

MOMENTUM

The Voice of Mensa in New Hampshire and Maine

Vol. 24 No. 1

August 2004



New Hampshire Mensa

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**Cover Artist:
NH/ME Mensa's own Christine Bartlett!**

The Fine Print

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MOMENTUM (ISSN 0279-2850) is the official publication of New Hampshire Mensa (030). It is published monthly at 83 N Main Street, Boscawen, NH 03303 and is distributed to members of New Hampshire Mensa with the subscription cost of \$6.75 included in the national dues. Out of chapter Mensa subscriptions are \$12.00 per year. Nonmember subscriptions are \$15.00 per year. Periodicals postage paid at Concord, NH 03301.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Momentum*, 83 N Main Street, Boscawen, NH 03303-1235.

Momentum logo by Matthew DeSmith

Hopefully everyone had a fabulous Fourth of July and was able to spend time with family and/or friends. I was down in New Bedford for Summerfest, which is the best value in outdoor festivals of which I am aware. For five dollars, you get free reign of the historic district, which is closed to everything but pedestrian traffic, for the entire weekend. Every kind of artisan imaginable is on hand, hawking their wares, along with whaleboat races, the blessing of the fleet, ship visits, fried seafood and acoustic music. I go for the music, myself, and although the line-up this year was not that strong, you can't beat the price. They usually hold it on the weekend after the Fourth, but this year, the organizers went with the holiday weekend, so they threw in fireworks to boot. It was odd to have the actual holiday fall on a Sunday so we all got to milk it for a three-day weekend. I am more of a traditionalist and feel that Washington's Birthday and Lincoln's Birthday should be celebrated on the 12th and the 22nd, for example, instead of these phony made-up long weekends, which are a new invention. At any rate, if you get the chance to experience Summerfest next year, I would enthusiastically recommend it.

I am pleased to announce that Regional winners of the 2003-2004 MERF Scholarships have been named and NH Mensa was able to land three scholarships at that level. Considering that we fielded 17 essays qualified for consideration, this is a remarkable percentage of success and a truly impressive showing. Emily Elliott of Concord was awarded \$300 as the Karen Cooper Memorial Scholarship winner for our local, Matthew Cosgro of Nashua was

awarded \$500 as a Grosswirth-Salny Scholarship winner and Melissa Hutchinson of Keene was awarded \$600 as a Rita Levine Memorial Scholarship winner. We still are going through the process of vetting the selectees who have been named as the winners of our three local prizes. The names of those winners will be published, along with the winning essays, as soon as the vetting process is completed. Those who might be interested in learning more about this underappreciated aspect of Mensa are directed to <http://merf.us.mensa.org/scholarships>.


Continuing on the subject of scholarships, huzzahs are in order for Christine Bartlett, who has agreed to chair the scholarship process for 2004-2005. Christine has been involved in Mensa since 1987, beginning in Ohio. She has been a scholarship judge in the past, and has served as a LocSec in that state. Stooing to the old hackneyed expression, she has not let any moss grow on her and has already begun the process of publicizing this year's contest. I am sure that she will be looking for judges in the December timeframe, so watch these pages to pitch in your time when the call comes. It would be spectacular to be able to repeat this year's level of success, but nothing can proceed in the contest until local judges make that first step happen. Christine can be reached at scholarship@nh.us.mensa.org for any queries or volunteering.

Darlene Alleman and Walter Wakefield have agreed to be co-chairs for the 2005 Regional Gathering. Ten folks showed up at the 12 July kick-off planning meeting, but several plum positions have not yet been snapped up. On the off-chance that this is the year that you have

decided to pull your light out from under that bushel, take the plunge and contact either of them to check on the status of the chair position for which you have been silently pining.

A little birdie tells me that we have a person who has voiced an interest in becoming the Gifted Children's Coordinator for Maine, but he has not been to an ExComm yet to have his mettle tested by those worthies. So all you Mainers, **don't think that you are off the hook yet!!** We still need a Testing/Proctor Coordinator and a Young Mensa Advisor; it would be nice to have an appointed officer from your state, again. It is understandable not wanting to make the commitment of time to drive to an ExComm meeting in New Hampshire every month that would be mandated by being in an elected position. But either of the two positions mentioned can be accomplished effectively from the comfort of your own home. Testing Coordinator is the first point of contact for non-Mensans looking to join either through testing or prior evidence. All that is required is a cheerful disposition and a willingness

to act as Mensa's version of the Welcome Wagon. We have a Young Mensa Coordinator who is a Young Mensan himself; the Advisor position is just being requested to act as a backstop for any situation with which the Coordinator and his parent feel the need for help. Please contact any member of the ExComm to find out about filling these vacancies.

This month's appeal is a restatement of an ongoing request. We are currently conducting FSM/ExComm at the Allemanse, which is fabulous during the summer months, but we still need a more suitable location for these activities to move indoors to when the weather gets a bit frosty. I implore someone to make their home available for a couple of hours once a month so that we are not once again reduced to discussing our organizational business in the back room of a tavern. I would also push for maximum turnout at this month's Micro-RG at the Allemanse; the pool temperature will probably be optimal, the meats on the barbeque prime and the conversation engaging. See all of you there! 

What's Cooking in Region 1

*Region 1 Vice Chair
Margaretta McBean*

June started off with a wonderful Astronomical show: Venus transiting across the Sun, viewable from the Earth. The last time this happened was in 1882! Living in midtown New York City precludes star gazing due to all of the ambient light from buildings, billboards, etc., but a short walk to Central Park's Sheep Meadow can give very good viewing conditions. In true New York City fashion, there were at least 200 other "Venus Viewers" out in the early dawn hours of June 8th. There was even a group of women clad in togae singing

a Venusian song. At least I think it was Venusian and that they were women...

Moving to more terrestrial matters, I have just returned from the Annual Gathering in Las Vegas. At the Annual Business Meeting, held 1 July, the motion to amend Mensa's Certificate of Incorporation was approved, following the submission by the Secretary of our proxies. Mensa can now legitimately conduct corporate matters with a minimum of 100 members voting, either in person or by proxy. The ProxyQuest team was

enthusiastically thanked for their work, as well as all of those who submitted their proxies.

Region 1 had some plaudits at the Awards Luncheon. Angela Tremain, the editor of Mid-Hudson Mensa's *Mid-Mensan*, won in the PRP (Publication Recognition Program) Newsletter's Special Mention Category.

Misha's Vineyard Players, captained by Greg Draves of Greater New York Mensa, scored in tenth place for this year's CultureQuest competition.

John G. DiLiberto of Greater New York Mensa won the National Chair's Service Award for his work in guiding the AMC through the complexities of risk management. Congratulations to you all!!!

A dues increase, effective 1 April 2005, was approved at the American Mensa Committee meeting. Local group support was increased to \$8.64 (up from \$8.15) per member per year. Mike Siegler, Region 3's Vice Chair, asked why local groups couldn't get more. After much discussion, it was decided to revisit the whole group allocation issue at the next AMC meeting in Portland, Oregon in September. It seems the formula of one-sixth of the national budget for local group support was created over thirty years ago!

The status of AML SIGs was discussed again. The definition of SIG member was debated, with the majority feeling that only a Mensa member can be a SIG member (I did not agree). The method of validating SIG members has yet to be decided and there are numerous issues attached to it. The definition of a SIG guest, as well as procedures to deny admission or remove SIG members, will be discussed at the next AMC meeting.

No group has submitted a bid for the 2007 Annual Gathering. I noted

that Region 1's groups are reluctant without full support from the National Office for hotel negotiations, hospitality, etc. The burden placed on a local group to produce a full-blown convention has become the topic of a study by the National Office. Hopefully a more efficacious method can be found.

Mensa World Connect is looking for more "sister" groups. This program matches similarly sized groups in the US and abroad. Members correspond with each other, individually and as a group, and often arrange meetings in each other's country.

It's summer time and that means cool drinks. Here's a North African version of a classic:

Moroccan Lemonade

- 1 lb. lemons, preferably thin-skinned, well washed and rinsed
- 1 lb. Sugar
- 12 mint leaves [optional]

1. Cut up lemons [and mint] and place in food processor or blender. Add sugar. Process on "chop" for about 2 minutes, or until mixture is thick and no pieces of lemon can be seen. (Do this in batches if your processor is small).
2. Scrape mixture into large bowl or jar. Add enough boiling water to cover and stir well. Let mixture steep at room temperature several hours or overnight.
3. If you're fussy, strain out the seeds. However, seed spitting contests are a summer tradition for many.
4. Add enough cold water to bring to your desired level of sweetness. Moroccans serve this with very little added water, but they have incredible sweet teeth. ■

American Mensa Ltd and Carlton Books Ltd have entered into an agreement settling a lawsuit AML filed in December 2003 over the use of the Mensa name and logo on publications sold in the United States.

Under the terms of the agreement, Carlton paid AML \$130,000 to reimburse in part for legal expenses of the suit and has agreed to pay reasonable royalties in the future and to obey restrictions regarding the future use of the Mensa name and logo in this country. AML and Carlton have agreed on a list of previously published titles that may continue to be reprinted. As part of the agreement Carlton will submit all titles to be published in the U.S. to AML for a quality review prior to publishing.

The publisher may not introduce new products into the market or sell titles other than those currently approved. Carlton also agreed to a nine-month "sell-off period," during which they and their subsidiaries and distributors in this country may sell any Carlton items remaining in their stock. After that period has expired, Carlton will destroy or remove from the U.S. any stock other than the approved titles. Then Carlton will begin a ten-year contract period during which it may sell the approved products in the U.S. All future royalties will be sent to Mensa International Ltd. Under a separate previous agreement among AML, British Mensa Ltd and MIL, royalties on all publications sold bearing the Mensa name and logo are divided among MIL and the national Mensas in the countries where the products are sold.

Why did we sue Carlton?

We had tried for several years to resolve the issue of these books without resorting to legal action, but we were unsuccessful in those attempts.

How did this all start?

In several contracts between 1992 and 1995, British Mensa gave Carlton the right to use the Mensa name and logo on puzzle books in all countries. The contracts were improper because BML didn't own the U.S. rights. A subsequent 1996 contract between AML and BML was supposed to limit Carlton's U.S. activity. That contract expired in 2000 and Carlton continued to expand its U.S. use of the Mensa name and logo despite AML protests and threats of litigation.

What was wrong with the books that we wanted to stop Carlton from selling in the U.S.?

There were problems with the quality of some of the materials, including books, cards and puzzles that we had been unable to resolve with Carlton. These books also caused AML's current contract with Sterling Publishing to be less valuable.

What will AML do with the money from this lawsuit?

We didn't enter into this lawsuit for monetary gain. Carlton's agreed \$130,000 payment to AML will mostly be used to cover our legal expenses in reaching this solution to the issue.

How much has AML earned in royalties from these publications and will that amount be less because of this suit?

Starting last year, royalties on publications bearing the Mensa name and logo are divided among MIL and the national Mensas in the countries where the products are sold. MIL will continue to receive royalties on the approved titles for the duration of our current agreement with Carlton (i.e., 10 years). In the past, British Mensa paid AML a portion of its royalties, based on U.S. sales. The payments were sporadic but, based on information supplied, complied with contract terms. It is reasonable to assume that, since there will be fewer Carlton products being sold in this country, our royalties may be somewhat lower; but the quality of the publications has always been the issue - not the amount of royalties received. AML now has direct control over the quality of all books Carlton will be allowed to distribute in this country.

I heard Carlton is going to sue British Mensa and Mensa International to get back the money we're costing them. Why are we doing this if we're going to hurt other Mensas?

British Mensa publications have said they have to reimburse Carlton for part of the AML settlement. While we are aware that this was said, we have no details about it. We have urged British Mensa to work with us in resolving the issue with Carlton. They declined to do so and, in fact, we believe they consulted continuously with Carlton throughout the process and they argued against any sanctions against Carlton,

contending that any AML actions would result in a devastating Carlton lawsuit against BML. Part of the agreement between Carlton and AML is that Carlton specifically said they will not sue AML, BML or MIL as a result of anything in this suit.

How many products are affected by this suit (i.e., how many were being sold before and how many will be sold now)?

It's not possible to determine the actual number of units that may be sold in the future, and there is disagreement about how many Carlton books were being sold prior to this agreement because some were repackaged versions of the same publications. Carlton may sell up to 30 for the duration of the current 10-year agreement.

What are the other "Mensa" books I see?

MIL, BML and AML have entered into a renewable five-year agreement with Sterling Publishing, a subsidiary of Barnes & Noble, giving them exclusive worldwide rights to use the Mensa name and logo on a minimum of 12 books per year books in the English language. This contract excludes the books previously published by Carlton. This contract is estimated to be worth over \$90,000 in royalties over five years.

Who gets the royalties from these new books?

The royalties are divided with 55% going to the country in which the products are sold, and 15% each to MIL, BML and AML for administration of the license. ■■

Present: Bill Alleman, Darlene Alleman, Sue Barnes, Christine Bartlett, John Bauman, Agatha Gagne, Jeff Jennings, Ann Majeske, John McGondel, Claire Natola, Lynn Pina, Tom Shiel, Walter Wakefield

The meeting was called to order at 5:25 p.m.

Christine Bartlett has agreed to take over the role of Scholarship Chair. Claire Natola moved to nominate Christine for said position. Bill Alleman seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

John Bauman reported that the national and regional scholarships have been awarded. Discussion ensued about the awarding of our local scholarships. Claire Natola moved that we award scholarships to our top three scorers. Bill Alleman seconded. Lengthy discussion ensued. The motion passed. The winners will be contacted for their enrollment information, and their names will be published in *Momentum*.

Walter Wakefield offered his services as RG Chair, provided he had guidance, preferably in the form of a handbook. However, an RG Handbook is likely not to be finalized for quite some time. Darlene Alleman offered to serve with Walter as a Co-Chair of the RG. Claire Natola moved to nominate Walter and Darlene as 2005 RG Co-Chairs. Bill Alleman seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The Maine Gifted Children Coordinator position was discussed. Darlene expected to see current Maine GCC Ann Kucera at the Bangor Dinner on June 30, and would find out from Ann what the position entails. Walter Wakefield would talk to people at his Portland Dinner about the position.

John Bauman reported a net gain of ten members for a total of 426.

Tom Shiel moved to adjourn. Bill Alleman seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m. ■

Special Interest Groups

FILM LOVERS UNITE! If you are a lover of rare, independent, and international films, and would enjoy the opportunity to see these films at the Portsmouth Music Hall (the largest screen north of Boston) with like-minded film lovers, contact Claire Natola at mensabear@hotmail.com or 603-279-9986. Claire will contact you when a group is getting together for a film.

M-TREPRENEUR: M-trepreneur is an on-line group that discusses ways to make a living (or even a little more) by getting together and using our skills to set up a business, or some alternative way to make money. Please contact John Lewicke at lewicke@yahoo.com to join. We will discuss ideas online, and when we have something that we want to pursue, we'll get together in person.

2005 RG Update

The 2005 RG Kick-Off Meeting was a great success, with ten people showing up to begin the planning! Walter Wakefield and Darlene Alleman will be serving as RG Chairs, Deb Stone as Registrar, Sue and Jim Barnes as Hospitality Chairs and Claire Natola as Programming Chair. We are looking for enthusiastic members to bring fresh ideas to the RG process! We still need to fill the following positions:

Assistant Hospitality Chair
Breakfast Coordinator
Games Chair
Movies Room Chair
RG Primer
Bartender
Speaker Escorts
Gofers

Newbies will be well-backstopped by our returning veterans, and volunteering is a great way to feel very much at home right in the thick of things.

Please contact Darlene at rgchair@nh.us.mensa.org or Walter at (603) 436-7250 if you are interested in helping out! We'd love to have you!

Classified

WANTED Your back-date copies of *Mensa Bulletin*, *Momentum*, and other national publications and newsletters of Maine, Vermont, and Massachusetts chapters of Mensa. Also Registers, etc.

Are you one of those people who discards them monthly, yearly, after a decade? I will buy them for cash. I will pay \$0.15 each for any/all, duplicates included. More \$ for publications dated 1940's through 1970's. Copies will be preserved and used for good, appropriate future uses, and will never be destroyed.

Contact Walter Wakefield at (603) 436-7250, see me at any of the many calendar events I attend in New Hampshire and Maine each month, or bring to The Antiquarian Bookstore, 1070 Lafayette Road, Portsmouth, NH 03801-5408. Thank You.

INERTIA SYNDROME

When it comes to buying a stock or mutual fund most people act pretty quickly. There are some who will take the time to get a report from Morningstar (it is worthless) or get reports from their broker (also worthless) or even do a search on the Internet (if you know what you are doing). When your broker says "buy" you buy and when a friend gives you a "tip" you buy.

Any fool can buy. It is the wise man who knows how to sell. One of the old masters of the market Bernard Baruch used to say, "I sell too soon," but he died a multimillionaire.

There is a reason folks are slow to sell. They fall in love with their position and know all the reasons why they should hold on. "My broker said it will come back." And pigs can fly.

With all these symptoms that have turned into syndrome diseases like acid reflux for which there is one of those purple pills to cure you in a hurry. When you buy a stock or mutual fund that doesn't go up or, worse yet, goes down we need one of those purple pills. People have contracted Inertia Syndrome.

The symptoms are terrible. Each day as you look on the financial page of your paper and see your stock has gone down another point your stomach begins to act up and you need one of those pills. You keep

putting off going to the doctor (broker) to tell him to sell so your symptoms will go away, but you don't. Things continue to get worse and worse until your money is almost all gone. Then you decide to sell. By then it is too late. What should you have done?

When it comes to your health you can change your diet and stop eating all those lovely sweet goopies that have no nutrition. When you own a stock like that and you lose sleep the best thing to do is to get rid of it. Maybe you have a profit and you are seeing it disappear. There is a way to relieve yourself.

Most people don't know when to sell so the best thing to do is have the market tell you. It is very easy. The first rule for making money in the market is to cut your losses short. As soon as you buy any stock or fund you must decide how much you are willing to risk. Five percent? Ten percent. Fifteen percent? That number should be calculated from the closing high of the move or never lower than where you bought it. If you paid \$50 per share your risk should be no more than \$5.00 per share.

To overcome Inertia Syndrome put the medicine in play as soon as you buy your position by using an Open Stop Loss Order. By limiting your risk you will never have a really bad belly ache. 🍷

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My name, as you can see above, is Eileen. Sometimes I am called Pennielane, or just Pennie. I have been a professional nanny for eleven years now, and am able to enjoy some of the perks that go with my position.

One perk is my being able to enjoy being outdoors with my wards on a fairly regular basis (weather permitting, of course). In 2000, I was caring for a two-and-a-half-year-old and we were able to walk to the local park, which was very close by and had a small pond.

On each of the nice days, I'd load the carriage with Miss Jackie and some snacks, and head down the hill from the house toward the park. To get to the park, however, we had to carefully cross a rather busy street. What I haven't mentioned yet is that there is a small pond on both sides of the street, where we frequently were treated to the sights of wild ducks crossing from pond to pond to tend to their business. Miss Jackie got the biggest kick out of watching those ducks, as well as the various chipmunks, squirrels, birds and reptiles.

I, for one reason or another, took an almost immediate fondness to this one particular pair of ducks that were obviously inseparable. The colorful male seemed to dote on his female mate; he was constantly preening her feathers. That pair would walk from one pond across the busy street to the other pond, and back again each day. I saw traffic stop for them on more than one occasion.

For months, our trek to the park was pretty much a daily excursion, again, of course, weather permitting. Then there was a late foggy morning, yet we headed down there as usual, and as we crossed the road toward the park, I noticed an object in the

middle of the road. My first thought was that it was a squirrel, or perhaps a skunk, but upon approaching it more closely I saw that it had feathers. It was the female duck. She and her mate had obviously tried to cross the road to the other pond, and she did not make it. An automobile must have hit her, and I am sure she had no chance.

I felt horrible, almost distraught, as I looked around trying to locate the loyal male. He was not anywhere to be seen, and I dejectedly pushed the carriage across the road, heading straight for the park and its pond.

Imagine my instant joy at seeing the male swimming around safely in circles! But that joy faded quickly as I realized that many ducks take one mate for life; I felt immense sadness for what I knew that duck must have been feeling.

You see, a few months prior to this, my husband of 27 years and I had separated. As I continued watching the duck, quietly floating on that pond, I got a strong urge to see my husband. That duck, that simple, foolish, and hopelessly devoted duck caused me to then realize how my husband must have felt when we became divorced. After taking things slowly, we are now back together, and much happier than ever before.

The old adage "Absence makes the heart grow fonder" is, to me, an absolute truth.

With the help of a couple of feathered friends, I was able to learn in my heart what true love really is. ■



Eddie's family was gathered in the hospital room. He could hear his parents, his young wife and little daughter crying. The chaplain was performing the last rites. Eddie tried to scream, but of course there was no sound forthcoming. They all finished praying, and at the priest's gentle urgings, left the room to sign the necessary documents. Eddie slid off into a dream...

He was swinging through the jungle treetops, master of all that he surveyed. Sometimes he leapt from branch to branch, at other times he would glide tree to tree, hanging onto a vine. Every now and then, he would pause to listen to the jungle, knowing its various sounds as an orchestra conductor knows each of his players' instruments. He scooped some cool water from the collecting hole in a tree's hollow. Looking up at a sound, he watched an eagle as it carried off a large, writhing snake. High above the jungle floor, he rested safely, breathing in great gulps of delicious air, enriched by the abundant, luscious, foliage. He gazed eastward as the sun began to rise, knowing that in a few short minutes, the heat would be sweltering.

On the way back to his nest, he searched for the day's food, and returned home with the carcass of a tender young Kudu buck. The spiral antlers would become knife handles; the skin would become water pouches. The entrails and bones he would give to Rall, the black leopard whom he had raised from a kitten, after having won a knife to fang death battle with its mother. The mother leopard's hide he had fashioned into a loincloth and a pair of leggings, for he wasted nothing.

He raised the cub instead of killing it, thereby replenishing the mother's life.

By midmorning he was well fed and resting comfortably in his hammock, some forty feet above the jungle trail. He planned to sleep for a while, until when the cruel sun was at its hottest. Then he would awaken from the heat and take a refreshing swim under the cool waterfall. While there he would gather some underwater vegetables to have with his afternoon meal. He was always gathering fresh fruit, since it quickly went bad in the heat of the humid jungle. The old fruit he would leave on the balcony of his tree house for the many multicolored parrots that followed him and came to him when he beckoned. They would fly along overhead when he ran the jungle paths, alerting him to danger with cries of alarm, or leading him to prey with calls of distress.

But for now he would sleep a contented man, lacking in nothing. At peace with himself and the world around him...

His eyelids flitted, but the nurse, freshly on shift, didn't notice. The staff never paid attention to coma patients. Just check the vital signs, change the bedclothes, clean the body, refill the I.V. bottles and a quick shave, then it was on to the next patient.

Once the nurse left, Eddie was able to concentrate on his dreaming again. He had long ago learned to stop trying to communicate with his caretakers. They were not aware of his thoughts. He could neither talk, nor move, nor in any way gain their attention. So he just waited, listening to them and receiving their ministrations, until they, whether doctors, nurses, or visitors, left him

alone. Then, when they were gone and he was once again in a pure and tranquil state, his mind would roam... At first he had roamed around the hospital. Then around the country. Then the world...And through time...And beyond.

Now he was Adam, the first man. The garden was his home. He walked upon the cool, soft moss of the garden's floor, which cushioned his bare feet, giving his steps a vibrant spring. He was not alone, for many other, smaller animals scampered about, some scurrying across his path, others chasing each other around bushes and trees. He fed the squirrels from his hand. He splashed in the clear river with his otter friends. The birds sang songs about him, in their own language. The world was almost perfect for him. Almost. Then Eve appeared from behind a tree. Together they laughed and played through the meadows, chasing butterflies and smelling the many flowers. They ran through a silent pool of cool water, stopping to watch the small purple fishes, which nibbled at their feet and toes. Finally, after much time spent in the enjoyment of each other's company, they lay down side by side in a large field of clover, basking in the warm sun and the blue sky. A light wind whispered over their exhausted young bodies. Adam reached out to gently caress Eve's tender face and she smiled innocently at him. He moved his trembling hand towards her slender white neck, and...

The next shift's nurse came into his room, interrupting his reality. For, to Eddie, the hospital was as sleep to him. Of minor consequence, but which must be tolerated. But his thoughts, dreams, fantasies, or hallucinations, or whatever combination thereof, those were his reality, his life which he had long since accepted. He at first had felt angry

whenever his keepers had disturbed his streams of unconsciousness. But he eventually adjusted. Then he found sadness and frustration upon learning that once interrupted, the trains of thought were gone forever.

And so he had come to accept the inevitable: That his life's thoughts and his reality was subject to being changed at any given moment, whether it be by routine nurse's visits, or by random visits from doctors or relatives and after which he would be plunged headlong into his next reality. Of course he had no sense of time, what with having nothing to relate time to. His life became a never-ending series of short movies, in which he was the star, and which were far better than anything the Hollywood film industry was capable of making. An existence of semi-conscious reality. For lately, had his caretakers taken the time to check or notice, his heart and respiration rates jumped in relation to his dream sequences. And his eyelids sometimes fluttered.

The nurse was finished and left the room, turning off the lights on her way out. Eddie's biorhythms came into line... Now this was something new. It was as if he was attached to the bottom of some sort of a plane or something. He was looking down at the Earth.

He felt as though he was a video camera mounted to a spaceship. The ship flashed right by the planet Earth, continuing on towards the sun. The light was blinding, as the ship whipped around the sun, swinging out past Mercury and Venus, back towards Earth. It was then that he noticed his being not alone. In addition to himself were many other cameras and devices. Along with them, he picked up various television and radio signals. News, weather, sitcoms, soap operas, as well as defense and military

communications. Then, without stopping, he was heading blindly out past the other planets, into outer space. His last input from Earth was about the arrival of Halley's comet. The ship was Halley's comet, due back every generation or so. This ought to be one hell of a ride.

The far off stars slowly and silently swept by. The expanse of outer space was truly humbling. One star appeared not to move. All the others either moved left, right, up, down, or went by. This star must be their destination. It was orange, not white like most, or yellow like the Earth's. The closer that they approached, the more apparent the distinctions became. There were seventeen planets. Most had moons, some natural, some not. The great ship stopped just outside the gravitational pull of the outermost planet. A smaller ship headed for it. He was reminded of a tugboat going to a luxury liner. He felt as though... as though...

And then the sheets were being lifted off of him by the next shift nurse. Her name was Melba and she was a Haitian, and she talked to him softly in a heavy accent. Eddie was resigned to just waiting for her to be done and gone, and his mind silently screamed out: "Leave me alone!" The old nurse dropped her thermometer, and holding her hands over her matronly bosom, she sat down heavily in the nearest chair. She breathed in and out until her heartbeat was relatively normal.

Melba regarded the white boy in his head bandages, doomed forever to his coma-bed. Finally, she spoke to him, an eye on his monitor. "Can you hear me, my little white child?"

The monitor made funny signals, as her mind heard: "Leave me alone. You all keep interrupting my dreams!"

She wiped her eyes and held onto her purse, which held the

medicines and magic pieces of her people. She was not facing the first spirit of her long lifetime. She answered Eddie: "My child, I do not think that you want me to leave. Now why not tell me your story, and then I will tell you mine own?" She felt instead of heard, as he unburdened his heart to her. He told her of swimming with the great whales, of diving deep into the oceans. And he spoke of loving. And the overwhelming sadness of knowing that he could never see or touch his loved ones again. The old woman felt his pain, as was her peoples' way. She wept a silent tear. "My boy, can we not do anything for you now?" A moment passed, and he thought to her. The councilor for the hospital had apparently convinced his family to "write him off." There was virtually no chance of his emerging from the coma. And even if he did, there was zero chance of his ever moving anything from the neck down.

The armed services took care of their own. To a point. A decimal point. Somewhere there was someone whose nasty job was to save the agency any "non-justifiable" expenses. Eddie now lived in constant awareness of the fact that the next person in the door could be there to pull the plug on his life support services...

Melba's eyes were wet with tears for she could not help the dear boy. If she told the hospital administration about the voodoo, she would be either locked up or fired. And she dared not to use a zombie spell/curse to help him, for she had promised her dead grandmother many years ago to forsake the old magic and her Shamanism. It was far too risky...The old woman quietly left the room, to think...

As Eddie had poured his anguish out to the old nurse, he'd felt a tugging at the edge of his mind, as if

someone or something was trying to gain his attention. Now with Melba gone, he tried to retreat to a dream-state, but there was that tugging again, only much stronger. He heard: "Are you with us or not? What's the problem?"

He answered: "Who are you?"

"Never mind us, Bub, how come we can't pull you in all the way?"

Eddie was completely confused: "Pull me where?"

"Through the induction line! You've gone and blocked it up! And right in the middle of our bonus incentive program, during our time of dire need!" Eddie thought that perhaps this might be another dream. "No, this is not a dream. You are dead, right?"

To this Eddie most indignantly replied: "NO, just a coma!"

"Coma? Well that's great! Tell me, what was happening when you first heard my, er, voice?"

Eddie thought. "Well, I was talking to Melba, and she was telling me about voodoo..."

"No! No!! First a coma, now it's voodoo stuff. I knew I should've used up a sick day today. Well, this is a fine kettle of fish. Here I am trapped in a three-way link between a witch and a comatose person. I can't wait to write up the report."

Eddie spoke up: "You? You? What about me, trapped in a body that can't move, waiting for my own family to pull the plug on my life support systems, and the only ones who can hear me are an old voodoo nurse who can't tell anyone, and you. And just who the hell are you anyhow?"

"I am sergeant Hong. I guide in the New Volunteer Death Cadets, and bring them to the Academy, where they will be trained to become Soul Warriors. My information is that you had just killed yourself to join us, so here I am."

"Why kill myself?"

"Because that's the only way you can join. You have to be thinking about joining us as you pass from life, we latch onto your death signal, and you are inducted into the Corps. Something happened, you weren't ready, and here we are."

Eddie thought fast: "What do you mean we?"

"It's like this: think of us like two telephone lines that got connected but cannot hang up. At least I can't. And I don't think that you are in any kind of a position to do much, are you."

Eddie took some time to absorb all of this. Finally he thought out to Sgt. Hong: "What are my options?"

"Well, when they come in to shut down your life supports, you could try to think of joining. But you'll probably pass out, which will break our connection, setting me free, and sending you off to the Probate Court. There you will be judged. After which you will either join us, or have to pay atonement for your past transgressions, or be sent to join the legion."

"What legion? The foreign legion?"

"Well, it's foreign all right. The Legion of the Damned! The bad guys. Our enemies. There're more of them than there are of us. That's why we have this bonus program for joining now."

"Bonus program?"

"Yep. Sign up now, become a Soul Warrior, and you are guaranteed a wonderful eternity."

Eddie was idly wondering again whether this was just another dream, when Melba walked back into the room. She had been tuned into the conversation, and touched her necklace and prayed. Eddie made up his mind about what to do. The three of them jumped into conversation. Once Melba was

brought up to speed, Eddie explained what he needed from her. He could not risk losing contact with Hong during the dying time after being disconnected.

"It is agreed then, I shall use my voodoo powers to keep the channel open during the few minutes that it should take you to die after being disconnected. I shall think identical thoughts to yours, about these Death Cadets. All should be well, but I must go now to prepare for this battle. I can feel unseen beings, which would urge me not to do this thing. I will leave now, and come back for the service in the morning." She said nothing to them about her weakening heart...

During the night, Hong brought Eddie up to speed on the Faith Wars, which currently occupied most of the galaxies' time, money and resources.

Morning finally came, with and Eddie and Hong still locked in thought-link. Eddie was tired of listening to Hong's whining about the clog in the induction line. Eddie's family, the Dr., and nurse Melba filed into the room. All but Melba and the Dr. were tear-faced. They all prayed silently, together. After the family left the room, while Melba stayed behind to record the death, the 'Healer'

turned off the life support machinery, and slithered out of the room.

Melba was locked into the trilateral switchboard, and fingered her voodoo charms. She chanted half- forgotten words, along with desires to join the Cadets, and had to force herself to think through Eddie's mind into Hong's. As Eddie grew weaker, Melba worked harder, veins pulsing wildly in her forehead. Eddie finally slipped into unconsciousness, and Hong almost felt released. But Melba grunted and screamed the phrases until she felt Eddie's full passing, at which point she collapsed in a motionless heap, her great loving heart having given out.

The 'Healer' discovered her dead body a little while later. Another fat person with a heart attack. "Now I have two death reports to fill out," he thought.

"Wow, this is great!" Eddie said.

"Yeah, ain't it? Just aim towards that star over there. Enjoy the ride. Time means nothing anymore." Then Eddie and Hong heard a voice behind them:

"This better be good, cause I was ready for a raise back there!" warned Melba, as they raced together through space. Towards the Academy... ■

KICK IRRATIONAL by Brian Lord

www.KickComics.com



Special Events

Pow-Owl CaMp at Buffalo Gap August 20-22, 2004

This delightful new annual event is like a mini summer camp for Mensans and friends/family of all ages. Buffalo Gap Camp is located west of Winchester, VA; the camp is wonderful and the food is excellent.

Planned activities include a variety of RG-like programs, a dance sampler series, and traditional camp activities like swimming, singing, and s'mores around the campfire. Cabins will be set aside for games, a book swap, and the children's clubhouse.

Registration is \$205 until August 13, with reduced rates for children. Includes pleasant cabin space (private room extra), tasty meals/snacks from Friday dinner through Sunday lunch, and tons of fun!

For more information, contact event sponsor Jenny Foster at pinc@xecu.net.

Cancun Club Med SIG Gathering September 4-11, 2004

Mark your calendars for a splashing good time at the Club Med SIG Gathering in Cancun the week of September 4-11, 2004.

Enjoy sailing, windsurfing, waterskiing, kayaking, snorkeling, tennis, dancing, and French food (with wine). All lessons are included. All sports equipment is included, even sailboats. All meals and bar drinks and snacks between meals are included!

Registration is free. For more information, check out the SIG website at www.MensaClubMed.org or e-mail Erica Byrne of the Club Med SIG at EMByrne@attglobal.net.

Fall Mountain Climb Woodstock, New Hampshire September 10-12, 2004

New England has wonderful mountains, enjoyable seashores, and lively cities. New England also has Mensa! Come fall (or, technically, late summer), we combine the mountain part with the Mensa part for a wonderful weekend!

This is when the bugs and the crowds have gone but the fine weather remains with us. The days are still long and the hiking's inviting. The mountains and view await our enjoyment!

Our venue is Pembroke Lodge. Home base for many Appalachian Mountain Club trips, Pembroke Lodge is surrounded by woods with a snow-fed brook flowing by, with the Pemigewasset River a short walk away. It has country bedrooms and a deck, a homey dining room open to a large kitchen, a secluded sitting room, and a basement with its own refrigerator and shower. It also has a clock that each hour chirps out the sounds of different birds, including, of course, a Mensa owl!

The weekend is low-key and basically unstructured. The one major piece of structure is; you guessed it, hiking! We generally have two hikes. One goes to a mountain peak or other destination worthy of a good day hike. The other takes a few hours over easier terrain to reach a viewpoint, waterfall or other point of interest. Of course, there's also the 'null hike,' a short walk or drive amidst the new leaves and flowers, some shopping, or relaxing around the lodge.

The weekend includes two nights' accommodations, two full breakfasts, Saturday dinner, and snacks and soft

drinks (BYOB for anything stronger), for just \$60 per person. For Saturday lunch, the hike groups stop at a store for people to buy sandwiches and the like before heading out on the trail.

Once the sleeping spaces at the lodge, around 15, are full, registrations without accommodations are \$30 (the town of Woodstock with a number of inns and motels is a couple of miles away. There are also some good nightspots in town).

We generally pick out the hikes on Friday night. The mountain hike leaves right after Saturday breakfast while the shorter hike leaves an hour or so later. As for the cooking and housekeeping, we do them cooperatively using a chore sign-up sheet, which definitely increases the feeling of closeness and camaraderie.

To sign up and reserve a place, send a check for \$60 per person to David Heimann, 149 Water Street, #5, Wakefield, MA 01880. You'll receive confirmation and directions to the lodge by return mail, e-mail, or phone call. If you have questions or need more information, call David at (781)245-2087, send him e-mail at heimann@world.std.com, or call Bob and Brendy Horn at (781)843-5581.

So there it is: wonderful weather, wonderful mountains, invigorating countryside, and Mensa friends, all in one wonderful weekend. Be sure to sign up early to guarantee a place!



**Whale and Puffin Watch
Bar Harbor, Maine
September 11, 2004
1:00 PM**

Join us on a whale and puffin watch in Bar Harbor, Maine! Acadian Whale Adventures (<http://www.barharborwhales.com/rates.htm>) offers a three-hour cruise.

Rates are \$39 for adults, \$25 for children (under 5 free), \$27 for seniors. Group rates are available for groups of 15 or more, so please indicate your interest to Darlene at 603-529-4446 or DSojda@aol.com so we can plan accordingly.

After the cruise we will go to a nearby park for a picnic dinner. We may also try to schedule a tour of Jackson Laboratory if time and interest permit.

**All Arizona Regional Gathering
Halcyon (A.A.R.G.H.)
Scottsdale, Arizona
December 10-12, 2004**

Imagine spending a spectacular weekend at a two-story House Party during Arizona's finest season at a luxury Scottsdale resort! Arizona's three powerhouse groups, Greater Phoenix Mensa, Tucson Mensa, and Borderline Mensa, present the All-Arizona Regional Gathering Halcyon! You belong at the AARGH!

The AARGH will be hosted at the beautiful desert grounds of the Doubletree La Posada Resort, in the heart of Paradise Valley, Scottsdale, Arizona. Hold on to your hats, because the single/double winter room rate at La Posada for the AARGH is only (drum roll please . . .) \$89 per night! Not only does this special rate represent a huge discount off the usual December room price, it is less than even the summer rates currently being advertised in the Phoenix area at comparable resorts.

What's more, the property is absolutely beautiful with its million-gallon waterfall pool and multiple Jacuzzis, tennis courts, single-level casita-style accommodations with terraces and views of Camelback Mountain, and all the amenities you

can expect from a high-end hotel resort. There is even a game room/arcade with air hockey inside the gigantic rock waterfall feature adjacent to the pool! Aside from all the great AARGH activities and programs, the opportunity for a winter weekend getaway at this venue at this price is an opportunity not to be missed!

Friday night, the festivities will kick off with a special Murder Mystery Dinner, a \$50 catered affair which is being offered to AARGH registrants for only \$25 per person (adults and children 12 and over, only, please). You can register for the AARGH, with or without the Murder Mystery Dinner, and make your room reservation with La Posada now, so don't delay! Whether you're an RG veteran, or a new or inactive member who has never ventured to a Mensa gathering, this is as good as it gets. You belong at the AARGH!!!

Hotel Reservations: Doubletree La Posada Resort, 4949 East Lincoln Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85253, 1-800-222-8733 or 1-602-952-0420. Mensa Room Rate (plus tax): \$89.00 for one or two persons (add \$10.00 each additional person).

RG Registration: \$65.00 through July 31, \$70.00 through September 30, \$80.00 through November 15, \$85.00 after November 15. Children 5 or younger on December 10th, 2004 are *free!* Children 11 or younger on December 10th, 2004 are *half price!*

Make checks payable to AARG (or All Arizona Regional Gathering) and mail to: Rev. Donne Puckle, AARGH Registrar, 125 East Kayetan Drive, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635-1117. For more information, see <http://borderlinemensa.tripod.com/aargh.html> or e-mail Donne at dpuckle@c212.com.

Ecstasy at Sea I January 24-29, 2005

Gatherings at Sea will host its first SIG gathering on Carnival's Ecstasy, out of Galveston, Texas, January 24-29, 2005. Join us for five days and four nights of Mensa fun. An RG on a ship, what an idea!

Enjoy the games tournament, the shopping in Cozumel or the beautiful white sand beaches of Calica. Enjoy fine dining, including late night buffets or casual dining in the Seaview Bistro. If eight meals a day aren't enough, there is room service. We will even have healthful selections, low in calories, fat, sodium, and cholesterol on the Spa Carnival menu.

Entertainment includes live music, including three bands, an orchestra, Vegas-style shows and comedy acts. You won't want to miss the welcome aboard party and the Captain's cocktail party. There is even a singles party!

To register: Contact American Voyager Travel, att: Bob Wallace, Group Travel, 14850 Montford Drive, Suite 165, Dallas, TX 75254. American Voyager Travel, a bonded travel agency, will be handling all registration/travel fees.

Per person Registration Fee: \$395 for inside cabins, \$450 for outside cabins, and \$300 for 3rd and 4th person in cabin. The minimum occupancy is 2 persons per cabin; a one-person cabin is \$500. To reserve your space, a \$200 deposit is due by August 23, 2004. Payment in full is due November 23, 2004. Full refund of deposits until November 14, 2004. Rates may change after November 14.

For more information contact the host, SIGs Officer Ray O'Connor, at roconnor@vartec.net or 605 Falling Leaf Drive, Allen, TX 75002, (972) 396-9399.

**Ski SIG Gathering
February 5-13, 2005**

The Ski SIG of American Mensa invites Mensa members worldwide to join us for a half-week or week of snow skiing the deep fluffy snow on the Rocky Mountains of Aspen and Snowmass. For details see <http://lists.us.mensa.org/mailman/listinfo/skisig-announce> or contact John Adams, Trip2005@skisig.us.mensa.org, (713) 666-9277, 8211 Fairhope Place, Houston, TX 77025-3201.

**Colloquium 2005
Earth in Mind: Fueling the Future
Tucson, Arizona
March 4-6, 2005**

Come join a unique forum, Mensa-style, of stimulating intellectual inquiry and insights into the problems and promise of renewable energy. We will explore associated societal changes, economic impact and technological challenges. Listen to internationally recognized speakers, then share your thoughts in round table discussions with fellow Mensans.

The Colloquium is presented by American Mensa and the Mensa Education and Research Foundation, and is hosted by Borderline Mensa. The location is the Sheraton Tucson Hotel & Suites, Tucson, Arizona; \$99 per night guestroom; \$119 suite

(mention the special "Mensa" rate). Breakfast buffet included with room rates.

Speakers invited so far include:

- David Orr, professor of environmental studies and author of *Earth in Mind* and *The Nature of Design*
- John Turner, hydrogen fuel cell research scientist with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory
- Richard Heinberg, professor of cultural studies and author of *The Party's Over*
- Judy Knox, educator and activist, pioneer of the use of sustainable straw-bale construction since 1989

Space is limited. Don't wait. Mensa's last Colloquium sold out. Register online today at www.colloquium.us.mensa.org.

**2005 Post-AG Cruise
July 2005**

The 2005 AG in New Orleans will end with a Mensa cruise to Jamaica, the Cayman Islands and Cozumel. Extra-special pricing until August 5, 2004. Details at <http://www.suitecruising.com/ag2.htm>.

Start the Limerick!

The last line is:

And when they are cats, they are smaller.

Write us the first four lines! Mail your entry to Claire Natola, P.O. Box 345, Meredith, NH 03253. The best entries will be published in a future *Momentum*. Sorry, all you win is glory and a few more seconds towards your fifteen minutes of fame.

Calendar of Events

August 2004

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
August 1	2	3	4 Mensa Tests in Nashua, NH and Elliot, ME	5	6 Temperance League	7
8 Second Sunday Brunch Bunch (South) Portland Dinner	9	10	11	12	13 Vermont Mensa Meeting	14 Central Maine Meet and Munch
15	16	17	18 Midweek Games on the Seacoast	19 Mensa Test in Portsmouth	20	21 Eat Drink/ Think Laugh Weare's The Micro-RG, Part VII FSM/ ExComm/ Business Meeting
22 Fourth Sunday Lunch	23	24	25	26	27 Appetite for Discussion	28
29	30	31	September 1	2	3 Temperance League	4

Plan Ahead for These Upcoming Events!

- 9/10-12: Fall Mountain Climb in Woodstock, N.H. (see Page 13 for details)
- 9/11: Whale and Puffin Watch in Bar Harbor, Maine (see Page 14 for details)
- 9/12: Second Sunday Brunch at Wentworth-by-the-Sea in New Castle, N.H.
- 9/17: No School at the Ugly Fox in Shrewsbury, Mass.