

Armadillo Literary Gazette

A Publication of *Lone Star Mensa*
Volume XXXVIII
Number 10, October 2011



Editor: *Rose M. Berkowitz*
Managing Editor: *Don Drumtra*
Publisher: *Board of Officers*

EDITOR'S CHOICE

By Rose Berkowitz

Did you see the article in the August Mensa *Bulletin* about the 35th annual O. Henry Pun-Off World Championships held in Austin this past May 21st? The event has been organized and run for many years by Austinite Gary Hallock, who hosts the website [Punpunpun](http://www.punpunpun.com) as an online record of past tournaments. **Gracie Deegan** was voted "Punniest of Show!" You can read her entire monologue on page 19 of that publication, or listen to it at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q71yvrIQd8>. Hope she decides to become a member!

Furthermore, Austin itself was recently listed in *Parade* magazine as "America's Punniest City." The Pun-Off has been held every year since 1977 near the 1891 home of turn-of-the-century short-story writer O. Henry, and typically attracts upward of 500 pundits and punheads. If any LSM member participated in any of these events and would like to share their experience with our readers, just drop me a line. All puns intended!

Our LoneStaRG XIII was a big success. Read all about it and check out the pictures on pages 7-8. During the awards ceremony Roger Durham, our RVC, presented Don Drumtra, our LocSec, with a well-deserved Mensa pin and Certificate of Appreciation, and September 5th 2011 was proclaimed to be **Don Drumtra Appreciation Day**.



Our annual Halloween Party will be held this year at the home of Ron and Linda Edelstein. Hope to see you there! (See calendar for details.) We're still looking for a volunteer to organize our annual holiday party. (Contact Don if interested.)

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

DO YOU PLAY KEYBOARD OR GUITAR?



*If you can play jazz and pop standards and show tunes.
If you'd like to accompany a cabaret singer.
If you can provide transportation (I'm unable to drive).
Contact Rose Berkowitz, 512-467-4871.*

MORE PUNNING AWARDS

Submitted by Ron Edelstein

It's that time again! Time for the annual Bulwer-Lytton Awards. Every year the English Department at San Jose State University issues its awards for the most dreadful opening sentence for a presumed novel or story. Here are the 2011 winners. Since Mensans love puns, you can go straight down to the "Most Vile Pun" category.

<http://www.bulwer-lytton.com/2011.htm>

ARE YOUR FRIENDS MENSA BRILLIANT?

American Mensa Bulletin

Let's ensure Mensa's next 65 years are as wonderful as the first 65!

Over the years, thousands of candidates have challenged themselves by participating in Mensa Testing Day. So tell your friends--it's time to show the world!



- They can take the Mensa Admission Test. Our normal testing fee is \$40 (U.S.), or
- They can join Mensa by submitting a qualifying score from a standardized intelligence test they've taken previously.

(View a [partial list of qualifying scores](#) or [learn more about this process](#).)

And you can give them a **coupon to save \$15** while they prove it during the Mensa Brilliant celebration! Download as many copies as you need from www.us.mensa.org/brilliantcoupon; the coupon is good for either admission testing or prior evidence review throughout the month of October.

DON'S DIALECTICS—It Must Be For Love

By Don Drumtra, LocSec



Who sets the policy and direction for Mensa? It is the International Board of Directors, responsible

for high-level decisions regarding broad strategic guidance for national Mensa organizations. The Mensa founders, who were the de facto IBD members at the time, set down the three reasons for our existence listed on the first page of the Mensa Constitution.

Closer to home is the governing body of American Mensa (AML)—the American Mensa Committee (AMC). As you might suspect, it develops policy and provides

direction for Mensa in America. But what else does the AMC do? It is hard to describe, but reading their minutes and reports on line might help us find out. We could also sit in on the AMC meeting at the Annual Gathering if we attended. (But then we might miss some of the interesting speakers we came to see.)

What then? Well, once each year the AMC meets in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area near the National Office in Arlington. The meetings are open to all Mensa members and, with a few exceptions, visitors are invited to participate in most activities and observe most meetings; but we have to pay our own way. So instead of visiting the AMC at an AG, we could hop in our car or on a train and attend the meeting. I chose the latter on September 8. It was fun and

enlightening and even though I was the only full-time visitor, I felt welcome.

The first day of the meeting consisted of a leadership development workshop. The AMC is serious about leadership development and believes it is important to set the example for the rest of American Mensa members. The presenter was Jeffery Cafaude, a national award-winning facilitator of company executive leadership conferences. He bills himself as an Idea Architect.

We began Friday with a continental breakfast at 7:30 AM. Jeff arranged us around five round tables with five participants each, and at 8:30 AM he began the workshop. We had one morning coffee break and then moved to

the next room for a buffet working lunch, while listening to an outside auditor explain the results of the recent AML financial audit. The workshop resumed at 1 PM and went to 5:15 with one break. There was a meeting on testing from 5:30 to 6:30 that most of us did not attend. At 6:30 we reconvened for a buffet working dinner, with a presentation on testing by the AML Chief Psychologist, Dr. Frank Lawless. Dinner ended at 7:45, in time for the meetings of the Leadership Committee at 8 PM and Finance Committee at 9 PM. I was dead tired when the day's work was done at 10 PM. What about the

National Office staff? They arrived before us and left after us, making sure all was ready, that we all got to the right place at the right time, and cleaning up after us.

Saturday the continental breakfast was at 7:30-8:30 AM, the same time as the Membership Committee meeting. The meeting convened at 8:30 and ended in mid-afternoon with a working buffet lunch with multiple discussions. After the AMC Committee meeting there was a meeting of the RVCs. Saturday evening we gathered for dinner and to exchange war stories.

On Sunday there was a working breakfast to wrap up the meetings. We all hung around the breakfast tables afterward, finally relaxing until we had to leave to catch our flights or other transportation home.

What was my impression? Some have suggested that most of the meetings AMC members attend are nothing but parties. My experience was quite the opposite. Our AMC members worked from sunrise until after sunset each day conducting the essential business of Mensa. Why? They do not get paid for this. It must be for love.

OCTOBER MONTHLY MEETING

Submitted by Rose Berkowitz, Discussion Leader

At our next LSM Discussion Group meeting 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.



WHO All members (and their guests)
WHAT **Austin LSM Discussion Group**
 Sit around a conference table, use talking stick method. Bring your enthusiasm and samples of your creative work. Bring something to write on if you wish to take notes. Bring any beverage and/or snack you'd like. (Be sure to clean up after yourself before you leave.)
WHEN Wednesday, Oct. 12, 2011, 7-8:30 PM
WHERE Northwest Village Branch Library
 512-974-9960
 2505 Steck Avenue, Austin, TX
 (near the corner of Steck and Burnet)

STATUS REPORT--MEMBER CONCERNS/ACTION PLANS

Submitted by Don Drumtra, LocSec

By September 4th work was begun on 29 of 44 or 66 percent of the action plans. Highlights include finishing work on the five action plans relating to RGs. We are awaiting the feedback forms to see what the attendees really thought; but informal feedback from attendees indicated that they really enjoyed the RG.

Another action plan addressed a concern that members may not present programs or lead discussions at the monthly general meetings; in fact, this used to be true. Now every member is not only allowed but encouraged to bring in speakers that interest them, lead discussions, and submit topics they want to learn about.

These six action plans will be presented to the board at the October meeting for closure. See <http://www.lsm.us.mensa.org/bylaws/ASIEs/#GI> for the full status report.



FEATURED MEMBER BIO



Hi, I'm Lynn Herrick. When I was little, my daddy made up little songs to sing to me. That taught me that people could write songs just as they draw pictures and write stories, so I did all three. In high school I co-wrote the class song, came in second in the original composition contest, and had songs in our musical revues and on Chicago radio.

Like Don and Patty Drumtra, I'm a Northwestern grad. I started out as a music major, but I was such a klutz on the keyboard I knew I'd never fulfill their piano requirement, so I switched to an English composition (writing) major.

Professionally I alternated between acting and writing advertising copy. At the Omaha Magic Theater I was Composer-in-Residence and a member of their rambunctious, surreal performing company. As I said on my later résumés, I "sang, danced, acted, ran, tumbled, rolled, and climbed leading roles."

In Omaha I teamed up with Gracie Lee as music partners, writing, performing, and publishing. We had our own recording studio where we wrote and performed jingles, and our own arts and entertainment newspaper.

In Houston, Gracie and I ran a battered women's shelter, and sang and played concerts as a duo or with our own feminist band SisterSong.

After the shelter closed for lack of funds and we all went our separate ways, I worked as a telephone interviewer, door-to-door canvasser for the environment and home health aide, until health problems forced early retirement at age 62.

Jane Thompson's bio about being bipolar has given me the guts to write about my disabilities. I've been sensitive to cold since 1965, when doctors painted my throat with hot chemicals, thinking they were helping me. I lost friends and jobs and drew a lot of hurtful ridicule when I'd go out with a mask or muffler on.

Then in the early 2000s prescription glaucoma eyedrops made my eyes so sensitive to light that I couldn't go out in the daytime without a blindfold. Due to these issues I was almost a total shut-in for eight years. But I'm making up for it now by the gusto with which I get out and walk and soak up the sunshine, fresh air, and beauty of Austin. I meet people and take pictures nearly every warm day.

Nobody ridicules a 74-year-old who's sensitive to cold, and I've rigged up a friendly-looking cat nose to wear in air conditioning. I've been told I'm one of the elements that keeps Austin weird!

The eye problem saps my energy, but I'm writing songs again and I'm working on a novel. Parts of the story deal with politics, and that's what's hanging me up. So if you know anything about various kinds of political corruption and/or money-laundering, I'd appreciate your sharing it with me. (Don't worry. I'll change things up so they're unrecognizable.) And you writers are invited to critique my first draft when it's finished.

[Lynn doesn't have access to a computer. She can be reached at 2700 Manor Road, Apt. 102, Austin, TX 78722-1722, or at 512-474-9156.—Editor]

PONDERINGS

By Ron Edelstein

Last Sunday our pastor spoke on challenging our limits and seeking to excel. She comes from a background in the corporate world—once manager of marketing for a very large company. She is one of those "connected" people

with a smartphone, tuned in all the time to everything going on, has an electronics engineer husband who works in the same company I used to (a semi-conductor manufacturer), and two beautiful and highly successful

daughters in college. So exceptional performance comes naturally to her mind.

As she spoke, I was prompted to think of another perspective. So I jotted down some notes during

the sermon (yes, I really WAS listening to her!) and here is what I wrote. And yes, I sent her a copy too...we swap ideas back and forth frequently. We don't always agree, but we enjoy the exchanges.

Stress Thoughts

"A wise man knows his limitations."—Dirty Harry

Learn to know your limitations and don't stress when you can't do everything.

Modern society pushes us to challenge and push our own limits. We are constantly exhorted to excel, to extend ourselves, to push onwards, to exceed our perceived limits.

These two concepts push us in opposite directions—or rather, pull us in different ways. The real lesson and objective is—BALANCE. Push your limits and find out what your limits are, then maintain that you can sustain. A rope pulled to its maximum tensile strength all the time will soon break. There must be a reserve for special surges, for special times of extraordinary need and to recognize when these special needs occur. The latter is important so you don't go to maximum power every time something minor crops up. Learn to take a long view of things, to stop and ask, "Is this a problem that has to be solved immediately—and does it have to be solved by me?"

If the answer to either part of the question is "no", then the next question is, "What do I need to do here?" This is where you have to step back and look at the big picture and decide several things, in addition to the previous two-part question:

- Is this even a problem? Does it need solving at all?
- IS there a solution?
- Is the solution really that, or does it just create a whole new problem?
- Who benefits from the solution—and who may benefit if there is NO solution?

Our society has developed into a high-speed, high-stress culture. With each advance in technology comes a new development in culture. Once, if you wanted to communicate with someone who was not within voice distance, you mailed them a letter. Depending on how far away they were, the letter might take anywhere from a couple of days to, sometimes, months to reach them if they lived in another country.

Then came the telegraph, telephone, radio and other devices, and you could have a real-time conversation. But if you called on the telephone and no one was home, you had to wait and keep calling until they returned home and answered. Then came the answering recorder and you could simply leave a message and wait for them to call you back. Next came e-mail and you could leave messages and get responses the next time you logged onto your service.

Now we have text messaging, Twitter and other social networks that demand that you respond instantly, no matter where you are and what you may be doing. NOTHING is so important as answering your electronic messages instantly, or you may be considered "out of touch" or "not with it." Even if the message is inconsequential, you MUST answer it immediately.

Of course all this creates stress. Stress that you aren't staying in touch with friends and family. Stress that you aren't answering the demands of your job, no matter when the message comes in (never mind that the person sending it is in the middle of his workday on the other side of the planet and you are sound asleep!)

Stress creates more stress—that you aren't responding to the stress. Then your health, physical and mental, begins to suffer and you have more difficulty keeping up—and that increases the stress. You begin to look like that rope referred to earlier...stretching, fraying, threads breaking...until the whole thing snaps—and you can't respond to anything at all anymore!

BALANCE! Find the balance. Everyone needs it, the wise seek it, the wiser find it and recognize it when they do. Everyone should try to excel at what they do well, but no one should kill themselves in the process. Knowing your limits, defining them, and then backing off slightly for a sustained performance, leaving a little reserve for those special times of real need,—there is the difference between a true performer and a frustrated "also ran."

Eastern religions often stress balance (if that is not an oxymoron). Balancing your strengths with your weaknesses—and recognizing that everyone has both. Not being ashamed of weaknesses, simply accepting that they are there, that they can be improved upon and sometimes even used to augment strengths. Not everyone can be good at every thing, so learn what you are good at, focus on that, and let someone else take care of the rest.

But don't stress about it!

Submitted by Patty Drumtra, VP and Secretary

Regular Meeting

The September regular meeting of the Lone Star Mensa board of officers convened at 6:18 PM, 2011 August 31, at Central Market, 4001 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin TX. Attending were **Don Drumtra, Patty Drumtra, Crockett Grabbe, Jon Kurylowicz, Paul Anderson, Bryan Bloch, and Michael Tolbert.**

The chairman called the meeting to order, announced that there was not a quorum, and recessed the meeting for 15 minutes to wait for another member.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting at 6:33 PM, announced that there was still not a quorum, and with the consent of the members present, adjourned the meeting at 6:34 PM until 5:00 PM, Sunday, 2011 September 4 at the Regional Gathering at the Wingate by Wyndham Hotel in Round Rock TX.



Adjourned Meeting

An adjourned meeting of the Lone Star Mensa Board of Officers convened at 5:14 PM, September 4, 2011, at the Wingate by Wyndham Hotel, in the board room of Williamson Conference Center, IH-35 and US 79, Round Rock, TX. Attending were: **Don Drumtra, Patty Drumtra, Crockett Grabbe, Jon Kurylowicz, John Neemidge, and Ray O'Connor.**

Referenced written reports and LOS are available on the LSM web site. Paper copies are available on request. The board adopted without debate the agenda, the minutes of the August regular meeting on page 7 of the *Armadillo Literary Gazette*, and the minutes of the September regular meeting as read by Patty.

The board received the following verbal officer reports:

- LocSec: Fred appointed Austin Meyer as Testing Coordinator effective October 1. A motion to commend John Pfeiffer for his good work as previous Testing Coordinator was adopted (Don)
- Crockett reported that his suggestion at the last meeting to change the menu options to be more understandable was implemented satisfactorily.
- Symposium Committee: The Fall picnic will be scheduled for the middle of October. (Patty for Helen) The next monthly membership meeting on September 14 will be open to topics presented by the attendees. (Don).
- LoneStaRG Committee: There were over 100 attendees, including walk-ins. The RG was a success. (John Neemidge, Co-chairman).

- Website Working Group Committee: A small fee might be needed for the design of the web site. Crockett said he has designed web sites and offered his services for free. (John Neemidge for Patsy Graham, Chairman):
- Action Plan Status Report (Don) – Work has begun on 66% of the Member Concerns action plans. At least five of the items are expected to be ready for closure by the October board meeting

New Business

- Deferred until the October meeting a motion to move the board meetings back to the NW Recreation Center now that construction is complete. (Don)
- 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 PM, Wednesday, October 5, at the home of Ron and Linda Edelstein (Patty).
- The next regular monthly membership meetings are scheduled for September 14 and October 12, 7-8:30 PM at the Northwest Village Branch Library. 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 5:47 PM.

LONESTAR RG XIII REPORT

Submitted by John and Geri Neemidge, RG Co-Chairs

Over 100 Mensans and friends gathered over Labor Day weekend, Sep. 2-5, 2011, for Lone Star Mensa's annual Regional Gathering. This year's gathering was the 13th, and it was a spooky, scary, haunted time. Not only did we have lots of fun, but we also supported some great charities.

Things got off to a great start on Friday afternoon, with food, beverages, games, puzzles, and discussion in our Hospitality room. We dined on meatloaf hands and greeted friends old and new. Early in the evening a bunch of us enjoyed a version of the popular game *Minute to Win It*. Many of the challenges were hard, but we had a great time trying to figure them out. Then we engaged in a spirited session of the Mensan-created word game Carnelli. The evening's programs were rounded out by the game Werewolf and by Fishbowl—a way for the opposite sexes to learn more about each other. Many people stayed up late into the night enjoying the company of their fellow Mensans.

Saturday kicked off with Mensa Admission Testing. We had several people test and hopefully they'll all be here to join us at the next LoneStaRG. Saturday morning we taught Thriller dance lessons. Our speakers on Saturday covered religious freedom, Fantastic Fest, golems, popular vampire literature, and a standing-room-only talk on forensic entomology. We had a workshop on the Tarot, learned about zombie games, and talked about our Mensa region with our Regional Vice Chair, Roger Durham. We also held a blood drive benefiting the Blood Center of Central Texas. (11 of us donated.)



Saturday evening was the Zombie Prom. We got started with a theatrical makeup session, courtesy of the wonderful makeup artists of SCARE for a CURE. (SCARE is a local Austin nonprofit which raises money for cancer-related charities through an annual haunted house and other scary activities. We raised over \$300.) With everyone zombied up and dressed in their scary finery, the Zombie Prom was a blast. We took prom photos of the guests, danced (including a performance of the Thriller Dance), listened to the music of Not Guilty!—a Mensan-led band from Dallas, and enjoyed a dessert party. After the prom, Hospitality again went late into the night.

On Sunday we continued with more great speakers, on Slavic culture and classic vampire legends, haunted house special effects, microbes and human destiny, and the Grateful Dead. We learned about self-defense, corn snakes, and flower arranging, decorated sugar skulls, and tasted chili peppers. Sunday night an overflow crowd played the always popular LoneStaRG classic *Name That Movie*. Then we had movie night with *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, *An American Werewolf in London*, and a spirited showing of the *Rocky Horror Picture Show* at midnight. A couple rooms away, the more musically-inclined gathered for a jam session and sing-along. And once again only extreme tiredness drove the last of us from Hospitality early Monday morning.

Monday we wrapped things up with a terrific presentation from "Dinosaur George" Blasing. Dinosaur George was a hit at last year's

LoneStaRG and told us how some of the questions asked last year directly contributed to current academic research in paleontology. We had a great time learning about the many different types of dinosaurs and the new discoveries that are changing what we know of the ancient world. We had a silent auction to benefit the Lone Star Mensa Scholarship fund (which raised well over \$400). Geri Neemidge won the coveted *Hell's M's Party Animal* award. (Party Animal recognizes the person who, in the view of the Hell's M's members at the gathering, did the most to make their weekend great.) Don Drumtra was presented with an award for his service to Lone Star Mensa and the region by Roger Durham. Then we all said our goodbyes and packed up to head home. Leftover snacks and drinks from Hospitality were donated to a shelter assisting those affected by the weekend's fires.

Our RG Committee did a terrific job creating this weekend. Geri Neemidge, our Program Chair, arranged the many great speakers, workshop leaders, games hosts, and other events. Modelle Gibson, attending her first Regional Gathering, dazzled the RG-goers with the quantity, quality, and variety of food available in Hospitality. Patsy Graham kept track of everyone's registrations and answered many questions about the RG. Andy York kept our books and financial records. Claudia Harbert arranged the scholarship auction. Laura Shankland contributed to many RG committee meetings and helped out at many events during the RG. Don Drumtra helped with some of the financial records and wrote reimbursement checks on site. McCartney Taylor volunteered to create our photo backdrop and lead the prom-photo effort, and also video-recorded many of our speaker presentations. Many people contributed food to the RG, including the Neemidges, Modelle Gibson, Patsy Graham, Claudia Harbert, Laura Shankland, Patty Drumtra, and Ray O'Connor. Far too many people to name volunteered in large and small ways over the RG weekend.

The RG Committee is already hard at work, looking at feedback from the attendees and planning next year's LoneStaRG XIV. We hope all of you will come join us and share in all the fun!



You can see more photos on the web site: <http://lonestar.us.mensa.org/events/rg/rg13dillo>

GROANERS

- King Ozymandias of Assyria was running low on cash after years of war with the Hittites. His last great possession was the Star of the Euphrates, the most valuable diamond in the ancient world. Desperate, he went to Croesus, the pawnbroker, to ask for a loan. Croesus said, "I'll give you 100,000 dinars for it." "But I paid a million dinars for it," the King protested. "Don't you know who I am? I am the KING!" Croesus replied, "When you wish to pawn a Star, makes no difference who you are."
- A man rushed into a busy doctor's office and shouted, "Doctor! I think I'm shrinking!" The doctor calmly responded, "Now, settle down. You'll just have to be a little patient."
- A marine biologist developed a race of genetically engineered dolphins that could live forever if they were fed a steady diet of seagulls. One day, his supply of the birds ran out so he had to go out and trap some more. On the way back, he spied two lions asleep on the road. Afraid to wake them, he gingerly stepped over them. Immediately, he was arrested and charged with transporting gulls across sedate lions for immortal porpoises.
- Back in the 1800's the Tate's Watch Company of Massachusetts wanted to produce other products, and since they already made the cases for watches, they used them to produce compasses. The new compasses were so bad that people often ended up in Canada or Mexico rather than California. This, of course, is the origin of the expression "He who has a Tate's is lost!"
- A thief broke into the local police station and stole all the toilets and urinals, leaving no clues. A spokesperson was quoted as saying, "We have absolutely nothing to go on."
- An Indian chief was feeling very sick, so he summoned the medicine man. After a brief examination, the medicine man took out a long, thin strip of elk rawhide and gave it to the chief, telling him to bite off, chew, and swallow one inch of the leather every day. After a month, the medicine man returned to see how the chief was feeling. The chief shrugged and said, "The thong is ended, but the malady lingers on."
- A famous Viking explorer returned home from a voyage and found his name missing from the town register. His wife insisted on complaining to the local civic official who apologized profusely saying, "I must have taken Leif off my census."
- There were three Indian squaws. One slept on a deer skin, one slept on an elk skin, and the third slept on a hippopotamus skin. All three became pregnant. The first two each had a baby boy. The one who slept on the hippopotamus skin had twin boys. This just goes to prove that the squaw of the hippopotamus is equal to the sons of the squaws of the other two hides.
- A skeptical anthropologist was cataloging South American folk remedies with the assistance of a tribal brujo who indicated that the leaves of a particular fern were a sure cure for any case of constipation. When the anthropologist expressed his doubts, the brujo looked him in the eye and said, "Let me tell you, with fronds like these, you don't need enemas!"

APPOINTMENTS

Submitted by Don Drumtra, LocSec

I am very happy to announce that:

- Jon Kurylowicz has moved up from assistant to assume the full responsibilities of Circulation Coordinator.
- Austin Meyer has accepted the position of Testing Coordinator, replacing John Pfeiffer. The board commended John for his outstanding work and continuing to serve even after he moved to Denver.

Jon and Austin are scheduled to assume their new responsibilities on October 1st.

OPPORTUNITY STILL KNOCKING!

[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

LoneStarRG 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 LoneStarRG 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.

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.

SPEAKING OF 9/11

By *Crockett Grabbe*



My experience 10 years ago seems like it

happened just last year. I was getting ready to see a podiatrist about a painful problem in my foot when I flipped on the TV for the morning news. They were showing the North Tower that had just been hit by a plane for reasons unknown; then suddenly I saw a jet come up and crash into the South Tower. I instantly knew that this was a terrorist act. Shortly thereafter I went to my

appointment, and by the time I was able to ask the doc's staff what was happening the South Tower had collapsed. About half an hour later I watched from the doc's office as the North Tower collapsed.

I stayed glued to the TV for the next few days, and as a physicist engaged in research at the University of Iowa, I puzzled about how the plane crashes could have brought the Towers down. Once I began to research this question I concluded they could not have. I wrote an article on this, suggesting the collapses resulted from explosives planted inside by the

terrorists. I found evidence to support my conclusion from studying photos of the collapses, and rejected government reports claiming the planes and the fires they started were responsible. I submitted the article to several newspapers, and I posted it on my website, where it stayed for several years.

Then in early 2007 I got a call from a reporter from New York City, and then was interviewed on TV about my conclusions. The emphasis was on Building 7—the one that fell hours after the Towers. I was invited that fall to speak at a 9/11 conference in New York City, at

which I showed slides created from excellent photos of the Towers falling that I'd found on the internet. The conference was held just a few blocks from the closed WTC grounds, and I got a standing ovation from the largest crowd I've ever had at one of my speeches.

That experience motivated me to continue researching, writing, and speaking on this for the next few years. I have published five papers, presented three more at physics conferences, and given talks in St. Louis, Iowa City, Chicago, Des Moines, New York City (again) and

here in Austin. In all of them I showed and concluded the Towers did not fall from the plane crashes or the fires they started.

Last summer I published an explosive book online (*National Swindle of the World Trade Center*) in which I strongly counter the government's NIST reports, pointing out their myriad scientific flaws, and present my own clear scientific conclusions. It has seven chapters, with 37 color photos, a glossary and an index, and can be ordered for downloading at my website (www.SeaLane.org) for

under \$13. It is viewable with any computer browser.

Several of the 9/11 programs on TV the other day presented a completely false picture of how the buildings at the WTC collapsed. This demeans the deaths of nearly 3,000 and the injuries of countless others. We haven't begun to find who all was behind it besides the terrorists who hijacked the planes. This mass murder was the worst crime of the 21st century, and I, for one, plan to keep speaking up about it. The victims of this crime have received no justice.

YOUR SUDOKU PUZZLE

Weekly Extremes, sudoku.org.uk
Submitted by Douglas Yee



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

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.

FROM THE RVC

Submitted by Roger Durham, Region 6 RVC

AMC News: At the meeting of the American Mensa Committee in September your Board of Directors voted to repeal the prohibition against e-mailing Local Group directories. Until now, local groups were not permitted to e-mail their group directories to members, due to privacy concerns regarding the ease of forwarding such communications to non-members, accidentally or otherwise. Modern scanning technology and other developments, however, have largely made this policy moot. Consequently, your group may now distribute a local directory by e-mail, either as part of your local newsletter or as a stand-alone document. Local officers are urged to remember, however, that they must not distribute the monthly membership list sent to your group by American Mensa, as these lists may contain information which your members may not have released for publication. Upon request, the National Office will

be happy to provide your local group with a list specifically for local directory purposes which has been redacted to eliminate non-public information.



The AMC also voted to engage an actuarial firm to review the calculations used to set life membership dues, in order to verify that we are maintaining adequate reserves to cover the future liabilities for services to life members. The current formula for determining the cost of a life membership was last reviewed in 1999, and the Finance Committee wishes to be sure the underlying assumptions are still valid.

The weekend before the AMC meeting I was in Round Rock for Lone Star Mensa's regional gathering, LoneStaRG XIII. The speakers were great, hospitality was bountiful, and I was pleased to see members there from North Texas, Gulf Coast, South Texas, Permian Basin, and New Mexico Mensa, as well as the host Austin group.

While at the RG I had the opportunity to look over the results of a survey taken of the membership by Lone Star Mensa. One of the questions asked members to identify anything they perceived as a problem area. Most of the responses were predictable, having to do with a lack of events in a particular area or involving a member's particular interests. I was somewhat puzzled by one member, however, who replied that a problem facing the group was excessive bureaucratic requirements by American Mensa. Now, I'm the first to admit that the AMC has a long and unfortunate record of over-reacting

to one-time events, or what I call the "killing flies with a cannon" approach, but I'm not aware of it happening in the last few years. If any of you have any concerns about an excess of bureaucracy creating problems for your local group, please let me know. As always, you can reach me at rvc6@us.mensa.org, or by mail at 9920 Ridgehaven Drive, Dallas, TX 75238.

Last but certainly not least, don't forget North Texas Mensa's upcoming RG in Dallas, Feast of Pleasures and Delights XXXII, over Thanksgiving weekend!



A BLOG IS AFOOT

Mensan Bill Sawatzki writes a monthly travel blog. This is the first chapter. You can follow his blog at bsawatzki.blogspot.com

Chapter One: Van Trip



Where to start. Lewis Carroll told niece Alice to begin at the beginning and go on till you come to the end; then stop. The protagonist in the movie Memento only knows the present. The present is where we are stuck living our lives and from where I am writing this blog.

It seems my blog has begun.

I was pulling Tehachapi on CA 58 in my 16-year-old work van when I began to note the open-hooded rigs upside the road. The valley floor had registered 102 degrees, but modern drivers don't even need to dim the AC in these conditions, shoulder occupiers excepted. Wasn't until the next morning, between Bishop and Hawthorne on State 6, that my alternator started giving me the high sign.

The last time I was on these roads alone was circa 1966, in an air-cooled Corvair. Turning on the heater drew heat from the engine while raising the driver's right foot temperature well above then-current, POW torture standards. The sides of the highways then were well-littered with hood-steaming 50s cars and trucks. That trip may have been the last time I saw the desert water bags, all Winslet-ty, on the prow of long-hooded Fords.

The "adventure" part of adventure is not knowing what is on the other side of the next hill. My blue van had not been

driven over 3,000 miles per year for the last five years. My trip preparation included taking the construction tools out and putting in one of those "as seen on TV" air-filled mattresses. Also had the oil changed. I was pretty sure that these preparations would guarantee adventure.

Just yesterday, or so it seems, my wife of 42 years died. Shortly after that damnable experience Woody Allen's "Midnight in Paris" debuted. Bonnie and I not so long ago spent five weeks ensconced in the third arrondissement. The images on the screen, street for street and turn for turn, as Hemingway could have said in the movie "rang true." I was glad I saw the movie. Upon leaving the theater I realized that the last movie I had gone to alone was "Georgy Girl" starring Lynn Redgrave in 1966. (I am not counting "Apocalypse Now." There were other reasons I saw that alone.)

Being as "there is a reason for everything," I pulled into the Napa auto parts store in Hawthorne and the nice guy metered the alternator and showed me the reason the alternator light was flashing—it was going out. "Can't get it replaced here today, Sonny. I supply all the mechanics in town and they are all slammed." I'm not sure if I remember the "Sonny" part correctly, since the nice guy was about my son's age. "You can make it to Fallon and you should be able to get it fixed there." If I had those words back I would own about 35 extra words.

Next Blog Chapter - The Fallon Women of Nevada

OCTOBER CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5 Board Meeting	6	7	8
9	10 Mensa Admissions Testing	11	12 Membership Meeting	13 ALG Deadline Chess Night, TGIT-North	14	15
16	17	18 Eclectic Eats	19	20 TGIT-South	21	22
23	24	25q	26	27 TGIT-North, Seal & Label	28	29 Halloween Party
30 	31					

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
1st Wednesday

Oct. 5, 6:00-7:00 PM
Home of Ron and Linda Edelstein
1439 Dapplegrey Lane, Austin, TX
Contact the Board Secretary, Patty Drumtra, to get an item on the agenda. Officers are encouraged to attend and all members are welcome.

Mensa Admissions Testing
Oct. 10

Registration at 6:30 PM
Testing at 7:00 PM
Community Room
Central Market Café North
4001 North Lamar Blvd.
Walk through the entrance about ten feet and turn right. Walk another ten feet and the information desk will be on your left and the Community Room will be on your right

Monthly Membership Meeting
2nd Wednesday

Oct. 12, 7:00 - 8:30 PM
Northwest Village Branch Library
2505 Steck Avenue, Austin, TX
512-974-9960
Near the corner of Steck and Burnet
8200 N x 2505 W on the Austin city grid

ALG Submissions Deadline
2nd Thursday

Oct. 13, Midnight
Submissions due.

Chess Night (with the TGIT group)
2nd Thursday
Oct. 13, 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

Oct. 13 and 27, 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 the Mensa table sign.

Eclectic Eats
3rd Tuesday

October 18, 7:00 PM
Thai Kitchen, 512-328-3538
3437 Bee Caves Road, Westlake
<http://thaikitchenofaustin.com>
Indulge in the tantalizing cuisine of Thailand. The simple decor presages great food, including meat, poultry, seafood, and vegetarian. Please provide your own transportation. RSVP to Aaron Rabushka at 512-280-2807 or arabushka@austin.rr.com by Sunday, October 16.

Thank Goodness It's Thursday (South)
3rd Thursdays

Oct. 20, 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).

Seal & Label
4th Thursday

Oct. 27, 6:00-8:00 PM
Central Market Café North
4001 N. Lamar Blvd.
512-206-1020
Join the TGIT Group to help seal and label the newsletter. See the TGIT-North entry for directions.

HALLOWEEN PARTY!

Saturday, Oct. 29, 8:00 PM to ?
1439 Dapplegrey Lane, Austin, TX
512-491-9881
This year's spooky gathering will be a potluck at the home of Ron and Linda Edelstein. Turn out in your scariest rig (if you dare) and join your LSM friends! BYOB and a dish/treat to share.

UPCOMING IN NOVEMBER

Nov. 2, Board Meeting
Nov. 9, Membership Meeting
Nov. 10, Chess Night, ALG Deadline
Nov. 10 & 24, TGIT-North
Nov. 17, TGIT-South
Nov., 24, Seal & Label

LONE STAR MENSA DIRECTORY

FUNCTION	CONTACT	PHONE	E-MAIL
Local Secretary (LocSec), etc.	Don Drumtra*	512-291-0315	drumtra@aol.com
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Hays County and Vicinity Coordinator	Brian Bloch	512-878-8800	bloxmail@grandecom.net
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.



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

Happy Birthday—Born Mensans!

- 1 David Floyd
- 1 Melanie G Gover
- 1 Robert Brian Holder
- 3 Thomas M Spillman Jr
- 3 John David White
- 4 Joan C Dameron
- 4 Karen M Werner
- 10 Robert Allan Larson
- 10 Nina Jo Saint
- 15 Vicky Yvonne Spradling
- 16 Brett McKenzie
- 17 David R Irvin
- 19 Charles D Daniel
- 23 Michael Bennett McCormick
- 25 Deidre Brightman
- 25 Audrey L Patton
- 26 Robert I May
- 26 Rachel Wenger-Keller
- 27 Michelle Chlada
- 28 Kimberly R Chapin

- 28 W Andrew York
- 29 Stephen A McAlister
- 29 Mary Frances Satterfield
- 29 David R Travis

- Timothy S Park
- Todd Pogue
- Shaughn Simmons

New Member—Welcome!

Aidan Brooks

Just Moved In—Hi Neighbor!

Rodney Appling
 Austin Hay
 Shawn Mitchell
 Michael Withers

Welcome Back—Missed You!

Thomas Lewis
 Carl Moffett
 Colby Ringeisen

Farewell—We'll Miss You!

Cody A Melcher

CONGRATULATIONS!

Member for 30 years

Ronald E. Edelstein

Member for 5 years

Melanie G. Gover

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

THE JOY OF CULTUREQUEST: FUNNY ANSWERS

By Marilyn Sallee, CQ XXI Coordinator

Since the CultureQuest Coordinator position is purely voluntary, and a heck of a lot of work, the only pay is getting to read all those really weird or hysterically humorous answers that no one else gets to see but the graders. Believe me, after hundreds of hours of fact-checking and grading, a good laugh is extremely appreciated. So special thanks go out to the teams with a warped sense of humor—we wouldn't have made it to the end without you. Below are a few of the funniest for you all to appreciate. First is the actual CQ question, followed by the funny, but not usually correct, answer. In parentheses is the name of the team and their region and chapter number. Enjoy! We sure did.

1. Perfect Woman: In Shaw's play Pygmalion, Henry Higgins molded Eliza Doolittle into the perfect woman. In the Greek myth, Pygmalion was the sculptor's name; what did he call his sculpture of the perfect woman?

Barbie by Mattel (Pszczyna 05 380)

17 – 18. Nobody Remembers Second Place: The Enola Gay dropped "Little Boy" on Hiroshima. But what about the plane that dropped the A-bomb on Nagasaki?

Enola Straight (Clueless 01 100)

30. This hypothetical particle, $\tilde{\chi}_i^0$, is an excellent candidate to comprise the universe's cold dark matter. It is sometimes jokingly referred to by particle physicists as "the Italian neutron." What is its real name?

Guidon (Duh Bears 06 760)

Pison - pronounced Pi - zón (M Tripled - Wendy's Wizards 03 488)

56. What study or activity is known as "the sweet science?"

Lots of funny answers: sucrology, glycology, candy tasting, confectionary, etc.

78. Name this landmark sculpture: (Photo of "Cloud Gate" in Millennium Park, Chicago)

The Bean, Kidney, Blob, "Bed Pan" by Jeff Koons, Big/Bicycle Helmet, Jellybean – several teams

Mothra's Egg (Brain Elevators 00 140)

Noosphere (Tsunami I 02 233)

Erythrocyte (Another Good Omen 08 970)

George (CarolinaH Brian Gang 05 293)

99. In 1935, this commercial product's new and improved version claimed it was now "guaranteed 100% free of splinters!" Name the product.

Toilet paper – what a relief!! (Indy 5.00 03 461)

101. Orphan Pip encounters a convict in the churchyard. What is his name?

Bernie Madoff (MECCA 03 452)

102. Pippin the Hunchback, subject of the musical, Pippin, was the son of whom?

Many answered "Charles Martel" - Pip's great-grandfather; missed it by several generations.

Fun answer: Quasimodo.

120. The species of dinosaur that was originally called a brontosaurus is now known as what?

Sinclair (dino) (Duh Bears 06 760)

Extinct (Nattering Nabobs of Knowledge 02 200)

125. This quantum particle is the only known massive scalar elementary particle predicted to exist by the Standard Model. Though it has not yet been observed, its existence would help explain the origin of mass in the universe. The media sometimes refer to it as "the God particle," but that name is generally disliked by particle physicists. What is its particle physics name?

Briggs-Hoson (name withheld to protect the guilty) (The Pulchritudes 02 170)

126. Name the type of growth known as the Malthusian Growth Model, which can be found in the graphs for compound interest, nuclear chain reactions and Ponzi schemes.

Excremental Growth (name withheld to protect the guilty)

152-156 – Identify the clef symbols:

Clef palette (H-Cubed 05 380)

188 –191. What's That Buoy's Name? – series about marker buoys in waterways.

"Uh, we live in THE DESSERT, Dammit! How 'bout 'identify the cactus'? Grrr." (The Phoenix Phive 09 850)

212. If you are at 0 degrees latitude and 0 degrees longitude, where are you?

Zero-zero Island, home of Colonel Bleep (Indy 5.00 03 461)

225 – 234. Label the map (of Carribean Islands)

Gilligan's Island (Tsunami I 02 233)

Island of Youth (Tidal Wave 02 233)

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Please send change of address to:

Armadillo Literary Gazette
c/o American Mensa, Ltd.
1229 Corporate Dr. West
Arlington, TX 76006-6103

PUBLICATION NOTICES

The Armadillo Literary Gazette, owned by American Mensa, Ltd., is the monthly official publication of Lone Star Mensa. Mensa members may subscribe for \$10 per year and may request delivery by email, USPS mail, or both. Send subscription requests to the Publications Office, 3206 Twilight Trail Austin, TX 78748-2608.

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

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