

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT MENSA CHRONICLE

If you or someone you know would like to be a speaker at our monthly dinner, please contact Activities Coordinator Nancy O'Neil at NancyOneil@aol.com or 203-791-1668. The dinner is held the third Saturday of the month.

ARCHIVED COPIES OF THE CHRONICLE

going back a year to July 2002 are available on the Internet at <http://www.44ellen.com/mensa>. You can download the latest e-mail version of the Chronicle there, as well as previous issues. All issues are in read-only Adobe Acrobat format so there is no chance of viruses accompanying the files.

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SCHEDULE OF CHAPTER EVENTS FOR DECEMBER

Saturday, December 6, 8:00

THEATRE EVENT: Louisa May Alcott's Little

Women performed by the Renaissance Theater Company Actor's Ensemble at Fellowship Hall, 45 Tabor Drive, Branford, CT (www.actorsensemble.com). Tickets are \$12.00. Contact Jim Mizera at (203) 522-1959, jmizera@hotmail.com, for info or reservations.

Friday, December 12, 7:00

Southern Connecticut and Connecticut/Western Massachusetts Joint Dinner

This is the new date for this monthly dinner 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, frbill@mags.net.

Saturday, December 13, 7:00

Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC.

"The Met? Wow, what a great idea, I haven't been there in years!" Honestly, how many of you are saying that "very same thing" right now?? Here's your opportunity to pay homage again to one of the world's truly great cultural institutions, and visit NYC in the festive pre-holiday hustle and bustle. Special exhibitions include a major El Greco retrospective. Most likely we'll leave from New Haven by train mid-morning and spend the afternoon at the Met before returning. PLEASE e-mail me if you're interested, if we get more than 10 people they'll want us to make advance reservations and we can look into chartering a door-to-door limo instead of taking the train. The more we can arrange in advance, the smoother everything will be. Admission to the museum is \$12, no backpacks or bulky bags (thanks, al-Qaeda!), transportation will vary depending on how many people go but expect \$30-40/person. Please RSVP bernobic@adelphia.net or (203) 393-9445.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR JANUARY

Friday, January 9, 7:00

Southern CT and CT/Western Mass.Joint Dinner

See above listing for details.

Saturday, January 17, 7:00

Monthly Dinner Place to be announced.**Saturday, Jan. 31, 8:00 THEATRE EVENT:**

Godspell at the Westport Community Theatre. Town Hall Building, 110 Myrtle Ave., Westport, CT. 06880. Tickets are \$14. Contact Jim Mizera at (203) 522-1959, jmizera@hotmail.com, for info or reservations.

CONNECTICUT AND WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS MENSA CHAPTER UPCOMING EVENTS

This is not a complete listing WE - Weekly Event, ME - Monthly Event, YE - Yearly Event CT & W. Mass Calendar Editor Gisela Rodriguez, (860) 872-3106, email: lilith@snet.net,

Mensans on the Radio: C&WM Mensan Janine Bujalski is on the airwaves every 2nd & 4th Friday 6-10 AM on 89.5FM, WPKN in Bridgeport, CT. There is a limited internet broadcast — about 25 can listen simultaneously at www.wpkn.org. From 6-9 AM there's jazz, blues & music from Brazil and from 9-10 AM the music is from Louisiana, mostly cajun & zydeco.

Vice LocSec Will Mackey is hosting Friday Evening Classics from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. weekly on 91.3 FM, WWUH, in West Hartford. The name of the program is "What You Will" and its focus is chamber music.

What better company to get out of the week and ready for the weekend?

4, 11, 18 Thursday 7:00 PM

Scrabble (WE) at Emmanuel Synagogue

160 Mohegan Drive, West Hartford Ellen Leonard, (860) 667-1966 (Please call first to make sure this is happening today).

Admitted in CT, NY & OR

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5 Friday 5:30 - 7:00 PM

Happy Hour (ME, first Friday) at the Ramada Inn, Meriden

Ann Polanski, (203) 269-4565 We warmly welcome newcomers, and it's 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!

7 Sunday 10:30 AM until ?

Norman Rockwell Museum Tour plus "Main Street at Christmas" Reenactment.

Full day of holiday fun! Join us in Stockbridge MA on one of the most festive days of the year, the beginning of the annual "Main Street at Christmas" festival. We'll meet at 10:30 AM just inside the Museum. Gallery Talk will be at 11 AM, then we'll tour the various galleries. At 1:00 PM, lunch at the famed Red Lion Inn in downtown Stockbridge. After lunch, participate in the Main Street Festival, return to the Museum, or shop at the nearby 65 Prime Outlet stores in Lee, MA. Museum admission for the day is \$12. RSVP to James Gilbert at jgilbert@bcn.net or 413-298-4554. RSVP required for restaurant reservation by Dec 5. To join up with a carpool from CT, contact Barb Holstein at BarbCPA@att.net or 860-632-7873.

19 Friday 7:00 PM - 11:00 PM

C&WM Mensa Holiday Party and Annual Meeting

at the Solomon Welles House, 220 Hartford Avenue, Wethersfield CT. Come feast and mingle with old and new friends. Annual Meeting and ExComm meetings start about 7:30 PM.

Everybody welcome! Contact Gisela Rodriguez at 860-872-3106 or Lilith@snet.net if you have questions. Traveling North On I-91: Take Exit 26 (Old Wethersfield). At stop sign at end of ramp turn left. At next stop sign turn left. At end of road turn left onto Marsh Street (curves to the right.) At next stop sign turn right onto Main Street. At second left turn onto State Street and proceed past Department of Motor Vehicles on right. The Solomon Welles House is on the right at the corner of State Street and

Hartford Avenue. Look for large white house with a red door. Traveling South On I-91: Take Exit 26 (Old Wethersfield) At stop sign at end of ramp turn right. Take quick left onto Marsh Street (curves to the right). At next stop sign turn right onto Main Street. At second left turn onto State Street and proceed past Department of Motor Vehicles on right. The Solomon Welles House is on the right at the corner of State Street and Hartford Avenue. Look for large white house with a red door. Traveling Route 5/15 North: Take Exit 28 (Wethersfield) and continue south. Take Exit 85 (Wethersfield/Rocky Hill - 99 S). The exit ramp will merge into 99 S. Immediately get into far left lane. Turn left at light onto Jordan Lane. At stop sign turn right onto Hartford Avenue. The Solomon Welles House is after next stop sign on left at the corner of Hartford Avenue and State Street. Look for large white house with a red door.

26 Friday 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM or so

Happy Hour, (ME, 4th Friday)

Colonial Tymes, 2389 Dixwell Ave, Hamden. Located about 1/2 mile north of Exit 60, Wilbur Cross Parkway. We have been able to sit at a nice big table and enjoy the good free food for a few months now. Come on down and join us. We also seem to be going out to dinner after, so if you plan to come and want dinner, too, let us know so we can reserve. Gail Trowbridge (203) 877-4472 or Gail.Trowbridge@att.com. I send out an e-mail reminder every month. Let me know if you'd like to be on the list.

31 Wednesday Noon

Middlebury Lunch (ME, last Wednesday)

Good food and good conversation available! Where? At Maggie McFly's in Middlebury, visible on the right from Rte. 63 just south of the Rte 63 and Rte 64 intersection. This intersection is at the end of a long ramp at Exit 17 on Rte 84 west. From this exit, turn left at the 63/64 intersection. If you use Exit 17 on Rte. 84 east (heading toward Hartford), turn left off the exit ramp and see Maggie McFly's on your left. When? On the last Wednesday of any month from 12 noon to about 1:30 p.m. The number of attendees is growing; so, join the fun. Become a McFlyer. Maggie, in goggles and leather helmet, flying a red biplane, soars over your head. She is either your wingman or she provides ground support as you advance into your lunch! Please call Richard Fogg at 860-274-2370 if you will attend for the first time. This will give him time to scramble for

a larger table, or a longer lunch trench, as needed.

31 Wednesday 5:30 PM - 9 PM

THE REAL MILLENIUM - PART V (YE)

The tradition continues! It's back to Cromwell this year for C&WM's own unique New Year's Eve bash. Unlike the rest of the nation (M's love to be different), we celebrate New Year's Eve at Greenwich Mean Time - 7 PM. The party starts anytime after 5:30 PM. At 7, we uncork the champagne, sing Auld Lang Syne loudly and off-key, hug everyone in sight, & celebrate. We eat around 7:30. By 9 PM, you're outta' there - plenty of time to go on to another party, celebrate First Night in Hartford, or simply get home before the serious drinkers hit the road.

Wear your absolute fanciest outfit, BYOB, your favorite show-off dinner dish to share, and \$2 for the champagne kitty. RSVP to Barb Holstein 860-632-7873 or BarbCPA@att.net - I need a head count to plan champagne.

Directions: 2 Old Colony Lane, Cromwell. I-91 N or S to Exit 22S onto Rte 9 South toward Middletown. First exit off Rte 9 = West St, Cromwell. Turn Right at end of exit ramp, first Right on Rte. 3 No, first Right on Evergreen Rd, & second Right onto Old Colony Lane. #2 is the very first house on the right - gray colonial, pink door, and lots of gargoyles to greet you. Note: This party is a command performance - only a note from your mother or the LocSec will excuse you!!

1 January Thursday 2 PM - 7 PM

New Year's Day Open House in Ellington.

Former LocSec Art Swanson once again opens his home to all M's for this annual tradition. Come and go as you like, bring something edible or potable to share if you like, or just bring yourselves, it's an easy day to relax after last night's festivities. Call Art at 860-872-9308 or ASwanson34@aol.com for info and directions.

REGIONAL GATHERINGS

MENSA MIND GAMES APRIL 16 - 18, 2004

Do you love games? Then mark your calendar for Mensa Mind Games™ 2004!

Members of Mensa are invited to be judges at the 2004 Mensa Mind Games competition. The event will take place April 16 - 18 in Chicago, IL. Judges will spend three days playing and rating the newest board games on the market. Judges will play a large quota of games, maybe around the clock. At the end of the competition, each judge will rank his or her favorite games. The top-scoring games earn Mensa Selectr distinction and may use the Mensa Selectr seal on their packaging and advertising.

Mind Games™ 2004 will be held April 16-18 at the Radisson Hotel O'Hare, 6810 N.

Mannheim Road, Rosemont, 2 1/2 miles from near Chicago's O'Hare airport. A free shuttle is available 24 hours a day and there is free parking for Mind Games participants. Make your reservation directly with the hotel at 800-333-3333 and ask for the Mind Games rate (\$89 S/D/T/Q).

There will be a HUGE game room - over 7500 square feet - and a restaurant, sports bar and lounge on-site.

Registration is \$60 before November 9, 2003; \$65 though March 31, 2004. On-site registration may not be available.

Registration fees include dinner Friday, lunch Saturday, and renowned Chicago hospitality 'round the clock.

<http://mindgames.us.mensa.org/participant/register.php>

FROM THE VICE CHAIR

Marghretta McBean

This has to be one of the most beautiful autumns I've seen in ages. The combination of heavy rainfalls and temperature fluctuations has made the leaves so vibrant that they shimmer in the dappled fall sunlight. As I ride the train each day to a consulting assignment in Stamford, Connecticut is such a pleasure to view as I watch the beautiful foliage whiz by.

October started off with me wearing my SIGHT hat as I showed Peter Boswell and his new wife Terry some of New York City's sights. Peter is currently the Director of Development for Mensa International. Both he and his wife have held various positions in British Mensa. One of the things we talked about was the Music Weekend that British Mensa holds annually. Musicians and vocalists gather, usually at a school that has dormitory accommodations, to learn new works and/or rehearse specially selected pieces, which are presented in a Sunday afternoon concert. The cost to put one on is minimized because meals are not provided and the sleeping arrangements are not elaborate. Any interest?

I was on the receiving end of hospitality par excellence when I attended Connecticut and Western Massachusetts' Mensautumn RG. What a friendly group! From the hot tub to the elegant Hospitality Suite, the weekend was wonderful! (See some photos at Region 1's website: <http://region1.us.mensa.org/>) Special thanks goes to Mike Wilson who not only picked me up at (and brought me back to) the train station, but also gave me a mini-tour of New Haven, with a side visit to a city wide art exhibit

The solicitation of proxies to amend Mensa's Certificate of Incorporation has now swung into full gear. If you have not yet submitted your proxy, please do so. It took me less than 30 seconds online at the special Mensa proxy site <http://proxy.us.mensa.org>)

Good News from the Green Mountain State. Jeane Thompson of Vermont Mensa has been selected as Region 1's member to the Mensa Hall of Fame Committee. Jeane will help choose the 2004 inductee.

PRP Judges Needed - The 2004 Publications Recognition Program (PRP) is looking for judges. The PRP exists to confer awards upon local groups and members of American Mensa, Ltd. (AML) for their official print and electronic publications and contributions thereto. This year the program has been divided into three sections: Newsletters, Websites, and Contributions, and 8 to 10 judges are needed for each section. Anyone interested in judging should contact the PRP Chair, Marc Lederman <prp@us.mensa.org>. The PRP Guidelines can be found at <https://secure.us.mensa.org/members/only/include/s/prp/PRP2004Guidelines.pdf>

When the temperature drops, it's nice to have a hot drink to take the chill off. This is not for the calorie-phobic, but it certainly makes you feel warm and cozy!

SPICED HOT CHOCOLATE

8 oz. E. Guittard's Sur del Lago chocolate, finely chopped*

3 cups whole milk

2 cups heavy whipping cream

6 tablespoons sugar

1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/4 teaspoon salt

Place chocolate in medium bowl. Place all remaining ingredients in heavy saucepan; bring just to a boil. Pour over chocolate; whisk until smooth. Strain before serving. (Hot chocolate can be made up to 3 days ahead. Cover and refrigerate.

Tip: *If you can't find Sur del Lago chocolate, use any good-quality semisweet or bittersweet chocolate.

6 servings

Per Serving: 545 calories, 42.5 g total fat (26 g saturated fat), 8 g protein, 41.5 g carbohydrate, 105 mg cholesterol, 190 mg sodium, 3 g fiber

Marghretta McBean
Region 1 Vice Chair
<http://region1.us.mensa.org/>
American Mensa Ltd.

ON THE 20TH CENTURY

POPULATION

World population increased from about 1.6 - 1.7 billion in 1900 to 6 billion in 2000, a 1.13% annual growth rate. But despite the apocalyptic warnings of "experts" and the concerns of ordinary people, no crisis emerged. Instead, the world remained sparsely populated. Despite war and tyranny, more people led longer, healthier, and more prosperous lives, natural resources increased, and environmental conditions improved. In the last quarter of the century, fertility rates declined and, if trends continue, the world will begin losing population in the mid-21st century.

OVERPOPULATION - MALTHUS AND HIS PREDECESSORS

Overpopulation must be defined in relation to something. Traditionally, it has been defined as an imbalance between the number of people and their food supply and living space, resulting in hunger or widespread disease. Overpopulation struck humanity many times in the past, but this was when there were far fewer people on earth. England suffered through famines for about 1/7th of the 13th century. Hunger and starvation frequently plagued North American Indians long before the continent's population multiplied. Indeed, hunger and famine were recurrent problems in the world's history until modern times, and ancient thinkers such as Plato, Aristotle, Confucius, and Tertullian all thought the world was bursting at the seams. This was the view despite the fact that the world's population never exceeded a half-billion until approximately 1550.

Prior to the industrial revolution, world population had never increased at more than a fraction of 1%. The population in 1500 may have been no higher than in 1 A.D., although the margin of error in all estimates for that period is great (See Table 1). The average life span probably did not exceed 20 years, and this severely limited population gains. After 1500, however, population began to rise, something it has done ever since.

TABLE 1
WORLD POPULATION

YEAR	POPULATION (Billions)
1 A.D.	.2 - .4
1000	.25 - .35
1500	.425 - .55
1750	.63 - .96
1800	.8 - 1.125
1850	1.125 - 1.4
1900	1.5 - 1.75
1950	2.5
1960	3
1974	4
1988	5
1999	6

The first thinker to popularize the modern idea of overpopulation was the Rev. Thomas Malthus, who wrote the first edition of his Essay on the Principle of Population in 1798. Malthus stated that since populations tend to increase geometrically (1,2,4,8,..) while food production only increases arithmetically (1,2,3,4,..), there would be mass starvation unless disease and war checked population growth.

Ironically, Malthus wrote his work while mankind was at the beginning of an agricultural and technological revolution that would raise life expectancies and standards of living like never before. Recognizing this, Malthus modified his theory in his 1803 2nd edition and all but abandoned his thesis by 1830. But the idea that overpopulation threatened mankind did not die with Malthus. Instead, in one of the great intellectual perversities of history, the idea

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ON THE 20th CENTURY cont.

gained renewed popularity in the 20th century.

In the 20th century, particularly in the latter half of the century, many intellectuals believed that population growth was not only a problem, but the biggest problem facing humanity - the root cause of many other problems such as poverty, pollution, crime, and war. Many of them labeled population growth a "bomb", a "cancer", and a "plague" upon the earth. However, this rhetoric must be weighed against statistical trends and economic reasoning.

FERTILITY TRENDS

World population reached one billion about 1800. It took just another 125 years for population to double to two billion. At this point, fertility rates in the West were dropping, but the years immediately after World War II brought a surge in the birth rates in the Western world and unprecedented population growth in the developing world. The world fertility rate hit 5 children per woman in the 1950s, as Western medicine reduced infant mortality rates dramatically in the Third World. In 1960, the global population hit three billion. World population growth reached a recorded high of 2.09% a year in 1970, and just 14 years after hitting three billion, the human population topped four billion.

1950-55	5
1975-80	4
1980-85	3.6
1995	3.1
2000	2.8
* UN World Population Prospects	

This unprecedented growth led many population pundits to extrapolate the numbers and proclaim future disaster. A British scientist in the early 1960s calculated that a thousand years hence, "people will be jammed together so tightly that the earth itself will glow orange-red from the heat." The popular press repeated many similar dire warnings. Newsweek magazine in 1962 warned its readers that at current rates of growth, "By the year 6000, the solid mass of humanity would be expanding outward into space at the speed of light." Living through the

Baby Boom, these forecasters saw only calamity ahead. What they failed to notice was that the Baby Boom in both the United States and in the world was coming to an end. Their crude extrapolations ignored changing conditions.

What the population prognosticators completely missed was the "demographic transition" the world went through in the late 20th century. Up until modern times, almost all countries had both high birth rates and high death rates, which were approximately equal. In the late 18th century, Northwestern Europe began a new stage in population dynamics. Improved sanitation, technology, and farming brought death rates down well below birth rates, and populations rose. In the next century, southern and eastern Europe entered this stage as well. At the end of the 19th century, northern Europe began another new population stage, a stage where the birth rate falls to the level of the death rate and approaches the replacement level of 2.1 children per woman. At this stage, population stabilizes. In the 20th century, the entire developed world - the West and Japan - fully reached this stage and went one stage further to birth rates below the replacement level, often significantly below. But something even more remarkable happened. Many developing countries went from the first stage all the way to the third or fourth stage by century's end. As a result, fertility rates in once rapidly growing countries like Brazil, Thailand, and China fell to or below replacement levels.

In western countries, the birth rate fell below the replacement rate 25 years ago and has kept falling. Italy's birth rate, for example, has plummeted to 1.2 children/woman/lifetime. Bulgaria's rate plunged to 1.14, the lowest ever recorded in peacetime. Spain's rate is close to that low. In Western Europe as a whole and in Japan, the fertility rate is down to 1.4-1.5. Population usually continues to grow for a while after birth rates fall below replacement rates, but after a generation or so this population momentum loses force and population begins to rapidly decline. This is most likely what will happen to Western Europe and Japan early in the 21st century.

Over the last three decades birth rates have dropped rapidly almost everywhere in the world. Today, according to the United Nations

ON THE 20th CENTURY cont.

Population Division, about 44% of humanity lives in countries where the fertility rate is below the replacement level, which means the population in these nations will drop soon unless immigration rises to offset the decline.

The birth rate in the developing world has been especially dramatic. It stood at 6.1 children/woman, but by 1995 it had sunk by nearly 50%, to 3.1. As a result, the world's annual population growth rate dropped from 2% in 1965-70 to less than 1.5% in 1990-95.

Official population projections plummeted with the birth rate. In the late 1970s, the U.N. forecasted that world population would peak at over 11 billion in 2050. In 1996, based on new data, the U.N. lowered its forecast to 9 billion.

There were several reasons why fertility rates fell throughout the world. Farms in poor nations use much more human labor. Hence, big families are an advantage for poor farmers since they provide more hands to work the fields. They also provide for parents when they age. In the 20th century, medical advances lowered the infant mortality rate drastically in the Third World, and, after a while, parents learned that they did not have to have as many children to assure that some would survive to help them in old age. At the same time, agricultural yields rose, so fewer farm workers were needed. Workers moved to the industrialized cities, where children were less of an asset. Workers who could build retirement savings or receive retirement benefits also found less need of children. At the same time, with education and economic development, more women worked in paid labor and their wages rose. Their opportunity cost of having children rose. Hence, the incentive to have children fell.

POPULATION AND POVERTY

What if Western Europe was more densely populated than China? There is no need to speculate about the question - Western Europe is already 30% more densely populated than China. This fact underscores an important point - there is no evidence that increased population density lowers per capita income. On average, countries with higher population density have higher standards of living. Africa, the world's most sparsely

populated major continent, also has by far the lowest standard of living. Hong Kong, the most densely populated area on earth, is also one of the wealthiest. Its income has grown faster than almost any country on earth even as its population has swelled with immigrants from "overpopulated" China.

There has been only one time of recorded rapid and prolonged population increase and that has been the latter half of the 20th century. This has also been the only time when the quality of life has improved throughout the world. The per capita income of developing countries has more than doubled since 1948, the advent of their "population crisis."

TABLE 3 POPULATION DENSITY

Country or Area	People / Sq. mi.
Monaco	45,770
HONG KONG	18,808
Singapore	18,480
Taiwan	1,744
Netherlands	1,080
Belgium	.936
Japan	.936
India	.886
Great Britain	.680
Germany	.641
Italy	.536
WESTERN EUROPE	.461
China	.369
France	.252
UNITED STATES	.76
SOUTH AMERICA	.73
AFRICA	.65
Brazil	.47
Russia	.22
Australia	.6
Mongolia	.4
GLOBAL	.104

Source: "The World Factbook 2002" & "The World Factbook 2003", CIA.

FOOD

World food production increased faster than population throughout most of the 20th century. In the last four decades of the century, the Third World countries enjoyed a Green Revolution that raised yields and drastically reduced hunger.

Many Westerners believed that the Third World could not cope with population growth, and

ON THE 20th CENTURY cont.

that its peoples would starve. But the Green Revolution boosted crop harvests everywhere. Developing countries doubled their food production from 1965 - 1988. China and India, the world's most populous countries, both became next exporters of food.

Nutrition improved worldwide. At the close of the millennium, the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization reported that only a third as many people were living on less than 2100 calories per day as had in 1970. Only a tenth as many people were dying of hunger as had a century ago, despite the fact that the world's population had tripled.

There were famines in the 20th century but they had nothing to do with overpopulation; nature was not at fault, governments were. The forced collectivization of agricultural under Communism caused mass starvation in the Russian Ukraine in the 1930s and in China during the early 1960s. Civil war brought the famines in Ethiopia and Somalia that horrified the world in 1984-85. These famines occurred not in densely crowded regions but in some of the most sparsely populated countries on earth. Elsewhere in Africa, continuing hunger stemmed from price controls on farm products to please populations in the African capital cities, not from any inability to grow food. China's case provided a dramatic example of what could be accomplished in impoverished areas by allowing more freedom. When the Communist government allowed farmers to grow food on private plots, food production soared by 30-40% in just six years. The problems in China, Africa, Russia, and India had nothing to do with natural limits, but with the failure to limit governments in these nations.

There were many economic and technological advances that fueled the world's century rising food production and reduced the threat of famine. Increased population density made roads more economical and these roads moved crops to markets more rapidly. They also made food supplies more secure. If a drought plagued one

area, people could buy food from other areas. Improved storage cut food losses and enabled farmers to carry seasonal surpluses over. Fertilizers, pesticides, and better plant breeding and irrigation increased yields and made them more consistent.

The world's agricultural progress has not reached any limit. As Colin Clark, former director of the Agricultural Economic Institute at Oxford University, pointed out, if all the world's farmers raised their productivity to the current highest standards, the world could feed 35.1 billion people on an American diet. This would not require any more land, although there is still plenty of land available. Only about 40% of the world's potential farmland was being used, and farming used less than 10% of the earth's land. So hunger should continue to decline in the 21st century.

MAN'S USE OF LAND AND RESOURCES

Overall, the trend for the past century was clear. The increasing number of people caused no shortages or starvation; food and resources become less scarce. The reason: people are born with hands and minds as well as mouths. Although the natural state of man is poverty, this is not an immutable condition. Western nations have been producing more than they consume for centuries now. More and more nations in other parts of the world joined this trend in the 20th century. Because more people are producing far more than subsistence level, people are eating better, living in better housing, and enjoying more amenities. Although war and political control frequently reversed, or stalled progress, population growth did not.

Not only did population growth not endanger progress, there are several reasons to believe that it speeded progress. One benefit of population growth is the growth of knowledge. More people bring more ideas. From these ideas, knowledge grows and knowledge often has a multiplier effect because it can spread cheaply or quickly. New ideas that improve productivity can

If you wish to comment on articles or 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 e-mail address or 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.

ON THE 20th CENTURY cont.

be copied and become new standards of excellence for whole industries. Increased trade and communication in the 20th century made it more likely for ideas to spread rapidly in this way.

It may also be true that a small group of talented people produce the ideas that generate most of the major improvements for the rest of mankind. If so, population growth increases the chances that geniuses like Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell, and Henry Ford will arise. Their work then produces dramatic progress for millions if not billions of others.

Increased population also increases specialization and division of labor, making industry and agriculture more productive. The bigger the market, the greater the division of labor. This effect is also strengthened by improved transportation.

Greater populations also create economies of scale. What was uneconomical for a smaller population may become practical for a larger population. Concentrations of people have made roads, railroads, telecommunication networks, and shipping more economical because their cost can be spread over more people.

POLLUTION

While some people accepted the clear evidence that production could outpace population, they thought population growth would devastate the environment. So Westerners became more concerned about pollution. Surely this was one area in which the population alarmists were right, wasn't it? No. While the 20th century produced some new pollution problems, it eliminated many old ones. Just as many nations were going through a demographic transition that progressed to lower fertility rates, many were also going through an industrial transition that led to more efficient production and less pollution.

Economic growth in the 20th century fostered a greater appeal for nature's benefits. Since poorer people find clean air and landscapes a luxury, as incomes rose, the desire for environmental amenities increased. Research by political-economist Aaron Wildavsky showed that while the early stages of economic development tend to generate higher levels of emissions, levels decline once per capita GNP passes \$4,000. Since the world is becoming richer, pollution has been

decreasing significantly in the developed countries and promises to do the same in the developing countries in the new century.

Progress in the 19th and 20th centuries brought cleaner drinking water, better sewage disposal, improved food handling, and personal hygiene. These advances in sanitation and public health reduced diseases such as cholera, typhoid, typhus, dysentery, and diarrhea major killers of children and adults. Unclean food and water no longer shortened life. The improvement has been so great that much of the world has forgotten about these pollution problems. Indeed these great achievements have changed the environmental focus in developed countries to relatively minor problems like pesticides and carcinogens.

Another important check on pollution was the increasing efficiency of industry. Pollution is waste for manufacturers; it is output that cannot be sold. As technology advanced, it became profitable for manufacturers to recover more of this waste. Coupled with the tendency for economic advancement to shift production from smokestack industries to lighter industries, this was a powerful force for change. This is a prime reason why smoke levels in London have been declining uniformly since the 1920s.

Like nutrition and natural resources, pollution actually had little to do with population levels. This could be seen by the fact that the most densely populated countries had the cleanest environments. The real problem was the incentives and deterrents to pollution. Pollution was worst in those countries where property rights were nonexistent or poorly defined. Hence, the Eastern bloc nations, before the collapse of the Iron Curtain, were much more wasteful in producing and created much more pollution than the Western nations. Similarly, in the Third World, many areas were commons, where resources were first come, first served, encouraging waste and pollution.

SPECIES LOSS

Many people believed that man's growing numbers in the 20th century were forcing animals from their habitats, causing extinction. But all the alarming claims about species loss hid a dirty secret: we don't know how many species there

ON THE 20th CENTURY cont.

are and we have no idea how many or how few are being lost. Scientists vary wildly in their estimates of how many species exist. Some believe there are 5 million while others think there are as many as 100 million. However, only one million species have been catalogued. Even if biologists were able to completely canvass the earth, though, they would still not agree on the number of species because they cannot agree on the classification of species. This uncertainty plagues estimates of extinction.

Opinions on how much extinction occurs vary even more wildly than species counts do. They are not based on observation, they are based on formulas that assume that when trees are removed or land is paved, many species disappear. When the assumptions change, the estimates change enormously. Harvard biologist E.O. Wilson, a pessimist on global species extinction, stated in 1991 that the world was losing 100,000 species a year. But the next year, his book *The Diversity of Life* revised that figure to 27,000. Other conjectures range from 100 species lost a day to one lost per year. The only proven observed rate is this lower figure - one species a year. Although man may be causing extinctions of unknown species, this is simply not clear. There is no understanding of how many species move in or out when man moves in. But some data contradicts the received wisdom on the subject. The Brazilian Society of Zoology could find no extinctions of plants or animals when that country's Atlantic rainforest was cleared in the 19th century. When Puerto Rico lost most of its forest in the first part of the 20th century, the number of bird species increased because new species migrated in. So the loss of wilderness or forestry area cannot be assumed to cause extinction. In sum, species loss in the 20th century was probably grossly exaggerated.

POPULATION IN THE 21st CENTURY

According to conservative estimates, the world's population will peak at 9 - 9.5 billion people in 2050 and then begin to decline. The mean global age will rise from about 25 today to about 42 by mid-century. Population will shift geographically. The U.N. projects that in the next 50 years Europe's overall population will drop from 725 million to 625 million, and Japan's from 125 million to 105 million. Africa's current 12% share of

the planet's population will double, South Asia's and Latin America's will remain about the same, and East Asia's will decline.

TABLE 4 POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR THE 21st CENTURY

2050 (Medium Projection)	9.4
(* based on 2.1 children/woman fertility rate)	
2050 (Low-Medium Projection)	8.5
(* based on 1.85 children/woman fertility rate, half the difference between low & medium)	
2050 (Low Projection)	7.7
(* based on 1.6 children/woman fertility rate, the current rate in the developed world) *	

Source: Estimates from the United Nations, the U.S. Bureau of the Census, and the University of Pennsylvania Population Center.

TABLE 5 PERCENTAGE OF WORLD'S POPULATION LIVING IN FIRST WORLD COUNTRIES (Europe, North America, Japan)

1950	32%
2000	20%
2050	(estim.) 12%

FALSE PREDICTIONS

The prophets of overpopulation were repeatedly wrong during the 20th century. Whether they were talking about food, energy, raw materials, or pollution, they consistently predicted disaster and worsening conditions that never materialized. It is informative to review some of these warnings.

A major bestseller by a renowned biologist in 1969-1970 stated flatly, "The battle to feed all of humanity is over. In the 1970s the world will undergo famines - hundreds of millions of people are going to starve to death." Of course, nothing of the sort happened. Worldwide food prices continued their long decline.

The same author had other stark predictions for the 1970s and 1980s: "the end of the ocean", falling agricultural yields, smog disasters for New York and Los Angeles ("nearly 200,000 corpses"), the "birth of the Midwestern desert"; and "both

ON THE 20th CENTURY cont.

worldwide plague and thermonuclear war are made more probable as population growth continues". None of these disasters came close to happening yet this biologist met little censure; instead he received a Macarthur Genius Award in 1990!

The natural resource forecasts of the doomsayers were not any better. In 1865 the famous economist Stanley Jevons predicted England would exhaust her coal soon. In 1877 U.S. Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz said that the nation would run out of timber at the turn of the century. From 1866 - 1975, ten U.S. government reports predicted imminent oil shortages, including the 1926 Federal Oil Conservation Board forecast that foresaw that the supply of oil would run out in 1933. In 1972, the influential Club of Rome's report *The Limits to Growth* predicted that the world would run out of gold by 1981, mercury by 1985, tin by 1987, zinc by 1990, petroleum by 1992, and copper, lead, and natural gas by 1993. Not only did the world not run out of any of these goods, but their prices continued to drop.

Despite their failed forecasts, the neo-Malthusians did not lose face. "Concerned citizens" continued to honor them and grant them moral deference. Some of the seers claimed that their warnings had forestalled or put off disaster. But this was untenable, since many of their predictions failed almost as soon as they were made. Meanwhile those economists and demographers who exposed their errors were denounced as blind and "short-sighted", as if the statistical evidence of decades and even centuries did not matter. Irony abounded in this field.

WHY?

Why was 20th century man so convinced that population growth posed such a problem? Most likely, it was because of powerful images and metaphors and the tendency to be intimidated by large numbers. Pictures of crowds, particularly crowds of scrawny or emaciated African, Indian, and Chinese peasants, scared many Westerners into believing these people were multiplying like rabbits and running out of room. But few people stopped to seriously explore why these people were suffering. They were not poor or starving because humanity had reached "the limits to

growth"; they were impoverished because they were not allowed to use their talents to produce. Where the barriers were removed, the problems of malnutrition and poverty diminished. Many obstacles remain, but these are political, not biological, limits.

Just as the vivid faces of the poor on broadcasts persuaded people that the world was overpopulated, various popular metaphors of the globe confused people about natural resources and pollution. The planet was constantly depicted as a sardine can or as a spaceship with very limited seating capacity. Very few interrupted these jeremiads to discuss the world's staggering resources, and their increasing availability, as shown by declining prices. Few informed people told children how humans were able to find new resources and better substitutes for old materials. While one part of the news would report new technological advances, the other would, almost oblivious to progress, report ominous warnings about coming disasters if man didn't stop runaway growth in population and production. The entire topic of population was discussed in schools and the media as if economics and economic evidence didn't exist.

The simple mention of billions of people was enough to scare many Western citizens. Few of them asked how one could tell if 6 billion was too many or too few people. Many people in the developed world tended to see the Third World as simply an undifferentiated mass of outstretched arms. They scarcely seemed to notice that the Third World was changing, that even as it remained poorer than the West, its standard of living was increasing, albeit at different rates in different countries. They assumed that poor nations would always remain poor. If a country like Hong Kong, Taiwan, or Chile escaped poverty, they seemed to forget that it had once been poor. Such misperceptions plagued the population question.

The idea that population growth would cause overpopulation was a crude and primitive idea that dominated later 20th century thought. But the population bomb never went off because the population bomb never existed. It was amazing that in an age of technology and increasing wealth, people could believe that humanity could not feed or maintain itself. Quite simply, it

ON THE 20th CENTURY cont.

was and continues to be one of the great intellectual blunders of our time. As the new millennium arrived, mankind was not running out of room or of food; it was not exhausting or poisoning the earth; and it was not destroying the wild kingdom. Both man's material condition and the world's were improving, as they had for much of the 20th century.

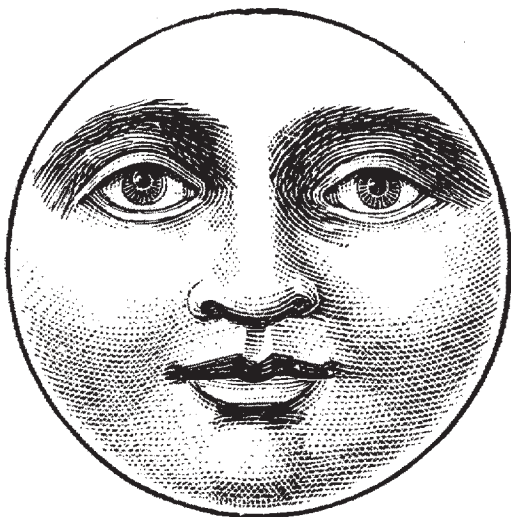
If you wish to comment on articles or submit material, please write or e-mail Jim Mizera at

PMB #181, 7365 Main St., Stratford, CT. 06614-1300, Jmizera@hotmail.com. E-mail submissions are preferred. Please include your name, address, and e-mail address or 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.

PUZZLES & QUESTIONS

(Answers may be in next month's Chronicle.)

1. Estimate the probability of throwing at least one double six when you throw a pair of dice 25 times.
2. Estimate the average income of accountants, butchers, carpenters, dentists, engineers, firemen, and insurance agents. Check how close your estimates were.
3. Describe as well as you can the philosophies of Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato. What were the similarities and differences in their philosophies?
4. What rules of thumb do you use?
5. What were your worst predictions for 2003?

**ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES:**

1. In the Earth's sky, which appears larger, the sun or the moon?

A: Neither. The sun and the moon both appear to be the same size in the earth's sky. The Sun's diameter is about 400 times that of the Moon, but it is nearly 400 times farther away. So their disks appear to be the same size to people on earth. This is why that during a total solar eclipse, the moon appears to cover up the sun.

3. How many miles up do you have to go before you reach outer space?

A: Outer space begins where the atmosphere ends. The atmosphere, however, does not have a boundary; it just gets less and less dense as you go up. Roughly speaking, though, it begins about 50 miles up, although there are still traces of atmospheric gases 1000 miles up. The U.S. Department of Defense says outer space begins at 50 miles up because it awards all pilots who fly above this altitude astronaut wings. At 62 miles up, there is no longer enough atmosphere to provide lift or drag for any aircraft.

POETRY CORNER

AUTUMN WITHIN

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

It is autumn; not without
But within me is the cold.
Youth and spring are all about;
It is I that have grown old.

Birds are darting through the air,
Singing, building without rest;
Life is stirring everywhere,
Save within my lonely breast.

There is silence: the dead leaves
Fall and rustle and are still;
Beats no flail upon the sheaves,
Comes no murmur from the mill.

FALL, LEAVES, FALL

by Emily Jane Brontë (1818-1848)

Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;
Lengthen night and shorten day;
Every leaf speaks bliss to me
Fluttering from the autumn tree.

I shall smile when wreaths of snow
Blossom where the rose should grow;
I shall sing when night's decay
Ushers in a drearier day.

Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;
Lengthen night and shorten day;
Every leaf speaks bliss to me
Fluttering from the autumn tree.

I shall smile when wreaths of snow
Blossom where the rose should grow;
I shall sing when night's decay
Ushers in a drearier day.

TU FU (713-770)

DAWN OVER THE MOUNTAINS

The city is silent,
Sound drains away,
Buildings vanish in the light of dawn,
Cold sunlight comes on the highest peak,
The thick dust of night
Clings to the hills,
The earth opens,
The riverboats are vague,
The still sky --
The sound of falling leaves.
A huge doe comes to the garden gate,
Lost from the herd,
Seeking its fellows.

CLEAR EVENING AFTER RAIN

The sun sinks towards the horizon.
The light clouds are blown away.
A rainbow shines on the river.
The last raindrops spatter the rocks.
Cranes and herons soar in the sky.
Fat bears feed along the banks.
I wait here for the west wind
And enjoy the crescent moon
Shining through misty bamboos.

SNOWSTORM

Tumult, weeping, many new ghosts.
Heartbroken, aging, alone, I sing
To myself. Ragged mist settles
In the spreading dusk. Snow skurries
In the coiling wind. The wineglass
Is spilled. The bottle is empty.
The fire has gone out in the stove.
Everywhere men speak in whispers.
I brood on the uselessness of letters.

NOTED AND QUOTED

Just because you have a Self doesn't mean you should express it.

- Amy Alkon, *advice columnist*

You can't teach people to be lazy... Either they have it, or they don't.

- Dagwood Bumstead

It takes courage to lead a life. Any life.

- Erica Jong, (1942 -), *author*

The world is a stage, but the play is badly cast.

- Oscar Wilde (1856 - 1900), *Irish author*

Destiny is no matter of chance. It is a matter of choice: it is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved.

- William Jennings Bryan, (1860 - 1925)

The years between fifty and seventy are the hardest. You are always being asked to do things, and yet you are not decrepit enough to turn them down. - T. S. Eliot, (1888 - 1965)

It is one thing to praise discipline, and another to submit to it. - Miguel de Cervantes, (1547 - 1616)

I don't believe that life is supposed to make you feel good, or to make you feel miserable either. Life is just supposed to make you feel.

- Gloria Naylor, (1950 -), *U.S. novelist*

It was one of those perfect English autumnal days which occur more frequently in memory than in life. - P.D. James, (1920 -), *British mystery novelist*

Hope is a risk that must be run.

- Georges Bernanos, (1888 - 1948), *French novelist*

Living involves tearing up one rough draft after another. - Anonymous

Human errors can only be avoided if one can avoid the use of humans.

- Morten Christian Holmgren

Know your limits... but never stop trying to exceed them. - Anonymous

The measure of success is not whether you have a tough problem, but whether it's the same problem you had last year.

- John Foster Dulles, (1888 - 1959), *diplomat, Sec. State*

When you become famous, your faults become your style. - Anonymous

If at first you don't succeed, redefine success.

- Phil Ross

Nature is not a temple, but a workshop, and man's the workman in it.

- Ivan Turgenev, (1818-1883), *Russian writer, Fathers and Sons, 1862*

Automatic simply means that you can't repair it yourself. - Frank Capra, (1897 - 1991), *director*

THE READING EDGE ^ WHAT'S YOUR READING SPEED?

Do you know what your reading speed is? There is an online test that can give you a quick estimate. The Reading Edge, a Wallingford, CT company, has a test at their website www.the-reading-edge.com. The tests take only a minute and calculate your reading speed instantly. For a more comprehensive test, the company a free demo that you can download that will test not only your speed but also your comprehension. The software can be set for different grade levels to test children as well as adults.

The company reports that the average person reads at a speed of between 200-300 words a minute but that people who enjoy reading can read more than 400 words per minute, and that some people can even read well at more than 800 words a minute.

The Reading Edge also offers books, tapes, tele-classes, and personal lessons to help people read faster and more efficiently. For more information, visit their website at www.the-reading-edge.com or contact them at info@the-reading-edge.com

**GOOD WINE CHEAP
(AND GOOD FOOD TO GO WITH IT)**

By John Grover

Well folks, this column is for the empty nesters and the otherwise socially challenged (We are the former and a bit of the latter.) I would like to introduce you to a wonderful wine from South Africa and to an easy and sensible approach to cooking. I will guarantee you that nothing could be easier for those lacking culinary skills.

The December selection is a 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon from Excelsior Estate Winery. operated by the De Wet family since 1859. This wine is a rich, juicy and fruit-filled find. It has a taste of blackberries and plums that dances across the tongue, and its aroma storms the senses. At just \$8 a bottle, it's the best bottle of wine less than \$10 that I have tasted this year.

The recipe for this month is a new take on an old style of cooking. The Boss went out and purchased a small 1«-quart crockpot so we could make a serving just enough for two aging Baby Boomers. Herewith is a classic comfort food, Swiss Steak (from the recipes in the Rival Owner's Guide for the Crock-Pot Slow Cooker).

SWISS STEAK

INGREDIENTS: 1/2 lb. round, cubed or Swiss steak; 1 medium onion, sliced; 1 can (8 oz.) tomato sauce; salt and ground pepper to taste.

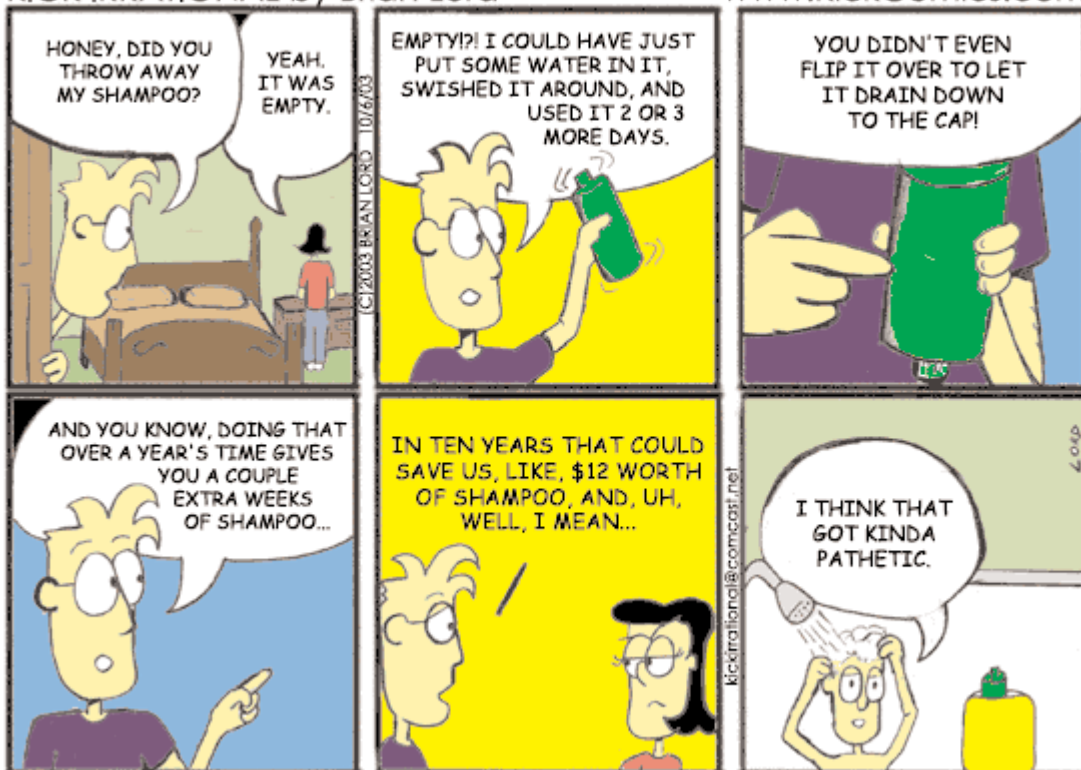
INSTRUCTIONS: Cut round steak in half; season with salt and pepper. Place onion slices in bottom of crockpot. Place meat on top of onion. Pour tomato sauce over all. Cover and cook 8 to 10 hours (6 to 7 hours if the steak has been cubed or Swiss'd - i.e., tenderized by various forms of physical violence.) This produces a flavorful dish that serves 2 persons.

I hope that you will contact me with your comments and favorite wines at jgrover@berk.com. I will be happy to share them with the broader Mensa group.

John Grover is a member of Mensa of Northeastern New York. He lives with his wife Sharon in the Hudson Valley of New York.

KICK IRRATIONAL by Brian Lord

www.KickComics.com



Brian Lord is a cartoonist and member of Middle Tennessee Mensa (Nashville area). His cartoon Kick Irrational is read weekly by people in 192 cities, 46 states and 9 countries via the Internet. You can see the Kick Irrational comics page at www.kickirrational.com

CHAPTER NOTES

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BETHEL CINEMA FILM GROUP The Bethel Cinema is an independent art house movie theater in the town of Bethel, CT, just outside Danbury The Cinema will be running a Freudian Flicks psychological-film discussion group from now until May or June Meetings are held on the second Saturday of the month at 11:00 am (Bethel Cinema 778-2100) If you are interested in participating in a Mensa group to see films in this series or any of the films on the theater's regular schedule, please contact Nancy O'Neil at Nancyoneil@aol.com.

If you would like to organize or sponsor a Mensa event, please contact Jim Mizera at Jmizera@hotmail.com The event can be posted in the Chronicle and announced at monthly dinners It can also be listed in the newsletter of the Connecticut and Western Massachusetts Mensa chapter, the Media, if enough lead-time is available.

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