

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT MENSA CHRONICLE



TABLE OF CONTENTS

2	Schedule of Mensa Events
4	From the LocSec
5	RVC Chat
	Election Letters
15	April Dinner
18	Word Check
	Synonym Sense
19	Puzzles
21	Noted and Quoted
22	Treasury Report
	Chapter Notes
23	Member Advertisements
24	List of Officers

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.

SCHEDULE OF CHAPTER EVENTS - MAY

Friday, May 10, 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@com-cast.net for info on location and/or reservations.

Tuesday, May 14, 6:30 pm

Post Road Dinner

King and I restaurant, 260 Post Rd., Fairfield, CT 06820. Contact Jim Mizera at jmizera@hotmail.com or (203) 522-1959 for reservations or info.

Saturday, May 18, 6:15 pm

Monthly Dinner

TOPIC: Alex Larsen of Westport, founder of the new company Larsen Toy Labs, will discuss with us his business and the building block toys it produces. Check out the company's website at <http://larsentoylab.com/> and an article about the company at www.ctpost.com/news/article/Westport-toy-firm-building-blocks-for-kids-4411107.php. Bring yourself and your kids or grandkids to the dinner.

WHERE: The PUTNAM HOUSE Restaurant, 12 Depot Place, Bethel, CT 06801 (downtown - across from old railroad station), (www.theputnamhouse.com). The dinner will be held on the 2nd Floor.

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. Contact Jim Mizera at jmizera@hotmail.com or (203) 522-1959 for reservations or

info. Reservations strongly encouraged but not required. You can bring a donation of money or food to benefit the Connecticut Food Bank. In case of storm, please call, text, or e-mail to inquire if the dinner is going on as scheduled.

CONNECTICUT AND WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER EVENTS

This is not a complete listing WE - Weekly Event, ME - Monthly Event, YE - Yearly Event

MAY

2, 9, 16, 23, 30 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

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

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

5 Sunday 12:00 Noon

Haveli India Restaurant

The food is enticing, the staff is friendly, and the company is the best to be had anywhere! Join us at Haveli India Restaurant for an all-you-can-eat \$9.95 buffet. The restaurant is conveniently located at 1300 South Main St., Rte 17 in South Middletown.

Admitted in CT, NY & OR

Sharon Oberst DeFala, Esq.
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RSVP required. Call or email Barb Holstein at BarbCPA@att.net or 860-632-7873 for a reservation. Also contact me if you need directions.

8 Wednesday 5:30 pm

Shoreline Happy Hour

(ME, 2nd Wednesday) at Donovan's Reef 1212 Main Street, Branford Conn. 06405. 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. Go south on Cedar Street crossing Rt. 1/Boston Post Road for about 0.5 mi. to Rose Street. Take a left on Rose and go 0.25 mi. to a driveway on the right where you will enter the parking lot for a number of businesses in a complex known as Lockworks Square. Drive part way through the lot and look for Donovan's Reef on the left. Locals can also enter Lockworks Square from the Ivy Street side just off of Main Street. The lounge is on the left inside. I usually have a table reservation and will likely have an "M" sign visible. We start around 5:30. There are free daily bar goodies along with any items that you may want to order from the comprehensive menu. Donovan's phone number is 203-488-5573. We have a great time talking about anything and everything. Hope to see you there! Questions? Contact Mike Wilson at 203-481-2858 or MahoutMike@aol.com

18 Thursday 6:30 pm

Pioneer Valley Dinner, Hadley, MA

Pioneer Valley Dinner (ME, 3rd Thursday) will try a new (for us) venue: Zoe's Fish House, located at 195 Russell Street (Route 9), in Hadley, Mass.

They have been voted "Best Seafood Restaurant" in the Pioneer Valley nine times by the Valley Advocate, and Chef Jim Sands and his family continue his tradition of fine cuisine. With a menu that includes fresh New England lobster, scallops, oysters, salmon and scrod, Zoe's satisfies their guests with the freshest and widest variety of fish and shellfish in the Valley. Beef, chicken, pork, and pasta round out the menu to satisfy all palates. Email Ian Fraser at ianfraser@usa.net, or call him at (413) 586-2031 this month to RSVP (very much appreciated but not required). As always, new members and guests are very welcome at this always friendly and interesting event. We hope to see you there!

20 Monday 6:35 pm

Mensa Goes to a Ball Game, New Britain

Meet Tom Thomas in Section 213 (third-base side, general admission) about four rows from the top for a ballgame between the New Britain Rock Cats (Double-A Minnesota Twins, www.rockcats.com) as they host the Binghamton Mets (Double-A New York Mets) in an Eastern League game. Parking is about \$4, and general admission ticket is about \$6. For more information, contact Tom Thomas at tom.thomas@the-spa.com.

24 Friday 5:30 pm

Fourth Friday Happy Hour

Happy Hour (ME, 4th Friday) at The Playwright in Hamden, <http://www.playwrightirishpub.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

Have a good month!

Deb Jennings

RVC CHAT - ANDREW HEFFERNAN, REGIONAL VICE CHAIRMAN, REGION I

It is time for Mensa Elections. Every two years a new Board of Directors is elected and the associated appointed officers are welcomed to the Board. This year I ran as your Regional Vice Chair unopposed, and will begin my second term as RVC in July. I enjoy this responsibility and it is very rewarding to continue working to improve Mensa. While I will continue in my role, many of the other positions will change, including, the Chair of American Mensa. Elissa Rudolph has served Mensa well and has been elected to Chairman of Mensa International. That leaves an open position for whom the person elected will be responsible for deciding the direction of Mensa in this country.

You will have already received election materials in the mail by the time this column hits the presses. I encourage you to vote for all of the positions as each of the races is very important. If you have any questions about the election process please reach out and ask questions. The National Office is there to help with the voting process, and I would be happy to share with you my opinion on the races if you wish to contact me.

I will be attending the first meeting of the new Board in July at the Annual Gathering in Fort Worth, TX. Will you be joining us? This is a special AG for a couple reasons for me. Firstly, I will be newly married to a wonderful M. And secondly, it will be the first organized, in-person meeting of my favorite Special Interest Group, the M Running Club. If you are in Fort Worth, and enjoy running, walking, or some combination, please join us for a meet and run session.
www.facebook.com/groups/TheMRunningClub/

Andrew Heffernan
 518-788-0019
rvc1@us.mensa.org

ELECTION LETTERS

Dan Burg for Chairman of American Mensa

The job of Chairman is, well, big. Lead the board. Choose priorities. Set the tone. Stay informed. Plan. Represent American Mensa, both internally and externally. Chair board meetings. Serve as an ex officio member of the board of the Mensa Foundation. Serve on Mensa International's Executive Committee, as well as on the International Board of Directors. With my background and experience, I can do all of them. I look forward to it.

My style is independence, integrity, and quiet competence backed by years of experience in a wide variety of areas and arenas. My priorities include not only planning for the future, but also getting back to basics. If elected, I'll review our rules and procedures and get rid of any that don't make sense. I'll make sure all board members know their roles and responsibilities. I'll

continue to be a resource to local groups and to members. Things will get done.

International Mensa is another important part of the Chairman's job: In addition to being a national representative, the Chairman is a member of the International Executive Committee. That is important because the ExComm conducts the business of Mensa International on a day-to-day basis, which, in turn, affects American Mensa. My long international experience - eleven years as a NatRep, chairman of two committees - has prepared me well for this larger role.

I would be honored to receive your vote as Chairman.

continued on next page

ELECTION LETTERS

Robert Salkin for Chairman of American Mensa

I'm Rob Salkin and I'm running for Chairman of American Mensa. With your vote, I will redirect the focus of the next board to the Mensa experience, making membership for everyone from gifted youth to veteran life members even more meaningful and enjoyable without raising the dues.

"I have no doubt that with Rob at the helm, American Mensa will be injected with a vibrancy unseen in my decade as a member." - Claire Natola, Co-Chair, 2014 Annual Gathering in Boston

I'm ready and able to lead American Mensa. I'm an educator and a lawyer with graduate degrees in business, law, and computer science. I've been on the national board (aka AMC), served as a LocSec, and founded the RechaRGe Regional Gathering (www.nymensa.com/rg) and the M-Available Special Interest Group (www.mavailable.org).

"Mr. Salkin is a leader in everything he does. His ability to bring volunteers together to tackle problems as a team is inspirational." - Andrew Heffernan, Regional Vice Chair for Region 1, Former LocSec, Mensa of Northeastern NY

I recognize and understand that there is an expectation about what membership in American Mensa means to you, other Mensans, and the public. Crafting and then exceeding that expectation will be my goal as Chairman of American Mensa, not missing the forest for the trees while buried in the minutiae of the bylaws nor worrying about where in the world the next Mensa International meeting will be held.

"Rob's vision for the future of American Mensa is exciting, and he has the direction and focus to ensure that progress will be made without wasting time on nonsense." - Elizabeth Penn, Recording Secretary, Greater New York Mensa

Rather than raising the dues, I will advocate for the current \$4 million budget to be spent in ways you notice and appreciate. My vision includes reforming the budget to allow for an increase in funding to local groups without the need for a dues increase. By making more robust leadership development opportunities available for local group and SIG leaders, and recognizing them for their efforts, they'll be better motivated and equipped to involve you in ways you prefer. In addition, modernizing American Mensa's technology infrastructure will ease some of the administrative burden on volunteers and allow you to connect with fellow Mensans as you see fit and on your own schedule.

"The commitment and drive [Rob] has shown in enhancing member involvement and retention, as well as communal goodwill, has set him apart as one of the most trusted and reliable people I know." - Robert Allen, National GenY Coordinator, Space Coast Area Mensa

Your vote counts more than you might expect. It only takes a few minutes to vote by mail or online. Either way, keep on the lookout for your ballot and be sure to vote by May 31st!

For more about my campaign, including unabridged endorsements and how you might be appointed to a national office, visit <http://RobSalkin.com> or email Rob.Salkin.AMC@gmail.com.

I would appreciate your vote. Thank you and enjoy Mensa!

Rob Salkin

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John Recht for First Vice Chairman

Hi, my name is John Recht and I'm running for First Vice Chairman. The position has few specified duties besides membership on our governing board, the American Mensa Committee, and on the AMC's Executive Committee. In particular, the

First Vice Chairman must take on projects as assigned by the Chairman and must be prepared to assume the position of Chairman if the position becomes vacant during the term. During my eight years on the board, I have taken the initiative on special projects that are important to Mensa's future. As Chair of the Planning Committee, I led the way in the development and implementation of the AMC's first-ever Strategic Plan, including development of the Strategic Dashboard on the AML website. As Chair of the Leadership Development Committee, I have led a team dedicated to increasing the number of new volunteers in American Mensa who are willing and able to serve in elected and appointed positions, giving them confidence and understanding in their roles as leaders and supporting them with resources and training. I am happy to report that American Mensa has made great strides in planning and leadership development during my terms in office, and I intend to continue my support of these efforts when I am elected First Vice Chairman.

Over the course of my years in Mensa I have served in a number of positions at the local, regional, national and international levels. Among them were LocSec, Treasurer, Mediator/Arbitrator, Chair or Co-Chair of four Regional Gatherings, Regional Vice Chairman, Co-Chair of the 2006 Mind Games and Co-Chair of the 2011 AG. I am currently Second Vice Chairman and a member of the Mensa International Board of Directors. My experience has given me a deep understanding of the big picture for Mensa, and I look forward to helping to assure that Mensa will remain a healthy organization, dedicated to creating a stimulating intellectual and social environment for our members. My goals for American Mensa are as follows:

- Encourage the development and implementation of programs that add value to member benefits
- Improve member satisfaction
- Increase motivation for people to join Mensa and to retain their membership • Provide the highest quality of service
- Improve communication
- Encourage member participation
- Increase transparency in the AMC and the National Office
- Promote membership development
- Assist volunteer and leadership development
- Ensure sound fiscal management
- Extend the use of social media to improve the experience of Mensa membership
- Facilitate the use of strategic planning tools at all levels of the organization In sum, please vote for me for First Vice Chairman and I will do all I can to build on our success. I hope to see you at the AG in Fort Worth this summer!

continued on next page

Heather Miller Poirier (N)
Candidate for First Vice Chair

Mensa has more to offer than any organization, anywhere.

Many of us want to see people clamoring to get into Mensa, nationwide media coverage of the Mensa Select winners, and an ever-growing membership. I want also to see Mensa fulfill its promise not only as an organization by the gifted and for the gifted, but also for the world.

I believe that for its own survival, Mensa has to turn more of its attention outward. Within the next five years, American Mensa will go through a crisis of identity, a crisis that has already begun. The way we used to do things—testing, local group events, volunteerism—needs changing. Numbers are down for testing in most local groups; event attendance is inconsistent; and volunteers are burning out with no one to replace them. We've got to re-envision the way the organization works and the direction in which it is headed.

But how?

What's important right now is vision. Our way forward begins with the AML Strategic Plan, but it doesn't end there. As First Vice Chair, I will work to strengthen the Strategic Plan and give Mensa stronger footing. The AMC has done

much work, but the focus has been lost. We risk returning to governance by micromanagement. We risk alienating the young members we try so hard to attract, those who have grown up performing community service. What can we tell them that we've done, given what we're capable of?

From there, the AMC can strengthen programs so that Mensa can really reach out into the world.→ This will ripple through membership, member retention, local group activities—you name it. Anyone is free to compare candidates via their resumes. Mine is extensive, ranging from service at the local group level to regional and national work, including chairing RGs and an AG. I've been all over the map in Mensa. Judging candidates by the past will just get you more of the same. Is that what you really want? Really?

There is no group anywhere that has more to offer. It's time for us to see what we can really do.

LaRae Bakerink (P)
Candidate for Second Vice Chair

Mensa became a part of my life in 2001 and I couldn't be happier. My life has been very full and I've been involved in many things. Now, I would like to apply my experience, knowledge, and leadership abilities to the AMC. I served on the board of the National Association of Securities Dealers (now called FINRA) for 7 years. NASD is the regulator for the securities industry in the United States. It is a not-for-profit (same as American Mensa) with 5600 member firms and 600,000 associated persons. During that time I served on the Membership, Technology, Search, Regulatory, and Audit Committees. I also served on the board of the NASDAQ Stock Market for 2 years. I served as President and Chairman of NAIBD for 12 years, a not-for-profit trade organization. I served on the President's National Hire Veterans Committee for 2 years, this committee reported directly to the Secretary of Labor. I have a B.S. in Finance and an M.B.A. with emphasis in Management.

My Mensa experience has been a joy. I have served locally as Activities Officer, Development Officer, LocSec, RG Chair, Database Coordinator, Webmaster, Testing Coordinator, Proctor, LDW Chair, Mind Games Chair 2010, and Scholarship Chair. I am currently serving as Assistant RVC 9. Nationally I am currently serving as the National Testing Officer, AG Chair 2016, Membership Committee, Leadership Development Committee, and the Awards Task Force. This is just some of my experience. I believe I have the necessary skills that will enable me to provide strong and smart leadership on the AMC. We need experienced leadership with new ideas to keep up with the changes in our world. Please let me bring my new ideas to Mensa to help enhance our membership experience. Please vote for me for 2nd Vice Chair.

For more information, go to: www.bakerink.com or contact larae@bakerink.com

What members are saying about LaRae:

"LaRae is well loved by her community and is the reason I got more involved in Mensa. She is a constant source of inspiration and I am amazed at how selflessly she commits to the group. I would consider any effort that has LaRae's focus to be an inevitable success."

Jarrod Overson, LocSec - San Diego,
GenX/GenY SIG leader

"Great leaders are dedicated, focused, creative, and humble. Great leaders are possessed of a powerful vision. LaRae Bakerink possesses all these qualities in abundance and has transmuted them into reality. She builds castles in the air and always puts foundations under them. She is unremittingly humble about her accomplishments and, as a result, an inspirer and uniter, not a divider." Richard Lederer, President Emeritus, San Diego Mensa, language columnist, Mensa Bulletin

"LaRae has consistently gone above and beyond, coming to Las Vegas from San Diego many times in the past year to help us rebuild and re-invigorate our ExComm and the chapter at large. In every case, she has been congenial, committed, willing to do far more than the minimum required and, frankly, invaluable to us."

J.R. Wilson, LocSec - SoNvM

Debra Reiger (N)
Candidate for Second Vice Chair

Please vote for me, Debra Reiger, for 2nd Vice Chair in the upcoming AML election. My Mensa and professional leadership experience make me a good choice for this job.

I have been in Mensa leadership positions for 20 years, starting with local positions (including LocSec, RG Chair, and others) and have been in an elected AMC position (RVC 8) since 2009. This is my second term as Regional Vice Chair of the Pacific Intermountain Region.

My professional experience includes management and executive level jobs with the State of California, most recently as the state's Chief Information Security Officer. I have spent many years dealing with organizational issues involving planning, budgeting, problem solving, leadership, delegation, public speaking, and management. I have also been active with community and statewide organizations in leadership roles, and have good experience in leading volunteers and with community outreach.

In the upcoming term, I look forward to using my varied and extensive organizational background to provide leadership, vision, and action.

- I support American Mensa's strategic goals for financial stability, member satisfaction, public awareness, and leadership at all levels. I am enthused and well prepared to continue making positive contributions to the process, and will continue to support the practice of strategy-based decision making.
- In Mensa we must continue to value diversity in multiple areas: culture, age, gender, physical abilities, opinion, and geographical location. I will continue to support and encourage appropriate ways to be inclusive and respect difference.
- Technology changes make things easier for many of us, but not for everyone. I will continue to push for AMC decisions that are "user-friendly" to people who have not embraced newer technologies, while also making appropriate use of new technology as it becomes available.

When you vote, please consider my many years of professional and Mensa-related organizational and leadership experience. I want American Mensa members to be proud of our organization, and I will work to make it so. I'll represent you well as Second Vice Chair. Please vote for me, Debra Reiger.

Brian Reeves (NP)
Candidate for Second Vice Chair

I am Brian Reeves, your current AML Communications Officer and now a candidate for AML Secretary.

As Communications Officer, I am responsible for helping set policies for - and troubleshooting - everything from the Mensa Bulletin to the website to the Forums and Mensa Facebook page to local group newsletters and much more. In addition, I chair the Communications Committee and serve on the national Bylaws Committee, the Finance Committee and am the Gifted Youth program's liaison to the AMC.

During my term as Communications Officer, we've created the Weekly Brainwave, calmed down tensions in the online Community and have upgraded the quality of the Bulletin (you'll see many of those changes later this year).

Your Secretary should be able to prepare meeting agendas and then later put out minutes quickly and accurately. Many Mensans are well-qualified for that part of the job. There is another aspect to the job, though, that many people don't consider. The Secretary also serves on

AML's Executive Committee where he or she is involved in helping make important decisions for Mensa. A deep knowledge of Mensa, everything from its finances to the personalities of the AMC members, is important to doing that part of the job well. As a current AMC member, I have that knowledge. I know the people involved and can work with them.

I can tell you from experience that most AMC members have strong personalities. Getting them to agree on things can be tough. I work as a mediator. I earn my living by getting people on opposite sides of issues to work together towards successful conclusions. I will bring the skills I've developed doing that work to the job of Secretary.

An additional project I plan to undertake is reorganizing the ASIEs. Have you ever tried to find something in the ASIE's? Did you finally just give up? I want to undertake the process of organizing them by topic rather than, as now, by the order in which they were adopted, so you can find things more easily.

If this sort of positive, competent "can-do" approach appeals to you, I'd appreciate your vote

Jared Levine for American Mensa Secretary

My name is Jared Levine, I am running for AML Secretary, and I would appreciate your vote.

Since rejoining Mensa in 1999, I have been an active member in each local group where I lived: Greater New York, Greater Los Angeles, and currently Metropolitan Washington. I hosted myriad events, and served in a whole slew of local positions (both on the Board of Directors in each group and in other capacities) and on multiple national committees (and still serve on the Bylaws Committee). I have a large base of experience within Mensa and knowledge of the organization on both the local and national levels.

As I have previously mentioned, aside from timely composition and dissemination of meeting minutes, I intend to make available within a month of the Annual Gathering a draft of the Annual Business Meeting minutes, while the meeting is relatively fresh in people's minds, rather than 11 months removed. Also, I will begin cross-referencing various documents so that it is easier to make updates to everything that is affected by changes in ASIEs or the local group charter. This, in turn, will make process easier both for officers and rank-and-file members, freeing up their time and energy for the more important things like providing a stimulating environment, effective in-person and online ways of connecting with fellow members, and various other services to the membership.

While being mindful of details is a necessary attribute (even more so for a Secretary) and an attribute on which I pride myself, looking for new ways to provide an even more positive Mensa experience for which the members actually find value in paying their dues is where it's at. I believe I will be able to work well with most possible combinations of people who might be elected to the AMC and ask that you vote for me for Secretary in the coming election.

To see more specific information about the leadership roles I have undertaken in Mensa, my understanding of the basic duties of an AMC Secretary, my philosophy for transparency on the AMC, suggestions for change in AML, and more, please visit my blog at <http://boxmaster-scorner.blogspot.com>.

Brian Reeves for American Mensa Secretary

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If this sort of positive, competent "can-do" approach appeals to you, I'd appreciate your vote.

Cary Chilson (P)
Candidate for Treasurer

Cary 'Curmudgeon' Chilson for AML Treasurer
 cary-c@pacbell.net ~ (714) 952-1102

Incumbent American Mensa Treasurer Nick Sanford and I are competing for your vote in the upcoming election. For the most part Nick has done an excellent job during his first term -- arguably better than any other Treasurer in the last decade. If you choose him for a second term, our finances will be in good hands.

But there is more to Mensa than making millions of dollars flow uphill every year. At least there was when I joined many years ago. There was an energy and excitement that kept members coming back for more. And encouraging their friends to join in the fun. Membership grew at a compound rate of over 9% per year during the 1970s and 1980s.

Then several things happened to spoil it all. Turmoil in our national business office. Turmoil among the volunteers who served on the Board of Directors. A succession of dues hikes amid suspicion of financial irregularities.

We relocated the business office and staffed it with new employees. Most of the volunteers from the troubled 1990s have stepped down at this point. Financials are not exactly an open book, but at least budgets, quarterly results, and annual audits are posted on the national website.

But the thrill is gone. Our member count is about the same today as 25 years ago. We currently need to bring in 3,500 to 4,500 new mem-

bers each year just to replace permanent lapses, and half of those new members will lapse at their first renewal opportunity.

I don't think business as usual is going to lead American Mensa to renewed success. I don't consider Board of Directors meetings filled with housekeeping motions and boilerplate 'reports' productive or inspiring. And it's not just me -- I went to one in San Diego a couple of years ago that had exactly two members observing. More recently, at the Reno AG, there were fewer than two dozen members observing (out of 2,000 or so attending the AG). As currently structured and conducted, our four AMC Board meetings each year are simply squandering time, talent, money, and opportunity cost.

Can the inertia of two decades plus be overcome? I'd like to try to make that happen. To transform our present gridlocked corporate culture into an innovative entrepreneurial one, responding to the special sensibilities of Mensa level intellects.

If that resonates with you, you can help in two ways. First, vote for new blood -- I happen to know that several of the challengers have intentions similar to mine. (If the next Board consists of me and 15 or

20 hold-overs from the present term there probably won't be much change happening). And second, if you have talents or abilities that could help shape a new and better Mensa, let me or the Chairman elect know.

Thank you for caring.

Nicholaus Sanford (NP)
Candidate for Treasurer

Please see my campaign statement either in the Bulletin or online for a discussion of my specific accomplishments. Here I will briefly state my qualifications and move on to new topics. I am a licensed CPA with four degrees (B.S. & M.S. in Applied Mathematics and B.S. & M.A. in Accounting) and 10 years of corporate finance experience. As your current Treasurer, I have passed motions to enhance our investment policies and revamp our life dues program, both to the great benefit of our organization. I will use the remainder of this space to talk about the benefit of having extensive experience in the national level positions of the Board.

The RVCs are a liaison between the groups and the AMC. I have seen these volunteers (myself included) bring forward specific situations that warrant a wider policy. Their intimate knowledge of the groups is invaluable. This is also an excellent place for an individual to start their Board experience. It is a stepping stone that is grounded by the members yet also touches the national level. This is where a Board member will learn to transcend their individual viewpoint in favor of having a much larger impact. I cannot imagine how poor of a job I would have done as Treasurer if I had not first spent four years learning what it means to be a Board member.

It is only after multiple years in a regional or appointed position that a person will truly be ready for a national position. Of course it is crit-

ical to never lose sight of the individual member, but the five national positions (Chair, 1st and 2nd Vice Chairs, Secretary, and Treasurer) must see the larger issues. For example, what does it truly mean to have food safety at gatherings, what are the risks associated with a life member program, what is the real impact of generational SIGs, and on and on. Each of these issues has a very different answer when viewed globally versus locally. It is imperative that the people in national positions understand both of these views.

One corporate viewpoint of group formation is summed up as "Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing". In this context, the Forming part is the post-election Board training. Storming comes about as individuals want their voice to be heard over others. Norming can be seen as everyone learning what it means to be a Board. Finally, Performing is where we all want to the AMC to ultimately land. The five national positions need to start in the Norming phase so as to guide the remainder of the Board through the process. If this level of leadership is composed of inexperienced Board members then the Board will spend a year or even two years just trying to get to a functional state. It is absolutely critical that the five national level positions are filled by people with extensive AMC experience. I would argue that it is even more critical that the Treasurer be me.

Nick Sanford, CPA

APRIL DINNER**EXPERIMENTS IN PATIENCE AND HONESTY**

At April's Southern CT Mensa meeting, we discussed famous psychological experiments on patience and honesty. Each person gave their opinions on the experiments and what they revealed about human nature. There were a lot of questions to consider and Mensans spent more than an hour discussing these fruitful subjects.

THE POWER OF PATIENCE

The first experiment we examined was one described in a 2009 New Yorker article we read by Jonah Lehrer (www.newyorker.com/reporting/2009/05/18/090518fa_fact_lehrer?currentPage=all).

It told the story of a classic experiment on patience conducted back in 1968 at Stanford University's Bing Nursery. Dr. Walter Mischel Stanford University led a team of psychologists who ran the experiments on children in the school. In these tests, a psychologist took a child into a small room and put a marshmallow on a plate within easy reach. The psychologist told the child that they would be leaving them with the marshmallow for a while and that they had a choice. If they wanted to eat the marshmallow, they could ring a bell summoning the psychologist and he or she would return. Or, they could leave the marshmallow alone until the psychologist returned and he or she would give them a second marshmallow. So the child was to get a "prize" for patiently waiting 15 minutes until the psychologist returned. Surprisingly, 70% of the youngsters couldn't wait 15 minutes. On average, the youngsters who surrendered to the marshmallow waited only three minutes. Some gave up within 30 seconds and ate the marshmallow without even bothering to ring the bell.

The fact that over two-thirds of the kids failed the marshmallow test didn't seem to surprise many in our audience. One Mensan compared it to how he could not resist trying to get a look at his Christmas presents before Christmas. But Dr. Mischel's follow-up on the experiment turned up some striking results that could not be written off as children's curiosity. In 1981, he

contacted the parents, teachers, and academic advisors of the 635 children who had been the subjects of the marshmallow experiment to find out how the youngsters were doing in school and life. He found that the children's ability to wait in the marshmallow experiment powerfully predicted how well they did as teenagers both academically and socially. On the SAT, for instance, the children who waited the full 15 minutes scored a stunning 210 points higher than the kids who gave in after only 30 seconds. As teenagers, the kids who were unable to wait displayed many more problems paying attention, dealing with stress, and keeping friends. Patience, it seemed, was not only a moral virtue but an enduring intellectual and social virtue as well.

Mischel and his team continued to track the kids as they approached mid-life. The differences between the patient and impatient youngsters remained telling. The impatient subjects, now in their late thirties, were fatter and had more drug problems than their patient brethren. The inability to delay gratification which had marked the very young children and adolescents led to a host of bad habits for them in adulthood.

Again, few Mensans expressed surprise at the results, but one insisted that Lehrer's article missed something important - it did not explore the mental turmoil impatience caused throughout a lifetime. The daily toll of compulsion and frustration and the anguish over hasty decisions, while hard to measure, he said, almost certainly made it agonizing for impulsive people to live with themselves.

Another Mensan noted that the personal and professional costs of impatience are often intertwined. For instance, it's hard to imagine, he said, an impulsive person becoming a philosopher or a poet or engaging in any work that required reflection or weighing conflicting evidence. If you can't resist a marshmallow, how can you compose your thoughts?

The profound and lasting intellectual, economic, and personal consequences of an early lack of

patience that Dr. Mischel discovered raised some questions for him and his colleagues. He wondered whether patience was a matter of nature or nurture - was it just an innate temperament or was it a deliberate strategy? Was it simply willpower or was it, as he called it, "strategically allocating one's attention." Could patience be taught and what were the best ways to teach it? Seeking answers, Dr. Mischel gave more youngsters the marshmallow tests and then gave the ones who could not wait for the second marshmallow some special training. He taught them ways to divert their attention away from the marshmallow, such as by pretending it was a cloud. He got some encouraging news when he re-tested these youngsters: even the most impulsive youngsters were now able to pass up the marshmallow for fifteen minutes.

So are patience and impatience inborn? Several people at our dinner said yes but most of them believed the impatient could be taught patience. One person said that the environment and training influence whether innate impatience will be expressed. The question is how to teach or build patience. Most adults simply tell children "Be patient" but never suggest how to be patient. Dr. Mischel found that he could get the impatient kids to wait by teaching them to divert their attention - to manage their mind. One Mensan suggested you might cultivate children's patience by teaching them to fish or play chess. This would be a less direct approach than Dr. Mischel's mental coaching, but it seems promising and might even change youngsters habits more deeply.

Researchers are now trying to find out if teaching kids patience will have long-lasting effects. Will kids be able to apply the lessons outside the classroom? Can they retain their patience as adolescents and adults? Dr. Mischel is starting a bigger study to see if he can coach large groups of young urban students psychological strategies to strengthen their self-control. Other psychologists are doing similar tests and plan to follow up on the youngsters in later grades to see if the techniques they were taught have become habits.

Dr. Mischel and his fellow psychologists' tests on patience were and will continue to be intriguing,

but everyday life is an informal test of patience. One Mensan wondered what tested the patience of his fellow Mensans the most. In response, several said they became impatient with run-on talkers who babbled about themselves or trivial concerns, seemingly oblivious to others' ideas. Everyone agreed this was a big time-waster and liked the suggestion that it was best just to excuse yourself from such a monologue. After all, patience does not mean wasting your time, much less encouraging others to do so. As one Mensan prudently observed, "I'm patient until give a reason to be otherwise." If there is no benefit, he added, patience isn't a virtue.

Other people in the audience mentioned chronic lateness, lying, or rudeness as things that were particularly hard to bear, and several also said that reckless drivers acutely tested their forbearance. Some said that they talked to themselves to keep their cool in such trying circumstances. It was a way of stepping outside the situation, a verbal strategy akin to Mischel's tactic of picturing the marshmallow as a cloud.

HONESTY: PAYING FOR YOUR BAGELS

The second experiment Mensans discussed wasn't a laboratory experiment but a business experiment that tested people's honesty. It was brought to the public's attention by a 2004 New York Times Magazine article by Stephen J. Dubner, assisted by Steven D. Levitt, one of the co-authors of the best-selling book *Freakonomics* (www.nytimes.com/2004/06/06/magazine/what-the-bagel-man-saw.html?page-wanted=print&src=pm). The Mensans at the dinner had read this article along with a shorter article about a similar experiment conducted in England (www.neatorama.com/2008/01/18/the-honesty-experiment/).

The experiment began when veteran economist Paul Feldman, director of The Public Research Institute of the Center For Naval Analyses in Washington, D.C., started bringing bagels to the office to reward his employees for winning new contracts. Then he started doing it every Friday and, because the bagels were very popular, he ended up bringing in about 180 of them a week. To pay for the bagels, he put out a basket asking

people to contribute a posted price for each bagel. Feldman kept records and found that 95% of the people in his office who took bagels paid for them, despite the fact that there was no vending machine or other device forcing them to pay.

Tiring of his longtime professional job, in 1984 Feldman decided to go into the business of delivering bagels to local Washington offices, letting the employees at these workplaces pay on the same honor system that he had run in his office. Soon, he was serving 140 businesses in the Washington area, delivering about 8,400 bagels a week.

What were the results? While Feldman did not get quite the payment rate he had got in his own office, bagel takers paid about 90% of the time. Feldman has continued his business for over two decades now. In the 1990s, the payment rate dropped to 87%. Then after the 9/11 attack in 2001, the rate jumped back up to 89%, where it has remained.

The Mensans at our dinner didn't seem surprised that almost 90% of the people paid for the bagels even though there was little or no compulsion involved. One said the stakes weren't high enough in the bagel business to test the limits of people's honesty. But a few Mensans reported that they had turned in larger sums of money they had found - as much as \$100. One added that he didn't know how much it would take to tempt him.

Along these lines, some in our audience suggested their own tests of honesty. A couple of educators said that if teachers found money left in class, they should announce it, and then see how many people would try to claim the money - and how many could identify the denominations of the bills that had been found. Someone else suggested leaving large bills in a public place and checking how many people turned the money in to the Lost and Found Department. What percentage of people would act honestly in this case? Would it be anywhere near 89%?

Does honesty depend on the details of a situation? Dubner and Levitt said that Feldman had concluded, based on the steady payment rate in

his bagel business, that honest people are honest and cheaters will cheat regardless of circumstances. But Feldman found that people's moods influenced the payment rate in small but statistically significant way. Factors like the number of employees, the morale of the office, the weather, holidays, and unemployment all changed the rate noticeably. Workers who like their work or their boss were more likely to pay. Likewise, on nice days, people were more honest. He also found that small businesses had payment rates 3% to 5% higher than large businesses. Surprisingly, upcoming Christmas and Thanksgiving holidays depressed the pay rate about 2%, as did lower unemployment.

The customers selecting the bagels in Feldman's experiment probably had fellow employees watching them sometimes and sometimes not. What if people just had an inhuman "eye" watching them? In an experiment we read about, British psychologists ran an interesting variation on Feldman's honor system by putting different pictures above a coffee machine in their university, accompanied, as in Feldman's business, by a note with a price. One week would put a picture of a flower and the next week a picture of eyes. It turns out people consistently paid much more when the eyes were "watching" them.

This novel tweaking of Feldman's experiment left our dinner crowd a little bemused. It was hard to imagine just a picture of eyes making such a big difference. But what about the situation where no one is watching and the product is intangible? We considered this in asking, "Why are people more honest about paying for bagels than in paying for computer shareware?" When people are allowed to download software and pay on the honor system, fewer than 10% usually pay. This isn't stealing but it is freeloading. Do people feel free to take the shareware without paying because the transaction is anonymous and the product almost invisible? One Mensan said the use of shareware isn't comparable to Feldman's bagel business because there is nothing dishonest about taking shareware without paying; it's simply part of the vendor's business model. Others questioned whether this wasn't rationalizing the act, suggesting that the business model work much better if people were more honest.

There were many more questions we could have discussed such as the connection between patience and honesty and whether these traits are more fundamental than intelligence. But it was an interesting discussion nonetheless and perhaps it will encourage people to investigate these topics on their own.

NEXT MONTH'S DINNER - Saturday, MAY 18: Alex Larsen, founder of the new company Larsen Toy Labs in Westport, CT, which produces building block toys for kids. Alex will discuss with us how he used crowd-sourcing to start his company and how he creatively designs and builds his product. Bring your thoughts and questions on creative play for children. You can learn more about the company at <http://larsen-toylab.com/> and at www.ctpost.com/news/article/Westport-toy-firm-building-blocks-for-kids-4411107.php. Don't miss the opportunity to talk to this inventive local entrepreneur.

WORD CHECK

See if you can define these slang, colloquial, or odd words.

1. fandango -
2. flibbertigibbet -
3. galumph -
4. kerfuffle -
5. lollapalooza -
6. palooka -
7. persnickety -
8. quidnunc -
9. shebang -
10. shmuck -

SYNONYM SENSE

See if you can come up with at least three synonyms or near synonyms for each word. Then see if you can give some antonyms.

1. relevant -
2. basic -
3. topple -
4. patient -
5. elated -
6. epitome -
7. engrossed -
8. unusual -

ANSWERS ON PAGE 20

PUZZLES & QUESTIONS

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

1. Which companies are overconfident now?
2. What is the highest free-standing (not part of a long mountain range) in the world?
3. Name the ten greatest Shakespearian actors and actresses.
4. How far across the U.S. would the Great Wall of China stretch?
5. Do computers help or hurt learning?
6. About what percentage of the world's approximately 6,900 languages are spoken by fewer than 100,000 people? Under 10,000 people?
7. Which medical disease is it most important to conquer now?
8. Which major league baseball pitcher pitched the most consecutive complete games?
9. What is walking distance?
10. How often has the driver in the pole (first) starting position won the Indianapolis 500 since it began in 1911? How often has the winner been a driver in one of the first five starting positions?

PUZZLES & QUESTIONS ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES:

2. How long is a furlong?
A: A furlong is one-eighth of a mile or 1,609.344 meters.:
4. What is the longest mountain range above sea level in the world?
A: The Andes mountain range in South America is the world longest mountain range on land - 4,350 miles (7,000 km.) long. It goes from north to south along the west coast of South America through seven countries: Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, and Argentina. It's highest peak is Aconcagua, at about 6,962 meters:

The longest submarine mountain range is the earth's mid-ocean ridge system, which is about 40,000 miles (65,000 km) long.
6. What was the longest pregnancy recorded for a woman who gave live birth?
A: 375 days - about 12.5 months. In 1945, 25-year old Beulah Hunter, gave birth to a healthy child after 375 days. The previous record was 317 days. The average pregnancy lasts about 280 days.
8. About how many apples does the average American eat a day?
A: According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the average American eats about one-seventh pound of apples per day or about 50.6 pounds of apples per year - about 18.6 lbs. (37 %) in the form of whole apples and about 40 lbs. (63%) in the form of processed apples in apple juice, applesauce, apple pie, or other apple products.
10. About what percentage of major league baseball games go into extra innings?
A: Since 1990, about 8.8% of games have gone into extra innings.

WORD CHECK ANSWERS:

1. fandango - 1. a lively Spanish or Spanish-American dance in triple time, performed by a man and woman playing castanets. 2. a piece of music for such a dance or one having its rhythm. 3. a ball or dance.
2. flibbertigibbet - a chattering or flighty, light-headed person.
3. galumph - to leap or move about clumsily or joyfully.
4. kerfuffle - a fuss or commotion; disorder; agitation.
5. lollapalooza - an extraordinary or unusual thing, person, or event; an exceptional example or instance.
6. palooka - 1. an athlete, especially a boxer, lacking in ability, experience, or competitive spirit.
2. a stupid, clumsy person.
7. persnickety - 1. fussy, picky, finicky. 2. snobbish or having the aloof attitude of a snob.
8. quidnunc - a person who is eager to know the latest news and gossip; a gossip or busybody.
9. shebang - 1. the structure of something, as of an organization, contrivance, or affair. 2. a primitive dwelling; shack; shanty.
10. shmuck - a jerk.

SYNONYM SENSE ANSWERS:

1. relevant - related, pertinent, germane, fitting, apt, appropriate, apropos, apposite, applicable, suitable.
Antonyms: irrelevant, unrelated, inappropriate, unsuitable.
2. basic - elementary, rudimentary, simple, fundamental, introductory,
Antonyms: advanced, complicated, complex, sophisticated, intricate, involved, knotty.
3. topple - overthrow, overturn, dethrone, usurp, upend, tip over, knock down. Antonyms: enthrone, crown, endow.
4. patient - forbearing, enduring, tolerant, calm, composed, deliberate.
Antonyms: impatient, impulsive, intolerant, agitated, hasty.
5. elated - ebullient, ecstatic, euphoric, exhilarated, overjoyed, joyful, joyous.
Antonyms: anguished, crushed, down, demoralized, depressed, devastated, disappointed, downcast, upset.
6. epitome - model, embodiment, archetype, archetype, apotheosis, essence, quintessence, exemplar, personification.
Antonyms: antithesis, inverse, opposite, converse.
7. engrossed - absorbed, focused, attentive, preoccupied, engaged, immersed. Antonyms: distracted, inattentive, unfocused, oblivious, unaware.
8. unusual - uncommon, rare, anomalous, atypical, unconventional, odd, strange, weird, bizarre, abnormal, unaccustomed, exceptional, extraordinary, singular.
Antonyms: usual, conventional, common, commonplace, typical, ordinary, unexceptional, normal, customary, regular, everyday.

NOTED & QUOTED

We cannot see the face of Mount Lu when we are standing on it. - *Chinese proverb*

No man is truly great, who is great only in his lifetime. - *William Hazlitt, (1778 - 1830), English critic, essayist, "Indian Jugglers"*

Less isn't more; just enough is more. - *Milton Glaser, (1929 -), U.S. graphic designer*

If particulars are to have meaning, there must be universals. - *Plato, (428 - 347 B.C.E.)*

I am I plus my circumstances. - *José Ortega y Gasset, (1883 - 1955), Spanish philosopher and politician*

The profundity of a creative work lies in the degree to which its contents can be summarized in one sentence - a sentence that penetrates human reality. - *Natsume Soseki, (1867 - 1916), Japanese novelist*

A person often meets his destiny on the road he took to avoid it. - *Jean de La Fontaine, (1621 - 1695), French poet, author of fables*

Time changes everything except something within us which is always surprised by change. - *Thomas Hardy, (1840 - 1928), English novelist and poet*

I did not count the days or the weeks or the months. Time is an illusion that only makes us pant. I survived because I forgot even the very notion of time. - *Yann Martel, (1963 -), Canadian novelist*

A man may be very industrious, and yet not spend his time well. There is no more fatal blunderer than he who consumes the greater part of life getting his living. - *Henry David Thoreau, (1817 - 1862), naturalist and author*

There is nothing more tragic in life than the utter impossibility of changing what you have done. - *John Galsworthy, (1867 - 1933), British novelist, Justice*

The trouble with life isn't that there is no answer, it's that there are so many answers. - *Ruth Benedict, (1867 - 1948), U.S. anthropologist*

Old and young, we are all on our last journey. - *Robert Louis Stevenson, (1850 - 1894), U.S. novelist, Crabbed Age and Youth*

People mistake their limitations for high standards. - *Jean Toomer, (1894 - 1967), U.S. author in Harlem Renaissance*

If neurotic is wanting two mutually exclusive things at one and the same time then I'm neurotic as hell. - *Sylvia Plath, (1932 - 1963), U.S. poet, The Bell Jar,*

A good sport has to lose to prove it. - *Anonymous*

Conscience is a man's compass. - *Vincent van Gogh, (1853 - 1890), Dutch painter*

Easy Street is a blind alley. - *Anonymous ?*

Are you worried about pressure? I look at it this way: Pressure is having to do something you are not totally prepared to do. - *Harvey B. Mackay, (1932 -), U.S. businessman, author*

New York is the meeting place of the peoples, the only city where you can hardly find a typical American. - *Djuna Barnes, (1892 - 1982), U.S. novelist, poet, illustrator, dramatist*

But my dear man, reality is only a Rorschach ink-blot, you know. - *Alan Watts, (1915 - 1973), Anglo-American Zen philosopher*

The dreamers are the saviors of the world. As the visible world is sustained by the invisible, so men, through all their trials and sins and sordid vocations, are nourished by the beautiful visions of their solitary dreamers. - *James Allen, (1849 - 1923), U.S. novelist*

You can't erase a dream, you can only wake me up. - *Peter Frampton, (1950 -), English rock musician*

Early in my career I felt that organization would destroy my creativity. Whereas now, I feel the opposite. Discipline is the concrete that allows you to be creative. - *Verna Gibson, first female CEO of a Fortune 500 company (The Limited stores)*

Art and power will go on as they have done, - will make day out of night, time out of space, and space out of time. - *Ralph Waldo Emerson, (1803 - 1882), Society and Solitude. Work and Days.*

There is a fifth dimension, beyond that which is known to man. It is a dimension as vast as space and as timeless as infinity. It is in the middle ground between light and shadow, between science and superstition." - *Rod Serling, (1924 - 1975), Introduction to The Twilight Zone*

MENSA MIND GAMES 2012 RESULTS

The 2013 Mensa Mind Games will be held April 19-21 at the St. Louis Airport Marriott in St. Louis, Missouri.

The Award-Winning Games for 2012 were:

Iota - A card game in which players take turns to find common or differing characteristics on the cards. Build your score by putting together lines of cards that have the same number of common features.

Snake Oil - A creative and unusual game in which players sell two-word products to strange customers. Invent products and then convince the buyers to buy them.

Mine Shift - A two player game in which you compete to see who can make it out of the mine first. Shift walls, place gems, and out think the other miner.

Coerceo - A game of wit and strategy with just a few simple rules. You must capture your opponents' pieces, but be careful – the board shrinks as you play.

Tetris Link - A multi-player, and non-electronic version of Tetris! Drop Tetriminoes into the grid to linking up your colored shapes to score points and block opponents' moves. But don't leave gaps in the tower grid, because points will be deducted. The game ends when the tower is full.

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Fiscal Year:
April 1, 2012 - March 31, 2013

Opening balance at 4/1/12	\$10,949.27
INCOME	
American Mensa	
Local Group Support Funds:	<u>\$1,328.86</u>
Total Income	\$1,328.86

EXPENSES	
Chronicle Printing Expenses:	\$456.24
Chronicle Postage & Supplies:	288.05
Chronicle Postage & Supplies:	<u>365.06</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$1,109.35

2nd Quarter Balance 9-30-12	\$11,168.78
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"Bridgeport - Tales from the Park City" by Eric Lehman, is available at www.history-press.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

Ben Behind His Voices

One Family's Journey from the Chaos of Schizophrenia to Hope by Randye Kaye The gripping story of one family's experience when its firstborn, a brilliant young man named Ben, is gradually struck down by schizophrenia – and the lessons that help the family participate lovingly in Ben's eventual steps to recovery. Rowman & Littlefield, Publishers. <http://books.randyekaye.com/writing.php> or www.amazon.com.

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