. With diligent focus for most of a long afternoon, 6 of them judged this year's local entries for the Mensa Education & Research Foundation scholarship essay contest. The other 2 acted as pit crew for the judges, tallying scores and supplying food and beverages. As the Scholarship Chair, I felt that this was Judgment Day, the day when I had to rely on others to complete this year's mission for the scholarships program. Many thanks to our wonderful, fun, understanding, dependable, smart, clever, cooperative, persevering, and discerning judges: Gloria & Ron Fortin, Jim Mangum, VeraLouise and John Pfeiffer, and Barbara Wilson! Thanks also to Artemis Harbert of Gulf Coast Mensa for visiting us that weekend and to my husband Alan, who designed the Excel forms that sped up the tallying. I hope everyone enjoyed the day as much as I did!

Judging the essays is hard but rewarding work. Ask our judges about it when you see them. Maybe you'll want to try it next year!

--

Claudia Harbert  
Scholarship Chair  
Lonestar Mensa



## Bylaws Committee

### February Monthly Report

*-submitted by Don Drumtra, Bylaws Committee Chair*

The fourteenth meeting of the Bylaws Committee convened 6:10-7:00 PM, February 12, 2009, with TGIT, at Central Market. We approved the last month's minutes with corrections, all other prior work, and the drafts for Article 5 Sections 5 through 9. The minutes and other details of our work are posted our Website, [http://lonestar.us.mensa.org/bylaws/bylaws\\_committee/](http://lonestar.us.mensa.org/bylaws/bylaws_committee/)

At our next meeting we plan to continue to work on the bylaws text. Come to the Bylaws Committee meeting 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.

## What's Happening in March?

### **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](mailto:JMKres@sbcglobal.net).

### **Monthly Meeting**

#### **1st Tuesday**

**Tuesday, March 3 7:00-8:45pm**

Old Quarry Branch, Austin Public Library

7051 Village Center Drive, Austin

Southeast of the intersection with Far West Blvd.

#### ***Navy League -***

#### ***Citizens in Support of the Sea Services.***

The speaker for the Tuesday, March 3, 2009 meeting will be Mr. Bruce Byron, president of the Greater Central Texas Council Navy League of the United States. For over 100 years, Navy Leaguers around the world have espoused the following four goals: to educate our national leaders and the American people, to support the men and women of the sea services, to provide assistance to sea service families and to support our youth programs, especially the Naval Sea Cadet Corps and Junior ROTC. You need not have served in the military to be a member of the Navy League. This is a civilian organization dedicated to informing the American people and their government that the United States of America is a maritime nation and that its' national defense and economic well being are dependent upon strong sea services - United States Navy, United States Marine Corps., United States Coast Guard and United States Merchant Marine.

### **ExComm Meeting**

#### **1st Wednesday**

**Wednesday, March 4 6:00-7:00pm**

Northwest Recreation Center, Arts & Crafts Room

2913 Northland Drive, Austin

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

### **Mensa Admission Test**

**Saturday, March 7th 10:00am**

Clay Madsen Recreation Center, Round Rock, Texas

The test fee is \$40 and practice home tests may be ordered online ([www.us.mensa.org](http://www.us.mensa.org)). Interested parties should contact Ellen Lukasik at [elukasik@sbcglobal.net](mailto:elukasik@sbcglobal.net).

### **Thank Goodness It's Thursday (TGIT)**

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

**Thursday, March 12 at Central Mkt North**

**Thursday, March 19 at Central Mkt South**

**Thursday, March 26 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, March 12 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 "Dinner and a Movie"**

**Thursday, March 12 6:00pm**

Woodys Barbeque, 2601 Hunter Road, San Marcos

Host: The Fortins (512) 754-8956

The South of Austin Ms will be having "Dinner and a Movie" on Thursday, March 12th at 6 pm. Please feel free to bring significant others or any friends or family that you think might enjoy an evening out. If you don't want to go on to the movie, that's fine, just join us for dinner.

If you need directions, call The Fortins at 512.754.8956 or email [fortin\\_associates@hotmail.com](mailto:fortin_associates@hotmail.com). We will decide during the meal which movie we want to see. It's a quick drive on Wonder World to the Starplex behind the Lowes.

### **Fold & Sticker**

**Thursday, March 26 6:00-8:00pm**

Central Market Café, 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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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.

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>March</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
			Monthly Meeting	ExComm Meeting			Mensa Test
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
					TGIT North Bylaws Mtg Dinner+Movie		
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
<i>'Dillo Deadline</i>					TGIT South		
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
					TGIT North Fold & Sticker		
	29	30	31	<i>April</i> 1	2	3	4
				ExComm Meeting			