

Welcome to New Hampshire Mensa's

Granite Gathering 2006:  
Return to Middle Earth



February 17-19, 2006  
Crowne Plaza Hotel  
Nashua, New Hampshire

# Hearty thanks to those who worked on our RG!

Chair .....	Claire Natola
Assistant Chair .....	Darlene Alleman
Hospitality .....	Elizabeth Becker Sue Barnes Gail Meinhold Devin Starlanyl Paula Werme Bromley Baril
Registrar .....	Deb Stone
Programming .....	Claire Natola
Music Chair .....	Bob Oxford
Games Chair .....	Adam Smargon
Puzzles .....	Claire Natola
Movie Chair .....	Rich Conde
Children’s Chair .....	Mark Becker
Biermeister .....	John Bauman
Icemeister .....	Jim Barnes
Auctioneer .....	Joe Zanca
RG Primer .....	Bromley Baril
Newbie Shepherds .....	Walter Wakefield Ann Majeske John Lewicke
Admissions Test Proctor .....	John Bauman
Speaker Escorts .....	Jack Balcom Ben Thompson
Signage .....	Adam Smargon
Program Book .....	Claire Natola

Any omissions are simply oversights due to the insanity of the Program Book Editor, not to any lack of appreciation by the RG Committee.

# RG Tips and Tidbits

**BADGES** Please wear your badge. It is the only way we can distinguish one another from other hotel guests.

**HOSPITALITY** Please keep all food and drinks on the 8th floor or in the Smoking Hospitality room on the 2nd Floor. We still need to abide by state regulations that govern the hotel.

**SMOKING** Smoking is allowed only in the Smoking Hospitality room on the 2nd Floor.

**POOL** If you choose to use the hotel pool, please observe the posted rules.

**BEHAVIOR** Please respect the property of the RG and the hotel. Illegal, destructive, or abusive behavior will not be tolerated and will be considered cause for possible eviction from the RG, without refund.

**HUGGING** The Mensa hugging dot code: GREEN = Yes, please hug me!  
YELLOW = Please ask me first.  
RED = Don't hug me.

Please treat children as if they have red dots, as they often decorate their badges.

**PARENTS AND CHILDREN** Please, no unaccompanied children in public areas after 11:00 p.m. Please make certain your children are supervised in the Children's Room as daycare service is not provided by the RG or by the hotel. Individual parents are requested to supervise activities and crafts, and to staff the room. RG staff provides craft materials.

**PUZZLE CONTEST** Picture and Word Puzzles are on display, so be sure to grab an answer sheet and play along! Complete your answer sheet by 8:00 p.m. Saturday to be in the running for a fabulous prize!

**PHOTOGRAPHS** We'd love to see your RG photos! Feel free to email them to Bill Alleman at [webmaster@nh.us.mensa.org](mailto:webmaster@nh.us.mensa.org) for posting on the New Hampshire Mensa website, and/or to Claire Natola at [editor@nh.us.mensa.org](mailto:editor@nh.us.mensa.org) for inclusion in a future issue of *Momentum*.

**RG ELEMENTS** All elements of our schedule are current as of 2/14/06, but are subject to change without notice. We hope nothing changes, but if it does, may it only be for the better. We will endeavor to post any and all changes on a prominent whiteboard on the 8th Floor.



Food/  
Drink

## Legend



Special  
Event



Music



Speaker/  
Workshop



Games  
Event



Children



Movie



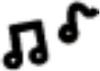
Time  
Check

## Friday



4:00 p.m.

Hospitality, Children's and Games Rooms Open



6:00 p.m.

Informal Music Jammin', Music Room

Did you bring your own instruments to join us? If not, there will be a variety of instruments available for you to play. Come and jam and sing with other folks during this unstructured time.



6:00 p.m.

Dinner, Hospitality

Join us for a welcoming New Hampshire dinner in Hospitality.

6:00 p.m.

Film: *Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*, Movie Room



(2001, PG-13, 3 hrs. Dir: Peter Jackson.) What is this "Lord" of all Rings, why must it be destroyed, how shall this be done, and who is fit to do it? (Hint: Take it to Mount Doom and throw it in.)

6:45 p.m.

Backgammon Tournament, Games Room



Backgammon is a two-person game; the object on the unique board is to move all your pieces off the board before your opponent does. You can slow down your opponent, but your opponent can slow you down in the same fashion.



7:30 p.m.

RG Primer, Room 801

First time at an RG? **Bromley Baril** is here to answer all our questions and to show you the ropes. Meet fellow newcomers and make some fast friends.

8:00 p.m.

**Story: *Henry and Mudge and the Long Weekend*, Children's Room**

In this enthralling tale, a boy and his dog build a castle. Join us as we recreate their feat!



8:00 p.m.

**Ice Cream Sundaes, Hospitality**

Sure, it's February...but New Englanders love ice cream all year round. Make your own sundaes from our buffet of ingredients.



8:30-9:00 p.m.

**Rob Oxford, Music Room**

Rob Oxford, guitarist and vocalist, performs a wide variety of music. Not just folk, not just country, just plain FUN. Come along and be entertained as Rob performs with guitar in hand. Who knows, others may join in, too!



9:00-10:00 p.m.

**Familiar Echoes, Music Room**

A folk trio with guitar, bass and banjo, Familiar Echoes are sure to get your blood pumping and toes tapping with their great tunes and three-part harmonies. Familiar Echoes has performed at pumpkin festivals and other venues around Southern New Hampshire. Come on in and clap along!



9:00 p.m.

**Beer Tasting, Hospitality**

Join Biermeister **John Bauman** as he presents this year's selection of finely-crafted brews.



9:00 p.m.

**Joke-Off, Smoking Hospitality**

Join **Jay Carlisle** for a joke-off and showcase your comedic skills. Located in Smoking Hospitality (Room 218: The Windsor Room).



9:30 p.m.

**Children's Room closes**



9:30 p.m.

**Film: *Fever Pitch*, Movie Room**

(2005, PG-13, 1:43. Jimmy Fallon, Drew Barrymore, Dir: the Farelly brothers) ...And there was a team with a Curse. And a man was devoted to them. And a woman learned to love him despite his Red Sox Mania. Would they stay in love? Would the curse be broken?





10:00 - 11:00 p.m.

**Informal Music Jammin', Music Room**

Did you bring your own instruments to join us? If not, there will be a variety of instruments available for you to play. Come and jam and sing with other folks during this unstructured time.



10:00 p.m.

**Shrimp and Wine, Hospitality**

Shrimp has become a Friday night tradition at our RG, and tonight we pair our shrimp with a tasting of fine wines.



11:00 p.m.

**Irish Coffee, Hospitality**

Cap the evening with a warm Irish Coffee.



11:30 p.m.

**Film: *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, Movie Room**

(1975, PG, 1:29.) Three reasons to see this. One, the funniest British comedy team of the early 1970s. Two, King Arthur. Three, the Holy Hand Grenade of Antioch. Four, wait, there is no four. Nevermind.



1:00 a.m.

**Movie Room closes**

## Saturday



6:00-8:00 a.m.

**Morning Activities, Children's Room**

Free play and dress-up time!



8:00-10:00 a.m.

**Breakfast, Hospitality**

Paula Werme will be making various flavored waffles from home-made batter.



8:00 a.m.

**Film: *Franklin and the Green Knight*, Children's Room**

Bring your breakfast to the Children's Room and enjoy this great film!

**8:30 a.m.** **Film: *The Hobbit*, Movie Room**  
(1977, made for TV, 1:18. Animated.) The prequel to "Lord of the Rings", this follows Bilbo Baggins and the One True Ring.



**9:00 - 10:45 a.m.** **Mensa Admissions Testing, Essex**  
The test will be proctored by **John Bauman** in the Essex Room, located just across the lobby from the Registration Desk.



**9:00 - 10:15 a.m.** **Voice Workshop Zero, Amphitheatre**  
This is workshop "zero" because it comes before Voice 101 — for people who were told: "You can't sing, so just move your lips." **Joanne DeVoe** and **Tom Padwa** enjoy encouraging people who want to sing, and think they can't. No experience required, no pressure, just the desire to make music — a joyful noise. Advance registration is requested; space is limited to four men and four women, over 18. Please sign up at the registration table on the 8<sup>th</sup> Floor.



**10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon** **Caricatures, Room 801**  
Come have your caricature drawn and help raise money for New Hampshire Mensa's scholarships! For \$25, you can have an artistic souvenir of the fun you had at Granite Gathering!



**10:00 a.m.** **Film: *The Incredibles*, Movie Room**  
(2004, PG, 1:55. Animated.) Superheroes are forced to live as 'normal' people, but find that they are born for things 'super.'



**10:00 a.m.** **Tiddlywinks Tournament, Games Room**  
Tiddlywinks is a partnership game for four people. Each person controls one of the four colors. Red partners with blue, and yellow partners with green. (Tiddlywinks can also be played as a singles contest between two people. In this case, one person controls red and blue, and the other person controls yellow and green.) It's played with sets of small, thin discs (called winks) lying on a surface, usually a felt mat. Players use a larger disc (called a squidger) to pop a wink into flight by pressing down on one side of the wink. The goal is to cause the winks to land inside a pot or cup.



**10:00 a.m.** **Build Your Own Shields and Swords, Children's Room**  
Every good knight needs a shield and sword! We'll give you the materials you need to build your own.





10:15 - 11:15 a.m.

**Global Warming: An Atmospheric Scientist's Viewpoint, Brookfield**

"The greenhouse effect is good." "Our current society lives in an Ice Age." "For most of Earth's history the planet has been much warmer than it is today or will be in 100 years." Are these the lunatic ramblings of someone out of touch with reality? Or is this information you can read in any introductory text on Climatology? Global warming has become a "hot button" socio-political environmental issue in the last few years. As with any political issue there is a good deal of rhetoric from all sides. In order to make informed decisions it is important to understand the science behind global warming and appreciate the complexity and areas of scientific uncertainty. In this presentation, **Dr. Eric G. Hoffman**, Assistant Professor of Meteorology from Plymouth State University, will put the observed warming of the 20th century in a broader climatic perspective and examine: the undisputed scientific facts; the widely accepted scientific conclusions; and the areas of scientific uncertainty associated with global warming.



10:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon

**FoxMind Games, Amphitheatre**

**Michel Lyons** will present five games that develop reasoning skills and different spatial logic abilities through play. These games, published by FoxMind Games Europe, were originally developed for children, but offer even adult math aficionados an entertaining and often quite surprising challenge...



11:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

**Rosicrucian Mystical Tour of Egypt - Spring 2005, Essex**

A color slide show of **Vic and Margie Zeller's** three-week tour of Egypt in April and May 2005. The trip starts in Cairo and the Giza plateau and goes from between the paws of the Sphinx to the Pyramids; from the Temple of Karnak in Luxor and the Valley of the Kings; up the Nile on a cruise ship to Aswan and then on to Abu Simbel; then back down the Nile to end up in Cairo.



11:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

**Riverboating Abroad, Brookfield**

**Jack Balcom** urges us to go global and learn about the cultural and educational alternative vacation of riverboating abroad. He will discuss the benefits of cruising down traditional waterways and experiencing the culture of a country at all levels. To be featured is Jack's recent riverboat cruise on the Volga River in Russia.

**12:00 noon**                      **Make Your Own Masks, Children's Room**  
Now that you've got your shield and sword, it's time to make your mask!



**12:00 noon**                      **Lunch, Hospitality**  
We'll be replenishing lunch continuously until 1:30 p.m., so if you're in the middle of a lecture or game at 12:00, don't fret! There will be plenty left when you reach the 8<sup>th</sup> Floor.



**12:00-2:00 p.m.**                      **Informal Music Jammin', Music Room**  
Did you bring your own instruments to join us? If not, there will be a variety of instruments available for you to play. Come and jam and sing with other folks during this unstructured time.



**12:15 p.m.**                      **Film: *What the >bleep< Do We Know?!*, Movie Room**  
(2005, PG, 1:48. Marlee Matlin.) A part-documentary, part-dramatic study of how the world we know (4 dimensions) may be far different in reality (10 dimensions). Featuring interviews with various physicists, philosophers, and psychologists in search of an answer to this: If what we see isn't certain, then what the >bleep< do we know? (ummm... We don't know <bloop>?)



**12:30 - 1:30 p.m.**                      **Chain Mail, Essex**  
**John Follansbee** presents a brief history on how chain mail began, what its uses were, what it was commonly made of, when it developed into riveted mail, in which eras it was used, and of what material it was made. Then, he'll show you how it's put together!



**12:30 - 1:30 p.m.**                      **Maine Mensans' Forum, Amphitheatre**  
It has been five years since Maine Mensa and New Hampshire Mensa merged. How has the experience been for Maine Mensans? What more would you like out of your Mensa membership? Do you see Maine Mensa re-emerging in the future? Join New Hampshire Mensa Executive Committee Member **Claire Natola** for this roundtable discussion.





**12:45 - 2:00 p.m. I'm a Serial Sudokuist, Brookfield**  
This informal talk will cover the history of the current worldwide Sudoku craze from the Conway Daily Sun newspaper of New Hampshire to millions of books sold worldwide. **Dr. Gaye Gould** will also deal with the addictive nature of the puzzle and the months when she did over a hundred a day. Myths about the history of Sudoku will be covered (and mythologized further) along with a discussion of "pretenders" and what to beware of when buying Sudoku puzzles in both books and computer programs.



**12:45 p.m. Meta-Forms Tournament, Games Room**  
Meta-Forms is a game with a deceptively simple premise...and only visual rules. This award-winning game builds and develops reasoning skills in their most fundamental form.



**1:45 - 2:45 p.m. Ask the AMC, Amphitheatre**  
Region 1 Vice Chair **Marghretta McBean** and American Mensa's Director of Development **Dr. John Sheehan** invite you to meet with them and find out what's new with the American Mensa Committee.



**1:45 - 3:15 p.m. Runecasting, Essex**  
Runes are a character set used by Northern Europeans from the third century through the present for everything from simple writing to magic. In the last decades they have become a well-known divination tool. **Tchipakkan's** lecture will cover the history of the runes and a brief overview of how they are used. Then, she will return later in the evening to provide runic readings to benefit our scholarship fund!



**2:00-6:00 p.m. Chair Massages, Room 801**  
Chair Massage (or seated massage) refers to a brief bodywork session, usually acupressure-based, done in a special chair in which the client sits facing toward the cushions, exposing the scalp, shoulders, neck, arms, back, and hips. Proceeds to benefit New Hampshire Mensa's Scholarship Fund.



**2:00 p.m. Babylon Tournament, Games Room**  
Babylon is a simple and pure abstract strategy game, perhaps one of the simplest ever designed. Two players, five minutes...that's all you need.

**2:00-4:00 p.m.**

**Ballroom Dancing, The Hunt Club**

Nothing is quite as romantic as dancing cheek-to-cheek! Come on down to learn a step or two. Turn one of those left feet into a right foot in no time!



**2:15 - 3:15 p.m.**

**Italian Maiolica: History and Techniques, Brookfield**

**Julia Passamonti** presents this fascinating lecture on maiolica pottery, covering such aspects as: maiolica vs. majolica, the origins of maiolica, trade routes and the island of Maiorca, main pottery centers of Italy, firing and decorating the pieces (Isnik vs. Italian).



**2:30 p.m.**

**Film: *The Princess Bride*, Movie Room**

(1987, PG, 1:38. Cary Elwes, Robin Wright. Dir: Rob Reiner.) A comedy/adventure tale of true love, heroism, and revenge. Haven't heard of it? Inconceivable!



**3:00 - 5:00 p.m.**

**Like, Totally Gross Anatomy: Parts Too, Amphitheatre**

At last year's Granite Gathering, **Darlene Alleman** and **Ken Gacioch** hosted a hands-on anatomy lab in which fascinated participants were able to dissect, inspect, and learn about the structures of brains, eyes, and hearts, respectively from sheep, other sheep, and pigs. Bowing to popular demand, Darlene and Ken will be conducting another lab session this year, but with whole bodies instead of disincorporated organs. The foetal pig is a very popular specimen for teaching mammalian anatomy. Nearly all major structures are the same or similar to those in humans, in a package about the size of a loaf of bread. If you've ever wondered what's "in there," here's your chance to get the inside scoop, with no tests and no homework! "Dissection engages students in observational and kinesthetic learning that instills a recognition of and appreciation for the three dimensional structure of the animal body, the interconnections between organs and organ systems, and the uniqueness of biological material." (Human Anatomy & Physiology Society Position Statement on Animal Use; HAPS News, November 1995, page 12.) Children are welcome. Scalpels will be reserved for the use of participants of age 12 or older. Note: Foetal pigs are not grown for laboratory study; they are a by-product of commercial pork processing. They come from makin' bacon.





3:00 p.m.

### Hobbit's Birthday Party, Hospitality

Join us for cake as we celebrate the Hobbit's Birthday!



3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

### Gluten, Casein, and the Autistic Spectrum, Essex

A gluten-free/casein-free diet has been found to be tremendously helpful in the treatment of autistic spectrum disorders and ADD/ADHD. Come learn more about it! Your instructor, **Katja Swift**, has Asperger's and her husband ADD: you'll hear first-hand experience in the challenges and the benefits to the diet, as well as how to implement it and still feel "normal."



3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

### Know Your Chocolate, Brookfield

It all starts with the bean, its tree and where it grows, and then it is about those who process the beans. If you have not thought about your chocolate consumption in terms of the percentage of Cacao beans in your chocolate, come learn and experience a little more than our large chocolate makers have made known. **Alan Jamison** of the Chocolate Conspiracy will inform you of several important and interesting details of Chocolate and its history so you can truly come to know, judge, and appreciate the "Elixirs of the Gods" that you are eating.



3:30 p.m.

### Sudoku Tournament, Games Room

Sudoku is a logic-based placement puzzle. Each puzzle is a 9x9 grid made up of 3x3 subgrids, starting with various single digits given in some cells. The goal is to finish filling out the 9x9 grid such that each column, row, and 3x3 grid contains the digits 1 through 9. Before the tournament starts, two warm-up puzzles will be administered; whoever finishes fastest with the correct solution in either contest will receive a door prize. The tournament consists of five puzzles; the fastest three people with the correct solution will advance to the finals, which will occur at 6:00 p.m.



4:15 p.m.

### Film: *Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*, Movie Room

(2003, PG-13, 3:20. Dir: Peter Jackson.) Best Picture and a lot of other Oscars.



5:00 - 10:00 p.m.

### Free Play, Children's Room

Enjoy some free play during the evening. Don't forget: you can bring your pizza back to the Children's Room after it's served at 7:30 in Hospitality.

5:30 p.m.

**Wine and Cheese Tasting, Hospitality**

Please your taste buds with fine wine and impeccable cheeses!



6:00 p.m.

**Sudoku Finals, Hospitality**

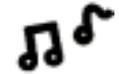
Come to watch and cheer on your favorite as our finalists compete for cash and prizes! (Um, no. That's not true. They'll be competing for plaques, a Sudoku book, and bragging rights.) We offer a laurel and a hearty handshake to all competitors.



6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

**Various Artists, Music Room**

We'll feature various artists who will play and sing for your listening pleasure.



7:00 p.m.

**Dinner Banquet, The Hunt Club**

Join us for the Dinner Banquet, featuring roasted chicken, pasta with alfredo sauce, vegetable soup, freshly tossed garden salad, rice, steamed vegetable medley, warm rolls, coffee, tea, and chocolate cake. Banquet tickets cost \$28 and are available from Deb Stone at Registration.



7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

**Runic Readings, Room 801**

**Tchipakkan** returns to do personal runic readings to benefit New Hampshire Mensa's scholarships! For \$20, you can have a 15-minute reading. Rune readings are good for answering questions about anything from love to money to the weather. While waiting for your reading, you can browse through the selection of sterling silver jewelry ranging from \$5 to \$30 from the Cabochons collection.



7:30 p.m.

**Pizza Dinner, Hospitality**

For those not partaking in the Dinner Buffet, pizza will be served in Hospitality.



7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

**Paul Mailman, Music Room**

Boston Mensa LocSec and a favorite entertainer at RGs for many years, Paul with his guitar and vocals performs songs you may know, and some you may not, but all are a sure bet to entertain.



8:00 p.m.

**Film: *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*, Movie Room**

(2003, PG-13, 2:23. Johnny Depp, Orlando Bloom, Kiera Knightley.) Captain Jack Sparrow is the zaniest pirate this side of Keith Richards.





8:30 p.m.

**Live Auction, The Hunt Club**

The inimitable **Joe Zanca** auctions as only he can, with proceeds to benefit his namesake scholarship fund.



8:00 p.m.

**Puzzle Contest Closes**



8:30 p.m.

**CultureQuest® Tournament, Games Room**

What musical art form originated in Italy around 1600 A.D.? What spice is also known as “wild marjoram”? Today’s winners have the ability to represent New Hampshire Mensa in the national CultureQuest® event in April; go to [www.us.mensa.org/culturequest](http://www.us.mensa.org/culturequest) for more information.



8:30 - 10:30 p.m.

**Karaoke, Music Room**

Come and sing to terrific Karaoke back up tracks provided by the professional Karaoke Jockey from **Captain Chris Entertainment**. There are some 1000 songs for you to choose from, so you are sure to find something you’ll be able to sing! So come one, come all and let us hear how talented you are (or aren’t!)...or just come and watch others show off! (Think “Mensa Idol”!)



8:00 p.m.

**Silent Auction Ends**



10:00 p.m.

**Children’s Room Closes**



10:00 p.m.

**Poker Tournament, Games Room**

Poker is the most popular card game in a class of games called vying games. (Vying games see players – with fully or partially concealed cards or items – make wagers into a central pot, which is awarded to the player/s with the best hand or collection.) It has seen a tremendous surge in popularity over the past ten years, and the poker tournament tradition continues here at the RG!



10:00 p.m.

**Chocolate Orgy and OGRE Grog, Hospitality**

The famous Chocolate Orgy is complemented by a delicious OGRE Grog, a brandy concoction that is perfect for capping off the evening.

**10:45 p.m.** **Film: *Wedding Crashers*, Movie Room**  
(2005, R, 2hrs. Owen Wilson, Vince Vaughn.) Two buddies spend their weekends charming their way into big weddings, and the beds of the bridesmaids. Then one of them breaks a big rule: don't fall in love.



**1:00 a.m.** **Movie Room Closes**



## Sunday

**8:00 a.m.** **Children's Room Opens**



**8:00 a.m.** **Breakfast, Hospitality**  
Join us for breakfast as we ready to bid farewell to friends old and new.



**11:00 a.m.** **Prizes, Hospitality**  
We'll be awarding prizes for the puzzle contest, games tournaments, and any special awards.



**1:00 p.m.** **Most Rooms Close**  
The Children's, Games, Smoking Hospitality, and Music Rooms close. Any help cleaning up the Children's Room, Games Room, and Smoking Hospitality before 2:00 p.m. is greatly appreciated!



**1:00 p.m.** **Special Business Meeting, Music Room**  
This Special Business Meeting is called for the New Hampshire Mensa Election Committee to make/accept candidate nominations for Executive Committee positions for the spring 2006 election. All are welcome!



**3:00 p.m.** **Hospitality Closes**  
Any help cleaning Hospitality, its prep room, and the Music Room before 4:00 p.m. is greatly appreciated!



**Thank you for being a part of yet  
another great Granite Gathering!**

## Many Thanks to Our Speakers!

**Darlene Alleman** has been a member of Mensa since 1988, and is currently NH Mensa's Treasurer as well as this year's RG co-chair. She has worked in the pathology field for almost 20 years, where she first met her co-presenter Ken Gacioch, whom she has to thank for introducing her to Mensa. She met her husband Bill at an RG in 1995 and has been an avid RG attendee since. In her spare time she tends to her poultry, which she loves to discuss at any opportunity!

**Jack Balcom** has traveled numerous times to the Far East, Middle East, Africa and Europe. He resides in Merrimack, N.H. with his wife Marie and has two grown children, all of whom have traveled extensively and all pursue the lifelong vocation of visiting as many countries as economically possible. Jack has lived overseas in England, the Philippines, Okinawa, Israel, and Hawaii (yes I know this is the USA, but it's still overseas). Jack is a retired New Hampshire State Representative, former Marine, and current Merrimack Town Trustee.

**John Follansbee** has been studying and making chain mail for more than a dozen years. He first became interested in chain mail through involvement with the Society for Creative Anachronism, and is now making and selling it to various people within the Society.

**Ken Gacioch**, currently residing in Albany, New York, joined Rochester Area Mensa in 1987, served as LocSec from 1988-90, and was assimilated by D-SIG at his first RG, in Syracuse. Resistance was futile.

Having received a degree in biology from Rochester Institute of Technology, Ken spent the next eleven years toiling at brain research at the University of Rochester Medical Center's department of Neuropathology. It was during this time that he browbeat Darlene Alleman, née Sojda, who worked in the lab across the hall, into joining Mensa.

Then he started designing expert systems and distributed business enterprise software applications, which tend not to turn ones fingers shocking colors, nor have quite as interesting a range of aromas.

**Dr. Gaye Gould** is an assistant professor of linguistics at Plymouth State University. She teaches literature and linguistics courses plus English grammar and, as of fall 2006, Cantonese. (She lived in Hong Kong for 20 years.) She is married to Wayne Gould, AKA "Sir Duke" (a nickname his British fans have given him). She has two children, a daughter who lives in London UK (television news producer) and a son who lives in Wellington, New Zealand (web developer, and new manager of [www.sudoku.com](http://www.sudoku.com)).

**Dr. Eric Hoffman** is an assistant professor of Meteorology at Plymouth State University. His main areas of expertise are in synoptic meteorology, weather analysis, and forecasting, but he regularly teaches the introductory climatology course. He has earned a B.S. degree in Meteorology from Cornell University and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Atmospheric Science from the University at Albany, State University of New York. Eric has lived in Plymouth, N.H. for five years with his family.

## Many Thanks to Our Speakers!

The world can be a nutty and bitter place. That's exactly where Becky and **Alan Jamison** found themselves as they watched the downward spiral of the software industry in New England where Al had been creating software for 20 years. Despite this, Al is close to finishing a Masters Degree at the Harvard Extension School in IT.

So what do you do with life's more bitter nuts? Turn them into Chocolate! Al and Becky, never ones to take the safe, and sometimes smart, path of drudgery, decided to pursue the taste of fine, world-class chocolate. Their experiences in Switzerland and the world of chocolate tasting gave them a desire to share this delight with others, to see their eyes light up when they taste great chocolate for the first time, to make world-class chocolate available and understandable to the general public, and to help people realize that there is so much more to chocolate than they have been led to believe.

You can visit them at their shop at the Pheasant Lane Mall until the end of February or their website at [www.chocolateconspiracy.com](http://www.chocolateconspiracy.com) which will soon host an online shop.

**Michel Lyons** of the University of Sherbrooke in Quebec is in charge of math teachers' education within their Masters Degree studies in math instruction. He has been acting as a math consultant over the last 30 years for numerous school boards in Quebec and New Brunswick. Together with his brother, Robert, they authored an extensive math curriculum that has been adopted by many schools in Canada. This curriculum puts at the center of math teaching children's natural tendency to learn through experimentation and their ability to

invent their own way of arriving at solutions. Michel loves to pass on to children his passion for logic, reasoning and (consequently) math through games. Several of the games used in his math curriculum have gone on to become award-winning games that are sold worldwide.

**Tom Padwa** and his wife **Joanne DeVoe** enjoy bringing others to the joy of singing. For 15 years, they have sung shape note music, the early American sacred music featured in the movie *Cold Mountain*. Last year, these two members of Providence Sacred Harp helped bring the distinctive sound to live audiences in the Great High Mountain Tour, sharing a stage with, among others, Alison Krauss and Ralph Stanley. Tom is also a balladeer who writes and sings topical songs, as well as the old songs that should not be forgotten. When not singing, Tom is LocSec for Rhode Island Mensa.

**Julia Passamonti** has been an artist and ancient history buff all her life, having started out as an oil portrait artist, working in the style of the Old Italian and Dutch Renaissance Masters. But, she also loves the malleability and timelessness of clay just as much, and has found a way to combine both her joy of painting, and her love of clay. Julia's Venetian Cat Studio began in 2004 with a gift of patronage from her mother, a talented portrait artist who also has a passion to choose beauty and excellence in creativity. Julia's love for things ancient began as a child upon seeing the movie *Ben Hur*, and later the Coliseum in Rome for the first time, where she imagined gladiators fighting in the arena.

## Many Thanks to Our Speakers!

The art of maiolica piqued Julia's interest at the tender age of nine, while seeing it being produced in a bottega in Castelli, Abruzzi, Italy, which is near where her family is from. She has worked in clay ever since, although it has taken her close to thirty years to fully understand how Italian painting, maiolica and ancient Roman pottery were produced. Julia enjoys painting as much as throwing pots, and reproduction pottery gives her an infinite blank canvas upon which to create. She's not an artist as is known today, but as one of times long past because she uses ancient techniques.

Her studio is in East Wakefield, New Hampshire, where she lives with her loving husband and friend Dino, her youngest son, and a small herd of cats.

**Katja Swift** is an herbal practitioner and nutritional counselor in Randolph, Vermont. She is the central Vermont chapter leader for the Weston A. Price foundation. She has studied with several herbalists and is an eternal student at Sage Mountain with Rosemary Gladstar and her green and flowering coterie.

**Tchipakkan** is an artist, writer, healer and teacher. She lives on a small farm with three adult children, working toward sustainability through farming, speaking and selling their art. She is author of *Divine Cookies*, a cookbook with tales about gods and magical cookie recipes, and the Rune article series in the *Blessed Bee Pagan Family Magazine*. She practices and teaches RuneValdr and Reiki, huna healing, herbalism, healing seidhr, soothsaying with runes, palmistry, tarot, numerology, and other systems.

**Vic and Margie Zeller** are both Mensans who have been enjoying retirement for the past two years. Vic majored in Physics and Philosophy at Brown University and taught Physics and Astronomy at a Community College for 41 years. He enjoys having more time now to travel and to pursue his interest in the mystical nature of the universe as presented by the Rosicrucians and the Association for Research and Enlightenment, founded by Edgar Cayce. Margie retired from teaching Computer Science at UMass Dartmouth, followed by several years working as a Software Engineer. She enjoys having time to travel, read, play tennis and has recently taken up bell-ringing. She currently serves as webmaster for the Rhode Island Mensa group.

### Thank You, Private Label Specialties!

When we contacted Private Label Specialties of Goffstown, N.H. to see if they could donate anything for our RG "goodie bags," company president Ray Duhaime came through in spades! We want to thank Private Label for the eight cases of bottled water they provided, in addition to dozens of mugs! We urge you to contact Private Label Specialties when you are in the market for promotional products of any kind! Thank you, Private Label!

## A Message From Our Games Chair

Hi! I'm Adam Smargon. I've been suckered into being the Games Chair again at this Regional Gathering. I have decided to administer seven tournaments this year. This is a slight increase in the number of tournaments I administered last year: zero.

In the Games Room, there will be copies of the game rules for all seven tournaments. Feel free to take one or more.

If your favorite game is not in a tournament, do not fret! Simply come on in and start playing!

If your favorite game is not in a tournament, and you want it to be in a tournament, do not fret! We're going to try something this year I call Do-Your-Own-Tournament. To help you find players for your favorite game, a white board will be in the Games Room for communication. For example:

Ezekiel wants to do a 52-Pickup tournament. Who's interested?  
Call him in room 9912 or on his cell: 603/555-EZEKIEL.

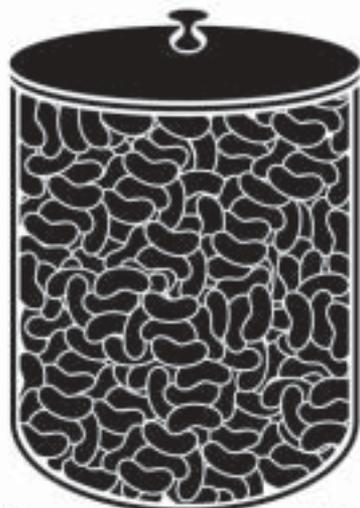
The pre-planned tournaments this year include Backgammon, Tiddlywinks, Meta-Forms, Babylon, Sudoku, CultureQuest®, and Poker. Here is a little bit of historical background on some of these games:

**Tiddlywinks:** Tiddlywinks was patented in 1889, and the modern version was introduced in 1955 at Cambridge University in England. Contrary to popular belief, the modern game is serious, comparable to croquet or even chess in its complexity. Tiddlywinks is popular at (among other places) famous universities in the United States, such as Harvard, M.I.T., and Cornell.

**Sudoku:** Named after the Japanese phrase "suji wa dokushin ni kagiru" ("the digits must remain single"), Sudoku is a logic-based placement puzzle. The attraction of the puzzle is that the completion rules are simple, yet the line of reasoning required to reach the completion may be complex. Educators recommend the game as an exercise in logical reasoning. Although first published in an American puzzle magazine in 1979, Sudoku initially caught on in Japan in 1986, and it attained international popularity in 2005. The first world championship will be in Lucca, Italy next month; go to [www.wsc2006.com](http://www.wsc2006.com) for more information.

**CultureQuest®:** CultureQuest® was founded in 1990 as a cultural trivia competition among local Mensa groups in Region 6 (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas). It went national in 1992, and teams from Canada played in 1997. While CultureQuest® might be considered a trivia game or competition, the intent has always been to promote and test cultural literacy. From film to politics, from literature to geography and from music to history, teams of up to five members gather in their neighborhoods on one single day across the U.S. and Canada. The teams have ninety minutes to answer as many questions as possible; cash prizes and bragging rights are at stake.

Whether competing in a tournament this weekend, or simply playing casual games, have fun!



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