

C R M N O O K

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March 2006

<http://www.crm.us.mensa.org>

CRM Monthly Meetings

MONTHLY DINNER/SPEAKER MEETING: March 25th, 6:00 pm, at 8512 Entiat Ave, Kennewick (Bob Bromm's house). Marlene Oliver, (resume attached), friend of Bob's and very knowledgeable student of cancer treatments, will be the speaker. Bring \$5 for pizza and drinks (or just come to hear speaker). Off Columbia Center Blvd (going south) turn right on Deschutes, proceed across Center Parkway, at 1/4 block turn right on Entiat. Look for big pine tree on right. (See maps). Contact: Bob, 374-4309.

ELLENSBURG - FIRST SATURDAY, April 1st (no fooling!) no-host brunch, 11:00 a.m. (note the time change) at The Matterhorn, 101 Umptanum Road, Ellensburg 509-925-7200. Take Exit 109 [Canyon Road] off of I-90, drive North to the first traffic light and turn West (left). The Matterhorn is on the Northwest corner of Canyon and Umptanum.) The table will be marked with two wine glasses turned upside down. If you want to make a trip of it, you could come for the First Friday Art Walk and stay for Mensa Brunch on Saturday. From the new Co-coordinators, Alix Drake-Williams and George Drake. Contact: EasternCascadesArea@crm.us.mensa.org

KNOW SOMEONE YOU THINK IS MENSA MATERIAL? During the month of April, they can send in the results of any standardized intelligence test, such as the GMAT, ASVAB, SAT (some versions) they have taken in the past, and we'll **evaluate their scores for Mensa membership for free**. (There is usually a \$30 fee to evaluate test scores.)

American Mensa accepts the results from more than 200 tests; a partial list may be found at www.us.mensa.org/testscores. To take advantage of this offer, your friends and colleagues should visit www.us.mensa.org in April and follow the instructions on the home page. Questions? Contact testing@crm.us.mensa.org.

SPRING TESTING: Attention All Mensans, Friends, and Neighbors: Spring testing is just around the corner. Buttonhole your smart friends (esp. women again) and give them this info: for a schedule and to be on the mailing list contact Testing@crm.us.mensa.org (or for proctor training info if you're a member. The more we test, the more we grow, have variety, etc.). We're aiming for late April or early May in the Tri-Cities and Yakima.

MEMBERS NEEDED TO CONTINUE PROGRAM: Alma is cutting back on some positions. If you can take some of these tasks it will ensure group's continued growth:

Monitor a, or some, poster display(s) and replace as necessary.

Fold, stamp and send posters to local businesses.

Assemble publicity materials and send to libraries in area.

Reserve and decorate display areas at local libraries.

Compose and submit a publicity article for Yakima and local paper.

CRM Group Directory: For those of you who are interested, National has changed its rules for a local group online directory again. They now will allow local group members' directories online, **IF** it is on a secure site,

and in .pdf. If this is something you could help with, maybe we could get it up sooner. Contact webmaster@crm.us.mensa.org or locsec@crm.us.mensa.org.



March 2006 RVC Column (Written and posted 2/3/06)

Northwest Passages

RVC Column for March Newsletters in Region 8

The other day **Scott Kauffman** sent me a copy of his unpublished book, Everything Interesting Evolves. Scott is well known in Oregon Mensa for his whimsical and hilarious essays that frequently have appeared in the *Omen*, for which he was recognized with the PRP print award for Humor in 2003.

Recently he has reached a national audience through his articles, "Think Fast!" and "Enthusiasm: Whether for Philately or Ant Farms - Just Get Something Going," which were published in the September, 2005, and November/December, 2005, issues of the *Mensa Bulletin* respectively.

The finely burnished humor in Scott's pieces reminds me a great deal of Robert Benchley, and I dare say Scott would have had a place at the Algonquin Round Table beside him, had he had the opportunity. For me, the test of a humorist is, can I read a piece of his or her work out loud without breaking up? Benchley definitely has passed my test, most especially with his essay, "Sporting Life in America-Turkish Bathing," which I have failed to read out loud any number of times. Scott has also a place in my personal pantheon of humorists, having passed my test on many occasions.

What I find particularly enjoyable about Scott's humor, however, is that he constantly sets his readers up for a deeper, personal truth about the human condition that he wishes to share, with humor as the vehicle. Oregon Mensa LocSec **Kristina Bernette** said much the same thing about Scott in her beautifully written column in the February *Omen*, and I want to go a bit further by sharing something from Scott's book, which I have promised to comment on. (Does this count, Scott?) After five convoluted pages of describing the condition of anomie that pervades our post-Modernist society, Scott offers his prescription for "leading a good life," to wit:

- "1. Understand how the world works, physically and socially.
- "2. If you're comfortable with things as they are, then be a happy part of it all.
- "3. If things aren't as you'd have them, then work for change.
- "4. Start over at step 1!

"That's it. All the secrets are there and the steps are spelled out: pay attention and understand, be happy where you can, try to improve what needs improving, and never feel as if you're done with the process. Everything else is just elaboration. Pretty simple, except for those elaborations."

Scott is absolutely right when he says that "everything interesting evolves," and our happiness depends upon our willingness to accept inevitable change. I became a Life Member of Mensa some time ago when I realized that this was a venue which I hoped would always afford me the opportunity to find joy in the company of my fellow members, and I will continue to work to make it the sort of society in which we all can find happiness with one another.

Speaking of happiness, I am delighted to report that the 2006 Mind Games in Portland, OR, on April 21-23, is heading for a sellout. We have 139 registrations as I write this, and there may be no spaces left by the time this is published at the beginning of March. If you are thinking of coming, I urge you not to wait even a moment; please go to <http://mindgames.us.mensa.org> and register. Whether or not you make it to Mind Games, be sure to come to Portland for the Oregon Mensa RG on April 28-30, as the more the merrier! **RuthAnn Parvin** has put together a stellar program, which you may preview at the Oregon Mensa website at www.oregon.us.mensa.org. Another delightful RG is coming up before either of those events, in Vancouver, BC, on March 17-19; information is available at <http://van-mensa.info-x.ca>. And the big one is coming: the World Gathering in Orlando, FL, on August 8-13, is not to be missed. Please go to

www.wg06.us.mensa.org and become part of the greatest Mensa show on Earth, along with several thousand other Mensa friends from around the world. Be seeing you....

EXCERPTS FROM: "GOOD BOOKS"

Gifted children rarely read "at grade level", and it is often difficult to find reading materials that are a good fit for gifted children's interest, reading ability, and level of personal maturity. Many of the topics that are appropriate when included in a book written to be read by seventeen-year-olds are not appropriate for a six-year-old with the reading ability of that average seventeen-year-old. Until gifted children reach their teens, most of their parents find that they spend hours pre-reading books to be sure that they are right for their children.

This is a daunting task, but help is available. A good place to start looking for help is on the Internet. Begin with "Guiding the Gifted Reader" (ERIC EC Digest #E481) by Judith Wynn Halstead, written for the ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education in 1990, and now preserved on the Hoagies Gifted website at <http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/eric/e481.html>. This short article includes information on the characteristics of gifted readers.

For information about what reading grade levels mean, try "Reading Levels of Children's Books: How Can You Tell?" by Carolyn K., aka. "Mrs. Hoagie", at http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/reading_levels.htm. It has links to information about many different ways to judge reading levels. For book ideas, check "Reading Lists" at http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/reading_lists.htm.

There aren't many books that deal with the mismatch in age, maturity, and reading level that is faced by most young gifted readers. The best recent book is Halstead's /Some of My Best Friends are Books: Guiding Gifted Readers from Preschool to High School/ (second edition, 2002, Great Potential Press, Inc.). Its recommendations about both books and their young readers make it a worthwhile addition to the library of any family with gifted children.

Many parents faced with the problem of helping their children find interesting books to read find that their best resources are parents of gifted children slightly older than their own children. These parents know what worked for their own children, and often have useful suggestions.

(Written by one of our GPC Team members, Kathe Oliver, of NJ Mensa.)

Beaver RG IX April 28, 29, 30 2006

Why do people love Portland in the springtime?

It is the weather, soft and mild and misty. It is the world cuisine, the coffee bars, the wine bars, the shops and galleries. It is the environment, the attitude, the people walking, biking and skateboarding. Enjoy great food in our hospitality rooms, at the many excellent restaurants nearby, or fix your own meals in your hotel suite. The 24 hour Whole Foods Grocery is a five minute walk from the hotel. Browse Powell's, one of the country's largest book stores. Try the teas, coffees and pastries of the world; catch some fine jazz, go to the ballet, or take in one of the plays that weekend. Contact <http://www.oregon.us.mensa.org> to register.

Keynote speakers are Marc Acito at Saturday's buffet at the Western Culinary Institute, (a Cordon Bleu Academy) and Deborah Ruf, before the Sunday morning brunch at the infamous Darcelle's XV, longest running show of male actresses in the US. There will be prizes for the Ugliest Tie and Most Outrageous Hat Contests while at Darcelle's, so don't forget to pack your entries! Dr. Ruf, author of the recently published book *Losing Our Minds: Gifted Children Left Behind*, will be sharing insights on that elusive quality "Intelligence" as it is influenced by personality and emotionality. Mr. Acito, author of *How I Paid for College: A Novel of Sex, Theft, Friendship and Musical Theater* will be challenging our funny bones to a duel.

Program: Updates from the best speakers from the last few years and new exciting voices talking about the Northwest volcanoes, Native life before Lewis and Clark, book making, jazz, Oriental carpets, national security, bioterrorism, meditation and stress reduction. We have award winning writers, patent holders, artists, story tellers, and scientists,... See our webpage for more information! <http://www.oregon.us.mensa.org/rg/programs.php>

Hotel Reservations: For Mark Spencer reservations, call 503 224-3293 or 1-800-548-3934. \$69 std room, \$89 Jr Suite or \$109 Executive Suite. For triple or quad, add \$10 per person to either suite rate. Children under 12 stay free in parents' room. Rates do not include 12% room tax. All rooms have fully equipped kitchens. Ask for Mensa rate, guaranteed thru Mar 5, 2006. Underground parking in gated garage \$14/day, public parking near the hotel available at various rates.

Tour Information: Use Portland's amazing public transportation and bring your walking shoes. Tours will be led by knowledgeable locals showing you places you have never been. Tours not meeting minimum sign up will be canceled with full refund. <http://www.oregon.us.mensa.org/rg/tour.php>

Morning: Choose one

Tour 1 – Ecotrust (a.m.)- A Green Makeover You will see how an eyesore warehouse was turned into the first building to win national awards for green building. Tour green businesses and meet the CEO of Shore Bank, committed to environmentally sustainable community development. (Max= 10; \$12 a person)

Tour 2--Yellow Line Public Art (a.m.)—this newest part of our train system incorporates ethnic art in the design of every station. (limited to 20 people, \$12 a person)

Afternoon: Choose one

Tour 3—Dove Lewis: Where Veterinary Medicine meets the Animal in Crisis (p.m.)—A tour of the only non-profit, 24 hour, emergency and ICU animal hospital of its kind in the nation. (limited to 8 people, cost \$12 a person)

Tour 4—Old Town (p.m.), where yesterday's Chinatown meets the Pearl, Portland's gentrified upwardly mobile revitalization project. Bruce Wong, an engineer who grew up in Old town will take you to three museums about American immigrants and to the beautiful Garden of Awakening Orchids, Portland's Classical Chinese Garden. (Cost TBA, about \$20 with entrance fees.)

Tour 5—The BrewBus: Expose Yourself to Better Beer (p.m.)-- Portland boasts more brew pubs and breweries (43) per capita than any other city in the U.S. This three hour tour will stop at several, where you will sample and learn about different styles of beer, local world records and the reason that Portland is the home of craft brewing.(cost will be between \$30-40, depending on number of participants. Min=10, Max=30)



GUEST WRITER ARTICLE:

THE "THRAWN RICKLE" courtesy of Los Angeles Mensa
by Williscroft, in 8/05 *L.A. Mentary*

Go with me on this one for a while...

Imagine a great civilization long ago somewhere in the universe—far from Earth, far from our Solar System. Imagine a thriving people filling a planet with themselves and their products—and their waste.

Picture a teeming world, overflowing with everything that is familiar to us on our own planet: Engineering feats like tracery bridges, stupendous tunnels, great buildings, powerful machines; sophisticated technology like computers, lasers, microwaves; transportation marvels like cars, trains, planes, ships, submarines, space shuttles. In other words, picture a world like ours, but more advanced, more sophisticated, and perhaps more crowded.

Now imagine their sun—like ours—but with a major difference. Solar physicists on their world have determined that their sun will nova in about 300 years, give or take. (I know—how do they determine this? What is the level of their science? How... Like I said: Go with me on this one for a while...)

Following the announcement and the initial panic, these people take the long view: We've got three centuries. Let's focus and solve the problem.

Remember, these folks are ahead of us—not a lot, but sufficiently so they can actually think about solving a problem like this.

And how do you do that?

When a sun novas, it destroys everything in its path: the planets, their moons, the asteroids and comets. Essentially, when everything is over and done with, all that is left are charred cinders where once proud worlds traveled around the sun. People, life, the products of life—all gone. You don't shelter a world from a nova. A nova's destructive power is absolute.

So how do you solve the problem of your sun going nova? The only answer that makes any sense is to go somewhere else, somewhere sufficiently far away to ensure your survival.

Since the entire solar system will be destroyed, and when it is over, there will be nothing left to inhabit, the only rational choice is to go to another solar system. You're talking about a lot of spaceships and a lot of fuel here. In fact, our own science does not know how to do this—travel successfully to another solar system, especially with a bunch of people.

What if these folks decided to build a moving world—a very large self-contained spaceship—that would hold their population, and keep them alive for however long it would take to travel the astonishing distance to another solar system. After all, they had 300 years to accomplish the task.

Think back over our short history. What were things like 300 years ago? What do you think they will be like 300 years from now?

In any case, we're talking about a hugely ambitious project. To build a self-contained world, one sufficiently large to contain the entire population of a planet teeming with people, sufficiently complex to create a living environment where they can grow their food, process their waste, and continue to live essentially normal lives. It boggles the mind, but science fiction writers have tackled this concept from time to time.

Now, fast-forward to a more recent time in our own solar system, but still long, long ago—a million years or more.

From out of interstellar space a strange craft appears. It is large, huge by any normal standard—in fact, it is planetary in size, some 892 miles in diameter. It finds at least one planet in this solar system that can easily support life, a planet that is not inhabited by intelligent beings, although there is plenty of evidence for a thriving biosphere.

The underlying DNA of the plant and animal life on the new world is incompatible with their own DNA, which means that the arrivals can't eat the plants or the abundant game—but, they took 300 years to build their ship, perhaps a thousand or more years to cross the gulf between the stars. So they can be patient while their scientists go about modifying the new planet's ecosystem at the molecular level. Eventually, the modifications overtake the native plant and animal populations, and the transformation is complete.

The star folk park their spacecraft in a safe orbit around the planet with distinctive rings, and leave the spacecraft for the last time to settle into life on their new world.

Before they can reestablish a high level civilization on their new world, something happens. Or perhaps something happened while they still were on their extended journey, so that their numbers became drastically reduced.

But whatever it was, before the starfolk could get their collective acts together again, they found themselves at a subsistence level with only faint memories of their great past civilization. They pass on stories that take on the veneer of legend, and all genuine memory of what they once were fades into obscurity.

They leave hints of their once greatness and scientific prowess at scattered sites around the world, but for the most part, it is as easy to discount these hints as but the meat of overactive imaginations as it is to follow their intriguing paths to wherever they may lead.

Ah... but I did forget one thing: that spacecraft parked long ago in Saturn's embrace. So what do we find orbiting our magnificent sixth planet?

Now mind you—these are just hints. When it is all said and done, all this may be nothing more than idle speculation to fill a lazy summer afternoon.

Iapetus is unlike any other moon. I will supply you with some highlights here, and urge you to visit this website to get the whole picture: <http://www.enterprisemission.com/moon1.htm>. Take the time to go through all four sections. The writer’s style leaves a lot to be desired, but his story is fascinating.

Iapetus appears to be constructed of geodesic sections. The patterns we observe on Iapetus may be simple artifacts of how we take the photos, but then again, maybe not. And nature doesn’t do geodesic sections.

A narrow wall extends around Iapetus at the equator, so that the moon looks like nothing so much as a walnut. No one connected with the Iapetus project can come up with a plausible “natural” explanation for this wall.

Iapetus’ density is far too low for a planet that appears solid, but if Iapetus were substantially hollow, then the numbers work out just about right. Several of the geodesic sections appear to have collapsed inward, revealing what appears to be complex structures underneath the surface layer. A tall, very narrow structure extends from the surface at one point, like a towering spike. Like the geodesic structure, this spike has no “natural” explanation.

The list goes on and on. It is easy to imagine that Iapetus really is the derelict remains of a once mighty starship nearly 900 miles in diameter. When we run the numbers, we find that, for instance, if we assume that the first mile from the surface down was designed for habitation, manufacturing, and so forth, with the rest of the ship relegated to fuel for the trip, and if we allot 1000 cubic feet of space for each being (i.e. 10 x 10 x 10 feet), the craft can easily accommodate nearly 460 trillion beings.

In other words, using a rough calculation, it is easy to see that such a craft really could carry the entire population of an Earth-like planet; so, if they had the science and engineering, there is no reason—in principle—that such a people could not have carried off this ambitious plan.

Are we the children of star children? Visit the website and draw your own conclusions.

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