

Armadillo Literary Gazette

A Publication of *Lone Star Mensa*
Volume XXXVIII
Number 12, December 2011



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

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Submitted By *Rose Berkowitz*



POEM FOR THE HOLIDAYS

*Once again the seasons change,
The endless cycle rolls around.*

*Once again my heart is touched
By all the love surrounding me.*

*Love that sparkles on a tree,
Love that decorates a home.*

*Proud displays of hope and faith,
Playful dreams, and memories.*

*So many people, giving so much
To make these moments meaningful—*

© Rose M. Berkowitz
November 27, 2004

We welcome your input and feedback. Please send your comments to editor@lsm.us.mensa.org. No particular word limit, but emailed submissions are appreciated.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hello, Rose,

I read what you wrote about fear [in last month's ALG] and I agree with you. Fear is a much bigger part of life than most people want to admit. And why are we afraid? We have an instinctive tendency to be anxious about our survival. Over the years, it has helped keep people alive and keep our species going. Do you want to get people's attention? Raise the question of survival. A story involving death or the possibility of death does this and is a standard way to hold an audience.

But survival is more than just about imminent death. We are social animals and have great difficulty surviving without the help of other people. So we have a deep fear of abandonment that draws us together, and we pay much attention to the intricacies of our relationships with each other. Stories about the ongoing human soap opera also are many and this is why. There is much more to say about all this, too much for an email. But understanding the underpinnings of our fears helps us greatly to be less enslaved to them and more free to live an optimum life. Thank you for writing.

73,
Hugh Brown

WE STILL NEED YOU!



**Help
Wanted**

[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.]

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. 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.

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.



Jon Kurylowicz Transfer Ceremony at TGIT/Seal and Label.

Jon receives our grateful appreciation and the symbolic postal tray and mailing labels from Don Drumtra as he accepts his new responsibility as our Newsletter Circulation Coordinator.



We are very happy to announce that **David Miller** has volunteered to be our **Nomination and Election Committees Chair** for the 2012 LSM election. This is your opportunity to influence the group by serving either on the Nomination Committee to recruit people for the board, and or the Election Committee to ensure the election is fair and honest. The duties and schedules to be met are detailed on our web site under the Annual Elections Calendar.

NOVEMBER BOARD MINUTES

Submitted by Patty Drumtra, VP and Secretary

The November regular meeting of the Lone Star Mensa board of officers convened at 6:05 PM, 2011, November 2, at Ron Edelstein's home, 1439 Dapplegrey Lane, Austin TX 78727. Attending were **Don Drumtra, Patty Drumtra, Ron Edelstein, Linda Edelstein, Crockett Grabbe, and John Neemidge**. The board adopted the agenda as amended and the minutes of the October regular meeting on page 5 of the November Armadillo Literary Gazette. The minutes, amended agenda, referenced written reports, and other documents related to the meeting are available on the LSM Website. Paper copies are available on request.

The board received the following officer reports and took the following actions:

- Treasurer: The board unanimously adopted the April-October 31, 2011 Financial Report. (Linda)
- ComComm: Circulation backup plan was tested and works; the National Office implemented new aliases. (Don)
- Membership Committee: Six prospective members were tested in September, one in October. Fred is sending new members welcoming emails. (Fred/Patty)
- Symposium Committee: The Halloween party was successful. Plans were discussed for the Holiday party. (Ron)
- LonestarRG Committee: Planning has begun on the 2012 RG. (John)
- Website Working Group: The Chair is working with a prospective designer. (John)

- Action Plans: Work has begun on two more action plans. (Don)

New Business

- Discussed formation of Nominating and Election committees.
- Discussed possible locations for the 2012 Monthly Meetings
- Established the Mind Games 2013 Bid Committee to prepare a bid for Mind Games 2013. The board confirmed the LocSec's appointment of Patsy Graham as Chairman

Announcements:

- The next monthly board meeting is scheduled for 6-7 PM, Wednesday, December 7, at the home of Ron and Linda Edelstein.
- The next regular monthly meeting is scheduled for November 9, 7-8:30 PM at the Northwest Village Branch Library. There will be no Monthly Meeting in December due to the Holiday Party. Confirmed topics and dates are available in the newsletter and on the Website. Potential topics looking for presenters also are available on the Website.
- The November 4th Thursday TGIT and Seal and Label was moved to Tuesday November 22 because of the Thanksgiving holiday.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM.

A CALL FOR NOMINATIONS TO THE LONE STAR MENSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

Submitted by Dave Miller

I'm Dave Miller and I'm the Chair of this year's Nomination Committee. My email is mail@DavidBMiller.com and my phone number is 512-689-2627.

Would you like to be on our Board? This is your chance to help decide how Mensa is governed. The Board meets monthly and among other things elects our President and Vice President. Six members will be elected to the Board this year, four to two-year terms and two to one-year terms. You can nominate yourself or someone else to appear on the ballot. It's easy; just email me your name and email address and tell me a bit about yourself or send me the potential nominee's contact information and I'll contact them myself. I'm especially encouraging newer members and those with special interests to apply. All nominees must be LSM members and willing to serve. Nominations must be received by December 4th. All those selected (and I'm hoping to have more qualified nominees than ballot positions) will be invited to submit a candidate's statement to be published in the newsletter. Feel free to call me if you have any questions.

If you'd prefer not to go through the Nominating Committee process you can be directly added to the ballot by submitting a petition with ten LSM member's signatures to me at the same email address.



FEATURED MEMBER BIO



Hi. I'm Amber Pine. From a very young age I've been fascinated with the amazing opportunities available to put your imagination in visual form through artistic media. However, I soon found that not all the world is a canvas, at least not my bedroom walls.

Though upset at my crayon mural, my mom did allow me many opportunities to draw and paint. At the suggestion of my kindergarten teacher, who said that public education would crush me, she homeschooled me for four years of elementary school. (I loved my kindergarten teacher, but I'm still upset that she wouldn't let me spend all day at the art station and took my favorite book out of the library to try and get me to read something else! I now have my own copy of that book.)

Being home-schooled was wonderful. I finished my work quickly and had plenty of time to read, draw and paint. I can't imagine how many packages of markers I must have gone through! At the age of eight I won my first art contest at the public library. Many awards later, when I was fourteen, I painted my first sanctioned mural in an aunt's laundry room. About that time I began to take commissions for paintings. I never had "formal" art training, but I had private lessons from accomplished artists, including my mother, who finally allowed my room to be painted purple a year before I graduated from high school.

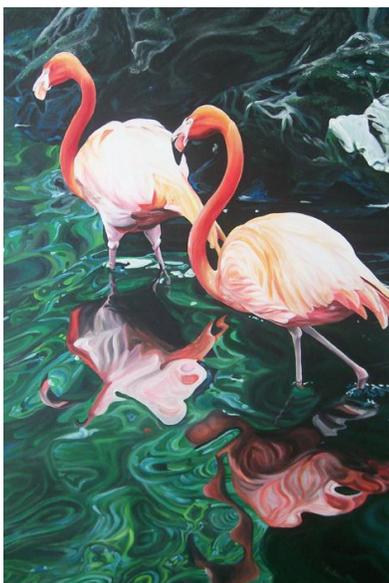
I would not say that I have any particular artistic genius. What I do have is an ability to understand what people want and to create it quickly and efficiently. I have a very mathematical sense of proportion, and I paint most of my murals without measuring or using a projector in an average of eight hours. Though most of what I paint now is for other people, it is still fun because I like to make people happy. I like to bring their imaginations to life for them. Go ahead and paint the walls! You can always paint over it later.

I am currently a 4th grade math and science teacher who paints during her free time and brings art into the classroom whenever possible!

[Amber is one of our newest members. Here are a few examples of her lovely art work. You can see more of them at her website [Flamingo Reflections .com/](http://www.amberpine.com/) -- Editc

Man in Hat

Broken Heart



DON'S DIALECTICS—Do You Strive To Be the Best You Can Be?

Submitted By Don Drumtra, LocSec



For over 20 years (until the end of the last century) the US Army's slogan was "Be all you can be." It signified the hard training each soldier had to endure to become the best he or she could be. Hours and hours of physical, practical, and classroom training were essential to both personal and team survival in combat. All the other services endure similar hard-core training.¹ But we expect that of our military. Certainly others don't need to do that. But do they endure it anyway?

Have you heard of Lara Croft? "Lara Croft is a fictional character and the protagonist of the Square Enix (previously Eidos Interactive) video game series *Tomb Raider*. She is presented as a beautiful, intelligent, and athletic British archaeologist-adventurer who ventures into ancient, hazardous tombs and ruins around the world."² Lara was made famous and vice versa by Angelina

Jolie in the film "Lara Croft Tomb Raider" and its sequel. Watching the first film, it seemed to me that the substitution of stunt doubles in the film was done particularly seamlessly. But looking more closely at the bungee ballet scene, I began to wonder, was it possible that Jolie was doing her own stunts?

The answer was in the DVD extras. Jolie insisted on doing her own stunts. She went through three months of hard physical training to learn to do what the stunt men do. She had weapons training with a Special Forces instructor, strength training, gymnastics training, aerial ballet training, and so on. They report that Jolie did most of her own stunts. When she filmed the sequel she was the highest paid Hollywood actress and was restricted from some stunts because of insurance limitations. Nevertheless, she learned new skills and new weapons for that film. But was all that just Hollywood hype? Other sources such as Wikipedia and magazines of the time seem to corroborate the story, convincing me that Jolie really worked unbelievably hard to become Lara Croft. Did she need to do that? Probably not. Other actors didn't.

There are many examples of super achievers we know and many examples of people who just coast along. Some folks strive for a title and do nothing to earn it. Some folks strive for power and then abuse it. Some strive for money and are never happy. Some folks strive to be the best they can be in what they do without concern for power or money because they enjoy it. What about you? Are you just coasting or do you strive to be the best you can be?

¹ See some of the requirements to earning a Dolphin badge in the Navy. *Armadillo Literary Gazette*, 37 (5), May 2010, p. 3.

² Wikipedia: Lara Croft, 2011 Nov 9. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lara_Croft

LAST MONTH'S MEETING

Submitted by Rose M. Berkowitz



On Wednesday, November 9th (at our final monthly meeting at the Northwest Village Branch Library on Steck Avenue), JimAnn Oliver gave an excellent presentation covering the REAL scoop on education in

America today and the REAL horrors of No Child Left Behind. About a dozen members attended, and the discussion was lively.

JimAnn has been a national supervisor of research for 23 years for Westat, the contractor with the U.S. Dept. of Education charged with gathering data for The Nation's Report Card, The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, The International Math and Science Study, and many more. She clued us in on what the research shows and grieved with us over the parts of it which are being ignored. She reviewed what we know from impartial and untainted research about the most important influences on a child's learning, private vs. public education outcomes, and other burning issues.

A particular focus of the presentation was the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study. She polled us on sixteen of the identified factors, asking whether we thought they did or did not have either a positive or

negative impact on children’s educational achievement, according to the study. The results were often not what were expected. In general, factors involving particular actions had no impact, while those involving particular states of being did.

JimAnn also provided a list of resources, with contact information and web site addresses to all attendees. Anyone wishing for a copy of the list or more

information may contact JimAnn at jimannoliver@sbcglobal.net

One of our members who couldn’t attend asked if Lone Star Mensa could provide a podcast of the presentation. We were not prepared at the time to do so, but we think it’s an excellent idea and something we’ll be looking into for the future.

2012 MONTHLY MEETINGS

Submitted by Don Drumtra

Patty, Rose, and I went to visit the Carver Branch Library, which is a candidate for our monthly meetings in 2012. The room we reserved is smaller than our current room, but it has built-in projector capability and we can make it larger if the adjacent room is not in use. The facility is relatively new, with good parking and easy access through the front door.

The library is located on the east side of I-35 between 11th and

12th streets. More information may be found at <http://www.austinlibrary.com/branches/index.cfm?action=carver>

Second Wednesdays were taken, but we were able to get second Mondays for all months except the November holiday when we have the third Monday. We have to be out by 8:30 PM, so we reserved the room from 6:30 to 8:30 PM, allowing us to have 6:45 to 8:15 PM, with time to set up and take down the furniture.

We plan to schedule dinner at some place in the East Austin area prior to the meeting, say 5:00 - 6:15 PM or so.

The board will be confirming these arrangements at our December meeting, when we approve the 2012 Calendar. If you have counter proposals, you may submit them before the meeting to any board member.

STATUS REPORT--MEMBER CONCERNS/ACTION PLANS

Submitted by Don Drumtra, LocSec

As of November 11, work has begun on 28 of the action plans. Highlights include:

- Welcome emails. Our Membership Chairman has begun to write to new members welcoming them to LSM.
- Task lists. Compilation of task lists continues with the lists for executive and independent officers.
- Member presenters. In November we had an excellent presentation by JimAnn Oliver on Education in America.

See <http://www.lsm.us.mensa.org/bylaws/ASIEs/#GI> for the full status report.

YOUR SUDOKU PUZZLE

Weekly Extremes, sudoku.org.uk

By Douglas Yee



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

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



Well, here it is December again, and that means the annual Mensa scholarship competition is getting into full swing. If you (or someone close to you) should happen to be looking for tuition assistance at a college or university next fall, there's still time to get your entry in. The Mensa Foundation awards a number of scholarships in amounts up to \$1,000 for applicants who can write a persuasive short essay on the subject of why they deserve financial support in achieving their educational goals. All entries are sent to a central location, and then distributed to local groups for the initial round of judging. Most local groups have a scholarship chair who arranges a judging session for whatever essays are assigned to them, which may be entries from their own local area, or sometimes from a neighboring local group which doesn't participate in the program. The local scholarship chair begins by numbering each essay and then separating it from its cover sheet so they will all be anonymous (contest rules prohibit any identifying information on the essay itself). The local judges rank each essay according to a carefully-designed point system, and the winning entries are forwarded to a regional judging session. Many groups have a local scholarship fund from which they award additional scholarships. Here in North Texas, we have a separately-incorporated scholarship foundation which awards two \$1,000 local scholarships each year.

While you're out buying stuff for Christmas, Chanukah, the Winter Solstice, or whatever holiday you choose to celebrate this time of year, I hope you'll set aside a little extra for the Mensa Foundation and/or your group's local scholarship program. Gifts to the Foundation are generally tax-deductible; gifts to your local program may or may not be, depending on the group. If you're feeling really generous, your accountant or tax attorney can tell you whether or not you can benefit from a major tax-deductible gift.

However, even if, like many of us, you are suffering from the ravages of the current economic downturn, and don't feel you can afford to contribute financially, you can still be of assistance to this worthwhile program. Call your local group's Scholarship Chair and volunteer to be a judge. The essays are occasionally moving, always interesting, and frequently hilarious. The judging is usually done in one afternoon, in the company of a dozen or more of your fellow Ms, and many people enjoy it so much that they come back year after year. If your group doesn't have a Scholarship Chair, you could volunteer to do the job yourself next year; complete instructions will be provided by the national coordinator.

Whatever you decide, please accept my best wishes for a joyful holiday season and a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year. The AMC will be meeting in Las Vegas on December 3, and I hope to have some thought-provoking news for you next month



COMMENTS ON EMAG 2011

Reprinted from the October 2011 issue of *Graffiti*, Cleveland Area Mensa
By Jeffrey Watson Dawson, watson@geomix.com
Photo: Part of the UNESCO complex

In August, I attended the European Mensa Annual Gathering (EMAG) in Paris. As a French speaker, this was an event I did not want to miss. However, people who spoke only English would have been fine too. I won't try to summarize the event, but will just give a few personal observations.

The main venue was the headquarters for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Administration (UNESCO), a huge complex. The building we were in had plenty of room. We had rooms on different floors--nice, comfortable, interesting rooms, with the mics and trappings required for interpreters and international meetings. The building is a maze worth exploring, with plenty of artwork. On the seventh floor is a cafeteria. The cafeteria food is varied and excellent.



The first day I was eating lunch at the cafeteria, I looked out the window and saw a wonderful view of la Tour Eiffel. On another day I found myself by chance seated at a table in the cafeteria with ExCom members of Mensa International. One ExCom member asked me how the gathering was, explaining that they were spending all their time in meetings so would not know.

I stayed one-and-a-half miles from UNESCO, which allowed me to take a nice walk each morning and afternoon through the streets of the Montparnasse district, which has a timeless, chic, laid-back atmosphere. The nearby, world-famous *Jardin du Luxembourg* is an oasis of peace to walk, jog, play tennis, read, or simply marvel at beauty. It was far from crowded, too.

One evening, I ate a *salade nicoise* at a tiny, inexpensive, narrow restaurant that jutted out onto the sidewalk. Taking a seat, I looked back at the extremely small kitchen about ten feet behind me and wondered if I should even be eating there. But I've never had a better meal than the salad and thin bread served with it. This is usually the case at such Parisian restaurants, which span the gamut of all nationalities and cuisines.

At EMAG I met people who tried to convince me to attend the annual gathering in Germany, a yearly gathering in the French alps with Mensa France, the next EMAG in Sweden (2012), and the first Asian Mensa Annual Gathering. As always happens in Mensa, the friendliness of the people and camaraderie were the best part of the gathering.

A member of Mensa France runs a chain of Flemish restaurants in Paris. One night I went to an icebreaker where there were about 150 of us in a room in the restaurant, servers serving up anything wanted from the bar, and an endless flow of some pizza-like food of various types. It was the only meal where I ate way too much.

After the meal, we met up by a bridge over the Seine River, where we waited to take a late-night cruise on the Seine. A member of Mensa was our tour guide on the large boat, with open sides and see-through top. From a "window" seat, up and down the Seine, and around the two large islands in the center of Paris, I got a stunning view. Who knew that parties were going on all around the Seine at midnight in Paris? Julius Caesar liked one of the islands when he visited and decided to found Paris in 52 BC, although tribes were living there thousands of years before.

The vice president of Mensa France is an inventor who gave a remarkable talk, complete with mechanical gadgets he handed to the audience and asked questions about and videos of his inventions.

A professional hypnotist gave a presentation and hypnotized some people as demonstrations.

I received a German lesson from a German language teacher attending EMAG. (Say "ee" and "oo" at the same time.) He said he was staying 50 meters from UNESCO with his girlfriend, in a VW camping van that has a 50 hp diesel engine (that gets good mileage). He said they were staying a month in Paris. "Did you know," he asked, "that parking is free in August everywhere in Paris?"

Before most of the presentations, the question was asked whether the audience wanted the talk in French, in English, or both. Often, a translator would translate the speaker's words either from French or English. For days I thought the translators were Mensans, but when I asked one, she told me that she was a professional translator. I enjoyed listening to both languages when this happened, and although the translators did a good job, noticed that sometimes a translator does not get everything. I asked a translator if she was using shorthand, and she said that during training each translator develops her own set of notations to keep track of what was said.

Mensa France did a fine job overall. Their enthusiasm and desire to do a good job always showed through, in spite of a few organizational issues.

From my perspective, EMAG was wonderful. I am glad I did not miss it. Also, though this was my fifth trip to Paris, it was the first time I did not want to leave.

"*Fin de vacance?*" the lady at the hotel desk asked.

"*Oui,*" I said, "*mais trop tôt.*"

HAVE A BLAST AT MIND GAMES®

By Jared Levine and Jess Byron, Mind Games Co-chairs

Thinking about attending Mind Games®? You've heard about it, thought about it, maybe even checked out the website, but what is it really? Here's what you should know before you go.

Mind Games is a weekend-long event that has up to 300 people playing games that have been on the market for no more than one year, testing them out, providing manufacturers valuable feedback, and selecting the Top 5. Every year, Mensa solicits new games of all types (except video games) from the various game manufacturers, from big names to small independent outfits. There are approximately 60 distinct titles in any typical year, and we get to test them all out. Sometimes we're among the first to ever even see the finished version of a game.

When you get your registration packet, you are handed the list of games. Everyone gets the same list, randomized order-wise, so that the first 30 games listed for each person are different. These are your "assigned" games for the weekend – the only games from which you are permitted to vote for the Top 5, which receive the Mensa Select® seal. Throughout the weekend, you are expected to play those 30 games; while you

can play the rest of the games with your extra time, you don't have to.

As you play, you try to find the main features of the games. You can provide feedback to the manufacturers on all sorts of items. Some games will be quick to understand and play, while others take longer. There's the occasional dud in the mix, but you'll play many great games over the weekend, some of which you'll be so excited about that you decide to play again despite having many other games to play. These are some of the best moments in Mind Games — enjoy them.

At the end of the fun, frenzied weekend of play, we announce the Top 5 winners and then hold a games give-away. All of the games played throughout the weekend are repackaged, the names of the Mensans in attendance are randomized, and, in order, we get to select which game we want to take home with us – a nice perk of the weekend. If there are any games left over when we hit the bottom of the list, we work our way back up the list until all the games are gone.

For 2012, we are holding Mind Games in Herndon, VA at the

Hyatt Dulles, a short hotel shuttle ride from Dulles Airport.

Registration includes round-the-clock hospitality and all the games you can play. All meals from dinner on Friday through breakfast on Sunday will be provided, including two buffet dinners provided by the hotel.

The official start time where announcements happen is at 4pm on Friday, but, if you're trying to decide whether to come early or late, err on the early side.

Registration will start around 9am, the games are fluffed (prepared) starting around 10am or so; once we've completely finished that process anyone who has already arrived is usually welcome to start playing. We're also looking into hosting some early gaming (not using the Mind Games entries) the night before. To find out additional important information, keep up with the happenings, and ask questions, find us on Facebook (search Mind Games 2012). To register for Mind Games, go to mindgames.us.mensa.org. To make hotel reservations, go to <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/MensaMindGames2012>.

We'll see you in Herndon on April 20 when Mind Games 2012 officially begins!

[We're happy to announce that **Patsy Graham** has been appointed Mind Games 2013 Bid Committee Chair for LSM.— Editor]

LOCAL "DESTINATION IMAGINATION" TEAM NEEDS HELP

Submitted by Geri Neemidge

Destination ImagiNation is an educational program in which student teams solve open-ended Challenges and present their solutions at Tournaments. Teams are tested to think on their feet, work together, and devise original solutions that satisfy the requirements of the Challenges. Participants gain more than just basic knowledge and skills—they learn to unleash their

imaginations and take unique approaches to problem solving.

Paige and David Neemidge are on a DI team with four other fourth and fifth graders. As part of tournament preparation the team will need to learn skills as diverse as woodworking, civil engineering, set design, script writing, and improvisational acting. If you have a skill

which you would like to teach the team, please let Geri Neemidge know (geri@neemidge.net).

There are several teams from our school participating and we may be able to arrange to have more than one team present for a skill lesson. Each team needs to send two adults to the tournament to act as judges, which DI calls Appraisers. That would require a commitment of one and half Saturdays in February. Appraiser Training is on February 4th from 8:00 am - 12:30 pm (location TBD) and the tournament is on February 18th all day long at

Harker Heights High School (in Killeen, about 70 miles north of Austin).

I think this will be a fun, minimal commitment opportunity to work with smart kids and see what creative solutions children come up with while problem-solving. I hope many of you will be willing to help our team.

[For more information, see their web site at <http://www.idodi.org/> or <http://www.texasdi.org/>-- Editor]

AUSTIN MARATHON—PROUD TO BE A GREEN LEADER



Here's another reason to be proud of our city. The Austin marathon sets the standard for being environmentally friendly: <http://youraustinmarathon.com/recycle>

Probably a lot of Lone Star Mensa members are runners and participate in this event. But whether or not you do, the above web site is quite informative for those readers who view marathons and other running events as just another traffic nuisance.

From their web site: "The LIVESTRONG Austin Marathon and Half Marathon® is an industry leader in green-friendly endurance sports events. Certified by the Council for Responsible Sport and named "the Greenest Road Race in North America" by Runner's World, the event is currently pursuing re-certification by ReSport for its 2011 and 2012 races. The LIVESTRONG Austin Marathon and Half Marathon® views its green initiative as an integral part of its event and a symbol of its commitment to ensuring that Austin residents can enjoy an active and healthy lifestyle in and around our great city for years to come."

The event date is February 19, 2012.



When God made the world, and chose to put animals in it, He decided to give each whatever it wanted. All the animals formed a long line before His throne, and the cat quietly went to the end of the line.

To the elephant and the bear He gave strength, to the rabbit and the deer, swiftness; to the owl, the ability to see at night, to the birds and the butterflies, great beauty; to the fox, cunning; to the monkey, intelligence; to the dog, loyalty; to the lion, courage; to the otter, playfulness. All these things the animals begged of God.

At last He came to the end of the line, and there sat the little cat, waiting patiently. "What will YOU have?" God asked.



The cat shrugged modestly. "Oh, whatever scraps You have left over. I don't mind."

"But I'm God. I have everything left over."

"Then I'll have a little of everything, please" said the cat.





And God gave a great shout of laughter at the cleverness of this small animal, and gave the cat everything she asked for, adding grace and elegance and, only for her, a gentle purr that would always attract humans and assure her a warm and comfortable home.

DECEMBER MONTHLY MEETING

Celebrate The Holidays With Your Fellow Mensans!

Submitted by Don Drumtra, Interim Program Coordinator



This year we will once again be having our Member Holiday Celebration at Coffee-A-Deli. Admission is only \$5 per person, \$2.50 per child under 10. The rest of the cost is subsidized by our group. Attendance is limited by capacity to 40, so get your reservations in early to Rose Berkowitz at editor@lsm.us.mensa.org or 512-467-4871.

A full holiday meal, dessert, and beverages will be provided, as well as free beer and wine. We'll have

the restaurant all to ourselves. The atmosphere is cozy, the place will be nicely decorated for the holidays, there's plenty of free parking, and it's handicapped-accessible.

Due to popular demand, we'll have our usual gift exchange (\$15 limit, wrapped please if you want to participate). In addition, we'll have entertainment in the form of Rose Berkowitz singing holiday songs, accompanied on the piano by Douglas Yee. (Douglas' playing will be recorded, since he'll be going to Little Rock for the holidays.)

Date: Saturday, December 17, 2011

Time: 6-9 PM

Contact information for Coffee-A-Deli:

11800 N Lamar Blvd

Austin, TX 78753

512-833-6000

www.coffeadei.com/index.htm



DECEMBER CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7 Board Meeting	8 ALG Deadline Chess Night, TGIT-North	9	10
11	12	13	14	15 TGIT-South	16	17 Member Holiday Meeting 
18	19	20	21	22 TGIT-North	23	24 Christmas Eve
25 Christmas Day	26	27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve

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

Dec. 7, 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.

ALG Submissions Deadline

2nd Thursday

Dec. 8, Midnight

Submissions due.

Chess Night (with the TGIT group)

2nd Thursday

Dec. 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

Dec. 8 & 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 the Mensa table
sign.

Thank Goodness It's Thursday (South)

3rd Thursdays

Dec. 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 statues
of fruits and vegetables.

Come join the South Austin group for
conversation, food and fun.
Prospective members welcome.

Member Holiday Meeting

Dec. 17, 6-9 PM



Coffee-A-Deli
Celebrate the
holidays with your
fellow Mensans. See
page 13 for all the
details.

Seal & Label

4th Thursday

Dec. 22, 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.

UPCOMING IN JANUARY

Jan. 4, Board Meeting

Jan. 9, Member Meeting

Jan. 12, Chess Night, ALG Deadline

Jan. 12 & 26, TGIT-North

Jan. 18, TGIT-South

Jan. 26, Seal & Label

NOTICE



I'm in the process of writing my memoir, and I'm looking for an agent and/or publisher, as well as advice on possibly self-publishing it. If you can offer any assistance, I'd greatly appreciate it if you'd contact me, Rose Berkowitz, at 512-467-4871 or rberkowitz@austin.rr.com.

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.

MEMBER NEWS (as of 10/31/11)

Happy December Birthdays

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 Mark Watson
 5 Aarne Hartikka
 5 Wayne William Banks
 6 Michael A Hattamer
 6 Walter R Barksdale Jr
 10 Mary Jane Lockhart
 13 Heather Hall
 13 Christopher Sullivan
 14 Barbara J Gordon
 14 John Paliwoda
 14 Cristina E LaFuente
 16 Donna M Kornhaber
 16 Justin Blount
 16 Anthony G Cassano
 17 Dr Caryl Neman
 18 Gerald L McGray
 19 Scott Jacobsmeyer
 21 Ashley N Inbody
 23 Fred G Deats III
 24 Thomas C Haddon III
 26 Michael Clinton Moyer</p> | <p>27 Joseph P Rach
 28 Sonya L Palmer
 28 Austin G Meyer
 29 Jack Vincent Musgrove
 29 Kevin Scott Szilvasy
 30 Merlin D Darling
 30 Mary L Hoane
 30 Shawn M Gamble
 31 Timothy Allen Sandfort
 31 Michelle Benoit</p> |
|--|--|

New Members—Welcome!

Randolph Christopher Small
 Udo Roberto Voss
 Justin A Jones
 Kenneth Hester

Just Moved In—Hi Neighbor!

Scott M Rose
 Gordon R Jones
 Melodee Ann DuBois

Welcome Back—Missed You!

Elizabeth Malloy
 Luke Mitchell Parish

Martha Morelock

Goodbye—We Wish You Well

William Gerald Baker
 Reiser Mayne

**DECEMBER
ANNIVERSARIES**

Member for 15 Years
Lori L Barr MD

Member for 10 Years
Joe Celko

Member for 5 years
James Lamar

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

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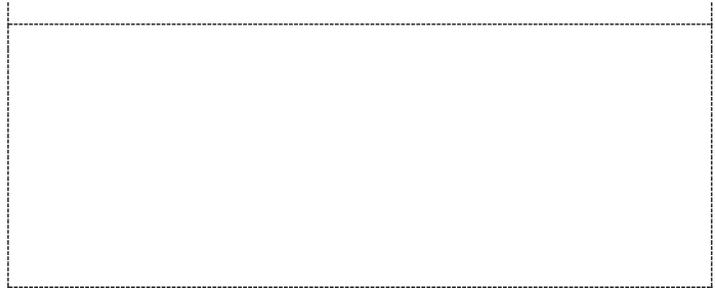
Submission Information: Submissions of all types are encouraged. The deadline is the 2nd Thursday of each month. Submissions may be by email or by snail mail in typed format. Anonymous submissions are not accepted, although the author's identity may be withheld upon request. The editor reserves the right 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.

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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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