

S o u t h e r n C o n n e c t i c u t m e n s a

SCHEDULE OF CHAPTER EVENTS FOR MAY

Wednesday, May 10, 7:00. Southern Connecticut and Connecticut/Western Massachusetts Joint Dinner. This regular dinner is now being held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Old Sorrento Restaurant, Newtown Road, Danbury, CT. Interested Mensans should contact Ward Mazzucco at (203) 744-1929, ext. 25, wjm@danburylaw.com, or Rev. Bill Loring at (203) 794-1389.

Saturday, May 13, 8:00. THEATRE EVENT: *Noises Off* at the Wilton Playshop, Wilton. Join Mensa for this fast-paced comedy. There will be a backstage tour with wine & cheese after the show. Tickets are \$10.00. For information or reservations, please call Nancy O'Neil at (203) 791-1668 or e-mail her at Nancyoneil@aol.com by Saturday, May 6.

Saturday, May 20, 7:00. Monthly dinner, Three Door Restaurant, 1775 Madison Ave., Bridgeport. Your car's bumper may do better than you in a low-impact fender-bender! Come hear Meredith Spector discuss the ramifications of even a minor car incident on your neck and body. Meredith has an extensive background in physical therapy including practicing it, teaching it at the undergraduate and graduate level, and developing special programs for home care and elder care. She is currently teaching a program to help the elderly with their balance enabling them to stay independent and in their homes for a longer time.

Please call Lee Steuber at 203-730-1634 for information and reservations. Dinner is \$10.00 and includes everything but the cash bar. Dress is casual and guests are welcome.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF CHAPTER EVENTS FOR JUNE AND JULY

Wednesday, June 14, 7:00. Southern Connecticut and Connecticut/Western Massachusetts Joint Dinner. See above listing for details.

Saturday, June 17, 7:00. Monthly dinner, Three Door Restaurant, 1775 Madison Ave., Bridgeport.

Saturday, June 24, 4:00 p.m. THEATRE EVENT: *Man of La Mancha*, at the Goodspeed Opera House, 133 Main St., East Haddam, CT., 06779 (www.goodspeed.org). Mezzanine tickets are \$20. Please call or e-mail Jim Mizera at (203) 332-2548, Jmizera@hotmail.com for information or reservations. To assure tickets, reservations should be made by Sunday, June 11.

Saturday, July 22, 8:30 p.m. THEATRE EVENT: *1776 - The Musical*, at the Ivoryton Playhouse, Main St., Ivoryton section of Essex, CT., 06442 (www.riverrep.com) Tickets are \$24. Please call or e-mail Jim Mizera at (203) 332-2548, Jmizera@hotmail.com for information or reservations. To assure tickets, reservations should be made by Sunday, July 16.

An Existential Orgasm

I recently had a dream in which I created the next important technological breakthrough. I invented a way to transmigrate molecules over the Internet. With this discovery, anyone could order almost anything online and it would be delivered to his home or office electronically into a large mailbox-like drop-off, perhaps located in a spare room.

In the same dream I developed an enhanced technology whereby large objects like automobiles could also be ordered on the Internet. The car would be delivered in a molecularly collapsed shape, later to be opened to full size by a maximizing process induced by a click of the mouse. At this point I woke up with a start, realizing that even in my dreams the pace of life was quickening.

If the dream seems farfetched, so sometimes does reality. To reach for the incredible, however, is the signature of Americans. This is well and good. To a point. Right now, though, progress is happening so quickly that it is difficult to keep up with the pace and the expectations that grow daily. Sometimes, I think that we are headed towards a psychic blowout, an existential orgasm. I wonder if the center will hold.

The quick-speed of the world's axis is fed by the Internet. I consider myself to be a normal person, yet since going online my world has speeded up. Reflecting the greater flow, my inner world is going too fast, and I don't know if I like it. I can shop, browse, e-mail anywhere in the world and chat with strangers. I can peek into the dark side of man. I am beginning to understand that cyberspace has a downside. Even an invasive side. Take, for example, shopping for food on the Internet. How sad that in doing so we no longer have the sensuous experience of touching fresh fruits and vegetables and smelling them on the marketplace shelves. And when we shop online for books, we no longer have the pleasure of physically browsing through the shelves of books, touching the pages directly with our fingertips instead of through a mouse pad. It is another way of being out of touch with our bodies, ourselves. I am afraid that the more quickly we can consume, the more we will consume quickly. This is a luxury that our spiritually starved society cannot afford.

It would be nice to think that our country is held together by certain essential values such as respect for life and honesty. Perhaps that was once the case. With the development of science and technology, though, the core principles of yesterday have steadily eroded. Possibilities are fraught with peril because we have lost some of our boundaries, and don't have enough time to assess where we are. The science of genetics, e.g., is cutting through the secrets of heredity with unprecedented speed. Someday we'll be able to clone ourselves and tinker with our genes. Babies can be developed in a test tube. We are living in a veritable Brave New World. One day, perhaps, we will have sex exclusively for the fun of it rather than for its basic function which is to procreate.

Life expectancy is increasing in developed nations. Clearly, the increase will require more haste by more people. Longevity-expanding drugs will place a great burden on institutions as well as on individuals. Ironically, the toll that increasing long life will place on families is incalculable, emotionally and financially. More people needing more assistance means greater activity for the caretakers. More haste.

Indeed, life is coming at us quickly. Like a speeding bullet. Job pressures mount; schools and teachers continue to be blamed for other people's failures. Television hypes the importance of the unimportant while quickly becoming a double wasteland: it now ticker-tapes information on the bottom of the screen while the main news is being broadcast. Unrelated information toppling on top of itself. And with the use of digital re-touching techniques on the TV screen, it is becoming more difficult to separate truth from fiction. What are we to believe, for example, when the supposed truth of the news is being broadcast against the backdrop of fantasy presented as fact? What we see as signs are often digital re-touching. Confusion of the spirit speeding up.

It is hard, too, to keep pace with the political world. In their rush to image-enhancement and acceptance by the many, our four major presidential candidates changed their colors more quickly than chameleons. The lies and manipulations are dispatched faster than we can keep up. Who actually is the one who criticizes the soft money vendors while holding out both hands to receive their coins? And another whose arrogance leaks out from behind a lifetime of media adoration for his athletic and intellectual accomplishments. And another, so desperate to be a winner that he wears himself according to the ways he thinks others would like. The fourth disguises his light-weight credentials by hiding behind the heft of his party and family. For sure, it's a full-time job to keep up with this bunch.

I am sometimes afraid for us all. Afraid that we might lose our spirit in the scurry to keep up with the pace of life. Ten years ago I asked my students what they thought the world would be like at the turn of the century. Most were guardedly optimistic. One of them said "Although I choose to be optimistic about the future, something from inside holds me back."

I wonder what that something could be. Perhaps it is that normal isn't good enough anymore. Maybe the exceptional has become the expected. Not only has the bar been raised but we are expected to run faster towards it. Perhaps the ground upon which we stand to keep our equilibrium is moving so fast that it is no longer a steady place to plant our feet. So we might fall. And it might be a fast fall into who knows where.

Gerard Brooker

If you wish to submit material, please write or e-mail Jim Mizera at PMB #181, 7365 Main St., Stratford, CT. 06614-1300, Jmizera@hotmail.com. E-mail submissions are preferred. Please include your name, address, and telephone number. Anonymous material will be rejected, although names will be withheld on request. Items will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Currently, the deadline for postal submissions is the 15th of the month preceding publication, and the 20th of the month for e-mail submissions.

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CHRONICLE

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