

# *Armadillo Literary Gazette*

A Publication of *Lone Star Mensa*  
Volume XXXIX  
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Acting Editor: *Ron Edelstein*  
Managing Editor: *Don Drumtra*  
Publisher: *Board of Officers*

## *EDITORIAL*

*By Ron Edelstein*

Unfortunately, Rose, our regular editor, is still recovering from the effects of her eye surgery, so still not up to taking back the newsletter responsibilities. Hopefully she will be able to by next month. Meanwhile, we'll muddle along and try to enlighten, entertain and amuse you.

As always, please send your comments, ideas, essays, poems, witticisms or whatever else you'd like to contribute to [editor@lsm.us.mensa.org](mailto:editor@lsm.us.mensa.org). No particular word limit though the editor reserves the right to trim to fit, but emailed submissions are appreciated.

## *JUNE MONTHLY MEETING*

*by Ron Edelstein*

**Please note that the day and place for the monthly Member Meetings have been changed for 2012.**

**DATE/TIME**      Second Monday, June 11, 6:45-8:15 PM  
**LOCATION**

The Carver Library is located between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets east of Highway I-35. This location allows direct access to the library from Highway 183 and via FM 969 MLK and 12<sup>th</sup> 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. Please refer to Page 10 of this issue for details.

*Responsibility is the price of freedom.  
- Elbert (Green) Hubbard*



### A Word To The Wise

I was happy to see some good response from last month's column; we're on the way to making this a more active group. We still have many opportunities for you to help; most notably, we really could use a

TGIT coordinator or two and Area Coordinators for Waco, UT, and Bryan. We could also use a SIGHT coordinator ("Services for Information, Guidance, and Hospitality for Travelers"); SIGHT helps connect travelling Mensans with local hosts, whether that be to find local information, a tour guide, lodging, or friends. There are a number of other open positions; some have someone that's expressed interest, but if you're interested in helping in any way, please let me know!

One event coming up that combines friends, lodging, hospitality, volunteering, and a bunch more is our Regional Gathering, LonestaRG XIV. For those who don't know, Regional Gatherings are conventions organized by local Mensa groups. My wife Geri and I are co-chairing this year's LonestaRG (as we have a number of times in the past), and it'll again be held at the Williamson Conference Center (adjacent to the Wingate at I-35 and US 79 in Round Rock). LonestaRG is held over Labor Day weekend (Aug 31-Sep 3 this year), and combines speakers, workshops, games, food and drink, a dance, and plenty more into a busy weekend. Our theme this year is Food For Thought; we'll have speakers on all sorts of foodie topics, likely including local food, vegetable gardening, the culinary arts, restaurants, health and dietary concerns, and much more. We're still early in planning; more will be announced as the RG gets closer, but we know it'll be a great weekend. It's our biggest event of the year, and your best chance to meet and spend time with many Lone Star Mensans (and Mensans from around the state and farther afield, too).



LonestaRG is also a major volunteer opportunity. An event as big as an RG takes many people to make it a success. We have a terrific core committee (and we'll be announcing committee meetings soon – stay tuned to the LSM Announce mailing list or the newsletter for information), but there are plenty of ways to help, from preparing food for Hospitality, taking responsibility for Hospitality during one of the meals, helping with logistics, running a game or tournament, and on and on. If you're interested in volunteering please contact Geri and me (at [lsrg14@neemidge.net](mailto:lsrg14@neemidge.net)) -- we appreciate it!

For more about LonestaRG, including ways to register, see [www.lsm.us.mensa.org/events/rg](http://www.lsm.us.mensa.org/events/rg). We'd love to see you there – the more, the merrier!

#### *On Youth*

*When we're young  
And so headstrong  
And think we're very clever,*

*We go about  
Our lives as if  
There is no end -- not ever.*

*But as we age  
And become a sage,  
We experience reality.*

*We start to know  
That life can go  
With quick ephemerality.*

*--Tom Haddon*

## MAY BOARD MINUTES

Submitted by Don Drumtra, Temporary Scribe

The May regular meeting of the Lone Star Mensa board of officers convened at 7:40 PM, Thursday, May 3, 2012 at Carver Public Library, Rooms 2-3, 1161 Angelina, Austin, TX. Attending were Angela Adams, Don Drumtra, Patty Drumtra, Linda Edelstein, Ron Edelstein, Crockett Grabbe, Aaron Legare, John Neemidge, Jack Speyer, and Douglas Yee. The board adopted the agenda and the minutes of the March regular board meeting as printed on page 7 of the April 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:** John thanked Angela and Jack for their interest the board and emphasized the need for need for other LSM members to step forward to be serve on the board.
- **Treasurer:** The board unanimously approved the April Abbreviated Treasurer's Report. She transferred LSM financial responsibilities and records to the board and Don agreed to maintain the books on behalf of the board until a new treasurer can be elected.
- **ComComm:** The board thanked Ron for acting as editor for the newsletter while Rose Berkowitz was recovering from eye surgery. Aaron volunteered to assist Ron with a view toward backing up Rose Berkowitz in the future.
- **MemComm:** Patsy Graham is planning a New Members welcome party on Sunday, May 6, 2 PM to 5 PM at her house. Don reported that there is a draft motion for the AMC to provide more rebate to the local groups and to restrict the surplus that local groups may accumulate.
- **LonestarRG 2012 Committee:** John announced that the tentative theme for the 2012 RG would be "Food for Thought" and invited members to volunteer to be the RG chairman and committee members. He will be convening a meeting soon for interested volunteers.
- **Website Working Group:** Patsy and Douglas reported that a basic design has been accepted, which Douglas will implement in software for further review.
- **Action Plan Status:** Don reported that actions on 64 percent of action plans have been approved leaving 17 to be completed.

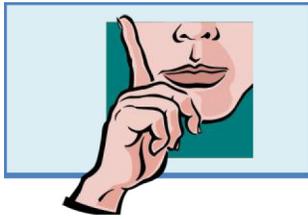
### Unfinished Business:

- Acting as a committee of the whole, the board reviewed the vacancies and proposed volunteers to do the work on a temporary basis. The board adopted the assignments as shown on the officers and contacts Webpages, at <http://www.lsm.us.mensa.org/officers/> .
- The board adopted the outgoing Treasurer's proposed budget for standing committee expenses. The bookkeeper agreed to propose additional budget items at the next meeting.

**New Business: (none submitted).**

## YOUR SUDOKU PUZZLE

Extreme Sudoku, [sudoku.org.uk](http://sudoku.org.uk)  
By Douglas Yee



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

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

by Roger Durham, Region 6 RVC



Things are pretty quiet just now, so I'm going to take this opportunity to talk about one of my favorite subjects: Gatherings. As you read this, the year's first Regional Gathering in Region 6, Gulf Coast Mensa's SynRG in Houston, will probably be history, but there will be plenty of other upcoming opportunities for you to find out why Mensa Gatherings are so popular, if you've never attended one. Next up, of course, is the Big Kahuna of Gatherings, the Annual Gathering, Mensa's annual national convention. Held in Reno, NV this year,

from July 4<sup>th</sup> through July 8<sup>th</sup>, the AG will attract about 2,000 Mensans for four days and nights of games, workshops, speakers, dancing, partying, and general merriment. You can still be one of them. See your copy of the Mensa Bulletin for more information, or check the AG website

( [www.ag.us.mensa.org](http://www.ag.us.mensa.org) ).

Another Regional Gathering comes up over Labor Day weekend in Round Rock, TX, where Lone Star Mensa will put on the 2012 version of LoneStaRG. A little shorter and smaller than the AG, but featuring many of the same opportunities to interact with your fellow Mensans. Details will be available soon.

Then, at Thanksgiving, you can attend North Texas Mensa's RG, *Feast of Pleasures and Delights XXXIII* in Dallas. One of the oldest and largest RGs in this part of the country, the Dallas RG moves to a new hotel this year, but will continue to provide the same North Texas hospitality and entertainment as before. More information will be coming along in the near future.

Last, but certainly not least, you can spend the first weekend in December with your fellow Ms in the party capital of our region (if not the nation), New Orleans. Yes, in 2012 New Orleans Mensa returns to the Gathering circuit for the first time since 2005, when they hosted the AG. (You may recall a little unpleasantness that followed shortly thereafter, but I'm sure the two events were not related.) Anyway, NOM is back in the RG business in a big way, with a downtown hotel on the St. Charles streetcar line just a few blocks from the French Quarter and the casino. Details are still under development, but watch for a listing in the Mensa Bulletin soon. Needless to say, I'll be mentioning this again soon as well.

And now for something completely different: a couple of months ago, I asked for your input regarding the filling of vacancies in the office of Regional Vice Chairman. As I expected, I heard from only four people, two of whom were completely satisfied with the current system. Brian Bloch obviously feels very strongly about this, but apparently the other 5,000 or so of you have no immediate concerns regarding this matter, so I'm going to let it drop.

*Roger Durham*

By Don Drumtra, based on JimAnn Oliver's handout.  
[See page 8 pf the January ALG for JimAnn's bio.]

### Part 2 Research on Education

The April General Meeting included two programs in one. In the first part of the program JimAnn discussed IQ and intelligence –the ability to learn. In the second part she summarized factors that influence actual learning. These factors are based on her years of research. “These statements are a little of what we do know from years and years of intensive research and experience.” They might seem obvious to those of us who have raised children but they evidently were not obvious to the developers of the No Child Left Behind program.

#### Factors Influencing Children and Learning

Factual knowledge about children and how they learn is the most important element needed to design an effective education program. JimAnn presented the five factors that research shows have the most influence on children's learning.

1. There is tremendous variation in abilities and background from child to child. JimAnn elaborated in her discussion on IQ.
2. All learning is achieved individually.
3. Children move in learning from what they know to the next step. Each child has his/her own learning pace, which varies from skill to skill. JimAnn pointed out that each child this very different in how they learn
4. Children respond to and engage best in activities for which the adult present shows enthusiasm, and in which the student is helped to feel good about himself and his response and engagement. She emphasized that motivation is critical to learning.
5. Children spend their most critical years in the home and neighborhood before ever coming to school, and continue to spend more time there than at school. The parents are the major influence on the educational success of the child. JimAnn emphasized that “The most important factor in education is what the parents “be!” This is the same foot stomping point she made in her in her presentation last fall.

#### Factors Influencing Teachers and Teaching

Factual knowledge about teachers and teaching is almost equally needed for program development. JimAnn presented eight factors from her research that relate to what the teachers job should be for children to learn effectively.

1. The job of the teacher is to present material to be learned in a format and atmosphere in which each child has the best opportunity for learning.
2. The best atmosphere for learning involves passion on the part of a parent, teacher, or other mentor which is conveyed to the person learning such that it catches his/her interest and engagement. JimAnn pointed out that street gangs have figured this out and use it well.
3. Teachers do the best job when they have some control over choosing their materials and methods.
4. The educational level of the teacher is not an important factor in how well students can do. Training workshops teachers attend, or getting higher degrees, have almost no impact on the learning level of the children.
5. Increasing teacher salaries substantially encourages the best-qualified persons to choose or remain in that profession.
6. Teachers, like all human beings, learn best and do best when given positive strokes, sympathy, and encouragement.
7. What the child already “*IS*” when he arrives at school, both for the first time and on a daily basis, is far more important than anything the teacher can do after he/she gets there.
8. Yes, teachers do make a difference, but very little compared to the home.

#### Factors Concerning Schools

JimAnn concluded her research section with three factors relating to schools that research shows are the most important influences in children learning.

1. Schools in neighborhoods which are run down and crime-ridden have two strikes against them.
2. The administrators of a school set the tone as either positive or negative toward teachers, children and the learning tasks. Positive is better.
3. A smaller number of students in the ratio of students to teacher does make a difference, particularly in the lower grades. In other words, the opportunity for personal interaction is important. Schools appear to recognize this in some of their sports programs (like in the ratio of coaches to football players).

### Conclusions

So, JimAnn asked us, What can we conclude from our discussion of IQ and the factors influencing children's education? After some discussion, JimAnn gave us her take:

#### So what is my idea of a good education?

In an ideal setting, each child's home background would be understood by the school personnel, his level of understanding of the subject matter in each area of the curricula would be known and briefly re-assessed every few months, his own best ways of acquiring knowledge would be determined (Some of us learn better through vision, some through hearing, some through manipulating, and so on. Some can learn by precept, some by admonition, some by observation, and some only by experience. At times we do not learn certain things by any of these ways.), and his potential pace for that acquisition would be taken into account as all these factors are used to plan his materials, methods of instruction, and expectations. The child would then be moved along as quickly as possible from one level in each subject to the next, with checks every few days to make sure each step is understood before moving to the next. This all done by a person who loves him/her, is excited to be working with him/her, is interested in what is being taught and conveys that enthusiasm to the student.

More costly than the way it's being done now? Well, in the need for more classrooms (because student-teacher ratios would be lower in many instances) and more teachers of certain kinds as opposed to other kinds of which we have an over-abundance at present. Also, teacher salaries would have to be raised a great deal in many instances, to be commensurate with the value of their jobs and to retain the really good teachers, many of whom are by definition capable of holding much more lucrative jobs with which to support themselves and their families.

However, on the financial plus side tons of money would be released by stopping the almost-worthless programs which are being paid for right now, and particularly all the employees of the bureaucracy administering and keeping accounts of all the reams of unneeded laws and guidelines and enforcements. [From the meeting handout.]

Our meeting concluded with a raucous round of applause. If you were not able to attend, you missed a good meeting.

*If you have integrity - nothing else matters.  
If you don't have integrity - nothing else matters."*

*--Evelle J Younger*

### Lone StaRG 2012 "Food For Thought"

It's time to start thinking about the time when Lone Star Mensans get together for fun, frivolity and frolic. LoneStaRG is held over Labor Day weekend (Aug 31-Sep 3 this year). It will be held at the Williamson Conference Center (adjacent to the Wingate Hotel at I-35 and US 79 in Round Rock). That's Exit 253 on I-35 if you are headed north.

The RG combines speakers, workshops, games, food and drink, a dance, and plenty more into a busy weekend. Our theme this year is Food For Thought.

we'll have speakers on all sorts of foodie topics, likely including local food, vegetable gardening, the culinary arts, restaurants, health and dietary concerns, and much more.





by the “Mensa test” in Reader’s Digest. A year later, after attending our Annual Gathering (about 60 people), we emigrated to Houston. It took many frustrating phone calls to American Mensa’s indifferent National Office staff, then in New York, to become members in the U.S.A.

We weren’t active for some years, while we established ourselves. We went to an occasional dim sum breakfast and not much else. We became more active in the early 1990’s and I went to my first Annual Gathering in Houston in 1996. More on AGs later...

Around that time, I joined the board of Gulf Coast Mensa and served two years as LocSec.

At the end of 1999, I went to live in California, went to a lot of Mensa events so as to meet people, and ended up on the board of Greater Los Angeles Area Mensa.

My biggest achievements for Los Angeles Mensa related to interaction with the “new” National Office (by then in Texas) and with various AMC members. Some examples: the folks in L.A. still considered American Mensa’s hierarchy to be “those people on the East Coast”, and there was no love lost. I helped craft some by-law changes and was told by the Los Angeles board that it could take six months to get a response and even then there would be revisions demanded. A quick email to Russ Bakke, the national by-laws Chair, and I got the amendments back, accepted “as is”, in four days. Someone else complained that her membership renewal hadn’t been processed and she couldn’t “get this fixed.” One phone call to Paige at the National office and the problem went away. My ‘reward’ was for me to be drummed into service as LocSec.

I moved back to Texas in 2008 and settled in San Marcos. My next Mensa appointment was as editor of InterLoc. This wonderful publication is now defunct. It served as the outlet for ordinary Mensa members to be heard on the national scene and was originally a separate publication. To save postage, it was incorporated into the Bulletin and I had a couple of great years editing and writing for all 55,000 or so U.S. Mensans. This ended when Mensa’s Publications Officer decided to do away with InterLoc and instead put out a monthly email piece called InterLink. This “rah-rah” email unequivocally supports any action of the AMC or the National Office.

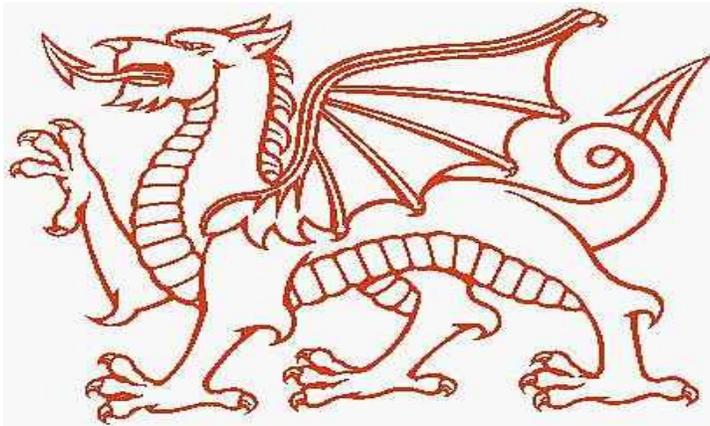
Since then, I’ve kept a low profile, only opting to be an area coordinator for Lone Star Mensa.

Finally, more on AGs. Since 1996, I’ve missed only three Annual Gatherings, and I’m going again this year. The first couple of AGs were all about programs – the educational, the lighthearted, the understanding of Mensa business. After that, it became more and more about meeting people, then renewing these new friendships. I met people from all over the USA and other countries, men and women who became friends, close friends, even lifelong friends. This more than anything is why I go to AGs.

## A Little Levity

Enjoy a little levity  
with it's constant cousin mirth,  
To fill your soul in brevity  
while living here on earth.

--Tom Haddon



## MEMBER NEWS (as of 5/11/2012)

### HAPPY JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Richard G Apel
- 1 Donald W Drumtra
- 1 John B Sanders
- 3 V O Speights Jr
- 3 Michele Vaughan
- 5 Thomas O Myer
- 5 Philip D Ryals
- 8 Thomas Cloyd
- 9 Cassandra Cher Joy
- 11 Clarence Lynn Cossey
- 11 Rick Reeder
- 12 Jeff Dommengo
- 13 Chris Markey
- 14 James R Thomas II
- 15 Taylor Griffin Smith
- 18 Benjamin H Ashmore Jr
- 18 Patricia Ann Drumtra
- 18 Jonathan E Smith
- 22 Ronald Wayne Holder Jr
- 22 Amanda MacLennan
- 22 Paul Rabago
- 24 Lawrence E Drake
- 27 Dean McCormick
- 28 Ian Ball
- 30 Madison R Jones

**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.

### Welcome Mensa Members Who Joined Lone Star Mensa in May

Elizabeth A Collins  
Brietta M Perez  
Capt Michael F Volpe III

### WELCOME BACK--MISSED YOU!

Joshua Benjamin Chlapek  
William Enyart

### IN MEMORIAM

Longtime Lone Star Mensa Member and past President/LocSec Karen Werner is profoundly sad to announce the death of her husband, Michael Harr, on April 4, 2012, due to brain cancer. Karen's contact information is 9110 Curlew Drive, Austin, Texas 78748, (512) 784-9572, [wernernag@hotmail.com](mailto:wernernag@hotmail.com).



### GOODBYE—WE WISH YOU WELL

Kathryn Bennett  
Pathikrit Bhowmick  
John Paliwoda

### JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

#### MEMBER FOR 45 YEARS

Matthew C Lawrence  
James Henry Smith  
John W Ufema MD

#### MEMBER FOR 15 YEARS

Helen Ruth Siders

#### MEMBER FOR 10 YEARS

Paul R Albers  
Dennis L Crabill  
Jo Ann Jay Howard  
Lesley Carol Morehead  
Newell Starks

#### MEMBER FOR 5 YEARS

Michael P Martin  
David Wade  
Kathryn Bennett  
Rabin C Monroe  
Chloe Werth

For those who may be familiar with the weekly on-line column, "THIS IS TRUE" (or for those who aren't...), Randy Cassingham, the creator and editor will be a speaker at the American Mensa Annual Gathering in Reno this year. Here is his announcement:

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A REMINDER FOR you Mensans (and wannabes) out there: I'll be speaking at their annual conference (they call it the "Annual Gathering") in Reno in July. I skipped the last one or two, but since a good friend of mine is the Chair this year, I promised to be one of his speakers. My presentation's title: "My Life Among the Obliviots", described in the program thusly: "Randy, a Mensa Life Member and the author of the weird news/social commentary column 'This is True', will look back on his 18 years of true stories and share examples of some of the most mind-bogglingly stupid people (or, maybe, smart people doing incredibly stupid things) -- and some of the often shocking (and hilarious) lessons he has learned along the way. Randy bills his column as 'thought-provoking entertainment' (what a concept for reading material!) and his talks follow the same principle."

My friend was most decidedly enthusiastic about the proposed topic. Maybe I had better start writing it!

My speaker's slot is Friday, July 6 at 4:30 p.m. My wife is also giving a presentation, on Saturday afternoon. For more info see <http://www.ag2012.us.mensa.org>

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For those who may be interested in this online news article (there's a free version and a paid version), go to

<http://www.thisistrue.com/subscribe.html>

*People demand freedom of speech  
as a compensation for the freedom  
of thought which they seldom use.*

*--Søren Kierkegaard*

### McDonald's Soliliquy or Parody after MacBeth

Is this a burger which I see before me,  
The soft bun in my hand?  
Come, let me clutch thee.  
I eat thee not, and yet I want thee still.  
Art thou not, gourmet's vision, sensible  
To taste as to sight? Or art thou but  
A burger of the mind, a false dinner,  
Proceeding from the meat-oppressed stomach? I  
see thee yet, in form as palatable

As this cracker which now I chew  
Thou nourish'st me on the way that I was going,  
And such condiments I was to use  
Mine mouth are made the fools o' the other senses,

The calories worth all the rest; I see thee still,  
And on thy plate and Happy Meals of fat  
Which was not so before. There's no fat,  
Which was not so before. There's no such food:

It is the bloody diet which informs  
Thus to mine eyes, Now o'er the Weight Watchers  
Tastebuds seem dead, and raw salads abuse  
The growing bowels; famished celebrate  
Jenny Craig's offerings, and wither'd hunger,  
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the bathroom scale,  
Laughs as it watches, thus with his mocking numbers.

With Hamburglar's ravishing strides, towards his goal

I move like a ghost. Thou warm and delicious beef,  
Hear not my teeth, which way they show, for fear  
My very swallows prate of my gluttony,  
And take the present mirror from the room,  
When now suite do not fit. Whiles I starve, he lives:  
Buffets to the heat of charbroiled chicken gives.

*(a bell rings)*

I go and it is done; the microwave bell invites me.  
Heat it not, Tongue; for it is a knell  
That summons thy mouth to heaven and thy body to  
hell.

## You're Not Old UNLESS You Can Remember:

- \* Being sent to the drugstore to test vacuum tubes for the TV.
- \* When Kool-Aid was the only other drink for kids other than milk and sodas.
- \* When there were only two types of sneakers for boys.
- \* When boys couldn't wear anything but leather shoes to school.
- \* When it took five minutes for the TV to warm up.
- \* When nearly everyone's parents smoked.
- \* When all your friends got their hair cut at the kitchen table.
- \* When nearly everyone's mom was at home when the kids got there.
- \* When nobody owned a pure-bred dog.
- \* When a dime was a decent allowance and a quarter a huge bonus.
- \* When you'd reach into a muddy gutter for a penny.
- \* When girls neither dated nor kissed until late high school, if then.
- \* When your mom wore nylons that came in two pieces.
- \* When all your teachers wore either neckties or had their hair done, every day.
- \* When you got your windshield cleaned, oil checked, and gas pumped, without asking, for free, every time.
- \* When any parent could discipline any kid, or feed him, or use him to carry groceries, and nobody, not even the kid, thought a thing of it.
- \* When it was considered a great privilege to be taken out to dinner at a real restaurant with your parents.
- \* When they threatened to keep kids back a grade if they failed – and did.

### ***ECLECTIC EATS***

Ron and Linda Edelstein will resume coordinating the Eclectic Eats each month. On June 5th we will meet at Dimassis Mediterranean Buffet, 12636 Research Blvd, Austin, 996-8900 at 6:30 PM. Food is, as you'd expect, Mediterranean style, all you care to eat, fixed price plus drinks (no alcohol). Please RSVP by not later than Monday afternoon so we can have a table count for seating.

Suggestions for places to go are welcome. Please provide the name and location, type of food and maybe a short paragraph of why you like it. Please send RSVP and/or suggestions to Linda at: [ledelstein@mindspring.com](mailto:ledelstein@mindspring.com) or call us at: 512-491-9881 and leave a message if we aren't home.  
*Bon appetit!*

### ***JUNE MEETING***

Our June monthly meeting will be something special. Zach Baumer, Climate Program Manager from the Office of Sustainability for the City of Austin will be giving us a very interesting presentation. Some of the topics are: Rollout of our new Sustainability Action Agenda, paired with the Rethink campaign for citizen action, Overview of our new Green Business Leaders program, how it works, what's included, etc., Inside look at a new Corporate Sustainability reporting framework for the city of Austin.

And bring your friends! LSM General Meetings are open to the public.

*Anyone who conducts an argument by appealing to authority is not using his intelligence; he is just using his memory.*

*--Leonardo da Vinci*

# Hi, Neighbor! Gulf Coast Mensa RG Announcement



## SynRG 2012: Visions

Houston, Texas is the place to be for **Memorial Day Weekend, May 25-28!** Come join the fun at **SynRG 2012: Visions!** Let's look towards the future, since the world isn't really going to end this year.

Team RG's feverish preparations are nearly complete, with speakers and events being finalized. Anne So is back this year with her amazing hospitality suite, and the games room will be open all weekend.

### **Among our tantalizing event offerings:**

Pre-RG Events on Thursday and Friday include: *A Taste of Houston Blues at The Big Easy*, *The Future of Transportation Today* - a free tour of the new, highly automated Hybrid Electric Vehicle Motor Plant at Toshiba International Corporation, and the Schilling Robotics Tour, where you can see (and drive!) their cutting-edge undersea robots. Space for the tours is limited, so please contact us at to reserve your spot!

We have already scheduled many speakers and events, with more to come! Here's a small sample of the topics we have lined up: *Climate of the Future*, *Living With Your Emotions*, *Scientists and Engineers of the Future*, *The Future of Heart Surgery*, *The Houston Dining Scene*, *Robonaut 2 – the Future of Space Exploration*, *Future Astronomy*, *Gulf Coast Food Culture*, a panel discussion of the future trends in transportation and city planning; and our **Saturday evening Keynote Speaker Scott Grischow** will describe his quest to climb the Seven Summits, the highest mountain peaks on each of the seven continents.

Additional activities include our *Saturday evening Jam Session and Karaoke, Name That Movie!*, *Carnelli*, the *Sunday evening Carnival*, chess tournament, tastings, games, and special presentations by Jason and Brigitte, celebrated Gamemasters for the North Texas Mensa RG and 2013 Fort Worth Annual Gathering! They have created a *Puzzle Quest* for Saturday night, will bring their Spaghetti Construction event to the Sunday night Carnival, and are hosting a trivia event on Sunday afternoon.

Full weekend registration includes all of the speakers, games, activities, and our fully loaded Hospitality suite. Visit our website [www.gcmensa-events.org](http://www.gcmensa-events.org) to register online!

**Reserve your room at the Crowne Plaza Houston Northwest - Brookhollow, conveniently located on Highway 290 at Pinemont. Call 713-462-9977 and remember to ask for the fabulous Mensa rate of \$75.50 s/d/t/q!**

## Food For Thought



LonestaRG 14

- Planned speaker topics include Urban Agriculture, Nutrition, Aquaponics, the culinary arts, and other foodie topics
- Many workshops
- Crockpot Potluck and Scholarship Dessert Cookoff
- Dance
- Captivating company
- Abundant hospitality, with meals, veggies, snacks, soda, beer, wine, margaritas
- Tastings
- Games and contests
- Goodies and Prizes

Feed your head at LonestaRG the 14th! We're planning a great weekend, Friday August 31st - Monday September 3rd, with speakers on foodie topics, games and workshops, and plenty of tasty treats in hospitality.

Registration is \$55 until June 15th and \$65 until July 13. Children 9-17 half price, 8 and under are free. Send registrations to Patsy Graham, 5804 Shoal Creek Blvd, Austin, TX 78757-3124 (mensapats@att.net). To register online via PayPal, or for more information as it becomes available, see the web page at <http://www.lsm.us.mensa.org/events/rg>

Our RG hotel is the Wingate By Wyndham, located at the intersection of IH-35 and US-79 in Round Rock. Our room rate is \$85/night. The room rate includes a hot buffet breakfast. For reservations call 512-341-7000 and ask for the Lonestar Mensa rate.

-----  
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please don't list my name and city/state on the RG web site attendee list

Please don't include me on the list of attendees made available to RG-goers

Please use paper mail (not email) for RG updates and correspondence

Names for Badges: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

Registration is \$55 through Jun 15, \$65 until Jul 13. Half off for children ages 9-17 (children 8 and under are free).

Number of registrations: \_\_\_\_\_ @\$ \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Are you interested in volunteering for any of the following?

Hospitality \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare Food \_\_\_\_\_ Registration \_\_\_\_\_

Solicit Donations \_\_\_\_\_ Bring Games \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker Assistant \_\_\_\_\_ Logistics/Purchasing \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Send registrations to Patsy Graham, 5804 Shoal Creek Blvd, Austin, TX 78757-3124, or register online. Make checks payable to "Lonestar Mensa RG". Dillo Jun 2012

## *Strange Change*

by Ron Edelstein

“Phony as a three dollar bill”. Ever heard that remark? Ever wondered why we *don't* have three dollar bills? We do have two dollar bills, though they don't circulate much these days. Well, in times past... say, the 19<sup>th</sup> century, we *did* have three dollar bills. Also fifty-cent bills, twenty-five cent bills and all sorts of strange (to our modern eyes) coins. Let's take a look at a few.

### **First “Nickel”**

Now when you speak of a nickel, you think of a five cent coin. But the first U.S. Coin made of nickel (actually, an alloy of nickel and copper) was a cent. Prior to 1857, the U.S. cent coin was a large copper piece, a little larger than a modern twenty-five cent coin. But copper prices were rising and the Treasury was tasked with finding something cheaper. (Sound familiar? It has happened several times in recent years and is a discussion going on in Washington right now.) The decision was made to reduce the cent size and use cheaper materials, and the result was a 19mm coin made of an alloy of 88% copper and 12% nickel, a much cheaper metal at the time. Unfortunately the flying eagle design, though aesthetically pleasing, did not strike up well in the minting process, so after two years—1857-1858-- it was replaced by the well known “Indian head” design of the same specifications. In 1865, the Indian head was changed to an alloy of 95% copper and the remainder of tin and zinc. The size has remained the same until the current cents in your pocket, though the composition has changed a number of times over the years. The current Lincoln cents, since 1982, are pure zinc plated thinly with copper.



### **In God We Trust**

This motto, now found on all U.S. Coins, first appeared in 1864, during the Civil War, on the new bronze 2¢ coin. The 2¢ piece was issued from 1864 to 1873, when it was abandoned.



### **Three Cent Coins**

In 1851 the postal rate dropped from 5¢ to 3¢ and coins were in short supply to make change when people wanted to buy stamps. So the 3¢ coin was created for that purpose. (Simultaneously the \$3 gold coin was created to buy sheets of 100 3¢ stamps.) The first 3¢ coin was a tiny silver piece, immediately referred to as a “trime” (1/3 of a dime). At 14mm diameter, this is the smallest U.S. coin ever issued. It was too small for practicality, so in 1865 a 3¢ copper-nickel, somewhat larger, was issued. Strangely enough, the silver trime continued to be minted until 1873, when it was abandoned. The larger copper-nickel version continued on until 1889.

Want to learn more about our strange money system? Let me know and we'll see what else we can dig up about “strange change”.



# LONE STAR MENSA CONTACTS BY FUNCTION

**As of January 10, 2012**

## **Newsletter**

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## **Gatherings and Events**

		--Vacant--	
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TGITs		--Vacant--	
Games Night		--Vacant--	
Chess Night	cmvc95@yahoo.com	Douglas Yee	288-9172
Eclectic Eats	ledelstein@mindspring.com	Linda Edelstein	491-9881
Picnics and Parties		--Vacant--	
Southern area events	southernarea@lsm.us.mensa.org	*Brian Bloch	878-8800

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## **S.I.G.H.T**

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locsec@lsm.us.mensa.org		*John Neemidge	310-7863

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

## JUNE CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5 <b>Eclectic Eats</b>	6	7 <b>Board Mtg</b>	8	9
10	11 <b>Member Meeting</b>	12	13	14 ALG deadline Chess Night TGIT-North	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 TGIT-South	22	23
24	25	26	28	29 Board Mtg TGIT North	30	

**Fold & Label**

See the online calendar ([www.lsm.us.mensa.org/events/calendar.html](http://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

### Mensa Admissions Testing

For time, location, and details contact Austin Meyer at 512-971-0123 or [austin.g.meyer@gmail.com](mailto:austin.g.meyer@gmail.com).

### ALG/Calendar Deadline

**2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday**

**June 7, Midnight**  
Submissions due.

### Chess Night (with the TGIT group)

**3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday**  
**June 7, 6-8 PM**

Central Market Café North, hosted by Douglas Yee. Bring your chess sets if you have them.

### Thank Goodness It's Thursday (North)

**2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays**

**June 14 & 29, 6:00-8:00 PM**

Central Market Café North at 4001 N. Lamar Blvd. and 44<sup>th</sup> Streets, Austin, on the south side of the store. Meet us at the Café for conversation, food and fun

### Eclectic Eats

**June 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesday**

### Dimassis Mediterranean Buffet

12636 Research Blvd. Mediterranean food, all you care to Eat. Please RSVP

*Prospective members welcome.  
Look for the Mensa table sign.*

### Member Meeting

**2<sup>nd</sup> Monday**  
**June 11, 6:15-8:45 PM**

Carver Public Library, Rooms 2-3 1161 Angelina, Austin, between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets, east of I-35. 512-974-1010

Location allows direct access to the library from Hwy 183 and via FM 969 MLK and 12<sup>th</sup> Street

### Thank Goodness It's Thursday (South)

**3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays**

**June 14, 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 Frontier Trail access road (the access road -290/SR71) 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 always welcome.

### Seal & Label the Newsletter

**4<sup>th</sup> Thursday**

**June 21, 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

### Board Meeting

**Thursday June 29**

Carver Public Library, Rooms 2-3 1161 Angelina, Austin, between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets, east of I-35. 512-974-1010  
Location allows direct access to the library from Hwy 183 and via FM 969 MLK and 12<sup>th</sup> Street

### UPCOMING IN July

July 9, Member Meeting

July 12, TGIT North  
Chess Night, ALG Deadline

July 19, TGIT-South  
July 12 & 26, TGIT-North

*If a man empties his purse into his head, no man can take it away from him. An investment in knowledge always pays the best Interest.*

*--Benjamin Franklin*

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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](mailto:calendar@lsm.us.mensa.org) by the second Thursday of each month for the next month's calendar.



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