

Armadillo Literary Gazette

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

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Submitted By Rose Berkowitz

Although I wasn't able to attend, I've heard that this year's LoneStaRG was a lot of fun. The attendees had a wonderful time, and thoroughly enjoyed all the weekend had to offer. It was all made possible by the dedication and hard work of our RG committee- -most notably the Co-chairs John and Geri Neemidge, and Modelle Gibson, who almost single-handedly ran Hospitality once again this year. (And she only joined Mensa last year!) I hope everyone who reaped the benefits of their efforts took the time to thank our volunteers. This couldn't have happened without them.

Next year's RG is already being planned, under the able direction of Ron and Linda Edelstein, who have volunteered once again to be co-chairs. There's much work involved, and they'll need all the help they can get. If you can contribute in any way—from providing ideas to donating items for goody bags to cleaning up the hospitality area—I urge you to contact them and get on board.

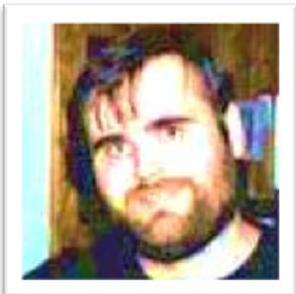
Austin is a major American city. Mensa groups in other major American cities are well-known for their great RGs—places like Chicago, San Francisco, New York, even Somerset, NJ. Let's pitch in and make our 2013 RG "absolutely fabulous!"

I'm always glad to hear from you. So please send in your comments, ideas, essays, or whatever else you'd like to contribute. No particular word limit, but emailed submissions are appreciated.

Note: Since "http://www." is common to the majority of internet URLs, I don't repeat this in the URLs used throughout this publication. If you click on a link in the emailed version, the address automatically resolves. For links in the printed version, simply add this to the front of the URL when typing it in to the address bar.

A WORD TO THE WISE

Submitted by John Neemidge, LocSec



As I write this, LonestarRG XIV has recently concluded. About 85 of us were there; we had great speakers, fun games and events, great food, and lots of conversation. We also raised about \$400 for the Lone Star Mensa scholarship fund. If you missed it, please make plans now to attend next year's convention, LonestarRG XV, chaired by Linda and Ron Edelstein (who chaired LonestarRG XII a couple of years ago). Linda and Ron had a great idea: present several possible RG themes to the attendees and let everyone vote. The winner, in a landslide, was "It's About Time". It'll be a great time and I hope everyone will go.

In between now and then, there'll be plenty of opportunities to get together. Coming up at Thanksgiving, North Texas Mensa (northtexasmensa.org) will be hosting their Regional Gathering, the Feast of Pleasures and Delights, in Dallas. A week later, New Orleans Mensa (neworleans.us.mensa.org) will host their RG. Next year, over Memorial Day, Gulf Coast Mensa (gcmensa.org) will be hosting SynRG: A Novel RG. Then, we get a special treat: American Mensa's Annual Gathering (ag.us.mensa.org) will be just up the road in Fort Worth from July

3-7. Annual Gatherings usually have over 2,000 attendees and are a lot of fun; it's the first one in Texas since 2001 in Dallas, and the next few after this are much farther away (Boston, Louisville, and San Diego). Sign up early; you'll get a better rate, and the AG hotels are filling up quickly.

Locally, we've got plenty to do, with monthly meetings, TGIT, and more. We're organizing an outing to Scare For A Cure (where I and my family are volunteering) in October. Coming up in December we'll be having our annual Holiday Party from 7-10 pm on Saturday, December 15. It should be a great time and we hope you'll come join us.

I'm looking forward to seeing all of you at something soon!

SCARE FOR A CURE

By John Neemidge

Ghost Town, 14219 Littig Road, Manor, Texas Saturday, Oct 20, 8pm

Come out to Scare For A Cure (scareforacure.org) with your fellow Mensans. Scare is an interactive, extreme haunted adventure; the event raises money for local cancer-related charities. You will be doused in fake blood and you will be scared! Several Lone Star Mensans, including Geri and John Neemidge (and their kids Paige and David) and Patsy Graham, are in the cast this year. It's a great cause and lots of fun! We're

suggesting that Mensans go to the Saturday Oct. 20, 8pm show, but there are performances Oct 12, 13, 18-20, 25-27, and 31.

Guests will be admitted in groups of six at a time; we can possibly help Mensans group up, if you contact us (at badgers@neemidge.net). Scare is not recommended for children under 12 (unless they're in the cast, of course). Buy tickets online early, as the event will sell out. Scare is being held at Ghost Town, which is off 290 between Manor and Elgin, just a 20 minute drive from Central Austin.

MEMBER MEETINGS

Submitted by Rose M. Berkowitz, Editor

October Meeting

This month's meeting will be a SIG Discussion Group session. Bring your stories, poems, songs, comedy routines—whatever you'd like to share with your fellow Mensans. The only requirement is to have a good time!

Last Month's Meeting

About a dozen members participated. First up was Edward Gordon, who gave an interesting presentation on how he was able to publish his autobiography free of charge. Of course, it takes a lot of effort to publicize and distribute a self-published book once it's written, and there are many things to be considered both before and after publishing. If you'd like to see a copy of his informative presentation in PowerPoint format, you can request it by contacting Mr. Gordon at edgortex@gmail.com. His book is now available both in print and in many electronic formats.

Ricardo Turullols-Bonilla then gave what some have referred to as a "surreal" presentation on his system of philosophy, which he calls "Dialogics." He evidently feels there is some relationship between the ideas proposed by the ancient Greek wisdom schools and solving the problems of our current society. His self-published books are available online at Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

Reading makes immigrants of us all. It takes us away from home; but more importantly, it finds homes for us everywhere.- Jean Rhys

SEPTEMBER BOARD MINUTES

Submitted by Brian Bloch, Vice-President/Secretary

The September meeting of the LSM Board of Officers convened at 7:30 PM, Thursday, September 6, 2012 at Carver Public Library, Rooms 2-3, 1161 Angelina, Austin, Texas. Attendees were: Angela Adams, Brian Bloch, Don Drumtra, Ron Edelstein, Crocket Grabbe, John Neemidge and Douglas Yee.

The board adopted the agenda and the minutes of the August 2012 Regular Board meeting as presented on page 7 of the September ALG. The agenda, minutes, written reports and other documents related to the meeting are available on the LSM website. Paper copies are available upon request.

REPORTS

- **Treasurer (Don Drumtra):** 2012 RG, financial information is incomplete at this meeting time. A total of \$420 was raised for scholarships. For the 2013 RG, approximately \$1200 has been collected from 27 registrants. No LSM Financial report was presented..
- **Com. Comm. (Don Drumtra):** Newsletter went out on time.
- **Ed. Comm. (Don Drumtra):** Confirmed above \$420 taken in for scholarships.
- **Mem. Comm. (John Neemidge):** 3 people tested at 2012 AG. No other report.
- **Sym. Comm. (Angela Adams):** Speakers are arranged for September.. Angela is working on October.
- **LSMRG 2012.** It was a good RG with positive feedback received. No final accounts yet available. There was mixed feedback regarding the hotel. Leftovers will be transferred to Ron for use at the 2013 Holiday Party.
- **2013 RG. (Don Drumtra):** The theme is "Time". Don will soon start asking for speakers and will contact other nearby local groups, as well as the Bulletin, for publicity.
- **Website.** No report.
- **Mind Games. (Don Drumtra):** Bid package received. John and Patsy will work on submission to National.

ACTIONS

The Board approved the selection of "Time" as the theme for LonestarRG 2013.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There have been letters written in response to the editorial on page 1 of the August ALG and Brian will also be writing a response. John said that individual responses are preferable to a response by the Board.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for October 4, 2012 at Carver Public Library. ** The November meeting will be held at Café Express, 3418 N. Lamar Blvd. Both meetings are to start at 7:30 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM

** Secretary's note: Subsequent to the meeting, the Carver Library became available for the November meeting. A resolution revising the November meeting place will be on the October agenda.

DID YOU KNOW?

Submitted by Don Drumtra, Secretary Pro Tem

It has been 9 months since Mensa offered us a choice in whether we wanted paper newsletters delivered to our mail box or electronic copies delivered by

email to our email boxes. Here are some interesting numbers that show the impact on Lone Star Mensa.

- 43 percent of LSM members selected electronic and 16 percent selected paper, leaving 41 percent without a selection.

- Of the 41 percent to be converted to electronic by default, 53 percent (22 percent of membership) actually automatically converted to electronic; the remainder had no email address on file and so remained with paper.
- An interesting result was that 7 percent of LSM members requested

electronic but did not provide an email address so they remain with paper.

Bottom line:

- 57 percent of LSM members currently receive electronic and 43 percent receive print
- Printing and mailing costs were reduced by over 50

percent--a significant savings -without any members forcibly converted and all with the capability to change their option at any time.

If you are getting paper and would rather have an electronic copy delivered to your email box you can change your online profile or let Rose, Linda, or me know.

FROM THE RVC—REPORT FROM THE AG

Submitted by Roger Durham, Region 6 RVC



AMC News: At the meeting of the American Mensa Committee in September, your Board of Directors voted to replace the procedure we have been using to deal with vacancies in the office of Regional Vice-Chairman. You may recall that over

the past few years some members have expressed dissatisfaction with the policy of appointing a non-voting representative to fill the remaining term of an RVC whose office becomes vacant for any reason. This system was adopted several years ago when our legal counsel advised us that New York law (Mensa is incorporated in the State of New York) prohibits the appointment of a voting member to replace a member of the Board of Directors who was elected by only a subset of those entitled to vote on other offices. This prohibition is primarily aimed at business corporations, which often have directors who represent only a particular class of stockholders, but unfortunately the same provision is found in the law governing non-profit corporations like ours.

The vast majority of members seem to have no problem with the arrangement we have been using, and I thought the question had been dropped, but at the Annual Gathering in Reno some of the other RVCs came up with a new plan, which they submitted for a vote at the September meeting. I did not support the new arrangement, but it passed narrowly despite my

opposition. Unlike previous plans, it does not require amendment of our by-laws, so it will not be submitted to the membership for approval.

The new policy is that in the event of a vacancy in the office of RVC, that RVC's region will be divided among two or more adjacent regions, and the RVCs of those regions will act as RVC for the groups in their part of the newly-divided region as well as their own for the remainder of that term of office. At the end of the term, the former region will elect its own RVC and be restored to its previous status. Frankly, I have little hope that this new arrangement will be any more acceptable to those who opposed our previous system, but perhaps I'm mistaken.

The vote on the dues increase announced at the last meeting was postponed until after the International Board of Directors meeting in October, as it is generally expected that the IBD will increase the International Component, which is the amount that each national Mensa must contribute to the international organization. It is currently 4% of the total dues amount collected each year.

As always, if you have questions or concerns about anything in Mensa, you can reach me at rvc6@us.mensa.org, or by mail at 9920 Ridgehaven Drive, Dallas, TX 75238.

Last but certainly not least, don't forget North Texas Mensa's upcoming RG in Dallas, Feast of Pleasures and Delights XXXIII, over Thanksgiving weekend, and the RG in New Orleans the first weekend in December!

NOMINATING COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES CANDIDATES FOR 2013 BOARD

Following is the list of candidates for national office that have been approved by the 2012-2013 Nominating Committee. Please note candidates may also be added to the national ballot by petition, and the specifics of that procedure will be announced sometime before mid-September after the Election Committee finalizes the 2013 Code of Election Procedures. Petition candidates will then have until Feb. 1, 2013, to complete the petition process. Further information and petition forms will be available online at us.mensa.org/election.

In accordance with the Bylaws and ASIEs of American Mensa, the National Nominating Committee has received CIFs from members interested in running for national and regional offices, has met with some of the potential candidates at the AG and has received additional information from them. After careful consideration, the Nomination Committee forwards the following names to the Election Committee and to the AMC as approved candidates.

I would like to thank the Members of the 2012-2013 Nominating Committee for their dedication and hard work.

Pat Coontz, NomComm Chair
NomCommChair@us.mensa.org
760-861-2375

POSITION SOUGHT	CANDIDATE(S)
Chair	Dan Burg
1st Vice Chair	John Recht, Heather Miller Poirier
2nd Vice Chair	Kenneth Silver, Debra Reiger
Secretary	Brian Reeves
Treasurer	Nick Sanford
RVC 1	Andrew Heffernan
RVC 2	Nancy M. Farrar, James Richard Sanford
RVC 3	Julia Ashley, John Michael Voymas
RVC 4	Ellen Voie
RVC 5	Bertie Clarke, Baker D. Ring
RVC 6	Roger Durham
RVC 7	William Jacob Winship, Gregory Robert Kontz
RVC 8	Harold Ward
RVC 9	Clark Jones, Desiree Sagray
RVC 10	Thomas George Thomas

MEMBER QUESTION: WHEN DID YOU NOTICE YOU WERE A LITTLE DIFFERENT?

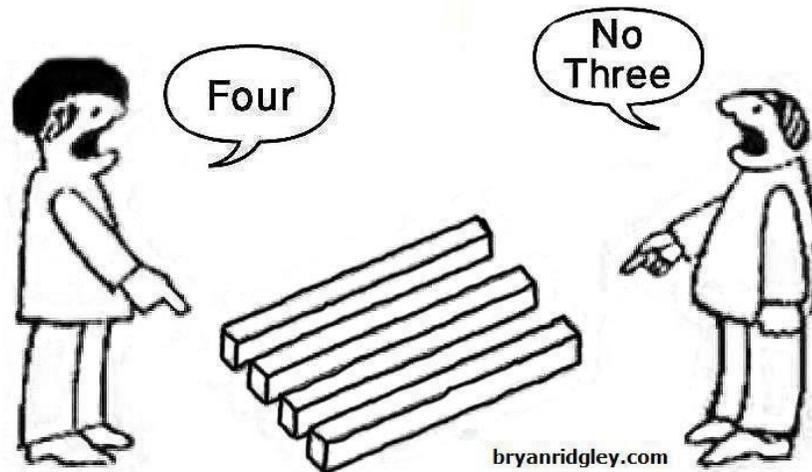
By JimAnn Oliver, Life Member

When I passed from first grade at the age of four, no one thought about ages. After all, the classroom, with four grades in it, had lots of ages and sizes. Later, in high school at age 12, I was as well developed as the other freshmen. BUT . . . about three months into that year I lined up with all the other high school students to get X-rayed for TB. No dice; I was stopped at the door. "Not within the age range."

This was the first time I became aware that I was somewhat of a school (or social) misfit. However, I mostly ignored that -- till I hit activities which had some sort of age framework, such as when, as a college sophomore, the church insisted on putting me in the high-schooler's Sunday School class. I vigorously declined. That was the episode which convinced me there could be "little white lies". Henceforth, in a pinch situation I simply lied about my age--one of the very few things I have ever lied about!

[This is the first in a series of questions JimAnn will be posing, similar to those being carried in the Mensa Bulletin. She invites you to write in to the Gazette with your answers, to share with your fellow LSM members.—Editor]

Reality can be so complex that equally valid observations from differing perspectives can appear to be contradictory.



MEMBER CHALLENGE: ATTENTION ALL PUZZLE AND BOARD GAME ENTHUSIASTS

By Amanda Lacy

At the RG, I overheard someone saying "There's no reason she shouldn't be able to play with us."

I couldn't agree more. If you were to design a game that could be played by a blind or visually impaired person, or if you had to play or solve it blindfolded, what design modifications would you make? My experience with games is quite limited, so feel free to broaden my horizons by giving detailed descriptions of your favorite games. I only ask that you adhere to a few guidelines:

1. Enough isolation already! It must be something that two or more people (blind and/or sighted) can play together.
2. Don't reinvent the wheel. Some of the most common gaming implements are either already accessible or easily modified. For example, most dominos and six-sided dice have depressed dots which can be read with the fingertips, and Braille/large print cards can easily be purchased or created.
3. Keep it smart. Any changes you make to the layout or rules of the game should neither dumb down the game nor make it agonizingly slow for sighted players. After all, it is expected to be played by Mensans.

Besides myself, I know of at least two other LSM members with either impaired or nonexistent vision who might benefit. Don't be afraid to think up adaptations or spin-offs of games which at first may seem impossible to play with any sense but eyesight. I look forward to testing your best ideas. Contact me at [lacy925@gmail.com/](mailto:lacy925@gmail.com)

SAVE THE DATE—LSM HOLIDAY PARTY!

Submitted by John Neemidge



First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin
4700 Grover Ave., Austin, TX
Saturday, Dec 15, 7-10 pm

Join us for Lone Star Mensa's annual Holiday Party! Food, drinks, white elephant gift exchange, and merriment. Full details in the November 'Dillo.

2012 NORTH TEXAS MENSA RG

Submitted by Andy McKellar, Chair

If you don't have any plans for Thanksgiving weekend (Nov. 22-25) after seeing your family for dinner, consider coming to North Texas Mensa's "Feast of Pleasures and Delights XXXIII." We will have good speakers, an excellent array of games, five tastings (beer, wine, cheese, sodas, and flavored vodkas), a Saturday night dance, and most of the other usual RG festivities. One of the extras this year is a paid ticket to the hotel's Saturday night buffet to augment the usual snacks and beverages in Hospitality -- and NO BLACK FRIDAY SHOPPERS (once you get to the hotel, that is). Registration is \$65 until Oct. 31, \$80 thereafter for adults; kids 6-12 are half-price, tots 5 and under are free. The hotel rate is \$70 a night -- a really sweet deal. Call the Night Hotel North Dallas (a Wyndham hotel which is actually in Farmers Branch) at 972-243-3363 and ask for the North Texas Mensa rate. You can get in touch with the RG registrar at RG2012registrar@northtexasmensa.org or by calling 214-361-4665.



FEAST OF PLEASURES AND DELIGHTS XXXIII Thanksgiving Nov. 22 To Nov. 25, 2012

North Texas Mensa is getting ready for its 2012 RG! It will be packed with events designed to appeal to every appetite, starting Thursday evening and ending Sunday afternoon! This year we'll bring you fascinating speakers, lots of games, another great dance, and lots of other interesting activities. There will be the usual fun and frolic that has given the NTM RG such a good reputation over the past several years! Come join your Mensa friends/family for another fun-filled Thanksgiving weekend. When: Thanksgiving weekend – Thursday, November 22 through Sunday, November 25, 2012. Come early and stay late to savor all the fun!

Where: The Night Hotel North Dallas, 2645 LBJ Freeway, Dallas, TX 75234 – Hotel Phone is 972-243-3363. This was formerly the Holiday Inn Select North Dallas (and the Summit in the early 80s). There is no 800 # set up for the Night Hotel North Dallas yet so you will need to call the local number and ask for the North Texas Mensa rate. And that rate is only \$70 a night and includes 2 free meals at their Breakfast Buffet. This is a REAL bargain!! Registration: \$65 if postmarked by Oct 31, 2012, and \$80 thereafter. All children 0-5 years of age are free. Pre-teens (6–12 at time of RG) are ½ the price of regular registration on the day they register. Check, money order, or credit cards are accepted. To register, use the handy form on the back and send to Deborah Lockhart, Registrar, at 6211 W. Northwest Hwy, # 1204, Dallas, TX 75225-3425.

Tastings! Tastings! Tastings!

We'll be having the ever-popular beer and wine tastings again this year and adding cheese, soda, and Flavored Vodka tastings. NOTICE: While it is our intention to conduct all tastings, one or more may be canceled if difficulties should arise. There will be no refunds on tasting tickets unless the event is canceled or rescheduled.

Saturday Night Dance!

Come enjoy a pleasant evening with your Mensa friends and dance the night away. More information will be forthcoming.

Saturday Night Buffet – FREE

Full Registrations include a ticket to the Zaya Restaurant's Saturday Night Buffet. It will be available anytime from 6 pm to closing (which is currently midnight).

Activities will start on Thursday night and continue through Sunday afternoon so make your hotel and travel reservations accordingly. The hotel is new this year and is an upscale hotel. We think you're going to really like it. And we get free wi-fi in our rooms. One down-side: this is a NON-SMOKING facility. But there is space outside the building where you can smoke. Sorry Smokers: we couldn't get them to budge on this. They will honor our rate 3 days prior and 3 days after the RG, if space is available. You can also bring pets again this year but ask about their restrictions on pets when you call for your reservation.

ICING ON THE CAKE FOR THE SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAM!

Submitted by Claudia Ellis Harbert, Lone Star Mensa Scholarships Coordinator

What do bacon-flavored ice cream, tofu couscous cake, Texas cherry cobbler, and dark chocolate brownies with coconut icing have in common? They were all entries in a desserts contest at the RG! Anyone could enter a dessert, and anyone could taste whatever desserts they wanted. But anyone who wanted to vote for a dessert had to buy a ticket at the high price of 4/\$1. And what do you think happened? Lone Star Mensans bought tickets and tickets and more tickets! As Scholarships Coordinator and ticket-seller, I was humbled and honored to receive many \$5, \$10, and \$20 bills. (I also tasted everything and had seconds of my favorites and gained 2 pounds.) Some Mensans didn't even take the tickets. I guess some voted their tickets for desserts their spouses or friends had brought, and some voted for their favorite several desserts. Every dessert received a bunch of tickets. The winner was Linda Edelstein's Texas Cherry Cobbler!

Thanks to John and Geri Neemidge for the fun fundraiser idea. Thanks to everyone who donated a dessert and to all who donated money! We made \$156 from the desserts. We also had a silent auction of some donated items, including some RG registration bargains for next year's Austin, Houston and Dallas RGs. The silent auction was the final event of the RG, and although the crowd had thinned and there wasn't much competitive bidding, many of those who bid offered generous amounts above recommended minimum bids, in the spirit of donating to the scholarships program! The silent auction made \$264, which included a \$40 donation from a generous M who didn't even win the item they originally bid on! Thank you all! We have some wonderful folks attending our RGs!

SCHOLARSHIPS CONTEST 2012-2013 BEGINS

Submitted by Claudia Ellis Harbert, Lone Star Mensa Scholarships Coordinator

The scholarships contest for 2012-2013 will officially begin on September 15th! Contestants, who do not have to be Mensa members, write an essay about their educational dreams and plans. National Mensa guarantees a scholarship of \$300 to a local winner within the Lone Star Mensa geographic area. Through our fundraising activities at the RG, Lone Star Mensa has been giving an extra \$500 to our local winner.

Enter to win, or mention the contest to your family and friends who are in an educational program beyond high school. The only qualification is that you need to be enrolled in an accredited degree or certificate program for 2013-2014. In addition, Mensa members can enter a separate contest for members only (you can use the same essay for both contests). The deadline is January 15, 2013. Get the details and this year, for the first time, fill out the entire application online at mensafoundation.org/scholarships.

WHAT THE SUN CITY DISCUSSION GROUP IS UP TO

By Joe DeBell

Re: the potential discussion subjects for this Sunday (2 PM).

Received some feedback from members on the order of discussion subjects from initial list I sent out earlier, and so compiled a new possible discussion order list below).

Now of course we won't come close to getting all or even nearly all of these discussed; and knowing our penchant for veering off course, who knows what will happen, but it's a start.

The paranormal one is a holdover (Edna). I know Burton probably wants to talk a little about some super-fast photography. The Outlaw Map of Physics (you can Google it) could take a long time..

What we don't get to, there's next time...

For the neuroscience one, the guilty brain, (Trudy), I'm separately sending that copy of the Mensa Brainwave in a follow-on email for your reading pleasure.

We're welcoming a new group member Nancy Hester from Georgetown; been an active Mensa member for

some time. Any new recommendations, just send them to me. Looking forward to Sunday..

Mensa SIG subjects for September 9 meeting: (In order of number of member responses...)

1. What I did on my summer vacation (short!).
2. "Paranormal" experiences... like pre-cognition, déjà vu, seeing or hearing an "entity", a "warning", a feeling of a "presence," a cold spot? Have you experienced any of these?
3. The Higgs Boson and The Big Bang.
4. A Standard Model of Physics (The "Outlaw Map of Physics" from John Aikman)
5. Where is alternative energy really heading? From which sources?
6. All these brain games... Do they really do any good?

7. Neuroscience - "My brain made me do it!" How much of your misdeeds are you really responsible for?
8. Computer - assisted bio-implants: Great breakthroughs! ... or, not so good?
9. Are our memories the total "us"? What if they could be changed?
10. How come some people can clearly recall every day of their lives?
11. What causes people to hoard stuff /junk;fill their houses with it?
12. The rapidly increasing army of smart robots around us...
13. Any validity to the widely held concept of reincarnation?
14. A couple of quick Mental Floss tests.
15. Empires of Light.

MY FIRST RG

By Amanda Lacy

First, I want to thank Ron and Linda Edelstein. I gave them every reason why it was impossible for me to attend an RG, and they overcame each one.

The first thing I noticed was a relaxing, informal atmosphere. The only rule was the name tag requirement, which I resisted until someone explained the colored dot system to me. Dots on name badges are used to distinguish huggers from non-huggers. I discovered a group of Mensans who enjoy lots of close hugs and took full advantage of it. 😊 Perhaps a scented version of this dot system could be developed for visually-impaired members.

At any given time there were usually two activities taking place. People entered them late or came and went, but were always considerate of those who were trying to listen to a speaker or watch a movie. If I wasn't too interested in either event or just needed a break, I could wander into the hospitality room. There I

could eat, drink, and space out, or join an interesting discussion.

The theme of this year's RG was food, and there was plenty of it. The root beer tasting (held Saturday afternoon) was in my opinion superior to the other tastings. Prof. Edelstein gave us all a lesson in the history of root beer and related drinks. My mind and taste buds were stimulated at once. The sheer variety of flavors present in the crock-pot and dessert dishes was a delight. The spam event on Sunday was a license to play with food. I did not carve it, but worked it through my fingers into an oily paste and then made an attempt to sculpt it like Play-Doh. It made a lovely mess.

The BBDSM discussion was just plain bizarre. After the dance Saturday evening, I had intended to return to hospitality, but the guy I was following led me into a discussion group headed by a couple describing their secret lives within a society of people who enjoy doing strange and

sometimes dangerous things to one another. After the discussion I was allowed to feel the effects of the violet wand—a device used for the application of low current, high voltage electricity to the body using an electromagnetic coil. It made a threatening "zzzzzap" noise, but when I held it a few millimeters from my skin it just tickled.

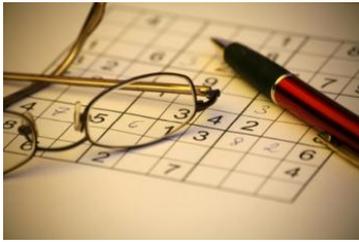
All of these activities provided input to all my available senses, and that is what food is supposed to do. Food is a pure sensory experience that brings people together.

At the RG, I was surrounded by people who would ask rather than assume. Interactions are infinitely more meaningful when I'm in a room full of people who love learning as much as I do. But the people in this group aren't just a bunch of copies of Mr. Spock. They are kind and understanding of each other's differences. I want to live at an RG.

YOUR SUDOKU PUZZLE

Weekly Extremes, sudoku.org.uk

By Douglas Yee



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

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.

EVAULUATING E-BOOK READERS

By Ron Edelstein

What I'm going to do is mention several e-readers with which I'm familiar and what I consider the strengths and disadvantages of each one. I can't tell you absolutely which is best, just the basis on which I judge them.

Kindle Fire:

I have one, given to me by Andrew and Kem. It's a handy little device, a sort of crossover between a tablet computer and an e-reader--and doesn't do either job very well. It has the advantage of a bright, color LCD screen, so you can read it with other lights off if you wish. Battery life could be better...probably good for five or six hours of play or reading before you need a charge. No SD card slot, so the only memory is what it has on board, not expandable. However, it's got 2GB of user available memory, so not too bad if you aren't into downloading videos and such. I find it a little thick and heavy for much use as an e-reader, and I don't like to be tied that closely to Amazon. It does have the advantage of WiFi connectivity, so downloading e-books from Amazon is really easy. However, loading books from other sources--not so easy. I find I

have to download them to my computer and "side load" them from there with the USB cable. I also don't like the fact that it uses a proprietary USB mini-plug instead of the standard USB plug, so if you lose the cable you have to buy another from Amazon--and they are really proud of it!

Ectabook Jet-Book Lite:

This is my preferred e-reader. Not one you are likely to have heard of, but I bought it after much research for some specific reasons:

Cheap. I paid about \$115 for it. You can get them directly from the manufacturer now for \$90. The screen is 5", so smaller than the Fire, but very legible. It is an LCD screen, but uses a black on white text format (reversible if you want, though I'd find that hard to use.) It can display several text sizes so you can make it larger (with fewer words per page, of course). Not backlit so you do need a light source to read, just as in the case of a paper book. It has the significant advantage of using four AA batteries for power--you can use either regular alkaline AA cells or the rechargeable kind. I use the

rechargeable with a set of alkalines on hand for emergency backup.

Couple of disadvantages...no WiFi. Sideloaded is the only way to get books into it. It has a relatively low built in memory of 100 Mb, but it has a mini-SD card slot so you can stick any standard mini-SD card in there up to 32GB, so virtually unlimited space. When plugged into the computer with the USB cable, the computer just sees the Jetbook and its SD card as two more drives and you just set up folders and copy books into them just as you would on your main computer drive. I name the folders according to contents--Sci-Fi, History, Religion, etc. and the Jetbook sees them that way when you are looking at your library. Also the Jetbook does not retain any memory when you have to change the batteries, so if you are in the middle of reading a book when the charge runs out (it gets about 24 reading hours per charge, so you can usually read a couple of books without changing the batteries), be sure to note the page number so you can get back to it later. As long as there is a charge, it stays right where you left it. Jetbook is not affiliated with

any of the book companies and can read virtually every e-book and text format known, so you can get your books from anywhere.

Kindle - various models:

Uses "e-ink" for display...similar to the B&W LCD of the Jetbook, but even sharper contrast. Not backlighted, so you do need a light source to read, just as in the case of a paper book. Like the Fire, tied closely to Amazon. Some models are WiFi only, others have 3G capability (for which you have to have a data plan). I would recommend the WiFi versions since you don't really need to be able to download a new book in the middle of the Mojave Desert and it's a lot cheaper and better battery life. They come in various sizes. I find the 5" and 7" the most practical. Larger is harder to hold

in the hand for long periods or to pack for travel. Expensive.

Nook - various models:

Tied to Barnes & Noble, similar to the Kindle with Amazon. Otherwise, whatever can be said for Kindle applies to Nooks. They allow you to download and browse books when you are actually in a B&N store to sample them and decide if you want to keep them.

Sony E-readers:

This is the choice of my son, David, who is an avid e-reader and writer of e-books. If I were to replace my Jetbook, I'd probably choose one of the Sony family. They have the e-ink screen format and can read all the different e-book formats, not tied to just one source such as

Amazon or B&N. They are WiFi capable and some have 3G capability. They are generally in the 7" size and cost around \$129 from Sony. Austin Public Library is in the process of establishing an online e-book library and the Sony will be able to use that when it is in place.

I also have an old Palm T|X PDA which has excellent screen resolution that I use because it tucks into a shirt pocket and of course does all the other things a Palm does. It's obsolete--Palm doesn't even exist as a company anymore, but I'd not give it up for anything! It also reads all the standard formats. Palms are still available used on the secondary market, though you'd probably find the screen too small for comfortable reading.

WEB SITES YOU'D LIKE

Adventures into macro- and micro-space (from Ron Edelstein):

youtube.com/watch?v=0fKBhvDjuy0
apod.nasa.gov/apod/ap120312.html

And here's just a sample of the many types of member blogs available at the American Mensa web site at us.mensa.org/connect/mensa-on-the-web/

A Dog Named Handsome

Original songs. You check out mine and I'll check out yours.

Ameriku, the art of poetry

This blog is related to my trademarked Ameriku art, and discusses various aspects of haiku as well as nature and art.

Better Than I Ever Expected: Sex and Aging

I am an advocate for ageless sexuality and the author of Better Than I Ever Expected: Straight Talk About Sex After Sixty. I started this blog so that we can continue to "talk straight" about topics involving sex and aging.

Deranged Blogger

Sometimes it takes other Mensans to understand a Mensan's sense of humor. This is a dry wit/satire blog; hope you stop by. Drop me a line with your thoughts if you do.

Dr. Jarret Morrow's health and fitness blog

A health and fitness blog written by a physician/Mensa Member.

HAPPY OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS*

- 1 David Floyd
- 1 Melanie G Gover
- 1 Robert Brian Holder
- 1 James Michael Rauch
- 3 Thomas M Spillman Jr
- 3 John David White
- 4 Joan C Dameron
- 4 Karen M Werner
- 7 Guanyan Cai
- 10 Robert Allan Larson
- 11 Brock P Childs
- 12 Matthew T Scarborough
- 15 Vicky Yvonne Spradling
- 16 Brett McKenzie
- 19 Charles D Daniel
- 23 Michael Bennett McCormick
- 25 Audrey L Patton
- 26 Robert I May
- 26 Amber C Pine
- 26 Rachel Wenger-Keller
- 26 Elizabeth Wrightson
- 28 Kimberly R Chapin
- 28 W Andrew York
- 29 Stephen A McAlister
- 29 Mary Frances Satterfield
- 29 David R Travis



NEW MEMBERS—WELCOME!

- Brock P Childs
- Steven Miller
- Elango Rajagopal
- Raven Shea
- Marshall M Tunstall

JUST MOVED IN—HI NEIGHBOR!

- Brad F Dieringer
- Matthew L Freeman
- Artemis Harbert
- Robert B Hood
- Charles B Hoover
- William Peregoy

WELCOME BACK--MISSED YOU!

- Michael Riggs
- Garry Morgan Watkins

GOODBYE—WE WISH YOU WELL

- Gerri J Duke
- Ross A Williams

**OCTOBER
ANNIVERSARIES**

MEMBER FOR 40 YEARS

- Ellen Ruth Shaffer CPA

MEMBER FOR 15 YEARS

- W Glynn Cooper

MEMBER FOR 10 YEARS

- Leo D Gordon
- Steven Neill

MEMBER FOR 5 YEARS

- Ian Ball
- Natalie Root
- Michael Rubin

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In my role as Communications Officer, I regularly read most of the newsletters throughout the country. The Armadillo Literary Gazette is regularly one of the better ones I read.

You have a good, clean layout, well-written articles and your letters to the editor indicate people are being engaged by what you write. Well done.

Thanks for all you do for Mensa.

Brian Reeves
AML Communications Officer

As usual, I enjoyed the Armadillo Literary Gazette. You do a thankless job in editing it, so I, at least, will say thanks!

Here is another source for free eBooks you might like:
gutenberg.org/

They offer some 40,000 books.

Take care...

Tom Spillman

Whoever it was didn't think English was easy probably realizes that about a third of the examples were of a recognizable pattern in English in which a two-syllable word is used as a noun when stressed on the first syllable & as a verb when stressed on the second. If English spelling showed on which syllable a word was stressed these words would not be confusing at all. Such words are all of Romance origin, & many go right back to Latin, so the relationship between the meanings of the noun & the verb is not always obvious. The resemblance between the two "entrance" words is coincidence.

The list of these words is not static. In many of these pairs (admittedly the “doubtful” ones) that H. W. Fowler presented in his celebrated guide to the English of a century ago, *Modern English Usage* (under “Noun & verb accent”) one of the halves has gone out of use. On the other hand, the verb-derived nouns “address,” “assist,” “display,” and “invite,” with stress on the first syllable, must all be of pretty recent origin, suggesting that the pattern is still living, at least in one direction. However, the people who made verbs out of the nouns “access” & “impact” apparently felt no need to move the stress to the last syllable, in spite of the already existing “accéde” and “impínge.”

The use of the position of the stress to distinguish an adjective from a verb is fuzzier; but I like to pronounce the adjective “dílute” with the stress on the first syllable, and the verb “frequíent” with the stress on the last.

– Martyn Hitchcock

[The next three emails gave me an idea. What other skills, knowledge, or experience do the members of LoneStar Mensa have that they could share with fellow members? If you have any ideas, send them to me and I can start putting together a directory for LSM.—Editor]

Rose,

Thanks for connecting me to Amanda. She has already been kind enough to let me know how to get the Gazette.

I look forward to meeting the other folks in LSM.

Best wishes,

Morgan

G. Morgan Watkins

Mr. Watkins,

I’m happy to hear that you intend to participate in some of our LSM events. I’ve forwarded your request for information to Amanda Lacy, who’s another blind person in our group, and quite knowledgeable about these issues.

Linda Edelstein emails a pdf copy of the Gazette each month to those members who have indicated their preference for emailed copies in their profile on the American Mensa web site.

Rose M. Berkowitz
Editor, Armadillo Literary Gazette

Dear Rose,

My name is Garry Morgan Watkins and I’ve been a member of Mensa (off and on depending on how well I’d paid attention to paying dues) since 1970. Because I kept missing my annual dues, I finally decided that it was worth upgrading to become a Life Member. However, with that decision, I decided I really ought to become more involved.

So, I am planning on attending meetings and other events as I move forward and I’d like to be able to read your Gazette. How do

I go about getting an online copy to read? I’m a blind fellow and use screen reading software on my PC as well as my iPhone. Any feedback or suggestions you have would be most appreciated.

Best wishes,

Garry Morgan Watkins

Gloria Fortin wrote to the ALG about poor attendance at Southern LSM events. I don’t believe that cliques are one of the causes. I think there are far bigger things in play.

As her successor, I tried to host a social get-together at my house, sending out personalized postcards, emails and postcards. The response was dismal, although – my mistake – I picked Good Friday to hold the event.

At the recent AG, as well as on the national LocSecs email list, many people commented that attendance at Mensa events is substantially down. It was said that Mensa is not alone in seeing this trend.

It would appear that the rise of social media has created sufficient interaction among younger Baby Boomers, the Gen-Xers, Gen-Yers and Millennials that face-to-face social events are less necessary than previously.

Comments, explanations, responses and denials are welcome.

- Brian Bloch

LONE STAR MENSA CONTACTS BY FUNCTION

As of September 30, 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	Don Drumtra*	291-0315
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	Douglas Yee	288-9172
LSM Officers, contacts	records@lsm.us.mensa.org	Don Drumtra	291-0315
Board Meetings	southernarea@lsm.us.mensa.org	Brian Bloch*	878-8800
Operating standards	records@lsm.us.mensa.org	Don Drumtra	291-0315
Email Lists	emaillists@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	971-0123
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			
	angsu@hotmai.com	Angela Adams	263-8780
Monthly Programs		Vacant	
TGITs		Vacant	
Games Night		Vacant	
Chess Night	cmvc95@yahoo.com	Douglas Yee	288-9172
Eclectic Eats	arabushka@austin.rr.com	Aaron Rabushka	280-2807
Picnics and Parties		Vacant	
Southern Area Events	southernarea@lsm.us.mensa.org	Brian Bloch	878-8800
RG REGISTRAR	mensapats@lsm.us.mensa.org	Patsy Graham	380-0141
RG CO-CHAIRS	lsrg13@nneemidge.net	John and Geri Neemidge	310-7863
OMBUDSMAN	reasurer@lsm.us.mensa.org	Ron Edelstein*	491-9881
REIMBURSEMENTS	drumtra@aol.com	Don Drumtra	291-0315
S.I.G.H.T.		Vacant	
EVERYTHING ELSE	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.

OCTOBER CALENDAR

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

See the online calendar (lsm.us.mensa.org/events/calendar.shtml) 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 Meeting

1st Thursday
Oct. 4, 7:30 to 8:30 pm
 Carver Branch Library

Member Meeting

2nd Monday
Oct. 8, 6:45-8:15 PM
 SIG Discussion Group

ALG/Calendar Deadline

2nd Thursday
Oct. 11, Midnight
 Submissions due to Editor.

Chess Night (with the TGIT-N group)

2nd Thursday
Oct. 11, 6-8 PM
 Bring your chess sets if you have them.
 Hosted by Douglas Yee.

Your Event Here!

Thank Goodness It's Thursday (TGIT-North)

2nd & 4th Thursdays
Oct. 11 & 25, 6:00-8:00 PM
 Meet us at the Café for conversation, food and fun. Prospective members welcome. Look for the Mensa table sign.

Eclectic Eats

Tuesday, Oct. 16, 7 pm
 Blue Dahlia
 1115 E 11th Street
bluedahliabistro.com
 512/ 542-9542
 Please join us as we revel in continental elegance when Eclectic Eats returns to downtown Austin. RSVP to Aaron Rabushka at 512/280-2807 or arabushka@austin.rr.com by Monday, October 15.

Thank Goodness It's Thursday (TGIT-South)

3rd Thursday
Oct. 18, 6:00-8:00 PM
 Enter at the east side of the store by the statue of fruits and vegetables. Join us for conversation, food, and fun. Prospective members welcome.

Seal & Label

4th Thursday
Oct. 25, 6:00-8:00 PM
 Join the TGIT Group to help seal and label the newsletter.

UPCOMING IN NOVEMBER

Nov. 1. Board Meeting
 Nov. 8, Chess Night, ALG Deadline
 Nov. 8 & 22, TGIT-North
 Nov. 12, Member Meeting
 Nov. 15, TGIT-South
 Nov. 22, Seal & Label

EVENT DIRECTIONS



Board and Member Meetings

Carver Public Library, Rooms 2-3
 1161 Angelina, Austin
 512-974-1010
 Between 11th and 12th Streets, east of I-35. This location allows direct access to the library from 183 and via FM 969 MLK and 12th Street.

TGIT-North, Chess Night, Seal & Label

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.

TGIT-South

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.

Send undeliverable copies or change of address to:

AMERICAN MENSA LIMITED
1229 CORPORATE DR W
ARLINGTON TX 76006-6103

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Submissions of all types are encouraged. The deadline is the second Thursday of each month. Submissions may be by email (preferred) 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, unless restricted by the author.
Calendar inputs may be submitted at any time and will normally be published online within three days and in the next month's printed calendar if received before the cut-off date. The cut-off date is the second Thursday of the previous month.
Advertising may be accepted subject to space limitations. Lone Star Mensa members may submit 2 non-commercial ads per year at no charge, limited to 4 column line maximum. Publication dates are subject to editor's discretion. Business-card-sized ads (2" x 3") are \$10 for one month, \$25 for three months, and \$40 for six months. Rates for other sized ads or other time periods are available upon request. Ads must be camera-ready, accurately sized, and should be submitted via email in Microsoft Word (preferred, DOC or DOCX), JPG, or PDF format. The deadline for ad submissions to the newsletter editor is 5 days before the general newsletter deadline. Publication may be delayed due to space limitations and may be edited to meet publication standards.

Newsletter submissions may be sent to
editor@lsm.us.mensa.org
Calendar submissions may be sent to
calendar@lsm.us.mensa.org

The editor's snail mail address is
Rose Berkowitz
10610 Morado Cir Apt 1302,
Austin, TX 78759-5555



Armadillo Literary Gazette

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