

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.



ARCHIVED COPIES OF THE CHRONICLE

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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TEEN MENSANS – Interested in forming a Teen Mensa group in CT Mensa? If you'd like to get together and meet with other young Mensans to discuss interests and plan activities, this is your chance. Contact Quinn Gruver at ConnecticutLady@aol.com.

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 - FEBRUARY

Friday, February 12, 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.

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sharon@oberstlaw.com

Sunday, February 14, 3:00 pm to ?

BILLARDS

At U.S.1 Billiards, West Haven CT (just past the Orange/West Haven border, past Best Buy and Target, on Route 1 - easy access off of Exits 41 or 42 of I-95. U.S.1 has a deal where you can play from 3pm to 8pm for a flat \$10 rate. Like On Cue, all the tables are 9 ft Brunswick Gold Crown tables. Contact Tom O'Neill at doctec2@gmail.com for further info.

Tuesday, February 16, 7:30

Post Road Dinner

The Bridge House Restaurant (<http://www.milfordbridgehouse.com>), 49 Bridgeport Ave. (Post Rd.), Milford, CT (Just over the Stratord-Milford bridge.) This restaurant closes at 9:00 on Tuesdays. Contact Jim Mizera at jimizera@hotmail.com or (203) 522-1959 for reservations or info.

Saturday, February 20, 6:30 pm

MONTHLY DINNER Putnam House Restaurant

The Seelye Room, 12 Depot Place, Bethel (downtown – across from old railroad station), CT 06801 (www.theputnamhouse.com - Dinner Menu 1). HYDROGEN: THE PERFECT FUEL - SEPARATING WATER AND FACT FROM FICTION. Technology developer Tim Dolan, owner of Enabling Technologies in Trumbull, will talk about the promise of hydrogen power and some of the misconceptions about it. Over the last 25 years of his professional career, Tim Dolan has been involved in various R+D projects ranging from diffractive optics to military aerospace applications. He is a contributor to the ISO committee responsible for writing the codes on hydrogen electrolysis systems. He has jointly developed a renewable powered, high-pressure electrolysis system and is currently building practical devices that use the energy

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from this sustainable process. Mr. Dolan has provided pertinent information about hydrogen and the electrolysis process to curious people of all ages. He will bring along some CDs with additional information for those who wish to investigate the topic further.

Dress is casual. Before the presentation, we will enjoy dinner. We will be ordering from Dinner Menu 1 (check www.theputnamhouse.com). There is parking in the rear of the restaurant and in the nearby Old Railroad Station lot.

MARCH

Friday, March 12, 7:00 pm

Danbury Dinner

Southern Connecticut and Connecticut/Western Massachusetts Joint Dinner

Saturday, March 20, 6:30 pm

MONTHLY DINNER

Location TBA

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.

FEBRUARY

3, 10, 17, 24 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 message, calls returned about 9 pm or weekends or email mensafran@yahoo.com

4, 11, 18, 25 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).

5 Friday 5:30 pm

Happy Hour in Wallingford

(ME, 1st Fridays) Ann Polanski (contact her at 203-269-4565 or ann.polanski@rfsworld.com or ann.polanski@comcast.net) at Alina's Ristorante, 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 Avenue. Alina's is in the Yale Plaza on the right.

9 Tuesday 6:00 pm

Quiet Corner Dinner

(ME, 2nd Tuesday) at J.D. Cooper's in Putnam, CT. Easy access from I-395 exit 95 near Putnam Ford. It's a nice cozy, congenial place with a full menu and a reputation for great food. Join us for a full meal, a sandwich, or just dessert and come away gastronomically satisfied in addition to a nice time with some of the area M's.

The address is 146 Park Road, Putnam, Conn. 06260 and the phone there is 860-928-0501. Visit www.jdcoopers.net for menus and other info. I'll probably have an M sign on the table. If possible, please call 860-974-0814 or email Joe Wonoski at n1khh@aol.com if you plan to attend. Hope to see you there!

10 Wednesday 5:30 pm

Shoreline Happy Hour

(ME, 2nd Wednesday) in Branford at The Donovan's Reef www.donovans-reef.com web site has a small map, and here are some directions with distances - from I-95 take exit 54/Cedar Street. Proceed south on Cedar Street, crossing Route 1 (North Main Street) for about 0.5 mi. to Rose Street. Take a left on Rose, pass the Post Office on your right and go 0.25 mi. to a driveway on the right where you will enter the parking lot for a number of businesses in a complex known as Lockworks Square. Donovan's Reef is partway through on the left. Locals can also enter Lockworks Square from the Ivy Street side just off of Main Street. Shoreline Foods faces Ivy. The lounge is on the left inside. We usually reserve the round table in the corner (with potential to annex adjacent ones) and will likely have an "M" sign visible. We start around 5:30. There are free daily bar munchies and numerous tasty items in the comprehensive and modestly priced menu. Hope to see you there!

Questions? Contact Mike Wilson at 203-481-2858 or MahoutMike@aol.com

12 Friday 6:30 pm

Diner Dinner

semimonthly, 2nd and 4th Fridays) 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. Questions? For info, contact Howard Brender at 860-635-5673 or howiebren@aol.com
Subject: Diner Dinner

12 Friday 8:00 pm, Right after Diner Dinner

Theater: Forbidden Broadway

Right after Diner Dinner, join us for a live production of Forbidden Broadway at the Berlin Cabaret Theatre - about a mile from the Diner. According to the advance billing, "In this long-running Off-Broadway hit musical revue, Broadway's greatest musical legends meet Broadway's greatest satirist in a hilarious, loving, and endlessly entertaining tribute to some of the theatre's greatest stars and songwriters. Think of it as the Broadway version of Saturday Night Live." Sounds too good to miss!
For reservations, contact the theatre directly: (860) 829-1248. For information, contact Barb Holstein at (860)632-7873 or BarbCPA@att.net

13 Saturday 9:00 am

Breakfast

(ME, 2nd Saturday) at Sal's Diner (formerly Oh Boy Diner / Rosie's Diner), 143 Gold Star Hwy, Rte 184, Groton, CT after Day's Inn, on your right. From New London, bear left on the bridge and exit Rte 184. From Rhode Island, exit 86 to CT 12 / CT 184, turn right on King's Hwy, continue to Gold Star Hwy, Rte 184. For details, call Roger Richards (860)572-1525 or email him at richardsrt@snet.net

13 Saturday 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 www.us.mensa.org/testingvoucher.

13 Saturday 12:00 - 6:00 pm

Make Pizza Day

at Fran Devevo's, near Granby, CT, 12 miles west of I-91. I'll make dough and sauce, and have cheeses available. You bring your own toppings. This is a no alcohol, family time. I have cats and dog, and it's a very small apartment so RSVPs are necessary. I think I can fit 6 people. Do not wear nice clothes as I am artist and lots of art stuff abounds. Also have foosball table, interesting record collection. Do not tease the dog or cats. Also house rules about chemical stuff...dryer sheets, scented detergent, make-up, perfume, cologne, hair care products, etc. Call for details. Fran Devevo 860-738-8488 or email menসাfran@yahoo.com

13 Saturday 6:30 pm

Neon John Revisited

Join us once again at the Funky Monkey Café in Cheshire for another riveting performance by our own John DiLeo. John is an award-winning composer heard on ABC television, and will perform his unique blend of thought-provoking originals and high-energy classics. The Funky Monkey is located at the Watch Factory Shoppes, 130 Elm St, Cheshire, CT. You can see pictures at <http://www.thefunkymonkeycafe.com>. Contact Barb Holstein at 860-632-7873 or BarbCPA@att.net for reservations or information. Note: We must arrive by 6:30 to get a seat.

18 Thursday 6:30 pm

Pioneer Valley Dinner

(ME, 3rd Thursday)) at La Piazza Ristorante , 30 Boltwood Walk in Amherst, Mass. Questions? Ian Fraser ianfraser@usa.net

20 Saturday 2:30 pm

Book Discussion

Join us at Pamela Guinan's home, 323 Griswold Road, Wethersfield, CT, for a discussion of *Spy Dust: Two Masters of Disguise Reveal the Tools and Operations That Helped Win the Cold War* (nonfiction) by Antonio Mendez, Jonna Mendez, Bruce Henderson. "Spy dust" is a chemical marking compound developed by the KGB (Soviet secret police) to help track targeted individuals. It is just one of the tools and techniques discussed by the authors, who headed up the Disguise and Documents Division of the CIA's Office of Technical Service and are now consultants for the CBS TV drama series *The Agency*. The authors met in the mid-1980s while helping to rebuild U.S. intelligence operations in the USSR, which had been severely crippled by American traitors selling secret information to the Soviets. Included here are fascinating tales of clandestine meetings, narrow escapes, missed clues, ingenious equipment, and various successes and failures, and the reader soon comes to realize that a lot of professional brain power goes into planning and carrying out this deadly game with the highest stakes imaginable. RSVP to Pam Guinan 860-563-5761 or Pamela.cwm@hotmail.com

21 Sunday 12:30 pm

Rescheduled for this month only

Indian Lunch

Meet us at Haveli's Indian Restaurant for a \$9.95 all you can eat Buffet. Haveli's is in South Middletown (1300 So. Main St. - Rte 17). You can view a sample of the menu here http://www.haveliindia.com/haveli_photos.htm Please RSVP to Barb at BarbCPA@att.net or 860-632-7873 so she can reserve with the restaurant.

26 Friday 5:00 pm

Happy Hour

(ME, 4th Friday) at The Holiday Inn in North Haven, web site www.holidayinn.com/h/d/hi/1/en/hotel/nohct?rpb=hotel&crUrl=/h/d/hi/1/en/hotelsearchresults Come on down and join us this month, we'd love to see ya. Contact Gail Trowbridge 203-877-4472 or Gail.Trowbridge@att.net

26 Friday 6:30 pm

Diner Dinner (semimonthly, 2nd and 4th Fridays) 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. Questions? For info, contact Howard Brender at 860-635-5673 or howiebren@aol.com Subject: Diner Dinner

LOOKING AHEAD

March 19-21 Fri 5 pm .through Sun. 4 pm

Region 1 Games Weekend

Hosted by RVC Lori Norris and her husband, Ron, at the Comfort Inn & Suites in Ludlow, MA. Space limited to 50 registrants. Registration required. Mail registration fee (\$25 per person) to Lori Norris, 294 Parkside Drive, Warwick, RI 02888. Reserve hotel room directly with hotel (413-589-9300) and ask for Mensa rate which is good through February 22. Rates are \$87.99 for two queen beds with a \$10 charge for the third and fourth guest. The hotel has a "deluxe continental breakfast" for those staying at the hotel. This event is being limited to adults only, no children. There will be limited hospitality and no alcohol provided by the hosts. You may, and are encouraged, to BYOB; however, no alcohol may be carried in open containers in the hotel (bring a covered, opaque container). Bring your games to share. For further information, please e-mail Lori at lorijnorris@hotmail.com

March 27 Saturday 2:30 pm

Book Discussion

Join us at Pamela Guinan's home for a discussion of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain. This irresistible tale of the adventures of two friends growing up in frontier America is one of Mark Twain's most popular novels. The farcical, colorful, and poignant escapades of Tom and his friend Huckleberry Finn brilliantly depict the humor and pathos of growing up on the geographic and cultural rim of nineteenth-century America. Originally intended for children, the book transcends genre in its magical depiction of innocence and possibility, and is now regarded as one of Twain's masterpieces. RSVP to Pam Guinan 860-563-5761 or Pamela.cwm@hotmail.com

MENZA MIND GAMES 2010

APRIL 16 - 18, SAN DIEGO, CA.

Mind Games® 2010 will be held April 16-18 at the San Diego Hilton Mission Valley, 901 Camino Del Rio South, San Diego, CA 92108; 800/682-6099. Nestled in the Mission Valley hillside in the heart of San Diego, this recently renovated hotel offers a relaxing and welcoming atmosphere.

To get the special Mensan room rate of \$95, call and mention "2010 Mensa Mind Games" or reserve your room online. Please note: you must be registered for Mind Games to get these great room rates. If you have not registered for Mind Games by the time you check in, the hotel will revert your room rate back to their normal rate.

Don't forget to make your travel reservations at www.us.mensa.org/travel ~ you can get the best deals and still use your frequent-flyer and Mensa discount numbers!

Please note that you may need to book your hotel directly through the hotel in order to receive our special Mensa rate.

The San Diego Hilton Mission Valley is six miles from San Diego International Airport. Typical minimum charge for the Super Shuttle: \$11.50

Typical minimum charge for taxi service: \$17
Driving directions: Take I-5 north to I-8 East; exit Mission Center Road; turn right onto Camino Del Rio South. The hotel is on the left.

REGIONAL GATHERINGS

MENZA 2010 ANNUAL GATHERING. June 30 – July 5, Dearborn, Michigan

50th Anniversary of Mensa in North America. Visit <http://www.ag.us.mensa.org> for more information. As 2009 draws to a close, so does the best registration rate of \$80 for the 2010 Annual Gathering. More than 1,000 Mensans have already registered to attend. Running from Wednesday, June 30, to Monday, July 5, AG10 is taking advantage of the holiday and scheduling a full extra day of fun! Along with Young Mensan programming and leadership development, the AG's program tracks will include:

- Mensa Gold: The celebration of Mensa in North America's 50th continues!
- Diverse Detroit: Explore Detroit as a microcosm of diversity and race relations.
- History in Motion: A Mensan view of the auto industry and its impact on the past century.
- Lions and Tigers and... All Things Sports! This track is for anyone who believes in making it against the odds.
- Motown Motion: How the Detroit Sound and its players influenced generations through music.
- Politics and Borders: From influential labor leaders to international relations, see what makes Detroit politics so intriguing.
- Cadillac's Ponchartrain: Motor through miscellaneous topics in style!

Still to come: day tours, the AG three-meal plan including the anniversary gala, and more! Don't miss it! Visit <http://www.ag.us.mensa.org> for more information. We hope to see you there! Maria Sawczuk, AG 2010 Chair

WASHINGTON, DC RG

Matrix 2: "Piratical Sabbatical"

April 30-May 2, 2010

Metropolitan Washington Mensa
Aye, me hearties — Over 30 Programs and Activities in All!

Visit us at mwmrg.org. Register and reserve your room online!

Registration: \$79 in February, \$85 in March, \$89 in April (till the 28th), \$99 at the door.

Holiday Inn Gaithersburg
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Make new friends. Learn to talk like a pirate.
Night pool parties.

Witness astounding feats of wonder.

Enjoy 24-hour hospitality and games.

Feast at our Pirate Banquet.

Quaff some ale with yer shipmates (Pirates must be over 21 to quaff ale.)

Visit yer Nation's Capital - at the height of spring!

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

I am looking forward to February, the shortest, and frequently coldest and snowiest, month of the year. New Hampshire's Regional Gathering (RG) will be held in Portsmouth the weekend of February 12-14. This event is usually well attended by members from around the region. If past performance is anything to go by, there should be interesting speakers, good food (I'll be contributing to the crockpot cook-off), lots of games and great opportunities to mingle with fellow Mensans and have impromptu discussions of many and varied topics.

It is time to plan ahead for March. The first weekend is Central New Jersey's RG, Snowball, as well as an AMC meeting for me (the agenda should be on line shortly). For those of you who don't know me well, I like games. So I am hosting a regional weekend games event in Springfield, Mass. the weekend of March 19 - 21. Space is limited so reserve early. If you are interested, e-mail me at lorijnorris@hotmail.com for more details or check out the Mensa Region 1 Facebook group for info (are you one of the more than 150 members?).

March is time to sign up for the 2010 Culture Quest® which will be held April 11th. I have been honored to be named as one of the American Mensa Ltd. (AML) Leadership Development Ambassadors and as such will be presenting a Leadership Development Workshop (LDW) session at the Annual Gathering in Dearborn, Michigan this summer. In addition, as one of the three named ambassadors, I will be representing American Mensa at the European Annual Gathering in Prague at the end of July. What a

privilege! There will be a couple of European LDW presenters in Dearborn. You may want to fit one of these sessions into your schedule to see how Mensas in Canada and Europe differ. Don't forget that the AG in Dearborn will be a combined North American Annual Gathering so there will be presentations by our Canadian neighbors. Take this opportunity to make friends with members of other national Mensas; remember, we are part of an international organization.

Renewal season is upon us. You may renew online. Is it time for you to consider a life membership or a multi-year plan (three or five years)? Multi-year plans are a money-saving option and help prevent your membership from inadvertently expiring. Don't forget local group officers and proctors must be members in good standing with AML. As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions/concerns/suggestions you may have about Mensa. I may not know all the answers off the top of my head, but typically I am able to track down the appropriate person to answer the question or to get the suggestion to.

- Lori

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THE JANUARY DINNER

BRIDGEPORT - A CITY OF INVENTION

Southern Connecticut Mensa started off its 2010 Monthly Dinner schedule at a different restaurant because a water pipe broke at Tonelli's, our normal meeting place. Instead we ate at The Putnam House Restaurant (www.theputnam-house.com), a highly rated restaurant in downtown Bethel, less than a mile from Tonelli's. We had a private room upstairs to enjoy our meal. Afterward, we sat back and listened to Eric Lehman speak about his book "Bridgeport - Tales from the Park City (2009, History Press - available at www.historypress.net or www.amazon.com). Eric focused his talk on Bridgeport's famous inventors and entrepreneurs, regaling us with stories about P.T. Barnum, Tom Thumb, Elias Howe, Joseph Frisbie, Andrew Riker, Gustave Whitehead, and Alfred Fones. He accompanied his stories with a wonderful slide show of historic photos of the Park City and its famous figures.

Eric has a special interest in Bridgeport, as he has taught literature and creative writing at the University of Bridgeport for over a decade. He's published essays, reviews, poems, travel stories, and fictional pieces in dozens of journal and magazines. His passion for travel writing landed him his contract for his book on Bridgeport. Originally, he submitted a travel book to History Press but the publisher wasn't interested in it. Instead, they asked Eric to write a book about Bridgeport as part of its series on American towns and cities. Eric dug into the project, spending countless hours in the Bridgeport Library going over old newspapers, and he talked to many city historians. Drawing on this rich trove of stories, he decided to tell the Park City's tale through the lives of its many innovators and heroes, mixing their stories with the city's history. History Press loved his style and published his book in 2009.

BRIDGEPORT'S BIGGEST DREAMER

Eric called Bridgeport "a city of dreamers and inventors" and its biggest dreamer was the legendary showman P.T. Barnum (1810 - 1891), "a master of the art of self-promotion." It was his promotion that put Bridgeport, chartered in 1836, on the map. Barnum was born Phineas

Taylor Barnum in Bethel, Connecticut, on Greenwood Ave., not far from where we ate. This year, Bethel plans to place a statue of Barnum on Greenwood, beside the Bethel Public Library. It will join P.T. Barnum Square, a small street nearby, and the P.T. Barnum Fountain as reminders of the town's favorite son. Bethel was where Barnum caught the entrepreneurial bug, running a small store, a sweepstakes, and a newspaper. From his early ventures, he learned the value of spectacle, and moved to the bigger stage of New York City to take over the American Museum. But Barnum found that he needed a big act to draw customers to his museum. In Bridgeport, he found his "big" attraction.

In 1838, Charles Stratton was born in the town of Bridgeport, a place of muddy streets, cow pastures, open sewers, and a few dozen stores. Charles was a midget who stood two-feet high at four-years old and never reached three-feet tall. The showman Barnum saw a great opportunity. He trained the boy to impersonate famous figures and perform skits, dubbed him General Tom Thumb, and took him on tour. Charles was a smashing success. No mere freak, "Tom Thumb wasn't just a little person, he was a comic genius," Eric said. On his national and world tours, his comic timing entertained paupers and princes, as he appeared before crowds of thousands, and in private audiences before the Duke of Wellington, Queen Elizabeth, and many royal personages. Thumb went on several tours, and added to the act when he married the midget Lavinia Warren. He and his bride were beloved by all. "Before TV," Eric said, "he was probably seen by more people than anyone else on earth."

Barnum's first world tour with Tom Thumb in 1844 made him wealthy. Upon returning to the States, Barnum decided to build a home equal to the great palaces he had seen in Europe, The beauties of Long Island Sound and the new railroads stopping in Bridgeport convinced him to build his house in Bridgeport. But Barnum's new house was more than just a house and more than a mansion, it was a Moorish palace, three stories high with minarets and an onion-shaped dome that was ninety feet above the ground. This grand home, which he called Iranistan, had

gardens and a pond, and the latest technology. Quite simply, it was the most fabulous home in the United States and drew admirers from around the globe. We have no photograph of it, but Eric showed us an artist's drawing of this dazzling spectacle. "Had this palace not burned down in 1856," Eric said, "it would undoubtedly be the greatest tourist attraction in New England today." Barnum lost his dream home in the blaze, but he never lost his dreams or his love for his adopted city. Although he traveled the world, he kept the Park City his home, building and living in three beautiful homes there - Lindencroft, Waldemere and Marina.

Eric had many stories about the many roles P.T. Barnum played - museum director, circus owner, bank director, state legislator, Mayor of Bridgeport, real estate developer, president of the Port Jefferson Steamboat Company, abolitionist, and philanthropist. He suffered many losses - he went bankrupt, his New York Museum burned down twice, his Iranistan palace burned to the ground, and so did the winter quarters of his circus in Bridgeport. But always he rose again. He managed to milk even his setbacks for everything they were worth. Eric chuckled about the heartbreaking story of the aged Jumbo the Elephant's death. Barnum's traveling circus was loading its train one day when an oncoming train struck the wandering Jumbo and the baby elephant Tom Thumb, killing Jumbo and breaking Tom Thumb's leg. Barnum told the press that Jumbo sacrificed himself to push Tom Thumb to safety. The news saddened the world, though no one knew what was truth and what was melodramatic publicity.

Barnum was as great a philanthropist as he was a showman. During his lifetime, he donated land to Bridgeport for parks, books to start Bridgeport Library, and money to found Bridgeport Hospital and Tufts University. In his will, he left money for what was to become the Barnum Museum, a landmark which still stands in downtown Bridgeport and whose photo graces the cover of Eric's book

THE FUTURE ARRIVES

When Barnum and Tom Thumb started touring, Bridgeport was a modest city of about 4,000

people. Over the course of Barnum's lifetime, however, its population grew ten-fold, and it became one of the world's leaders in several industries. Eric surveyed for us a few of these fields where Bridgeport became a giant, starting with the sewing machine industry.

In 1846, Elias Howe patented the first successful chain-stitching sewing machine. He could not find investors in the U.S., however, so he left for England. Meanwhile, several U.S. inventors continued working on sewing machines. Allen B. Wilson made improvements to the machine and teamed with manufacturer Nathaniel Wheeler to start a business. Coincidentally, they decided to manufacture their machines at the empty Jerome Clock Factory building in Bridgeport, a failed project of P.T. Barnum's. Over the next generation, they grew and grew, expanding their workforce to 1000 employees. In 1856, Elias Howe returned from a stay in England, litigated his patents, and set up a competing factory in Bridgeport. The city, aided by the incredible demand for uniforms for the Union Army in the Civil War, established itself as the number one sewing machine producer in the world.

Connected to the world by rail and steamship, Bridgeport forged ahead on many other fronts. Eric talked about several of the Bridgeport companies that sprung to life in the 19th century, including Bridgeport Brass (1865), Remington Arms (1866), Warner Brothers (1876), Bryant Electric Company (1888), Bullard Machine Tool (1880), and Harvey Hubbell (1888). Bridgeport's early leadership in these industries is recognized, but Eric also delved into the stories of some lesser-known Bridgeport companies, such as the Holmes and Edwards Silver Co. In the late 19th century, they figured out how to silver-plate tableware, automating the manufacture of silver sterling forks, spoons, and knives. They produced such beautiful and durable silverware that many people assumed they were handcrafted.

PIE IN THE SKY

Eric posed the question "Why did it happen in Bridgeport?" Why did this city burst forth in so many industries? No doubt it had geographic advantages - its location on Long Island Sound and its position between New York City and Boston. But it was more than just geography

that pushed the Park City into the technological vanguard; Bridgeport blossomed because it welcomed new immigrants and new ideas, and newcomers and natives borrowed ideas from each other, "embracing new possibilities" wherever they were found. Bridgeporters imagined the future and then created it.

A personal favorite of Eric's provides an example. As he confessed, "My favorite business from Bridgeport's history is Frisbie Pies." This was evident as he passed around a treasured antique Frisbie Pie plate he bought off eBay. In the 1850s, young Joseph Frisbie worked in his family's small but successful pie business. Joseph had an eye on the industry sprouting up all around him and asked himself why couldn't he apply the automation he saw in sewing machines, machine tools, wiring, and clothing to pies. When Joseph inherited the family business in 1903, he moved the business to a factory in the east Bridgeport, a less developed area of the city. There he set up the first pie-assembly line and began producing 80,000 pies a day. Studying Harvey Hubbell's successes, he expanded regionally. Many companies copied his idea, however, and ultimately the frozen-pie industry took over. But Frisbie's steel pie plates had found another use in the 1920's - as disks to be tossed about. After World War II, the Frisbee Company took the idea and made a plastic version of it - the Frisbee, Bridgeport's inadvertent gift to the world.

PIONEERS OF THE ROADS, SEAS, AND SKIES

Bridgeport kept innovating in the 20th century and the later chapters of Eric's book feature several Bridgeport inventors who transformed transportation. While some of these men such as Igor Sikorsky became famous, others have been unfairly neglected and Eric examined with us why this might be.

Who invented the airplane? "If you go to Germany," Eric told us, "they'll tell you it was Gustave Whitehead, not the Wright Brothers." Whitehead was a German immigrant to Bridgeport who settled in the Black Rock area. He built his own motors, and used balsa and pine at first, and then steel and aluminum. A few years before the Wright Brothers first flight in 1904, he took his gliders out to Tunxis Hill,

amazing children and adults with his flights, which the Bridgeport Herald newspaper reported on. He also tested his planes in Lordship on Stratford's beaches. He flew off, traveled up to seven miles, and then landed in Long Island Sound. Although no photos of Whitehead's flights exist, he had many signed witnesses, and Scientific American published an article detailing his planes.

Why, then, has Whitehead been denied credit for inventing the airplane? The Wright Brothers visited Whitehead's workshop once and probably drew on his work. The problem, Eric told us, was his personality. "Whitehead was a technical genius, but he had no people skills. He managed to rub everyone the wrong way." Gustave had many investors, but when he got tired of working on their projects, he would abandon their work for something else that piqued his curiosity. His restless mind frustrated his backers. "If only Barnum had still been alive when Gustave Whitehead was," Eric mused, the team could have been the perfect blend of personality, promotion, and production. But Eric, like many others, feels that whatever Whitehead's personal shortcomings, he deserves some of the credit for manned flight. "There wasn't one inventor of the airplane anymore than there was one inventor of the automobile," Eric argued.

Whitehead briefly worked as a machinist at a forgotten but revolutionary Bridgeport company, the Locomobile Company of America. This company produced "alternative energy" vehicles before petroleum took over. At the beginning of the 20th century, the company turned out 5,000 steam-powered autos at its factory near Seaside Park. Then Andrew Riker, a young inventor, transformed the company and the industry. When he was only 13 years old, Riker made an electric tricycle. In 1896, he built the first electric cars. Not one to stand still, in 1901, he invented the first four-cylinder gas engine and sold it to Locomobile. He continued improving "the Locomobile", and in 1908, his #16 car became the 1st American car to win the Vanderbilt Cup international road race, reaching nearly 65 mph. During World War I, Locomobile shifted production, making thousands of trucks for England and the Allied forces. Ultimately, the company lost out to competitors, but collectors and historians still remember Bridgeport's Locomobile.

One of Eric's slides showed a photo of another brilliant local innovator, one who almost no one in the audience recognized - Simon Lake, inventor of the submarine. "Before Simon Lake, submarines had been deathtraps," Eric said. But Lake overcame the complexities that stymied others. He set up a factory on Bridgeport's Soundview Avenue and produced submarines for U.S. and Allied navies during World War I, turning out twenty subs a year for the Allies.

Lake was inspired by Jules Verne's science-fiction novel, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. In Russia, another young lad, Igor Sikorsky, also read and found inspiration in Jules Verne's novels. When he was only ten years old, he built a small helicopter. He dreamed of and worked on amphibious planes. After escaping the Communist Revolution, he came to New York and continued working on his dreams. In 1941, he flew the first manned helicopter, right on Park Ave. in Bridgeport. In 1943, the Navy asked him to begin production for the war, and Sikorsky started the first assembly line in Bridgeport. The rest is aviation history.

TOOTH AND BRAIN

Bridgeport's innovation was not limited to manufacturing. On Eric's campus resides the Fones School of Dental Hygiene, an institution that was the brainchild of another Bridgeport pioneer. "In the 19th century" however, Eric winced, "dentistry was just pulling out decayed teeth". There was little emphasis on preventing decay. Bridgeport native Alfred Fones was not satisfied with the status quo. The son of a prominent Bridgeport citizen and dentist, he graduated from the New York College of Dentistry the year bacteria was identified as the cause of tooth decay. The discovery convinced Alfred that it was time to bring preventive dentistry to the masses. Opening an office on Washington St. in Bridgeport, he tirelessly wrote and lectured to persuade dentists and the public of the need for dental cleaning. Dentists couldn't undertake this immense task without assistants. So in 1913, he opened the first school to train hygienists to assist dentists in the new field. Fones' cousin and assistant, Irene Newman, demonstrated the art to students. Eric showed us a photo of these first dental hygiene students hard at work, cleaning the teeth of Boy Scouts. The payoff

was dramatic: Bridgeport saw a 75% drop in dental disease. The graduates of Fones spread out across the country, advancing the art, and making dentistry into a science and a regular part of public health.

Alfred Fones was also one of the driving forces behind Bridgeport's first college, The Junior College of Connecticut. Together with educator Prof. E. Everett Cortright and local philanthropists, he founded the school in 1927. It became a model for other junior colleges. After World War II, the college became a full university, the University of Bridgeport, and settled into its present location aside Seaside Park. The University purchased P.T. Barnum's former mansion, Marina Hall, and several other prominent Victorian-era manors, gracing the campus with Bridgeport's beautiful architectural history.

THE PARK CITY

Although Bridgeport may seem the quintessential industrial city, its nickname is the Park City because, as Eric related, Bridgeport was one of the first cities to build municipal parks. It owes much of that parkland to its captains of commerce and, not surprisingly, a prime contributor was none other than P.T. Barnum. Barnum and other wealthy citizens combined to buy the open farmland on Long Island Sound and donated it to the city in 1865 for what was to become Seaside Park. The city gradually added land to the park and Frederick Law Olmsted, designer of New York's Central Park, was part of a team that designed the original layout. Today, it occupies 325 acres adjacent to the University of Bridgeport's campus.

Bridgeport is also the home of the only zoo in Connecticut, Beardsley Zoo, which is part of Beardsley Park, Bridgeport's second major park. The land for Beardsley Park was donated by cattle baron James Beardsley. Once again, Frederick Olmsted was called in to design the park. Like Seaside Park, it has many monuments to the city's historic figures.

Eric's book has chapters discussing other Bridgeport notables such as Catherine Moore - the keeper of Black Rock Lighthouse for six

decades, World War II hero Colonel Henry Mucci, and famed cartoonists Al Capp (Lil' Abner) and Walt Kelly (Pogo). Anyone interested in local history is sure to enjoy it, but it's also a fine book for anyone who wants to learn about American urban history or Yankee ingenuity.

Eric has started on his next book, a history of his town of Hamden. Like his Bridgeport book, it will tell the town's story through the lives of some of its colorful and intriguing people, Elias Howe and the playwright Thornton Wilder among them. Once again, History Press will be the publisher. Eric may also be getting his originally proposed travel book published. In the meantime, he and his wife continue teaching literature, writing, and poetry in the University of Bridgeport's Literature and Civilization department (www.bridgeport.edu/pages/5052.asp). We look forward to his future books and wish many rewards for this deserving writer.

You can order a copy of Eric Lehman's book "Bridgeport - Tales from the Park City" at www.historypress.net or www.amazon.com.

NEXT MONTH: We look to the future. Technology developer Tim Dolan, owner of Enabling Technologies in Trumbull, will speak about hydrogen power. We'll be meeting at The Putnam House Restaurant again. Don't miss this one.

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

BY JOHN GROVER

Whether clothes, electronics, cars, or most importantly, wine, it is always satisfying to come across a great buy. The wine this month is the 2008 Big House White from California. This dry white wine is a blend of juice from four grapes - Malvasia Bianca, Muscat Canelli, Viognier and Roussanne. It starts with a nose that is both fruit and floral. The taste is complex combining pear, citrus and sweeter tropical fruits (lychee?). This is all carried off with a pucker of crisp acidity. It is a good match for a wide range of dishes including the recipe below. This wine is a real value for between \$9 and \$10 a bottle.



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.

CHICKEN MARSALA

Marsala wine lives up to the reputation of making everything taste better. Having a bottle on the shelf means you always have a quick flavor enhancer for deglazing the saute' skillet. (You can find dozens of recipes for chicken marsala over the internet. But, this one is really quick and easy.)

Ingredients:

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1/2 cup seasoned dry bread crumbs
- 3 tbsp. butter, divided
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup chicken broth
- 1/4 cup dry marsala wine
- freshly ground pepper to taste

Pound chicken breasts to half inch thickness. Dip in beaten egg and dredge lightly in bread crumbs. Heat 2 tbsp. of the butter in a large skillet. Add chicken and garlic and cook over a medium-high heat until chicken is browned and cooked through, about 4 minutes a side. Transfer chicken to a serving platter and cover. Add broth and wine to the skillet and cook over high heat, stirring constantly, until sauce has reduced to a glaze, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat and swirl in remaining tbsp. of butter. Pour sauce over chicken and sprinkle with pepper to taste.

Serving suggestion: Serve with your favorite pasta tossed with extra virgin olive oil, a dash of red pepper flakes and freshly grated Parmesan cheese.

PUZZLES & QUESTIONS

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

1. Compare and contrast Australia and New Zealand.
2. How long do horses live?
3. What is the difference between drama and excitement?
4. What percentage of the world's land area is in Russia? In China?

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES:

2. How much has the U.S. money supply increased since 1971?
A: M2, which consists of physical currency, checking deposits, most savings accounts, money market accounts, retail money market mutual funds, and certificates of deposits under \$100,000, increased by 13 times from 1971 to 2009. It is the broadest measure of money supply that the Federal Reserve currently publishes.
4. What percentage of babies in the U.S. are given a first name based on a close relative's name?
A: About 60%.
6. On average, how many houses do home shoppers look at before buying one?
A: Eight.
8. How fast do escalators move?
A: Escalators move at 1 to 2 feet per second.
10. During which decade since 1790 did the U.S. population increase by the greatest percentage?
A: The fastest rate of growth in population was from 1800 (5,236,631) to 1810 (7,239,881), an increase of 38.3%. Every decade from 1790 to 1860 saw increases of over 30%. The increase from 1990 - 2000 was 13.2%.
12. What are the benefits of free radicals?
A: The free radicals hydrogen peroxide activates white blood cells that can kill bacteria and fungi and destroy pathogens and cancer cells. Short-term doses of free radicals may protect the body against diabetes by increasing sensitivity to insulin.

WORD CHECK

See if you can define these difficult 's' words. Answers are below.

1. chiasmus -

2. concordance -

3. epeolatry (ep-i-OL-uh-tree) -

4. expatiate -

5. heteronym -

6. homonym -

7. lingua franca -

8. orotund -

9. palaver -

10. prolix -

11. semiotics -

12. syllogism -

ANSWERS:

1. chiasmus - a figure of speech by which the order of the terms in the first of two parallel clauses is reversed in the second, forming an "AB:BA" or "X" pattern. This may involve a repetition of the same words ("Fair is foul, and foul is fair" - Shakespeare, Macbeth) or a reversal of phrases, letters of words, sounds, numbers, or ideas. The term derives from the Greek letter chi (χ), indicating a "criss-cross" arrangement of terms.
2. concordance - an alphabetical index of all the words in a text or corpus of texts, showing every contextual occurrence of a word.
3. epeolatry (ep-i-OL-uh-tree) - the worship of words.
4. expatiate - to speak or write at length (used with on or upon).
5. heteronym - a word that is spelled the same as another, but has a different meaning and often pronunciation. A heteronym that is spelled the same as another word and has a different pronunciation is a heterophone. (e.g. minute (60 seconds) vs. minute (very small)).
6. homonym - one of two or more words that are identical in sound or spelling but different in meaning. There are three kinds: (1) those that look alike and sound alike but have different meanings (calf - young bovine animal vs. calf - lower leg). (2) those that sound alike but are not spelled the same ("homophones", e.g., course - class vs. coarse - crude. (3) those that are spelled the same but do not sound alike ("homographs" - e.g., lead - to go first vs. lead - the metal.
7. lingua franca - any language that is widely used as a means of communication among speakers of other languages.
8. orotund - 1. vocally rich and full. 2. rhetorically pompous.
9. palaver - idle talk, chat; cajolery.
10. prolix - excessively wordy; verbose, long-winded, using too many words.
11. semiotics - the study of signs and symbols as elements of communication; the analysis of systems of communication, such as language, gestures, or clothing.
12. syllogism - two premises and a conclusion.

NOTED & QUOTED

A human soul is not to be trifled with. It may inhabit the body of a Chinaman, a Turk, and Arab, or a Hottentot, - it is still an immortal spirit. - *P.T. (Phinneas Taylor) Barnum, (1810 - 1891)*

Man alone is born crying, lives complaining, and dies disappointed. - *Sir William Temple, (1628 - 1699), diplomat, statesman, essayist and author*

The courage to be is the courage to accept oneself, in spite of being unacceptable. - *Paul Tillich, (1886 - 1965), German-American theologian and philosopher*

It is cruel to discover one's mediocrity only when it is too late. - *W. Somerset Maugham, (1874 - 1965), English novelist and dramatist, 'Of Human Bondage', 1915*

Oh! Do not attack me with your watch. A watch is always too fast or too slow. I cannot be dictated to by a watch. - *Jane Austen, , (1775 - 1817), Mansfield Park*

In peace sons bury their fathers, but in war fathers bury their sons. - *Croesus, (595 - 547? B.C.E.), Greek king of city-state Lydia*

Matter tells space how to curve. Space tells matter how to move. - *John Wheeler, (1911 - 2008), U.S. theoretical physicist*

Time is a great story teller. - *Irish Proverb*

To cultivate trees, you need 10 years. To cultivate people, you need 100 years. - *Chinese Proverb*

The cause is hidden. The effect is visible to all. - *Ovid (Publius Ovidius Naso), (43 B.C.E. - 18 A.D.), Roman poet.*

Light is, perhaps, the most wonderful of all visible things. - *Leigh Hunt (James Henry Leigh Hunt), (1784 - 1859), English poet, critic, and essayist*

Is not light grander than fire? - *Thomas Carlyle, (1795 - 1881), British historian and essayist*

In nature, light creates the colour. In the picture, colour creates the light. - *Hans Hofmann, (1880 - 1966), German-American abstract expressionist painter*

Gratitude is a sickness suffered by dogs. - *Joseph Stalin, (1878 - 1953)*

You've got to think about "big things" while you're doing small things, so that all the small things go in the right direction. - *Alvin Toffler, (1928 -), U.S. futurist*

The poet is in command of his fantasy, while it is exactly the mark of the neurotic that he is possessed by his fantasy. - *Lionel Trilling, (1905 - 1975), U.S. literary critic*

A fool with a plan can beat a genius with no plan. - *Thomas Boone Pickens, Sr., (1899 - 1988), U.S. oil and mineral rights leaser*

Education... has produced a vast population able to read but unable to distinguish what is worth reading. - *George Macaulay Trevelyan, (1876 - 1962), English historian*

Writing is not hard. Just get paper and pencil, sit down and write it as it occurs to you. The writing is easy - it's the occurring that's hard. - *Stephen Leacock, (1869 - 1944), Canadian educator, humorist, and literary biographer*

We write to taste life twice, in the moment and in retrospection. - *Anais Nin, (1903 - 1977), French-born American novelist*

Efficiency is intelligent laziness. - *David Dunham*

To paint a chicken you have to be a chicken. - *Edgar Whitney*

Fame is solitude. - *Coco Chanel, (1883 - 1971), French fashion designer*

The goal I seek is to have people refine their style through my clothing without having them become victims of fashion. - *Giorgio Armani, (1934 -), Italian fashion designer*

Work is what you do for others... art is what you do for yourself. - *Stephen Sondheim, (1930 -), U.S.*

film and stage composer, lyricist
It's not what you look at that matters, it's what
you see. - Henry David Thoreau, (1817 - 1862)

The so-called "practical men" sneer at specula-
tive men, as if, because they speculate or see,
they could do nothing. - Ralph Waldo Emerson, (1803
- 1882), 'The American Scholar', Phi Beta Kappa address,
1837

There is a condition worse than blindness, and
that is, seeing something that isn't there.
- Thomas Hardy, (1840 - 1928)

However beautiful the strategy, you should
occasionally look at the results.
- Winston Churchill, (1874 - 1965)

Quickly, bring me a beaker of wine, so that I
may whet my mind and say something clever.
- Aristophanes, (444 - 380 B.C.E.), Greek comic dramatist

Each of us bears his own Hell. - Virgil (Publius
Vergilius Maro), (70 - 19 B.C.E.), Roman poet, Aeneid

A rolling stone gathers no moss. - Publius Syrus,
(c. 100 B.C.E.), Roman slave and poet, Maxims

For what is it to die, But to stand in the sun and
melt into the wind?
- Kahil Gibran, (1883 - 1931), Syrian writer and painter

I think we may class the lawyer in the natural
history of monsters.
- John Keats (1795 - 1821), British Romantic poet

Music expresses that which cannot be said and
on which it is impossible to be silent.
-Victor Hugo, (1802 - 1885)

Music washes away from the soul the dust of
everyday life. - Berthold Auerbach, (1812 - 1882),
German-Jewish poet and author

Whatever you think, be sure it is what you think;
whatever you want, be sure that is what you
want; whatever you feel, be sure that is what
you feel. - T.S. Eliot, (1888 - 1965)

History is always written wrong, and so always
needs to be rewritten.
- George Santayana, (1863 - 1952), philosopher

Many men of genius must arise before a particu-
lar man of genius can appear.
- Isaac D'Israeli, (1766 - 1848), English litterateur, Literary
Character of Men of Genius

No institution can survive if it needs geniuses or
supermen to manage it. It must be organized to
get along under a leadership of average human
beings. - Peter Drucker, (1909 - 2005), U.S. economist
and sociologist of management

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