

Armadillo Literary Gazette

A Publication of *Lone Star Mensa*
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Editor: *Rose M. Berkowitz*
Managing Editor: *Don Drumtra*
Publisher: *Board of Officers*

LAST CHANCE!

If you haven't selected paper delivery of this newsletter, you only have until the end of August to do so. If you don't take action, you'll automatically start getting delivery via email if Mensa has your email address.

Don't say we didn't warn you!

Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.

(See complete instructions on page 8.)

EDITOR'S CHOICE

By Rose Berkowitz



Did you know? LSM has \$100 per month (total) in the budget to support any LSM-related events (such as a campout) organized by our members. There's no need to get board approval. Whoever spends the money just has to submit a voucher and receipts to the Treasurer to be reimbursed.

The following article from Howard Prince details the various awards that American Mensa has recently presented to members in recognition of their outstanding service to the organization. Wouldn't it be nice if some of LSM's members took the initiative to nominate someone in our group for an award, or even to just say "Thank you." via a letter to the editor? This group could not exist without the dedicated (and often thankless) service of our board and officers.

Also, Julie Boone reports on awards that American Mensa publications have received from international organizations. We can all take pride in Mensa's contributions.

Please send your ideas and suggestions for improving our service to you, as well as any items for the newsletter, to editor@lsm.us.mensa.org. No particular word limit, but emailed submissions are appreciated.

AML AWARDS NEWS

Submitted by Howard Prince, Director of Operations and Julie Boone, American Mensa

American Mensa officially honored excellence in volunteerism of all kinds during the Annual Gathering in Portland, Ore., June 30-July 4.

Saturday, July 2, saw a rare Mensa occurrence: presentation of not one but two Margot Awards during the gala dinner. Receiving AML's highest award were Dr. Francis A. Cartier, Jr., and Velma Jeremiah. Specifically, the Margot is bestowed "for the rendering of exceptional service to Mensa for a number of years."

More Mensans were recognized during the annual Awards Luncheon on Friday, July 1:

- Receiving the Chairman's Award were Stacey Kirsch, for her work on the 50th American Mensa anniversary video and on the Foundation's 40th anniversary video; and Taz Waring and Alexis Wise for their work as TeenSIG Coordinators.
- Eldon Romney and Amy Shaughnessy received the Distinguished Service Award in recognition of outstanding and dedicated service to the organization.
- Kathe Oliver received the Certificate of Appreciation for special contributions to the organization.
- Bill Rock received the Gifted Children Coordinator Award.

Local Group awards were also presented at the Awards Luncheon. Receiving Group of the Year Award (GOTYA) honors in their respective size categories were Southeast Michigan Mensa (more than 900 members), Central Pennsylvania Mensa (400 to 899 members), Piedmont Area Mensa (200 to 399 members), Vermont Mensa (100 to 199 members) and North Dakota Mensa (less than 100 members).

The Local Group Owl Awards are presented in recognition of efforts to encourage group health. With a 93.1-percent member retention rate, Sangamon Valley Mensa received the Innovative Owl, with honorable mentions going to Chattanooga Mensa and Vandalia Mensa. With membership growth of 22.7 percent, Vermont Mensa received the Prolific Owl, with honorable mentions going to Vandalia Mensa and Central Indiana Mensa.

Captained by Tiffany Everett, the CultureQuest(r) team "MECCA" took top honors among 19 other winning CQ teams, and the top "Next Generation" youth team "Invisible Bobs" was captained by Zack Scherrer.

Receiving the top Publications Recognition Program Owls for excellence were "Neva-Mind," the newsletter of Northern Nevada Mensa, Anna Wright, Editor; and the Web site of East Central Ohio Mensa (www.ecom.us.mensa.org), Richard DeMattia,

Webmaster. The two PRP Owl winners are selected out of the six Outstanding Newsletter and Web Site winners in the small, medium and large group categories.

Also recognized as outstanding were:

- "Intelligencer," the newsletter of San Francisco Regional Mensa, Jessica Jackoby, Editor (large group)
- "Graffiti," the newsletter of Cleveland Area Mensa, Scott Vinick, Editor (medium group)
- The Web site of Minnesota Mensa (www.mnmensa.org), Karen Kuntz, Webmaster (large group)
- The Web site of Northwest Florida Mensa (www.nwflorida.us.mensa.org), Jill Russ, Webmaster (small group)

To view all the PRP winners, see the related news item on the home page of www.us.mensa.org or our recognition pages at www.us.mensa.org/recognize.

Two of American Mensa's publications efforts have recently received international awards.

The Mensa Foundation's Mensa for Kids Web team has been recognized with a 2011 APEX Grand Award in the category of Electronic & Video Publications (Nonprofit/Small Office subcategory). Specifically, the award was given for the site's online activity and lesson plans. According to the judges' comments, they were impressed by the "brilliant lesson plans -- wonderfully written and illustrated, and crafted to get students involved."

In addition, the Mensa Bulletin received an APEX Award of Excellence in the Most Improved Magazines & Journals category. The Bulletin was recognized with another association award in the same such category earlier this year.

APEX 2011 -- the 23rd Annual Awards for Publication Excellence -- is an international competition that recognizes outstanding communications activities in all media. Of the more than 3,300 entries to this year's competition, just 100 Grand Award winners were selected in 11 major categories; winners included the Disney Company, Sandia National Laboratories, Lockheed Martin, Kohl's and Merrill Lynch. An additional 957 APEX Awards of Excellence recognize excellence in 130 subcategories.

To view and download the lesson and activity plans, visit the Parent/Teacher Resources section at www.mensaforkids.org.

DON'S DIALECTICS- Where Was the Bubble?

By Don Drumtra, LocSec



Almost everyone I've talked with recently in LSM has asked "How was the AG?"

"Always great," is my short response. "Lots of good programs, good food, and pleasant conversations." is my longer response. If anyone really wants to talk about it we can sit down, have a tea or beer, and discuss it for a half hour or so.

How does the experience compare with last year's AG? Well, last year I wrote "From the time we arrived at the Amtrak station until the time we returned we were sort of suspended in a bubble of friendly, interesting, and intelligent colleagues creating and living in that environment." It was not the same this year. The lines at the Austin Airport were long. Our airplane broke in DFW and we had to wait for a new one. The skycap and light rail agent could not agree on how we punch the buttons to get a ticket to the hotel. Flying is not fun! The bubble was not there.

The AG itself was interesting and we did get into some stimulating conversations, but the AMC meeting was dull and routine (except for some interesting comments from the Ombudsman). Functional meet-and-greets like the Treasurer's meetings were sparsely attended and imparted little new information. The bubble was not there.

The speakers were interesting and some were inspiring, but some of the questions from my fellow Mensans seemed to result from a desire to show how smart they were rather than learning what the presenter had to offer. The bubble was not there.

What about hospitality? Well that was somewhat unusual. The hotel put drapes and carpets in the first level of the underground parking garage, added tables and chairs, and kegs of great beer, bottles of good wine and reasonable hospitality meals and snacks. We ate off real plates with real silverware, all of which had to be washed and reused. There were separate bins for food scraps, paper, cans, and bottles, and trays for used plates and silverware. We

were expected to bus our own tables and sort our trash into the appropriate bins and trays. The planning was good and execution by the volunteers was super. However, can Mensans be taught to put paper in the paper bin, food scraps in the composting bin, and cans in the can bin? It didn't look like some were aware of the difference or even cared. Some folks could not seem to hit the bins, leaving a sticky mess on the carpet. This resulted in partial abandonment of a good plan for helping the environment. The bubble was not there.

Was the trip to the Portland AG worth the time and money? Absolutely. Would I do it again? Of course. The worst AG I have attended was great and the best full of inspiration and wonder. But after this AG I asked myself, where was the bubble?



SEPTEMBER MONTHLY MEETING

Submitted by Don Drumtra, Interim Program Coordinator

This is a short reminder to folks that if you do not contribute, you will not have interesting meetings.

We have no program scheduled for the September meeting. The meetings depend on you. There are several topics that beg to be presented or discussed already posted on our Web site. Go to www.lsm.us.mensa.org, click on "Monthly Meetings," and then on "Online Topic List." If you are interested in any of the topics listed, please volunteer to lead the discussion or bring in an expert to talk about it. Also, if you'd like to suggest a different topic or speaker, you may add it to the LSM Web site there.

LAST MONTH'S MEETING

Submitted by Rose Berkowitz, Discussion Leader

On August 10th we held our first LSM Discussion Group meeting. Attendees agreed to establish the following structure:

- Meet every other month at the Northwest Village Branch Library, where we've been holding our regular monthly membership meetings.
- Use the "talking stick" method as our "rules of the road."
- Arrange tables in the middle, with chairs around the perimeter, to facilitate discussion and note-taking.

Our next LSM Discussion Group meeting will be on October 12th. Rose Berkowitz will lead a discussion of "How and Why We Express Our Creativity." After that, we will be seeking volunteers to facilitate discussion of the next topic we select.

We brainstormed possible topics, and came up with these as possibilities:

- How and why we express our creativity.
- Impact of electronic communications in today's world; possible hands-on demos.
- What basic ground rules are needed for people to work together?
- When does life start?
- Impact of women's liberation movement
- Impact of civil rights movement
- Women in science.
- Scientific aspects of social issues, such as nuclear power/disasters.
- Motivations for and types of collecting.
- The best "?" you've never heard of in Austin.
- Share favorite music.
- Favorite books and movies.
- Educating gifted children/activities for them in Austin area.

STATUS REPORT--MEMBER CONCERNS/ACTION PLANS

Submitted by Don Drumtra, LocSec

The board finalized their criteria for considering work on an action plan satisfactorily completed. "Completed" indicates that the Board considers initial work on a Member Concerns Report action plan completed when the actions taken were:

- Consistent with the actions the board recommended,
- Reasonably expected to satisfy related member concerns, and
- Sufficiently institutionalized that there is only a small chance that the concern would arise in the future.

Based on these criteria the board approved six action items as completed:

- Thanks to Crockett Grabbe, a glossary of Mensa terms is now available on the Mensa Web site under the "About LSM" menu item.
- A comprehensive calendar of events is available on the Web site under the menu item with that name. The Calendar Editor, Rose Berkowitz has agreed to keep it current. Members may register and add calendar items if they wish.
- Since February, Mensa membership anniversaries of LSM members have been recognized in the *Armadillo Literary Gazette (ALG)* in five year increments. Data is compiled monthly by the Record Manager, Don Drumtra.
- Informal procedures have been in use at board meetings since the March meeting. ASIEs have been eliminated in favor of a less formal set of documents called LSM Operating Standards.
- Rose has provided the names of experienced LSM members in the *ALG* since the March edition to help other LSM members navigate the AMC and national office bureaucracy.
- Since March the LocSec has provided the membership monthly reports on the status of each of the Member Concerns Action Plans, consisting of a summary in the *ALG* and a full report on the Web site.

In July and August work was begun on several more action plans, bringing the number of plans having been worked on to 26 of 44 or 59 percent, including the six completed items above. See www.lsm.us.mensa.org/bylaws/ASIEs/#GI for the full status report.



FEATURED MEMBER BIO

Hi, I'm Ron Edelstein.

It's always a bit difficult to talk about yourself without sounding either egotistical or deprecating. But since no one else knows me as well as I do, I'll give it a shot. Let's see—as the classic stories start, I was born at a very early age...no, that's not where to start, is it?



OK, basic facts: I'm older than dirt but younger than Don Drumtra. My wife Linda and I have been Mensa members for a long time—twenty years for Linda and over thirty for me. I became involved in Lone Star Mensa after I moved to Austin in 2004 to work for Solectron and Linda joined me after retiring from her federal

Civil Service career in 2006. Prior to that we lived in Richardson, TX, a suburb of Dallas and were active in North Texas Mensa, where I served a term or so as VP and where we hosted the annual New Members Party and the occasional New Year's Eve party at our home.

Before moving to Texas in 1994 we lived in California for twenty-five years in San Diego, Long Beach and Santa Clara. I joined Mensa during the sojourn in the L.A. Area, where I was a member of GLAAM (Greater Los Angeles Area Mensa). In Santa Clara we were members of SFRM (San Francisco Regional Mensa) and enjoyed the annual trek to Asilomar for the granddaddy of all RGs.

I'm a native of Alabama and grew up in a remote, rural town. I attended a military school in Alabama—the Marion Military Institute—in preparation for the U.S. Naval Academy. I moved to Milwaukee, WI for college after my Academy physical disqualified me due to having less than 20/20 vision (a non-waiverable requirement in those days). I met Linda there, when she beat me twice in a row over a chess board. That started our nearly fifty-year relationship.

I served on active duty in the Navy in New London, CT on diesel submarines, and later out of Newport, R.I. on a destroyer. After my active duty time ended I stayed on in the Naval Reserve, eventually reaching CPO, and then was promoted to Warrant Officer. I finally retired after nearly 31 years as a Chief Warrant Officer 4 Boatswain (Bosun, as we salts pronounce it). Meanwhile we moved to Southern

WHAT'S AN OMBUDSMAN?

I have to admit I'm not overwhelmed with requests for services, and according to my predecessor that has been the case for years. In fact, I just raised the question to the National Ombudsman group and most of them reported they rarely have a request for service. We consider that to be both good and bad. It's good because perhaps it means that within most groups there are not enough conflicts or acrimony rising to the level where a formal grievance is raised. The downside is that there may be conflicts simmering under the surface that should be resolved, but the members aren't aware there is a formal structure within Mensa to do that, both at the local and national level.

So what is an ombudsman? Well, basically it is a person who is authorized to receive the complaints of members and seek resolution independent of the "command structure" of the local or national group. These can be complaints about another member, about the LocSec, or about any of the officers of the group. This structure has been set up as an alternative to having members decide to leave the group or even leave Mensa because of their frustration at not getting their issues resolved.

The ombudsman may simply sit down with an aggrieved member and hear their complaint. If it is about another specific person, the ombudsman may seek resolution by any of a number of means; usually by speaking with the other party, getting their side of the story (if any), and then trying to arrange a meeting of the two and mediating. If the issue is with a group officer, the ombudsman can bring the LocSec into the picture. If the LocSec is the focus of the issue, the ombudsman can request the services of an arbitrator. (More on that position in a moment.) The ombudsman has no authority to impose any rulings on any party to the conflict—only to try to mediate and reach agreement. It is always up to the parties involved to agree to any recommendations the ombudsman may make or that are reached during the discussion.

Now as to the arbitrator: *I also hold that position in LSM, but that is not an office I would exercise on behalf of an LSM member. The arbitrator reports to the Regional Vice Chairman (RVC). It is a position set up to mediate disagreements between local groups within the Region, when:*

California, where I worked at the Mexican border at Tijuana as a U.S. Customs inspector. Later I was Chief Inspector for Los Angeles Harbor and District Chief of Fines, Penalties and Forfeitures for the Los Angeles District of Customs. When I left the Customs Service we moved to Santa Clara, where I joined Fujitsu, a Japanese computer company, as their first Corporate Customs Manager. Later it was Texas Instruments that recruited me to move to Dallas as their Director of Corporate Customs. I finally retired from active employment in 2008 from Freescale Semiconductor in Austin, and now do some consulting in international trade compliance when the opportunity arises.

I enjoy playing and working on computers—I build my own. I also am a collector of all sorts of things, including coins, gems (I'm a certified gemologist), stamps, old mechanical watches and other things. (Collecting--a fancy word for "packrat.") I also have always been a compulsive reader on almost any subject. (I prefer science fiction, mysteries, religion, philosophy, and history, but just about anything else—even a cereal box—will do in a pinch!) I like books—paper or digital.

Past history with LSM has included a couple of terms as LocSec and RG Chair, and I currently serve as LSM Ombudsman and Arbitrator. For more on that, see the accompanying article.

- *The ombudsman of another local group is one of the persons involved in a dispute in that group.*
 - *The LocSec and ombudsman of a local group are in conflict.*
 - *The LocSec will not accept the efforts of the ombudsman for that group.*
- In other words, "Have gun, will travel."—a hired gun to go settle problems in some other group or between groups.*

The National Ombudsman coordinates training and communication among all the local group ombudsmen. He sits in on the meetings of the American Mensa Committee (AMC), the governing board of Mensa. He is not a member of the AMC but is accorded the perks and privileges of an AMC member. He does not have a vote on the AMC but has the responsibility for advising the board of any issues which he deems it needs to know. He acts independently of the AMC, just as the local ombudsman operates independently of the LocSec.

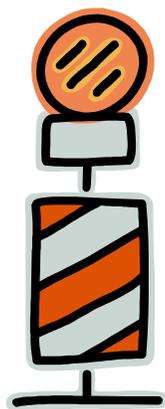
So now you know whom to call if you have an issue about your local group and need someone to talk with who is empowered to actually do something about it or raise it to "management" attention. I can't promise to solve all your problems, but give it a shot and let's see what we can do. If we don't reach a solution you want, we can always "kick it upstairs" to either the RVC or the National Ombudsman.

ANNOUNCEMENT—HOSPITALITY CHAIR APPOINTED

John and Geri Neemidge have appointed Modelle Gibson to be the Hospitality Chair for the RG. We really appreciate Modelle's volunteering for this important job. Please support her by volunteering your time to help with hospitality. Her contact information is 512-431-2766 and modellegibson4@yahoo.com.

FINAL NOTICE--THIS MAY BE YOUR LAST PAPER GAZETTE

Submitted by Don Drumtra



If you receive both a paper and electronic copy of this September newsletter, and have not changed your newsletter delivery options by midnight August 31, you will receive your

October and future newsletters by email. If that is OK with you, don't

do anything. But if you would rather receive future copies in paper by snail mail, you will have to update your newsletter delivery options:

1. Go to the AML Web site www.us.mensa.org/mynewsletterdelivery.
2. Log in.*
3. Click on the button next to "I prefer to receive my local publications via regular mail."
4. Click on the "Save Changes" button.

You will then get paper copies of future newsletters beginning in two months. When you are done, be sure to click Logout on the upper right side of most pages.

**If you do not have online access or do not remember your password, ask Mensa member services at 888-294-8035, ext. 199 to update your newsletter delivery options. If you need help, call me at 512-291-0315.*

AUGUST BOARD MINUTES

Submitted by Patty Drumtra, VP and Secretary

The regular monthly meeting of the Lone Star Mensa Board of Officers convened at 6:08 PM, August 3, 2011, at the home of Ron and Linda Edelstein. Attending were: **Don Drumtra, Patty Drumtra, Linda Edelstein, Ron Edelstein, Crockett Grabbe, Jon Kurylowicz, and John Neemidge**. Referenced written reports and LOS are available on the LSM Web site. Paper copies are available on request.

The board adopted the agenda and the July 6 minutes, printed in the August 2011 Armadillo Literary Gazette (ALG), page 3, without debate.

The board received the following verbal officer reports:

- **LocSec:** John announced the RG appointment of Modelle Gibson as Hospitality Chairman. Don offered to assist Andy York by making Pay Pal deposits into the LSM bank account and by signing LSM checks for RG reimbursement in Linda Edelstein's absence.
- **Treasurer:** The board unanimously adopted the Financial Report, April 1- July 31, 2011. (Linda)
- **Symposium Committee:** Future regular monthly membership meetings need presenters (Don).
- **LonestarRG Committee:** There are 67 registrations. Plans are on track. The next RG meeting will be Sunday, August 14 at Café Express (John Neemidge, chairman).
- **Web site Working Group committee:** The board rejoiced at Patsy's locating a possible new web site designer to meet with Douglas. (Patty for Patsy Graham, Chairman):
- **Action Plan Status Report:** (Don)
 - See page 4 for more details.

The Board approved with debate the following motions, postponed from the July 3 meeting, as amended:

- The LSM Board of Officers Goal for the 2011-2012 term is to complete at least half of the Member Concern Action Plans
- The Board considers initial work on a Member Concerns Report action item completed when the actions taken were:
 - Consistent with the action the board recommended,
 - Reasonably expected to satisfy related member concerns, and
 - Sufficiently institutionalized that there is only a small chance that the concern will arise in the future

The board considers six action plans completed, based on the adopted criteria.

New Business: The board approved the following motions with debate:

- Added \$500 to the ComComm budget to increase the newsletter to 16 pages for the rest of the fiscal year, taking the money from the SymComm budget and possibly from any RG earnings. (Don as Interim ComComm and SymComm Chairman)
- Deferred a motion to establish a Leadership Committee until the next Board Meeting. (Helen)

Announcements:

- The next monthly board meeting is scheduled for 6-7 M, Wednesday August 31 (not September—due to the RG) at Central Market balcony. (Patty).
- Future Monthly Meetings will depend on Mensa Members' presenting topics themselves and obtaining suggestions for speakers. Please submit names to LocSec or other board members. Confirmed topics and dates are available in the newsletter and on the Web site. Potential topics are available on the Web site. (Don).

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM.

AG REPORT—NEAR-RECORD NUMBERS OF MENSANS ATTEND NATIONAL CONVENTION

AML Web site

The Pacific Northwest hosted American Mensa in a major way over the July 4th weekend; more than 1,900 members flocked to Portland, Ore., **for the second-largest national convention in the organization's history**, according to preliminary registration figures. Attendees enjoyed workshops and presentations, tours, tournaments, special events, the best of the local food and drink — and each other's company.

Among myriad other things, AG 2011: "A Great Journey West" featured:

- *Bill Stainton, Mensa member, multiple Emmy Award-winning TV producer/writer/performer and internationally recognized Beatles expert.*
- *Jean M. Auel, internationally acclaimed author of the "Earth's Children" book series.*

- William Paul Young, author of "The Shack," one of the top 100 best-selling books of all time.
- Paulann Petersen, Oregon's poet laureate.
- Programs on everything from stupid criminals to earthquakes to cheese.
- A revamped lineup of programming and activities for Young Mensans.
- "Beervana."

The Annual Gathering is planned and hosted every year by a committee of volunteers, many of whom are local to the area. The committee for the 2012 AG is hard at work preparing next year's event to take place **July 4-8 in Reno, Nevada.**



OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS—CRITICAL VACANCIES!

If you are interested in any of the following positions, and in the grateful appreciation of your fellow LSM members, please contact the person indicated.

Nomination and Election Committees Chair and members

—Whether you like how LSM is being run or don't, you can influence the group by chairing or working on the Nomination Committee to recruit people for the good of the organization. If your goal is to be sure elections are fair and honest, you might do that by chairing or working on the Election Committee. The work to be done and the schedules to be met are listed on the Web site under the Annual Elections Calendar. Contact Don Drumtra, 512-291-0315 or drumtra@aol.com

LonestaRG 2012 Chair—This can be one of the most rewarding jobs in *Lone Star* Mensa. The Chair leads and coordinates all the activities and volunteers who will:

- Make the 2012 RG an exceptional experience for the more than 100 folks who are likely to attend.

- Help it achieve the financial success needed to support the LSM scholarship and education programs.

This position also provides an excellent opportunity to enhance your résumé by demonstrating real-world experience in project management. If this sounds appealing, if you and a friend would like to share this experience, or if you just want to find out more, contact the 2011 LonestaRG Co-chairs John and Geri Neemidge, at 512-310-7863 or badgers@neemidge.net.

Awards Coordinator—A good awards program appropriately recognizes the work of individual LSM volunteers in serving the members of LSM. There are many awards established that might be presented to LSM volunteers. However, few of us know about them. LSM would greatly benefit from a spirited volunteer to implement a viable awards program which will:

- Provide a list of award options and processes available to LSM leaders.
- Encourage them to motivate and recognize the work of their volunteers.

- Ensure that awards are equitable across LSM
- If this interests you, contact Fred Goertz, the Membership Chair, at fgoertz@gmail.com.

Testing Coordinator—John Pfeiffer, our previous testing coordinator, has moved to Denver but has agreed to help a new coordinator learn the ropes. The work consists of scheduling tests, and coordinating with and scheduling our three proctors and prospective members to attend one testing session a month. Most of the work can be done from anywhere by email. You do not have to be a proctor yourself. Contact Fred Goertz, the Membership Chair, at fgoertz@gmail.com.

Web Designer—Here's an opportunity to strut your stuff! We have a plan for the LSM Web site and a volunteer to be Webmaster, but we need a graphic designer to lay it out for us. Contact Patsy Graham at mensapats@att.net if interested.

POETRY CORNER

Listening to the Sounds of Space

By Tom Hadden

*I listen to the sounds of air
And wonder, curiously:
What's up there?
Is He observing humanity?
Can He have time for little me?
These thoughts I ponder,
as I wander,
Through silent stars,
way up yonder.
His omnipresence comes to me
In waves of
peaceful pleasantry.
His love for me
is most imbued
With vibrant
verisimilitude.
It fills me with
His gentle grace;
Restored to whole
from outer space*



Sea Anemones

By Rose M. Berkowitz

*Now they appear
To glide across a watery mirror,
Dancing ballet
In time to the waves,
Ritual steps
Meant to illustrate
Miracles beyond words.*

Musings

*There will always be
A new thought—
That is the meaning
Of infinity.*

What Is Thought?

*The insects talk to each other, communicate...
That requires intelligence.
They don't understand us—
We don't understand them.
Are we not intelligent?*

YOUR SUDOKU PUZZLE

Weekly Extremes, sudoku.org.uk

Submitted by Douglas Yee



		5	3			6		
	2			7			4	
				1				8
3			4					1
	6		2	5	1		8	
2					8			4
4				2				
	7			4				9
		1			3	4		

Each Sudoku has a unique solution that can be reached logically without guessing. Enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces. Every row must contain one of each digit. So must every column, and every 3x3 square.

WINNING REGIONAL SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY

Submitted by Claudia Harbert, Scholarship Coordinator

Humor Helps Win a Scholarship

Following is the final winning essay in our series from the 2010-2011 scholarships contest. Abigail Cain won the Harper Fowley Isolated M Award for a student pursuing a liberal arts degree--a scholarship at the National level of the Mensa Foundation contest. Abigail will be studying at Brown University.

Since many college students matriculate in liberal arts programs, many essays competed for this scholarship. Congratulations on your win, Abigail!



In eighth grade, my entire class was escorted to the computer lab to fill out a future career survey online. Scrolling down the page, I read each question, answered it, then clicked the submit button at the bottom to enter my responses.

The next page began to load, and I glanced at the career suggestions that appeared on my screen. Imagine my surprise when I read my results:

“You seem to enjoy working outside with your hands. A career in agriculture would work well with your interests. For example, have you considered a job as a Christmas tree farmer?”

That certainly wasn't the career path I expected! As a student who loves classes in biology, art, math, history, newspaper, and Spanish, I worried that I would have difficulty finding a career path that encompassed all my interests. Now, I know journalism is a profession that can incorporate my wide range of talents and passions.

My interest in journalism began early. In third grade, I decided to create a newspaper for our family. Titling it the Cain Chronicle, I published stories about our summer vacation, my trip to the City Science Fair, and the kids' triathlon we competed in. Later, I joined the staff of my elementary school's newspaper and wrote book reviews and drew comics.

In middle school, I saw a different side of the publishing process. As the art editor of our school's literary magazine, Inkblot, I learned to use computer programs like InDesign and Photoshop to create the journal's beautiful, glossy pages. I was thrilled when some of my own poetry and photographs were chosen for publishing.

But it was high school where I truly began to realize that journalism could become a future career. As a freshman, I signed up for the newspaper elective on the advice of a friend. For the first issue, I was terrified of interviewing someone. The idea of calling up another student I didn't know petrified me, and it took my mom's constant prodding to allow me to work up the courage to do my first interview. Now, as the co-Editor-in-Chief of The Liberator, I look back on those early days and smile. I am in charge of a news staff of 45—leading class each day, assigning and editing stories. I still write my own articles for the paper, interviewing students, teachers, the principal, and experts in other fields. There's an artistic aspect to being an editor, too. I design the front page and the photo essay, creating informative and engaging graphics to grab the reader's attention.

Being a reporter or correspondent often involves travel—after trips to Nicaragua, Peru, and Mexico, I realize that I yearn to see more of the world. I intend to continue studying Spanish in college and become fluent so that I can use this second language reporting in Texas and Latin American countries.

Later, I may work in radio or television. Many years of singing and playing piano at school, church and recitals have made me comfortable performing in front of large audiences.

And as I continue to pursue my career goals in journalism, I always know I have a backup plan—I'm sure I would make an exceptional Christmas tree farmer!



FROM THE RVC

Submitted by Roger Durham, Region 6 RVC

Most of the business that comes before the American Mensa Committee is dealt with by one of the AMC committees before it comes up at an AMC meeting. For that reason committee memberships can be an important part of a Regional Vice Chairman's job. Last term I was a member of two AMC committees--the Intellectual Property Litigation Committee and the Name and Logo Committee. IP Litigation is the committee that recommends the commencement of any legal action against outside parties who infringe upon Mensa's trademarks. I have been reappointed to that committee. Name & Logo is the committee that rules primarily on granting permission to Mensa members and organizations for the use of the Mensa name and the m-and-globe symbol within the organization. This term I am the chair of that committee, and in that capacity I am also an ex-officio member of the Licensing and Marketing Committees, which deal with contracting with outside interests for use of the Mensa name on their products, or Mensa endorsement of products and services marketed to our members. These committees, chaired by Development Officer Bob Bevard of South Texas Mensa,

are quite important, because our income from outside marketing and licensing deals was more than \$200,000 last year.

Also this term I have been appointed to the Finance and Audit Committee--another important committee that deals with all of our organization's financial affairs; everything from making recommendations on employee salaries, to budgets for various officers, to the amount of dues increases. I specifically asked for a seat on this committee because I wanted to be able to tell you that I know where every dollar of your money is going. That is not true of all AMC members, because when the AMC gives final approval to the annual budget, the money is appropriated in broad categories, and it's not always easy to tell everything that may be included in a particular budget category. The Finance and Audit Committee, on the other hand, looks at every individual line item. I want you to know that I will make every effort to be sure your money is spent wisely.

A couple of months ago, I told you about a newsletter exchange service being set up for our region. I'm happy to report that this

service is now up and running, under the guiding hand of Asst. RVC Jeff



Dommonge of Lone Star Mensa. If you would like to receive an email version of the newsletter of every local group in Region 6 that publishes their newsletter electronically, all you have to do is send an email to R6NewExchangeRequest@lists.us.mensa.org, with the word "subscribe" in the subject line, and Jeff will add you to the list. This list's email address has been added to the distribution list of every local group in the region, so as each local newsletter is sent out, a copy will go to the server at the National Office, where it will automatically be forwarded to you. (If you change your mind, just email the same address with "unsubscribe" as the subject, and you'll be removed from the list.)

Don't forget the upcoming Regional Gatherings: LoneStarRG XIII in Round Rock over Labor Day weekend, and Feast of Pleasures and Delights XXXII in Dallas over Thanksgiving weekend.

A FREE WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION FOR ANYONE, ANYWHERE.



KHAN
ACADEMY

The Khan Academy (www.khanacademy.org/about) is an organization on a mission. We're a not-for-profit with the goal of changing education for the better by providing a free world-class education to anyone anywhere.

All of the site's resources are available to anyone. It doesn't matter if you are a student, teacher, home-schooler, principal, adult returning to the classroom after 20 years, or a friendly alien just trying to get a leg up in earthly biology. The Khan Academy's materials and resources are available to you completely free of charge.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

An excellent job on the periodical. I can see it getting much better each month.

To generate general interchange, what would you think if our Sun City discussion group periodically submitted some thought-provoking questions to the Armadillo in hopes of soliciting general member comments?

Joe DeBell
Georgetown



Here's to the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels. The trouble-makers. The round pegs in the square holes. The ones who see things differently.

They're not fond of rules, and they have no respect for the status-quo. You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify, or vilify them. The only thing you can't do is ignore them.

Because they change things. They push the human race forward. And while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius. Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do

-- Apple Computers

GENETICS = SMARTS

via [The University of Edinburgh](#)
Related on SmartPlanet

Today DNA is commonly used to reveal ancestry information and health risks. Now researchers claim up to 50 percent of people's smarts can be traced to their genetic makeup.

Researchers at [the University of Edinburgh](#) looked at half a million genetic markers called single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) in more than 3,500 people in Scotland, England and Norway. Differences in knowledge base and problem solving skills can be an "additive influence" of genetic variations, the scientists wrote in a paper published in [Molecular Psychiatry](#).

The differences were found in mutations called [linkage disequilibrium](#).

"We have found genetic signals associated with people's intelligence differences. We have not found the actual genetic differences that cause some intelligence differences, but we now have evidence that some of the genetic causes are linked to those genetic factors that we tested. This gives us leads that we are now planning to follow," Edinburgh's epidemiologist Ian Deary said in [a statement](#).

This study demonstrates the complexity of the genetic basis of IQ, which is almost certainly going to pose a challenge to molecular biologists for year to come.

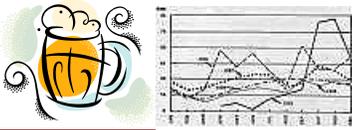


1960 vs. 2011

1960: Long hair
2011: Longing for hair



1960: KEG
2011: EKG



1960: Acid rock
2011: Acid reflux



1960: Moving to CA 'cause it's cool
2011: Moving to AZ 'cause it's warm



1960: Screw the system
2011: Upgrade the system



1960: Seeds and stems
2011: Roughage



1960: Hoping for a BMW
2011: Hoping for a nice BM



1960: A new, hip joint
2011: A new hip joint



1960: Rolling Stones
2011: Kidney stones



1960: Trying to look like Marlon or Liz
2011: Trying NOT to look like Marlon or Liz



1960: Parents begging you to get your hair cut
2011: Kids begging you to get their heads shaved



1960: Passing the drivers' test
2011: Passing the vision test



SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			31 Board Meeting	1	2 LoneStaRG XIII	3 LoneStaRG XIII, Admissions Test
4 LoneStaRG XIII	5 LoneStaRG XIII 	6	7	8 ALG Deadline Chess Night, TGIT-North	9	10
11 10 YEARS 	12	13	14 Membership Meeting	15 TGIT-South	16	17
18	19	20 Eclectic Eats	21	22 TGIT-North, Seal & Label	23	24
25	26	28	28	29	30	

See the online calendar (www.lsm.us.mensa.org/events/calendar.html) for the latest additions, cancellations, or changes. Online calendar inputs may be posted at any time. Calendar input for the printed calendar is due by the second Thursday of each month for the following month's calendar.

Board of Officers Meeting

August 31, 6:00-7:00 PM

Central Market Café North
(See the TGIT North entry,) Contact the Board Secretary, Patty Drumtra, to get an item on the agenda. Officers are encouraged to attend and all members are welcome.

LoneStaRG XIII

Sept. 2-5

Join us for LSM's biggest event of the year at the Wingate by Wyndham / Williamson Conference Center in Round Rock, 512-341-7000, at IH-35 and US 79. Walk-in registration is \$80. Children 9-17 half price, 8 and under free. Our room rate is \$85/night and includes a hot buffet breakfast. Mensa admissions testing is scheduled for Sat. at 9:30 AM.



ALG Submissions Deadline

2nd Thursday

Sept. 8, Midnight

Submissions due by midnight.

Chess Night (with the TGIT group)

2nd Thursday

Sept. 8, 6-8 PM

Central Market Café North
Bring your chess sets if you have them. Hosted by Douglas Yee. See the TGIT North entry for directions.

Thank Goodness It's Thursday (North)

2nd & 4th Thursdays

Sept. 8 and 22, 6:00-8:00 PM

Central Market Café North at Central Park:

4001 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin, TX,
512-206-1020
East of N. Lamar between 38th and
44th Streets; on the south side of
the store.

Meet us at the Café for conversation, food and fun. Prospective members welcome. Look for folks with Mensa shirts who appear smart. ☺

Monthly Membership Meeting

2nd Wednesday

Sept. 14, 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Northwest Village Branch Library,
512-974-9960
2505 Steck Avenue, Austin, TX
Near the corner of Steck and Burnet,

Thank Goodness It's Thursday (South)

3rd Thursdays

Sept. 15, 6:00-8:00 PM

Central Market Café South at
Westgate Mall:

4477 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin, TX,
512-899-4300

On the south side of the S. Lamar access road (the south access road of I-290/SR7) between Westgate Blvd. and Frontier Trail. Enter at the northern door, by the huge statues of fruits and vegetables. Come join the South Austin group for conversation, food and fun.

Prospective members welcome. For questions call Helen (512-799-6985).

Eclectic Eats

3rd Tuesday

September 20, 7:00 PM

The Habana Restaurant
www.habanaaustin.com
512/443-4253

2728 South Congress. Austin.
Their menu features seafood, meat, and vegetarian choices, and the breezy recessed-from-the-street location promises a pleasant evening for all. Please RSVP by Sunday, September 18, to Aaron Rabushka at 512/280-2807 or arabushka@austin.rr.com.

Seal & Label

4th Thursday

Sept. 22, 6:00-8:00 PM

Central Market Café North
4001 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin, TX, 512-206-1020
Join the TGIT Group to help seal and label the newsletter. See TGIT notice above for directions.

UPCOMING IN OCTOBER

Oct. 5, Board Meeting
Oct. 12, Discussion SIG Meeting
Oct. 13, Chess Night, ALG Deadline
Oct. 13 & 27, TGIT-North
Oct. 18, Eclectic Eats
Oct. 20, TGIT-South
Oct. 27, Seal & Label

LONE STAR MENSA DIRECTORY

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Regional Vice Chair (RVC)	Roger Durham*	214-349-4521	RVC6@us.mensa.org

* Experienced members who've worked with the National Office (NO) and the American Mensa Committee (AMC), and can help members navigate both.



SEPTEMBER MEMBER NEWS *(as of 08/31/11)*

Happy Birthday—Born Mensans!

- 03 Harold A Cromwell
- 03 Cindy Lou Palko
- 05 Angel Sater
- 07 Dan Allen Flanagan
- 09 Barbara Erskine Bartlett
- 11 George B Smith Jr
- 14 Ross A Williams
- 16 William Darrell Cheek
- 16 Karen Jager
- 16 Khurram Qureshi
- 16 Neil Vannoy
- 17 Mary E Dougherty
- 17 Dana Lynn Holland
- 18 Capt Howard A Konetchy
- 21 Brad E Rhoden
- 23 Linda Edelstein
- 23 John C Foster
- 23 Robert E Kiefer
- 24 Frederick Charles Bothwell III

- 24 Allen Vorwerk
- 26 Lynn Herrick
- 27 William Richard Jones CCP
- 28 Vaughn E Akins
- 28 Clay C Black
- 30 Shea Hillis
- 30 Melissa Vanessah Melton
- 30 Laura Shankland

Just Moved In—Hi Neighbor!

Richard J Zielinski

Welcome Back—Missed You!

Hasmat Akgun
Nancy W Norwood
Ronald Joseph Theriault
Aleta Ann Wallace

Farewell—We'll Miss You!

Gordon R Jones

CONGRATULATIONS!

Member for 25 Years

Cathryn Leigh Cox

Member for 20 years

Joseph L Rotunda

Member for 15 years

Jimmy D Roberts

Member for 5 years

Ronald E Garner

Tony Matta III

William C Neely Jr

Note: We can't acknowledge your birthday if you've restricted that information in your member profile. To check, log in to the AML web site

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Submission Information: Submissions of all types are encouraged. The deadline is the 2nd Thursday of each month. Submissions may be by email 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: Lone Star 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 ads (2" x 3") 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, accurately sized, and should be submitted electronically in Word (preferred), JPG or PDF format. 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 to the newsletter editor is 5 days before the general newsletter deadline.

Calendar: See the online calendar for the latest additions, cancellations, or changes to calendar items. Online calendar inputs may be submitted at any time. Inputs for the printed calendar are due to calendar@lsm.us.mensa.org by the second Thursday of each month for the next month's calendar.



Armadillo Literary Gazette

IN THIS ISSUE

Last Chance!/Editor's Choice	1
AMLAwards News	2
Don's Dialectics/Monthly Meeting	3
Last Month's Meeting/Status Report	4
Featured Member Bio/What's an Ombudsman?	5
Announcement/Final Notice	6
August Board Minutes/AG Report	7
Critical Vacancies	8
Poetry Corner/Sudoku	9
Winning Regional Scholarship Essay	10
From the RVC/Khan Academy	11
Letters to the Editor/Genetics = Smarts	12
1960 vs. 2011	13
September Calendar	14
LSM Directory/Membership News	15
Table of Contents/Postal Page	16