

Armadillo Literary Gazette

A Publication of *Lone Star Mensa*
Volume XLI
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Editor: *Rose M. Berkowitz*
Managing Editor: *Don Drumtra*
Publisher: *Board of Officers*

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Submitted By Rose Berkowitz

I'm B-A-ACK! Thanks so much to Ron Edelstein for holding down the fort while I was incapacitated. Thanks also to all my fellow Mensans who sent me their prayers and/or well-wishes for a speedy recovery.

In case you're wondering, I went into the hospital with kidney failure. They got me started on dialysis, and I'm feeling a lot better. More good news: JimAnn Oliver is recovering. See her letter on page 12.

Don Drumtra reports that he and Patty met 6 other Mensans at the January TGIT Chess night, as well as one passerby who stopped to watch and chat. There were three (or maybe four) games of chess played. Don says "Chess and checkers are the sort of games one might expect at a joint like a grocery store eatery." Why not stop by next time and join the fun!

Well, the big holidays are over for a while, except for one—Valentine's Day. If there's a special someone in your life, celebrate each other! If not, you can still celebrate the wonder of being you. ☺ And it's a good opportunity to let your friends and loved ones know that you're glad they're in your life.



It's also time to elect some new LSM board members. This is the first election since the new bylaws were enacted. You can review their campaign statements on pages 4 and 5 in this issue, and then use the ballot on page 5 to cast your votes per the instructions on page 3. Please show your support!

I'm always happy to hear from you. You can send in comments/reactions to newsletter items, ideas, poetry, essays, or whatever else you'd like to contribute. If you tried a recipe we published, tell us how you liked it. No particular word limit, but emailed submissions are appreciated. Send them to editor@lsm.us.mensa.org.

MENSA IN THE NEWS

Submitted by Julie Garcia, at JulieG@americanmensa.org, 817-607-0060 ext. 5547.

Special Edition – The Today Show Feature

Over the weekend, the Today Show hosts answered Mensa questions they took from our website! They also continued to mention Mensa over the weekend. Good stuff we just wanted to share! In case you missed it, you can watch the story here: <http://www.today.com/video/today/53930743#53930743>.

WORD TO THE WISE

Submitted by John Neemidge, LocSec

As I wrote last month, there are a number of ways to get involved in Lone Star Mensa. One of those is simply to participate, and the first way to participate is to vote in the upcoming elections. You'll be reading more about the elections in the Armadillo Literary Gazette this month and next. Please take the time to look at the candidate statements and help us pick a board to lead the group for the next year.



Another way to get involved is to volunteer for an open position. At the Board level, we are looking for a Symposia Chair. The Symposia Chair plans our monthly meetings and helps to plan other parties and events. If you're not interested in the full job, perhaps you'd be interested in being a Speaker Seeker—helping

us find monthly meeting speakers. We are also looking for a Testing Coordinator to arrange testing sessions (location, time, test proctors, etc.) and register test-takers. And we always need test proctors—people with a degree which includes testing experience may be qualified already, and anyone with a degree can become certified as a proctor.

Yet another way to get involved is to host an event. It doesn't require anything special to schedule an event—just plan something and contact the ALG Editor to get it on the calendar. If you'd like, you're certainly welcome to ask me or any of the other officers what we think of an event idea, but it's not required. You're welcome to schedule just a one-time event (a party, for instance) or plan a recurring event (such as our existing Games Night or Eclectic Eats). There are a lot of things that would make great events, if we had people interested in hosting them; movie nights, parties, picnics, community volunteer activities, shows, etc.

Beyond that, we always need volunteers at major events. Mind Games is only a couple of months away and we will need many volunteers to make it a success. Please contact Patsy Graham if you're interested in volunteering! We will also need many volunteers for Lone Star RG XVI, coming up over Labor Day weekend.

Finally, just coming out to an event, participating in the Facebook group, on the LSM chat list, responding to a newsletter article, writing something for the newsletter, etc., are all ways of participating. I am really hoping to see more members than ever getting involved in Lone Star Mensa this year. I understand many of you are busy people—I am too—but I hope you'll take some time to get more involved with your Mensa group. I'm looking forward to seeing you all this year!

FROM THE RVC

Submitted by Roger Durham, Region 6 RVC

Well, the holidays are over, which means it's time to start thinking about the Annual Gathering. This year's AG, as most of you know, will be in Boston. The main hotel is already sold out, but there are two others that still have plenty of rooms, and the AG Committee is working feverishly to ensure that there are lots of exciting programs and activities for you to enjoy. Just go to the national website, www.us.mensa.org, and click on Attend – Annual Gathering – AG Locations – Brilliance in Beantown. A word of advice, however—if you go to Boston, don't plan to drive there. Hotel parking will cost you nearly as much as your room,

Between now and the AG, of course, we'll have one last chance to rehearse our gathering skills at the Gulf Coast Mensa Regional Gathering, SynRG 2014. Don't pass up the opportunity to party with our Houston-area members over the Memorial Day weekend. After the AG, of course, comes Lone Star Mensa's RG in Round Rock over Labor Day weekend, and then this year the North Texas Mensa RG in Dallas returns after a break last year for the Fort Worth AG.

If you haven't read your January Mensa Bulletin yet, please dig it out and take a look for details about the

replacement for the Publications Recognition Program (PRP). The PRP was discontinued last year due to widespread complaints about the format, followed by a lack of judges, but a new competition is being rolled out for 2014. A replacement program for the Group of the Year Awards (GOTYA) is also in the works and you'll get more information about that soon.



In the meantime, membership renewals are due next month, so don't forget to get your renewal in to the National Office as soon as possible. Early renewals save money for Mensa that can be used for the support of valuable membership services.

As always, if you have any comments or questions about American Mensa or Region 6, please feel free to contact me by email at RVC6@us.mensa.org, or by USPS at 9920 Ridgehaven Drive, Dallas, TX 75238.

BALLOT INSTRUCTIONS

Submitted by Linda Edelstein, Nominations and Election Chair

On page 5 of this newsletter you will find a ballot listing the candidates for the Lone Star Mensa Board for the next two years. Candidates' statements may be found on pages 4 and 5.

Since we had no election last year, this year there is a double election. We will fill four seats for a term of one year and four for a term of two years. Thus you will be voting for up to eight of the ten candidates running for election.

Because our by-laws require that each member receive a paper ballot, all members are receiving this month's newsletter by mail. If your preferred method of delivery is email, you will also receive a copy by email. You may use the ballot in the newsletter or photocopy it if you prefer. After marking your ballot, you can cast your vote in one of three ways:

1. Place your ballot in an envelope; write your name on the front and membership number on the outside of the back envelope flap. Mail the ballot to Linda Edelstein at 1439 Dapplegrey Lane, Austin, TX 78727.
2. Do the same, except hand-deliver the ballot to any of the members of the election committee (Linda Edelstein, Janet Kres, and Patsy Graham).

If you choose either method one or two, the anonymity of whom you voted for will be preserved by having a non-Mensan open the envelopes after a member of the Election Committee verifies that you are a current member as of December 31st.

3. You can send your ballot to ledelstein@mindspring.com by email. In this case, of course, your anonymity will be somewhat compromised. If you use email, you must write your name and member number in the body of the email.

All ballots must be received no later than February 10th. Ballots received after that date, or where the voter's membership cannot be verified (because the envelope or email does not contain the member's name and membership number) will not be counted. If you don't know your number and can't find your membership card, look on the mailing label above your name on the mailed Armadillo or on the renewal letter you recently received from National Office. Ballots will be counted by the Election Committee, and results will be published in the March newsletter.

VOTE!

LONE STAR MENSA ELECTION BALLOT 2014

Vote for up to eight candidates, four for each year. See instructions above for acceptable methods of delivery of vote, which must be received no later than February 10th.

April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015 (one-year term)

- Andrew Badgley
- Donald Drumtra
- Geri Neemidge
- Aaron Rabushka
- Doug Williams

April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2016 (two-year term)

- Ronald Edelstein
- Edward Gordon
- Leslie Stevenson
- Johnnie Vaughn
- Douglas Yee

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

Submitted by Linda Edelstein, Nominating and Elections Chair

Following are the candidate statements from the 10 members who are running for the 8 open board seats for the 2014-15 term:

Andrew Badgley

I tend to like spending my days in a computer hardware and software design validation laboratory. In addition to my technical interests at work, I work with numerous non-profit community groups in the Austin area, volunteering my energy and technical expertise. Having recently joined Mensa, I seek to engage with other members in interesting conversation, pleasant debate, and stimulating discussions. I look forward to hearing from many of you to find out what benefits you would like to receive from your membership investments in our local group.

Don Drumtra

My experience in LSM includes LocSec, Vice-President, Treasurer, Circulation Coordinator, Managing Editor, Record Manager/Archivist, and Officer Coordinator. I would like to continue on the board to contribute my experience and knowledge of what has worked and what has not worked in the past. I believe that such information would be useful to board members when planning future activities in LSM.

Geri Neemidge

I have been a member of Lone Star Mensa for 18 years. During that time I have held a number of offices, including president. I was one of the people who ran our first RG and I have been working for its success as a yearly event ever since. Over time I have seen the group wax and wane in number of members and activity level. I would really like to see the group engaging more members - both online and face to face. We have an exciting year ahead as Lone Star will be hosting its first National event - Mind Games (I am the hospitality chair). I hope to work to make this group fulfill whatever reason each member joined. Did you want to meet people? Learn a new skill? Engage in intellectual discussions? Play games with worthy opponents? Just be able to hang out without censoring your vocabulary? Lone Star Mensa can offer that. Let's work together and have a great year.

Aaron Rabushka

Aaron Rabushka has been an active member of American Mensa since 2006. He has participated in groups in and around Austin, Raleigh, Kansas City, and San Jose, and has run Lone Star Mensa's "Eclectic Eats" event for several years.

Doug Williams

I grew up in Houston, then moved to Austin for the first time in 1982 to attend the University of Texas. I liked Austin and Central Texas so much that I moved back to Austin to retire in 2013. I was a member of Lone Star Mensa from 1999-2001, but was too busy with work to devote as much time to Mensa as I wished. Now, I have the time to show my appreciation by serving as a member at large.

Ron Edelstein

I am standing for election to the Lone Star Mensa Board of Officers to continue my service to this group. I have had the position of Board Member and LocSec before and believe I can continue to offer service and "getting things done" for the group. My past service has included co-chairing, with my wife, Linda, of two RG's, hosting group parties at my house and contributing to and editing the newsletter. Your vote is appreciated.

Edward Gordon

I have been a Mensa member for 32 years, enjoying the many benefits that the organization provides. Traveling for my profession, I've been a member and on the board of Boston Mensa, Broward Mensa (Fort Lauderdale) and Metropolitan Washington Mensa (Greater DC). When I lived in Northern Virginia in the early 2000's, I was Regional Vice Chair from Region 2 for two years.

Professionally, I am a retired software engineer, did some teaching at Austin Community College, and am now starting a new career as a writer.

My platform is simple, as a member of the board, I will help continue the great participation and help the members meet with others with similar interests. Lone Star is a well-functioning group and needs to continue to provide for the wants and needs of the members.

Leslie Stevenson

I had been a "Mensa Groupie" for years, attending the Gulf Coast and Lone Star RG's with my cousins, Joe & Barbara Bartlett. After years of persuading, I finally took the Mensa test at the Culture in Cowtown AG in July 2013, and having received a qualifying score, I immediately wanted to get active. Little did I know how active I was about to become: I'm one of the co-chairs for the 2014 Lone Star RG XVI.

One of the reasons I'd like to be on the board of officers is to help out where I can, as I believe we need lots of participation to keep our area alive and fresh. If I want to be a part of an active group, I need to be an active member, like the people I have seen who have kept Lone Star Mensa going for so long. I'm the new kid on the block, but really excited to be a member, and ready to help out where you all need me! Thank you,

Johnnie Vaughn

I first joined Mensa back in the 70 s. There would be periods of time when I would let my dues lapse, but then I would move back to an area that had an active group and the cycle would start again. Lone Star Mensa has been my home for several years now, and I've enjoyed the benefits of being a member. While it will never be calm, my schedule has slowed down enough that I can attempt to give back some time to the organization, and maybe give some of the other members a well-deserved break.

Douglas Yee

I am running for the position of Senior Officer on the Lone Star Mensa Board of Officers. I first joined Mensa and the local chapter in 2010 and have served as a board member since 2012. I am the current LSM Webmaster, organizer of the monthly Chess Night meetings, and provider of the monthly Extreme Sudoku puzzle in the Armadillo Literary Gazette. I welcome the opportunity to continue to serve on the board and would appreciate your vote.

MEMBER MEETINGS

Submitted by Don Drumtra, Chairman Pro Tem

The next regular membership meetings are scheduled for 6:45-8:15 PM February 10th ((the Annual Business Meeting), and March 10 (second Mondays) at the Carver Branch Library, Room 2. No speakers are on the schedule, so these will be open discussion meetings. Any attendee may suggest a topic.

THE VALUE OF \$70

By Rob Salkin

If you're like me, you have some disposable income. By "some," I mean not unlimited. By "disposable," I mean I can use it for things other than bills. Considering I have a limited amount of money to spend any way I want, I want to get the most I can for that money.

American Mensa membership is currently \$70 per year. If you check out the member benefits page on the website (<http://us.mensa.org/benefits>), you'll see that your membership entitles you to discounts on things you may or may not need. I've heard great things about the Geico discount. Friends have also enjoyed a percentage off their stays at Choice Hotels. However, if you ask people why they join Mensa, I guarantee you won't hear "I heard members get a great deal on insurance and travel." It's just a nice bonus American Mensa throws our way. Great! Hard to argue with that!

Yet, discounts on insurance and travel aren't hard to find on your own. Getting stuck with Geico means you might be missing a great rate with another company. Limiting yourself to Choice Hotels means you're probably not shopping around for better deals. That's the goal though. Companies offer these deals to American Mensa members so they'll get more business and make up the discount in volume. They're banking on your not shopping around for a better deal elsewhere, remaining loyal to their brand, and telling your friends to get on board with their brand too.

For travel, I recommend kayak.com which will search multiple travel sites for you. If you're the lucky type, you might want to try to name your own price on priceline.com or hope to get a great deal on a hotel stay at hotwire.com. I've seen some great cruises with upgrades and bonuses on cruisesonly.com. Believe it or not, travel agents are

still a thing and might actually be able to get you a great deal. Once you arrive at your destination, check out yelp.com for the best local options for dining and other services.

Why bother searching for these deals when you've already paid the \$70? Well, good point. You're likely to find a better deal than the Mensa discount, but it might not be worth your time to do so. Your time is valuable. So, why did you pay your hard earned \$70 to Mensa in the first place? Again, probably not for the discounts. So, what was it?

People join Mensa for a variety of reasons. The reasons people join Mensa are an urge to feel validated, wanting to socialize with other smart people, seeking intellectual stimulation, hoping to network in order to find a job or more business, needing to find a compatible, smart significant other, and more. It's been said that Mensa has no competition, so if you want in for those things, you're stuck spending \$70. Not so.

Want to feel validated? Well, your test score did that before you even joined and you've experienced whatever validation membership provides you for a while now. Looking for ways to meet people at fun events? Try meetup.com. It's free and the events are local to you. Game nights, lectures, dinners, etc. are all available. Need to find a job or find new business? Ok, monster.com, indeed.com, and linkedin.com have paid off for people. If you're not worried about another government shutdown, you might even try usajobs.gov. The best part is that they're all free. Want a date? You wouldn't be the only one looking for a date on okcupid.com and pof.com. They are excellent free sites for local

Rob is a computer science faculty member at a community college outside of New York's Capital District and holds graduate degrees in business, law, and computer science. He is an American Mensa life member and has been a Local Group President (LocSec), Regional Gathering (RG) Chair, Mind Games Logistics Chair, Special Interest Group (SIG) Coordinator, Assistant Regional Vice Chair (RVC), and National Membership Officer. The jugglers provide some unexpected entertainment.



matches. Speaking of matches, match.com is under \$70 for a three month membership. Thirsting for intellectual stimulation beyond what your friends have to offer for free on facebook.com and twitter.com? Museums are well under \$70 for admission; even yearly memberships are rather affordable and might offer events, publications, and discounts. Of course, there's always going out to dinner with family and friends or meeting new friends at a happy hour. Those things are also well under \$70.

Contrary to popular belief, your best bet would probably have been putting your extra cash into the stock market. The market is up in the neighborhood of 25% in the last year. Had you invested a year ago, your \$70 would be worth about \$87.50 today. Of course, you would have needed a rather accurate crystal ball to know that was coming. Sadly, I have yet to find one of those on thinkgeek.com. Hmmm. Didn't Mensa have a discount on that site in the past?

So, don't re-up? No, that's not the point. Mensa has so much potential. Put a minor amount of effort into contacting the board (<http://www.us.mensa.org/connect/boardcontacts/>) and staff (<http://www.us.mensa.org/connect/staffcontacts/>). Let them know you want more for your money. Let them know there's competition and they need to start competing. If things change, your \$70 in yearly dues might just pay off in spades...or more friends...or whatever it is you're looking for in Mensa membership.

The jugglers provide some impromptu entertainment.

JANUARY BOARD MINUTES

Submitted by Don Drumtra, acting Scribe

The January regular meeting of the Lone Star Mensa Board of Officers convened at 7:16 PM, Thursday, January 2, 2014 at Carver Public Library, Room 2, 1161 Angelina St., Austin TX. Attending were **Don Drumtra** and **Douglas Yee**, board members, and **Leslie Stevenson** and **Johnnie Vaughn**, Lone Star RG Co-Chairmen. The board elected Don as Chairman and Secretary pro tem, adopted the agenda for the meeting, and approved the minutes of the December 5 Board meeting on page 4 of the January Armadillo Literary Gazette. The agenda is available on the LSM Website.

Reports

The board received the following officer reports:

- Treasurer: Don reported that the December 9 checking account balance was \$9011.38.
- ComComm: Don reported that the January newsletter mailing went very well with one barcode error and no other errors. A problem we had been facing was a Post Office mandatory requirement for full service mailing at the end of January which would have meant a large increase in our postage. We received notice at the end of December that the post office has delayed implementation to an undetermined date in the future.
- EdComm: No report
- MemComm: No report.
- SymComm: As reported previously, the November meeting featured a Tai Chi instructor. Don reported that we have received good feedback on the program. The Holiday social was a great success, with 37 attendees. LSM covered roughly half the cost. The board thanked John and Geri Neemidge for putting the party together.
- Lone Star RG: Leslie Stevenson reported that we are meeting with the hotel the second week of January to secure the hotel. Once secured, we plan to schedule monthly RG Planning meetings through the RG wrap-up meeting in September. Several have already expressed interest in helping plan, so I created a Google Group for pre-planning ideas. We are looking for a Hospitality Chair. We have many presenters and activities already scheduled/planned—so we are on track, aside from the hotel
- Website Working Group: Patsy reported that she and Tami Heaton have a working model of the Website they are discussing. With a little more work it should be available to others for review.
- Mind Games Committee: Patsy reported that there are 172 registrants. The next committee meeting is scheduled for a Saturday in mid-January.
- Nominations and Elections Committees: Linda Edelstein reported that there are ten candidates for board positions. Candidate statements and a ballot will be provided in the February newsletter.

Actions

There were no motions for board action.

Announcements

- The next regular monthly Board meetings are scheduled for 7:15-8:15 PM Thursday, February 6 and March 6 (first Thursdays) at the Carver Branch Library, room 2.
- The next regular membership meetings are scheduled for 6:45-8:15 PM January 13, (the Annual Business Meeting), February 10, and March 10 (second Mondays) at the Carver Branch Library, room 2.
- The next testing session is scheduled for Saturday, January 25.
-

Adjourned 7:56 PM



*John Neemidge calls out the
“winning” numbers*

Submitted by Lisa Van Gemert, Gifted Youth Specialist

Happenings & Celebrations:

5th: National Weatherman's Day
11th: Make a Friend Day
20th: Love Your Pet Day
27th: Polar Bear Day

February is Great American Pie Month and also National Cherry Month. Put them both together and you've got cherry pie! Celebrate by baking this super easy recipe <http://bit.ly/cherrypierecipe>.

Resources:

National Weatherman's Day

On March 15, 1952 on an island in the Indian Ocean, it rained 73.62 inches in one day! That's a lot of rain! If you're interested in weather, check out this website <http://www.exploringweather.com/> for lots of information on all sorts of weather.

Valentine's Day

Find fun Valentine's Activities to do with your kids brought to you by the Mensa Foundation at <http://bit.ly/mensavalentine>.

Make a Friend Day

Need some suggestions for finding friends? We've got some great ones at <http://bit.ly/mensafriends>.

20th: Love Your Pet Day

Find out who owns what pets at <http://bit.ly/petsforamerica> and how to care for your pets here <http://bit.ly/careforpets>

27th: Polar Bear Day

Polar Bears International has a YouTube channel with lots of great video of polar bears <http://bit.ly/polarbearintl>, and you can learn more about them from National Geographic here <http://bit.ly/learnpolar> as well.

Triviality: February 1865 is the only month in recorded history that never had a full moon.

Latest Contest:

We want to know your life story, but you can only use six words. Tricky, eh? For inspiration, see some examples from young people at <http://bit.ly/kidbios>. You may illustrate it yourself or use an image. All images must be copyright free and royalty free. You may wish to visit <http://morguefile.com> for some great, free images.

Guidelines

- Entrants must be members of American Mensa and the Mensa number must accompany the entry.
- Each person may submit only one bio.
- The biographies may have only six words. Hyphenating words not standardly hyphenated is not permissible.
- The source of the image must be identified.
- All entries must be received by March 15th.

Divisions

- 6 & Under
- 7 – 11
- 2 & Up

To enter: email your entry to GiftedYouth@americanmensa.org. Unfortunately, we cannot accept pdf files.

If you have questions, please contact GiftedYouth@americanmensa.org.

Regards,

Lisa Van Gemert
Gifted Youth Specialist | mensafoundation.org
lisav@americanmensa.org | 817.607.5578
Get resources: <http://pinterest.com/brightkids>
Find more: <http://mensaforkids.org>

Sometimes we stare so long at a door that is closing that we see too late the one that is open.

- Alexander Graham Bell

YOUR SUDOKU PUZZLE

Weekly Extremes

<http://www.sudoku.org.uk/>

By Douglas Yee



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

WHAT IS YOUR MONEY WORTH?

By Ron Edelstein

Everyone is familiar with the term “inflation” when applied to their pay/pension check. Right now the U.S. is experiencing one of the lowest inflation rates in history, and one of the lowest in the world, at about 1.5% per year. It hasn’t always been that way. Back in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s, inflation in the U.S. reached the double digits. Mortgage rates were up in the 13-15% range and credit card interest rates reached up to over 30%. (Interestingly enough, they haven’t come back down even with inflation and other major interest rates now down in the low single-digits!)

However, even at its height, U.S. rates were nothing compared to some in history. The classic example is what happened in Germany after the end of World War I, when they became astronomical! The financial system in Germany completely collapsed. They didn’t talk about yearly rates, they were dealing with HOURLY rates! When you ordered a meal -- if you could afford one! -- you negotiated the price before you ordered, because by the time you were done, it would have changed! In 1923, the collapse was complete and a new currency was issued. But before that, the currency was issued in increasingly large bills and anyone who collects world stamps is familiar with the “German wallpaper” with stamps overprinted with higher denominations--like a 15 pfennig stamp overprinted with “3 Milliarden Marks” (For those not familiar with German numerals, a milliard is equivalent to a billion as Americans know it--a billion in Germany would be the equivalent of an American trillion.) Currency was issued in denominations of up to 100 TRILLION Marks! One woman tells the tale of going to a store to buy a packet of dye, which, before WWI would have cost 15 pfennig. The clerk had calculated it at the time of purchase and it came to

375 million Marks! One U.S. dollar was equivalent to 4.2 trillion Marks!

When the monetary system was overhauled in 1923, the exchange rate of the old Marks to the new Rentenmark was -- 1 TRILLION to 1! The peak inflation rate was 29,500%.

Other countries have experienced extreme inflation too, sometimes even more. Greece, at the end of World War II, was experiencing a rate of 13,800%, with a DAILY rate of 20.9%! Other extreme examples were: Yugoslavia, 1989-1994 at 313 MILLION % and a daily rate of 54.6%. The prince of inflation was Zimbabwe, from 2000-2009, when its rate reached 516 quintillion per cent. Zimbabwe issued Z\$100 trillion notes. (Now available at most coin shows for about US\$20 as novelties.) The KING of inflation was Hungary in 1945-46, at the end of WWII. There inflation peaked in July 1946 with monthly rate of 4.19 x 10¹⁶% and 207% daily inflation rate!

So look at your 1.5% inflation per year and think of how good you have it!



Read more: <http://www.businessinsider.com/10-hyperinflation-stories-of-the-20th-century-2011-3?op=1#ixzz2pxtDfm1c>

LONE STAR RG XVI LOGO CONTEST

Submitted by Leslie Stevenson, Lone Star RG XVI Co-Chair

We are planning to have some t-shirts and goodies specially printed for sale and prizes at the RG - and we want to ask you to design our logo! What could be more fun?!

CONTEST SUBMISSION DEADLINE: February 28th, 2014

JUDGING: March 1st - 25th, 2014

WINNER ANNOUNCED: April 1st, 2014 (Facebook event page) and May 2014 Armadillo Gazette

FUN! RULES and SPECIFICATONS! WOO HOO!

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE

- The contest is open to all current Mensa members residing in the Lone Star region.
- The Chair and Co-Chair of Lone Star RG XVI: Playtime! Come Play With Us! are ineligible to submit entries for this contest.

LOGO DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS

- The artwork may also be used for embroidery; it should not depend upon a lot of intricate detail or an excessive number of colors: Submission should be three colors maximum with the ability to translate into one or two colors and still be legible.
- The artwork should incorporate the theme of "Playtime" in the design.
- The artwork should incorporate the number "16" in the design.
- The artwork should incorporate an armadillo in the design.
- You shouldn't sign your actual artwork.

SUBMITTING ENTRIES

- All entries must have the following information:
 - FULL NAME
 - ADDRESS
 - CONTACT PHONE NUMBER
 - CONTACT EMAIL
- All entries must be digitized and sent by email. Entries should be in 300dpi resolution and in JPEG or TIFF format.
- Send entries to: leslielstevenson@gmail.com with subject line "Lone Star RG XVI Logo Contest Entry"
- Each individual member may submit up to two entries.
- Once submitted, all artwork will be considered property of the Lone Star Mensa group, and the winner's artwork will be used as deemed appropriate by the LoneStarRG XVI committee, regardless of ability to notify the winner. There will be every attempt to notify said winner (see below) but in case of inability to contact the winner of the contest, the winner's artwork will still be used.

DEADLINE

- Deadline for the submission of entries is February 28th, 2014, with no exceptions.

JUDGING

- Entries will be judged by March 25th, 2014.
- Judging will be done by the RG Planning Committee.
- To assure objectivity, the names of the owners of each entry will not be divulged to the judges except for the RG Chair and Co-Chair.
- The judges reserve the right to choose more than one winning entry.

WINNER NOTIFIED AND ANNOUNCEMENT

- The RG Chair will notify the winner between March 26th and 31st by phone and email.
- The winner will be announced on April 1st, 2014 on the Facebook LoneStar RG XVI Event site: <http://bit.ly/LoneStarGXVI> and in the May 2014 *Armadillo Literary Gazette*.

AND THE AMAZING PRIZE

The winner of the Lone Star RG XVI: Playtime! Come Play With Us! Logo Design Contest will get a free t-shirt (of winner's requested size) and bragging rights about having won.

QUESTIONS?

Any questions with regards to the above rules may be sent to leslielstevenson@gmail.com.



MEMBER NEWS

Compiled by Don Drumtra, Records Manager, as of 12/31/14

HAPPY FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

1	Dennis Robert McDaniel
3	Gwyndolyn N Jones
3	Matthew A Kuffler
5	Jan Cox
6	Joyce L Gioia-Herman
6	Benny Bruce Younger
8	Michael McCann
8	Jacob T Miller
8	Kevin Powell
9	Rebecca K Elder
9	Meredith S Hardy
10	Patricia Kay Bowers
13	Brietta M Perez
13	Brooke E Roeder
14	Michael Seay
15	Joseph Brian Gresham
15	Linda Van Broeke-Pierce
17	Jeffrey Neil St Onge
19	Kyle McCoy
20	Angela H Adams
20	William Allan Morita
22	Shawn Sprinkel
25	Christina Hinton
26	Elizabeth Malloy
27	Dave McCracken
27	Geri Lynne Neemidge



NEW MEMBERS—WELCOME!

Nanette South Clark
Louis Heidema
Hadley Hughes
Sophie Hughes
Carl Knickerbocker
Gracen Pizzitola
Rachel Schroeder

JUST MOVED IN—HI NEIGHBOR!

Mary L Abbey
Bradley Jewell
Brian Slone
Douglas A Williams

WELCOME BACK--MISSED YOU!

Rebecca K Elder
Paul Pierce

GOODBYE—MOVING AWAY

Michael Herzfeld

** 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.*

MEMBER FOR 20 YEARS

Heather Hall

MEMBER FOR 15 YEARS

Keith A Johnson
Steve Young

MEMBER FOR 10 YEARS

Jordan Pekevski
James Tupa

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!



MEMBER FOR 5 YEARS

Claire Cahill
Katherine 'Kate' Cahill
Margaret 'Meg' Cahill
Maria Maega
Priscilla Navarro Quejada

MEMBER FOR 1 YEAR

Rimma Aguirre
Mason Clark
Stephen Howard Gallion
Stephanie Hilliard
Mischa Sikkenga
Benny Bruce Younger

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Greetings of the season.

I hope you are doing well. I have had a miraculous recovery from my almost-fatal accident June 30, 2012, thanks to the prayers, thoughts, and love from so many friends plus the unfailing devotion of my family. I am living in a little apartment attached to my oldest daughter's (and her husband's) home. I have help come in once a week, and can get out of the wheelchair and walk a little with a walker. I feel good and what pain I have (all the time) is minor. I cannot reach my feet because of a paralyzed left leg and foot, but can do most daily things for myself.

I hope you have a very happy holiday. Tell your spouses and all my friends for whom I have no email address that I said hello.

Love, peace, and joy,

JimAnn Oliver

Hi, Rose,

American Mensa is excited to introduce the all-new digital Bulletin. Just click on the link below to view the November/December issue, including bonus content for this issue's cover feature! Even better, you can download each edition and take it with you on the go—no Internet or cell signal needed. Read it on your smartphone, tablet, or computer—it will optimize to whatever platform you use.

<http://www.us.mensa.org/digitalbulletin>

When prompted, use American Mensa website login. If you don't have that information available, contact Web Services at WebServices@americanmensa.org or 888-294-8035 ext. 5005 during regular business hours.

We hope you enjoy this new FREE member benefit. Look forward to future notices in your email going forward.

Happy reading!

Roger Brooks
Editor, Mensa Bulletin
American Mensa, Ltd.

BulletinEditor@us.mensa.org
www.us.mensa.org
www.twitter.com/americanmensa
www.facebook.com/americanmensa



[The next two letters are in response to Ron Edelstein's car trivia quiz in the January 2014 issue.—Editor]

The automobile pictured on page one is a Mercedes Benz 300 SL, 1955; on page 11 it's a 1957 Ford Thunderbird (note fins on rear fender); the last photo, on page 13, is a 1956 Lincoln Continental Mark II. Thanks for the pictures of these great rides.

Glenn Mautner

Page 1: Mercedes 300SL Gullwing Coupe made from '55 - '57. I don't believe the picture provides enough detail to call the year.

Page 11: '57 Ford Thunderbird

Page 13: Continental Mark II made from '56 - '57. Again, I don't believe the picture offers enough detail to call the year.

[The third picture is a Continental Mk II. Continental did not become a Lincoln model until the following year. The Mk II was only built in one year, 1956.—Editor]

For both the Mercedes and Continental I don't believe there were any "model" year changes, only detail improvements. Is it a coincidence all are from the mid-fifties?

I've been to the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance three times so I guess I like talking about cars.

Thank you,

Dennis Crabill

HOLIDAY PARTY PICS

Photos by Sean Medley

We had a nice turnout at our annual holiday party. Thanks to John and Geri Neemidge for making the arrangements, and to their children for helping out. Photos from the event are scattered throughout this issue.

Mr. David Meliot recently rejoined Mensa after "...a sabbatical lasting several decades, which is fully explainable were I to actually pause to think about it." It seems our fellow LSM member is an author, with a new book Exophobe. Following is a review:



Exophobe by D. Kenton Mellot
Publisher: Triadic Press, 432 pp.
Digital versions at Apple, Amazon, and Barnes & Noble
Hardcover at Barnes & Noble and www.exophobe.com
Reviewed by Suzanne Yuskiw

If you like your science fiction leavened with humor, brainy wordplay and a whiff of romance, look into D. Kenton Mellot's latest novel, Exophobe.

Enoch Maarduk -- the quirky narrator -- engages with the reader immediately, drawing you into his semi-geeky, restless bachelorhood. It's Friday night and he's torn between following a Google thread on Gilgamesh and chasing babes with his pals at the local watering hole. Initially, Gilgamesh wins and the reader is treated to an overview of Sumerian trivia. But the web surfing soon turns serious -- toward the electromagnetic energy spectrum -- and the plot shifts into high gear.

By Chapter Two, Enoch's life is threatened by a polyester-clad heavy, saved by a requisitely gorgeous female agent named Phoebe Scarlett O'Hara, and he is introduced to PHANTASM, an über CIA-like agency that both welcomes and threatens Enoch's existence.

As an English teacher more inclined toward Dickens and Austen than Heinlein or Herbert, I was wary about tackling a new science fiction novel for review. Lengthy exposition seems to be de rigueur for this genre (vis-à-vis Dune!), distancing the reader from the story and often diluting its literary possibilities. In this case, however, Mellot's highly verbal central character talks directly to the reader, drawing "you" into the meandering byways of his mind. Enoch is unable to resist a horrible pun, then apologizes; throws out a pithy Latin phrase, then suggests "you should look it up. Really."; slyly references Dante, Shakespeare, and Voltaire.

By Chapter 3, you're in his head and willing to follow him anywhere. When he confronts the Eemees (electromagnetic entities), the alkaloid peptides, and ultimately the quantum cascade laser, a little exposition can be excused. The book is skillfully wrought, with enough geeky stuff to satisfy the sci-fi regular and more than its share of literary-historical-philosophical musings to appeal to the rest of us.

Suzanne Yuskiw retired from teaching English years ago and currently directs a small community theater group in Gaithersburg, Maryland. SYuskiw@gmail.com
More reviews can be found at Goodreads, Amazon, and at his website, www.exophobe.com.



*Dave Miller scores an angel
at the White Elephant
exchange.*

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Compiled by Don Drumtra, Officer Coordinator, as of 01/31/134

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mostquality@austin.rr.com	& Johnnie Vaughn	512-867-5658

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S.I.G.H.T.

	Vacant	
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EVERYTHING ELSE

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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.

** LSM board members: John Neemidge, Don Drumtra, Douglas Yee, and Fred Goertz.

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Compiled by Rose Berkowitz, Calendar Editor

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 GROUNDHOG DAY	3	4	5	6 Board Meeting	7	8
9	10 Member Meeting ELECTION DEADLINE,	11	12 LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY	13 ALG Due Chess Night TGIT-North	14 VALENTINE'S DAY	15 Games Night
16	17 PRESIDENT'S DAY	18 Eclectic Eats	18	20 TGIT-South	21	22 WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY
23	24	25	26	27 TGIT-North Seal & Label	28	

See the online calendar (ism.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.

Board Meeting
1st Thursday
Feb. 6, 7:15-8:15 pm
Carver Branch Library

LSM Election Deadline
Feb. 10, Midnight
Votes must be received by then.

Member Meeting
2nd Monday
Feb. 10, 6:45 to 8:15 pm
Carver Branch Library

ALG/Calendar Deadline
2nd Thursday
Feb. 13, Midnight
Submissions due to Editor.



Chess Night
2nd Thursday
Feb. 13, 6-8 PM
Bring your chess sets if you have them. Hosted by Douglas Yee.

Thank Goodness It's Thursday (TGIT-North)
Feb. 13 & 27, 6-8 pm
Meet us upstairs at the Café for conversation, food and fun. Prospective members welcome

Games Night
3rd Saturday
Feb. 16, 7-10 pm
Café Express
3418 N. Lamar, Austin
Bring a game or just show up. Café Express has lots of tasty items and beverages, but you do not have to buy a meal to sit with us! Family and friends are welcome.

Eclectic Eats
Tuesday, Feb. 18, 7 pm
Russell's Bistro
1601 W. 38th Street, Austin
(a few doors down from the Kerbey Lane Café on Kerbey Lane)
512-467-7877
<http://www.russellsbistro.com/>
No strong ethnic theme— just great food well prepared and served in a charming atmosphere. RSVP by noon on Monday, February 17. to Aaron Rabushka, 512-280-2807 or arabushka@austin.rr.com.

Thank Goodness It's Thursday (TGIT-South)
3rd Thursday
Feb. 20, 6-8 pm
Join us for conversation, food, and fun. Prospective members welcome.



Seal & Label
Feb. 27-8 Ppm
Join the TGIT Group to help seal and label the newsletter.

UPCOMING IN MARCH
Mar 6. LSM Board
Mar 10, RMM
Mar 13, TOI,T, CN
Mar 13, ALG & Calendar inputs
Mar 15, GN, Café Express
Mar 20, TGIT
Mar 27. TGIT, S&L

EVENT DIRECTIONS

Board and Member Meeting
Carver Public Library, Room 2,
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. Look for the Mensa table
sign—usually we're upstairs on the
Mezzanine.

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. Enter at
the east side of the store by the
statues of fruits and vegetables.

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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.

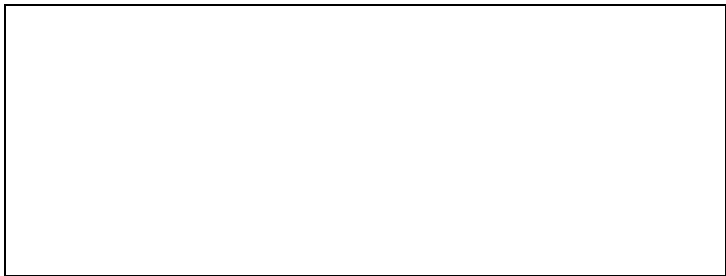
Calendar inputs may be submitted at any time and will normally be published online within three days and in the next month's printed calendar if received before the cut-off date. The cut-off date is the second Thursday of the previous month.

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

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Armadillo Literary Gazette

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