

Armadillo Literary Gazette

A Publication of *Lone Star Mensa*
Volume XL
Number 1, January 2013



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

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Submitted By Rose Berkowitz

Dear Fellow Members,



I am seriously considering resigning as Editor of this publication, and from the Lone Star Mensa group. I know that many of you appreciate my efforts to produce an engaging and relevant monthly publication for our members. However, I don't see much point in continuing to do so if the majority of you are uninterested in any involvement in our group other than reading this newsletter, since it's getting more and more difficult for me to find interesting things to publish.

The same few people are the only ones who come to most of our events, which makes the events generally predictable and uninspiring. The same few people volunteer to do the work required to keep the group viable, and few of those follow through on their responsibilities. We even have a hard time getting a quorum of officers for the monthly board meetings.

Every month I attempt to challenge my readers via direct questions and/or requests for a response to a proposition. Rarely do I get any reply. Every month I have to practically beg to get some of the regular reports I need for the Gazette from the various officers and committee chairs, and I count myself lucky if I get a response at all...

I've been trying to find ways to generate more enthusiasm within our membership ever since I joined Lone Star Mensa, and especially since I took on the job of Editor two years ago. I can count on one hand the others in our group who've also been doing whatever they can, and more, since they've been shouldering duties that rightly belong to others.

Lone Star Mensa is replete with members who have interesting jobs, creative ideas, and all kinds of contacts. We could be building a vibrant, exciting organization that could be making real, positive contributions to each other's lives, and to our communities. Instead, "Let somebody else do it (and then resent them for it.)" seems to be the prevailing attitude.

I understand that people feel they are too busy to participate, and also that they may prefer other, newer ways of connecting (for example, via social networks). But if this is the case, is there still a need for a Lone Star Mensa group? Perhaps it *should* be disbanded, and let everyone who wants to just be a member at large.

You may not mind going on this way. But I'm discouraged and frustrated, and tired of trying. If I don't start seeing some encouraging signs by the time my membership is up for annual renewal, I think I'm out of here.

***Standing in the middle of the road is very dangerous;
you get knocked down by the traffic from both sides.***

- Margaret Thatcher [Margaret Hilda Roberts]

MEMBER MEETINGS

Submitted by Rose M. Berkowitz, Editor

January Meeting

Angela believes we have a speaker lined up for our first member meeting of 2013, but she's waiting for confirmation. Otherwise, we'll have a random discussion topic. All member and board meetings for 2013 will be held at the Carver Library.

December Meeting—LSM Holiday Party

Our annual Holiday Party was held on Saturday, Dec 15, 7-10 pm at the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin. About 40 members attended, including a guest named Tue from Mensa Denmark. See this month's LocSec column for more details. Pictures from the party (taken by Don Drumtra) are on pages 7 and 8.

November Meeting

The meeting was rescheduled to Nov. 19, 6:45-8:15 pm, at the Carver Library, since the library was closed on Nov. 12 in celebration of Veteran's Day. The discussion topic was The Secrets of Mental Math: Addition and Subtraction. We watched two engaging 30-minute lectures on DVD by Arthur Benjamin, a professor of mathematics at Harvey Mudd College. Despite the confusion over the Nov. meeting date, eight Mensans showed up to discover some of the secrets to rapid mental math calculations. As a bonus, interested participants also learned how to count to 99 using just two hands (the Korean finger-counting method).



MEMBER ADMISSIONS TESTING

Submitted by Austin G. Meyers

[FYI, the following is an example of the communication sent out to prospective members by our Testing Chair. If you know anyone who would like to be scheduled for admissions testing, feel free to contact him. —Editor]

Hello All,

In addition to the copied Lone Star Mensa officers, this email is being sent to you because you indicated an interest in testing for Mensa admission.

Lone Star Mensa will be offering a testing session Saturday, December 1st.

Registration will begin at 9:00 am with testing starting promptly at 9:30 am.

The building door can only be opened by the proctor and will be left open until 9:00 am; as such, if you are not there before

9:00 am, there will be no provision for entering the building (no testing).

When you respond please let me know if (1) English is your first/primary language and (2) you are over 18 years old. This information is important for the testing protocol.

For this session space will be limited to 5 seats, and your seat will only be guaranteed if you RSVP. You may also simply show up, but will be allowed to test only on a space-available basis.

If you would like to stop receiving notices or you have already tested let me know so I can remove you from the list.

Submitted by John Neemidge, LocSec



Happy New Year to everyone in Lone Star Mensa! I hope the New Year finds you happy and healthy, and that you've had a good holiday season. It's the time for New Year's resolutions, and I'd like to suggest making Lone Star Mensa

one of your resolutions. Resolve to attend a few events this year, if you haven't before. Resolve to attend more, if you've been to a few already. Resolve to get more involved in the group - we have open volunteer positions ranging from smaller roles to Board positions. Resolve to host an event Most anything you find interesting and think other Mensans might too can be placed on the calendar. This group is what we all make of it, and we'd welcome your contribution.

As I'm writing this, we just had our Holiday Party on December 15th. It was a great time; nearly 40 of us got together, had lots of good food and drink and conversation, exchanged gifts, listened to holiday

music, and celebrated the season and the many holiday traditions we have between us. We'd like to have a group party at least once a quarter; if you're interested in hosting one, contact Symposia Chair Angela Adams and she'll be happy to help. The group does help out with party expenses, so don't let that worry you.

Normally I remind people of upcoming events here, and so I will. In January we'll have our Board meeting, our monthly speaker meeting, two TGIT's including Fold and Label, and an Eclectic Eats. A bit farther out, Gulf Coast Mensa's Regional Gathering in Houston is Memorial Day weekend, and American Mensa's Annual Gathering in Fort Worth is over July 4th weekend. Both are highly recommended and I hope I'll see you at both. In addition, I want to mention an upcoming event a little further out: Lone Star Mensa submitted a bid to host Mind Games in 2014 and won. It'll be April 18-20, 2014 at the Austin Airport Hilton. For more information, contact Patsy Graham. (Also, see the article below.) You'll hear plenty more about Mind Games as we draw closer; it's a big event and we're thrilled to get to host it.

And the host of Mind Games® 2014 is...



We are pleased to announce that Mind Games® 2014 has been awarded to Lone Star Mensa. The nationally recognized gaming event will be held at the Hilton Austin Airport in Austin, Texas.

Thanks go out to all groups that submitted bids for Mind Games 2014. Lone Star Mensa has a strong team in place and is expected to stage a fun event for members and guests.

If your group is thinking about sponsoring a future Mind Games, contact Victoria Liguez at marketingmanager@americanmensa.org for more information or a bid packet.

Mind Games®, April 19-21 in St. Louis, Mo. – Registration is open but space is filling up fast. Registration for player judges is \$85 through Dec. 31, so make your move today. Get more information and register online at www.mindgames.us.mensa.org.

Registration for Mind Games 2013 in St. Louis, Mo., remains open. Visit www.mindgames.us.mensa.org today for more information or to sign up.

DECEMBER BOARD MINUTES

Submitted by Don Drumtra, Secretary Pro Tem

The December regular meeting of the Lone Star Mensa board of officers convened at 7:44 PM, Thursday, December 6, 2012 at Carver Public Library, Rooms 2-3, 1161 Angelina, Austin, TX. Angela Adams, Don Drumtra, Crockett Grabbe (by telephone), John Neemidge, and Douglas Yee attended.

The board elected Don as Secretary Pro Tem and adopted the agenda and the minutes of the November regular board meeting as printed on page 3 of the December 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 announced that Lone Star Mensa won the bid for the 2014 Mind Games. The board applauded and congratulated Patsy and her committee on their success. and authorized John to negotiate a contract for the event. He also reported that the Christmas party planning was complete.
- **Treasurer:** Don reported that LSM revenue is meeting our expectations. but expenses are well below budgets; so Don encouraged the standing committees to plan more activities for our members. The board adopted the November financial report; the board discussed renewing a CD at a higher rate, but decided that completing the paperwork was not worth the effort for the few dollars the change would generate.
- **ComComm:** Douglas reported that the Scholarship portion of the Website was updated in preparation for the 2013 scholarship competition. Don reported the December paper newsletter went out on schedule. The national office announced that they will be providing labels with intelligent bar codes to local groups starting in January to meet the USPS conversion date.
- **SymComm:** Angela reported that the November General Meeting was a success, with eight Mensans participating in the Secrets of Mental Math exercises. The December General meeting is the Christmas party. She has planned a speaker for January. Don confirmed the room reservations for the Carver Library for the regular member and board meetings at the Carver library.
- **LonestaRG 2013 Committee:** Don reported that Ron and Linda Edelstein, the RG 2013 Co-Chairmen, expect to begin planning meetings in January.
- **Website Working Group:** Douglas reported that the Website Working Group is waiting for the designer to provide one or two prototype Websites for working group and board consideration.
- **Mind Games Bid Committee.** See John's report on page 3.

Announcements:

- The next regular monthly board meetings are scheduled for 7:15-8:15 PM, Thursday, January 3 and February 8, at the Carver Branch Library.
- The next regular monthly general member meetings are scheduled for 6:45-8:15 PM, Monday, January 14 and February 11 with a speaker on January 11 and a discussion topic on February 11, at the Carver Branch Library. Potential topics looking for presenters and discussion leaders are available on the Website.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.



FROM THE RVC

Submitted by Roger Durham, Region 6 RVC



It's hard to believe that 2012 is already gone, and it's time to wish all of you a very happy New Year. It's been a hectic fall, and I'm looking forward to a few quiet months before we gear up for the 2013 American Mensa

elections. (Yes, I'm running for re-election.)

Due to my wife Leslie's unexpected cancer surgery just before Thanksgiving, I was unable to go to New Orleans for the winter AMC meeting on December 1st. I participated by telephone, so I didn't miss the meeting itself, but I must apologize to Bart Geraci and New Orleans Mensa for having to pass up what I'm told was a most enjoyable Regional Gathering. I hope NOM will decide to make it an annual event. Leslie, I'm happy to report, is doing fine and is expected to make a complete recovery.

For the same reason, I also missed my own group's RG, the Feast of Pleasures and Delights in Dallas over

Thanksgiving weekend, where a good time was reportedly had by all. There will be no Dallas RG in 2013, as everyone who would normally work on the RG is busy putting together the Annual Gathering in Fort Worth, but I hope you will all mark your calendars now for Thanksgiving 2014, when the Dallas RG will return, bigger and better than ever.

Which reminds me to mention that it's not too early to make your plans for Gulf Coast Mensa's SynRG 2013, coming to Houston over Memorial Day weekend. Check their website for details.

And speaking of enjoyable Mensa events, congratulations are due to Patsy Graham and Lone Star Mensa on their successful bid to host the 2014 Mind Games in Austin next year.

Finally, many groups recently went through local elections and have new officers taking over this month. My congratulations (or condolences) and best wishes to all of you who are newly elected to a leadership position in your local group. Please do not hesitate to contact me (rvc6@us.mensa.org) if I can be of assistance in any way.

MEMBER ESSAY

By JimAnn Oliver, Life Member

Three things I wish I'd known sooner:

1. That in spite of many painful experiences and pitfalls through their early years, all my children (5) and grandchildren (10) would "turn out all right".
2. That at this time in my life one of my biggest regrets would be that I did not just let housework/supervising chores/gardening/ranch work go more often to spend more JOYFUL time with my children.
3. That it is the invisible forces which rule the Universe and the path to love, joy, and peace is to align oneself with them day by day. These forces are legion, and include both the physical (lasers, radiation, wind, gravity, vapor, atomic particles, electrons, genes, etc.) and the non-physical (faith, hope, love, truth, loyalty, forgiveness, oneness with all, etc.) which may be called by many names (metaphysical, God, Spirit, universal truths, The Way, principles of life, Nature, etc.) Material goods are transient but the invisible is eternal/immutable/omnipotent/omnipresent/omniscient/universal. Giving my attention, time, and resources to lining up with the unseen forces has brought me incredible contentment, love, joy, peace, and delight--every good thing I want in my life!

OH! To have understood this sooner!

YOUR SUDOKU PUZZLE

Weekly Extremes, sudoku.org.uk

By Douglas Yee



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

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.

SOME PITHY QUOTATIONS

If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need.

- Marcus Tullius Cicero

The six stages of drunkenness: verbose, jocose, morose, lachrymose, bellicose, and *comatose*.

- Richard Pena, Bonita, California (from A Word A Day)

I would rather be able to appreciate things I cannot have, than to have things I am not able to appreciate.

- Elbert Hubbard

We're all nothing but unified arrangements of atoms and particles, drifting around, enjoying consciousness every now and then for a second or so before splitting up to become bits and pieces of trees and stars and french fries

- Alan Dean Foster

The difference between love and sex is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug.

- Dan Rather [Daniel Irvin Rather Jr]

I used to be a heavy gambler. But now I just make mental bets. That's how I lost my mind.

- Steve Allen [Stephen Valentine Patrick William Allen]

Only the mediocre are always at their best.

- (Hippolyte) Jean Giraudoux

Being a genius is no guarantee against acting stupid.

- Victor Serebriakoff

A nation is not in danger of financial disaster merely because it owes itself money.

- Andrew (William) Mellon

Nobody talks more of free enterprise and competition and of the best man winning than the man who inherited his father's store or farm.

- C(harles) Wright Mills

The same people who can deny others everything are famous for refusing themselves nothing.

- (James Henry) Leigh Hunt

Paige Neemidger



David Neemidge, D.D. & Morgan Watkins

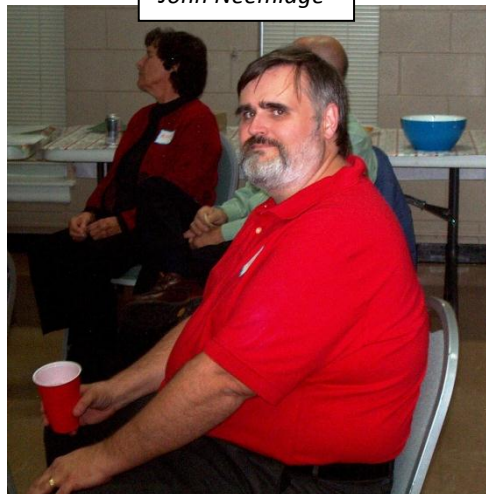


Lisa Walker



Our members, all dressed up for the festivities!

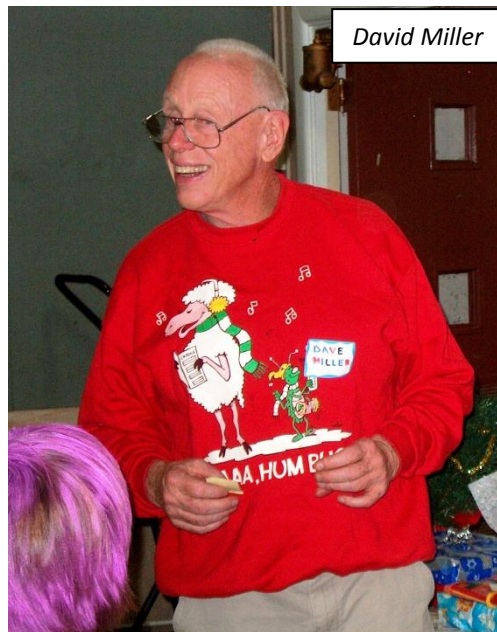
John Neemidge



Ron Edelstein, Amanda Lacy, Matt Lawrence, Artemis Harbert

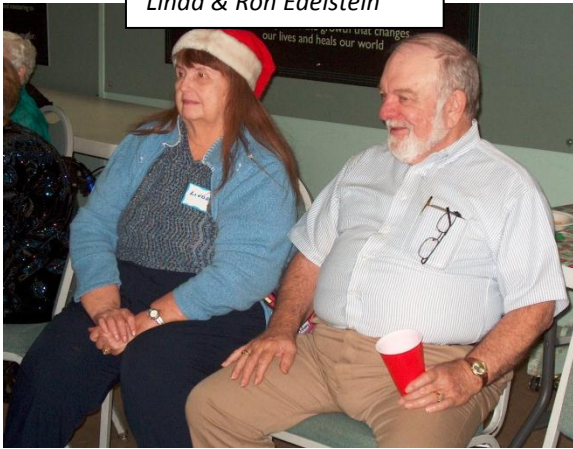


David Miller





Linda & Ron Edelstein



Paige Neemidge, Patty Drumtra



Patsy Graham, Tue Holm Jensen, Rose Berkowitz, Ed Gordon, etc.



The young man in the striped shirt was our guest Tue from Mensa Denmark.

By Rose Berkowitz

[Following is an excerpt from a book of my memoirs that I'm working on and may publish someday.]

At fourteen, I was tall, strong, healthy, and what the boys called “built.” I was basically a loner, although recently “adopted” for unknown reasons by Mary, the most popular girl in my all-girl, Catholic high school. Books had been my only friends for most of my childhood, and coming from a very poor and dysfunctional family, I was just learning some social graces.

I had a lot of energy and loved to walk. I would practice striding gracefully, like Audrey Hepburn, my head held high, disdainfully ignoring the whistles and catcalls from men and boys in passing cars. I liked to imagine myself “Queen of the May,” dressed up in white like a princess, with the place of honor in the annual Our Lady of Bistrića procession through the streets. But that honor was reserved for daughters of the remaining influential men in the community—who of course were officers in the Knights of Columbus. (Not like my father, who had little influence even among his crowd of ex-cons and small-time mob gofers.) Their daughters (like Geraldine Myscivic) could afford to wear poodle skirts, cashmere sweaters, and a string of (real?) pearls to go with their pageboy hairdos.

My routine on Saturday mornings when I wasn't working at Emil's was to have some cereal with reconstituted powdered milk, get dressed, do some chores, and go out for the day. I'd usually walk around the neighborhood for an hour or so, and then head over to Mary's house. Her mom, Bessie, was like a second mother to me. (I needed one, since my own mother seemed to be ill most of the time.) We'd do our hair and makeup together, and then get on the Number 26 Blue Island CTA bus to go downtown.

I had to be home in time to give my younger brothers and sisters their weekly Saturday night bath. Dad would drag the big metal tub into the middle of the kitchen and fill it with boiling water from the stove. I would cool it off with cold water from the sink and put in some dishwashing detergent. Everyone but Dad used the same water, since it was too hard to set everything up more than twice.

Dad would bathe the same way, but he got his own water—into which he always put a little lye. (Dad was mean, but he was clean!) We were used to seeing Dad around the house naked except for an undershirt and socks. For the last couple of years I had been having my baths for 25 cents at the public showers across from

Holy Trinity, supplemented by cold sponge baths at the kitchen sink.

Mary and I had plans to go to Walgreen's on State and Madison that day. There were always off-duty servicemen hanging around there. We wanted to pick up a couple of sailors from Great Lakes and get them to treat us to lunch or ice cream, and take us some place like Riverview or a Cubs game. We were willing to make out with them, but not go all the way. I was still a virgin then, and I think Mary was too. We'd done this several times before, and it had always been a lot of fun. Luckily, the sailors we dated had been gentlemen, and had never tried to force us into anything.

That particular morning I was walking dreamily along on Loomis Street when Hector caught up with me. He was an okay-looking Mexican guy, about 18 or 20, and not much bigger than me. I knew him to say hi, but had never really talked to him. But he was Harriet's boyfriend, so I thought he must be at least somewhat respectable. When he asked if he could walk with me, I smiled and replied, “It's a free country!”

We turned onto 18th Street, heading towards Throop. 18th Street is lined with tall apartment buildings, with no spaces in between, many with shops at street level. I had gone trick-or-treating on that street when I was younger, and had always been uneasy about knocking on the apartment doors in those buildings. But I had done it anyway, and no harm had come to me.

As we were walking along, Hector remarked that he had recently moved into one of the buildings there. I said skeptically, “No, you didn't! You live with your family on Cullerton!” He kept insisting it was true, that he was on his own. When I still didn't believe him, he stopped and pointed to the building we were in front of. “Look at the mailbox in the hallway. You'll see my name on it!”

Without thinking, I opened the door and stepped inside and Hector followed me. The hallway was dark brown—stairs and heavy wooden railing, shiny painted walls and linoleum floor. I went over to the row of mailboxes and read the names. Ha! Hector's wasn't there. As I turned to say so, he grabbed me and tried to kiss me. I slapped his face, yelling “You're Harriet's boyfriend. I don't steal boyfriends!”

The next thing I knew, I was fighting. Fighting his hands away from my breasts, from between my legs, from

inside my panties. I struggled to get away, to the door, but he pulled me back. This went on for maybe ten minutes, and he wasn't getting anywhere. I don't know why—maybe we were concentrating too hard—but neither of us made a sound. Finally, we were both exhausted. We stood there, staring at each other. Suddenly he leaned over and bit me, hard, on the side of the neck. He shouted "That's to show you I'm a man!" Just before he ran out the door, he swore if I told anyone what had happened, he would hunt me down and kill me.

I leaned against the wall, shaking and breathing heavily for a few minutes. Then I arranged my clothes and smoothed my hair. Finally I hesitantly opened the door. He was really gone!

In a way, I was a very tough girl. I had already seen and been through a lot in my short lifetime, and I prided myself on my courage. I wasn't going to let Hector scare me! However, I was embarrassed to let anyone see the mark he'd left on my neck, so I used the back alleys to get to my house.

When I got there, I calmly told Mom and Dad what had happened. My mother naturally got upset, and my father was furious! He took out his gun and loaded it, and went looking for Hector.

It didn't take me long to calm down, and soon my thoughts turned to my plans with Mary. I told Mom I was going over to her house. Since I had always been such a good girl (until recently), she didn't have a clue as to what I was really up to. Also, since she depended on me to help run the family and pay some of the bills, she protested, but not too strenuously. I tied a scarf around my neck (a la' Hepburn) to hide the mark, and off I went.

By the time I got to Mary's, my experience that morning had become something to brag about. After all, I had fought Hector off successfully! Mary was enthralled with my tale, and so it seemed were the two young men we met later that afternoon. We were walking in Grant Park when I realized it was time to get home for the Saturday bath routine. The sailors suggested they come with us. I thought they could all wait for me at Emil's, and I'd come back when I was done.

When I got home, Dad said he hadn't been able to find Hector, but he had told everybody about the attack and they were keeping an eye out for him. A little while later, Uncle Frank Vrchota (most of the adults on our block were addressed as "Aunt" or "Uncle") came banging at our door and shouted excitedly that Hector was in the corner tavern across the street. Dad grabbed his gun and grimly marched out.

A little later another neighbor came by, to tell us that my Dad had confronted Hector, but Hector punched him in the face, knocking off his glasses, and escaped out the back door. I had just finished bathing my siblings, and I ran out to see if Dad was all right. Someone hollered "Hector's got a knife and he's looking for you!"

My mother came running after me, and pulled me into the nearest building. We ran up three flights, and pounded on the door at the top of the stairs for the people to let us in. We thought Hector was coming right behind us.

But he had changed his mind when he saw all the men on the block coming out after him. Mom and I watched from the third floor window while my "uncles" chased him and cornered him a block or so down. They were yelling, and Hector was weaving in and out of parked cars, under and over railings, trying to get away. When they told the story later, they said he was "like a monkey."

Finally, John from the apartment behind us tackled Hector and brought him down. John was a tough-looking, middle-aged man who lived alone. He was rumored to be a Communist, and as such, had been avoided by most. But from that time on, Uncle John was accepted into the community.

The men started beating Hector up, but the police got there before he was hurt too badly. I told them my story, and they arrested Hector and took him away in handcuffs. They said I'd have to go to court to testify against him. Mom and I thanked everyone for their help, and then I told Mom I had friends waiting for me at Emil's, and went off to fill them in. I was so thrilled! I had escaped being murdered, all those people had come out to help me, and for once I was the center of attention and admiration!

A couple of weeks later Dad took me to the big courthouse/police station at State and Roosevelt. I repeated my story calmly and clearly. The judge found Hector guilty and sentenced him to three months in Cook County Jail. He said he could only give Hector that much time, since he had not actually raped or knifed me.

I was afraid of what Hector would do when he got out, what kind of revenge he would take against me. The closer the time came, the more I worried. One Saturday I was getting on the Number 26 bus to go shopping, and who but Hector should be getting off. He stopped, looked me straight in the eye, and said "Listen, I'm sorry for what I did. You've got a lot of guts standing up to me that way!" Then he turned and walked away, I got on the bus, and I never saw him again.

RESPONSE TO LAST MONTH'S MEMBER ESSAY

By Lynn Herrick

Once I went to a Libertarian meeting. They didn't seem to care if people like me (a ward of the government) lived or died. They kept calling my views "socialist." I said "I'm not intimidated by labels."

Despots have done a real job on the word socialism. Stalin's evil empire called itself the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Even the Nazis called themselves National Socialists. No wonder most freedom-loving Americans are scared silly of the word!

There was nothing social or communal about Russian "communism." It was just another murderous, brutal dictatorship. I feel it was worse even than Hitler's, because a) it covered a bigger area, b) it believed it wouldn't work unless it conquered the world, and c) it was done in the name of concern for the poor and the underdog.

Its worst legacy is giving concern for the poor and the underdog a bad name. Every effort to help people makes some folks yell "Socialism!"—with the implication that it's one small step from a Communist dictatorship.

Those who still call themselves socialists (and I've met some) say the Soviet dictatorship wasn't true socialism, but actually state capitalism, with the state as the sole owner and boss. They say real socialism (like real Christianity according to some Christians) hasn't even been tried.

Trying to level the field to dig people out of the holes they're in (that some were born into, and some fell into through no fault of their own) is not socialism. But if it were, it wouldn't be the end of the world. Even now we don't live in a pure capitalist economy. Like most developed countries, we live in a mixed economy, and we need the mixture.

What's so bad about giving to people according to their need? Is it just because vicious tyrants adopted this idea as a slogan? Again I say, don't be intimidated by labels.



HAPPY JANUARY BIRTHDAYS*

5 Jonathan Baumgardner
 5 Donald Cardno
 8 Paul F Memrick
 8 Betty Knight Davis
 8 Benjamin Schrader
 8 John Jertson
 9 Charles Wilson
 9 Charles B Owen
 10 Ada M Howard
 10 Elizabeth A Collins
 10 William C Neely Jr
 15 Linda Carole White
 16 Rose M Berkowitz
 16 Maria Maegan Priscilla
 Navarro Quejada
 17 Rodney Appling
 21 Victoria Leonard
 24 Derek Saunders
 24 Kevin M Dorman
 25 Harry D Keirns
 25 James George
 Zimmerman
 25 Timothy T Rueger
 26 R Dennis Conine
 27 Hans T Weger
 27 Elizabeth Smith Evan
 28 Tim Brown
 29 John D Moris
 30 Duncan Stewart

NEW MEMBERS—WELCOME!

Samantha C Pugh
 Pat Wimberly

JUST MOVED IN—HI NEIGHBOR!

Victor A Albanese
 Tamara M Anger
 Kenneth J Heldenfels

WELCOME BACK--MISSED YOU!

James Michael Rawles

GOODBYE—WE WISH YOU WELL

Eugene LaMar Guyon Jr
 Marshall M Tunstall
 Julie N Walker

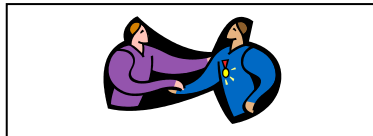
**JANUARY
ANNIVERSARIES**

MEMBER FOR 40 YEARS

David B Miller

MEMBER FOR 35 YEARS

Lucille S Russell
 Stuart R Singer



MEMBER FOR 25 YEARS

Dan Allen Flanagan

MEMBER FOR 15 YEARS

Brooks B Annarino

MEMBER FOR 10 YEARS

Betty Knight Davis
 Madison R Jones
 Madeleine Z Mercier
 John D Perkin

MEMBER FOR 5 YEARS

J Jonathan A Blair
 David Duffey

MEMBER FOR 1 YEAR

Jerry Dike
 Kevin M Dorman
 Terrence R King
 Bobby Olgin
 Rachel D Roe
 Casey D Shaw
 Dr Steve Shelton

**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

Hi fellow November seal and label friends,

Congratulations for a perfect score.

More times than not, USPS runs a diabolical verification program against our newsletter mailing. It is called MERLIN which stands for Mail Evaluation Readability Lookup INSTRUMENT. It has been quite a while since we have achieved 100 percent in a mailing. But this time we did it. It means that we had no crooked folds, the newsletters were flat, the labels were straight, the bar codes were not smeared, and the 260 newsletters were properly sorted. Well done!

... take a look at the prices we paid for mailing our 2 oz. newsletters and how many subscribers we have in Austin and the surrounding areas.

- Within the Austin city area (787xx zip codes) we paid 5 cents each for 150
- Within the greater Austin area (786xx and 789xx zip codes) 26 cents each for 69
- Outside that area we pay 32 cents each for 41

The remainder of our over 600 members receive their newsletters by email so their mailing cost is zero

When we mail a newsletter to someone outside our normal mailing we pay 65 cents each. That is why we go through our seal and label process. (Well, it is true that we also have a good time socializing while we do it.)

So thanks to everyone who has participated in our seal and label parties in the past and particularly those who

participated in November and achieved a perfect score. I hope you had a great Thanksgiving. You deserved it.

Don Drumtra

I was stunned and disappointed to read Victor Albanese's essay which vented his opinion of the recent presidential election. Opinion pieces on religion and

politics have absolutely no place in a national or a local Mensa newsletter. Mensa members are intelligent enough to discuss global warming, charter schools, veganism, or any other topic requiring thoughtful discourse. However, politics and religion are deeply held points of view not necessarily based on fact; no submission on these subjects should be accepted.

Joan Champie

[Our editorial policy is to accept member essays on any and all subjects, as long as they are written clearly and civilly. — Editor]

History is a pack of lies about events that never happened, told by people who weren't there. - George Santayana

WEB SITES YOU'D LIKE

FROM	DESCRIPTION
Ron Edelstein	FreeOffice from SoftMaker. (softmaker.com/english/) I have used this office suite for several years off and on. It's not my primary office suite--I prefer LibreOffice for the most part as an alternative to Microsoft Office, but I've found SoftMaker to be a solid, good performing suite and it does what it says, reads and writes to MS Office documents flawlessly. I started using SoftMaker because it was the only office suite that worked on the old WIN CE handheld computers. You get a WORD, EXCEL and POWERPOINT work alike. If you can use MS OFFICE you can use SoftMaker. This version is free so it doesn't have a couple of the features of the paid version, like an ACCESS equivalent. But you also contribute 10 euro cents for trying it out. It's available in both WINDOWS and LINUX versions. If you're tired of paying Microsoft for upgrades, this is a freebie that may meet your needs. In any case, it costs nothing to try it out. The program comes from Germany.
Rose Berkowitz	If you're an old-timer like me, or if you're curious about what the old radio shows were like, this is a FANTASTIC site! dumb.com/oldtimeradio/

TED® Connections

us.mensa.org/learn/gifted-youth/parentteacher-resources/tedc2ae-connections/

Mensa for Kids' TED Extensions are short, easy-to-use guides that help teachers, parents and young people get more out of TEDTalks in a classroom or home setting. These extensions include discussion questions, suggested activities and additional resources, all encouraging higher levels of thinking.

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As of December 31, 2012

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

JANUARY CALENDAR

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

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
Jan. 3, 7:30 to 8:30 pm
 Carver Branch Library

ALG/Calendar Deadline

2nd Thursday
Jan. 10, Midnight
 Submissions due to Editor.

Chess Night (with the TGIT-N group)

2nd Thursday
Jan. 10, 6-8 PM
 Bring your chess sets if you have them.
 Hosted by Douglas Yee.

Thank Goodness It's Thursday (TGIT-North)

2nd & 4th Thursdays
Jan. 10 & 24, 6:00-8:00 PM
 Meet us at the Café for conversation, food and fun. Prospective members welcome. Look for the Mensa table sign.

Member Meeting

2nd Monday
Jan. 14, 7:45 to 8:15 pm
 Carver Branch Library

Eclectic Eats

Tuesday, Jan. 15, 7 pm
 Russell's Bistro
 1601 W. 38th Street, Austin
 512/447-8121
ussellsbistro.com
 Eclectic Eats will kick off the New Year here. No specific ethnic theme—just great food, well prepared, with some stimulating artwork on display as well. Vegetarian and vegan menu items are available with a day's notice, and you'll probably want to grab some of their bakery wares on the way out! We will be meeting there, about where 38th turns into Kerbey Lane. Please RSVP to Aaron Rabushka at 512/280-2807 or arabushka@austin.rr.com by January 14 at mid-day.

Thank Goodness It's Thursday (TGIT-South)

3rd Thursday
Jan. 17, 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
Jan. 24, 6:00-8:00 PM
 Join the TGIT Group to help seal and label the newsletter.

UPCOMING IN FEBRUARY

Feb 7 LSM Board, Carver Branch Library
 Feb 11 RMM, Carver Branch Library
 Feb 14 TGIT, Central Market North
 Feb 14 Newsletter input due, email
 Feb 14 Calendar input due, email
 Feb 21 TGIT, Central Market South
 Feb 28 TGIT, Central Market North
 Feb 28 S&L, Central Market North

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 130 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:

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PUBLICATION NOTICES

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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.

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Armadillo Literary Gazette

IN THIS ISSUE

Editor's Choice	1
Member Meetings/Admissions Testing	2
LocSec Column/Mind Games	3
Board Minutes	4
RVC Column/Member Essay	5
Sudoku/Quotes	6
Holiday Party Photos	7-8
Member Story	9-10
Member Response	11
Member News/Letters	12
Web Sites	13
LSM Contacts	14
January Calendar	15
Postal Page/Table of Contents	16