

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.

AMERICAN MENSA LTD. NEEDS YOUR HELP to correct a technical inconsistency in its Certificate of Incorporation. The Board of Directors of AML wants to change the Articles of Incorporation to permit elections and referenda to be conducted by mail. In order to do so, they need your proxy vote. So please take time **NOW** to give your proxy by visiting <http://proxy.us.mensa.org>.

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 MAY

Saturday, May 1, 8:00

Theater Event: The Beauty Queen of Leenane

performed by Theatreworks, 5 Brookside Ave., New Milford (www.theatreworks.usa). A darkly comic tale set in the Irish town of Connemara. Tickets are \$15. For info or reservations, please call Jim Mizera at (203) 522-1959 or e-mail jmizera@hotmail.com. To ensure seats, call a week early.

Friday, May 14, 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, May 15, 7:00

Monthly Dinner

John's Best Restaurant, 85 New Canaan Ave. (Rte. 123, just off Rte. 7), NORWALK, 06850, (203) 847-7414. DIRECTIONS from I-95: Merge onto US-7 N via exit number 15 toward NORWALK/DANBURY. Take the CT-123/ NEW CANAAN AVENUE exit - #2. Turn RIGHT onto CT-123/ NEW CANAAN AVE. (0.30 miles). Turn RIGHT onto CT-123/ NEW CANAAN AVE. (0.09 mi). John's is on the left after Wendy's and the bank. FROM DANBURY: Take US-7 / CT-33/ DANBURY RD down to Norwalk. Turn RIGHT onto GRIST MILL RD/ US-7. Continue to follow GRIST MILL RD. 0.16 miles Turn LEFT onto the US-7 S. highway and go 1.68 miles to Exit 2. Turn RIGHT onto CT-123/New Canaan Ave and follow to John's Best. Dress is casual. Please contact Nancy O'Neil, Nancyoneil@aol.com, 203-791-1668, for information and reservations.

Saturday, May 22, 8:00.

THEATRE EVENT: The Complete Works of W Shakespeare (Abridged),

performed by the Branford Renaissance Theater Company Actor's Ensemble at Fellowship Hall, 45 Tabor Drive, Branford, CT www.actorsensemble.com. A hilarious, non-stop comedy extravaganza that romps through all of Shakespeare's plays in two hours. Tickets are \$12.00. Contact Jim Mizera at (203) 522-1959, jmizera@hotmail.com, for info or reservations.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR JUNE

Friday, June 11, 7:00

Southern CT and CT/Western Mass. Joint Dinner

See above listing for details.

Saturday, June 19, 7:00

Monthly Dinner Place to be announced.

Saturday, June 26, 7:30.

Theater Event: Shakespeare's A Winter's Tale

performed by Shakespeare on the Sound (www.shakespeareonthesound.org), Pinkney Park, Route 136, Rowayton (Norwalk), CT. This is an outdoor show so arrive early and bring your chair. Suggested DONATION is \$15. 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"

Admitted in CT, NY & OR

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and its focus is chamber music.

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

MAY

5 Wednesday 6:30 pm

¡Come Celebrate Cinco de Mayo!

There will be room for a total of ten Mensans and guests at Puerto Vallarta (a great, reasonably-priced Mexican restaurant in Middletown, CT). To join the dinner celebration, please contact Ernest Adams by email at CTMnsn@Comcast.Net, (860) 445-1786 (Groton, CT), or (860) 543-2334 (Hartford, CT; cell phone). Directions will be cheerfully provided (the Middletown location is not yet on the Web!).

6, 13, 20, 27 Thursday 7:00 pm

Scrabble (WE) at Emmanuel Synagogue, 160 Molegan Drive, West Hartford. Ellen Leonard, (860) 667-1966 (Please call first to make sure this is happening today).

7 Friday 5:30-8:00 pm

Happy Hour (ME, 1st Friday)

at the Ramada Inn, Meriden. Suspended temporarily as the Ramada undergoes renovation. Alternative venue to be announced via email and the website when one is obtained.

8 Saturday 10 am - 2 pm

TV SIG Join us at the cable access station in Bolton for more video making fun. If you can't stay the whole day, come for while you can and see what it's all about. Our group will be learning the basics of how to work with the equipment provided at the studio, and how we will go about producing what will become the program(s) we want to do in future, once we have people qualified to work the equipment and develop their creative ideas. The class is free and open to anyone who's curious. CVC's phone number is: 860-645-1454. Their web page is: <http://www.ctcvc.org/home.htm> They are located at: 105 Notch Road, Bolton, CT 06043 For more details, call Bob Smith 860-872-3106 or BoboRobDOS@snet.net

15 Saturday 11:00 am;

rain date 5/22, same time.

TAKE A HIKE, at Wadsworth Falls State Park.

From the junction of CT 66 and CT 157 in Middletown, take CT 157 southwest and follow the signs. You will reach the park entrance on your left in 1.6 miles; park at first available spot. Walk 3 miles, moderate pace (includes view of the falls), 200' total vertical rise, 2 1/2 to 3 hours. Bring water, lunch or snack. Contact Nicole Michaud for info: leave a message at (860) 434-7329 or email nirimi@snet.net, subject "hike."

21 Friday 6:00 pm-8:00 pm or so

Diner Dinner (ME, 3rd Friday)

at Olympia Diner, Rte 5, Newington, just north of the Berlin town line and North East Utilities. Menu ranges from toasted cheese sandwich to steak and fish dinners. Basic bar menu available, no happy hour prices, but the food is good and very reasonable. Please contact Nicole Michaud at (860) 434-7329 or email nirimi@snet.net, Subject: Diner Dinner

22 Saturday 12 Noon

Carnivale Fest! Part I

Have you been hankering to see (or re-see) one of the most intriguing metaphysical TV series ever shown? HBO's powerful Carnivale series from last year is haunting, amazingly well crafted cinematically, and completely addictive. The first four of 12 episodes from the first season will be screened today at my place, rain or shine, courtesy of my TiVo. Join me for some of the weirdest but spiritually most engaging TV ever, a Gnostic mélange reminiscent of Bradbury's *Something Wicked This Way Comes*, Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, and Serling's *Twilight Zone*, with a *Twin Peaks*-y twang, and an impressive audiovisual lushness. Warning: A high tolerance for narrative ambiguity is required (and deliciously well rewarded). RSVP to Gisela Rodriguez 860-872-3106 or Lilith@snet.net so I can plan munchies and absinthe. Adults only, please.

REGIONAL GATHERINGS

POW-OWL CAMP

August 20-22 at Buffalo Gap Camp
(off Rt. 50, west of Winchester, VA)

Only \$165 until May 28th, then \$185 to 7/19,
\$205 to 8/13.

\$50 deposit (non-ref); balance by 7/19

Kids 13-17 @75%, 6-12 @50%, <6 free

Includes pleasant cabin space (private room
extra), tasty meals/snacks from Fri. dinner to Sun.
lunch, and all the fun you can handle!

This delightful new annual event is kinda like a mini-summer camp for Mensans and friends/family of all ages. (Yes, including children by popular demand-there will be a cluster of family cabins.) The place is wonderful and the food is excellent. Planned activities include a variety of RG-like programs, a dance sampler series making use of the fine floor, and traditional camp stuff like swimming and singing/s'mores around the campfire. Cabins will be set aside for games, a book swap, and the children's clubhouse. All we need is YOU! For more info, contact event sponsor Jenny Foster: pinc@xecu.net or 301-371-4312 (email preferred).

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

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.

FROM THE VICE CHAIR

Marghretta McBean

Spring has supposedly sprung, but as I write this in early April, the temperature is hovering at freezing, with wind chills in the twenties. The soil in my garden plot is icy and rock hard; no early tomatoes this year!

Charlottesville Virginia, however, was full of budding trees while I was down there for the AMC meeting March 20th - 22nd. Topics covered included increasing the prior evidence fee to \$30; a motion to increase dues to \$52 beginning in 2005 was postponed as one to increase the local group subsidy to \$8.64/member; and what has drawn a great deal of attention, that SIGs (Special Interest Groups) be made a membership benefit (for reasons too numerous to mention here, I abstained from the vote). This action, which came at the recommendation of the SIGs Committee following the Risk Management Report, has generated enormous discussion among many members. Details are to be presented at a later date.

Also, following the recommendation of the AAA (American Arbitration Association) Task Force, of which I am a member (I was an arbitrator in a past life), a choice of arbitration for finding of fact will be offered to someone against whom charges have been leveled.

April 2nd - 4th found me up in Manchester Connecticut where Connecticut & Western Massachusetts Mensa hosted a wonderful Region 1 Leadership Development Workshop. Representatives from New Hampshire/Maine, Boston, Northeastern New York, Vermont, Mid-Hudson, Greater New York and of course, C&WM Mensa convened for a weekend of workshops covering topics ranging from Financial Basics to Getting PR for Mensa to Dealing with Problem Members. Stellar presenters included our president Dr. Jean Becker, Cookie Bakke the Bulletin associate editor, and Catherine Barney, Mensa's PR manager. Dr. Deborah Ruf, the national Gifted Children Program Coordinator, led a Gifted Children track in which several children and their parents participated. A HUGE tip o' the hat goes to C&WM Mensa for the excellent job they did in planning and hosting!

My end of the fiscal year allocations to the groups who expressed an interest were:

- Boston Mensa - \$100 (RG supplies: \$50 for a crockpot + \$50 for game containers),
- Central New York Mensa - \$125 (newsletter production: copy of Adobe Acrobat Professional),
- Connecticut & Western Massachusetts Mensa - \$100 (promotional video and cable TV show),
- Greater New York Mensa - \$106.37 (Peggy Deane Memorial Scholarship Fund),
- Mid-Hudson Mensa - \$75 (non-specified),
- Mensa of Northeastern New York - \$100 (items from Mensa Boutique for speakers, Anniversary Picnic etc.),
- New Hampshire Mensa - \$95 (\$20 reimbursement for postage and copying costs + \$75 non-specified)

Eggs are a symbol of spring and renewal. Here they are in a classic Italian soup.

STRACCIATELLE ("RAGS") ALLA ROMANA

6 cups broth
2 cups chopped fresh spinach
2 eggs
3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
grated rind of 1 lemon
salt and pepper to taste
juice of 1 / 2 lemon (about 1 Tbl.)

- 1) Bring broth to a slow boil and add spinach.
- 2) In a bowl, thoroughly blend eggs, cheese, lemon rind, salt and pepper.
- 3) Lower heat under broth and as soon as it stops boiling add egg mixture.
- 4) Turn up heat and stir.
- 5) Add lemon juice and serve with additional grated Parmesan cheese.

Marghretta

"The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function."

- F. Scott Fitzgerald

ON THE 20TH CENTURY THE AUTOMOBILE

No discussion of the 20th century would be complete without talking about one of its greatest innovations, the automobile. In 1900, there were only about 8,000 cars registered in the United States, compared to about 25 million horses. Today there are an estimated 130 million passenger cars and another 40 million trucks and other vehicles in the United States, and there are more than a half billion in the world.

Many versions of automobiles were invented before the 20th century. Nicolas Joseph Cugnot of France invented the first self-powered road vehicle in 1769, but Cugnot's auto was actually a steam-powered tricycle. Most automobiles created in the next century were also steam-powered, making them dangerous and malodorous. In the late 1800's, some inventors came up with electric cars that were cleaner than the steam vehicles, but they used bulky batteries and had a limited range. From 1870 to 1900, the greatest automotive progress took place in Austria and Prussia, where engineers Siegfried Marcus, Nikolaus Otto, Gottlieb Daimler, Karl Benz, and Wilhelm Maybach contributed improvements that produced the internal combustion engine, the first motorcycle, the four-cylinder engine, and the first modern gasoline-powered vehicles.

By 1900, there were 50 automobile-manufacturing companies in the U.S. but the automobile was not only a luxury but also a rarity. The man who made the automotive industry into a mass production industry was Henry Ford, who improved on the methods of Ransom Olds. In the early years of the century, cars were hand made and cost over \$1,500, about two- and-one-half times the average annual wage. The first Model T's took about a day and a half to build. But when Ford introduced the conveyor belt in 1908, production leaped. Ford's company produced 10,000 cars in 1909, and 78,000 in 1912. In 1914, he opened the world's auto assembly line, and turned out an astonishing 472,000 cars, or approximately one car every 93 minutes. Ford's mass production methods enabled him to cut the cost of the car from \$850 in 1906 to \$400 in 1916, and down to \$290 by 1924. The Model T was the top-selling car in the world every year from 1909 - 1927, and Ford sold over 15 million

cars during that span, about half the car sales in the U.S. Henry Ford put America and the world on wheels.

Early cars did not offer much comfort, much protection, or much variety. But a steady stream of innovations changed this. With the invention of the self-starter in 1911 by Charles Kettering, drivers no longer had to hand-crank their cars. By 1927, synchronized transmission for gear shifting, and improved carburetors, tires, shock absorbers, hydraulic brakes, head lamps, windshield wipers, and heating systems made the automobile much more than simply a horseless carriage.

One innovation that perhaps sparked more sales than any other was not technical but financial. In 1911 the Studebaker Company began offering cars for sale on the installment plan. Other companies eventually followed, and by 1921, half the cars in America were bought on installment. Thanks to mass production and financing, U.S. car sales topped 4.5 million by 1929, accounting for about 8% of all retail sales in the country.

To see how radically the automobile changed life, consider that at the beginning of the 20th century, the average American traveled less than 2,000 miles in his lifetime, mostly on foot. By century's end, the average American drove 12,000 miles a year in his car. While the railroad had done much to transform the landscape of America and Europe in the 19th century, the rural areas of the industrial world were still isolated. Most people in these areas had little contact with people outside their town. If they were lucky, a train might pass through once a day. So farmers found the automobile a god-send. By 1929, the United States' 6.5 million farms had more than five million autos and trucks. The auto also benefited city dwellers, enabling factory workers to live in more spacious quarters away from their workplaces in the crowded inner city. The automobile for the first time put personal mobility within the reach of every man.

The car expanded people's employment and shopping choices. As people obtained cars, they increased the pool of companies they could work for. Similarly, employers could choose from a larger pool of employees. The result was a bet-

ter matching of workers to jobs. With the automobile, consumers could also go beyond the corner market to shop and sellers thus had a larger market to serve. Supermarkets became economical to build and they offered shoppers greater variety at lower prices. Shopping malls and giant warehouse stores would ultimately follow.

The Depression and World War II kept car sales almost flat worldwide in the 1930s and 1940s, but the automobile became more popular than ever in the 1950s. In 1950, there were about 70 million cars worldwide. But in the next decade, the number of automobiles in the U.S. almost doubled, and elsewhere autos multiplied faster. The number of American men with a driving license increased 37% from 1950-1959, but the number of women drivers tripled. The two-car family became commonplace. The U.S. highway system went up and Americans drove their cars to visit friends and relatives in different states, theme parks and campgrounds, and historic sites and natural wonders all over the country.

TABLE 2
WORLD AUTOMOBILE PRODUCTION,
1950-2000

<u>Year Production</u>	<u>(millions)</u>
1950	8.0
1955	11.0
1960	12.8
1965	19.0
1970	22.5
1975	25.0
1980	28.6
1985	32.4
1990	36.3
1995	35.5
2000	41.1

Source: DRI-WEFA, American Automobile Manufacturers Association, and Global Insight.

In the 1950s, the Japanese car industry was also born. Japanese production grew rapidly, going from sixth in the world in 1962 to second by 1967, and passing the United States in 1980 to become the world's greatest auto producer.

Although automobiles are a mature industry in the Western world, sales still continue to grow. The U.S. automotive industry is the largest manufacturing industry in the U.S. and about one-sixth of U.S. businesses are automobile-related. An estimated 60% of U.S. families own two or more cars, up from 20% in 1960. Automobile sales comprise 20 - 25% of retail sales in the U.S. Japan and Western Europe are approaching this level.

In the last third of the 20th century, critics of the automobile multiplied but they did not discourage people from continuing to take advantage of the tremendous convenience and flexibility it offered. Automotive antagonists decried the pollution cars produced but neglected to compare this with the waste and less sanitary conditions produced by the horses and crowded living quarters that prevailed before the auto. They also blamed the automobile for traffic jams, urban sprawl, and the decline of the cities, and championed mass transit. But their criticisms overlooked the fact that it was the most densely populated cities with extensive mass transit systems, such as New York, Chicago, Washington, London, Paris, and Rome that had the worst traffic congestion. What they called "urban sprawl" was merely a pejorative phrase for "decentralization", a universal desire of people to try and obtain more land and space for themselves, a trend which barely changed the amount of open space. The movement to the suburbs predated the automobile and was global, occurring in areas in Europe and Japan where urban conditions differed. Even with high taxes on gasoline, higher population densities, and more rails, Western Europe has seen growth in the number of cars per-capita that is three times as fast as in the U.S. Mass transit, despite enormous subsidies taken from gasoline taxes, could not meet complex commuting patterns the way the automobile did.

At the end of the century, people in the developed world owned over 80% of the world's automobiles, but this is sure to change in the 21st century. There is about 1 car for every 12 people in the world, so there is still a huge untapped potential for cars. The Chinese now buy 2 million vehicles a year, but China is poised to mass-produce cars, bringing wheels to the greatest untouched market. Perhaps by 2050, the car will become truly universal.

WORD ORIGINS

MANGLED WORDS

Many words entered the English language with their spelling, pronunciation, or meaning corrupted from the names of places or from foreign phrases. Here is a list of some of these mangled words.

Love in tennis - this term comes from the French "l'oeuf", meaning egg. Tennis first gained popularity in France and, since the zero looks like an egg, the French used "l'oeuf" to indicate a score of zero. But when the English adopted tennis, they mispronounced it as the simpler "love", and English and American tennis players have used that term ever since.

Bedlam - St. Mary of Bethlehem's Hospital was an insane asylum in 16th-century London. Its name became slurred into "bedlam", a word for chaos.

Brummagem - this word, which means a cheap, tacky, poorly made item, is a corruption of the name "Birmingham", the English city that produced many such items.

Curfew - In the Middle Ages, French towns rang a bell in the evening to signal people to bank the hearths and prepare for sleep. The call was to "cover fire" - "couvre feu", which became "curfew" in English.

Denim and jeans - both of these American words come from the names of European places. Denim comes from the French phrase "serge de Nîmes", or serge (a fabric) from Nîmes, a town in southern France. "Jeans" is a shortened form of "Jannes", the old French word for Genoa, the Italian city. The French bought "Jannes fustian", a type of twilled cotton cloth from Genoa.

Tawdry - like "brummagem", this word denotes cheapness and tackiness. Like that word, it is a corruption of a proper name, "Saint Audrey." In medieval times, Saint Audrey's Fair was a fair at which peasants frequently purchased cheap and gaudy lace collars. "St. Audrey" became synonymous with such goods, and the slurred phrase became the word "tawdry."



POETRY CORNER

STRAW IN THE STREET

Amy Levy, (1861 - 1889)

STRAW in the street where I pass to-day
 Dulls the sound of the wheels and feet.
 'Tis for a failing life, they lay
 Straw in the street.

Here, where the pulses of London beat,
 Someone strives with the presence, grey;
 Ah, is it victory or defeat?

The hurrying people go their way,
 Pause and jostle and pass and greet;
 For life, for death, are they treading, say,
 Straw in the street?

THE LAND OF NOD (1885)

By Robert Louis Stevenson, (1850 - 1894)

FROM breakfast on through all the day
 At home among my friends I stay,
 But every night I go abroad
 Afar into the land of Nod.

All by myself I have to go,
 With none to tell me what to do ---
 All alone beside the streams
 And up the mountain-sides of dreams.

The strangest things are there for me,
 Both things to eat and things to see,
 And many frightening sights abroad
 Till morning in the land of Nod.

Try as I like to find the way,
 I never can get back by day,
 Nor can remember plain and clear
 The curious music that I hear.

JOSEPH SEAMON COTTER, JR., (1895 - 1919)

RAIN MUSIC (1918)

from Second April, publ. 1921

On the dusty earth-drum
 Beats the falling rain;
 Now a whispered murmur,
 Now a louder strain.

Slender, silvery drumsticks,
 On an ancient drum,
 Beat the mellow music
 Bidding life to come.

Chords of earth awakened,
 Notes of greening spring,
 Rise and fall triumphant
 Over every thing.

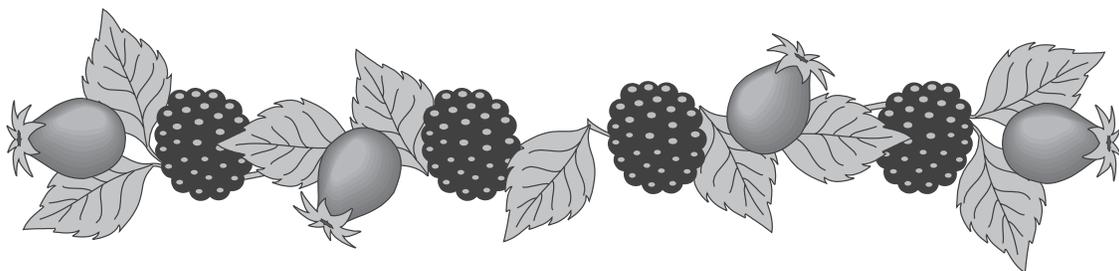
Slender, silvery drumsticks
 Beat the long tattoo ---
 God, the Great Musician,
 Calling life anew.

I'M A-WAITING AND A-WATCHING

I'M a-waiting and a-watching for the day that has no end.
 For the sun that's ever shining, for its rays that ever blend;
 For the light that casts no shadows, for the sky that's ever fair,
 For the rose that's ever blooming as its fragrance fills the air.

I'm a-waiting and a watching for the land that knows no night;
 Where the terrors of the darkness are dispelled in morning's light,
 Where the murmurs of the breezes blend themselves into a song,
 And the silvery carol echoes to the heavens, soft and long.

I'm a-waiting and a-watching for the song that's never o'er,
 For the joy that's never ending on that light-emblazoned shore,
 For the peace that shall enfold me with the heaven's holy breath,
 For the glory that shall greet me, for the life that knows no death.



NOTED AND QUOTED

If you are a fatalist, what can you do about it ?
- *Ann Edwards-Duff*

One moment on the battlefield is worth a thousand years of peace. - *Benito Mussolini, (1883 - 1945)*

Hell is a half-filled auditorium.
- *Robert Frost, (1874 - 1963)*

Fortunes are made by buying low and selling too soon. - *Baron Nathan Mayer Rothschild, (1840 - 1915), British banker*

We cannot tear out a single page of our life, but we can throw the whole book in the fire.
- *George Sand, (1804 - 1876), French novelist*

Life is like a cobweb, not an organization chart.
- *Bernard Berenson, (1865 - 1959), U.S. art historian and critic*

Do something good and someone might imitate it. - *Albert Schweitzer, (1875 - 1965)*

He who has injured thee was either stronger or weaker than thee. If weaker, spare him; if stronger, spare thyself. - *Seneca, (4 or 5 B.C. - 65 A.D)*

Children today are tyrants. They contradict their parents, gobble their food, and tyrannize their teachers. - *Socrates, (470 - 399 B.C), inquiring philosopher*

We are each at the center of the universe. so is everyone else.
- *e.e. cummings, (1894 - 1962), U.S. poet*

The biggest difference between time and space is that you can't reuse time.
- *Merrick Furst, Georgia Tech, Prof. Computer Science*

My own business bores me to death. I prefer other people's. - *Oscar Wilde, (1856 - 1900)*

No enemy is stronger than one who does not know he is beaten. - *J. Middleton Murray, (1926 - 2002), British author and critic*

Truth is, I've always been selling out. The difference is that in the past, I looked like I had integrity because there were no buyers.
- *Lily Tomlin, (1939 -)*

The end may justify the means as long as there is something that justifies the end.
- *Leon Trotsky, (1879 - 1940)*

Between yesterday's regrets and tomorrow's dreams is today's opportunity. - *Anonymous*

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

RUMINATIONS

William Faulkner: Nobel Prize Speech
Stockholm, December 10, 1950

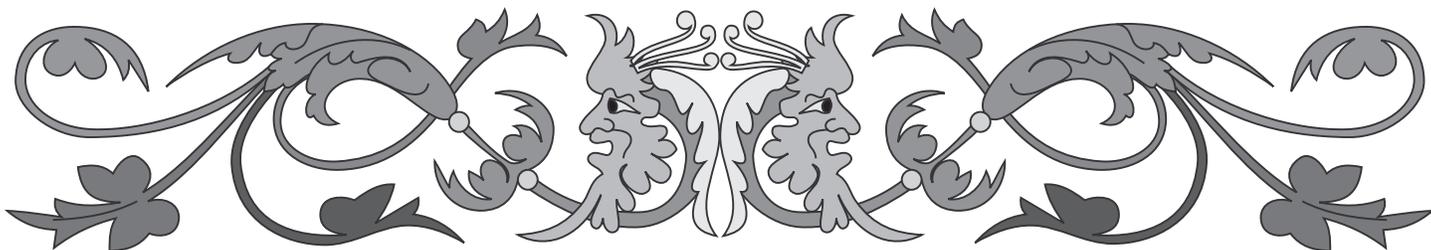
I feel that this award was not made to me as a man, but to my work - a life's work in the agony and sweat of the human spirit, not for glory and least of all for profit, but to create out of the materials of the human spirit something which did not exist before. So this award is only mine in trust. It will not be difficult to find a dedication for the money part of it commensurate with the purpose and significance of its origin. But I would like to do the same with the acclaim too, by using this moment as a pinnacle from which I might be listened to by the young men and women already dedicated to the same anguish and travail, among whom is already that one who will some day stand where I am standing.

Our tragedy today is a general and universal physical fear so long sustained by now that we can even bear it. There are no longer problems of the spirit. There is only one question: When will I be blown up? Because of this, the young man or woman writing today has forgotten the problems of the human heart in conflict with itself which alone can make good writing because only that is worth writing about, worth the agony and the sweat.

He must learn them again. He must teach himself that the basest of all things is to be afraid: and, teaching himself that, forget it forever, leaving no room in his workshop for anything but the

old verities and truths of the heart, the universal truths lacking which any story is ephemeral and doomed - love and honor and pity and pride and compassion and sacrifice. Until he does so, he labors under a curse. He writes not of love but of lust, of defeats in which nobody loses anything of value, of victories without hope and, worst of all, without pity or compassion. His griefs grieve on no universal bones, leaving no scars. He writes not of the heart but of the glands.

Until he learns these things, he will write as though he stood among and watched the end of man. I decline to accept the end of man. It is easy enough to say that man is immortal simply because he will endure: that when the last ding-dong of doom has clanged and faded from the last worthless rock hanging tideless in the last red and dying evening, that even then there will still be one more sound: that of his puny inexhaustible voice, still talking. I refuse to accept this. I believe that man will not merely endure: he will prevail. He is immortal, not because he alone among creatures has an inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance. The poet's, the writer's, duty is to write about these things. It is his privilege to help man endure by lifting his heart, by reminding him of the courage and honor and hope and pride and compassion and pity and sacrifice which have been the glory of his past. The poet's voice need not merely be the record of man, it can be one of the props, the pillars to help him endure and prevail.



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PUZZLES & QUESTIONS

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

1. Which sparks more inventions, necessity or curiosity?
2. What skill is more important to an executive: solving problems or recognizing opportunities?
3. What tools do you have that you seldom use?
4. What is the average speed of a raindrop?

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES:

1. CRYPTOGRAM: (prepared by Rick Magnus.)

Rc bxtotxat Ftdoz zo st hdcs jr, st fpor zftdu
cpx Vtxrjqjvzrt cq Jdvcxabcxjrjcd. Xtrpxd ecpx
bxcne rcuze!

Clues: 1) The solution contains neither H nor L;
and 2) P is the code for U.

A: To preserve Mensa as we know it, we must
amend our Certificate of Incorporation. Re-
turn your proxy today!

2. What percentage of what the average person files is never looked at again?

A: A study by Stanford University found that 87 percent of filed paper is never looked at again. Hence, many organizers recommend that you immediately file incoming paperwork, sorting files by use. If you use papers less than once every 3-4 weeks, consign them to a central archive or to the garbage.

3. Name the counties of Connecticut.

A: Connecticut has eight counties:
Fairfield (pop. 882,567),
New Haven (824,000),
Hartford (857,000),
Litchfield (182,000),
Middlesex (155,000),
New London (259,000),
Tolland (136,000), and
Windham (109,000).

COMMENTARY

by Gerard Brooker

In light of the recent escalating attacks on our military and the brutal murders of our civilians in Iraq, it is clear that the November presidential election will be a hallmark date in American history.

We will vote for a temperate man, perhaps overly analytical, grounded in personal experience in the horrors of war, or for a man who has been quoted as saying, "Academics think and leaders act," as if acting without thinking is a virtue.

Recent weeks in Iraq have made it clear once again that George W. Bush does not have the ability to envision the future, nor the capacity to plan for it. The net effect for Americans is that we have lost moral ground, material wealth, trust in government and, most important of all, the lives of over 630 service members, an aver-

age of 10 per week, since the war in Iraq started some 14 months ago.

We read about these dead men and women as if they were statistics. A presidential directive prohibiting the photographing of caskets that contain the dead coming home to rest acts as an order restraining the human face of horror from appearing. And the real grief of the life-altering injuries of thousands of our wounded men and women has not yet come through to us.

Though it is impossible for the president to attend the funeral of each dead soldier, we know that he does make some personal phone calls to the grieving families. It would be comforting, however, to hear him say publicly once in a while how sorry he is that they, most in the flowering of their lives, are dead, instead of re-iterating

after each tragic loss that we "will stay the course." At some deep places in us we hear this rhetoric as more political self-service than genuine compassion. It is with breaths held tight against the future that we are grateful to the administration that we have not suffered a frontal attack on the mainland since the Twin Towers went down. In most every other respect, though, this nation has lost ground over the past three plus years.

In spite of some 360,000 jobs created in the past quarter, we are still a minus 2,600,00 jobs since Bush took office. It is estimated that over one million workers, not included in these totals, have dropped out of the search in despair. Worsening the situation is another 1.2 million college graduates who will enter the work force in a couple of months.

At the same time, productivity is up, as is wealth. Unfortunately, it is flowing upwards, away from the middle class and the poor who are losing most of the jobs.

The value of our dollar continues to fall overseas, and our trade deficit for January was 43.1 billion dollars, the highest ever. The price of Arab oil is going up and Bush continues to be soft-jawed with the Saudis as gasoline prices rise at the pump.

We have gotten into a fraudulent war that is going badly. It is perhaps the only war that we have ever been in where more soldiers died in its aftermath than in its battles. Our armies are built for speed and power, and they are being confronted now, it is depressing to say, like a heavy-weight being kicked about by a bunch of karate boxers. This administration simply had no idea of what it was getting us into.

Nor does it seem to know how to get us out. The June 30th deadline for handing over sovereignty to Iraqi leadership appears, at best, unrealistic, and, at worst, self-serving to an administration that is always stubborn, yet not always thoughtful.

One need not be prescient to predict that the eventual "Iraqization" of the war will end no better than Vietnamization did thirty-five years ago, in a bloody civil war that resulted in the deaths of thousands of innocent people.

The Iraqi people, as we, are in a profound debt to the American soldiers who have released them from the bondage of Hussein and his demented sons. We have to wonder, though, how parents and loved ones of the dead Americans might feel about a civil war in the wake of their children's ultimate sacrifice. And how will our severely wounded, twenty or thirty years from now when the myth of unilateral dominance, spun so deceptively by Bush, is over and the reality of broken dreams takes its final hold, feel about the war's outcome?

The other war, the virtually forgotten one that was supposed to be the main event, Afghanistan, is also going badly, although one would not know it from the administration's glib speeches and prepared press conference reports.

Aside from Kabul where some evidence of democracy can be seen, the country is being run again by feuding warlords whom we try to pacify with bribes, hoping they will lead us to bin Laden. Murders, robbery and the threat of rape hover over the hills and countryside where farming poppy for dope has increased by 600% since the war began.

The situation in Afghanistan is another reminder that the current administration lacks foresight, and has difficulty presenting the truth to the American people. In the face of terrorism, it might be a show of our collective courage come November to accept the gift of vigilance from Mr. Bush while at the same time electing a man more grounded in the realities of war, cooperation, and possibility.

GOOD WINE CHEAP

(and good food to go with it)

By John Grover

Over the next few months many of my friends and former co-workers will be working on grant applications. During that stressful time my advice is to stay calm, stay on track, and when you are done - HAVE A PARTY! This month's wine and recipe should help them plan that party.

The wine is a 2002 blend of Chardonnay and Viognier grapes from the Tourtoise Creek vineyard in the Languedoc region of France. This winery is owned by a family of British transplants who have produced a wine that is both very good and very affordable. The Chardonnay juice in the wine gives it a rich fruit flavor of peach and pear, while the Viognier makes the wine more complex with distinct floral characteristics. This wine is good with food or as an aperitif and goes for only about \$7 a bottle.

**MUSHROOMS STUFFED WITH FETA CHEESE**

(from The Frugal Gourmet Cooks Three Ancient Cuisines by Jeff Smith. Attributed to a cookbook prepared by members of a Greek Orthodox Church in Seattle)

Ingredients:

15 large fresh mushrooms
 .25 (1/4) cup melted butter
 salt and freshly ground pepper
 2 tbsp. butter
 3 tbsp. chopped green onions
 1 tbsp. flour
 .25 (1/4) cup milk
 3 tbsp. finely chopped parsley
 1 clove garlic crushed
 3 tbsp. crumbled feta cheese
 .25 (1/4) cup grated kasseri cheese
 (grated Romano will substitute)

Clean the mushrooms. Remove the stems and reserve them. Brush caps with melted butter. Arrange hollow side up in a baking dish. Sprinkle with Salt and pepper.

Mince reserved mushroom stems. Heat small frying pan and add butter. Add stems and onions and sauté until the liquid has been absorbed. To the frying pan add the flour and mix well. Add the milk, stirring until thickened a bit. Add the parsley, garlic and salt and pepper to taste. Mix well. Add feta cheese to mixture and fill mushroom caps.

Top with the kasseri cheese and small dots of butter. Bake at 375 degrees 15 to 20 minutes or until the stuffing has browned slightly and cheese has melted. This appetizer was a real hit at our last party.

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.

CHAPTER NOTES

Southern Connecticut Mensa has an e-mail server list on Topica where members can discuss topics with other Mensans on the list To subscribe, just send a blank e-mail to:
MensaSCT- subscribe@topica.com

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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Vocabulary Booster CD The Vocabulary Booster CD is a great way to build vocabulary skills. Contains 200 of the most common and troublesome SAT words with definitions, contextual usage sentences, and various memory aids. Produced by Gene McKenna, a graduate of Georgetown University with a master's degree in education, who scored a perfect 800 on the verbal section of the SAT. As founder and director of Ace In-Home Tutoring, he has helped thousands of people improve their vocabulary strength. Now you, too, can get all the advantages of his expert one-on-one tutoring at just a fraction of the cost with the Vocabulary Booster CD. Just pop this CD into your car stereo or portable disc player for ten minutes a day, and watch your vocabulary grow. It's fast, easy, and effective. Gene McKenna's "Vocabulary Booster" CD can be purchased through his Web site, www.inhometutoring.com.

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