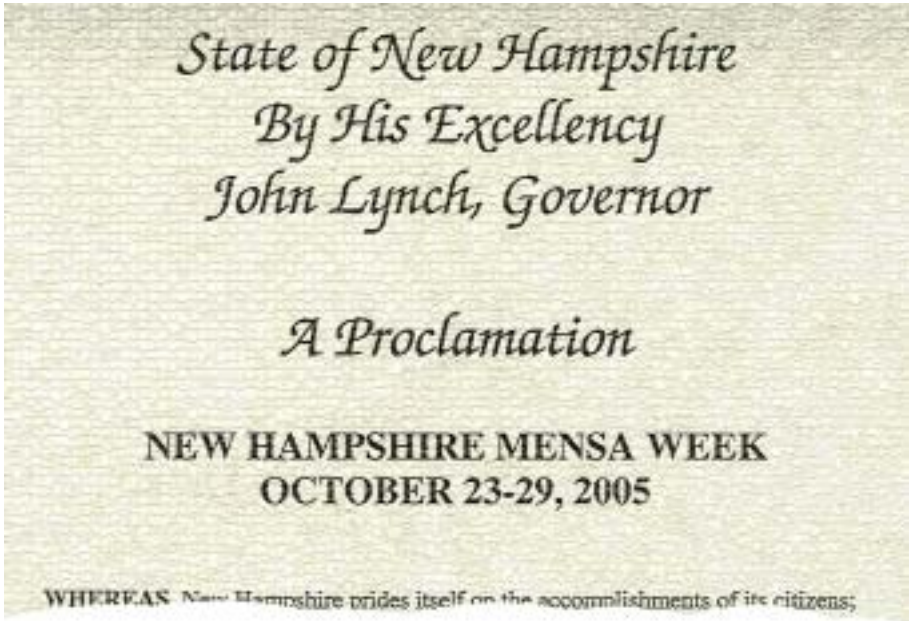




The Voice of Mensa in New Hampshire and Maine

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We sincerely thank **Marty Capodice** for spearheading Governor Lynch's acknowledgment of New Hampshire Mensa's 25th Anniversary. To read the entire proclamation, see Page 3.

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*State of New Hampshire
By His Excellency
John Lynch, Governor*

A Proclamation

**NEW HAMPSHIRE MENSA WEEK
OCTOBER 23-29, 2005**

WHEREAS, New Hampshire prides itself on the accomplishments of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, New Hampshire typically leads the nation in the measured achievements of its students; and

WHEREAS, Mensa, the high IQ society, promotes intelligence with endeavors challenging people of all ages to fully use and enjoy their brains; and

WHEREAS, New Hampshire Mensa offers Gifted Children special events that champion environments conducive to mental growth, grants scholarships to those proficiently and effectively stating their goals, tests those interested in measuring their own intelligence, and hosts gatherings where ideas are shared and the joy of knowledge is celebrated; and

WHEREAS, October 2005 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the New Hampshire chapter of American Mensa;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOHN LYNCH, GOVERNOR of the State of New Hampshire, hereby proclaim the week of **October 23-29, 2005** as **NEW HAMPSHIRE MENSA WEEK** and encourage all residents to applaud this organization for its dedication to intelligence.



Given at the Executive Chamber in Concord,
this 4th day of October, in the year of Our Lord
two thousand and five, and the independence of
the United States of America, two hundred and
twenty-nine.


John H. Lynch
Governor



Bauman's Quiver

LocSec John Bauman

DAMN AND BLAST! I cannot believe that the Red Sox whimpered into such an ignominious ending to a pretty great season. When you consider that they did not have an ace or a closer for most of the year, when you consider that the manager's misguided loyalty to an individual rendered first base, a traditional power position of the offense, toothless, when you remember that for a long time, at the beginning of the season, having Millar, Renteria and Bellhorn in the lineup for all intents and purposes turned the team into a National League team with three automatic outs, then the 2005 Red Sox had no business winning 95 games. But we made it into the ALDS against Chicago, and even though there was not the feeling of destiny like last year, we were the defending World Champions. Game One rocked everyone back on their heels, but Boomer was cruising in Game Two, up 4-0 and Red Sox Nation felt that this would turn out after all. The pundits were calling for the full five games being required to decide the division winner and we were looking for a split before heading back to Fenway. Then the Graffanino play, turning himself into a human wicket, dashed all hopes for the split. When Big Papi and Manny went back-to-back in the fourth inning of the third game, I felt that we would win that game, though those two homers only tied the game. Dead center is 420 feet and Big Papi hit it about 419 feet with two men on during his first at-bat. The big bats were coming alive in the fourth, but maybe that 419-foot out should have told us that the baseball gods were interested in giving the White Sox, who have not won since the 1917 Black Sox scandal, their chance this year. Where Ortiz came up empty, Konerko was able to connect in the sixth. Trot made one of his trademark crashing-into-the-wall catches in the sixth and when we loaded the bases with nobody out in our half of the inning, I felt like we still would win. But what a pitiful display! You will never convince me that Damon broke his wrists or did not "have control of the head of the bat" for the final out. We were never going to win the whole thing with our pitching, but it still chafes to not even be able to muster one win. So, as I said, the team that had no business winning 95 games outplayed themselves this year and we should be satisfied with that, although no one in Red Sox Nation is. Therefore, go Angels, since my two favorite teams are the Red Sox and whoever is beating the Yankees.

Turning to chapter news, I would like to announce that we have a new Scholarship Chair; we were in kind of a bad way, what with the link for the application already being posted at the AML website and no Chair being in place. I would like to take this opportunity to thank again those members who answered the "special alert" email that went out to Claire's announce list - you know who you are and you will not be forgotten. When the time comes to bolster the judges' ranks, we will call on you then. So the outcome is that

Adam Freiband of Nashua has agreed to be Scholarship Chair; let me extend the heartfelt gratitude of the entire ExComm for stepping into the breach. Scholarship season is upon us and I have already received the first entry at the chapter post office box, not surprisingly from a student enrolled at the same school as our inaugural Zanca scholar, Heather Crosby. I predicted back in June that we should expect a marked rise in the number of entries from nursing students in Maine, and I am not being disappointed in my prediction.

We are behind in vetting the winners of the local chapter prizes, but all have been contacted and I am just waiting on their bona fides to arrive before awarding the cash. I am able to announce the first place winner of \$400 at this time, however. Jodie Ingram of New Hampton, NH is another nursing student, enrolled at the New Hampshire Technical Institute in Concord, and we offer her our belated congratulations for her effort and best wishes in her academic labors. The text of all the winning essays will appear in a future issue of *Momentum*, once the second and third place winners are finalized.

The announcements have arrived for this year's Copper Black, Distinguished Teacher, and Lifetime Achievement Awards. These are recurring cash awards offered by the Mensa Foundation; anyone interested in nominating a deserving individual is directed to download the application from the Foundation link at the AML website at <http://www.us.mensa.org>. For those not on-line, contact either the Editor or me for more details.

Halloween will be upon us soon and Thanksgiving is hard on its heels. That means that Boston Mensa's RG is gearing up. I would commend this RG to any members new to Mensa, to established members who have never partaken of the RG experience, and to any members who have not been to an RG for some time. There is a price break in effect until November 5th; be sure to get your checks to Paul Mailman ASAP.

That's all for now. **BEAT NOTRE DAME.** 🍷



What's Cooking in Region 1

Region 1 Vice Chair Marghretta McBean

The long hot days of summer are gradually giving way to shorter days and cool nights. My garden's bumper crop of basil (five! different kinds) is slowly diminishing and I doubt if any more tomatoes will make an appearance. The kale, beets and salsify, however, will have no problem with the frosty days ahead. And I'm planting hyacinth bulbs under tomorrow's full moon.

Moving away from my bucolic reveries, I can report that the recent AMC (American Mensa Committee - Mensa's board of directors) meeting was a pleasant and productive affair. An all-day planning session yielded many worthwhile goals. The motion to amend the Local Group Host Agreement by including the national office staff as Annual Gathering (AG) registration agents

was defeated. One salient point did emerge from the spirited discussion: AGs are national events that are partially funded by American Mensa, Ltd. While host groups provide the locale, volunteers, speakers, hospitality, etc., they do not operate independently. I was surprised to learn there is even a cap on the amount of money a group can expect to net, a reason some groups have refrained from bidding for an AG. Several issues that surfaced will be explored as they directly impact not only local group/national office relations, but also the very nature of membership in a national organization.

I have appointed Lawrence Pool (Northern New Jersey Mensa) and Ernest Adams (Connecticut & Western Massachusetts Mensa) as representatives to the Mensa Hall of Fame Committee, which will choose the 2006 nominees.

Happy 25th Birthday to New Hampshire Mensa! Best Wishes on its Silver Anniversary!

L'shanah tovah ("for a good year") - it's the Jewish Year 5766. May the new year bring peace to all.

Ramadan is the holiest month in the lunar Islamic calendar, beginning when the moon is at its apogee (maximum distance from Earth) from the earth. Devout Muslims fast during daylight hours, eating only at night. In 2005, the first day of fasting begins on October 4th and ends on November 2nd.

Basbousa is an Egyptian sweet dense cake saturated with syrup. It is served after the nightly Ramadan meal. Other versions of Basbousa include Nammurra (Lebanese) and Hareesa (Palestinian).

Basbousa

Syrup	1 cup yogurt
3 cups sugar	1 cup vegetable oil
1½ cups water	1 cup heavy cream
1 tsp. - 2* Tbl. fresh lemon juice	¼ cups semolina**
Cake	2 medium eggs
1 cup sugar	2 teaspoons baking powder
1 cup flaked coconut	Whole blanched almonds, pistachios, or pine nuts

1. Prepare syrup by putting the sugar and water in a heavy saucepan. Bring to a boil while stirring to dissolve the sugar. Let boil until it appears clear. Add lemon juice and let boil for a minute or so. Remove from saucepan and let cool completely.
2. Preheat the oven to 350° F. In a bowl beat all cake ingredients and stir until well mixed. Pour into a 9-inch square baking pan. Decorate the surface with nuts.
3. Bake until golden for about 30 minutes. Remove from oven and pour some syrup over the entire cake surface and return the pan to the oven for about 5 minutes to dry the surface.

4. Allow to cool, then cut the basbousa into squares like brownies. Serve with additional syrup.

* I like tart so I use more.

** Cream of wheat can be substituted for the semolina. Also, you can reduce the semolina by half and add ground almonds instead. 🍴



CultureQuest® Sampler

Each month, we publish a few questions from this year's CultureQuest® so you can quiz yourself. Do think about joining a New Hampshire Mensa team for next year's CultureQuest®! Answers can be found on Page 16.

1. Name the woman who, in response to Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, wrote *A Vindication of the Rights of Men* and later gave birth to Mary Shelley, the author of *Frankenstein*?
2. Name all three years in which the modern summer Olympic games would have been held, but were not.
3. The 19th amendment to the United States Constitution provided for what?
4. After Adolph Hitler committed suicide, who succeeded him as the leader of the Third Reich?
5. Name the person to whom the following quote is attributed: "The best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter."
6. What does the acronym URL stand for?
7. In *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, the great snake, the basilisk, is unleashed upon Harry. "Basilisk" refers to a real-life South American animal. What is the common name of this animal?
8. Sonya (also called Sophia) Kovalesky was born in Moscow and later attended the University of Gottingen. She had a very prestigious occupation for a woman at her time. Name her occupation.
9. The five original nations that founded ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) were Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and these two countries.
10. Angkor Wat, located in Cambodia, is one of the most recognized examples of this type of architecture. 🍴



Executive Committee Meeting

Recording Secretary Claire Natola

Date: 17 September 2005

Present: Bill Alleman, Darlene Alleman, Frank Fournier, John Lewicke, Ann Majeske, Gail Meinhold, Claire Natola, Tom Shiel, Mike Terrell, Walter Wakefield

The meeting was called to order at 4:18 p.m.

Walter Wakefield reported that we have five new members, two reinstated members, five renewing members, two members moving in, and three members moving out for a net gain of 11 members. Our total membership is 465 members (330 in New Hampshire, 135 in Maine).

Claire Natola reported that the 25th Anniversary keychains have been ordered. Darlene Alleman reported that Marty Capodice wrote (and emailed to her) a proclamation for the State of New Hampshire to recognize our 25th Anniversary. The ExComm approved the wording of the proclamation, which declares 23-29 October to be New Hampshire Mensa Week.

Gail Meinhold informed the ExComm that Joe Zanca was featured in an article in his local newspaper as a result of his recent award from American Mensa, and the establishment of the Joe Zanca Scholarship. Claire reported that Joe has contacted three other newspapers about featuring similar articles. Walter would like the *Portsmouth Herald* to feature same.

Claire reported that the RG Committee will hold a kick-off planning meeting on October 15th. Walter Wakefield and John Lewicke volunteered to "shepherd" first-time RG-goers; Gail volunteered to help Elizabeth Becker with Hospitality.

Claire will contact Adam Smargon to inquire as to the status of vetting the 2005 scholarship winners, and the status of preparation for the 2006 scholarship program.

Claire reported that a total of nine testing sessions will be held in New Hampshire and Maine in October in conjunction with National Testing Day.

Two pieces of old business were tabled for another month: (1) Paypal alternative - Darlene will research "GoChargelt." (2) Reimbursement for event hosts to send postcards touting events - Claire will talk to Ric Werme about label-generation possibilities.

Walter announced his candidacy for LocSec in the next local chapter elections.

Walter reported that the Mensa Foundation provides only annual statements, as opposed to quarterly, as we had requested for the Joe Zanca Scholarship.

Walter will talk to Joe to see if Joe can twist their arms to provide quarterly statements (even if they are “unofficial” unaudited reports).

Walter proposed the Cracker Barrel restaurant in Londonderry as a possible site for future FSM/ExComm meetings. The ExComm members agreed to meet there for dinner on October 4th to determine its suitability.

Walter reported that one subscription to the *Mensa Research Journal* is offered per chapter; no one on the ExComm objected to Walter being its recipient.

Walter proposed that a motion be made to print a pre-determined number of extra *Momentum* copies over the actual label total each month. The ExComm decided simply to use “best judgment” each month with a recommendation that the number of extra copies not fall below 40.

Walter addressed the issue of mileage reimbursement to proctors for Bangor, Augusta, and Dexter testing in October. After much discussion, Darlene moved that for National Testing Day 2005, New Hampshire Mensa reimburse the proctors traveling to Bangor, Augusta, and Dexter for the actual gas and tolls expended. Ann Majeske seconded. The motion passed in the majority.

John Lewicke moved to adjourn. Bill Alleman seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m. ■■



Our Northeast Corner

Sue Flaherty

On Tuesday, September 27th a small but mighty team (Mike Terrell, Claire Natola, Bev and Gordon Bryant, and I) gathered at Rí Rá Irish Pub on Commercial Street in Portland to take on the pub quiz challenge. After filling up on a hearty meal, the game was afoot.

The game is divided into six rounds: five rounds of questions and a picture round, in which we had to identify supermarket products with their names or logos removed. The questions are read aloud by the emcee and each team records its answers on an answer sheet which is turned in at the end of each round. The answer sheets are “graded” after each round, and the scores are tallied throughout the evening on a large scoreboard.

On the night we attended, the questions ranged from general knowledge (Who directed the film *Jaws*?) to more Irish-oriented questions (Which Irish saint allegedly discovered America before Columbus?). (Answers: Steven Spielberg and St. Brendan.) Some questions had our team stumped (Who is the female companion of Flash Gordon?). When the night was done, our team, aptly named Irish Luck, was just one point from the overall win! Second place out of 21 teams sure wasn’t bad at our first outing!

Would you like the answer to the Flash Gordon question? Join us on October 25th or November 29th when we gather again at Rí Rá, and we’d be more than happy to share the answer. ■■



A Search Engine Primer

David Hallmark

PPC: Also Known As "Pretty Parted Cash"

Pay-Per-Click (PPC) is THE shortcut to gaining top search engine placement. For a fee, you jump straight to the front of the line. But like most front-line activity, be prepared to do battle.

PPC allows new and old sites to begin to draw traffic as soon as five minutes after you hand the search engine your credit card. Here's how this all works:

Almost every word in the dictionary has an assigned value. Some are worth \$10 per pair of eyeballs; some are worth 10¢. Here the ROI (Return on Investment) is crucial. Is the \$10 click going to draw the right customer, or will the 50¢ click draw the same customer?

To follow our previous examples of "automobile paint" and "custom automobile paint," Yahoo Search Marketing (formerly Overture) prices as follows per click-through (as of 10/14/05):

Automobile paint = 21¢ for #1 position
(paid for by Shopping.com)

Custom automobile paint = 11¢ for position #1
(paid for by a mom-and-pop shop)

Be aware that almost every keyword will have competition and you may start a bidding war. A key point to note: when your investment is spent, your listing is REMOVED!

The difference between Organic and PPC is that one takes five minutes while the other takes five months. If both were allocated the same funds, one would last a month or two while the other might last for years. As Internet users become more savvy, they are now discovering that the top "sponsored" links are nothing more than advertisements. Trends are beginning to show that the bigger firms are spending huge amounts of cash to capture the PPC world in attempts to bypass Natural Placement. This is likely because to have their sites optimized would mean having to re-do the entire structure; the time and money it takes to build a mega-site with thousands of products is too great. This is wonderful news for the smaller firms.

Although I do advocate PPC spending, it must be balanced with Natural Placements. How I approach this is within a budget, allocating funds for optimization. During the time it takes to get ranked, spend within the budget a portion for PPC. Reduce this spending as Natural rankings climb. At some point you will be at the tipping point of where you have captured top placements for all of your selected keywords and terms "Organically" and THEN if your

budget allows, go after the higher-priced generic keywords. It's a small balancing act.

This issue is a lengthy discourse that requires at least another installment. In the meantime, with keyword list in hand, go to <http://uv.bidtool.overture.com/d/search/tools/bidtool/> and research your keywords' prices. Note #1-10, and we will discuss each of these next time.

I would welcome success stories any time from this series; please feel free to contact me directly at dh@cvwp.com.

David Hallmark works for CrystalVision Web Site Design in Portsmouth, New Hampshire as a Search Engine Optimization Coordinator. ■■



Letter to the Editor

Hi Claire,

We at the Greater Manchester Alliance for the Gifted (GMAG) are growing a local support and advocacy group in the Manchester, NH area. We are reaching out to parents of gifted children and thought that NH Mensa would be a good place to start. I hope you are willing to publish the following information in your newsletter and to refer parents, with questions about parenting and educating gifted children, to us.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

*Kate Richards, Founder and Vice-President
Greater Manchester Alliance for the Gifted*

[Kate, I'm happy to oblige! - Ed.]

The Greater Manchester Alliance for the Gifted (GMAG), a support and advocacy group for parents/guardians & educators of gifted and talented children in the Manchester, NH area, welcomes you to join our group.

GMAG meeting topics include: Characteristics of Gifted Children; Working with Your Child's Teacher; Managing Stress and Perfectionism; The Pros and Cons of Testing; Parenting Strategies that Work.

GMAG meetings are open to the public and are held the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm at Hesser College in Manchester. In addition to meetings, GMAG organizes enrichment and social activities for gifted children and supports the implementation of Gifted and Talented Programs within the school systems.

We offer information and support at meetings, via phone and e-mail.

For more information contact Kate Richards at 603-644-1403 or e-mail info@allianceforthegifted.org

<http://allianceforthegifted.org/> ■■



Granite Gathering 2006 Update

RG Chair Claire Natola

Our kick-off planning meeting for Granite Gathering 2006 was held on October 15th. In attendance were Claire Natola, Gail Meinhold, Sue and Jim Barnes, and Elizabeth, Mark, and Nicholas Becker. Because all the volunteers present will be handling Hospitality, decisions regarding Hospitality took center stage. You can expect to find many returning favorites next year: the Chocolate Orgy, Shrimp and Champagne, Make-Your-Own Sundaes, and Irish Coffees, among others.

I would like to thank those volunteers who have already stepped up to the plate for 2006. Any volunteers from last year who may not have solidified with me their intent to volunteer again are urged to do so. Next month I will publish a current list of our slate of volunteers, as well as a list of areas where we still need assistance.

Members of the RG Committee will make a "field trip" to the Crowne Plaza in Nashua in November to check out the facilities. The date of the visit was not determined as of press time; if you would like to come along, please email me at rgchair@nh.us.mensa.org so I can keep you informed of the date and time. All are welcome! ■■



Upcoming Testing Sessions

Tell Your Friends!

Information on testing and prior evidence can be found at nh.us.mensa.org. Anyone 14 or older who wishes to take the Mensa Admissions Test should pre-register with the respective proctor listed below, who can provide testing site information. The test costs \$30; a photo-ID is required.

Date	Location	Proctor
Monday, 14 November 4:00 p.m.	Cape Elizabeth, Maine	Bev Bryant 207-799-0888
Wednesday, 16 November 7:00 p.m.	Nashua, N.H.	John Bauman 603-883-7494
Saturday, 19 November 10:00 a.m.	Portsmouth, N.H.	Bromley Baril 603-749-1088

Granite Gathering 2006: Return to Middle Earth February 17-19, 2006



Your presence is kindly requested at New Hampshire Mensa's 16th Annual Regional Gathering! Our growing reputation does not rest solely on being the northeasternmost RG in America, but on being one of the best: stellar hospitality, ample food and libations, scintillating speakers, music, games, contests, book sale, silent auction, and more! Medieval or Tolkienian garb encouraged; rentals benefiting our scholarship fund will be available.

Location: Crowne Plaza Nashua, 2 Somerset Parkway, Nashua, NH 03063. Room rate of \$94 (exclusive of 8% NH Rooms Tax) per night guaranteed until 1/18/06. Call 603-886-1200 and ask for the Mensa rate. Complimentary indoor parking garage. Complimentary shuttle service to and from Manchester Airport *when prearranged*. Complimentary full service health club.

Registration: \$55 until 11/15/05; \$65 until 1/15/06; \$75 thereafter or at the door. Children 8-17 \$15 less than regular rate; children under 8 free. Saturday rate is \$10 less than regular rate in effect at time of registration. Saturday evening buffet \$28.* Mail your form and fee to our Registrar: Deb Stone, 24312 Spartan Street, Mission Viejo, CA 92691-3921. (email: debstone@cox.net) Do not mail registration after 2/1/06; please register at the door instead.

*All registrants who buy their Saturday evening buffet tickets before 1/15/06 will be entered into a drawing for fabulous prizes, including free registration for the 2007 Granite Gathering!

Questions, concerns, criticisms, compliments? Contact Claire Natola at rgchair@nh.us.mensa.org or 603-279-9986. For latest details, see www.nh.us.mensa.org/rgnews.shtm. See you in February!

✂-----

Name	Name on Badge	Tell us something(s) interesting (or not) about you for your badge...
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Children's Names: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

email: _____

Telephone: _____

Type	Qty	Rate	Subtotal
Adult Registration			
Child 8-17			
Child under 8		Free	
Saturday Buffet		\$28.00	

Total: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to "New Hampshire Mensa" or charge to MasterCard or Visa:

Card # _____ Exp: ____ / ____ Name on Card: _____



One Step at a Time, Sweet Jesus

Gail Meinhold

Well, at least that's how I felt starting out on the Barr Trail on Pike's Peak in Colorado. Pike's Peak is known as America's Mountain. It was from there that Katherine Lee Bates was inspired to write "America the Beautiful" when she finally ascended to the peak of this 14,110-foot mountain. The problem for me was the amount of gear I was carrying. I have backpacked for over 12 years now and every time I go I always take a bit too much but the 50-pound pack I was carrying was really way too much. I was not familiar with the mountain and felt I needed to be prepared for winter weather as well as summer heat. The weather patterns on the "Peak" are unpredictable, just like on Mt. Washington (considered a hill by Rocky Mountain standards). My pack empty weighs six pounds; add the three liters of water and "pint's a pound the world around" so that was another six pounds. I opted to take my XCR Gore-Tex and that weighs a ton instead of my lightweight rain pants and jacket. It was really about four pounds more so my total is now 20 pounds without any other gear. I needed a sleeping bag, air mattress, cookstove, gas, food, medical kit, thermals and fleece, hat and gloves, personal care kit, shovel, duct tape, water filtration unit and well, you get the picture. Where are those Sherpas when you need them? How about a mule train? Llamas? A goat?

Now let's talk about atmosphere! THERE IS NO AIR UP THERE. The statistics are that the available oxygen is 50% less at peak elevation than it is at sea level. It was like climbing a mountain with a good head cold, stuffy nose and lung inflammation. I started out in Manitou Springs, elevation 6600 feet and I was already having trouble with a slight dizziness and cloudy thinking (or maybe it was a blonde moment?). I had flown into Denver the day before and used the day to walk around getting acclimatized. I was trying, also, to determine if I should take the Diamox which helps prevent acute mountain sickness (AMS).

After walking around Manitou for a few hours gasping for breath I decided to take the ultimate plunge and I drove up the White Knuckle Highway to the top of Pike's Peak to see how much worse it could be. The official name of the road is the Pike's Peak Highway...but if you ever get the chance to drive up it you will certainly agree that the White Knuckle Highway is much more appropriate. I call it that because in Colorado they don't believe in guardrails so the road just disappears into the horizon and all you can see are the distant, much lower mountains off the side of the road. I took my half out of the middle of the road almost all the way up and down and I gladly let the other motorists pass me. I think I heard them laughing as they whizzed by. The breathing on the top was worse, much worse. I made a decision then and there to start taking the Diamox immediately.

The next day I donned my pack and started the torturous journey up to Barr Camp, a distance of seven miles. I can tell you without shame that people were passing me right and left. Of course, they had the sense to carry nothing but a bottle of water and a piece of fleece. All the people I talked to made a comment on how heavy my pack looked and while I appreciated the sympathy, it did not make it any easier. People usually will climb up to camp and then come down, climb up to the top and ride down, or start at the top and climb down. Not too many people don gear and go for it. I did have to rest a lot and took many breaks, even had a little nap on the side of the trail.

I finally arrived at Barr Camp only to find out that they had thick mattresses in the bunkhouse and a lovely gas stove in camp. That was about three pounds I did not need to bring with me. I also found out that they were able to serve dinner for a modest cost of \$7.00 and it was something I could eat that would not trigger an adverse reaction that I sometimes get from certain foods so I opted to let them cook for me that night. Did I mention that I was about stupid with exhaustion and lack of air? Anyway, the next day, I stashed most of my gear in the bunkhouse and started up the next three miles to the A-frame.

Originally, I had planned to lug everything up to the A-frame and spend the night, but I knew it was not something my body was going to allow me to do. I arrived at the A-frame and spent about a half-hour there admiring the view and talking to some cowboys who had spent the night there. I noticed that they had carted a half-gallon of Canadian Mist up the mountain. "More power to them," I thought. After my short rest, I decided to go another mile up which put me at the two-miles-below-summit mark and at an elevation of 12,800 feet. I then turned around and returned to Barr Camp. I was feeling much better because I hadn't carried much weight for the day so I cooked for myself. I did get to talk to a lot of interesting people who were staying the night.

In the morning I loaded up on gear and hiked down. I wasn't finished with the mountain just yet but I needed to lug my gear out so it made sense to go on down. I made much better time going down than I did going up and ended up back in Manitou in the afternoon. I stayed the night in Manitou and started out for the top of Pike's Peak again. My plan was to take the Cog railway up and walk down to the two-mile mark and then walk back up. That did not work out because when I went to buy a ticket on the Cog they told me that you have to go up and down on the same train and they only stay 40 minutes at the top. That probably reduces the risk of people getting AMS and therefore cuts their liability down. At any rate, I ended up driving up again and did the two miles down and back which completed my goal.

On the way down, I was giving a ride to an older gentleman who had hiked up that day but did not have a ride down. He lives in Colorado Springs and does the mountain regularly so he did not need the acclimatization. We were driving down the WKH when we came upon what I thought was an accident but actually turned out to be a herd of mountain goats. We got great pictures of them and it was the only time I had seen them on the mountain. The only

other wildlife I actually saw were a chipmunk and a pica. You have to leave the wildlife alone unless you are fond of contracting Bubonic Plague. The little critters carry the virus and the fleas to transmit it.

“Why do I do this to myself?” is a question I always ask at least once on a hike, but asked multiple times on this particular hike. I swore at least 14 times that I was all done climbing and that I was getting too old for this— ... and I almost turned around about 8 times. This was all when I was climbing up with my too-heavy pack. Well, that all disappears when I get above tree line and almost to the top because the beauty of the mountains captures me yet again and I am glad I did it. This particular choice was really a training expedition for my big hike next year to the Roof of Africa while there is still snow on Kilimanjaro. ■



Notes from National

In the October *Momentum*, we published a Letter to the Editor from Michael Paul Beetham, Mensa’s Project Inkslinger® Coordinator, regarding book donations to libraries in the south affected by this season’s devastating hurricanes.

This month, Michael encourages us to visit <http://www.readertoreader.org>, the website of Reader to Reader, Inc. of Amherst, Massachusetts. Reader to Reader is gratefully accepting book donations, specifically science, educational, history, poetry, and similar books. Reader to Reader is also appreciative of any financial assistance that can be offered.

In other Project Inkslinger® news, the Project Inkslinger® information on the national Mensa website is due to be updated shortly. Development of the Project Inkslinger® book donation information service is essentially complete, with redevelopment of the philanthropic side to come.

Project Inkslinger® was founded in 1993, when the Mississippi and its tributaries flooded parts of the Midwest and South. Many schools and libraries lost their entire collections to water damage. Mensans across the country worked together to gather books to replenish those collections in need. Since then, the project has evolved to also support tutoring and other specialized programs. ■

Answers to CultureQuest® Sampler

(See Page 7 for the questions if you’re reading *Momentum* back-to-front.)

- | | | | |
|-----|----------------------------------|----|-----------------------|
| 10. | Khmer Architecture | 5. | Winston Churchill |
| 9. | Singapore, Philippines | 4. | Adm. Karl Dönitz |
| 8. | Mathematician (studied calculus) | 3. | Women’s right to vote |
| 7. | Jesus Christ Lizard | 2. | 1916, 1940, 1944 |
| 6. | Uniform Resource Locator | 1. | Mary Wollstonecraft |



The Suicide Club

John McGondel

Prologue: 2005 - Francis checked beside his bed to make sure everything was ready for the night. Yes, the nine millimeter Glock was on the nightstand, and the jar of strawberry jam was beside it. He had a distinct fondness for the jam. Between them and Francis was his medication. All three had to be in their proper places in order for him to sleep...

From the desk of Dr. Raoul Lipschitz:

The subject is a fifty-year-old male, who has constant thoughts of suicide, which thoughts have been and still are exacerbated by the sudden deaths of close friends and people he had looked up to. Below is a brief history, at the end of which will be a follow-up theory as to probable causation:

Death was not a stranger to Francis, as he came from a large Irish American family. Some of his earliest memories included wakes and funerals in the Massachusetts cities of Woburn, Charlestown, and South Boston. By the time his paternal grandfather died, in 1964, he was already familiar with the Irish process of dealing with death. Little did he realize that death would become as familiar to him as life.

After his paternal grandfather died, his paternal grandmother died an excruciating death from cancer. Actually, the cancer didn't kill her, the treatment did. Francis was tortured by memories of her body, burned red from the radiation therapy. Then, his maternal grandmother died from a heart attack, alone in her tiny stucco home in Wilmington, Mass. They found her cold and stiff on the kitchen floor, still clutching her rosary beads in her clenched fist. Francis began thinking about death a lot, pondering it to the point of obsession. But more was to come, and his pondering would evolve into a psycho-emotional syndrome of despair and forlornness.

Charles McMahon taught Francis to swim at the Woburn Boy's Club. Charlie was a nice guy, and worked well with the kids. Francis liked Charlie a lot, because Charlie did not treat Francis like a little kid. They enjoyed a unique friendship, considering their age difference. Charlie was the last American killed during the Vietnam War. The irony of it to Francis was that Charlie was killed as US troops were evacuating. To Francis, it was another emotional scar and a senseless death.

Francis was 21 years old in 1975; he had several friends, including one named Joe Dell. Joe was a troubled young man, and Francis took him into his life to help him. They became close friends, and confided in each other. Joe had a friend named Dougie Breer, who was in the passenger seat one night when Joe's car failed to negotiate a turn in Burlington, Mass. The car hit a big tree stump, and was totaled. Dougie died instantly. When the police showed up, they found Joe Dell groaning in the bushes twenty feet away from the wreck. He had been thrown through the window head-first. They rushed him

to the hospital, where his kidney was removed, due to it having been skewered and smashed when the gear shifter penetrated his abdomen.

Joe was discharged a week later, and sent home to finish recuperating. However, the next day his mother received a call from the hospital, telling her not to allow Joe to move, and that an ambulance was on the way over. It seems that what with worrying so much about the kidney, they had managed to overlook the fact that Joe's neck had been broken in three places. By then it was too late to fix without some very complicated and dangerous surgery, which Joe elected to forego due to lack of insurance. He was finally released, after which he met Francis.

Joe was in a permanently depressed state of mind. He was devastated by Dougie's death already, but Dougie's parents blamed Joe for the death and started legal proceedings against him. Joe sank deeper into disconsolation. When Francis spoke with him, Joe told Francis that he missed Dougie and did not deserve to live. Joe started drinking more heavily, and increasingly used drugs - anything to make the bad thoughts go away. He hated himself and embraced a self-destructive lifestyle. Joe had to take anti-seizure medication, because every now and then, while he was just walking along the road, he would have a seizure and fall to the ground sideways, sometimes almost getting run over. The seizures were exacerbated by Joe's drinking and drug use, and Francis tried very hard to help Joe, but it was obvious that Joe wanted to die. Then came the Blizzard of 1978, and Joe dropped some pot off to Francis, and walked away. Francis would never see Joe alive again.

Francis found out a few days later that Joe had died during the blizzard, from slipping in the shower and banging his head on the bathtub. Joe had apparently drunk himself into a seizure, and that was that. He got what he wanted: freedom from his emotional pain.

John Swain was another friend of Francis. John was a troubled young man who spoke to Francis often about suicide. One day, John's body was found in the woods beside a local pond, a single gunshot wound to his head. He had placed the gun in his mouth and pulled the trigger. Nice guy that he was, he had gone out to do it in the woods, so as not to further traumatize his family. Francis mourned, having understood the pain that John could not deal with.

Francis had a cousin, Michael Keating. Michael had a lot of pent-up aggression, and was a very self-destructive individual. He drank heavily and was constantly trying to impress people by getting into needless fights. He and Francis spoke often, and attended adolescent parties together. Francis tried to tell Michael that if he kept pushing the envelope, he would run out of envelope. Michael replied, "So what? What's the difference if I die today or next week or in twenty years? Nobody will know who I was a hundred years from now. Dying means the end of pain." Francis was never to forget those words. Michael was speeding down a highway in Massachusetts, his sister and her friend in the car. The convertible he was driving slammed a guardrail and flipped and tumbled. Three more closed caskets of teenagers...

David Burrell was nicknamed Bonga, because of his wiry, frizzy hair. Bonga was also a good friend of Francis. Bonga also had what would later be termed

a deathwish. He got heavily into drugs to masquerade his pain. Bonga's pain seemed to derive from his inability to accept the fact of his own mortality. He dwelled upon death frequently, almost constantly. Francis and he had many long philosophical discussions, trying to wrap their brains around the concept of death. Bonga was not one to believe in an afterlife, and eventually, when his distress became completely unbearable, he got high on barbiturates and walked straight down a set of Boston subway tracks toward an oncoming train. The conductor saw him and tried to brake, but it was too late. The conductor, when interviewed by the police, said that Bonga had stood there in the middle of the tracks, smiling and giving the train the finger even as it hit him.

Francis pondered these deaths.

Steven Lundgren had been nicknamed Spunky since elementary school. Francis had gone to school with him, and knew him to be a nice enough guy, albeit a bit wild. Spunky got into drugs early in life, and probably should have died years before he did. But then he seemed to clean up his act a bit, and mostly just drank. He was a typical example of a depressed individual who self-medicated with alcohol. He, like Francis, had seen far too many friends die at early ages, and was resigned to two things. The first was that he was convinced that he too would die young. And second, he was sure that if it didn't happen any other way, it would happen by his own hand. Francis remembered trying to talk him into a better place, a more positive mindset, to no avail. Spunky was found in the woods behind his mother's house. He had hanged himself on his favorite climbing tree.

When Francis was hanging around the local housing projects with his friends, there were these three inseparable buddies. Two brothers name Billy and Chris Lindsey, and Barney Farncoft. All three were wild in the streets. They dealt drugs, ripped off out-of-town drug buyers who came to the projects looking for dope, and generally tortured the police. Francis tried talking to them on more than one occasion, to no avail. They did not believe that anything existed after death, and thus there was no reason to not indulge themselves to the maximum. Jail did not bother them; indeed they flourished there every time they were sent. Francis tried to talk sense to them, but instead was almost swayed by the simplicity of their philosophy of nihilism. One night the three were in a car, racing down a local road, a road that they had traveled countless times. The car did not negotiate a turn; in fact the car never turned nor even applied its brakes - no tire marks on the road whatsoever. The car hit a tree and all three died instantly. Everyone was bewildered as to how they could not have known enough to take the turn slowly. But Francis alone knew why: They didn't make the turn because they didn't want to. They had decided that they had had enough.

Years went by, and Francis attended more funerals. He raised a family and moved to New Hampshire to try to get away from the suicide scene in Massachusetts. He kept in touch with only a few old friends, like Raymond Keating, Paul Sorenson, and Paul's brother Neil. In 2003, Francis sat for three days with his dying father in a hospital room. He held his father, whom he had promised would not be alone when he died. He watched the nurses and doctors

prescribe more and more morphine, until his father's heart ...just...stopped. Francis shaved him, as was his family's way. His father had always been his closest friend.

Over the years, Francis had several personal heroes, people in the entertainment industry whom he admired and looked up to. One was a guitarist named Jimi Hendrix. Another was a singer named Janis Joplin. Then there were Jim Morrison, John Lennon, John Belushi, John Candy, Ken Kesey, and Hunter Thompson. Francis observed as one by one they each died. He saw friends who came back from the Vietnam War, who could not deal with the post-traumatic stress that piggy-backed home with them. That was when he claims that he figured out that the underlying cause of the many deaths he had observed or had been aware of was a form of depression which led to a sense that nothing really mattered in this world.

There were two brothers in Woburn, Mass., whom Francis occasionally hung out with. The two brothers were very close. One weekend they got their hands on a bottle of five hundred valium. They spent the weekend eating the valium and drinking alcohol. On Monday morning, one of the brothers was found dead in a closet, from an overdose. The other brother blamed himself and was distraught with grief and guilt. Francis tried to speak to him, to get through to him, to no avail. Finally, one night while a bunch of people were parked in the housing project parking lot, the other brother pulled out a .45 automatic, and said, "Hey everyone, goodbye." He then put the gun beside his temple and pulled the trigger. Francis remembers seeing the head explode in a shower of red, and was watching an eyeball spinning around for what seemed like hours, on the hood of a car.

Francis had developed a close friendship with a professor he had in college. (Francis started attending college when he was 43 years old) She was named Cornelius Brous, his psychology teacher for the following several years. They became colleagues, and had warm, fond, but not romantic, feelings for each other. Francis sensed a distinct deep sadness in her, and tried to help her deal with whatever it was from earlier in her life that had affected her in such a negative fashion. She would only let him scratch the surface, and would not let him in any further. Whatever it was must have traumatized her to the core. She would not talk about religion, or about what she thought might happen after death. The subject always got quickly changed, and the conversation redirected. She was obviously depressed, and Francis wondered whether she earned her Doctorate in Psychology in order to understand and help herself. The year after his father died, Francis visited Dr. Brous in a hospice, where she was quickly dying from uterine cancer. There were tears in both their eyes when they were bidding goodbye to each other. He told her he would see her on the other side, where they would co-teach some more classes. She smiled and nodded. Three days later she was dead. No funeral, as she was cremated. Francis was wearing down. He was about to turn fifty, and had seen far too much death and despair.

Raymond Joseph Keating (no relation to Francis' cousin Michael Keating), was a huge man. Francis was like his older brother, having known him since

Raymond, who was called Rucka, was eighteen years old. He worked out in the gym constantly, and could bench an unbelievable six hundred pounds. Francis knew Rucka to be a funny guy with a well-developed sense of humor. Then he developed diabetes, and had to use a needle every day. He still lifted weights, and since he was already using a needle daily, started using steroids also. These made him depressed and unruly. He would speak to Francis about how there was no God and no real reason to live. His "friends" got him to use drugs like coke and speed. He turned to heavy drink. Then he had to have a good portion of his leg cut off because of the diabetes. This further alienated and depressed him. He ended up on serious painkillers, oxycontin. He spiraled downhill until Francis finally had to cut him loose, as he became too unpredictable. On Christmas Eve, 2004, seven months after Francis said his last goodbye to his dying psychology professor, Rucka was found dead.

Francis had turned fifty on December 11, 2004. Two days before New Year's Day 2005, Paul Sorenson was found dead. Francis and Paul had been friends since 1973. Paul was a bit of a flower child, but had many instances of rage when he drank a lot. He had uncontrollable desires and a tremendous amount of pent-up hostility. He was a born again Christian who tried hard to believe in an afterlife, but who confided to Francis that he was convinced that there was just nothingness after death. One time, in the mid-1990s, he got into a drunken argument with his wife, who had just told him that his son was not his. The police showed up, and a roaring-drunk Paul came out the front door with two guns. The cops had no choice but to return fire. Paul ended up shot three times. In the hospital they removed one kidney, his spleen, half of his pancreas, his gall bladder, and some bowel parts. Paul recuperated but was never the same. He finally succeeded in driving his body to death during the 2004/5 holidays.

Opinion: Francis tries hard to cope with the many deaths he has been faced with, and the emotional distress that it causes him. He still loves strawberry jam. He believes that when the time is right, the last thing he will taste will be the strawberry jam smeared around the barrel of his nine-millimeter Glock. But for now, he wonders who from the Suicide Club will be the next to go. There are only four left: Paul's brother Neil, John S., Bob W., and Francis. Francis is trying very hard to be the last. He has a hope, however dim, that by speaking with people, he can help them through their depression and despair. He tells them to seek medical attention; he participates in round-table discussions that are similar to group therapy or encounter sessions. Some of these seem to work for a while. He has hopes of helping the other three before it is too late, but deep down he senses that it is already too late.

And always, he keeps the Glock within reach, in case he awakens and is in such an extreme state of panic and disillusionment that he feels the need to cancel himself out then and there. But to reach the Glock, he must reach past his medicine first, thus giving him a chance to take a pill and emerge from his disconsolation. However, he has reported that the medication seems to be taking longer to work, and is less effective when it does work.

Prognosis: It seems inevitable that Francis will be found dead as the result of a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head, and that there will be strawberry jam smeared across, and in, his mouth and skull cavity.

Recommendation: Different, stronger medicine. Confinement to a locked-down ward in a psychological facility. However, this should be done suddenly and without his knowledge, as it is reasonable to expect that should he find out about it in advance, he would definitely suicide.

Raoul Lipschitz, M.D., Psychiatry 



Colloquium 2006

Judy Keating

Mensa of Northeastern New York, the Mensa Foundation, and American Mensa are pleased to announce Colloquium 2006: Revolution in Cosmology.

Join us for a stimulating mix of information, revelation and discussion of the greatest mystery in the past 100 years - the recent discovery that a mysterious new kind of "dark matter" and "dark energy" makes up 96% of the "stuff" of the universe. Hear the latest opinions on "Theories of Everything" (String Theory and Loop Quantum Gravity). What is the "Accelerated Expansion of the Universe" and do higher dimensions and multiple universes exist? Hear these internationally recognized scientists and question them in panel discussions. Share your thoughts with fellow Mensans, these experts, and others at this national gathering with a serious purpose.

Invited speakers include best selling authors and familiar faces from such venues as the *NOVA* public television "The Elegant Universe" series and *Scientific American* magazine. These speakers are not only the world's experts in the field but also the very people who are making these discoveries.

We invite you to join us in Albany, New York, October 6-8, 2006 as we explore this great mystery and the resulting "Revolution in Cosmology." Early registration rates are \$170 for members and \$220 for non-members through 4/30/06. Room rate is \$109 at the Marriott on Wolf Road. For more information call Judy Keating and Harry Ringermacher at 518-441-7058 and watch for our website at <http://www.colloquium.us.mensa.org>.



Local Kudos

Elliott Ketay of Lyme Center, New Hampshire, recently travelled to Baton Rouge to work with the Central Vermont/New Hampshire Valley Chapter of American Red Cross Disaster Relief/Mass Care. Elliott, thank you for your efforts to provide relief to those affected by Hurricane Katrina. Good job!



Calendar of Events

November 2005

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4 Temperance League	5
6	7	8	9	10	11 Roving Salon Immoveable Feast Veterans' Day	12 Garlic, Chocolate, and Bubbly
13 Second Sunday Brunch Bunch	14	15	16 North of Boston Dinner	17	18 WinnepaSupper	19
20 Central Maine Dining	21 Pre-FSM Dinner FSM/ ExComm/ Business Meeting	22	23	24 Thanksgiving	25 Appetite for Discussion	26
27 Fourth Sunday Lunch	28	29 Dinner and Pub Quiz	30			

Mensa members are welcome to submit calendar listings to the Calendar Editor (calendar@nh.us.mensa.org) before the first of the month prior to the cover date. It is NH/ME Mensa policy to avoid conflicts as much as possible, but no conflicts are allowed to group-sponsored events. Mensans, members of their household, and invited guests are always welcome at NH/ME Mensa events. Abundant and continued thanks to our event hosts!