

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT MENSA CHRONICLE

If you or someone you know would like to be a speaker at our monthly dinner, please contact Jim Mizera at 203-522-1959 or Jmizera@hotmail.com. The dinner is held the third Saturday of the month.



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going back to 2000 are available on the Internet at <http://scm66.org> (Note: this is a new URL). 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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ATTENTION SOUTHERN CT MENSANS: *The Southern CT Mensa Executive Committee needs a member to assume the open position of Secretary. We also need Proctors, who administer admissions tests to local candidates for Mensa. This is your chance to put ideas that can help our local chapter into action. Please notify one of the current board members to volunteer for these positions.*

SCHEDULE OF CHAPTER EVENTS - DECEMBER

Friday, December 11, 7:00

Danbury Dinner - Southern Connecticut and Connecticut/Western Massachusetts Joint Dinner

at a new venue, The Pasta Garden, 174 Federal Rd, Brookfield CT 06804 (restaurant phone: (203) 775-0426). Interested M's should contact Ward Mazzucco at 203-744-1929, ext 25, wjm@danburylaw.com or Rev. Bill Loring at 203-794-1389, fr.bill@comcast.net for more info on location and/or reservations.

Tuesday, December 17, 7:30

POST ROAD Dinner

Jani, 187 Cherry St Milford, CT 06460 (Post Rd,

Admitted in CT, NY & OR

Sharon Oberst DeFala, Esq.
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close to I-95, Milford Plaza, one mile south of Milford Mall). Japanese - Chinese food. Contact Jim Mizera at jmizera@hotmail.com or (203) 522-1959 for reservations or info.

Sunday, December 20, 4:00 pm

Hockey

The Bridgeport Sound Tigers (www.soundtigers.com) play the Springfield at Harbor Yard Stadium, , Bridgeport, CT (I-95, Exit 27, near downtown Bridgeport). Contact Jim Mizera at jmizera@hotmail.com or (203) 522-1959 for reservations or info.

December ?

CHESS

The Chess Club Meeting has not been scheduled as of yet. Contact jmizera@hotmail.com if you are interested in setting up a meeting place and date.

December ?

OTHER EVENTS of INTEREST.

Contact Jim Mizera at jmizera@hotmail.com, (203) 522-1959, to notify us of events you think fellow Mensans might like to attend.

JANUARY

Saturday, January 16 6:30 pm

Monthly Dinner (New Members Dinner)

TONELLI'S RESTAURANT, 41 Grassy Plain St., Bethel, CT 06801. Eric Lehman, author of "BRIDGEPORT - TALES FROM THE PARK CITY (2009)", will talk about his book, which narrates the city's rich history of invention, beautiful parks, and eccentric characters. P.T. Barnum, Tom Thumb, Elias Howe, Abraham Lincoln, Joseph Frisbie, James Beardsley, Igor Sikorsky, Gustav Whitehead, Henry Mucci, Al Capp, -

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they're all part of Bridgeport's story. Eric has taught literature and creative writing at the University of Bridgeport for over a decade, and is president of the Bridgeport chapter of Phi Kappa Phi. He has published essays, reviews, and stories in dozens of journals and magazines.

New members - come enjoy our 2010 kickoff dinner and meet members from all over the area.

Dress is casual. Before the presentation, we will enjoy dinner. Choose what you like from the menu. You can bring a donation of money or food to benefit the Connecticut Food Bank. There are plenty of seats and guests are welcome. Contact Jim Mizera, jmizera@hotmail.com, 203-522-1959, for information and reservations. In case of severe weather, please call. Reservations encouraged but not required.

CONNECTICUT AND WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS 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, 860-888-9867, email: lilith@beadylittleskies.com.

DECEMBER

2, 9, 16, 23, 30 Wednesdays 6:30 - 9:00 pm

Open Mike Night

(WE) at Peaberry's Coffee Shop on Rte 10 in between Fitzgeralds Market and CVS, Simsbury, CT. This is a regular musician event. If you want to see MensaFran make a fool out of herself, this is the place. Great munchies, coffee, tea, freeziedrinks and stuff. No alcohol. Fun people. Fran Devevo 860-738-8488 leave a mes-

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sage, calls returned about 9 pm or weekends or email mensafran@yahoo.com

3, 10, 17, 24 Thursdays 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).

4 Friday 5:30 pm

Happy Hour in Wallingford (ME, 1st Fridays)

Ann Polanski (contact her at 203-269-4565 or ann.polanski@rfsworld.com) hosts us upstairs at George's II Restaurant, 950 Yale Avenue, Wallingford, CT 06492 Phone: 203-269-1059. Directions: Exit 66 off Wilbur Cross Parkway. Turn left (south) onto Rte 5. Take first left that's not a highway entrance onto Yale Ave. George's II is in the Yale Plaza on the right.

6 Sunday 2:30 pm

Book Discussion

Join us at Pamela Guinan's home, 323 Griswold Road, Wethersfield, CT, for a discussion of *MISTAKES WERE MADE (BUT NOT BY ME): WHY WE JUSTIFY FOOLISH BELIEFS, BAD DECISIONS, AND HURTFUL ACTS* by Carol Tavris and Elliot Aronson. Why do people dodge responsibility when things fall apart? Why the parade of public figures unable to own up when they screw up? Why the endless marital quarrels over who is right? Why can we see hypocrisy in others but not in ourselves? Are we all liars? Or do we really believe the stories we tell? Backed by years of research and delivered in lively, energetic prose, *Mistakes Were Made (But Not by Me)* offers a fascinating explanation of self-deception how it works, the harm it can cause, and how we can overcome it. RSVP to Pam Guinan 860-563-5761 or Pamela.cwm@hotmail.com

9 Wednesday 5:00 pm

Happy Hour in Branford

(ME, 2nd Wed) Donovan's Reef 1212 Main Street, Branford Conn. 06405. The Donovan's Reef <http://donovans-reef.com> web site has a small map, and here are some directions with

distances - from I-95 take exit 54/Cedar Street. Go south on Cedar Street crossing Rt. 1/Boston Post Road for about 0.5 mi. to Rose Street. Take a left on Rose and go 0.25 mi. to a driveway on the right which has a low sign that says "1188 - 1238" where you will enter a parking lot for a number of businesses in a complex known as Lockworks Square. Drive part way through the lot and look for Donovan's Reef on the left. Locals can also enter Lockworks Square from the Ivy Street side just off of Main Street where Shoreline Foods faces Ivy. The lounge is on the left inside. I'll see about a table reservation and will likely have an "M" sign visible. We start around 6. I'm told there is some sort of daily bar goodie along with any menu items that you may want to order. Donovan's phone number is 203-488-5573. Questions? Questions? Contact Mike Wilson at 203-481-2858 or MahoutMike@aol.com

11 Friday 6-10 pm

C&WM Mensa Holiday Party - NEW VENUE!

at the Pitkin Community Center, 30 Greenfield Street, Wethersfield, CT 06109 (860) 721-2950 <http://wethersfieldct.com/rec/directions.html#pitkin>. Free food and fun for all Mensans and their guests. Helpers welcome, too, so call Pam Guinan 860-563-5761 or Pamela.cwm@hotmail.com to get with the program.

12 Saturday 11:30 am

Lunch and Holiday Market in Montpelier VT

There's a great Italian trattoria/pizza joint in Montpelier called Positive Pie where we'll meet at 11:30 a.m. for lunch and great Mensa conversation. Positive Pie is located at 22 State Street in Montpelier, and you can find them on the web at www.positivepie.com. Appetizers (as low as \$3), salads, sandwiches, burgers, pizza, calzones, stromboli...all delicious! And just around the corner from Positive Pie will be the annual Touch of Vermont Holiday Gift Market at Montpelier City Hall (39 Main Street, www.touchofvt.org, no admission fee). The market is open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Some of us will be visiting the market after lunch; others may want to arrive early to shop before lunch for the best selection. The TOV Holiday Gift Market will be host to over 40 Vermont craftspeople and specialty food vendors (pottery, jewelry, baked goods, herbals, metal works, photography, chocolates and many other juried crafts).

O.U.R. House of Central Vermont (an advocacy group for sexually abused children) will be there with a fundraising raffle made up of Vermont-made crafts, getaways for two and much more (about 50 prizes in total). Every vendor is donating an item worth at least \$30 to the raffle, and outside contributors are donating Grand Prizes worth over \$500. Tickets will be drawn throughout the market. To RSVP, contact Claire Natola at mensabear@gmail.com or (603) 279-9986 by 12 noon on Friday. We look forward to seeing you there!

12 Saturday Time TBA

Mensa Admissions Testing

(ME, 2nd Saturday): C&WM Mensa now holds regular testing in Newington, CT on the second Saturday of every month. Please preregister to attend by contacting the testing Proctor Coordinator, David B. Collier at Testing@CWM.US.Mensa.org for more details, including directions. In addition to the regular testing, additional tests will be made available around the region as candidate interest requires. To register for testing updates, go to www.us.mensa.org/directtesting and provide an email address. You can also save time at the site by paying for your testing session online at <http://www.us.mensa.org/testingvoucher>.

13 Sunday 12:30 am

Indian Lunch

(ME, 2nd Sunday) Our first experience was such a smashing success that we are going to make this a monthly event - every second Sunday. Meet us at Haveli India Restaurant for an all you can eat Indian buffet for only \$9.95! The food is fabulous and the restaurant is conveniently located at 1300 South Main St., Rte 17 in South Middletown. Call Barb Holstein for a reservation, 860-632-7873 or BarbCPA@att.net. To read about the restaurant, or get directions, check <http://www.haveliindia.com/>

17 Thursday 6:30 pm

Pioneer Valley Dinner

at the Hofbrauhaus, at 1105 Main Street in West Springfield, Mass. With any luck, the Springfield area location will entice some of our south-valley brethren (and sistren) to join us. Questions? Ian Fraser ianfraser@usa.net

LOOKING AHEAD

January 1 Friday 11 am - 3 pm

New Years Day Brunch

at LocSec Ann Fitzgerald's home, 1 Essex Road in Old Saybrook, CT 06475 Finger food contributions welcome. The chapter will provide beverages, including a virgin fruit punch and a potent eggnog. We can all start on resolutions Jan. 2. Contact annelly@comcast.net

January 16 Sunday 2:30 pm

Book Discussion

'Tis the season for self improvement resolutions, so in keeping with this modern obsession, join us at Pamela Guinan's home, 323 Griswold Road, Wethersfield, CT, for a discussion of **GOOD CALORIES, BAD CALORIES: FATS, CARBS, AND THE CONTROVERSIAL SCIENCE OF DIET AND HEALTH** by Gary Taubes. In 2002, science journalist Gary Taubes published an article entitled "What if It's All Been a Big Fat Lie?" He argued that reputable scientists were coming around to the idea, advanced by diet gurus like Dr. Robert Atkins, that carbohydrates, not fat, are the ultimate dietary villains. If so, he wrote, "the ongoing epidemic of obesity in America and elsewhere is not, as we are constantly told, due simply to a collective lack of will power and

a failure to exercise. Rather it occurred . . . because the public health authorities told us unwittingly, but with the best of intentions, to eat precisely those foods that would make us fat, and we did."

Taubes, a writer for Science magazine, begins by showing how public health data has been misinterpreted to mark dietary fat and cholesterol as the primary causes of coronary heart disease. Deeper examination, he says, shows that heart disease and other diseases of civilization appear to result from increased consumption of refined carbohydrates: sugar, white flour and white rice. When researcher John Yudkin announced these results in the 1950s, however, he was drowned out by the [then new] conventional wisdom. Taubes cites clinical evidence showing that elevated triglyceride levels, rather than high total cholesterol, are associated with increased risk of heart disease-but measuring triglycerides is more difficult than measuring cholesterol. Taubes says that the current U.S. obesity epidemic actually consists of a very small increase in the average body mass index. Taube's arguments are lucid and well supported by lengthy notes and bibliography. RSVP to Pam Guinan 860-563-5761 or Pamela.cwm@hotmail.com

Classified Advertisement from member:

NEW Joint Event for C&WM and RI Lady Mensans Ladies!

Looking to forge new friendships for support and socializing with other lady Mensans? New monthly event starting in New London, CT. Will start with coffee and tea, probably at host's home, unless size makes us move to a restaurant location. Pot luck or restaurant meal also possible in the future. Tentative time: monthly weekend afternoon; date to be set with interested participants. RSVP: Mindy Hoffer, 860-447-2408, mindyhoffer@yahoo.com. Note: Mindy has been certified as a group facilitator, and has previously facilitated and participated in organized groups for years.

*FROM THE REGIONAL VICE CHAIRMAN**LORI NORRIS**RVCHAT*

In October, Ron and I attended Connecticut & Western Massachusetts's MensAutumn and had a great time. C&WM is my home group, so we not only attended the RG, but got involved in the planning and execution as well. There were over 100 folks on hand, wonderful hospitality, Ron's margaritas at the tiki bar, Oktoberfest, great speakers and many interesting conversations. Already looking forward to next year's event. In November we will be attending Pilgrimage hosted by Boston Mensa - always a great time. Volunteering at a regional gathering (or annual gathering, or any other event) is a great way to meet people. For those of us who are on the introverted side, having a job to do seems to make it easier to talk to others. Talk to your RG chair or a member of your ExComm if you would be interested in volunteering with your group.

Don't forget to register for the 2010 Annual Gathering (AG), which will be a celebration of the 50th anniversary of Mensa in North America and will be a joint gathering of American Mensa and Mensa Canada. Registration goes up after December 31st. Go to AML's webpage to register and for additional information. And there will be many opportunities for you to volunteer at the AG.

In case you haven't heard the good news, Mensa of Northeastern New York was awarded the privilege of hosting Mind Games® 2011, which will be held in April of that year. It is within driving distance, train distance, etc. of a large section of Region 1. Keep an eye on their website (monny.us.mensa.org) because I'm sure that they will be looking for volunteers. The 2010 Mind Games will be in San Diego the weekend of April 16-18. I've only been to one Mind Games, but would like to attend more.

Mensa Region 1 Facebook group is up to 118 members - are you one of them? We're exchanging thoughts and event invitations and having some discussions, but we miss you.

I've mentioned volunteering a few times in this column and I wonder if any of the local groups do any volunteering (or community activities) as a group. I know that Greater New York does; they were recognized by the Community Activities Program at the AG in 2009. I also know that as individuals, many of us give something back to our communities. I would love to hear your comments on: 1) whether we, the local groups, should become more active in community volunteerism; 2) what are your suggestions; and 3) would you be willing to host a group of Mensans in a project, perhaps something you're already involved in. Let me know (e-mail, Facebook. or any other means) what you think.

I hope everyone has a good holiday season (if you celebrate) or a great ending to this year. 2010 is next and it just feels like we were wondering/worrying about Y2K. How time flies - now I sound like an old lady!

- Lori

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

The fact that I was still harvesting heads of Bibb lettuce in mid-November (in Upstate New York) gave me the idea for this month's column. Helped by some old sawhorses and a large sheet of clear plastic to cover the plants, I pulled off this near miracle of gardening to come up with the salad to go with November's wine. The constant supply of greens from the garden since last spring has encouraged our newfound proclivity toward dinner salads of all types.

The wine this month is the 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon from Robert Mondavi's "Private Selection" line. It is 77% Cabernet Sauvignon and the rest is a blend that comes from the juice of four other grape varieties. This wine has a rich berry nose and fills the mouth with black cherry, velvet tannins and a subtle oak flavor. I bought it at \$9 a bottle for a case, making it an extraordinarily rich wine for the price.

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.

BLACKENED STEAK SALAD

(recipe from the Chicago Chop House, printed in Bon Appetit Magazine, September, 2000)

Ingredients for steak spice mixture:

- 1 tbsp. paprika
- 2 tsp. ground black pepper
- 1 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. cayenne pepper (you may want to cut the cayenne in half the first time)
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 tsp. dried thyme

For salad:

- 1/4-cup olive oil
- 2 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 6 cups (packed) mixed baby greens
- 1/2 green bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced red onion
- two 5-to-6 ounce beef tenderloin steaks, each about 1/2-inch thick
- 3 tbsp. butter, melted
- 6 tbsp. crumbled blue cheese (about 3 ounces)
- 1 tomato, quartered

Prepare spice mixture: Mix all ingredients in small bowl. (Can be made 1 week ahead. Store airtight at room temperature.) Make salad: Whisk oil, vinegar and mustard in large bowl to blend. Season with salt and pepper. Add greens, bell pepper and onion and toss to coat. Divide salad between 2 plates. Cook Steaks: Spread spice mixture on a plate. Coat both sides of steaks with spice mixture. Dip both sides of steaks into melted butter. Heat heavy large skillet over high heat until very hot. Add steaks and cook to desired doneness, about 2 minutes per side (1/2-inch steak) for medium-rare. (Our steaks were about 1 1/4 inch requiring 4 minutes a side for medium-rare.) Transfer to cutting board; let stand 2 minutes. Thinly slice steaks crosswise. Arrange slices atop salads. Sprinkle with cheese. Garnish with tomato and serve. This recipe serves two aging baby boomers very nicely.

*THE NOVEMBER DINNER**THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD IN NEW MILFORD*

During the years of slavery in the United States, 30,000 or more slaves escaped the South via the Underground Railroad, an informal and secret network of paths, waterways, and homes set up by slaves and abolitionists. The story of the Underground Railroad is a dramatic part of the history of the U.S, but many Fairfield and Litchfield county residents are unaware of the local area's role in that drama. At our November dinner, we had a chance to remedy that when we heard from Ms. Deborah Calhoun, director of the Afrikan-American Cultural Awareness Association (A.A.C.A.A.), based in New Milford, CT. Ms. Calhoun has researched the Railroad's history locally and nationally and she started an Underground Railroad Walking Tour in New Milford in 2002 to show people the places in the town that were links in the Underground. She shared her research with us, taking us on the dangerous journey from slavery to freedom. It proved a great evening, as Mensans from both Connecticut chapters listened intently to her fascinating stories and had many questions for her.

Deborah has lived in New Milford for many years and taught in the area. While investigating the history of the Underground Railroad, however, she realized that there was very little information about the Railroad's activity in her town. She asked one of the members of her organization, a teacher, to investigate New Milford's role in helping the refugees from slavery. "I hoped to get a deeper understanding of the period," she said, and she and her colleagues began delving into the subject. They came across several homes in town that had harbored freedom seekers on their trip north to Canada. It looked like the Underground's path came across Candlewood Lake and headed north up to Route 67, and Ms. Calhoun carefully documented this neglected trail.

In 2002, Ms. Calhoun decided to gather together local people to conduct a walking tour of the Underground Railroad sites in New Milford. The response was enthusiastic. Although the walk was 10 miles long, over 400 people showed up to participate. Shortly before she organized the event, she found from further research that the

path went right through her property. She felt that history was right on her doorstep, and it deepened her sense of the local struggle for freedom.

The Walking Tour has continued to be a popular event. Over its seven years, it has attracted classes of students from Waterbury, New York, and Wash. Deborah is continuing her work to document the sites so that the walk may become a self-guided tour on the National Park Services Underground Railroad Network, which would also make it a part of Connecticut's Historic Freedom Trail.

One of her goals, she said is to "celebrate the spirit of perseverance and courage of the freedom seekers and their supporters." It is a powerful story and one she tries to convey to area educators. "Teachers say the hardest thing to talk about in history classes is slavery," Deborah said. "But it's something that we must talk about in order to understand." She finds that many young schoolchildren have little comprehension of slavery. She brings the story home to them by talking about the local history of the Underground Railroad, the dangers freedom seekers had to overcome, and the heroism of all the participants in the Underground.

PERIL AND SECRECY

Although slaves had been escaping the South since the late 18th century, Deborah explained, the term "Underground Railroad" didn't come into use until the 1830s. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was a turning point in the Railroad's history. It stipulated that all runaway slaves, regardless of how far north they made it, were required to be returned to their slave masters. Anyone housing or helping a runaway slave faced imprisonment and fines. The Act made the free states responsible for enforcing slavery and authorized any official to seize and arrest any suspected runaway without trial. This intensified the conflict between North and South, and made the Underground Railroad trip much more dangerous. "The escapees were always looking over

their shoulder," Deborah said, as now it was not enough to make it the northern states; they had to make it to Canada to find safe haven.

The risks the slaves took were terrifying because capture meant you would probably be whipped and beaten, tortured, and then shackled so that you would never try to escape again. If you were a supporter caught helping an escaped slave to freedom, you could be branded, fined, or imprisoned.

The freedom seekers had to be ingenious as well as courageous to escape and elude slave catchers. "They left during the harvest so they could hide in crops," Deborah told us. "They traveled alone or in small groups at night, and hiked through rain and river to make it harder for pursuing bloodhounds to detect their scent. Some mulatto female slaves disguised themselves as white slaveholders to get themselves and their husbands past fugitive hunters." Then there is the amazing story of Henry "Box" Brown, a slave in Virginia who packaged himself in a box and mailed it to Philadelphia to escape to freedom.

"In researching the Underground Railroad", Ms. Calhoun said, "The historian really has to be a detective." Artifacts and clues are hard to come by because secrecy was paramount in the Railroad's mission. Since all traces of plans to help the slaves had to be hidden or destroyed, Deborah looks for codes in her investigations. Someone asked her if the refugees or abolitionists used quilts with secret symbols woven in them. "The juries still out on that," she said. Abolitionists may have used quilts with symbols from African traditions to communicate. The slaves definitely used songs to signal escapes. The legendary Harriet Tubman had slaves sing "Go down Moses" to alert their brethren that she was coming down to lead another escape.

Deborah had much to say about Harriet Tubman, the most famous "conductor" (guide) on the Underground Railroad. After escaping slavery, Tubman made repeated trips back south to plan and rescue hundreds of slaves. Ms. Tubman was truly a heroine, for as she told audiences, she "never lost a passenger."

Railroad jargon was part of the secret language that guides and protectors used to tell when and where to travel. There were "agents" who helped "passengers" find the "stations" (hiding places) and "stationmasters" (those who provided safe homes). The network was the "freedom train" and its final destination was Canada, "the promised Land." But the Underground kept changing their routes and codes to confuse the marshals and slave catchers, who were enticed by rewards offered by slave masters.

THE WALKING TOUR

Deborah explained New Milford's vital part in the Underground Railroad, talking about the groups and individuals who ran the railway in the area. Quakers were one prominent group. They were adamantly opposed to slavery, and several New Milford members provided aid and refuge for runaways. Local Indian tribes also provided safety. Some slaves joined these tribes and intermarried.

A number of New Milford houses that served as stations or depots on the Railroad are still standing. Other safe stops are now buried beneath the man-made Candlewood Lake. The Underground Railroad Walking Tour that Deborah leads is a ten-mile walk covering eight stops:

- 1) The Charles Sabin House - located on Old Town Park Rd. in the Lanesville section. It was the home of Charles Sabin from Pawling, NY, who settled there before 1830.
- 2) Wanzer Farm and Barn - in the Lanesville section. Abraham Wanzer, a Quaker owned this property. The barn was probably a hiding place for runaway slaves on their trip to Canada.
- 3) The old Friends Meeting House - Route 7, Lanesville. The Quakers' place of worship.
- 4) Elisha Bostwick House - Grove St. and Bostwick Place. This home had a hiding place for refugee slaves beneath the floor of the third story attic.
- 5) Augustine A. Thayer Homestead, Grove St. and Route 67. A New York newspaper reported a \$500 reward for the capture of two runaway slaves who were believed to be hiding

- in Thayer's home. The Phillips Property - at the fork between Old Grove St. and Prospect Hill Place/ Route 67. It is believed that escape tunnels led from this property to the Thayer house and then to Bridgewater.
- 6) Gerardus Roberts House - Whittlesey Ave. The abolitionist Deacon Roberts, a member of the Underground Railroad, built this house in 1855. Two other houses belonging to members of the Roberts family are also believed to have been Underground Railroad stops - the secluded Roberts House at Second Hill and Hallet Road, a secluded area about four miles from the Thayer House, and the Gerardus Roberts Farmhouse at Second Hill and Lillis Road.
 - 7) Colonel Nathaniel Thayer House - it is understood that an underground passage from the barn to the house existed for escaped slaves.
 - 8) Boardman House Tunnels - North Main St. A tunnel going from the warehouse to the home was used to transport large casks of molasses and rum. It is also believed to have served as a hiding place or escape path on the Underground Railroad.

Deborah read much existing research such as the 1930's Writer's Project interviews with many former slaves that recorded slave narratives about slave life and the Underground Railroad. But she told us about some new evidence she uncovered in her local research. She found a receipt used in the freedom train at the Wanzer Farm and Barn. She also discovered a secret room at Adrienne's Restaurant in New Milford, a boarded up tunnel in one house, and evidence that Frederick Gunn, founder of the Gunnery School and a local abolitionist, used the school as a safe haven. An unpublished book about the local Underground Railroad also provided helpful background.

CANADA

There were many stops further north on the Underground Railroad that Ms. Calhoun made it a point to visit. Many fleeing slavery crossed the Ohio River from Kentucky to Ohio, which was free territory with a Quaker sanctuary. Deborah visited that place of refuge and also toured the home of Harriet Tubman in Auburn, N.Y., and Underground Railroad depots in Michigan,

which were the last stops before the slaves reached their ultimate destination in Canada. Refugees from slavery were not free until they could reach Canada and escape the arm of the Fugitive Slave Law. Canada had restricted slavery in the late 18th and early 19th century and abolished it in 1834. When slaves crossed the border, they could finally build a new life. Many of the former slaves had skills such as carpentry and blacksmithing that they could put to good use on the Canadian frontier. They practiced their trades in southern Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Vancouver and founded some communities in these regions. Deborah made trips to three black settlements in Canada and she profoundly felt the pioneering spirit that the liberated slaves brought to this Promised Land

One important refugee from slavery who settled in Canada was Josiah Henson, who wrote his story in *The Autobiography of Josiah Henson, a Former Slave*. As Deborah related, Harriet Stowe actually garnered much of her information for her famous novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* from Henson's book. In 1830, Henson fled a Maryland farm when he learned he was going to be sold. He made it to Canada and freedom and founded a black settlement near Dresden, Ontario. He went on to start a laborer's school for fugitive slaves, become a minister, and build a church at the new settlement

Many slaves who escaped to Canada went back to the South after the war to get their families whom they had left behind. Many returned to the United States permanently after emancipation but others stayed in to work their new lands. One group built the famous black village of Africville in Nova Scotia, which Deborah said she wants to visit on her next trip.

RESEARCHING THE SLAVE TRADE IN AFRICA

Last year, Deborah visited Ghana in Africa with her oldest son Kojo to trace the roots of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. For several years, Kojo has visited Africa to research the beginnings of the journey, and he explored the trading routes, the dungeons where slaves were held, and the marketplaces where people were bought and sold. The slave pens reminded Deborah of the pens that she saw in the

American South, the barbaric relics of U.S. slavery. In the interior of Ghana, Deborah and her son toured Salaga, a village that was a huge slave market. Kojo has walked the incredible 1,200-mile journey from Ghana to the ports on the coast where slave traders brought their captives to ships on the coast. From these docks, slaves were shipped to South America, Central America, the West Indies, and the United States.

Koho talked with the elders of villages in Ghana to learn more about the routes that were used and to look at artifacts of slavery such as manacles and shackles that were used to chain the captives. The elders let him bring back to the States some of these grim reminders of the slave trade, and he has created a personal museum to help teach others about the painful history of the period.

Deborah will continue her research on the Underground Railroad and she eventually wants to write a book on the topic. She shares her knowledge with schools and groups interested in history and conducts private tours. If you have heard about a place that may have been a part of the Underground Railroad, you can contact Deborah at the Afrikan-American Cultural Awareness Association. Their website www.aacaa.org has info and videos on the Underground Railroad Walking Tour.

JANUARY'S DINNER: There will be no 3rd Saturday dinner in December as we take a break for the holidays. We will resume in 2010 with our big New Members dinner on Saturday, January 16. The speaker will be Eric Lehman, who teaches poetry and literature at the University of Bridgeport and recently authored the book BRIDGEPORT - TALES FROM THE PARK CITY (2009), a marvelous collection of stories from the city's rich history. Check out the book at www.amazon.com or www.barnesandnoble.com and then bring your questions for Eric to the January dinner.



PUZZLES & QUESTIONS

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

1. True or False: Most important innovations come from creative people.
2. What major league baseball pitcher gave up the most home runs during his career?
3. How many interruptions occur per hour?
4. What is the average percentage of medical bills that U.S. citizens pay out of pocket?
5. How do investigators detect art forgeries?
6. Estimate the populations of these towns: Beverly Hills, California; Niagara Falls, New York; Canton, Ohio; Cooperstown, NY; Cape Cod, Mass.
7. What are the most difficult crimes to solve?
8. Approximately what percentage of United States citizens worked for the military during World War II?
9. What makes an area walkable?
10. What was the first hedge fund and when did it debut?
11. Name some occasions in which you used Ockham's Razor to make a decision.
12. What percentage of U.S. banks are robbed each year?
13. What are the most overrated technologies?
14. What is the deepest gorge in the world?
15. What western state is the most like Connecticut?
16. What are the chances that a tax filer will be audited by the I.R.S?
17. Name some autodidacts.
18. What is the biggest statue in the world?
19. How can you distinguish between skill and luck?

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES:

2. How many private investigators are there in the United States?
A: About 60,000. Many are former FBI, customs, Secret Service, or even CIA agents.
4. In the National Football League, what percentage of plays run from scrimmage last year (2008 - 2009 season) were passing plays? What percentage of the passes were completed? What was the average gain per completion?
A: Two-thirds of plays were passing plays. 61% of the passes were completed and the average gain on completions was 10.73 yards. The average gain per pass attempt was 6.55 yards. 2.81% of passes were intercepted. The defense sacked the quarterback about 5.9% of the times he dropped back to pass.
The average gain on rushing plays was 4.2 yards. 1.81% of running plays were fumbles.
6. Describe the Taylor Rule used in monetary policy.
A: The Taylor Rule is a rule or formulation about how the Federal Reserve Bank should increase or decrease the Federal Funds Rate in response to changes in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The Federal Funds Rate is the interest rate at which commercial banks borrow and lend to each other on a short-term basis (usually overnight). The rule was developed by Stanford economist John Taylor in the 1980s.

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES (cont.):

In a simple form, the rule is:

$$R = P + 0.5y + 0.5 (P - 2) + 2$$

where R = the short term interest rate, P = the rate of inflation over the previous four quarters (using the GDP deflator measure), and Y = the difference between real GDP and potential output.

Taylor assumed that there was a target level of inflation, which he put at 2%, and that that the equilibrium real interest rate (nominal rate - inflation rate) was also 2%.

According to Taylor's Rule, if inflation rose by 1%, the Fed should raise the Federal Funds Rate by 1.5%. If GDP falls by 1% relative to its growth path, then the Fed should cut the rate by .5%.

8. What is the flattest continent?

A: Europe is the flattest continent with an average height of 230 meters.

10. What countries border Mexico?

A: The United States borders Mexico on the north, and Guatemala and Belize border on the south. Guatemala has about 14 million people. Belize, which used to be British Honduras, has only 320,000 people and has one of the lowest population densities in the world. It gained self-government in 1964, took the name Belize in 1973, and achieved full independence in 1981.

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT MENSA TREASURY

Fiscal Year:

April 1, 2009 - March 31, 2010

Opening balance at 4/1/09

\$9013.70

INCOME

American Mensa Local Group Support
Funds: \$1261.38

TOTAL INCOME: \$1261.38

EXPENSES

Chronicle Printing Expenses: \$426.12

Chronicle Postage: \$318.88

Speakers' Dinners: \$73.37

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$818.37

WORD CHECK

See if you can define these difficult 's' words.

Answers are below.

1. aflatoxin
(af- luh- TOK- sin)
2. dysbiosis
3. fermentation
4. glutathione
5. macrophage
6. myopathy
7. peristalsis
(per- uh- STAWL- sis, per- uh- STAL- sis)
8. prebiotic
9. probiotic
10. protozoa
11. steroid
12. synbiotics

1. aflatoxin - any of a group of toxic compounds produced by certain molds, especially *Aspergillus flavus*, that contaminate stored food supplies such as animal feed and peanuts.
2. dysbiosis - a condition in which the gastrointestinal system's bacterial population becomes disturbed.
3. fermentation - a chemical reaction in which sugars are broken down into smaller molecules that can be used in living systems. It does not require oxygen.
4. glutathione - a tri-peptide consisting of the amino acids cysteine, glycine, and glutamic acid. It is a "master" antioxidant that regulates lesser antioxidants like vitamin C and vitamin E, regenerates immune cells, and detoxifies a wide range of chemicals.
5. macrophage - the white blood cells of the immune system that serve as its first line of defense, protecting against bacteria and other pathogens.
6. myopathy - any abnormality or disease of muscle tissue.
7. peristalsis - the wavelike, involuntary muscular contractions that move food through the digestive system.
8. prebiotic - non-digestible food ingredients that stimulate the growth of or activity of beneficial bacteria in the digestive system.
9. probiotic - a beneficial bacterium found in the intestinal tract of healthy mammals; often considered to be a plant.
10. protozoa - small parasitic organisms that can cause disease, including major infections.
11. steroid - a naturally occurring or synthetic fat-soluble organic compound that contains 17 carbon atoms arranged in four rings. Examples: estrogen, testosterone, many anti-inflammatory drugs, and anabolic steroids that stimulate bone growth and appetite and increase muscle mass and strength.
12. synbiotics - the combination of probiotics and prebiotics.

ANSWERS:

NOTED & QUOTED

If you don't read the newspaper you are uninformed, if you do read the newspaper you are misinformed. - *Mark Twain, (1835 - 1910)*

All journeys have secret destinations of which the traveler is unaware. - *Martin Buber, (1878 - 1965), Austrian-born Jewish philosopher*

Sometimes, I feel discriminated against. But it does not make me angry. It merely astonishes me. How can any one deny themselves the pleasure of my company? - *Zora Neale Hurston, (1891 - 1960), Afro-American novelist, folklorist*

There is nothing like a dream to create the future. - *Victor Hugo, (1802 - 1885)*

The world is seldom what it seems; to man, who dimly sees, realities appear as dreams, and dreams realities. - *Samuel Johnson, (1709 - 1784)*

A consistent soul believes in destiny, a capricious one in chance. - *Benjamin Disraeli, (1804 - 1881)*

He turns not back who is bound by a star. - *Leonardo Da Vinci, (1452 - 1519)*

The least touchable object in the world is the eye. - *Rudolf Arnheim, (1904 - 2007), German-American art and film theorist, perceptual psychologist*

Life is a search for the truth; and there is no truth. - *Chinese proverb*

Our battered suitcases were piled on the sidewalk again; we had longer ways to go. But no matter, the road is life. - *Jack Kerouac, (1923 - 1969)*

Embrace the detours. - *Kevin Charbonneau*

High thoughts must have high language. - *Aristophanes, (444 - 380 B.C.E.), Greek comic dramatist*

Every time I look out the window, I see a poem passing. - *Gwendolyn Brooks, (1917 - 2000), African-American poet*

If poetry comes not as naturally as the leave to a tree, it better not come at all. - *John Keats, (1795 - 1821), English Romantic poet*

There is no such thing as writer's block if your standards are low enough. - *Linda Pastan, (1932 -), U.S. poet*

A drama critic is a person who surprises a playwright by informing him what he meant. - *Wilson Mizner, (1876 - 1933), U.S. humorist*

Music reveals a personal past of which, until then, each of us was unaware, moving us to lament misfortunes we never suffered and wrongs we did not commit. - *Jorge Luis Borges, (1899 - 1986), Argentine poet, essayist, and short-story writer*

The trouble with music appreciation in general is that people are taught to have too much respect for music; they should be taught to love it instead. - *Igor Stravinsky, (1882 - 1971), Russian composer*

The Wright Brothers weren't the first to fly. They were just the first not to crash. - *Anonymous*

The secret of dealing successfully with a child is not to be its parent. - *Mell Lazarus, (1927 -), U.S. cartoonist*

Hope inspires the good to reveal itself. - *Emily Dickinson, (1830 - 1886)*

The sooner you fall behind, the more time you'll have to catch up. - *Steven Wright, (1955 -), Canadian comedian*

There is a fine line between "hobby" and "mental illness." - *Anonymous*

All things are difficult before they are easy. - *Thomas Fuller, (1608 - 1661), English clergymen and historian*

Above all nations is humanity. - *Goldwin Smith, (1823 - 1910), British-Canadian historian and journalist*

NOTED & QUOTED CONT.

Many speak the truth when they say that they despise riches, but they mean the riches possessed by others. - *Charles Caleb Colton, (1780 - 1832), English epigrammist*

Wisdom is to finish the moment, to find the journey's end in every step of the road, to live the greatest number of good hours.
- *Ralph Waldo Emerson, (1803 - 1882)*

It is the still, small voice that the soul heeds, not the deafening blasts of doom.
- *William Dean Howells, (1837 - 1920), U.S. novelist*

Our ego is our silent partner - too often with controlling interest. - *Cullen Hightower, (1923 -), U.S. salesman and sales trainer*

A human being can stand any amount of pain.
- *Frank Herbert, (1920 - 1986), U.S. science fiction novelist, Dune*

The trouble with being punctual is that nobody's there to appreciate it.
- *Franklin P. Jones, (1853 - 1935), U.S. humorist*

MENSA MIND GAMES 2009 RESULTS

Mensa members came together April 24 - 26 in Kentucky for the annual Mensa Mind Games(R). For 48 hours straight, they played and rated new board and card games. At the end, they voted for the five games that will bear the Mensa Select(R) seal. To learn about past winners, visit www.mindgames.us.mensa.org.

The 2009 winners are as follows:***Cornerstone***

This is a 3-D strategy game requiring a steady hand and clever mind in order to build, climb and race to the top before it all comes tumbling down. www.goodcompanygames.com

Dominion

Players compete to create the best deck of cards by buying action (10 of 25 possible each game), treasure, and victory cards. The deck with the most victory points wins! Order phone: (505) 771- 8813

Marrakech

Each player takes the role of a salesperson who tries to outwit the others. Roll the dice, move Assam, and determine whether you must make a payment to lay a rug. www.fundexgames.com

Stratum

Following the layering laws each player tries to cover up their opponent's pieces. The player with most exposed pieces wins! www.familygamesamerica.com

Tic-Tac-Ku

An exciting twist on the age old favorite, Tic-Tac-Toe. The game has nine playing areas. Each player determines in which playing area his opponent may play. Object: win the most playing areas. www.colorku.com

Congratulations to the winners, and a big thank you to all of our Mensan judges!

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