

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.

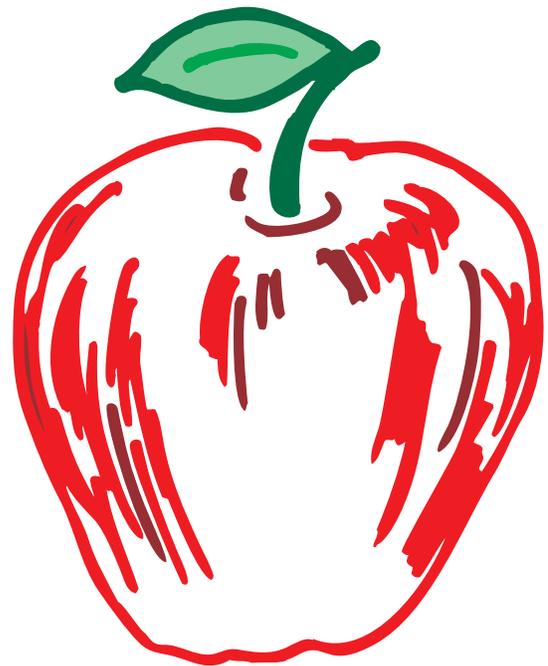


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going back to 2000 are available on the Internet at <http://scm66.org> (Note: this is a new URL). You can download the latest e-mail version of the Chronicle there, as well as previous issues. All issues are in read-only Adobe Acrobat format so there is no chance of viruses accompanying the files.

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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.

Admitted in CT, NY & OR

Sharon Oberst DeFala, Esq.
GENERAL PRACTICE OF LAW

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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. Please notify one of the current board members to volunteer for these positions.*

HIKING IN FAIRFIELD COUNTY
(Non-Mensa event)

A few members have mentioned an interest in hiking locally recently. One group that sponsors regular local hikes of varying lengths and includes a number of Mensans as members is the Central Fairfield County Hikers (<http://hiking.meetup.com/392/>). This group uses meetup.com (a great site, in case you're not familiar with it) to coordinate its hikes. There is a detailed description of each hike. To participate in a hike, please sign up through meetup.com. If you have any questions about the hiking group, please feel free to contact Deb Jennings locsec@rocketmail.com, (President, Southern CT Mensa). In addition, if you are interested in organising a hike or trying to get in contact with other Mensa hikers, we can include information in this monthly letter and help you with organizing and publicizing your events.

SCHEDULE OF CHAPTER EVENTS - SEPTEMBER

Friday, September 10, 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.

Saturday, September 18, 6:15 pm

Monthly Dinner

The Putnam House Restaurant, The Seelye Room, 12 Depot Place, Bethel (downtown - across from old railroad station), CT 06801 (www.theputnamhouse.com - Dinner Menu 1).
TOPIC: Poet, novelist, commentator, and Mensan Jerry Brooker will give a presentation on his recent humanitarian visit to Haiti. Contact Jim Mizera at jmizera@hotmail.com or (203) 522-1959 for reservations or info.

Sunday, September 19, 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.

Thursday, September 23, 7:00 pm

Book Discussion

Borders bookstore coffee shop, 1499 Post Rd., Fairfield, CT 06897. How Doctors Think, by Jerome Groopman, M.D, 2007. Contact Jim Mizera at jmizera@hotmail.com or (203) 522-1959 for reservations or info.

LOOKING AHEAD

October 2, 2010, 11:00 - 5:00

A Day At The Races

Lime Rock Park Racetrack, Lime Rock CT.
Hosts: Mike Yost (GNYM), Tom Thomas (C&WM)
The Bruce Grohe Memorial SIG invites you to the beautiful Lime Rock Park race track to enjoy a day of SCCA Sports Car racing. Join That Nice Tom Thomas and the occasionally polite Mike Yost, sit on a grass hillside watching a variety of sports cars negotiate Lime Rocks twisty, challenging circuit. Feast on whatever you bring (and what you might care to buy from the surprisingly good concession stands) and enjoy autumn in New England. Dress in layers, expect anything from sunny and warm to cool and damp; the races run rain or shine.

Meet us on the Infield Spectator Area over-

looking the Esses. Look for yellow balloons. BYO lawn chairs or blankets, picnic food and drink. No pets and No Glass Bottles. Admission is reasonable, 15 dollars at the gate, 10 dollars advance purchase from the track's website.

Lime Rock is located in northwestern Connecticut, and getting there on the scenic roads of the area is part of the fun. For more information, including directions and how to order tickets visit their website: <http://www.lime-rock.com/> or you can call them at 1-800-RACE-LRP. For details about this event, or to RSVP, email mike@mikeyost.com, or call his mobile 917-603-0410

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.

SEPTEMBER

1, 8, 15, 22, 29 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

2, 9, 16, 23, 30 Thursdays 6:30 pm

Scrabble

(WE) at the Fellowship Housing clubhouse, 24 Starkel Road, West Hartford (it's the small building right where the road bends). For more info contact Lois Cappellano 413-567-4702

3 Friday 5:30 pm

Happy Hour in Wallingford

(ME, 1st Fridays) Ann Polanski (contact her at 203-269-4565 or cell 860-817-9910 or ann.polanski@comcast.net) at The Old Dublin, 171 Quinpiac Street, Wallingford, CT 06492, 203-949-8022, <http://www.theolddublin.com> From

Route 15: Take exit 64 toward Wallingford/Downtown, Sharp right at Quinpiac Street, At 0.3 miles turn left to stay on Quinpiac Street

The Old Dublin will be on the left about 0.3 miles from where you turned left

From I-91: Take I-91 to exit 13 Turn right at end of exit onto South Colony Road

At about 0.2 miles, turn left onto Quinpiac Street (Wallingford center, just before the gazebo). The Old Dublin will be on your right within about two blocks.

8 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

10 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

11 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.

11 Saturday evening

Steam Vent Concert/Open Mike

returns (ME, 2nd Saturday). Email Deb at info@firstchurchofwinsted for information, or Fran Devevo at mensafran@yahoo.com

12 Sunday 12:30 pm

Indian Lunch

(ME, 2nd 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 www.haveliindia.com

14 Tuesday 6:00 pm

Quiet Dinner Corner

(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!

16 Thursday 6:30 pm

Pioneer Valley Dinner

(ME, 3rd Thursday) at the delightful Tavern on the Hill perched on the shoulder of Mount Tom, conveniently located on Route 141 between Easthampton and Holyoke. In order to fully appreciate the view and the sunset, we will be meeting there a half-hour earlier than usual, at 6:00 pm. Of course, if you want to come earlier and enjoy the view of the valley, or the view of the well-stocked bar, you'll probably find company! All are welcome, please email Ian Fraser ianfraser@usa.net for more information or directions.

18 Saturday 10 am & 4 pm

ShoreGrass

(Our own M Barbara Shaw and her band) at Hartland Bluegrass Festival, Hartland, CT. Full day of music, food, picking, concerts from 10 am to 7 pm with 7 different bluegrass bands! We're doing sets at 10 am (yikes) and 4:00. \$20, children under 12 free. Call: (860) 844-8526 | (860) 978-1876 | (860) 653-6800 | (860) 653-4287 or Email: artathighlonesome@cox.net.

24 Friday 5:00 pm ***Happy Hour***

(ME, 4th Friday) at Harry's Sports Grill in The Holiday Inn in North Haven, web site www.harrysportsgrill.com. Come on down and join us this month, we'd love to see ya. Contact Gail Trowbridge 203-877-4472 or gail_trowbridge@yahoo.com

24 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

REGIONAL GATHERINGS

October 15-17, 2010

**Connecticut & Western Massachusetts Mensa
MENSAAUTUMN 2010**Sponsored by Connecticut & Western
Massachusetts Mensa

Super 8 Hotel and Conference Center
Manchester, CT Register early and spend less
\$75 until September 15, 2010 - \$90 thereafter
Children under 12 - half price Day rates available
- contact registrar Registration Includes
Friday - supper, A Connecticut Yankee in King
Arthur's Pub Saturday - lunch, speakers, dinner,
surprise guest, Ron's Riverboat Bar Saturday
and Sunday - continental breakfast All weekend
- hospitality, games, tournaments, an interesting
group of speakers and more surprises Hotel
Super 8 Hotel/Conference Center 20 Taylor St.,
Manchester, CT 06040 Call (860) 643-1864 for
reservations. Mention Mensa and the rate is
only \$70 a night

October 29-31, 2010

BOSTON MENSA REGIONAL GATHERING

Register online or download a flyer at:
www.bostonmensa.org/rg/registerinfo.aspx
Join us for a weekend-long party at Boston
Mensa's new "Wicked Good! RG", October 29-
31, 2010. Costumes encouraged but not required
for the Saturday Night Grand Halloween
Costume Party. As always we will have great
speakers, games, and plentiful hospitality.

February 18 – 20, 2011

**MENSA COLLOQUIUM: "Electronic Gaming and Its
Impact on Society"**

Omni Austin Hotel at Southpark in Austin,
Texas. Visit <http://www.colloquium.us.mensa.org>
for all the details and to register.

Instead of focusing on the "whats" of individual
games, this Colloquium will consider our socie-
tal obsession with electronic gaming, how we
got to this point, and what the future could
bring -- the "hows" and "whys," if you will. And
the rock-bottom registration rate is only \$169
through next Saturday, July 31!

Sponsored by the Mensa Foundation as an edu-
cational outreach program, the weekend-long
Colloquium event historically provides Mensans
and the public alike the opportunity to gather
with industry experts and researchers to dig
deeper into socially relevant (and often contro-
versial) topics.

APRIL 1 - 3, 2011

**GREATER NEW YORK MENSA
REGIONAL GATHERING**

GREATER NEW YORK MENSA PRESENTS:
A NEW YORK STATE OF MIND - LET'S GATHER
IN THE VALLEY!

CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL - WHITE PLAINS, NY
RG WEBSITE: www.anewyorkstateofmind.org

GNYM IS BACK AND BETTER THAN EVER!
JOIN US A FOR A WEEKEND OF GREAT SPEAK-
ERS, ROUND-THE CLOCK HOSPITALITY, AN
AMAZING GAMES ROOM, CONTESTS, TRIVIA,
SATURDAY NIGHT DJ, WINE TASTING, HUD-
SON VALLEY SIGHTSEEING, AND SO MUCH
MORE!

REGISTRATION

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

\$30 through 7/15/2010; \$40 through 12/31/2010
\$109/night S/D/T/Q

\$55 onsite for entire weekend

Call 1-800-227-6963 or 1-914-682-0050

\$50 through 3/31/2011

or reserve online -

www.crowneplaza.com/whiteplainsny

\$40 Saturday 4/2/2011 only

Use hotel registration code M12

Rates guaranteed through 3/11/2011

Saturday Dinner \$40 (inc. tax + tip)

Sunday Breakfast \$20 (inc. tax + tip)

Questions? Call RG Chair Vicki Goldberger (516)
935-1613 or vgoldberger@gmail.com.

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

The 2010 Annual Gathering (AG) is now a distant memory. But autumn brings the start of the Region 1 Regional Gathering (RG) season starting in October with Connecticut & Western Massachusetts' "MensAutumn" and Boston's "Wicked Good! RG," followed by Maine's "Shop ME" in November. Hope to see you at one of these events. Details are available on the local groups' websites.

Speaking of AGs - congratulations to Boston Mensa for being awarded the 2014 AG; thanks to chairs Claire Natola and Deb Stone. The last Region 1 AG was in 1994 in Cambridge; many of you were probably in attendance there (I wasn't). Let's show the world how New England throws a party.

At this year's Awards Lunch, Region 1 groups received several awards. Vermont Mensa was awarded the GOTYA Class V (Group of the Year for group size of less than 100 members) and also received an Prolific Owl Honorable Mention for outstanding membership growth. GNYM's CultureQuest team of Misha's Vineyard Players led by Greg Draves placed 14th in the competition and received a cash award. Boston Mensa won the regional "Leadership Development Workshop (LDW) Name the Event Contest" thanks to David Wolff's "VIP: Volunteer Improvement Program." Webmaster Bill Alleman of New Hampshire Mensa brought home the PRP (Publications Recognition Program) award for Outstanding Web Site (Medium Group). Mensa of Northern New York (MoNNY) scored the national award for best Calendar and Mensa Awareness, and Outstanding Newsletter - Small Group [thank you, Editor John

Hornberger]. Check my math, that's five groups out of 13 local groups, so 38% of Region 1 local groups won an award. Can we increase that next year? I was disappointed to see that no local groups had submitted a nomination for recognition by the Community Activities Program (CAP). I know that many of our groups participate in events to benefit the community. That includes book, food and/or clothing drives, judges for Odyssey of the Mind, mentoring, public TV/radio fundraising, etc. I may have to nag each and every one of you to submit your projects for recognition at next year's AG. Not only is it great to receive recognition from your Mensa family, but think of the publicity we can generate if we want to. Let me know what your local group is doing.

As part of the Mensa International Leadership Exchange Program, I presented leadership development programs at the AG and European Mensa's Annual Gathering (EMAG) in Prague. There were over 400 people from about 30 countries in attendance. I found that while there were many differences in the way these two gatherings were organized, the Mensans were indeed very similar. We all like to talk (the noise levels in the gathering rooms were identical), meet new people, express opinions and learn new ideas and concepts. Talk to me about some of the other differences. After EMAG, Ron and I stretched the vacation into some time in Germany (especially Dresden) and Copenhagen, Denmark. Beautiful countries and friendly residents.

- Lori

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THE JUNE DINNER

Our speaker at the June 19th dinner was Beth Lambert, co-author of the upcoming book "A Compromised Generation: The Epidemic of Chronic Illness in America's Children (Sentient Publications, 348 pgs., September 2010, www.sentientpublications.com/catalog/compromised.php)." It was an excellent presentation, as Beth marshaled evidence from epidemiological and laboratory research to make the case that American children are suffering a rash of illnesses caused by a convergence of medical, environmental, and social factors.

Beth told us that she became passionately involved in this cause when her own children started showing symptoms of illness that doctors could not diagnose. Both her pediatrician and various specialists assured her that, despite the persistent problems her kids were plagued with, they were "fine" and "normal". After this run-around, Beth visited practitioners of functional medicine, a philosophy of medicine that emphasizes the variation in metabolic function among individuals due to their genetic, biochemical, and environmental differences. These specialists look more for underlying causes rather than just symptoms. Through better testing, they were able to get at the root of the problems and recommend changes in her kids' diets and environment that eliminated their chronic conditions.

In her search for solution to her children's problems, Beth talked with many parents who were having similar problems with their kids and she did extensive research about chronic childhood illnesses. She realized that the problems were much more widespread than she had imagined; it was an epidemic. Inspired to help the many parents and children suffering, Beth started the non-profit organization PEACE (Parents Ending America's Childhood Epidemic), which educates the public about the epidemic affecting our youth and helps parents learn from other parents of afflicted children and find medical specialists who can aid them. Besides serving as Executive Director of PEACE, Beth also has a website, ANSWERS for an Epidemic (www.epidemicanswers.org), which provides similar help online.

Beth Lambert, co-author of "A Compromised Generation: The Epidemic of Chronic Illness in America's Children"

EVIDENCE OF AN EPIDEMIC

Beth outlined her talk for us at the outset. She promised to discuss the three main questions of her book: What are the symptoms of the ongoing epidemic? What are its causes? What can be done?

First, Beth cited statistics that laid out the case for the epidemic. The numbers, all public health documented stats, show American children are suffering from a dizzying array of chronic illnesses. One in 91 U.S. children now suffers from autism (1 in 57 boys), a 6000% increase over a generation. One in 8 has asthma, with an even higher rate among blacks. One in ten has been diagnosed with attention-deficit disorder or ADHD. One in 80 has the once-rare Celiac disease.

The numbers on allergies are also discouraging: they are overrunning America's kids. One in five suffers from allergies or eczema. One in 12 children under the age of four have food allergies and many more have food sensitivities or restrictions. One in every 2 or 3 children has environmental allergies.

The problems don't stop there. Other illnesses are also on the rise among American children: reflux, sensory and processing or integrating disorders, behavior and mood disorders, thyroid conditions, and inflammatory bowel diseases. Perhaps most troubling, public health officials estimate that diabetes will affect one in three children before long.

These are just the most prominent conditions. "Just because a child does not have a diagnosis, it does not mean he is not affected," Beth cautioned. "Even 'healthy children' are showing signs of being affected, they just exhibit milder or temporary versions of obsessive-compulsive disorders or the other illnesses.

One Mensan questioned Beth's description of these problems as an epidemic, asking, "What's an epidemic? The CDC struggles with this question. Normally the word is limited to contagious diseases." While admitting that the diseases she

described did not spread from person to person like in textbook cases of epidemics, Beth said, "We're not talking about just infectious diseases anymore. By "Epidemic" we simply mean a lot - a large increase." By this standard, there has certainly been an explosion, if not an epidemic.

WHAT DO THE SYMPTOMS MEAN?

What is causing the epidemic of childhood illnesses? "This is what my book is about," Beth said. She put forth two fundamental underlying biological causes - one, children's immune systems are not working properly, and two, their "guts" - our gastrointestinal systems are out of balance. These two culprits keep showing up in the lab work investigating the myriad problems Beth described. She carefully explained why the immune system and gut are so important and why they are central to the health problems plaguing the nation's children.

IMMUNE DYSREGULATION

The technical term for the immune systems malfunctioning is immune dysregulation. Beth outlined the three general ways our immune defenses can go awry. First, they can become hypersensitive and react to innocuous food and plants. Second, they can become unable to shut off and end up attacking the body's own cells and tissues. Third, they can become ineffective and ignore real threat such as viruses and infection and fail to detoxify the body. Each type of immune failure makes the body vulnerable to some of the illnesses Beth discussed.

Immune hypersensitivity is behind the explosion in cases of allergy and asthma that our children are suffering from. As Beth's stats made evident and many doctors are noticing, a growing number of kids are extremely sensitive to normal foods like peanuts, wheat, dairy products, salt, and shellfish. The mere presence of these foods triggers sneezing, rashes, itching, scratching, eczema or psoriasis in these kids. With asthma, kids suffer because their immune systems attack normal particles they breathe in such as pollen and animal hairs. This inflames their lungs, making breathing much harder for them. It's important to treat the fundamental causes of these conditions, because hypersensitive immune systems, Beth told us, put a special stress on the body. Reacting to benign substances inflames

tissues and puts oxidative stress on cells, impairing their function, and in extreme cases lead to chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS). But specialists who run immunoglobulin E (IgE) allergy tests have been able to identify the what kids are allergic to and get at the root problem by retuning the body's immune system to eliminate the reactions without using drugs.

Even more alarming was the next immune failure Beth discussed - when the immune system attacks the body's own healthy tissue. This is called autoimmunity. Here the body produces autoantibodies, antibodies that attack benign cells and tissues. In the case of celiac disease, the intolerance of wheat and gluten, the body launches attacks on its own intestinal cells when it senses these foods. In some autistic children, Beth reported, scientists have discovered autoantibodies attacking brain and central nervous system cells.

In the third case of immune dysregulation, the immune system ignores viruses and parasites or responds very weakly to them, and children become chronically ill. Harmful germs that they could eliminate in one day plague them sometimes for weeks.

GUT DYSBIOSIS

Turning to the second general cause behind the epidemic, gut dysbiosis, Beth painted an equally troubling picture. She defined gut dysbiosis as a harmful imbalance in the gastrointestinal system, the tube that runs from tongue to tail. The gastrointestinal system has trillions of microorganism such as germs, bacteria, yeast, viruses, and parasites living in it. Some of these organisms are good and some are bad, but normally, Beth pointed out, the good ones predominate. It's vital that they do because good bacteria (probiotics) in the gut help digest food, produce energy, and manufacture neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine that regulate our mind and moods. But in gut dysbiosis, the bad germs in the gut outnumber the good germs, and this can upset digestion, diminish energy, and disturb our senses.

The good microorganisms in the gut have another vital function - they help our immune systems develop. Hence, immune dysregulation is linked to gut dysbiosis. "The gut is the head-

quarters of our immune system," Beth emphasized, estimating that 70% of our immune system is in our gastrointestinal tract. A bad gut will mean a weak immune system.

Beth gave us a prime example of the link and the problems dysbiosis can cause - "leaky gut" syndrome. In this disease, she said, bad germs poke holes in our intestinal lining. Undigested food then leaks into the circulatory system. The immune system perceives these food particles as pathogens and attacks them, setting off the allergic reactions Beth described earlier.

Because of the gut's central role in immunity, an unbalanced gut leaves us vulnerable to pathogens. Since 90% of pathogens enter the body through the gut, if there aren't enough good germs to fight them off, they will run rampant. It's no surprise that sickness often begins in the gut. If the gut isn't right, it can't detoxify well. Beth noted that harmful substances such as mercury that a healthy gut could excrete are more likely to stay in the body when the gut's immune defenses are weakened.

Beth made clear that problems that start in the gut don't necessarily stay there. Discussing the gut-brain connection, she revealed a surprising statistic - our gastrointestinal system manufactures 95% of our neurotransmitters. Consequently, when harmful microbes rule the gut, it plays havoc with our mind. Obsessive-compulsive disorders, mood swings, and depression have all been linked to a bad gut balance.

WHY DO WE HAVE IMMUNE DYSREGULATION AND GUT DYSBIOSIS?

Just what is damaging our immune system and upsetting our guts? "If there is an epidemic," Beth logically observed, "we should look at what has changed," Our gene pool could not change rapidly so the answer must lie in our habits and environment. She outlined five general factors that have changed for the worse in recent decades, creating a "perfect storm" that has endangered the public health: 1) the overuse of medicines, drugs, and antibiotics; 2) environmental toxins; 3) cultural and lifestyle trends; 4) diet and nutrition; and 5) the improper administration of vaccines.

OVERUSE OF MEDICINE, DRUGS, AND ANTIBIOTICS

Beth said, "I personally think pharmaceuticals are a big factor", adding that Americans consume more drugs than people in any other country - far more than people in other developed countries in Europe and Asia. Many prescription drugs and over-the-counter medicines have bad side effects for our guts, decreasing the healthy germs in our gut, either by killing them or by making the gut a less friendly place for them to grow.

Kids are vulnerable because doctors are prescribing more drugs for them, drugs once prescribed almost exclusively for adults. Beth had numerous examples of this. For instance, doctors today are prescribing acid-reflux medicines for youngsters, something that wasn't done a generation ago. Acid-reflux drugs and NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) like ibuprofen, diminish good bacteria in the body and can damage the gastrointestinal lining. There are many other drugs that damage kid's immune defenses. PPI's (protein pump inhibitors), change the PH balance, allowing bad germs to flourish in the gut. Tylenol, which contains acetaminophen, depletes glutathione, which as Mensans know from previous dinners devoted to the subject, is the master antioxidant in our detoxification system. Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) anti-depressants can cause bleeding in the gastrointestinal lining. As bad as these side effects are, the problem of drugs for kids is only compounded when doctors prescribe multiple drugs for a condition.

Antibiotics are a special problem. "Doctors are handing antibiotics out like candy for everything from ear infections to sore throats." Giving antibiotics to very young children whose immune systems haven't developed, however, hinders their system's development. In addition, Beth stated, the antibiotics don't just pose problems to patients; 70% of antibiotics are getting into the water supply.

Our speaker recommended a new protocol for the use of antibiotics: when you give an antibiotic, also give a probiotic. Hospitals and doctors in European countries are following this practice

and, while these countries are experiencing an increase in chronic illnesses, probiotics have lessened the severity of the crisis for them.

ENVIRONMENTAL TOXINS

"Almost as big a factor in the epidemic are environmental toxins," Beth said. She fingered heavy metals such as aluminum and cadmium, and toxins such as PCB's and BPA, prevalent in bottles and toys imported from China, as common dangers. In addition, safety requirements such as the flame retardant mandated for use in pajamas and mattresses, have unwittingly put us in direct contact with toxins.

The health dangers of cell-phone use on the brain have been much in the news lately, and this is an example of a newly recognized danger to our immune systems - electro-pollution. A small segment of the population, about 3%, seems to be hyper-electrosensitive. Some workers in the cell-phone industry have become acutely sensitive to electricity. Although people are focusing on the problem with cell phones, there are many other sources of electro-pollution - computers, power lines, and the like. "Give it time," Beth predicted, "and the evidence will accumulate." Youngsters are adding cell-phones to their already long list of electronic companions, making them guinea pigs in a giant experiment with electro-pollution.

Ms. Lambert was pessimistic about the trend with toxins. "They are being stored in our cells and I don't think government or public health officials are on top of this," she stated. Parents may have to eliminate quite a few chemically tainted products to help their children avoid reactions.

DIET AND NUTRITION

Beth cited the standard American diet (SAD) of sugars, meats, and acids as a third major set of problems. "We have processed food to the nth degree," she said, and this has removed many vital nutrients. In the 19th century, with the advent of processed foods, people in the industrial world started suffering from allergies and hay fever, conditions that had previously been very rare. The use of highly refined white flours instead of whole grain flours are one reason for

this. Another is the addition of sugar, especially high fructose corn syrup. Americans eat 140 pounds of sugar a year. Candida - a yeast infection - and other diseases thrive on sugar.

Yet another contributing cause is the lack of natural lacto-fermentation. Before the 20th century, Americans used to preserve their foods by using the good bacteria lactobacillus. It had several benefits - it aided digestion, added vitamins and good antibiotics, and promoted the growth of good bacteria in the intestines. With modern preservatives in our processed foods, we lose these advantages.

American children, like American adults, are getting many bad things in their food and missing out on many good things. With their meals, they are getting many additives and hormones that make them susceptible to yeasts and parasites in their gastrointestinal system. "Unfortunately," Beth said, "We don't know the full extent of the damage because the effect of most of the additives on humans hasn't been studied." We do know, however, that the junk food diet many children eat is also lacking in fiber, minerals, and lacto-fermented foods, jeopardizing their guts and their health.

To avoid these problems, Ms. Lambert recommended that people eat organic pesticide-free food, meat and poultry from animals that are allowed to roam free, and probiotics. Someone asked, "Which probiotics are best?" "There is no standard answer," Beth advised. "Everyone's gut ecology is different. The best thing to do is to eat plenty of probiotic foods like sauerkraut."

A new problem with our diets is genetically modified organisms, which Beth said are toxic to our bodies. She thinks that they pose yet another danger to our gastrointestinal systems because of the possibility of gene transfer from genetically modified foods to our guts. She said that the evidence is just becoming to emerge on this threat and predicted that it will grow in the next generation. "Watch the research in 20 years," she warned.

Someone objected that mankind has always been doing genetic modification by crossbreeding different plants. But Beth said this hybridization, a natural form of genetic modification, is

not the same thing as genetic engineering. The long-term consequences of transferring a gene from one plant to another have not been studied on human guts. One cannot assume that the gene will behave the same way in its new genome, particularly when it replicates itself, produces proteins, or needs to repair itself. The genes from genetically modified organisms may produce unpredictable effects, including damage to our immune system.

CULTURAL AND LIFESTYLE FACTORS

Cultural and lifestyle factors are the fourth reason Beth identified for the breakdown in children's health. The problem starts at birth. She mentioned that over 30% of U.S. babies now are delivered by Caesarian section. Children born this way don't get the good probiotics that they get in natural childbirth. Moreover, 60% of U.S. women are getting antibiotics during pregnancy, which hurts the balance between good and bad bacteria in their bodies, which weakens their newborns' immune systems as well. After birth, most American children aren't breastfed and thus miss out on the good bacteria this provides. For all these reasons, infants may very early in life find the bad bacteria exceeding the good bacteria in their guts - a classic case of gut dysbiosis.

Another problem is that kids, like Americans in general, are not getting enough exercise and not spending enough time outdoors. Beth cited a statistic that Americans are spending only 5% of their time outside. Schoolchildren, more and more, are indoors because schools are lengthening their days and have cut back on physical education in favor of more academic work. When they get out of school, children are devoting more of their time to video games and electronics in the house, activities that don't give them much of a workout or much fresh air. This lack of exercise contributes to obesity and weakens their immune system. Staying indoors, they also miss out on the Vitamin D from sunlight, which is critical to immune function. When they do get out in the sun, they often are using sunscreens, which block the Vitamin D. Again, Beth had some useful advice, which she said she applies to her own children: "A better way to guard against sunburn is to start with a low exposure to the sun and gradually increase it

over time." This protects against sunburn and melanoma while giving us the benefits of sunlight.

Discussing children's lack of time outdoors, Beth brought a point that might surprise a lot of people - kids need dirt. If they don't play outside, she explained, they miss out on the beneficial microorganisms that dirt has, ones much like the good germs in our guts. These soil microbes help youngsters' immune systems develop. Dirty can be healthy.

Thinking about this, someone asked Beth whether she thought the Hygiene Hypothesis explains the epidemic affecting American children. This hypothesis postulates that modern kids develop allergies because they live in environments that are too sanitary and they are not exposed to enough germs. Reflecting on her general thesis, she answered, "I don't think the Hygiene Hypothesis alone can explain it," she stated, "because there are too many other factors." It is just one of the lifestyle changes that have undermined children's health, but which probably wouldn't make kids sick unless accompanied by some of the other bad conditions Beth talked about.

One of the disease factors that kids who don't play much can suffer is a very-adult malady: stress. Stress harms the gut. Beth told us that several studies indicate that it can cause the body to lose lactobacillus, one of the good bacteria in the gut. If kids are in turmoil, especially if they don't get enough sleep, they can become literally sick to their stomach.

VACCINES - ARE THERE DANGERS?

Probably the most controversial point of the evening was the connection between vaccines and autism. This has been in the news because prominent celebrities have taken up the cause, fingering vaccines as the culprit in their children's autism. But as Ms. Lambert made clear, most reporting has generated controversy without providing insight.

Both the press and the public are looking at vaccines too crudely, Beth argued. "They have a binary notion of vaccines - good or bad, give them or don't give them. But there is a gray

area." Though vaccines have virtually wiped out some life threatening diseases, they can cause grave problems when used too frequently with infants whose immune systems have not developed, especially those who have received multiple doses of antibiotics. "It's important to remember", Beth stressed, "that when children are born, they have no bacteria, good or bad, in their gut. They have to gradually develop the beneficial bacteria. Their immune systems have to learn to distinguish good particles and bad particles and eliminate the toxins." A doctor in the audience added that vaccines trigger autoimmune production. If an infant does not have good gut ecology, the vaccine's immune assault will not be tolerated and it will compromise the immune system. Infants who don't eat well or have toxins in their homes or get antibiotic treatments - a significant portion of American children - could be vulnerable to the harms posed by vaccines.

"There is no definitive evidence of vaccines causing autism BUT there are plenty of correlations," Beth said. When it comes to vaccines, once again, Americans are the world leaders - U.S. children get immunized for 15 infectious diseases, more than any other nation administers and double the number given in the 1970s, a time when autism was much less frequent. Yet many states want to add yet more vaccines, such as the much-criticized Gardasil vaccine. The problem is that researchers haven't probed the possible dangers deeply enough. Beth said, "Vaccines are studied for efficacy not for safety, at least not for longer-term safety. They are looking for adverse effects for 24 - 72 hours, not six months." Much more research is needed.

Many news stories about the vaccine argument have focused on the thimerosal mercury preservative in vaccines, but this was removed from vaccines in 2000. Beth pointed out, though, that the problem goes beyond mercury and beyond autism. There are live attenuated viruses or aluminum adjuvants (immune boosters) in vaccines. Aluminum can cause brain damage and chronic immune problems. But the wider problem is that frequent vaccines skewer an important balance in the immune system. The immune system has two components that must be finely coordinated to function well. The humoral immune system, the Th1 (T helper 1),

system produces antibodies to sense antigens (bacteria or viruses) and the cellular immune system, the Th2 (T helper 2), destroys, digests, and discharges the antigens. Vaccines tilt the balance toward the Th2 sensing function, making the body more susceptible to allergies, chronic illness, and autoimmune diseases. Hence, multiple vaccines, especially in infants with weak general resistance, can cause immune dysregulation.

The lecture was a disturbing look at how America has failed its children's health. The multiple subtle threats to young people's guts and immune systems have made tracing the causes difficult. Physicians, who under current health insurance demands must juggle patients, rushing from one to another, devoting perhaps 15 minutes to each, haven't been up to the task. The subtlety of the problems defies such hasty analysis, which only promotes treating symptoms with convenient but ineffective drugs instead of eliminating fundamental causes, a wasteful and harmful mindset already encouraged by doctors' medical training. Reaching for drugs is in many cases only adding fuel to the fire. Parents need to look at the factors Beth focused on to get a clue to the problems.

Beth made a strong case that many bad medical, pharmaceutical, and social practices and conditions are converging to compromise our children's health. We do have answers to this crisis, however, and Beth's book can help make Americans more aware of the problem and how we can alleviate it. We certainly learned from her talk and it stimulated a great discussion that everyone was reluctant to end.

Beth Lambert's book A Compromised Generation: The Epidemic of Chronic Illness in America's Children (Sentient Publications, 348 pgs., September 2010, www.sentientpublications.com/catalog/compromised.php) is available at www.amazon.com and book sites. She will be speaking about her book at the Wilton Library, Wilton, CT, on Thursday, September 16, at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.

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

This summer the Boss and I visited the Finger Lakes region of New York State. We stayed at a bed and breakfast in the Village of Penn Yan, which is located at the Northern end of Keuka Lake. The B&B was quaint; the landscapes were breathtaking; and, the wine tastings at the many vineyards around the lake were ever so good. The recipe for this month was determined by the sudden surplus of eggplants coming from our garden. It turned out to be a wonderful dish and a nice match to the wines below.

The wines this month are from wineries on the east side of Keuka Lake. The first is the 2008 Traminette from Rooster Hill Vineyards. Traminette is a clone of the Gewurtztraminer grape. This wine offers floral scents and a spicy fruit and citrus rind taste. It finishes crisply with a little pucker across the tongue. You can buy it at the winery for \$12.99 a bottle. The second wine is the 2007 semi-dry Riesling from McGregor Vineyard. The Finger Lakes is famous for its Rieslings and this one does not disappoint. It gives you the bouquet of peaches and orange blossoms, and it fills your mouth with the luscious full fruit of peaches and apricots. This wine is more refined, and not as acidic as the first; but it still has a clean finish. It is available at the winery for \$17.99 a bottle.

THAI CHICKEN SOUP WITH RED CURRY AND VEGETABLES

(published in Bon Appetit, September 1997 and available on line at Epicurious.com)

Ingredients: 2 tbsp. corn oil
 1 tbsp. Thai red curry paste (Maesri is a good brand)
 12 oz. skinless boneless chicken breast halves, cut crosswise into 1/2-inch-wide strips
 4 oz. green beans, cut into 1-inch lengths
 2 small Japanese eggplants, cut into 1-inch pieces
 3 cups canned low-salt chicken broth
 3 cups canned unsweetened coconut milk
 1 tbsp fish sauce (nam pla)
 1/4 cup chopped fresh basil

Heat oil in heavy large saucepan over medium heat. Add curry paste; stir until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add chicken; stir 2 minutes. Add green beans and eggplant pieces; stir 1 minute. Add broth, coconut milk and fish sauce; bring to boil. Reduce heat; simmer until vegetables are tender, about 12 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Stir in basil and serve. We served this with a large dollop of jasmine rice in the soup bowl. Also, regular eggplant will do if the smaller Asian varieties are not available.

PUZZLES & QUESTIONS

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

1. How large is a neighborhood?
2. What was the longest boxing match ever?
3. Which debts should you pay off first?
4. What percentage of U.S. citizens live in the state they were born in?

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES:

2. How many Zoroastrians are there in the world?

A: There are estimated to be 150,000 - 210,000 Zoroastrians in the world. India has about 70,000 Zoroastrians, though the emigration rate is high. There may be as many as 25,000 in the U.S. and Canada.

4. What is the difference between a toxin and an allergen?

A: A toxin is a poisonous substance produced by living cells or organisms that is harmful amounts to just about everyone. The harm is proportional to the dose. Allergens are substances recognized by our immune systems that are harmful in small amounts to some people but not others. The response doesn't depend on the dose.

6. How many Supreme Court Justices did the U.S. Constitution originally provide for?

A: The Constitution never specified the size of the Court. It gave Congress the power to set the number of justices. The Court began with six justices, the number approved by

the Judiciary Act of 1789. Congress increased the number to seven in 1807, nine in 1837, and ten in 1863. The Judicial Circuits Act of 1866 stated that the next three retirees would not be replaced, which would have brought the number back down to seven. The next two retirees dropped the Court to eight in 1867, but Congress raised the number of justices to nine in 1869, where it has stood ever since.

8. Which nation has the most islands?

A: Canada has the most islands - more than 300,000. This includes minor islands and fresh water islands.

Indonesia is the world's largest archipelago and has more than 18,000 islands, about 16,000 of which are inhabited.

WORD CHECK

Define these words. Check your answers at right.

1. agronomy -

2. alluvial -

3. cavil (KAV- I)

4. concept -

5. dugdgon -

6. equiponderant -

7. gainsay -

8. intelligible -

9. jejune (ji- JOON) -

10. martinet -

11. praxis -

12. supernumerary

13. vale -

14. vatic -

15. winsome -

1. agronomy - the science of soil management and the production of field crops.
2. alluvial - full of loose, unconsolidated soil or sediments made up of a variety of materials such as silt, clay, sand, or gravel that were not deposited by a perennial stream or river.
3. cavil (KAV- I) - to quibble, carp; to raise trifling, irritating objections.
4. concept - 1. a general or abstract idea. 2. an idea of something formed by mentally combining all its characteristics or essential features. 5. dugdgon - resentment, sullen anger.
6. equiponderant - equal in weight, power, balance or force.
7. gainsay - 1. to deny, dispute, or contradict. 2. to speak or act against; oppose.
8. intelligible - capable of being understood, comprehensible.
9. jejune - 1. dull, insipid, insignificant. 2. juvenile, childish, immature. 3. uninformed; inexperienced.
10. martinet - a rigid disciplinarian.
11. praxis - 1. the practice of a profession or field as opposed to the theory.
12. supernumerary - 1. in excess of the usual or proper number; additional; extra. 2. an extra person or thing. 3. a non-speaking extra in a play or film.
13. vale - a valley.
14. vatic - pertaining to or characteristic of a prophet.
15. winsome - innocently charming; engaging.

ANSWERS:

NOTED & QUOTED

This constant reference to genius is another characteristic of the pseudo-scholar. He loves mentioning genius, because the sound of the word exempts him from trying to discover its meaning.

- Somerset Maugham, (1874 - 1965), English novelist and dramatist, *Aspects of the Novel* (1927)

Genius makes its observations in short-hand; talent writes them out at length. - Christian Nestell Bovee, (1820 - 1904), U.S. lawyer, editor, author

Those who live are those who fight.
- Victor Hugo, (1802 - 1885)

Perhaps you're proud that your ancestors "came here legally." I'm pretty sure they would be denied entry today. - Art Carden, U.S. economist

What we think we are surely going to do, we don't do; and what we never intended to do, we may one day notice that we have done, and done, and done. - Cynthia Ozick, (1928 -), Jewish-American novelist, *Art and Ardor* (1983), Foreword

You can't make it more interesting when you get to the editing room.
- David Mamet, (1947 -), U.S. playwright, screenwriter, essayist, *On Directing Film* (1990)

Write the story, take out all the good lines, and see if it still works. - Ernest Hemingway, (1899 - 1961)

There can be as much value in the blink of an eye as in months of rational analysis.
- Malcolm Gladwell, (1963 -), British-born Canadian journalist and author

You can tell the man who rings true from the man who rings false, not by his deeds alone, but also his desires. - Democritus, (460 - 370 B.C.E.), Greek philosopher

If you want to be prosperous, make someone else prosperous.
- Neale Donald Walsch, (1943 -), U.S. author

Truth is always strong, no matter how weak it looks; and falsehood is always weak, no matter how strong it looks.
- Phillip Brooks, (1835 - 1893), U.S. clergyman

To regret deeply is to live afresh.
- Henry David Thoreau, (1817 - 1862)

You must never regret what might have been. The past that did not happen is as hidden from us as the future we cannot see.
- Richard Martin Stern, (1915 - 2001), U.S. mystery novelist

O dear me, the mystery of life! The inaccuracy of thought! The ignorance of humanity!
- Laurence Sterne, (1713 - 1768), English novelist, clergyman, *Tristram Shandy*

Man is a complex being; he makes the deserts bloom and lakes die.
- Gil Stern

One thing that's good about procrastination is that you always have something planned for tomorrow. - Gladys Bronwyn Stern, (1890 - 1973), British novelist, playwright, literary critic

Things that don't get better get worse.
- Ellen Sue Stern

The mind stands in the way of the eye.
- Arthur Stern

It is more important to know what patient has the disease than to know what disease the patient has.
- Dr. William Osler, (1849 - 1919), Canadian physician

Everywhere in the world, music enhances a hall, with one exception: Carnegie Hall enhances the music.
- Isaac Stern, (1920 - 2001), Russian-American violinist

Perhaps it was because Nero played the fiddle, they burned Rome. - Oliver Herford, (1863 - 1935), English author and illustrator

Oscar Hammerstein was a man of limited talent but infinite soul and Richard Rodgers was a man of infinite talent but limited soul.
- Stephen Sondheim, (1930 -), U.S. film and stage composer, lyricist

MENSA MIND GAMES 2010 RESULTS

More than 200 Mensans gathered in San Diego this weekend for Mind Games 2010. During the three-day event, members played and rated 49 board and card games. The top five games have earned Mensa Select distinction and may use the Mensa Select seal on their games.

This year's winners are:

Anomia (Anomia Press, www.anomiapress.com)

Dizios (MindWare, www.mindware.com)

Forbidden Island (Gamewright, www.gamewright.com)

Word on the Street (Out of the Box Publishing, www.otb-games.com)

Yikerz! (Wiggles 3D Incorporated, www.yikerzgame.com)

Mind Games 2011 will be held April 15-17 in Albany, NY. Register for just \$55 through April 30, 2010 at www.mindgames.us.mensa.org

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"Bridgeport - Tales from the Park City" by Eric Lehman, is available at www.historypress.net or www.amazon.com. Paperback.

Holistic Kidney

Check out the Holistic Kidney website online. <http://www.holistic-kidney.com/articles.html> My first article is an interview with the author of How I Avoided Dialysis and You Can Too! Dr. Jenna Henderson Holistic Kidney A Safe, Natural Approach for all stages of Kidney Disease

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