

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT MENSA CHRONICLE

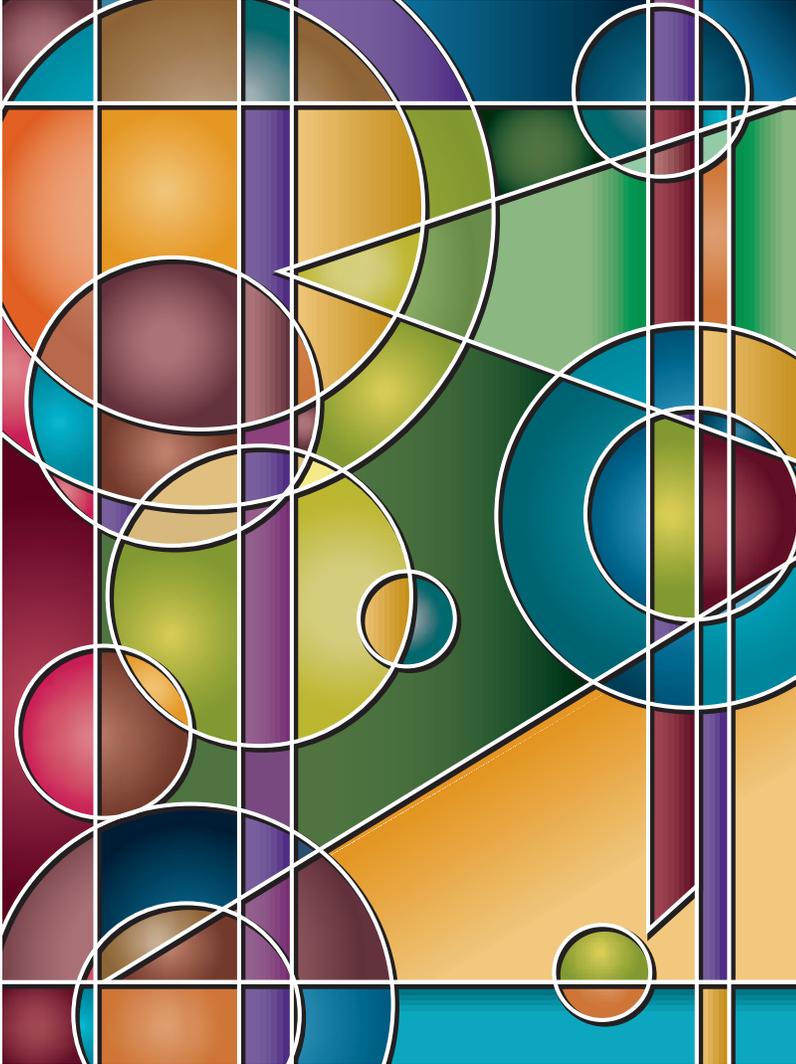


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If you or someone you know would like to be a speaker at our monthly dinner, please contact Jim Mizera at 203-522-1959 or Jmizera@hotmail.com. The dinner is held the third Saturday of the month.

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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SCHEDULE OF CHAPTER EVENTS - JANUARY

Friday, January 13, 7:00 pm

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

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

Tuesday, January 17, 6:30 pm

POST ROAD Dinner

Red Bean Sushi, 1711 Post Road East, Westport, CT 06880. Contact Jim Mizera at j Mizera@hotmail.com or (203) 522-1959 for reservations or info. strongly encouraged but not required.

Saturday, January 21, 6:15 pm

Monthly Dinner - New Members Dinner

New Members Dinner: Members who have joined in the past year or who have not attended a dinner before can enjoy a free dinner. Come anytime after 6:15.

SPEAKER: Southern CT Mensan author and world traveler Jerry Brooker will talk about his recent trip to Indonesia. He'll tell us about the Dani Indians of New Guinea, their warrior chief-tain, and their 600-year old mummy. He'll also show us pictures of the 300-pound komodo dragons on Komodo and Rinca Islands, and we'll hear about the animistic practices on Sulawesi, the burials in cliffs, and bizarre gifts and ceremonies. It's sure to be a fascinating presentation.

WHERE: The PUTNAM HOUSE Restaurant, 12 Depot Place, Bethel, CT 06801 (downtown - across from old railroad station), ([namhouse.com. The dinner will be held on the 2nd Floor. Dinner Menu 1 - a vegetarian option is included on the menu.\) Dress is casual. Before the presentation, we will enjoy dinner. There is parking in the rear of the restaurant and in the nearby Old Railroad Station lot.](http://www.theput-</p>
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You can bring a donation of money or food to benefit the Connecticut Food Bank. Contact Jim Mizera at j Mizera@hotmail.com or (203) 522-1959 for reservations or info. Reservations strongly encouraged but not required.

Wednesday, January 25, 6:30 pm

Southern Corner Dinner

Egani Restaurant 135 Bedford Street, Stamford, CT 06901-1907. Korean food. Contact Jim Mizera at j Mizera@hotmail.com or (203) 522-1959 for reservations or info.

TBD

January Hockey

Bridgeport Sound Tigers or Danbury Whalers. Call or e-mail Jim Mizera at j Mizera@hotmail.com if interested. Consult www.soundtigers.com, <http://www.danburyhockey.com/schedulereleased>.

TBD

January Museum/History Center Trip

Fairfield Museum and History Center, 370 Beach Road, Fairfield, CT 06824. Mon. - Fri., 10 - 4, Sat. - Sun., 12 - 4. Bravo! A Century of Theatre in Fairfield County. On View through Sunday, March 18, 2012. Call or e-mail Jim Mizera at j Mizera@hotmail.com if interested.

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.

JANUARY

5, 12, 19, 26 Thursdays 6:30 pm

Scrabble

The word-loving Mensans (are there any other

kind?) and non-Mensans gather to play Scrabble at Panera Bread Restaurant at Bishop's Corner, 2542 Albany Ave., West Hartford. For more info contact Lois Cappellano 413-567-4702

6 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 Quinnipiac Street, Wallingford, CT 06492, 203-949-8022, www.theolddublin.com

From Route 15: Take exit 64 toward Wallingford/ Downtown, Sharp right at Quinnipiac Street, At 0.3 miles turn left to stay on Quinnipiac 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 Quinnipiac Street (Wallingford center, just before the gazebo). The Old Dublin will be on your right within about two blocks.

13 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

14 Saturday 10:00 am

Mensa Admissions Testing - Newington

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 <http://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.

21 Saturday 10:00 am

Mensa Admissions Testing - New Haven

C&WM Mensa now holds regular testing in New Haven, CT. 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 <http://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.

27 Friday 5:00 pm

Fourth Friday Happy Hour

Odd months, we'll be at the Playwright Pub and Restaurant, 1232 Whitney Ave., Hamden www.playwrightirishpub.com. [Even months at the Old Gate Tavern & Steakhouse, in Milford.] 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

27 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**HAVE A BLAST AT MIND GAMES®**

by Jared Levine and Jess Byron,
Mind Games co-chairs

Thinking about attending Mind Games®? You've heard about it, thought about it, maybe even checked out the website, but what is it really? Here's what you should know before you go. Mind Games is a weekend-long event where up to 300 people play games that have been on the market for no more than one year - testing the games out, providing manufacturers with valuable feedback, and selecting the Top 5 games of the year. Every year, Mensa solicits new games of all types (except video games) from the various game manufacturers, including everyone from the big names to small independent outfits. We receive about 60 titles in a typical year, and we get to test them all out. Sometimes we're among the first to even see the finished version of a game.

When you get your registration packet, you are handed the list of games. Everyone gets the same list, randomly ordered, so that the first 30 games listed for each person are different. These are your assigned games for the weekend - the only games which you are permitted to vote for the Top 5, which receive the Mensa Select® seal. Throughout the weekend, you are expected to play those 30 games - while you can play the rest of the games with your extra time, you don't have to.

As you play, you try to find the main features of the games. You can provide feedback to the manufacturers on all sorts of qualities. Some games will be quick to understand and play, while others take longer. There's the occasional dud in the mix, but you'll play many great games over the weekend, some of which you'll be so excited about that you'll decide to play them again. These are some of the best moments in Mind Games - enjoy them.

At the end of the fun, frenzied weekend of play, we announce the Top 5 winners and then hold a

games give-away. All of the games played throughout the weekend are repackaged. Then the names of the Mensans in attendance are randomized, and we get to select which game we want to take home with us - a nice perk for the weekend. If there are any games left over when we hit the bottom of the list, we work our way back up the list until all the games are gone.

For 2012, we are holding Mind Games in Herndon, VA at the Hyatt Dulles, a short hotel shuttle ride from Dulles Airport. Registration includes round-the-clock hospitality and all the games you can play. All meals from dinner on Friday through breakfast on Sunday will be provided, including two buffet dinners provided by the hotel.

The official start time, when we hear announcements, is at 4 p.m. on Friday. but if you're trying to decide whether to come early or late, err on the early side. Registration will start around 9 a.m., and the games are fluffed (prepared) starting around 10 a.m. or so; once we've completely finished that process anyone who has already arrived is usually welcome to start playing. We're also looking into hosting some early gaming (not using the Mind Games entries) the night before. To find out additional important information, keep up with the happenings, and ask questions, find us on Facebook (search Mind Games 2012). To register for Mind Games, go to mindgames.us.mensa.org. To make your hotel reservations, go to <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/MensaMindGames2012>.

See page 16 for a list of this year's winning games.

We'll see you in Herndon on April 20 when Mind Games 2012 officially begins!

REGIONAL GATHERINGS

Herndon, Virginia, Fri. - Sun., April 20-22, 2012

Mensa Mind Games 2012

Game manufacturers enter their newest products in pursuit of the Mensa Select seal of proof that the most avid game-players in the country have judged their games to be the best. Held at the Hyatt Dulles, 2300 Dulles Corner Blvd., Herndon, VA 20171; 888/421-1442. Recently renovated, the all-suite hotel offers a taste of luxury just minutes from Dulles International Airport. It is also just 40 minutes from Amtrak Union Station (estimated taxi fare: \$60) and approximately 25 minutes from the West Falls Church and Vienna Metrorail stations. The hotel offers complimentary shuttle service to and from the airport as well as Reston Town Center. Herndon offers an ideal locale for exploring the nation's capital or historic sites both in Virginia and Washington, D.C.

Nearby attractions

Manassas (Bull Run) Civil War historic battlefields

Historic Leesburg and Middleburg

George Mason University

Shenandoah National Park

The National Zoo

Smithsonian National Air & Space Museum

Mount Vernon

Gunston Hall Plantation

Luray Caverns

Northern Virginia Wineries ... to play

Registration rates for judges:

Jan. 1, 2012, through March 25, 2012: \$90

Register online at

<http://mindgames.us.mensa.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Register2>

Fri., May 11 - Sun., May 13, 2012

CAPE CODE MINI REGIONAL GATHERING

Plan Ahead:

The 2012 Cape Cod Mini-RG will be held in Dennisport, MA

Hotel rooms are \$74.95 for 1-4 people until 3/31, then \$79.95. It is never too early to reserve a room. Our block sold out last year and RG goers had to stay elsewhere. Mail your check, made out to "Corsair", directly to the motel at 41 Chase Avenue, Dennisport, MA 02639.

Registration for this event is already available online at: <http://caperg.org>

Wendy Birchmire and Lori Norris will be co-chairing the event. For information contact Wendy Birchmire (mensatesting@gis.net).

FROM THE REGIONAL VICE CHAIRMAN**ANDREW HEFFERNAN****RVC CHAT**

As the new year is here, many of us choose to turn over a new leaf. One of my weaknesses in my workplace has been constructive confrontation. My Dad tended to be harsh in his criticism of his offspring, and so I default to being extra nice and accommodating. I have been trying to improve in this area. For example, every day at work, I review safety bulletins. Some involve deaths of workers in other countries where safety training is not as prominent. One day, one of my co-workers laughed and made fun of a person who had lost his life while working in China. Instead of laughing along with the conversation, I made the difficult choice to stop the discussion and explain that this man had died while providing for his family, and that the family no longer had a husband or father. It was no joking matter. This is an area I will continue to improve in 2012, as I did during my safety discussion. I'd like to share with you some words of Dr. Allan Weiss that helped me to make this decision:

I've met too many people who insist that I create magic which would defy Houdini and the Sorcerer King: They want me to square a circle.

They tell me that they are not being paid enough, but don't want to upset the apple cart by asking for more pay. Or they ask how they can get a key client to change his behavior without having to confront the individual or describe the behavior. Or they want to know how to find enjoyment spending time with someone whom they hate.

You can't square a circle, not with a compass, protractor, formula, or alchemy. You can't flap your arms and fly. You can't expect someone to change their behavior without informing them of it, and you can't expect them to love you for telling them that their behavior is a problem for others.

Get over it.

People do run around in circles trying to square circles, but that doesn't help. The more you enable someone in doing something you detest, the more they will do it and the more you will detest it. "Overlooking" things or cutting people slack is your business, but you then forfeit the right to complain that they continue to do it.

Either tell people what you need to in order to change their behavior, or get over it and simply accept the inevitable. But to continue to complain and be agitated about something you refuse to confront, contradict, or clarify is just raising futility to an art form.

"I don't get any respect," I was told.

"Stop whining about it, and tell people how they have to change their behavior with you," I suggested.

"Oh, I don't want to be unpopular and seen as a complainer," she whined. (Balancing Act Newsletter, November 2011)

Every organization can be improved. From our places of work, our own Mensa groups, and even our families. If I can help make your Mensa experience a better one, please don't hesitate to contact me.

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THE NOVEMBER DINNER CONVERGING ON A SPACE PROGRAM FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Space, the great frontier. Or is it? Given the recent changes to the space program, including the ending of Space Shuttle flights, many are wondering "What next?". That's the question our November Dinner speaker, retired NASA engineer Paul Wieland, PE, addresses in his recent book *Crossing the Threshold: Advancing into Space to Benefit the Earth*. In his talk, Paul presented the vision in his book - a rapidly-approaching future in which space explorers and entrepreneurs help us deal with the energy and environmental problems we face. He thinks that technological advancements on several fronts are converging with opportunities, putting us on the cusp of rapid progress in space. In this future, private companies will bring people, manufacturing, and commerce into space, and NASA's experiments and exploration will pave the way for the next leap forward.

Paul's interest in space goes back a long way. As he told us in his introduction, he grew up in the 1960s, watched all the space flights, studied science, read science fiction, and looked forward

Local boy makes good. Southern Connecticut Mensa member Donald Bobowick has been issued a United States Patent. The patent is for a vertical axis wind turbine design.

Vertical axis wind turbines have some advantages over the horizontal axis style we see most often. A few of those advantages are:

- Vertical axis wind turbines are bird friendly
- Respond to lower wind speeds
- Have the torsional benefits of a long drive shaft
- The generator or pump they are powering can be placed at ground level for easy servicing. The one major disadvantage to vertical axis wind turbines is that they move in the wrong direction (into the wind) for half their rotation. This newly patented design handles that disadvantage. While scalable to large installations, this wind turbine will be ideal for homes, farms and small businesses.

to being an astronaut. He remembered seeing the 1968 science fiction film *2001: A Space Odyssey*. "When I watched the moon landing in 1969, it seemed science fiction was becoming science fact," he reminisced. But the future was not as bright as it seemed. The Apollo program wound down, completing its final mission in 1975 with the joint U.S. - Soviet Apollo-Soyuz project, and the public's enthusiasm for space exploration waned. But Paul kept his eyes on space. He did not visit the moon, but he earned a degree in botany and then mechanical engineering, and joined NASA as an environmental control systems engineer. He worked for over 20 years at the Marshall Space Flight Center in Alabama, participating in important projects such as the Hubble Space Telescope, the Spacelab 3 mission, the Space Shuttle Challenger accident investigation, and the life support systems for the International Space Station.

Paul lived through the ups and downs of NASA and the space program and it gave him some perspective and insights on both its potential and problems. His degree in botany and his work on life support systems furthered his interest in environmental and energy problems. Drawing on his knowledge of engineering, space travel, ecology, and history, Paul decided to write his book, hoping that it can start people thinking about how space can help us solve problems on earth. He firmly believes that this is the vision that should drive the space program. *Crossing the Threshold* has won praise from best-selling engineering and science authors such as Henry Petroski and Homer Hickam, and from *The Space Review* magazine. Paul, a member of Alabama Mensa, has given talks about his book at Mensa meetings from California to Maryland, and has been interviewed on radio and TV. He spoke before New York City Mensans just two days before visiting us, and hopes to speak before more local groups and regional conventions in the future.

WHAT'S GOING ON NOW

One of the first things that Paul brought to our attention is that there are actually more space projects going on that most people realize. We are in NASA's Year of the Solar System, and space probes from several nations are studying

asteroids and comets, the sun, the moon, Mars, Mercury, Venus, Saturn, and more, including sites outside our solar system. Paul outlined many of these missions, showing us slides of what seemed like a dizzying array of adventures.

Looking at the U.S. space program, Paul cited many projects it is pursuing. Among them are trips to two old favorites, the moon and Mars. NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO), a robotic spacecraft, is now orbiting the Moon and making a 3-D map of the lunar surface, perhaps preparing for the return of manned landings. On Mars, two NASA automated vehicles - rovers - are operating. The rover Opportunity landed there in 2004 and has become the longest-running Mars surface mission. Another rover, Curiosity, joined it in late November, shortly after Paul's talk.

NASA is also studying the sun in more detail than ever before. The two STEREO (Solar TERrestrial RELations Observatory) spacecraft were launched in 2006 from Cape Canaveral to study the solar corona, winds, and magnetic fields.

Several of Paul's slides looked at current explorations of asteroids and comets. NASA's Stardust space probe was launched in 1999 to study both. It returned asteroid samples in 2006, intercepted the comet Tempel 1 in February, 2011, and continued to the comet Wild 2. Another NASA asteroid explorer is Dawn, an ion propelled spacecraft built with European help. Launched in 2007, it is orbiting and collecting data on the large asteroid Vesta now and will go on to study another big asteroid, Ceres. The European Space Agency (ESA) is exploring comets as well. Its Rosetta space probe left earth in 2004 and hopes to map the surface of a comet in 2014.

Paul gave a good survey of the space programs of other countries, encompassing many interesting projects. The ESA is one of the leaders. It too is exploring Mars. Its Mars Express probe has been orbiting the red planet since 2005, studying its atmosphere, surface, and interior. The ESA is also using a similar spacecraft, the Venus Express, that will do the same for Venus.

The Japanese national space agency JAXA is

also trying to explore the climate of Venus, using its unmanned Akatsuki spacecraft. Another interesting JAXA project Paul mentioned is its solar sail space flights. In 2004, it sent out the first solar sail spacecraft. NASA launched a similar small solar craft in 2010 to test its capabilities.

The Russians produced the first satellite, the first spacesuit, the first man in space, and the first space station. In the new millennium, the Russian Federal Space Agency (RKA) has produced another first with their introduction of space tourism for fare-paying passengers to the International Space Station (ISS). The Russians, who have contributed heavily to the ISS, have reused their Soyuz spacecraft to bring passengers there. On the horizon: return unmanned trips to the moon and Mars.

Another of Paul's slides looked at China's growing space program. In 2003, China became the third nation to send an astronaut in orbit around the earth. In 2007, it became the fifth nation to orbit the moon when its unmanned Chang'e 1 lunar orbiter accomplished that feat. A follow-up mission, the Chang'e 2, mapped the moon earlier this year and now on its return trip is studying the sun and the earth's magnetic field.

Turning to our northern neighbor, Paul updated us on the Canadian Space Agency's (CSA) activities. The Canadian government and private Canadian telecommunications companies have been sending satellites into space since 1962. CSA has also sent several astronauts up on joint missions with the U.S., Europe, and Russia. In the last decade, they have been leading the way in microsatellites, running projects such as NEOSat to track near-earth orbit objects.

As Paul made clear, the planets beyond Mars are not being neglected. NASA's New Horizons space probe, launched in 2006, aims to fly by and study Pluto and its four moons in 2015. Afterward, it may attempt flybys of dwarf planets or other small bodies in the Kuiper belt beyond Neptune. NASA is also jointly running with the ESA the Cassini mission to Saturn. Launched in 1997, it is scheduled to land on Saturn in 2017.

Looking beyond our solar system, Paul men-

tioned NASA's EPOXI (Extrasolar Planet Observation and Deep Impact Extended Investigation) is photographing and collecting data on distant planets. Meanwhile, the Kepler space observatory, launched in 2009, is counting planets in the habitable zone of our galaxy

The most cosmopolitan space mission has been the International Space Station. Orbiting since 2000, it is a joint venture between the U.S., Russian, European, Japanese and Canadian space agencies. Running in low Earth orbit, it conducts experiments in microgravity, human biology, astronomy, meteorology, and other fields. Six astronauts live on the shuttle at a time, and they generally stay on for three months. Paul pointed out that this gives us a chance to study one of the hazards to humans of staying in space so long - the weakening of muscles.

Paul's survey showed not only the variety of space efforts but also the growing cooperation between nations to explore space. He sees this a key theme for the future, and it is becoming evident in the private ventures into space.

COMMERCIAL SPACE EFFORTS

Paul devoted the next section of his talk to private organizations and businesses that are either offering prizes to space aviators, launching commercial space ventures themselves, or combining these two approaches. Several wealthy entrepreneurs are working to bring sub-orbital or orbital flight to the masses, and some of them are creatively combining their efforts.

Paul mentioned brothers Dick and Burt Rutan, aviators who have been winning prizes for years and who are now leading the charge into space. Back in 1984, Dick set a world record when he flew the Voyager, a lightweight airplane designed by Burt from composite materials, around the world without refueling. A generation later, Burt designed the SpaceShipOne craft that made three successful privately financed sub-orbital flights in 2004, winning the Ansari X-

Prize, a \$10,000,000 prize for the first non-government organization to make flights into space twice within two weeks with a reusable spacecraft.

The Ansari X-Prize is named after a major donor, the husband-wife team of telecom entrepreneurs Hamid Ansari and Anousheh Ansari. Ms. Ansari is noted for another first, our speaker pointed out. She became the first self-funded female space tourist in 2006 when she flew on a Russian Soyuz spacecraft to the International Space Station. Former NASA engineer and multi-millionaire Dennis Tito was the first paying space tourist in 2001. Six others followed him into space in the program run by the U.S. company Space Adventures Ltd. and the Russian Space Agency. Microsoft executive Charles Simonyi was the first repeat tourist, going up in 2007 and 2009. Tickets cost \$20 million. Now a number of other companies have sprung up hoping to bring down the cost of space tourism.

After SpaceShipOne, Burt Rutan teamed up with billionaire Richard Branson, founder of Virgin Atlantic Airline, who wants to promote space tourism through his new company, Virgin Galactic. Rutan is building several SpaceShipTwo vehicles to carry passengers into space. Branson's company will offer sub-orbital flights on these vehicles into space for people willing to pay \$200,000. If we have space tourists, Paul asked, how about space hotels? That is the ultimate goal of motel magnate Robert Bigelow. He started Bigelow Aerospace and launched the two first inflatable space habitat modules, in 2006 and 2007. He plans a third module, the Sundancer, to launch in 2014. It will have full life support systems and orbital maneuvering systems. Beyond that, Bigelow wants to put a commercial space station Alpha up in 2015

Several of the space entrepreneurs Paul discussed are computer millionaires or billionaires. Burt Rutan's SpaceShipOne was financed by Microsoft's co-founder Paul Allen. Elon Musk, who earned a fortune from founding PayPal, has now started Space Exploration Technologies (SpaceX) to launch rockets. The founders of Google have established the Google Lunar X Prize, a competition that will award a prize to the first private company to put a robot on the moon; Yet another big name is the game is Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon.com. He has started a space company called Blue Origin that is looking into space industry.

RECENT ADVANCES IN SPACE TECHNOLOGY

It's going to take technological leaps to make space travel and space manufacturing common. Fortunately, engineers are making improvements in many technologies necessary to make space travel safer, easier, and less expensive. Paul described the progress in half-a-dozen of these fields.

One of the areas of rapid progress Paul focused on is nanotechnology. Ideally, materials in spacecraft should be both strong and light. Scientists have created carbon nanotubes with very strong carbon bonds for fibers and cables - 17 times stronger than Kelvar used in bullet-proof vests. Paul would return to this technology later in discussing energy projects in space.

From super-strong materials, Paul turned to super insulating materials - aerogels. Aerogels are synthetic materials that are porous like a gel but have gas instead of the liquid gel. They have extremely low density and don't conduct heat well. NASA used aerogels on the Stardust spacecraft to trap space dust particles and also used them for heat insulation on the Mars Rovers and in space suits.

As Paul had mentioned earlier, the U.S. and Japan are working on solar sails. Elaborating on the principles behind these, he explained that solar-driven spacecraft seek to use the ion particles in the solar wind or the pressure of sunlight to propel themselves. Another alternative to liquid fuel rockets, the ion drive engine is also powered by solar energy. It uses xenon as propellant. Ion drive engines have already been used on missions to comets and asteroids. Neither solar sails nor ion engines provide rapid acceleration, but if scientists can improve the materials in solar sails and the electric drives in ion engines, they could make these alternatives for flying through space much more attractive.

Our speaker fondly remembered the robot HAL in the movie 2001. While HAL is not a reality yet, robotics researchers are moving a bit closer with robonauts - robots that work alongside astronauts or that can work outside of spacecraft, controlled from the inside. These robots will have far more dexterity than the robot arms used for lifting on previous missions.

LOST IN SPACE?

Despite progress, Paul acknowledged that the space program has not fulfilled the heady expectations of the Apollo days. We don't live in the Jetson's world and space does not inspire the public imagination as it once did. As Robert Bigelow has said, "It's been 30 years since the last beginning and we don't have anything to show for it but memories. People are tired of memories."

What has gone wrong? Disasters such as the Columbia and the Challenger have set back the program, but Paul thinks there is a bigger problem, something that is intangible but vital. He quoted Admiral Hal Gehman who said after the 2003 Challenger disaster, "The U.S. civilian space effort has moved forward for more than 30 years without a guiding vision." Paul thinks that this is the missing element. "A vision of the future we want is the key to focusing our efforts," he said. "It must be a long-term vision." We cannot simply revive the Apollo program or shoot for Mars, however. Neither would provide a vision, for as Paul said, "A destination is not a goal. The moon was a destination not a goal." We need more.

Paul said that to find a vision, we must ask some important questions, starting with "What kind of world do we want to live in?" Almost everyone, he continued, wants a world that is peaceful, has a healthy environment, and provides a high standard of living. Naturally, the question follows, "How can we achieve it?" Paul suggested that it will require cooperative efforts using renewable energy and making efficient use of available resources. What most people haven't considered, however, he said, is the question "How can space help us achieve this?" He argued that this should change: "When we talk about energy, space isn't part of the discussion. It's time to include space in the conversation."

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

Before looking at how space can help us with alternative energy, Paul reviewed some of the progress in these fields on earth. "Whether you believe carbon output is causing climate change or not," he said, "reducing pollution is beneficial

and alternative energy can do that." He talked about some of the steady improvements in this area but also showed us slides of projects that have taken bigger strides. Looking at wind power, he conceded that it now produces only 1% of the world's power, but highlighted its potential to power entire communities. He showed us an amazing example of this in his slide of the town of Greensburg, Kansas. 95% of the town was destroyed by a tornado in 2007. Rebuilt, it now has 10 new wind turbines and biodiesel backup generators to power the town's homes and industries.

Solar power's cost has declined by a factor of 10, but it has not become an energy of choice yet. Even more so than wind, however, it has the potential to be the prime power source for towns and cities. Paul showed us some of his favorite examples: the Cimarron Solar Plant in New Mexico, which generates electricity for nearly 10,000 homes; the 64-megawatt solar thermal plant Solar One in the Mojave Desert, which provides power for 500,000 people; and the solar panels on the Atlantic City Convention Center, which comprise the largest rooftop solar array in the U.S.

While solar and wind are the alternative energies getting the most attention, Paul also talked about hydropower, geothermal, and nuclear power, which have not received as much publicity lately. But now they are taking on new dimensions. In the near future, hydropower may not just be dams on the river, but energy from ocean waves. On the nuclear front, we have had nuclear fission plants since the 1950s but scientists haven't been able to tap the much greater promise of nuclear fusion. In the next decade that may change as the first experimental fusion reactor aims to start up in 2015.

ENERGY FROM SPACE

But how can we use the space environment help us with our energy problems? Paul discussed some seemingly exotic ideas that could revolutionize energy production.

Wind power has always had to overcome two problems: the wind on earth is weak and sporadic in most places. But up in the jet stream, the winds are much stronger and steadier. What

if, Paul asked, we put wind turbines high in the sky? These "flying windmills" could multiply the power we get from the wind.

Solar power is another energy source that is only intermittent on earth's surface. But above the planet's atmosphere, Paul noted, the story is different. Up there, solar energy has several times the intensity that reaches us here. Why not, then, collect solar energy in space? This is what engineer Peter Glaser proposed way back in 1968, suggesting that we put solar arrays in orbit around the earth. If placed high enough, they would collect solar radiation continuously, day and night, and would not have the big environmental footprint they would have on earth. Photovoltaic arrays in space would have to transmit power to earth, losing something along the way. Paul mentioned that some people are speculating about placing antennae on islands to gather the power when the solar satellites pass overhead. But then he brought up a more radical vision: using superconductive carbon nanotube cables to connect the solar arrays to earth. This requires major technical advances, for sure, but it is another example of how space dramatically expands our possibilities.

MANUFACTURING IN SPACE

The abundant solar energy in space could be an advantage for mining and manufacturing, but Paul brought out other potential advantages: the low gravity on the moon, the seeming weightlessness in space, the coldness when facing away from the sun, the availability of rare metals on the moon and on asteroids, and the sheer room in space. Small-scale space manufacturing has begun already, he noted. In 1984, the Space Shuttle Discovery manufactured some pharmaceuticals in an experiment. Astronauts also produced microscopic latex spheres for calibrating microscopes.

One big idea for space manufacturing, Paul said, actually goes back to famed engineer Buckminster Fuller in the 1950s. Fuller envisioned what he called "Cloud Nines" - dome-covered, floating cities, one-half mile in diameter. Paul explained that the domed cities would have an air pressure slightly lower than the outside and this would allow them to float in the air much like a hot air balloon. Heat from normal

activity in the city would provide sufficient buoyancy to lift them off the earth even if the dome was a steel shell. They could migrate with the weather. Industries could manufacture the domes on the moon and send them to earth. A wild and dangerous idea? Actually, it would be quite practical, Paul said, because the new domes would be hollow, so their density would be low. As they headed to earth, they would hit the atmosphere, which would slow them down for a soft landing.

THE FUTURE ARRIVES

For those who think that colonizing space and producing power and manufacturing there are too far off to think about, Paul drew a historical parallel with the settling of the American West. Listing a timeline of events, he noted that the U.S. made the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 but just 87 years later in 1890, the U.S. Census declared that the west was settled. Turning his attention to space exploration, Paul reminded us that it was only in 1969 that man landed on the moon. Then in the 1970s, we put space stations in orbit. In the 1980s, we did the first manufacturing in space. Now civilians are going into space. By 2015, we could be generating energy in space. In the next decade, Paul predicted, we will reach a critical stage in space manufacturing and energy production. "Vision, motivation, and means will converge over the next ten years." Using his historical analogy, he projected that by 2056, figuratively speaking, the space frontier will be settled.

People pondered Paul's message about vision, motivation, and means, and someone asked him if he had \$100 million or billion of means, what would he do? "Promote creativity," Paul replied. "Engineering at its best is a very creative discipline." It is this creativity that he looks to get humanity across the threshold into space.

Attendance at the dinner was modest. Those who didn't make it can get a copy of Paul Wieland's book *Crossing the Threshold: Advancing into Space to Benefit the Earth* (Threshold 2020 Press, 2010, ISBN 978-0-9825127-1-5) by visiting the website <http://www.threshold2020.com> or e-mailing contactus@threshold2020.com. ---

JANUARY SPEAKER: Jerry Brooker will talk about his recent trip to Indonesia. (See photo)



New Members Dinner: Members who have joined in the past year or who have not attended a dinner before can enjoy a free dinner.

TRAVEL BLOG**Chapter 4: Ways to Get Home****By Bill Sawatzki**

Every story has a beginning, middle and end. How to end a story that may be just beginning is the task at hand. For well over 200,000 miles the passenger seat was filled with myself or my now departed spouse of 42 years. I drove the two-lanes and she drove the freeways. This trip I was alone.

Blue Van had a cassette player but, being a work rig, only one random cassette, a found Dolly Parton / Kenny Rodgers pirate home mix. I could, however, for the first time in many years, because I was alone, use the radio's station scanner. The geography dictated country music while my taste was jazz / swing. I did hear "You said you were jogging but they tell me you were running around." The sentiment, if not the song, was country classic.

I did catch a couple Spanish language stations. They always seem to be having more fun than we have. NPR faded in and out so Ira Glass was not able to put me completely to sleep while I was driving. Straight, high desert two-lane is a close enough cause for sleep. At a rest stop, a motorcyclist, sounding exasperated, said to his buddies, "I almost fell asleep three times. You're not supposed to fall asleep on a motorcycle!" - or driving Blue Van.

Fastest, prettiest, most freeway miles, most small towns, are four routes to get home. Home is the only destination left for this trip, even if it is just to pack for another trip.

One road leads through the town of Jordan Valley, Oregon. Stopping there to get gas and coffee on the way south, on this trip, I was standing next to a uniformed local policeman while waiting to pay. "Were you here in 1969?", I asked.

"No, that wasn't me," he answered.

"That was Pat." Came a voice from the center spot of the booth of old guys who occupy small town cafes. "Pat's been gone for a while. One

time he gave a speeding ticket to a business man as he came into town and another ticket as he left."

On the way to my 1969 San Francisco wedding I had picked up my speeding trap ticket. It was well before cell phones so I couldn't warn my parents, who came through about two hours later, to pick up their ticket. I hope Jordan Valley had the best school system in Oregon, otherwise our fines were probably wasted.

Heading home: Deadman's Pass, Emigrant Pass, and Summit Pass lurked on Interstate 84. Blue Van passed on 84. Way too many mountains prevented a crow-flies route so I tacked two-lane blacktop in an almost random but northerly direction. Each turn was to a road less traveled but few didn't conjure memories of previous trips in what sometimes seemed a previous life.

Pendleton, Oregon to Liberty Lake, Washington. is a road oft traveled. Time to put Blue Van on cruise control and head for the barn. After 40 plus years and hundreds of trips, one direction or the other, this part is almost a commute. .

Commuters know to have a shaving or makeup applying ritual, a Sirius radio subscription, a ride share, or even Howard Stern to forestall ennui. A wife of forty-two years would be better. Now all I have is an empty passenger seat.

Lao-tzu is credited with saying "The longest journey begins with a single step." This newest journey began with a two thousand mile step.

Fade to Credits

If you would like, follow my blog at bsawatzki.blogspot.com

WORD CHECK

See if you can define these phobias.

1. acrophobia -
2. algophobia -
3. bathophobia -
4. ergophobia -
5. gelotophobia -
6. glossophobia -
7. haptophobia (or haphophobia) -
8. ligyrophobia -
9. mysophobia (or misophobia) -
10. nyctophobia (also known as achluophobia, lygophobia, or scotophobia) -
11. panphobia -
12. spectrophobia -

ANSWERS:

1. acrophobia - the fear of heights.
2. algophobia - the fear of pain.
3. bathophobia - the fear of depth.
4. ergophobia - the fear of work.
5. gelotophobia - the fear of being laughed at.
6. glossophobia - the fear of speaking in public or of trying to speak.
7. haptophobia (or haphophobia) - the fear of being touched.
8. ligyrophobia - the fear of loud noises.
9. mysophobia (or misophobia) - the fear of being contaminated with dirt or germs.
10. nyctophobia - the fear of darkness.
11. panphobia - the fear of everything or constant fear of an unknown cause.
12. spectrophobia - the fear of mirrors and one's own reflections.

PUZZLES & QUESTIONS

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

1. How should people practice for negotiations?
2. Give the 10 largest cities in Germany and their population.
3. Name some Catch-22 situations.
4. When did these organizations begin: Lloyd's of London; The Associated Press; Reuters; The Red Cross; the Better Business Bureau; the Fresh Air Fund; Standard and Poor; the FBI; the American Cancer Society; Save the Children?
5. How should boxing matches be scored?
6. Which nations have a AAA credit rating? Which companies have a AAA credit rating?
7. What are the most common mistakes young drivers make?
8. What was Shakespeare's shortest play by word count?
9. How should you organize files on a computer?
10. What is the largest gulf in the world?
11. How well do military veterans adjust to civilian life?
12. What is the deepest river in the world (by average depth)?

PUZZLES & QUESTIONS ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES:

2. About how many customers does Connecticut Light and Power have in Connecticut?
About how many does United Illuminating have?
- A: Connecticut Light and Power (CL&P) has 1.1 million customers in about 149 towns and cities in Connecticut. It's parent company is Northeast Utilities, which has 2.1 million customers in New England.

The United Illuminating Company (UI), established in 1899, has 325,000 residential, commercial, and industrial customers in the 17 towns or cities in the Greater New Haven and Bridgeport areas.
4. List the 12 tribes of ancient Israel.
- A: The 12 tribes of Israel were Asher, Benjamin, Dan, Gad, Issachar, Joseph, Judah, Levi, Naphtali, Reuben, Simeon, and Zebulun. These tribes descended from the 12 sons of Jacob (later known as Israel), who was Abraham's grandson. Joseph's two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, became separate

tribes

In order of birth, the sons were 1) Reuben, 2) Simeon, 3) Levi, 4) Judah; 5) Dan; 6) Naphtali; 7) Gad, 8) Asher; 9) Issachar; 10) Zebulun; 11) Joseph; 12) Benjamin.

The mothers and their sons were Leah (Jacob's elder wife): 1) Reuben, 2) Simeon, 3) Levi, 4) Judah; 9) Issachar and 10) Zebulun; Zilpah (Leah's slave woman): 7) Gad, 8) Asher; Rachel (Jacob's younger wife): 11) Joseph, 12) Benjamin - Bilhah (Rachel's slave woman): 5) Dan, 6) Naphtali.

6. About how many stars are in the Milky Way Galaxy?
- A: The Milky Way has an estimated 200 - 400 billion stars.
8. What is the approximate speed of meteorites?
- A: Meteorites travel at 50,000 - 150,000 miles per hour.

10. The 2010 U.S. Census gave Connecticut's population as 3.5 million. What was Connecticut's population in 1900?

A: According to census figures, Connecticut had about 238,000 people in 1800 and about 908,000 in 1900.

12. What is the difference between the Internet and the World Wide Web?

A: The Internet is the global computer network that interconnects numerous smaller computer networks for communication using standard communication codes. It is hardware. The World Wide Web is the software collection of HTML pages stored at various locations worldwide that are cross-referenced using hypertext links and that can be searched and seen on the Internet using web browsers, software that allows computer users to search and view information stored on computer networks on the Internet.

The Internet preceded the World Wide Web, beginning about 1970 as part of a U.S. defense project. For the next 20 years, the Internet was

used mostly by academics and scientists to communicate with each other. Then the web was invented, allowing people to share documents, and later pictures, and videos using a web browser.

14. What was the average number of pitchers used per game by major league baseball teams in 2011?

A: About 3.75.

16. Which Hall of Fame National Football League quarterbacks threw more interceptions than touchdown passes?

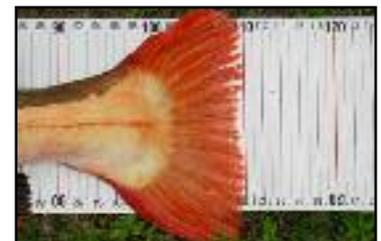
A: George Blanda threw 236 TD's and 277 interceptions; Otto Graham, 88 TD's, 94 interceptions; Bobby Layne, 196 TD's, 243 interceptions; Joe Namath, 173 TD's, 220 interceptions; Y.A. Tittle, 242 TD's, 248 interceptions; Van Brocklin, 173 TD's, 178 interceptions; and Bob Waterfield, 97 TD's, 128 interceptions.

CHAPTER NEWS

Take a look at this monstrous fish. It's a world record size - 109 cm., or slightly over 42 inches - red-tail catfish caught by Southern CT Mensan Michael Ma on June 2, 2011. Mike caught it while fishing in the Ratchaburi Province in central Thailand. The International Game Fishing Association (IGFA) verified Ma's record-breaking catch in September.



Mike's photos have appeared in the national Mensa Bulletin sent to members each month and these pics will probably appear in a forthcoming issue. He has been a member of our local Mensa chapter for nearly two years and he often attends the Post Road Dinner and the monthly dinner in Bethel. Stop by one of our dinners and you might get a chance to hear about Mike's world record and his global travels.



You can read an article about Mike's achievement by the Darien Times at <http://www.darientimes.com/news/darien-features/5001587-world-record-fish.html>.

Shall I refuse my dinner because I do not fully understand the process of digestion?

- Oliver Heaviside, (1850 - 1925), English physicist.

The practice of medicine is a thinker's art, the practice of surgery a plumber's.

- Martin H. Fischer, (1879 - 1962), German-American physician, author, Fischerisms (1944)

A critic is a necessary evil, and criticism is an evil necessity. - Carolyn Wells, (1862 - 1942), U.S. writer of mysteries and verse

The circumference of life cannot be rightly drawn until the center is set.

- Benjamin E. Mays, (1894 - 1984), U.S. minister, scholar, activist, president Morehouse College 1940-1967

Wisdom consists of the anticipation of consequences.

- Norman Cousins, (1912 - 1990), U.S. journalist, essayist, and editor of the Saturday Review 1937 - 1972

One can't indefinitely do for somebody what he is reluctant to do for himself.

- Christopher Hitchens, (1949 - 2011), British-American author, journalist

It's fine to celebrate success, but it is more important to heed the lessons of failure.

- Bill Gates, (1955 -),

I am certain there is too much certainty in the world.

- Michael Crichton, (1942 - 2008), U.S. novelist and movie director

Do I believe in ghosts? No, but I'm afraid of them.

- Madame du Deffand, (1697 - 1780), French hostess and patron of the arts

My ambition is handicapped by my laziness.

- Charles Bukowski, (1920 - 1994), German-American author and poet

The loftier the building, the deeper must the foundation be laid.

- Thomas a Kempis, (1380 - 1471), German monk, author

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Fool! Don't you see now that I could have poisoned you a hundred times had I been able to live without you?

- Cleopatra, *Egyptian Queen*, (69 - - 30 B.C.E.)

I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul.

- William Ernest Henley, (1849 - 1903), *English editor and poet*

Let us not say, every man is the architect of his own fortune; but let us say, every man is the architect of his own character.

- George Dana Boardman, (1801 - 1831), *U.S. minister*

Our ship of fate, which recent storms have threatened to destroy, has come safely to harbor at last.

- Sophocles, (496? - 406 B.C.E.), *Greek playwright*

Life's a voyage that's homeward bound.

- Herman Melville, (1819 - 1891)

Youth is properly dedicated to error.

- John Jay Chapman, (1862 - 1933), *U.S. author, dramatist, and essayist*

Time has no divisions to mark its passage, there is never a thunderstorm or blare of trumpets to announce the beginning of a new month or year. Even when a new century begins it is only we mortals who ring bells and fire off pistols.

- Thomas Mann, (1875 - 1955), *German-American writer, Nobel Prize laureate Literature 1929*

No trumpets sound when the important decisions of our life are made. Destiny is made known silently.

- Agnes de Mille, (1905 - 1993), *U.S. choreographer and dancer*

Every man meets his Waterloo at last.

- Wendell Phillips, (1811 - 1884), *U.S. abolitionist, reformer.*, Nov. 1, 1859

The cat is a dilettante in fur.

- Theophile Gautier, (1811 - 1872), *French poet, dramatist, novelist, journalist, and literary critic*

The great charm of cats is their rampant egotism, their devil may care attitude toward responsibility, and their disinclination to earn an honest dollar.

- Robertson Davies, (1913 - 1995), *Canadian novelist, playwright, critic, and journalist*

We know nothing in reality; for truth lies in an abyss.

- Democritus, (c. 460? - 370? B.C.E.), *Greek philosopher.*

Shared danger is the strongest of bonds; it will keep men united in spite of mutual dislike and suspicion.

- Livy, (59 B.C.E. - 17 A.D.), *Roman historian*, Book II, sec. 39

Man grows used to everything, the scoundrel.

- Fyodor Dostoevsky, (1821 - 1881), *Russian novelist*

He that waits upon fortune is never sure of a dinner.

- Benjamin Franklin, (1706 - 1790)

Attachment is the great fabricator of illusions; reality can be attained only by someone who is detached.

- Simone Weil, (1909 - 1943), *French writer, philosopher.*

Scents, colors, and sounds respond to one another.

- Charles Baudelaire, (1821 - 1867), *French poet, critic, and translator*, *The Flowers of Evil* (1857)

I'm like that. Either I forget right away or I never forget.

- Samuel Beckett, (1906 - 1989), *Irish playwright, novelist, Waiting for Godot*

My existence is a sad country where it is always raining....

- Léon Bloy, (1846 - 1917), *French novelist, essayist, pamphleteer, poet*, *The Woman Who Was Poor* (1917)

You have to live the way you think, otherwise you'll end up thinking the way you lived.

- Paul Bourget, (1852 - 1935), *French writer and critic*, *The Demon of Noonday* (1914)

Being alive serves no purpose, if one has to work.

- André Breton, (1896 - 1966), *French Surrealist writer and poet*, *Nadja* (1928)

The more successful the villain, the more successful the picture.

- Alfred Hitchcock, (1899 - 1980)

There are two impulses in theatre: to be frivolous or to make rules.

- Tadashi Suzuki, (1939 -), *Japanese theatre director, writer, and philosopher*

I sought trains; I found passengers.

- Paul Theroux, (1941 -), *U.S. travel writer and novelist*

Devotion to symbols must never come at the expense of devotion to principles.

- *Jacob G. Hornberger, founder and president of The Future of Freedom Foundation*

As the ostrich when pursued hideth his head, but forgetteth his body; so the fears of a coward expose him to danger.

- *Akhenaton, King of Egypt, 14th century B.C.E*

Conversation may be compared to a lyre with seven chords - philosophy, art, poetry, love, scandal, and the weather.

- *Anna Jameson, (1794 - 1860), Irish essayist*

He who wants to persuade should put his trust not in the right argument, but in the right word. The power of sound has always been greater than the power of sense.

- *Joseph Conrad, (1857 - 1924)*

The pursuit of beauty is much more dangerous nonsense than the pursuit of truth or goodness, because it affords a stronger temptation to the ego.

- *Northrop Frye, (1912 - 1991), Canadian literary critic and theorist*

Idealism springs from deep feelings, but feelings are nothing without the formulated idea that keeps them whole.

- *Jacques Barzun, (1907 -), Franco-American critic, educator, and historian*

The decay of society is praised by artists as the decay of a corpse is praised by worms.

- *G.K. (Gilbert Keith) Chesterton, (1874 - 1936), English essayist and poet.*

The ego is entranced by ... names and ideas ... (However) names and concepts only block your perception of this Great Oneness. Therefore it is wise to ignore them. Those who live inside their egos are continually bewildered.

- *Lao Tzu, (6th c. B.C.E), Chinese philosopher, founder of Taoism*

We repeat again: strength of character does not consist solely in having powerful feelings, but in maintaining one's balance in spite of them. Even with the violence of emotion, judgment and principle must still function like a ship's compass, which records the slightest variations however rough the sea. - *Carl von Clausewitz, (1780 - 1831), German soldier, military theorist*



MENSA MIND GAMES 2011 RESULTS

This year's winners are:

InStructures

(4 or more players, ages 8 and up; designed by Jane's Games, published by Jane's Games)

Pastiche

(2 to 4 players, ages 10 and up; designed by Sean D. MacDonald, published by Gryphon Games)

Pirate Versus Pirate

(2 to 3 players, ages 8 and up; designed by Max Winter Osterhaus, published by Out of the Box Publishing)

Stomple

(for 2 to 6 players, ages 8 and up; designed by Greg Zima, published by Spin Master)

Uncle Chestnut's Table Gype

(for 2 to 4 players, ages 10 and up; designed by Paul E. Nowak and Christopher Nowak, published by Eternal Revolution)

The Chronicle is THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT MENSA #066. The subscription rate for members is \$3.50 and is included as part of yearly dues. Others may subscribe at a rate of \$10.00 per year. (Monthly)

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INCOME

American Mensa
 Local Group Support Funds: \$1247.80
Total Income **\$1247.80**

EXPENSES

Chronicle Printing Expenses: \$387.96
 Chronicle Postage & Supplies: 176.00
 Speaker Dinners: 160.86
 Event Expenses: 629.93
TOTAL EXPENSES: **\$1354.75**

2nd Quarter Balance 9-30-11 **\$10,055.71**

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