
Southern Connecticut mensa Chronicle

REMINDER!!! DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR MENSA MEMBERSHIP! RENEWAL NOTICES WERE MAILED OUT IN JANUARY. You may renew by mailing in your membership form, or by calling (817) 607-0060, x199 between 8:30 and 5:00 P.M., Central Standard Time, and using your MasterCard or Visa.

SCHEDULE OF CHAPTER EVENTS FOR APRIL

Wednesday, April 11, 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, April 21, 7:00. Monthly dinner, Three Door Restaurant, 1775 Madison Ave., Bridgeport. How can employers increase their chances of hiring the right people? Have you ever had to take a pre-employment screening assessment? Our speaker this month, Carol Vincie, will talk about "Using Assessment Tools in the Interview Process." Carol began her career at IBM in the early days of the computer revolution. After spending 25 years there, she went out into the world as an entrepreneur. As part of her business, Carol links up companies and venture capitalists, and evaluates the staff in small start-ups to judge the company's viability. She is also skilled in techniques to improve hiring decisions.

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 MAY

Saturday May 5, 8:00. THEATRE EVENT: *Seven Keys to Baldpate*, performed by the Town Players of New Canaan at the Powerhouse Theatre, Waveny Park, South Ave., New Canaan. Writer Kenneth Magee has bet that he can finish a story at rural resort Baldpate Inn, now closed for the winter. The owner has given him the "only" key to the front door. But there are six other keys, and peculiar characters, some of them up to no good, keep turning up as the mystery deepens. This play is based on the first novel of Earl Derr Biggers, creator of the Charlie Chan books, and was first brought to the stage by George M. Cohan. Tickets are \$12. For info or reservations, please call Jim Mizera at (203) 332-2548 or e-mail Jmizera@hotmail.com.

Wednesday, May 9, 7:00. Southern Connecticut and Connecticut/Western Massachusetts Joint Dinner. See above listing for details.

Saturday, May 19, 7:00. Monthly dinner, Three Door Restaurant, 1775 Madison Ave., Bridgeport.

Admitted in CT, NY & OR

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CONNECTICUT AND WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS UPCOMING EVENTS

This is not a complete listing. WE - Weekly Event , ME - Monthly Event, YE - Yearly Event

April 5, 12, 19, 26 Thursday 7:00 PM

Scrabble (WE) at Emmanuel Synagogue, 160 Mohegan Drive, West Hartford. **Ellen Leonard**, (860) 667-1966.

April 6, Friday 5:30 - 7:00 **Happy Hour** (ME, first Friday) at the Ramada Inn, Meriden. **Ann Polanski**, (203) 269-4565. This monthly reunion usually draws 10-20 people, warmly welcomes newcomers, and is less than a mile from the I-91 and I-691 interchange.

DIRECTIONS: From I-91 north or south, or Route 15 north or south, take East Main St. (Meriden) exit, head east (away from Meriden Center). After the I-91 interchanges, take a right at the next light. There is a small Ramada sign at the corner. After you pass the Meriden Cinema Complex and the road curves to the left, take a right into the Ramada parking lot. Inside Silver City Grill, ask the host/hostess for the Mensa table - they know us well!

April 6, Friday 7:30-11:00 **PUZZLES and TRIVIA** night at the Greene residence in Windsor. Hosted by Henry Green and Shanti Greene. Pizza and beer on the house. Please RSVP by Thursday April 5. Come meet two Mensans who want to get involved! For directions and reservations, contact Henry at HGPuzzle@Yahoo.com or (860) 298-0323.

April 14, Saturday 9:00 AM

Second Saturday Breakfast (ME) G. Willikers, Rt. 184, Groton. **Marge Cohen**, (860) 887-1297.

April 14 Saturday, 2:00

Games "Night" at **Bill Vincent's** in Manchester - starts around 2 PM for you early birds. We'll go to whenever for you real gamers. Room to crash is available if we play too late. Munchies will be provided. BYOB. We'll order take out (pizza, chinese, whatever) when we get hungry. Bring your favorite game or come and play one of mine. Everyone is welcome. Call 860-646-3007 or e-mail wpvincent@aol.com for directions. PM

April 15, Sunday 2:05 **Happy Easter!** Mensa Goes to a Ballgame in New Britain. Meet in Section 213 (General Admission) for a game between the New Britain Rock Cats and the Portland Sea Dogs. For more info, contact **Tom Thomas** at (413) 467-7726 or tom.thomas@the-spa.com.

April 20, Friday 7:30 **C&WM Meeting** (ME, 3rd Friday) at the Solomon Welles House, Wethersfield. \$2 kitty. Speaker this month is Veronica Erdmann, teacher of New Haven Sacred Circle. She will both inform and instruct on sacred dancing.

DIRECTIONS: I-91 to exit 26. Follow the signs to the Dept. of Motor Vehicles. Pass DMV to next intersection. House is on right. Park in back.

April 21, Saturday 1:00 PM **TAKE A HIKE** in Cockaponset State forest in Chester, CT. Come and discover the first signs of spring. Forest walk, marked trails, slightly hilly in spots, approx. 3 hours (loop different from last year's). CT Rte 9, exit 6 Rte 148 in Chester; west 1.5 mile to Cedar Lake Rd and turn right; 1.5 mile to entrance of Lake Pattaconk State Recreation area and turn left; 0.4 miles (past beach) to parking. Meet at right side parking lot 1pm. Rain date, 4/28. Contact **Nicole Michaud** for info: leave message at (860) 434-7329 or email nirimi@snet.net, subject "hike."

May 5, Saturday 5PM - bowling at T-Bowl Lanes, Rte 5 in Wallingford. This is for the physically challenged, as Charlie and I have difficulty breaking a hundred (in my case, it takes 3 games!) Please call **Beth Collins**, (203) 294-0503 (note different number) or email Player.Piano@Juno.Com to reserve your place. We'll plan to bowl 3 strings, cost of \$3.25 each, shoe rental is \$2.00. Afterward, there's a grand place for pizza plus close-by. PS - this is great for my tennis elbow as the 8-pound ball stretches out my arm! Please note - the lanes can be a little bit smoky.

Grand Central Terminal: Railroads, Engineering, and Architecture in New York City

The Friends of Fairfield University's DiMenna-Nyselius Library recently helped inaugurate the new library auditorium by hosting Dr. Kurt Schlichting's discussion of his new book "Grand Central Terminal: Railroads, Engineering, and Architecture in New York City During the Age of Energy" (Hardcover - 208 pages, April 2001, Johns Hopkins Univ. Press; ISBN: 0801865107). Dr. Schlichting, professor of sociology and anthropology at Fairfield University, drew on his extensive research into railroad archives to paint an impressive portrait of the technical and aesthetic achievements in the creation of Grand Central, along with some insights into its social and economic history.

In his two-hour presentation Dr. Schlichting gave a history of the concourse that has been called "New York's Secular Cathedral". The railroad terminal was part of the "Age of Energy", the period 1865 - 1915 that saw an unprecedented wave of engineering and architectural triumphs. In New York alone, there was the building of the Brooklyn Bridge from 1867-1883, the first elevated railroad in 1874, New York's first subway - the IRT - in 1902, and skyscrapers like the Flatiron Building in 1903, and the Singer Building in 1908. All of these were gigantic projects, but probably none had the impact that Grand Central Terminal had upon New York. Started in 1903 and opened on February 1, 1913, it transformed midtown Manhattan into the commercial center it is today.

Professor Schlichting's talk outlined the developments in railroading, engineering, and architecture that converged to create Grand Central. In each field, there was one key man or family who drove the project. In railroading, it was the Vanderbilt family. Cornelius "Commodore" Vanderbilt helped consolidate the railroad industry by buying the New York and Harlem, the Hudson River, and the New York Central railroads in 1863. All of these railroads, along with the independent New Haven Railroad, ran steam-powered trains into Manhattan, and used the Grand Central Depot, another Vanderbilt project. This predecessor to the 20th century Grand Central included an enormous Train Shed that when completed in 1871, was the largest interior space in the U.S. Vanderbilt's railroads, especially the New York Central, were extremely profitable. When Vanderbilt added the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad in 1873, he was able to offer the first rail service from New York City to Chicago. One advantage of its service, as Dr. Schlichting pointed out, was that the New York Central, unlike the Penn Central, followed the path of the Erie Canal (the later path of the New York Thruway as well), which was the "water level route" - the only flat path through the Appalachian Mountain area. So successful was this railroad that the first Grand Central Railroad exceeded its capacity in a short time. By 1898, it was obvious that renovation and expansion was necessary.

Although ridership on the New York trains continued to increase, many people complained about the congestion, noise, smoke, and heat generated by the trains coming into the Park Ave. tunnel system. In 1908, the state legislature was to ban steam railroads coming into New York, but even before this, outcries prompted plans for a new electrified system. The engineering genius behind the new Grand Central Terminal was William J. Wilgus (1865-1947), the 5th Vice President and Chief Engineer of the New York Central Railroad. His 1902 plan called for a two-story electrified underground railroad system with a

Bronx and Westchester County. Dr. Schlichting showed many of the original drawings and schematics of Wilgus. Wilgus's genius, he noted, covered not only the design of the railroad system, but the planning of the construction project, which required a special railroad just to carry away the dirt. The planning was especially complex because the old railroad would have to continue service while the new Terminal and power generators were built over a ten-year period.

The third genius behind Grand Central was the architect Whitney Warren. The firm Reed and Stem won the 1902 architectural competition to build Grand Central. But William K. Vanderbilt, grandson of Commodore Vanderbilt and chairman of the New York Central, insisted that his cousin, the well-respected architect Whitney Warren of the firm Warren and Wetmore, share the project. Charles Reed, the original architect, planned a twelve-story structure, with office buildings above. But Whitney Warren, who had studied at the Ecole de Beaux-Arts in Paris, had other plans. Inspired by his training in the classical Greek and Roman style, he took over the aesthetic design and gave us the classical façade of Grand Central and the famous interior where everything radiates from the central space, the Grand Concourse. Park Avenue, which was north of Grand Central, was created as a grand boulevard, modeled after one in France. What had been known as the poor and sooty Railroad Alley became the swank and luxurious Park Ave.

Upon its completion, Grand Central Terminal was the largest railroad terminal in the world. But it was the crowning achievement of an era that was soon to end. Dr. Schlichting noted that although the commuter passenger count increased 127% from 1913-1920, the coming of the automobile and the highway system undermined the local commuter train service and the airlines undercut cross-country train rail travel. As the fortunes of the railroads declined, Grand Central deteriorated. The International Style eclipsed the Beaux-Arts style, making the Terminal seem an almost obsolete relic by the late 60s. It came close to demolition, but a costly renovation begun in 1988 restored its luster. In 2013, it will celebrate its centennial as America's monument to the Age of Energy.

ADVERTISEMENTS

In Don't Forget to Write!, The 6' Ferret Writers' Group shares more than ten years' experience on how to start a local writers' group, add members, and avoid common problems. Also included are writing exercises, events, recommended reading, and stories from a few exercises. Order through your favorite on-line or local bookstore. ISBN 0-7388-3698-2

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Wanted: Child who loves science as much as Willy! Our son Willy, 7 years old, loves science. There's lots of it he understands on a college level. We're looking for other kids with similar interests/abilities to hang out and pretend they're subatomic particles or invent new viruses (not the computer kind!).

THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD IN CONNECTICUT

Many Connecticut residents are unaware of the historic Underground Railroad sites in the state that provided temporary refuge for blacks escaping slavery in the South. The Underground Railroad, which was neither under the ground nor a railroad, was the chief means of escaping slavery in the United States. The system was set up after the U.S. passed the Fugitive Slave Act in 1793, which allowed for the capture and return to slavery of any runaway slave living in a free state. The railroad was a dangerous undertaking because there were many laws that made it a crime to assist runaway slaves. Hence, slaves did not just have to make it across the Mason-Dixon line, but had to make it to Canada or a state that had no laws mandating the return of slaves.

Runaway slaves had to travel by foot, wagon, horse, or boat to a private house, barn, or church where they would be hidden until the next leg of the trip was deemed safe. The people who operated or cooperated with the Underground Railroad were free African Americans, Native Americans, and whites, all of who had to work together under strict secrecy. Because of this secrecy, we don't have a well-documented record of what sites served as havens on the Railroad or of many of the individuals participating. Some of the history of the trail survived only through oral tradition. We do know that fugitive slaves entered Connecticut at a number of points and traveled different routes through the state, going through both small towns and major cities. Some went through Stamford or Old Lyme to Farmington, the central station of the Connecticut Underground Railroad. From there they headed north to Westfield or Springfield, Massachusetts. Some traveled to Springfield by way of Middletown, Hartford, and other communities along the Connecticut River. Another path went through New London or Westerly, Rhode Island, on north to Norwich and Putnam, and then to Worcester, Massachusetts. A major western route included Waterbury, New Milford, Washington, Torrington, Winchester, and Winsted.

As noted, some of the buildings listed below cannot be confirmed absolutely. There are also other possible sites that are not shown here. With the exception of the Joshua Hempstead House in New London, the buildings listed here for the Underground Railroad are privately owned and are not open to the public.

MIDDLETOWN

BENJAMIN DOUGLAS HOUSE
11 South Main Street, Middletown

AUSTIN F. WILLIAMS HOUSE/CARRIAGE HOUSE
127 Main Street

GUILFORD

SACHEM COUNTRY HOUSE
111 Goose Lane, Guilford

SAMUEL DEMING HOUSE
66 Main Street

OLD LYME

STEVEN PECK HOUSE
Lyme Street and Beckwith Lane, Old Lyme

SMITH-COWLES HOUSE
27 Main Street

NEW LONDON

JOSHUA HEMPSTEAD HOUSE
11 Hempstead Street, New London

TIMOTHY WADSWORTH HOUSE
340 Main Street

NORWICH

VERNEY LEE HOUSE
118 Washington Street, Norwich

MANCHESTER
HART PORTER HOMESTEAD/OUTBUILDING
465 Porter Street, Manchester

FARMINGTON

ELIJAH LEWIS HOUSE
1 Mountain Spring Road

BLOOMFIELD
FRANCIS GILLETTE HOUSE
540 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield

NEWINGTON

BRACE/STEPHEN HOUSE
1349 Main Street, Newington

BIGGEST 20th CENTURY EARTHQUAKES ON RECORD IN U.S.

How does the recent earthquake in Seattle compare to the largest earthquakes in Unites States in the 20th century? The list below ranks the 15 biggest recorded quakes and estimates the damage they caused. It excludes several earthquakes that occurred in remote unpopulated areas of Alaska. Each whole number on the Richter scale represents a ten-fold increase in wave amplitude and about a 31-fold increase in energy.

- | <u>Date</u> | <u>Richter Scale Magnitude, Location, and Damage</u> |
|-----------------|--|
| 1) 3/27/64 | 8.4 Good Friday quake near Prince William Sound, Alaska, kills 131. |
| 2) 4/18-4/19/06 | 7.8 estimated, San Francisco, CA, quake and fires level the city, killing an estimated 700. |
| 3) 7/21/52 | 7.7 Tehachapi-Bakersfield area 50 miles north of L.A. |
| 4) 6/28/92 | 7.3 in Landers, CA, and 2nd quake at 6.5, hits San Gabriel Mountains. Kills 1 boy, injures 400, \$100 million in damage. |
| 5) 10/17/89 | 7.1 World Series quake shakes San Francisco Bay area, killing 67 and causing \$7 billion in damages. |
| 6) 4/13/49 | 7.1 near Olympia, WA, kills 8. |
| 7) 10/16/99 | 7.0 in California's Mojave Desert derails an Amtrak train, knocks out power to thousands but causes no serious damage or injuries. |
| 8) 2/28/01 | 6.8 southwest of Seattle damages Washington State Capitol, closes Seattle-Tacoma International Airport and injures at least 29. |
| 9) 1/17/94 | 6.7 in Northridge section of LA kills 72, injures 9,000, and causes \$35 billion in damage. |
| 10) 2/9/71 | 6.5 in California's San Fernando Valley kills 65. |
| 11) 3/10/33 | 6.3 Long Beach, CA, kills 115. |
| 12) 10/1/87 | 5.9 in Whittier, CA, with a 5.3 aftershock, kills 8. |
| 13) 6/28/91 | 5.8 under San Gabriel Mountains in Southern California kills 2. |
| 14) 1/24/80 | 5.8 Livermore area east of San Francisco, damaging nuclear weapons lab. |
| 15) 9/20/93 | 5.4 in Southern Oregon, killing a motorist hit by falling rock. |

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.

Paws for Reflection

April 2001

By Regional Vice Chairman Betsy Burke, Casper & LambChop

Ah, yes. Wonderful March. The flower bulbs were up, spring was in the air, RG's were held in New Hampshire and New Jersey, RVC 1 & RVC 2 both had car crashes, and snow was coming down from the sky. Hopefully, April will be better.

The national office reports that membership and renewals continue to increase. As of February, we had 47,427 members, which is higher than we ended with. Our total membership will show a growth for the third straight year. I wonder if the ability to pay online is helping. Also for those of us, who shop sales, remember that you can take advantage of multiyear membership renewals.

Remember to check us.mensa.org for a variety of items. You can read additional articles and letters that were not printed in the bulletin due to space considerations. You can read the AMC agenda materials as well. These are all available online in the members resource section of the Web site.

April has a variety of dates that are important to remember- April 11th, April 15th and April 27th-29th. April 11th is my birthday, you know what the 15th is, and GNYM is having their RG April 17th-29th. To register for A New York State of Mind or for information contact Vicki Scher 67-00 192nd St. Fresh Meadows, NY 11365 (vscher@msn.com). Remember that this RG is being held in Staten Island NOT Long Island.

Thanks to those of you who responded to last month's question about continuous membership. 17 people took the time to e-mail me. They all wanted to be recognized for all their years of membership – not just continuous years. This month I'm curious about any experiences you've had using Mensa's SIGHT program.

NOTED AND QUOTED

- Lots of folks confuse bad management with destiny. - Kin Hubbard
- Destiny: A tyrant's authority for crime and a fool's excuse for failure. - Ambrose Bierce
- Men heap together the mistakes of their lives, and create a monster they call Destiny.
- John Oliver Hobbes
- I do not believe in a fate that falls on men however they act, but I do believe in a fate that falls on men unless they act. - G.K. Chesterton
- We judge ourselves by our motives and others by their actions. - Dwight Morrow
- If truth is beauty, how come no one has their hair done in a library? - Lily Tomlin
- I'm tired of all this nonsense about beauty being only skin-deep. That's deep enough. What do you want, an adorable pancreas? - Jean Kerr
- America is the only nation in history which, miraculously, has gone directly from barbarism to degeneration without the usual interval of civilization. - George Clemenceau
- Is it progress if a cannibal uses a knife and fork? - Stanislaw J. Lec
- My idea of an agreeable person is a person who agrees with me. - Benjamin Disraeli
- The Bible tells us to love our neighbours and also to love our enemies, probably because they are generally the same people. - G.K. Chesterton
- It is discouraging to try to be a good neighbor in a bad neighborhood. - William R. Castle
- Charity: a thing that begins at home, and usually stays there. - Elbert Hubbard
- Consistency is the last refuge of the unimaginative. - Oscar Wilde
- You can fool too many of the people too much of the time. - James Thurber
- A fellow who is always declaring he's no fool usually has his suspicions. - Anonymous
- The difference between genius and stupidity is that genius has its limits. - Anonymous
- A man is not necessarily intelligent because he has plenty of ideas any more than he is a good general because he has plenty of soldiers. - Nicolas Chamfort
- In youth we run into difficulties, in old age difficulties run into us. - Josh Billings
- It is not important to come out on top; what matters it to come out alive. - Bertolt Brecht

MENSA REGIONAL GATHERINGS

Greater New York Regional Gathering: "A New York State of Mind", April 27-29, 2001. Food, games, speakers, chocolate, socializing. At the Staten Island Hotel, just off the Staten Island Expressway, convenient from the Manhattan, Westchester, and Connecticut. Saturday Buffet Dinner and Sunday Brunch options. Registration rate \$55 until 3/31/01, \$60 after. For details and registration form, visit <http://www.mensa-ny.org/rg2001.asp>.

Boston Mensa Cape Cod Getaway Weekend, May 11-13. Come to Dennisport, Mass., for dining, shopping, swimming, socializing, and great hospitality. Organize your own activities or join others going on day trips to Provincetown or Hyannis, whale watching, antiquing or whatever suits you. Registration is only \$35 per person (\$40.00 after May 1st). Send check payable to "Boston Mensa", to the Chairperson/Registrar: Wendy A. Birchmire, 70 Oak Hill Road, Needham, MA (781) 444-8213 (wab@birchmire.com). Room rates \$49.95/night before 4/1/01 and \$54.95 afterwards. Each additional person is \$5.00 per night extra. Send a check, made out to "Resort Motels", directly to the motels at: 41 Chase Avenue, Dennisport, MA 02639 (1-800-332-2279).

2001: The Annual Gathering. Tue., July 3 - Sun., July 8, Dallas, TX. Registration \$65 until 4/30, 75\$ to 6/30, \$85 after. Hotel Intercontinental, 15201 Dallas Pkwy, Dallas, TX, 75248, (972) 386-6000. Registrar: Debbie Kittenbacher, 1504 Auburn Drive, Richardson, TX 75081, (972) 669-8436. Checks payable to: AG 2001. Send registrations to: American Mensa Ltd., 1229 Corporate Drive West, Arlington, TX 76006-6103. Web Site: www.ag.us.mensa.org.

ADVERTISEMENTS

FALL 2001 NOTICE The Connecticut Association for the Gifted needs people who are willing to teach youngsters in grades K-8 for their Minds in Motion classes tentatively planned for October, 2001, at Danbury High School. The CAG, a non-profit organization, sponsors classes in subjects such as rocketry, chess, math, drama, dance, the environment, art, and foreign languages. If you are interested or want more information, please call Susan Chapman at 778-0194 or Chris Cuhsnick at 778-0002.

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*Great gift for a man! **Pre-Publication Special: Mail \$25 + \$4 postage (\$9 int'l) to: Carole Bell, 2269 Chestnut Street, pmb#174C, San Francisco, CA, 94123. carolebell@compuserve.com**

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(Monthly)

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Change of Address

Please allow four weeks for the change in MENSAs Bulletin (the National Magazine) delivery, and eight weeks for the Chronicle. Remember to give your membership number to facilitate this process. (This number appears on your membership card and labels affixed to the Chronicle and MENSAs Bulletin.)

Member Number: _____

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Please send form to: **American Mensa, Ltd.**
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Arlington, TX 76006-6103

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