

Armadillo Literary Gazette

A Publication of *LoneStar Mensa*
Volume XXXIX
Number 2, February 2012



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

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Submitted By *Rose Berkowitz*

[This is me when I was 5, back in 1953, in Chicago.--Editor]

There's a lot of information in this month's edition regarding what we accomplished in 2011 and what we're planning for 2012. We're working hard to make LoneStar Mensa the best local group it can be, but we can't do it without you. Take the time to read this newsletter, and take the initiative to volunteer in some capacity.

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



CULTUREQUEST® 2012

amlnewsflash@lists.us.mensa.org

Set your calendars and round up your trivia buffs—the 2012 CultureQuest® competition will take place on Sunday, April 29th.

You can register online at www.us.mensa.org/culturequest. Select *CultureQuest Registration* from the left menu. Downloadable rules and registration forms are also available on that page. Online registration can be made until 11:59 p.m., Saturday, March 31, 2012. Team changes must be received via email by that date as well.

We hope you will join us this year! Who knows? Your local group could make it in the Top 20 and win money for your group! For more information, contact the CQ Chair at CultureQuest@us.mensa.org. For information or changes to your registration, please contact localgroups@americanmensa.org

OFFICER ANNOUNCEMENT

Submitted by *Don Drumtra, LocSec*



[Here's a recent picture of Patsy.—Editor]

I am pleased to announce that Fred Goertz has appointed **Patsy Graham** to be our **New Member Coordinator**. She will be responsible for encouraging folks who have qualified to join LoneStar Mensa and for welcoming new members into our organization and helping them learn all about us. Please congratulate her when you see her and extend your encouragement and support as she begins her new duties.

NEW MEMBERS MEETING

Submitted by Patsy Graham, New Member Coordinator

LoneStar Mensa will have a very informal New Members Meeting on Sunday, February 12, 2012. Drop in any time between 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Café Express, 3418 N. Lamar. We will be in the reserved room. This is open to all LSM members and their guests. No matter how long you have been a member, if you haven't attended an LSM event yet, drop by to meet us! If you have a question, email Patsy Graham at mensapats@att.net.

BE THERE OR BE SQUARE!

REPORT OF ELECTION COMMITTEE

Submitted by David Miller and Committee (Modelle Gibson and Geri Neemidge)

Based on the submission from the Nomination Committee and the three additional submissions by petition, the candidates for the Board of Officers for LoneStar Mensa are listed below.

Since the number of candidates for elected officer positions (5) on the board is less than the number of vacancies (8) we declare the following LSM members elected to the board effective the first board meeting in April. Any challenges to the election process may be addressed to the Election Committee and must be received by February 6.



Crockett Grabbe, 2012-2013
Jon Kurylowicz, 2012-2013
Aaron Legare, 2012-2014
John Neemidge, 2012-2014
Douglas Yee, 2012-2014

Mr. Legare, Mr. Neemidge and Mr. Yee volunteered to serve on the Board at the LoneStar Mensa holiday party and ten attending Mensans endorsed them.

Election procedures are provided in Article 12 of the LSM bylaws, and specific dates for the 2011-2012 election cycles are provided in the Election Calendar 2011-2012. Both are available on the LSM website.

OFFICER VACANCIES

By Don Drumtra

In most cases, officer terms end when their duties are assumed by their replacements on or after April 1. The process begins with the nomination and election of new board members. When this process is complete, a new board will take shape and elect from among themselves the new LocSec, Vice-President/Secretary, and Treasurer. The new LocSec will then appoint standing committee Chairs for Communications, Education, Membership, and Symposia (member meetings, events, and parties) with the advice and consent of the board. The Standing Committee Chairs will then appoint the Coordinators to serve on their committees.

Take a look at the officer positions on the LSM Website at www.lsm.us.mensa.org/officers. Note those positions that are listed as volunteer needed or --vacant-- in the

contacts listing and let the incoming Past President, Don Drumtra, know of your interest in serving in any of them or if you'd like more information on what duties you could expect if appointed. He will pass your name to the new LocSec or standing committee chair after they are elected. You can volunteer for more than one position. If you are an incumbent, you may volunteer to serve for another year term. There are no term limits except for the three executive officers listed above, who may only serve for two terms.

This is your opportunity to gain experience in leading or coordinating activities in a not-for-profit organization. It looks good on your résumé' and you will learn a lot about people, particularly smart people. Serving is sometimes a headache, but for me it has been rewarding and a lot of fun.

2012 ANNUAL MEMBER BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

Submitted by Don Drumtra, LocSec

The 2012 annual LoneStar Mensa Member Business Meeting convened at 7:10 PM, January 4 2012 at the Carver Branch of the Austin Public Library, 1161 Angelina, Austin, TX. Attending were Don Drumtra, LocSec, Patty Drumtra, V-P and Secretary, Linda Edelstein, Treasurer, Ron Edelstein, Past President, and Rose Berkowitz, Editor of the *Armadillo Literary Gazette*. Don welcomed the members to the meeting, noted that a quorum of 25 was not present, adjourned the business meeting, and began his presentation for the Regular Monthly Member Meeting. (See the summary below.)

Members began arriving for our Regular Monthly Member Meeting at 6:30 PM. The early arrivals began setting up the chairs and computer for the presentation at the Annual Business Meeting. We were meeting at our new location in the Carver Branch of the Austin Public Library in East Austin between 11 and 12th street. The current library is a beautiful, modern 15,000 square foot facility with access to nearly 50,000 titles. It is co-located with the 36,000 square foot Carver Museum and Cultural Center and a youth center; all are part of a cultural complex completed in 2004. Our meeting room has plenty of space for us to expand our meetings, plenty of free parking, and easy access (even during rush hour) from *Highway 183* and *Highway 130* east of the library, allowing most of us to go around Austin and avoid Mopac and *HIGHWAY I-35* traffic. Our meeting room has an adjacent kitchenette with a range, refrigerator, and microwave. This will allow us to offer snacks and drinks at our

meetings as long as we clean up after ourselves.

The meeting opened with the Annual LSM Member Business Meeting. The quorum was not met so we could not conduct any business. Nevertheless, the LocSec provided the members reports, beginning with the financial condition of LSM. The bottom line of the financial report is that we are below budget in most areas and have more than enough money to last through the end of March (our fiscal year is April to March). We could be doing more. A copy of the report is available on our website under the Officers/ Board of Officers tab, at www.lsm.us.mensa.org/board.



The LocSec then provided an overview of the LSM activities for the year. In 2011, we had 11 monthly meetings, and an average of 5 other activities per month, including TGITs, Eclectic Eats, Games Nights, Halloween and Christmas parties, testing sessions, and a picnic. Similar activities are planned for 2012. Members are encouraged to sponsor the kind of activities they would like. Just add them to the online calendar (you can do this yourself) and let Rose know so she can add them to the newsletter calendar.

Our Regional Gathering was a great success. Feedback was

complimentary, we came close to breaking even operationally; and we even were able to provide some \$400 for scholarships from the auction. The main problem now is that the 2011 RG was such a hard act to follow that we are having a hard time finding someone who will chair the 2012 RG next fall.

If you are interested in gaining this sort of project management experience for your resume, go ahead and volunteer. Do not worry. The 2011 committee members will assist you whenever and however you need help.

Speaking of scholarships, because of the generosity of RG attendees, our scholarships will continue at \$500 for the next few years and if future RGs go as well, we might be able to raise the awards still higher in the future. Claudia Harbert has been running an excellent scholarship program. See the August and September 2011 newsletters to read the three 2011 winning essays.

The big report this year was about the member concerns. To condense the ten page report to a few words one could say that it is clear that the member concerns are not being put off and the report is not being put on the shelf never to be looked at again. To the contrary, the board developed a set of 44 action plans to address the concerns and LSM officers have been methodically taking action according to the plans. And to be sure none are overlooked, the board must review and approve the action taken on each plan to be sure action sufficiently addresses the underlying member concerns.

After the presentation, the LocSec invited members in the audience to provide feedback. Feedback was generally positive, but three concerns were identified, two relating to the Website and one to visibility of actions taken to resolve member concerns. One of the Website concerns was about the delay in redesigning the Website. The LocSec suggested that the Website design delay has been due to the difficulty in finding someone experienced with Website design who is willing to work with a diverse committee of Mensans whose conflicting needs must be met. The LocSec agreed to discuss the progress with the committee chair and let the membership know the results. The second concern was about keeping the current Website up to date. The LocSec is responsible for the Website update until the redesign is complete. He was distracted over the holidays, but

future updates should be more timely.

The third item dealing with visibility built on the difficulty of finding out what actions are being taken regarding member concerns. Currently the LocSec updates the ten-page Member Concerns Status Report monthly and posts the updated report on the website. He then writes a sentence with the number or items completed and a summary of the status of one to three action plans with recent activity for the newsletter.

The attendees suggested that, although the monthly updates and status report were useful, it would be particularly helpful if the LocSec wrote an annual two-page or so comprehensive update for the newsletter and website--"not statistics but a narrative on highlighting what great work we are doing to resolve the member concerns." (The LocSec agreed to

do this. See the status report on page 5.)

In the second half of the monthly meeting, members were invited to share a story about an event in their life that particularly stuck in their minds. Two stories were presented. Patty Drumtra shared a story about a family camping trip to some of the national parks in the West. Linda Edelstein spoke about the experiences that eventually led her into the genealogy field. They agreed to share their stories with the rest of the membership in the newsletter. [See our next issue.—Editor]

In summary, this was an exciting monthly meeting for me. Not just for the fun of meeting in a new facility but for the opportunity to share some of the things our local group is doing and to receive feedback from our members.

You should have been there.



FEATURED MEMBER BIO



Crockett Grabbe received his PhD in Applied Physics from Caltech in 1978, after having received Bachelor of Science with Highest Honors and Master's Degrees in Physics from the University of Texas. He is an experienced scientist who does research and consulting in applied physics (particularly plasma physics), and writes and speaks on physical science and technology-related issues and current-events.

Crockett recovered from first a large pituitary tumor, and later a cerebral hemorrhage, both of which triggered disabilities. He has overcome several obstacles despite these, as told humorously in his 2001 book Duck Soup for the Diehard Soul (written under the pen name *SeaLane Gray*). He published the online book National Swindle of the World Trade Center on 9/11 in 2011. He has given seven radio and TV interviews (five are available online), on this topic, and addressed public audiences in

New York, St. Louis, Iowa City, Des Moines, and Chicago, as well as presenting scientific papers on it in St. Louis and Chicago. He has published over 100 scientific papers and nine books (four for the general public and five for scientists), and about 25 other general articles.

Crockett recently moved his business, SeaLane Research and Consulting, down to Austin from Iowa. While there he was a research scientist for 29 years at the University of Iowa, and consulted and trained with American College Testing and other businesses. He has spoken at venues across the country from California to New York, in several European countries, and in Israel and Canada. He is a member of the National Speaker's Association, the American Physical Society, the International Union of Radio Science, the Institute of Electrical & Electronic Engineers and the Writer's League of Texas. He has been profiled for several years in Contemporary Authors, Writer's Directory, and Who's Who in Science & Engineering.

*Originally submitted By Don Drumtra, LocSec
Revised by Rose Berkowitz, Editor*

This month I thought I'd highlight the work we've done on the member concerns and suggestions summarized at the beginning of 2011 in what's known as the Berkowitz Report. You can find that report on our website. The complete status report is also on the website at



at the beginning of 2011 in what's known as the Berkowitz Report. You can find that report on our website. The complete status report is also on the website at

www.lsm.us.mensa.org/bylaws/ASIEs/#GI.

But here's a summary:

- A number of actions have been taken to address the concern that other chapters seem to have more participation than LSM. For example:
 - A New Member party was held on March 12, 2011, and 20 members attended.
 - Regular New Member parties are now being scheduled going forward.
 - A Consolidated Calendar has been created on the LSM website and is being maintained by the Calendar Editor.
 - Any LSM member may schedule an event by posting it to the website calendar.
 - Members are actively solicited on a regular basis to volunteer for leadership positions in the organization.
 - We set up a system to obtain input from our members on what topics and speakers would interest them for our monthly membership meetings.
 - We established an LSM Discussion Group.
 - In 2011, we had 11 monthly meetings, and an average of 5 other activities per month, including TGITs, Eclectic Eats, Games Nights, Halloween and Christmas Parties, testing sessions, and a picnic. Similar activities are planned for 2012.
- A New Member Coordinator was appointed in January 2012 after a long search, to address concerns that new members had not been welcomed adequately. She has developed and circulated a draft welcome letter for all new members.
- Members suggested that fresh blood and new ideas were needed to increase interest and participation in our annual RG. In response, the RG Co-Chairs and committee members incorporated many new ideas

submitted by members. We had a more varied and active committee this year than in nearly any previous year. The 2011 RG was a great success.

- A new Southern Area Coordinator was appointed and is planning programs for LSM members who live south of Austin. The monthly meeting has been moved to East Austin, making it more accessible for members who live north and south of Austin.
- The board addressed the perception of cliques at the officer level of LSM by bringing in new members to serve on the board. In addition, the newsletter Editor, the Membership Chair, the New Member Coordinator, the Newsletter Circulation Coordinator, the 2011 RG Hospitality Chair, the RG Treasurer, the Nomination Committee Chair and one of the two committee members are also new LSM members.
- The newsletter has been redesigned to address many of the issues noted by members, including the layout, more varied content, separation between articles and letters to the editor, a board-approved editorial policy, solicitation of member feedback, positive article control, and response to submitters. Membership anniversaries are now published in the Gazette in five-year increments. Large reports such as the monthly financial report and large standing rules are now posted to the LSM website and referenced in board minutes, rather than being reprinted in the newsletter.
- The website is now being kept up to date (with a few lapses). The Website Working Group is searching for a website designer, and plans to use existing content providers and add new ones as the design of the new, improved LSM website progresses.
- The board approved the Volunteer Service Name Badge award for exceptional service for one or more terms, to address the concern that recognition for volunteer work was inadequate.
- It was noted that our younger members (under 35) seem to prefer communicating via social networks. All board members have now joined Facebook and are learning to use it.
- The board is now using more informal procedures, including automatic motions from the agendas, action on motions without seconds, discussions without motions, and use of first names. ASIEs have been replaced by LSM Operating Standards (LOS), some of which will be converted to guides and approved by the standing committees and chairs.

JANUARY BOARD MINUTES

Submitted by Patty Drumtra, VP and Secretary

The January regular meeting of the LoneStar Mensa board of officers convened at 6:10 PM, January 4, 2012 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 and the minutes of the December regular meeting as printed on page 4 of the January *Armadillo Literary Gazette*. The minutes, 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:

- LocSec: Don announced that Fred Goertz appointed Patsy Graham as the New Member Coordinator.
- Treasurer: The board unanimously approved with discussion the December monthly Treasurer's report.
- Membership Committee: Patsy Graham submitted a draft letter for New Members and a list of Frequently Asked Questions for our review. A testing date is planned for January 9 and the first or second Sat. in Feb.
- Symposium Committee: The Holiday Party was a success, with 37 attendees. The board members thanked Ron and Linda for the planning, Rose Berkowitz for taking reservations, and Patty for checking folks in.

- LoneStaRG 2012 Committee: Patsy Graham reported there have been no new registrations.
- Website Working Group: Patsy Graham reported that she is researching Word Press and other web templates for the LSM website as no one has come forward to design it for us. It may take a while to find a good fit as there are hundreds of templates available.
- Mind Games 2014: Patsy Graham recommends a bid package similar to our previous bid.
- Action Plans: See report on the LSM Website.

Old Business: Don reported that the Nominating and Election Committee still needs two members.

Announcements:

- The next monthly board meeting is scheduled for 6-7 PM, Wednesday, February 1, at the home of Ron and Linda Edelstein.
- The next regular monthly meetings are scheduled for Monday, Jan. 11, Feb. 9, Mar. 12, and Apr. 9, 6:45-8:15 PM at the Carver Branch Library. January will include a General Membership Business Meeting, as well as a topical discussion. March will feature the alternate month topical discussion. February and April have presentations by Modelle Gibson and Lisa Oliver scheduled. Potential topics looking for presenters are available on the website.

The meeting adjourned at 6:47 PM.

FEBRUARY MONTHLY MEETING

Submitted by Rose M. Berkowitz

Since so many members missed the announcement that the topic for the January member meeting was "Sharing Our Stories," we've decided to reschedule the discussion for our February meeting. We encourage you to bring a short story about your life to share with the rest of the group, so we can get to know each other a little better. Of course you're welcome to just come and listen. (And if there's anyone out there who'd be willing to host the discussion for a change, please let me know.)

Please note that the day and venue for the monthly Member Meeting have been changed for 2012.

DAY OF MONTH Second Monday

VENUE The Carver Library is located between 11th and 12th Streets east of *HIGHWAY I-35*. This location allows direct access to the library from *Highway 183* and via FM 969 MLK and 12th Street. It is 4 miles from *Highway 183* and 8 1/2 miles from the *Highway 130* toll. So depending on how far away you live, you can bypass most of the rush hour traffic by jumping on *Highway 183* or *Highway 130*. Check it out on Google maps.

(Don't miss the story Patty Drumtra shared with us at the January meeting, reprinted starting on page 9.)

YOUR SUDOKU PUZZLE

Weekly Extremes, sudoku.org.uk

By Douglas Yee



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

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



One of my favorite concepts is something called the Law of Unintended Con-

sequences, which basically states that anything we do will have unforeseen results, regardless of whether or not it achieves whatever we set out to do.

I was reminded of that concept recently, after the National Office sent out an appeal for early membership renewal, suggesting that it was the “green” thing to do, as early renewals “save trees” by eliminating the need for follow-up mailings. The response to this appeal was extremely encouraging, as it generated numerous renewals and quite a few new membership applications as well. Previous appeals for early renewal in order to save the expense of the follow-up mailings were usually widely ignored, but apparently saving trees is much more popular than saving money.

One member, however, objected strenuously. He sent me an e-mail pointing out, correctly, that “saving” trees can actually harm the environment, as mature trees, if not harvested and replaced, will eventually die, increasing the danger of forest fires and decay, degrading air quality. Cutting of fast-growing softwood trees for paper-making, on the other hand, insures a continuing supply of young, healthy trees that are better for the environment. Now, that’s not to say that logging companies aren’t frequently guilty of a number of abuses, but simply “saving paper” is, in and of itself, not a particularly earth-friendly thing to do.

Our government frequently falls victim to this same error. When Congress banned the manufacture of incandescent light bulbs a few years ago, they intended to reduce electricity consumption. They achieved that, by all accounts, but they also achieved some things that aren’t so popular: the Compact Fluorescent Lamps that replaced the old light bulbs contain substantial amounts of poisonous mercury, which will end

up in our landfills and leach into our water supplies, and due to the hazards of handling mercury in a manufacturing process, no domestic company is willing to make CFLs, so hundreds of American jobs were exported to China.

My point is that the Law of Unintended Consequences is as inescapable as gravity, because, as Tolkien’s wizard Gandalf put it, “even the wise cannot see all ends.” A solution that seems obvious to me may have ramifications that somehow escaped my attention. Nonetheless, decisions must be made, and actions must be taken, and all we can do is hope that we have foreseen the most important of the unintended consequences that are sure to follow.

So, whether or not you want to save a tree, please renew your Mensa membership early. Every dollar we can save by not mailing dues reminders is another dollar available for other programs. Thanks!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

[If any member would be interested in providing written reviews of any of these books for publication in the ALG, please let me know, and then contact Brian Underdahl per his instructions below to obtain review copies.-- Editor]

Dear Mensa Editor:

As a long-time Mensa member (over 35 years), I know that the job of being a newsletter editor is a lot of work (I've held the position so I have first-hand experience). It's often hard finding good content—especially Mensa-related material. That's why I'm writing to you.

Earlier this year we started Vermillion Road Press (www.VermillionRoadPress.com), with the intent of publishing e-books for the Kindle and Nook markets. We currently have three Mensa-written titles available and we would really like to have them reviewed in Mensa publications. To that end I'd like to offer review copies to you or someone you designate as a local newsletter book reviewer.

The three titles are:

[I Hate to Criticize, But... Professional Writers and Broadcasters Are Murdering the English Language](#), by Gordon K. Andersen, former Mensa Bulletin editor and SOTS founder. Gordon is well-known in Mensa and his book is a must for anyone who cares about language.

[Threadbare](#), by Darlene Underdahl, is an intriguing narrative of escape, understanding, and forgiveness set in the Scandinavian communities of Northern Minnesota. It contains sex, violence, religious con men, and is most definitely not the Lake Wobegone of Garrison Keillor! Darlene has been a Mensa member for over 30 years.

[The Sociopath of Carson City](#), also by Darlene Underdahl, is the story of greed, drugs, sex, attempted murder, and the IRS as the good guys. Is it really fiction?

If you or one of your local members would like review copies of any of these titles, please let me know. Be sure to indicate the local group and newsletter name as well as the desired title(s) and format (Kindle or Nook) in the request along with the e-mail address I should use to send the review copies. By the way, free reader apps are available for both formats—it's not necessary to have an actual Kindle or Nook device.

I would, of course, appreciate being notified when any reviews are published.

Best regards,

Brian Underdahl, Publisher
Vermillion Road Press
brian@underdahl.net

PITHY QUOTES

Submitted by Ron Edelstein

Alexander Hamilton
1757-1804

"Those who stand for nothing fall for anything."

William James
1842-1910

"We never fully grasp the import of any true statement until we have a clear notion of what the opposite untrue statement would be."

Abraham Joshua Heschel
1907-1972

"There are inalienable obligations as well as inalienable rights."

Ambrose (Gwinett) Bierce
1842-1913

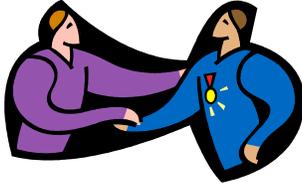
"Death is not the end. There remains the litigation over the estate."

Helen Foster Snow
1907-1997

"One can judge a civilization by the way it treats its women."

Harry Crews
1935-

"There is something beautiful about all scars of whatever nature. A scar means the hurt is over, the wound is closed and healed, done with."



HAPPY FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Dennis Robert McDaniel
- 3 Matthew A Kuffler
- 5 Jan Cox
- 6 Joyce L Gioia-Herman
- 6 David Hillis
- 7 Aaron H Legare
- 7 Justin L York
- 8 Jacob T Miller
- 8 Kevin Powell
- 9 Meredith S Hardy
- 9 Steven Vaughan
- 12 Carl J Brown
- 12 Jim-Ann Smith Oliver
- 13 Brooke E Roeder
- 14 Michael Seay
- 15 Linda Van Broeke-Pierce
- 17 Jeffrey Neil St Onge
- 18 Audrey Houswerth
- 19 Michael Ryan Maguire

- 19 Kyle McCoy
- 20 Angela H Adams
- 23 Jeffrey McKee
- 25 Christina Hinton
- 26 Elizabeth Malloy
- 27 Dave McCracken
- 27 Geri Lynne Neemidge
- 29 Stephen L Jones

NEW MEMBERS—WELCOME!

Richard Blankenship
Donald Cardno

JUST MOVED IN—HI NEIGHBOR!

Bill Milstead

WELCOME BACK--MISSED YOU!

Alexander P Keith
Rena M Popma
Steven E Thornhill

GOODBYE—WE WISH YOU WELL

Ronald A Rieke

**FEBRUARY
ANNIVERSARIES**

Member for 10 Years

Lynn Herrick
Terry Rodgers

Member for 5 years

Robert Corvus
Jim H Mangum Jr.
James Raymond Smallman
John W Smith Jr.
Jeffrey Neil St Onge

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

PATTY'S VACATION STORY

By Patty Drumtra.

Dad worked as an engineer for B. F. Goodrich, but his heart was in the outdoor wilderness. After graduating from high school, he enrolled with the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) and went to the Northwest to build facilities for logging and the National Park systems. Thus our family vacations were always camping trips. We were fortunate that our parents made the effort to take these trips, which were usually to one of the Great Lakes or within a short day's drive.

I was in high school when Dad realized I would be off and away soon. It was time to trek west and visit places he had seen or heard about.

All the camping gear and food for the first few days were packed in the trunk of the car and underneath the four of us in the back seat. Judy was in the front with Mom and Dad. Our clothes were tightly rolled in an Army footlocker and braced to the roof of the car. No personal items were allowed, even though the back

shelf was empty. Thank goodness we left Buffi, our collie, home this time! As we headed out that second week in June, the wind whistled under the trunk on top—a good indication that all was intact

Our first night was on the prairies of Iowa against a pink and orange sky, with the sun dropping toward the horizon. Mom started supper on the Coleman, and Judy and Marcy set the table, while Kenny, Cindy, Dad and I pitched the tent. Dad was in his element, with a twinkle in his eye as he cajoled us into the routines we only half remembered: "What? Heck! Pay attention!"

The Badlands were the strangest formation of earth I had ever seen, almost completely devoid of plant life. How could we camp there? But it was fun running up and down the mounds of clay after the long drive.

We were almost finished with supper when it started to rain. We quickly cleaned up and covered the cooking

gear with the heavy plastic tablecloth, pulling the corners underneath the table to keep it as watertight as possible. Mom and Dad pulled out the collapsible shovels and dug trenches around the perimeter of the tent, while we put down extra layers of plastic on the floor inside to protect the sleeping bags. Drainage was nonexistent and run-off rampant. The ground got so slippery we could hardly stay on our feet the next morning. After our first fall in the mud, we gave up and just had fun TRYING to run up and down the mounds again. How we ever packed that mud-encrusted, soaking wet, heavy canvas tent I'll never know. We would deal with the damage later.

We spent several days in the Black Hills, acting less like mud puppies and more like tourists.. We had a lovely campsite beside a babbling brook in a pine forest. Across the brook was a hillside with boulders to climb.

Campfires filled the air with the slightly acrid aroma of pitch that still brings back memories. We cleaned, repaired and had to replace a few items of gear and clothing, but at least we were presentable when viewing the national monuments at Mount Rushmore.

Next was Yellowstone. As we gained elevation the air chilled. We pitched the tent as a snowstorm developed, but then sought refuge in a motel on the way into Montana. We rationalized that we really did need a top-to-bottom shower anyway. Discretion may be the better part of valor, but in this case it was more nearly defeat. I'm not sure we ate that night.

We saw the natural sights, the geysers, the hot springs and mineral pools, the sparkling mountain springs. We were fishing as a mother moose and her calf trotted along the water's edge on the opposite bank.



We later retreated from our bamboo poles when a mother bear and her twin cubs crossed from the woods. They definitely intended to use Mom's log to get out of the ice-cold water. The cubs made up for the intrusion by treating us to a show of their climbing skills when their mother chased them up a tree. Our Mom herded us to safety, as Momma Bear did the same.

It was at Yellowstone that I turned 16. Dad teased "Sweet sixteen and never been buffalood!" as we ate buffalo burgers in celebration. It was from Yellowstone that I sent a postcard to my nemesis, Bob Dewey, saying

"The bears raided the garbage cans this morning. Wish you were there!" I did not tell him that the previous evening Cindy and I had had to abandon two 42-ounce cans of stew we were fixing for dinner. Bears routinely wandered through the camp and occasionally tore up tents when they detected something interesting inside.

One day was spent hiking around Jenny Lake in the Grand Tetons. We packed lunch assembly line-style and put it in two knapsacks. I remember the majestic mountain views, the towering waterfall, and the meadows of wildflowers; but mostly I remember how tired we were after the seven up-and-down miles we hiked. I think Judy had to be carried part way, having only been a couple years recovered from rheumatic fever. Fortunately Kenny's ankle, which he'd twisted in the Badlands, held up. We were ready to move on.

Driving was awful—hot and sticky. The dust bothered my contact lenses, which I was just getting used to wearing. There was no remedy: with no air conditioning, the windows had to be open. We made a short stop at Obsidian Lake—a lake completely surrounded with glass shards from volcanic forces. We learned how to read maps and hummed along with the whistle of the trunk on top of the car.

The next night was spent in a dusty, rocky canyon with very hard, foul water. Mom says one of her most hilarious memories is of me trying to wash my hair there and discovering too late that we had no vinegar to rinse away the salts and soap scum. I felt like I was wearing steel wool on my head until I could try again.

We camped in the shadow of Devil's Tower. The ground was riddled with tunnels of the prairie dogs whose turf we had invaded. They were fun to watch, but frankly everyone was getting a little travel-weary. The stifling hot summer heat was beginning to settle in over the plains. That combination of humidity and sunshine promotes the world's best harvests, but wilts people.

The Interstate Highway system had not yet been constructed. We made a more-or-less direct return to our home on the Illinois River, with a short side trip to meet Marcy's long-time pen pal in Merville, Iowa, just off the East-West country bee line road we were taking home.

Approaching the last hour of the trip, Dad mentioned, "We're almost out of gas!" At first a sense of panic clutched me. But glancing at his face, I saw serenity and satisfaction. With a smile, he looked at me and then followed with "We're out of food—and money—and time, too. But we'll make it!"

LONESTAR MENSA CONTACTS BY FUNCTION

As of January 10, 2012

Newsletter			
Editor	editor@lsm.us.mensa.org	Rose Berkowitz	467-4871
Emailing	epostmaster@lsm.us.mensa.org	Linda Edelstein	491-9881
Snail mailing	postmaster@lsm.us.mensa.org	Jon Kurylowicz	913-6550
Online	records@lsm.us.mensa.org	Don Drumtra	291-0315
Calendar	calendar@lsm.us.mensa.org	Rose Berkowitz	467-4871
Publicity	publicity@lsm.us.mensa.org	Paul Anderson	259-7824
Advertising		--Vacant--	
Photographer		--Vacant--	
Managing Editor	editor@lsm.us.mensa.org	Don Drumtra	291-0315
Publisher	recsecretary@lsm.us.mensa.org	Board of Officers	291-0361
On Line			
Website Design	mensapats@att.net	Patsy Graham	380-0141
Website Maintenance	webmaster@lsm.us.mensa.org	Don Drumtra/Douglas Yee	291-0315
LSM Officers, contacts	records@lsm.us.mensa.org	Don Drumtra	291-0315
Board Meetings	recsecretary@lsm.us.mensa.org	Patty Drumtra	291-0361
Operating standards	records@lsm.us.mensa.org	Don Drumtra	291-0315
Email Lists	emailists@lsm.us.mensa.org	John Neemidge	310-7863
Facebook	facebook@lsm.us.mensa.org	Geri Neemidge	310-7863
Membership			
membership@lsm.us.mensa.org		Fred Goertz	569-1758
New Members	mensapats@lsm.us.mensa.org	Patsy Graham	380-0141
Renewals	membership@lsm.us.mensa.org	--Vacant--	
Testing	testing@lsm.us.mensa.org	Austin G. Meyer	971-3123
Awards	membership@lsm.us.mensa.org	--Vacant--	
Officers	records@lsm.us.mensa.org	Don Drumtra	291-0315
Education			
		--Vacant--	
Gifted Children Programs	giftedchildren@lsm.us.mensa.org	Michele Vaughan	388-5970
Scholarships	scholarship@lsm.us.mensa.org	Claudia Harbert	238-0205
Financial Outreach		--Vacant--	
Gatherings and Events			
		--Vacant--	
Monthly Programs		--Vacant--	
Regional Gathering	registrar@lsm.us.mensa.org	John and Geri Neemidge	310-7863
TGITs		--Vacant--	
Games Night	mensapats@att.net	Patsy Graham	380-0141
Chess Night	cvmc95@yahoo.com	Douglas Yee	288-9172
Eclectic Eats / Dining out	arabushka@austin.rr.com	Aaron Rabushka	
Picnics and Parties		--Vacant--	
Southern area events	southernarea@lsm.us.mensa.org	Brian Bloch	878-8800
Disputes			
	ombudsman@lsm.us.mensa.org	Ron Edelstein	491-9881
Reimbursements			
	treasurer@lsm.us.mensa.org	Linda Edelstein	491-9881
S.I.G.H.T			
		--Vacant--	
Everything else			
	locsec@lsm.us.mensa.org	Don Drumtra	291-0315

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

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Board Meeting	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9 ALG Deadline Chess Night, TGIT-North	10	11
12 New Members Party	13 Member Meeting	14	15	16 TGIT-South	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 TGIT-North Seal & Label	24	25
26	27	28	29 Board Meeting			

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

Feb. 1, 6:00-7:00 PM

Home of Ron and Linda Edelstein
1439 Dapplegrey Lane, Austin.
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

?????

For time, location, and details contact Austin Meyer at 971-3123 or austin.g.meyer@gmail.com.

ALG/Calendar Deadline

2nd Thursday

Feb. 9, Midnight

Submissions due.

Chess Night (with the TGIT group)

2nd Thursday

Feb. 9, 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

Feb. 9 & 23, 6:00-8:00 PM

Central Market Café North at Central Park:

4001 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin
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.

New Members Party

Sunday, Feb. 12, 2:00 - 5:00 PM

Café Express

3418 N. Lamar, Austin

Open to all LSM members and their guests. We'll be in the reserved room. Drop in any time—we're very informal. Hosted by Patsy Graham. Contact her at mensapats@att.net.

Member Meeting

2nd Monday

Feb. 13, 6:15-8:45 PM

Carver Public Library, Rooms 2-3

1161 Angelina, Austin

512-974-1010

Between 11th and 12th Streets, east of *HIGHWAY I-35*. This location allows direct access to the library from *Highway 183* and via FM 969 MLK and 12th Street.

Thank Goodness It's Thursday (South)

3rd Thursdays

Feb. 16, 6:00-8:00 PM

Central Market Café South at Westgate Mall:

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

On the south side of the S. Lamar access road (the south access road of I-290/SR71) between Westgate Blvd. and Frontier Trail. Enter on the east side of the store, by the statues of fruits and vegetables.

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

Seal & Label

4th Thursday

Feb. 23, 6:00-8:00 PM

Central Market Café North
4001 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin
512-206-1020

Join the TGIT Group to help seal and label the newsletter. See the TGIT-North entry for directions.

UPCOMING IN MARCH

Feb. 29, Board Meeting

Mar. 8, Chess Night, ALG Deadline

Mar. 8 & 22, TGIT-North

Mar. 12, Member Meeting

Mar. 15, TGIT-South

Mar. 22, Seal & Label

Lone Star Mensa				
2011-2012 Cumulative Program Activity Details				
April 1 - December 31				
	Rate	Annual Budget	Actual to Date	75%
Membership Program				
Membership Revenue				
AML Incentive	\$1/mbr		\$ 65.00	
Fund Raising			-	
AML Testing Reimbursement	\$15/test		405.00	
AML Reimbursement			-	
Total Revenue		\$ 720.00	\$ 470.00	65%
Membership Expenses				
Copies			-	
Facilities			-	
Honoraria			174.82	
Postage			-	
Supplies and Equipment			-	
Other Expenses			-	
Total Expenses		720.00	174.82	24%
Total Membership Program		\$ -	\$ 295.18	
Communications Program				
Communications Revenue				
AML Allotment	\$325/mo		2,925.00	
Fund raising			-	
Subscriptions	\$.65/sub		5.20	
Total Revenue		3,900.00	2,930.20	75%
Communications Expenses				
Copies			-	
Publicity			-	
Postage			310.04	
Printing			1,709.94	
Supplies and Equipment			142.63	
Other Expenses			-	
Total Expenses		3,900.00	2,162.61	55%
Total Communications Program		-	767.59	
Symposia Program				
Symposia Revenue				
AML Allotment	\$100/mo		900.00	
Interest			-	
Reimbursements			185.00	
Total Revenue		1,200.00	1,085.00	90%
Symposia Expenses				
Facilities			805.00	
Honoraria			-	
Postage			-	
Supplies and Equipment			140.00	
Other Expenses			-	
Total Expenses		1,200.00	945.00	79%
Total Symposia Program		-	140.00	

Lone Star Mensa				
2011-2012 Cumulative Program Activity Details				
April 1 - December 31				
	For each	Annual Budget	Actual to Date	75%
Education Program				
Education Revenue				
Donations and Gifts			-	
Fund Raising			-	
Interest	\$40/mo		360.00	
RGD Distribution			-	
Reimbursement			-	
Total Revenue		480.00	360.00	75%
Education Expenses				
Copies			-	
Scholarships			-	
Postage			73.32	
Supplies and Equipment			-	
Other Expenses			-	
Total Expenses		480.00	73.32	15%
Total Education Program		-	286.68	
Common Activities				
Common Revenue				
AML Allotment	\$12.5/mo		112.50	
Fund Raising			-	
Interest			-	
Reimbursement			-	
Other Revenue			-	
Total Revenue		200.00	112.50	56%
Common Expenses				
Copies			15.40	
Honoraria			-	
Fees & Services			35.00	
Postage			-	
Supplies and Equipment			-	
Other Expenses			-	
Total Expenses		200.00	50.40	25%
Total Common Activities		-	62.10	
All Programs				
Total Revenue		6,500.00	4,957.70	
Total Expenses		6,500.00	3,406.15	
Total Programs		-	1,551.55	

Lone Star Mensa				
2011-2012 Cumulative Program Activity Details				
April 1 - December 31				
	For each	Annual Budget	Actual to Date	75%
LonestaRG				
RG Revenue				
Fund Raising		-		
Hospitality Reimbursement		-		
Beverages Reimbursement		-		
Registrations		4,927.50		
Tastings		-		
Rental Reimbursement		-		
Other Revenue		205.00		
Total Revenue	4,700.00		5,132.50	109%
RG Expenses				
Registration (copies, badges, PayPal)		84.00		
Facilities		1,770.00		
Programs (guide, speakers, honoraria, cups, certificates)		275.00		
Hospitality (food, snacks, coffee, juice)		1,549.57		
Beverages (Pop, beer, wine, water)		449.58		
Publicity / raffle (flyers, signs, supplies, copying, printing)		140.00		
Supplies (tastings, not in other accounts)		567.49		
Rentals and related supplies		298.00		
Other Expenses		244.57		
Total Expenses	4,500.00		5,378.21	120%
RG Revenue Less Expenses	200.00		(245.71)	
RG Disbursements				
Scholarship at 10 percent	20.00		-	
Reserve for Next Year at 45 percent	90.00		(245.71)	
Undistributed at 45 percent	90.00		-	
As directed by the ExComm	-		-	
Total Disbursements	200.00		(245.71)	0%
Total LonestaRG	-			0.00
Undistributed Rev and Exp				
Undistributed and Prior Year Revenue				
AML Allotment	604.00		363.40	
Donations and Gifts	-		-	
Fund Raising	-		-	
Interest	-		-	
RG Distribution	90.00		-	
Reimbursement	-		-	
Other Revenue	-		-	
Total Revenue	694.00		363.40	
Undistributed Expenses				
Programs	-		-	
Scholarship Escrow	-		-	
Other Expenses	-		-	
Total Expenses	-		-	
Total Undistributed	694.00		363.40	
Net Revenue	\$ 694.00		\$ 1,914.95	

Lone Star Mensa		
2011-2012 Balance Sheet Details		
December 31		
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash	\$ 185.00	
Checking Account		
GB Checking Balance	\$ 5,491.86	
GB Pending Deposits	-	
Less GB Uncleared Checks	(100.00)	
Total Checking Accounts	5,391.86	
Certificates of Deposit		
CD 1, 498% 12 mo 11/29/2012	10,162.68	
CD 2, 448% 10 mo, 6/10/2012	13,639.64	
Total Certificates of Deposit	23,802.32	
Less Funds and Obligations	(18,000.00)	
Accounts Receivable	-	
Interest Receivable (Allocated)	462.18	
Prepaid Expenses		
Prepaid Postage	504.26	
Prepaid RG 2012	-	
Prepaid RG 2011	0.00	
Prepaid Take Home Tests	37.50	
Other Prepaid Expenses	-	
Total Prepaid Expenses	541.76	
Total Current Assets	12,383.12	
Long Term Assets		
Funds		
Scholarship Endowment	7,000.00	
Education Fund	8,000.00	
RG Fund	3,000.00	
Total Funds	18,000.00	
Equipment		
Acquired Value	981.31	
Less Expensed Value	(1,026.82)	
Total Equipment Book Value	(45.51)	
Other Long Term Assets	-	
Total Long Term Assets	17,954.49	
Total Assets	\$ 30,337.61	
Liabilities, Approp., and Net Assets		
Liabilities and Appropriations		
Accounts Payable	333.23	
Escrow Accounts		
Scholarships Escrow	1,096.36	
RG Escrow 2012	845.00	
RG Escrow 2011	0.00	
Total Escrow Accounts	1,941.36	
RG Reserve	947.21	
Eqpmt Replacement Appropriation		
Comm Eqpmt Rep Appr	510.00	
Symp Eqpmt Rep Appr	94.50	
Total Eqpmt Rep Appr	604.50	
Other Liabilities and Appropriations	-	
Total Liabilities and Appropriations	\$ 3,826.30	
Net Assets	26,511.31	
Total Liabilities, Approp., and Net Assets	\$ 30,337.61	

Lone Star Mensa				
2011 Regional Gathering				
December 31				
		2010 Budget	Actual Revenue and Expenses	%
LonestaRG				
RG Revenue				
	Fund Raising		\$ -	
	Hospitality Reimbursement		-	
	Beverages Reimbursement		-	
	Registrations		4,927.50	
	Tastings		\$ -	
	Rental Reimbursement		-	
	Other Revenue		205.00	
	Total Revenue	\$ 4,700.00	\$ 5,132.50	109%
RG Expenses				
	Registration (copies, badges, PayPal)		84.00	
	Facilities		1,770.00	
	Programs (guide, speakers, honoraria, cups, certificates)		275.00	
	Hospitality (food, snacks, coffee, juice)		1,549.57	
	Beverages (Pop, beer, wine, water)		449.58	
	Publicity / raffle (flyers, signs, supplies, copying, printing)		140.00	
	Supplies (tastings, not in other accounts)		567.49	
	Rentals and related supplies		298.00	
	Other Expenses		244.57	
	Total Expenses	4,500.00	5,378.21	120%
	RG Revenue Less Expenses	200.00	\$ (245.71)	-123%
RG Disbursements				
	Scholarship at 10 percent	20.00	-	
	Reserve for Next Year at 45 percent	90.00	(245.71)	
	Undistributed at 45 percent	90.00	-	
	As directed by the ExComm	-	-	
	Total Disbursements	200.00	(245.71)	
	Total LonestaRG	\$ -	\$ 0.00	

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT TEXAS

- Beaumont to El Paso: 742 miles. Beaumont to Chicago: 770 miles
- El Paso is closer to California than to Dallas
- World's first rodeo was in Pecos, July 4, 1883.
- The Flagship Hotel in Galveston is the only hotel in North America built over water. It was destroyed by Hurricane Ike in 2008.
- The Heisman Trophy was named after John William Heisman, who was the first full-time coach at Rice University in Houston.
- Brazoria County has more species of birds than any other area in North America
- Arkansas Wildlife Refuge is the winter home of North America's only remaining flock of whooping cranes.
- Jalapeno jelly originated in Lake Jackson in 1978.
- The worst natural disaster in U.S. history was in 1900 on Galveston Island, caused by a hurricane in which over 8,000 lives were lost.
- The first word spoken from the moon, July 20, 1969, was "Houston," but the space center was actually in Clear Lake City at the time.
- King Ranch in South Texas is larger than Rhode Island.
- Tropical Storm Claudette brought a U.S. rainfall record of 43' in 24 hours in and around Alvin in July of 1979.
- Texas is the only state to enter the U.S. by TREATY (the Constitution of 1845 by the Republic of Texas), instead of by annexation.
- A Live Oak tree near Fulton is estimated to be 1,500 years old.
- Caddo Lake is the only natural lake in the state.
- Dr Pepper was invented in Waco in 1885. There is no period in Dr Pepper.
- Texas has had six capital cities: Washington-on-the Brazos, Harrisburg, Galveston, Velasco, West Columbia and Austin.
- The Capitol Dome in Austin is the only dome in the U.S. which is taller than the Capitol Building in Washington DC (by 7 feet).
- The San Jacinto Monument is the tallest free-standing monument in the world— taller than the Washington monument.
- Tejas is not Spanish for Texas. The name is from the Hasini Indian word "tejas," meaning friends.
- The State Mascot is the Armadillo, just as it is the mascot for LoneStar Mensa. (An interesting bit of trivia about the armadillo is that they always have four babies. They have one egg, which splits into four, and they either have four males or four females.)
- The first domed stadium in the U.S. was the Astrodome in Houston.

PERIODICAL Postage Paid at
AUSTIN, TX
Permit #554-650

POSTMASTER:
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 LoneStar 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, 1007 Creekbend Cv., Pflugerville, TX, 78660-2301

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: LoneStar Mensa members may submit 2 per year at no charge. 4 line maximum, subject to editor's discretion as to date of publication.

Commercial: Business card sized ads (2" x 3") are \$10 for one month, \$25 for three months, and \$40 for six months. Publication may be delayed due to space considerations. Ads must be camera ready, accurately sized, and should be submitted electronically in Word (preferred), JPG or PDF format. We reserve the right to edit for content if necessary. Rates for other sized ads or other time periods are available upon request. The deadline for ad submission to the newsletter editor is 5 days before the general newsletter deadline.

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



Armadillo Literary Gazette

IN THIS ISSUE

Editor's Choice/Announcements	1
New Members Meeting/Report of Election Comm/Vacancies	2
2012 General Business Meeting Minutes	3
Featured Member Bio	4
What We Accomplished in 2012	5
January Board Meeting Minutes/February Monthly Meeting	6
Sudoku/From the RVC	7
Letters to the Editor/Pithy Quotes	8
Member News/Patty's Vacation Story	9
LSM Contacts by Function	10
February Calendar	11
2011-2012 LSM Financial Reports	12-15
Interesting Facts About Texas	15
Table of Contents/Postal Page	16