

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 to July 2002 are available on the Internet at <http://www.solarandthermal.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 AUGUST

Saturday, August 1, 8:00.

THEATRE EVENT: Shakespeare's A Midsummer's Night Dream performed by Bridgeport Free Shakespeare, at the Beardsley Zoo, 1875 Noble Ave., Bridgeport, CT 06610. This is an outdoor show so arrive early and bring your chair or blanket. Free, donation suggested. For info or reservations, please call Jim Mizera at (203) 522-1959 or e-mail Jmizera@hotmail.com.

Friday, August 13, 7:00

Southern Connecticut and Connecticut/Western Massachusetts Joint Dinner

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, August 21, 7:00.

Monthly Dinner

We have a **new meeting place!** The Stony Hill Inn, 46 Stony Hill Road (right off Exit 8 on I-84), Bethel, CT 06801 (203-743-5533). Speaker unknown at press time. Dress is casual. Please contact Nancy O'Neil, Nancyoneil@aol.com, 203-791-1668, for information and reservations.

Directions from New Haven or Bridgeport: Take Route 25 into Newtown, where it becomes Route 6 West. OR take I-84 and get off at Exit 9 (Route 25 Brookfield). At the end of the ramp take a left. At the first light take a right on to Route 6 West. The hotel is located 2 miles on the right, not far over the Bethel line. From Stamford/Norwalk: Take Route 7 to I-84 and follow the above directions, turning right after exiting I-84.

Saturday, August 28, 8:00.

Theater Event: William Shakespeare's Richard III, performed by the Elm Shakespeare Company (www.elmshakespeare.org) outdoors in Edgerton Park, Whitney Ave, New Haven, near the Hamden town line. This is an outdoor show so arrive early and bring your chair or blanket. Free, donation suggested. For info or reservations, please call Jim Mizera at (203) 522-1959 or e-mail Jmizera@hotmail.com. Saturday, August 24, 7:30.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF CHAPTER EVENTS FOR SEPTEMBER

Friday, September 10, 7:00.

Southern Connecticut and Connecticut/Western Massachusetts Joint Dinner.

See above listing for details.

Saturday, September 18, 7:00.

Monthly Dinner.

See above listing for details.

Saturday, September 25, 8:00.

Theater Event: Euripides' Medea

performed by Theatreworks, 5 Brookside Ave., New Milford (www.theatreworks.usa). Tickets are \$15. The classic 2000-year-old story of love, betrayal, and tragedy. 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.

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 1st & 3rd Friday 6-10 a.m. 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.

Admitted in CT, NY & OR

Sharon Oberst DeFala, Esq.
GENERAL PRACTICE OF LAW

<p>Law Offices Gary Oberst A Professional Corporation 111 East Avenue Norwalk, CT 06851</p>	<p>Office (203) 866-4646 Home (203) 852-9571 Fax (203) 852-1574 sharon@oberstlaw.com</p>
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weekly on 91.3 FM, WWUH, in West Hartford. The name of the program is "What You Will" and its focus is chamber music.

AUGUST

5, 12, 19, 26 Thursday 7:00 pm

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

6 Friday 5:30-7:00 pm

Happy Hour (ME, 1st Friday)

in Meriden. Ann Polanski (contact her at 203-269-4565 or ann.polanski@rfsworld.com) hosts us at Jacoby's Restaurant, 1388 East Main Street, Meriden, CT (203) 634-3222. From I-91 Northbound: Exit 16. Turn right at end of exit and continue on East Main Street for 0.7 mi. Jacoby's is on the left. From I-91 Southbound: (Same exit as for the former Ramada.) Exit 17. Turn left at end of exit and continue as above.

7 Saturday 9:00 - 2:30 PM

Butterfly Event: M Diane Adams The Connecticut Butterfly Association's 10th Anniversary Field Day and Plant sale will be held at the Flanders Nature Center in Woodbury, CT. This year the theme is "Monarch Butterflies"! Lynn Rosenblatt, Author of "Monarch Magic" will present a program for kids and adults. She will be selling and signing her books later in the morning. This will be followed by Tom Pawlesh's "Metamorphosis to Mexico: The Life of the Monarch Butterfly". Also happening on this day: a Monarch tagging demonstration; kid's butterfly crafts; butterfly field trips around the beautiful meadows of the sanctuary; and throughout the day, a plant sale offering several species of native milkweeds (Monarch caterpillar host plant)! All events will originate at the "Sugar House". This event is FREE and for the whole family! For more information about the Connecticut Butterfly Association, go to www.ctbutterfly.org. To learn more about the Flanders Nature Center, go to www.flandersnaturecenter.org. Directions to the sanctuary can also be found there. For more info or to confirm, contact Diane Adams (860) 526-1993, ButterflyPR@comcast.net.

10 Tuesday 7:00 PM

Mensa Goes to a Baseball Game

The New Britain Rock Cats host Akron, the Double-A farm team of the Cleveland Indians. Buy a general admission ticket (\$5), turn left and go to section 213, climb to about six rows from the top and join other Mensans for an evening at the ballpark. More info? Contact Tom Thomas tom.thomas@the-spa.com To confirm starting time (and possible fireworks) check your local newspaper of www.rockcats.com the day of the game.

20 Friday 6:00 PM

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. This month's contact is our LocSec Bob Smith at 860-872-3106 or BoboRobDOS@snet.net, Subject: Diner Dinner

27 Friday 5:00 pm

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.

25 Wednesday 12:00 noon

Middlebury Luncy (ME, last Wednesday) 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. Please call Richard Fogg at 860-274-2370 if you will attend for the first time.

LOOKING AHEAD:

5 September Sunday 12 Noon

The Alderman's Annual Labor Day Picnic

39 Lakeside Dr. Andover CT For the seventeenth time you are all invited to assemble on lovely Andover Lake. All of you who have been here before know how much fun it is; the rest of you are invited to find out for yourself. We will not cook out this year again so bring a dish to share. Call 860 742 5265 for menu coordination. Bring bathing suits, boats (no motors), and lawn games, if you wish. Directions from Hartford: Follow I-84 East to I-384 East. At the end of 384 take the right fork (Route 6) toward Willimantic. After about 5 miles take a right onto route 316 at the first traffic light. After about 3/4 mile take a left onto School Rd. This changes name to be Lakeside Dr. with no turns. # 39 is on the left about 1 1/4 miles from the turn onto School Rd.

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).

February 5-13, 2005

The Ski SIG of American Mensa

invites Mensa members worldwide to join us for a half-week or week+ of snow skiing the deep fluffy snow on the Rocky Mountains of Aspen and Snowmass. For details see [Http://lists.us.mensa.org/mailman/listinfo/skisig-announce](http://lists.us.mensa.org/mailman/listinfo/skisig-announce) or contact John Adams, rip2005@skisig.us.mensa.org, +1 713 666 9277, 8211 Fairhope Place, Houston, TX 77025-3201, USA.

2005 Post-AG Cruise

The 2005 Annual Gathering in New Orleans will end with a Mensa cruise to Jamaica, the Cayman Islands and Cozumel. Extra-special pricing until August 5, 2004. Details at <http://www.suitecruising.com/ag2.htm>



FROM THE VICE CHAIR

Marghretta McBean

June started off with a wonderful astronomical show: Venus transiting across the Sun, viewable from the Earth. The last time this happened was in 1882! Living in midtown New York City precludes star gazing due to all of the ambient light from buildings, billboards, etc. but a short walk to Central Park's Sheep Meadow can give very good viewing conditions. In true New York City fashion, there were at least 200 other "Venus Viewers" out in the early dawn hours of June 8th. There was even a group of women clad in togas singing a Venusian song. At least I think it was Venusian and that they were women....

Moving to more terrestrial matters, I have just returned from the Annual Gathering in Las Vegas. Having never been to Sin City, it was a memorable trip. "Over the top" doesn't begin to describe the sights. I, however, couldn't help but think of the billion of gallons of water consumed each day to give this desert city its sparkle. My daughter, who visited the Hoover Dam while I was in meetings, said the level there is dangerously low.

At the Annual Business Meeting, held 1 July, the motion to amend Mensa's Certificate of Incorporation was approved, following the submission by the Secretary of our proxies. Mensa can now legitimately conduct corporate matters with a minimum of 100 members voting, either in person or by proxy. The ProxyQuest team was enthusiastically thanked for their work, as well as all of those who submitted their proxies.

Region 1 had some plaudits at the Awards Luncheon. Angela Tremain, the editor of Mid-Hdson Mensa's Mid-Mensan, won in the PRP (Publication Recognition Programme) Newsletter's Special Mention Category.

Misha's Vineyard Players captained by Greg Draves of Greater New York Mensa scored in tenth place for this year's CultureQuest competition.

John G. DiLiberto of Greater New York Mensa won the National Chair's Service Award for his work in guiding the AMC through the complexities of risk management. Congratulations to you all!!!

A dues increase effective 1 April 2005, was approved at the American Mensa Committee meeting. Local group support was increased to \$8.64 (up from \$8.15) per member per year. Mike Siegler, Region 3's Vice Chair, asked why local groups couldn't get more. After much discussion, it was decided to revisit the whole group allocation issue at the next AMC meeting in Portland Oregon in September. It seems the formula of one-sixth of the national budget for local group support was created over thirty years ago!

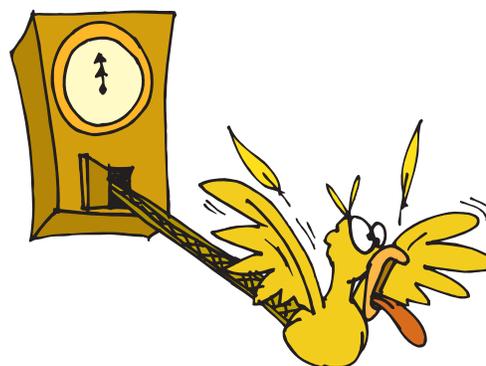
The status of AML SIGs was discussed again. The definition of SIG member was debated, with the majority feeling that only a Mensa member can be a SIG member (I did not agree). The method of validating SIG members has yet to be decided and there are numerous issues attached to it. The definition of a SIG guest as well as procedures to deny admission or remove SIG members will be discussed at the next AMC meeting.

No group has submitted a bid for the 2007 AG. I noted that Region 1's groups are reluctant without full support from the National Office for hotel negotiations, hospitality, etc. The burden placed on a local group to produce a full-blown convention has become the topic of a study by the National Office. Hopefully a more efficacious method can be found.

Mensa World Connect is looking for more "sister" groups. This programme matches similarly sized groups in the US and abroad. Members correspond with each other, individually and as a group, and often arrange meetings in each other's country.

It's summer time and that means cool drinks. Here's a North African version of a classic:

(continued on next page)



MOROCCAN LEMONADE

1 lb. lemons, preferably thin-skinned, well washed and rinsed
 1 lb. sugar
 12 mint leaves [optional]

1. Cut up lemons [and mint] and place in food processor or blender. Add sugar. Process on "chop" for about 2 minutes, or until mixture is thick and no pieces of lemon can be seen. (Do this in batches if your processor is small).

2. Scrape mixture into large bowl or jar. Add enough boiling water to cover and stir well. Let mixture steep at room temperature several hours or overnight.

3. If you're fussy, strain out the seeds. However, seed spitting contests are a summer tradition for many.
4. Add enough cold water to bring to your desired level of sweetness. Moroccans serve this with very little added water, but they have incredible sweet teeth.

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

WORD ORIGINS

Many phrases use the names of animals or are based on animal lore. Here are a few of them.

bellwether - In Anglo-Saxon times, sheperds put a bell around the neck of the wether, the eunuch sheep, which led the flock.

cool one's heels - This term means "to be forced to wait." It comes from the days when horses were the way to travel. During a long trip, a horse's hoofs would become heated, and his rider would have to stop to let his horse's heels cool a little.

dog days - This phrase refers to the "sultry part of summer." It goes back to ancient times when the Romans called the hottest period of summer, roughly July 3 to August 11, the "days of the dog" because they believed the hot weather was caused by the rise of the dog star Sirius.

a mare's nest - A mare's nest is a great discovery that is no discovery at all, but a hoax, like a horse's nest. The expression has also come to mean a hopelessly complicated situation.

stalking horse - Back in the 1500s, huntsmen trained their horses so that they would approach their game while the hunter remained hidden behind the horse or under the coverings on the horse. Some hunters even built dummy horses to serve this purpose. When the "stalking horse" got close enough to the unsuspecting quarry, the hunter would aim and fire. **white elephant** - In past times in Siam, the king automatically took ownership of all of the white elephants, which were extremely rare creatures. By royal decree, none of these elephants was allowed to work. If the king wanted to punish one of the members of his court, he would sometimes give them a white elephant, knowing that it would eat that person out of house and home without doing any useful work for him.

talk turkey - In colonial days, white hunters and Indians before going on a hunt would often agree to share their kill. But when they came home with crows and turkeys, the white man would give the crows to the Indians while taking the turkeys for himself. The Indians would complain about the white man's rhetorical deception, saying that the Anglo was "talking turkey." for himself.

POETRY CORNER

AN AUGUST MIDNIGHT

Thomas Hardy, (1840 - 1928)

I

A shaded lamp and a waving blind,
And the beat of a clock from a distant floor:
On this scene enter--winged, horned, and spined

-

A longlegs, a moth, and a dumbledore;
While 'mid my page there idly stands
A sleepy fly, that rubs its hands . . .

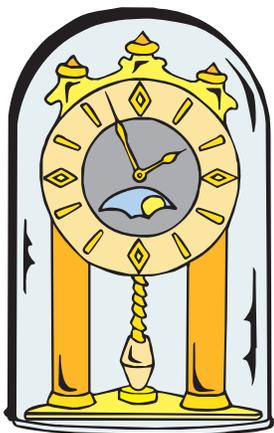
II

Thus meet we five, in this still place,
At this point of time, at this point in space.
- My guests parade my new-penned ink,
Or bang at the lamp-glass, whirl, and sink.
"God's humblest, they!" I muse. Yet why?
They know Earth-secrets that know not I.

A CALENDAR OF SONNETS: AUGUST

Helen Hunt Jackson, (1830 - 1885)

SILENCE again. The glorious symphony
Hath need of pause and interval of peace.
Some subtle signal bids all sweet sounds cease,
Save hum of insects' aimless industry.
Pathetic summer seeks by blazonry
Of color to conceal her swift decrease.
Weak subterfuge! Each mocking day doth fleece
A blossom, and lay bare her poverty.
Poor middle-aged summer! Vain this show!
Whole fields of Golden-Rod cannot offset
One meadow with a single violet;
And well the singing thrush and lily know,
Spite of all artifice which her regret
Can deck in splendid guise, their time to go!



GARBAGEMAN:

THE MAN WITH THE ORDERLY MIND

Gwendolyn Brooks, (1917 - 2000)

WHAT do you think of us in fuzzy endeavor, you
whose directions are sterling, whose lunge is
straight?

Can you make a reason, how can you pardon us
who memorize the rules and never score?

Who memorize the rules from your own text but
never quite transfer them to the game,

Who never quite receive the whistling ball, who
gawk, begin to absorb the crowd's own roar.

Is earnest enough, may earnest attract or lead to
light;

Is light enough, if hands in clumsy frenzy, flimsy
whimsically, enlist;

Is light enough when this bewilderment crying
against the dark shuts down the shades?

Dilute confusion. Find and explode our mist.

MY MIND IS

e.e. cummings, (1894 - 1962)

my mind is
a big hunk of irrevocable nothing which touch
and taste and smell
and hearing and sight keep hitting and chipping
with sharp fatal
tools
in an agony of sensual chisels i perform squirms
of chrome and ex
-ecute strides of cobalt
nevertheless i
feel that i cleverly am being altered that i
slightly am becoming
something a little different, in fact
myself
Hereupon helpless i utter lilac shrieks and scarlet
bellowings.

AN INTERVIEW WITH CARTOONIST BRIAN LORD

PLANNING FOR SUCCESS: Brian Lord, Creator of Kick Irrational

by Susanna McLeod, July 9, 2004

(Excerpted from www.Suite101.com, an online publishing community of writers, readers, and educators.)

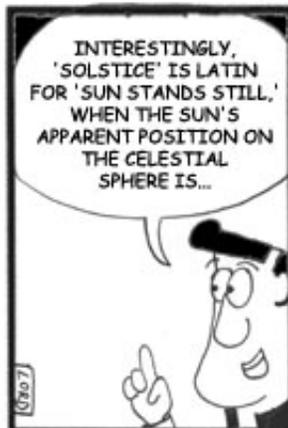
My cartooning career started on our family farm outside of Greentown, Indiana, at age four. My older sister Kelly started a family newspaper where she provided the articles, and I did sports and comics. We even had worldwide circulation! (We had a great uncle who worked for Habitat for Humanity in the Philippines.) At age six I made my own "Star Kid" comic books, and in

high school I drew a lot of single panel cartoons.

Kick Irrational came about over Labor Day weekend while I was a senior at DePauw University. The school newspaper turned it down, so Kick just sat on the shelf for four or five years after graduation. I was blessed to marry a wonderful woman who also likes to make her dreams into reality, and she's been my biggest source of encouragement-and material. Krista's a professional singer (www.thedarins.com), and she loves having a character based on her. In fact, she chose Cricket's name, and when something silly happens to us, she'll say, "That's a comic right there!"

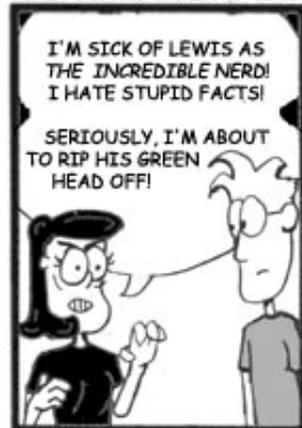
A lot of people ask me where the name "Kick Irrational" comes from. The other names are much easier to explain. Lewis and Tolk are named after

KICK IRRATIONAL by Brian Lord



www.KickComics.com

KICK IRRATIONAL by Brian Lord



www.KickComics.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.

my two favorite authors, C.S. Lewis and J.R.R Tolkien. Cricket is one of my wife Krista's nick-names, and Josie was suggested by a fan. But Kick was different. I sat down that Labor Day weekend, said to myself, "I'm going to start a comic strip today", and the name of it was Kick Irrational. I never thought of any other names, or questioned if I should change the name. Its just Kick Irrational. I do have a strip coming up where Kick gives his mother's explanation, but I haven't come up with one for me yet.

The strip has been fun to develop. Initially there were just three characters. Kick would have the good influence of Lewis pulling him one way and the bad influence of Tolk pulling him another. I also planned the strip to contain frequent flashbacks to childhood. The reason for that was the strips I loved growing up- primarily "Peanuts" and "Calvin & Hobbes" - were based on kids, so I thought I needed kids. But I soon realized that as much as I liked Charles Schulz and Bill Watterson's work, I wasn't them. I had to develop Kick Irrational as it came out of my head and hands, and hope that was good enough.

As I'm sure is the case with many beginning cartoonists, there's a mental incubation period where ideas are floating around in your head. The point where Kick Irrational was reborn from college strip to its current form interestingly took place on the way to the Miami airport in 2002. Krista and I stopped off at Borders on the way to the airport and I came across a book called "The Parables of the Peanuts" by Robert L. Short. It talked about how Charles Schulz not only wanted to make people laugh, he also wanted to make them think- about faith, love, the meaning of life - all sorts of things. It helped me crystallize what I wanted to accomplish with Kick Irrational. I decided I wanted people to be better off for having read Kick that day.

Whether it was thinking about their spouse, their faith, their job, or just having a good laugh, I wanted Kick to make a difference with people. One of my favorite comments from readers is "Your strip is the highlight of my Tuesday morning." Armed with a mission, I drew and emailed out my first strips that next Monday night.



KICK IRRATIONAL by Brian Lord

www.KickComics.com



I'm a big believer in setting yourself up for success, so when I started, I tried to find ways to do just that. I read several articles about cartoonists in publications like Susanna McLeod's column, Cagle, and the Washington Post to learn how top cartoonists got started. One of the common themes was dealing with rejection, so I decided to make sure I had firm supporters when I started. I emailed 50 friends and family and told them that because they'd been such an encouragement in the past, I needed their encouragement for something new. I promised them that I'd email them two new comics every Monday night. Of course, if you tell people they've encouraged you in the past, they're more likely to encourage you in the future. The first strips I emailed out were terrible, but the recipients were all kind and lied to me and said they were great. Also, since I'd promised to send out two new strips every Monday night, I had to write them whether I felt like it or not. This forced me to keep at it, which helped me get better.

Drawing the strip is very simple. I draw the comic, scan, and fill it in to make both a black and white version (for editors who print in black and white), and a color version for email subscribers. Krista proofreads everything. She does provide helpful feedback like: "This is too wordy. If I wanted to read this much, I'd get a book." Then I figure out a way to make it shorter, and it's usually better.

Since I knew I'd need to convince people who didn't know me that Kick Irrational was worth considering, I made sure to keep track of the city and state (and eventually country) of everyone who signed up to get Kick via email. There's a big difference between saying "a lot of people read it" and saying "I have email subscribers in 257 cities, 47 states, and 11 countries." I took a cartooning class from Watkins School of Design to improve the drawing side.

I wanted Kick to have a broad audience, so I pitched it to "Funrunner" (a local running magazine), and "The Mitensan" (a local Mensa publication.) All of them began running Kick as well, and soon I had a good enough resume to submit Kick to other news, sports, religious, and Mensa publications. Now, just 10 months after it was first published, Kick Irrational can be read by over 250,000 people in 43 publications in 22

states and 2 countries.

I've also been amazed at how incredibly helpful and humble the cartoonists I've met have been. Several members of the Southeast Chapter of the National Cartoonist Society patiently looked through my work to give me tips on anything from drawing 'talk' balloons to chin shadows. Fellow DePauw alum and creator of "Big Top" Rob Harrell has given me a ton of advice and even advised me on the best strips to include in my syndicate submission. Editorial cartoonist Wayne Stayskal was the first to encourage me to send in syndicate submissions.

I even took a class from former AAEC president Sandy Campbell, whose favorite saying seemed to be "let's give a little weight to that line." The response from most professional cartoonists to Kick is that they really like the writing ("which is the hard part," they say) and that the drawing is good but could be better.

The character who has been most affected by cartoonist comments has been Lewis. Sandy Campbell told me all of my characters had the same body type. Lewis suddenly gained weight. Rob Harrell said he always gets a lot of reader feedback when he does strips on diets. Suddenly Lewis has to deal with his cravings for sweet tea and barbecue. From feedback, many more readers can now relate to Lewis.

So what's the plan for Kick Irrational now? In short, it's in the submission stage. I'm waiting it out like other cartoonists, checking the mail box for a response, just hoping that the right editor will take a liking to the strip, and help it get in 1,000 newspapers. But that's just the business side of things. I also hope that Kick is already achieving its goal of making people laugh and think. On the "Calvin and Hobbes" website (www.calvinandhobbes.com), one can read letters people wrote when they found out Bill Watterson was ending the strip. Whenever it is that I finish this strip, I want to get responses like that, where people are sad and grateful and see themselves in the characters. Not that I want people to be sad, but I want them to connect with Kick and Cricket and Lewis and Tolk. Because if they do, it means I'll have made a small little difference in their lives, and that's all that I ask for.

NOTED AND QUOTED

Worry is as useless as a handle on a snowball.
- *Mitzi Chandler*

For the first time, the weird and the stupid and the coarse are becoming our cultural norms, even our cultural ideal.
- *Carl Bernstein, (1944 -), U.S. journalist*

If we were not all so interested in ourselves, life would be so uninteresting that none of us would be able to endure it.
- *Arthur Schopenhauer, (1788 - 1860)*

Experience is one thing you can't get for nothing. - *Oscar Wilde, (1856 - 1900)*

When we treat man as he is, we make him worse than he is; when we treat him as if he already were what he potentially could be, we make him what he should be.
- *Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, (1749 - 1832)*

I found Rome a city of bricks and left it a city of marble.
- *Augustus Caesar, from Suetonius, "Augustus", sec. 28*

Goodness is the only investment that never fails.
- *Thoreau, (1817 - 1862), Walden: Higher Laws, 1854*

There are only two kinds of journalists: bad ones, and those who are improving.
- *Bob Baker, L.A. Times reporter and editor*

The first thing I do in the morning is brush my teeth and sharpen my tongue.
- *Dorothy Parker, (1893 - 1967), U.S. author, poet, and wit*

Hermits have no peer pressure.
- *Steven Wright, (1955 -), Canadian comedian*

We have not passed that subtle line between childhood and adulthood until... we have stopped saying "It got lost," and say "I lost it."
- *Sidney J. Harris, (1917 - 1986), U.S. newspaper columnist.*

Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle.
- *Philo of Alexandria, (20 B.C. - 50 A.D.), Jewish philosopher*

Old people don't get tired - it's only the young who tire. Confusion exhausts them.
- *George Balanchine, (1904 - 1983), Russian-American dancer and choreographer*

There is no yesterday, so what's left is today.
- *Bob Dylan, (1941 -)*

Why must we have something to look forward to: Why can't we just look at now?
- *Jerry Rubin, (1938 - 1994)*

He's so snobbish he has an unlisted zip code number.
- *Earl Wilson, (1907 - 1987), U.S. syndicated columnist*

Hope is a good breakfast, but it is a bad supper.
- *Francis Bacon, (1561 - 1626)*

Very often a change of self is needed more than a change of scene.
- *Arthur Christopher Benson, (1862 - 1925), English poet and essayist*

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.

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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

OF NATURE IN MEN

by Francis Bacon

NATURE is often hidden; sometimes overcome; seldom extinguished. Force, maketh nature more violent in the return; doctrine and discourse, maketh nature less importune; but custom only doth alter and subdue nature.

He that seeketh victory over his nature, let him not set himself too great, nor too small tasks; for the first will make him dejected by often failings; and the second will make him a small proceeder, though by often prevailings. And at the first let him practise with helps, as swimmers do with bladders or rushes; but after a time let him practise with disadvantages, as dancers do with thick shoes. For it breeds great perfection, if the practice be harder than the use. Where nature is mighty, and therefore the victory hard, the degrees had need be, first to stay and arrest nature in time; like to him that would say over the four and twenty letters when he was angry; then to go less in quantity; as if one should, in forbearing wine, come from drinking healths, to a draught at a meal; and lastly, to discontinue altogether. But if a man have the fortitude, and resolution, to enfranchise himself at once, that is the best:

Optimus ille animi vindex laedentia pectus Vincula qui rupit, dedoluitque semel.

Neither is the ancient rule amiss, to bend nature, as a wand, to a contrary extreme, whereby to set it right, understanding it, where the contrary extreme is no vice. Let not a man force a habit upon' himself, with a perpetual continuance, but with some intermission. For both the pause reinforceth the new onset; and if a man that is not perfect, be ever in practice, he shall as well practise his errors, as his abilities, and induce one habit of both; and there is no means to help this, but by seasonable intermissions. But let not a man trust his victory over his nature, too far; for nature will lay buried a great time, and yet revive, upon the occasion or temptation. Like as it was with Aesop's damsel, turned from a cat to a woman, who sat very demurely at the board's end, till a mouse ran before her. Therefore, let a man either avoid the occasion altogether; or put himself often to it, that he may be little moved with it. A man's nature is best perceived in privateness, for there is no affectation; in passion, for that putteth a man out of his precepts; and in a new case or experiment, for there custom leaveth him. They are happy men, whose natures sort with their vocations; otherwise they may say, multum incola fuit anima mea; when they converse in those things, they do not affect. In studies, whatsoever a man commandeth upon himself, let him set hours for it; but whatsoever is agreeable to his nature, let him take no care for any set times; for his thoughts will fly to it, of themselves; so as the spaces of other business, or studies, will suffice. A man's nature, runs either to herbs or weeds; therefore let him seasonably water the one, and destroy the other.

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PUZZLES & QUESTIONS

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

1. Where is the United States' center of population?
2. What is the average speed of a housefly?
3. Do you think that there are additional categories that could be added to the Nobel Prize awards?
4. What wars do you think have been most neglected in historical study?

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES:

3. How many public charities are there in the United States?

A: There are 800,000 public charities in the United States.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

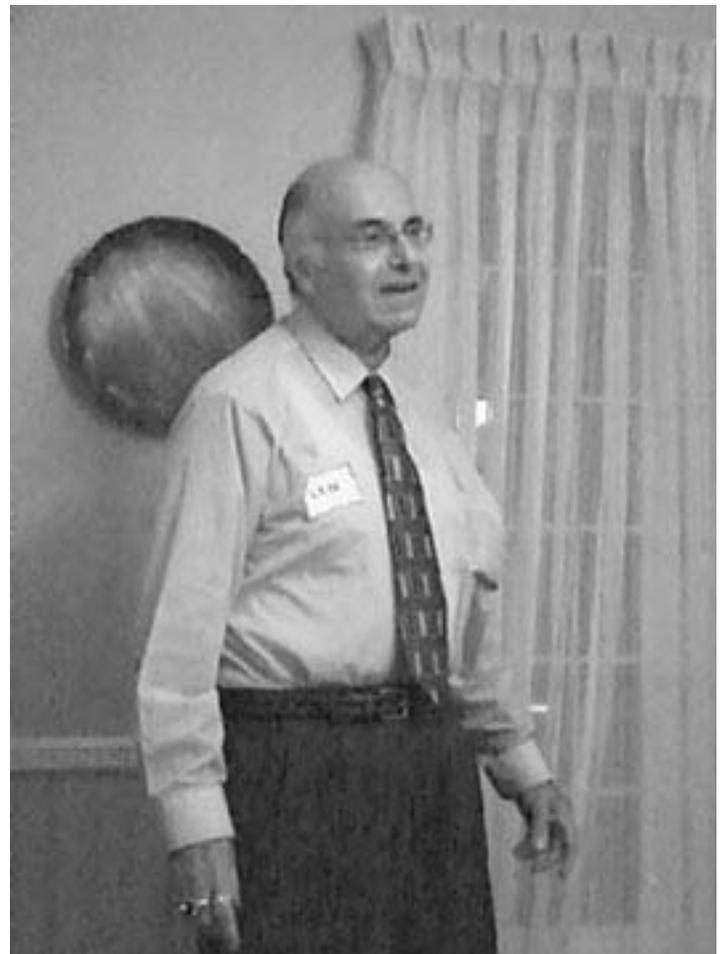
Rick D'Amico
Southern Connecticut Mensa Loc Sec

A dozen members and guests joined us in July for our first meeting at the Stony Hill Inn in Bethel. The Inn proved to be an excellent gathering place, as our cozy private room came with a beautiful view and marvelous food. It was a bit of a drive from southern Fairfield County, but worth every mile of it.

Our featured speaker was Dr. Len Kaplan, who gave an exhilarating and informative presentation on hypnotherapy. He gave us a good idea of what hypnotherapy is all about with a group session to curb anxiety.

We were privileged to have our Region 1 Vice Chair, Marghretta McBean, as an honored guest. She added warmth, wit, humor and wisdom to our discussions over dinner, which ranged over topics from current events to fencing. This was the first, but hopefully not the last, meeting that Marghretta will join us.

Hope to see more of you at our next meeting.



*Len Kaplan, July's dinner speaker.
See article on next page.*

THE JULY DINNER

DR. LEN KAPLAN ON HYPNOTHERAPY

IN July, Southern Connecticut Mensa met at a new place for our monthly dinner - Bethel's Stony Hill Inn, where we enjoyed a private dining room in a quiet setting. Our Regional Vice Chairman Marghretta McBean came to visit us from New York City, and we enjoyed her company as she gave us insights into her duties. After dinner, we sat back and listened to a familiar but always intriguing speaker, hypnotherapist Dr. Len Kaplan.

Dr. K. opened by telling us of the wide variety of problems he works on with patients - smoking, stress and anxiety, memory, and weight loss, among many others. He stated that 95% of people can be hypnotized if they are motivated to overcome their problem. Len's goal is to get these people relaxed and put them in the middle of the Alpha state, where their brain waves are about 14 cycles per second. This is not the deep sleep state of Delta brain waves, but a day-dream-like condition where people may feel they are floating.

Len uses verbal and visual suggestions along with breathing exercises, lights, and rhythmic sounds to ease patients into the hypnotic state. Most people, he told us, become so relaxed when he hypnotizes them that they lose track of the time. They commonly think that just 5 or 10 minutes have passed after a 45-minute session. This, he said, is because the unconscious has no sense of time without clocks. Freed from pressing demands, people become more open to suggestions, although Dr. Kaplan stressed that people cannot be hypnotized into doing something they consider evil.

Our speaker noted that positive suggestion is much more powerful than scary imagery. It is also more effective than a blackboard lecture. So Len soothes people with encouraging talk and images that almost everyone in Western culture finds peaceful - waves, light, serene valleys and mountains, and angels. Using such pictures, he guides them through scenes where they first release and then overcome their problems.

Dr. Kaplan led the audience through a session where he demonstrated his techniques, using his repertoire of lights, sounds, and exercises to gently calm listeners into a tranquil state and then took them on a journey through idyllic lands. Along the way, they visualized their problem being swept away by waves. At the end, they pictured themselves emerging triumphant, free from the chains of bad habit.

Awakened from their beatific sojourn, the audience had many interesting questions for Dr. Kaplan. One person asked how hypnotists would work with people who didn't have very strong imaginations and might not see his images vividly. Len replied that he usually starts off hypnotherapy with more literal suggestions, and adjusts them as he goes along depending on how helpful his subject finds his images.

Another question was, "How effective is hypnotherapy compared to drugs?" Len and some members of the audience pointed out that hypnotherapy has one definite advantage over drug treatments such as Prozac - the reactions to drugs depend greatly on the individual, while hypnotherapy is safe and effective for almost everyone.

Dr. K. gave us a most relaxing and illuminating look at hypnotherapy as practiced by a professional. We thank him again for giving Mensans a first hand look at this field.

You can learn more about Dr. Kaplan's services at www.thekaplanwellnesscenter.com, or by calling the Kaplan Wellness Center, 469 Danbury Road, New Milford, CT 06776, at (203) 792-2166, or Toll Free (800) 792-2166.



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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