



# TAMPA BAY SOUNDING

*A Publication of Tampa Bay (Florida) Mensa*

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Photo by Chris Clement

The North Counties Picnic and Campover will be held November 9-10, 2002. See the calendar for more information.

## ABOUT US

Mensa is an international society whose sole qualification for membership is a score at or above the 98th percentile on a standard IQ test. Mensa is a not-for-profit organization whose main purpose is to serve as a means of communication and assembly for its members. All opinions expressed herein are those of the individual authors, and not necessarily those of the editors or officers of Mensa. Mensa as an organization has no opinions. Visit AML at <http://www.us.mensa.org>.



*Tampa Bay Sounding* is the official newsletter of Tampa Bay Mensa. See the inside back cover for copyright information. Tampa Bay Mensa, which split off from Central Florida Mensa in 1975, serves Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, Hernando, and Sumter counties. Visit TBM at <http://www.tampa.us.mensa.org>, which provides full instructions on how to join *tbm-gm* and *tbm-discussion*, our two Yahoo Groups.

## SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

*Tampa Bay Sounding* encourages submissions from all members. Submissions must be signed, but names may be withheld or pseudonyms used if requested. All letters to the editor will be subject to publication unless the author specifically requests otherwise. All material submitted will be considered for publication, but nothing can be guaranteed. *Everything* is subject to editing. Please keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Articles, casual essays, opinion pieces, poems, short stories, puzzles, and artwork are all encouraged.

- Personal attacks and bigoted, sexist, hateful, or otherwise offensive material will not be published.

- E-mail submissions are preferred, either embedded or in Word-readable attachments. Computer printouts and typewritten pages are fine. If you submit hard copy, please make sure your printer has enough toner or your typewriter has a fresh-enough ribbon. *Legible* handwritten submissions will be considered (but not given preference).

You may send your submissions by either of the following means:

- (1) E-mail — [MotherMary@extremelysmart.com](mailto:MotherMary@extremelysmart.com) (Please indicate "TBM" in the subject area.)

- (2) U.S. Mail — Mary W. Matthews, 1000 Granville Court N., St. Petersburg, FL 33701-1529 (Telephone 727-502-9301)

Unless otherwise specified in the calendar, the deadline for unsolicited contributions is the tenth day of the month.

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Photo by Chris Clement

The North Counties Barbecue and Campover on November 9 and 10 will be held on the beautiful site shown here and on the front cover. For more information, please see page 18.

Kushner's Korner*All the News...**Maxine Kushner, LocSec*

Hello, Tampa Bay Mensans! There is a lot going on in our group, thanks to all the members who are finding time to volunteer and become involved in some way with our group's activities.

⚓ Next up is our first **Fall Barbecue and Camp Out**. It is being hosted by Chris Clement up in Brooksville. *Nota bene*, all you folks in the northern counties—this event is in *your* backyard! Tampa Bay Mensa will provide beef and veggie burgers, hot dogs, and condiments for Saturday night. You should bring a covered dish (or something else to share), BYOB, eats for Sunday, games, crafts, musical instruments, tapes, records, CDs, etc. For more information, please refer to the invitation you should have received in the mail or go to Chris' web site: <http://www.micrometer.com/bv.htm>. If you have any questions not answered in these two sources, feel free to contact me. If the party is successful, it could become an annual event. I hope many of you will come on out and join us. **Please note that we changed the dates to November 9-10.**

⚓ TBM participated in **National Testing Day** on October 19. Testing Coordinator Terri Elston informed me that the testing room was filled to capacity and she actually had to

turn away people interested in testing. Due to the large interest, she is going to hold another testing session in the near future. Terri can be reached at: [teriprofsr@aol.com](mailto:teriprofsr@aol.com), 727-799-1151.

⚓ Tampa Bay Mensa's part of the MERF scholarship program just got better! Starting this year, we will now award two scholarships instead of one. See the article on page 22 for more information — and applause to scholarship chair Roger Preslar.

⚓ **Movie Night** at Dana and John Groulx's place was fun, especially since we watched the movie I wanted to see. . . .

⚓ Planning continues for our annual **RG**. If you would like to volunteer, in any capacity, please contact Jack Brawner or any of the other honchos: [trojanowl@aol.com](mailto:trojanowl@aol.com), 727-546-6061.

⚓ Our recently created online **discussion group** is a great place for talking with other Tampa Bay Mensans (or at least reading what they have to say). Information on joining our two email lists is posted on TBM's website: <http://www.tampa.us.mensa.org/>.

Until next month —

Maxine  
[maxine.kushner@verizon.net](mailto:maxine.kushner@verizon.net) 

## Testing Matters


*Terri Elston, Testing Coordinator*

On October 19 — American Mensa National Testing Day — Tampa Bay Mensa tested 15 prospects for membership in Tampa. That's a lot at one sitting for us!

We could have used more proctors (if we only had more); we could have offered more testing sites and accommodated more prospects. We had a lot more who were interested at the last moment.

If you (as a Mensa member) would like to be a proctor, please let Terri Elston know (*teriprofsr@aol.com* or 727-799-1151), and she'll tell you

how to go about it. Proctoring requires about two hours of your time, usually on a Saturday morning. Training means observing two testing sessions and then actually giving two tests under the supervision of a proctor. (Teri did that this morning, courtesy of Joe Joeb and Yvonne Meadows, so she too can be a proctor.)

The Testing Coordinator lines up the prospects and registers them; proctors don't have to do that. American Mensa grades the test, etc., so proctors don't have to do that either. If you are a teacher, it's a BREEZE!!! 

## Card Night!!

Card Night is an evening of fun and adventure held each month On Top of the World, at the home of Terri Elston in Clearwater. (See page 23 for information on the November Card Night.)

The following are comments that were overheard at Card Night in October, made (where remembered) by Susan Valek, Dave Goodrich, Ronan Heffernan, and Terri Elston. At the end, we'll reveal the name of the fun new card game that Susan introduced.

"Dave can't get in his foot!"

"Dave doesn't need anyone else!"

"Am I ever going to get on the board?" (Susan)

"I'm melding into my foot." (Dave)


"YES! — we are on!!" (Susan)

"I'll never get in my foot, so my partners had better get some good cards!" (Susan)

"You really don't believe probability, do you?" (Ronan)

"Watch me screw it up!"

"I stuck Ronan with his foot!" (Susan)

The game is called "Hand and Foot"! 

**THE TENTH STORY***Jewels of the Gold Coast**Elissa Rudolph, R. V.C.*

November always seems the darkest month to me, with only Thanksgiving to light it up. Without dark, however, how would we determine light? I think going to the Keys for the Mini RG that the Miami group organizes every year might be a way to keep a nice balance between light and dark. See you there?

⚓ A couple of items to surface from the recent AMC meeting in Lincoln, NE: **The Bootstrap Committee**, a nationally appointed group, is there for your group. Should you get into a pickle financially, this committee can help. There are extra funds to assist a group in getting (or saving) a certain postal rate, for instance. A group needs only to present its case and the Bootstrappers will jump in. Contact me for more info.

⚓ There will be a change in the **GOTYA (Group of the Year Award)** program that will make it less competitive and more achievement-oriented. The change will take place with the next go-round. If your group is currently amassing points, continue to do so! New

rules for the 2003-2004 program.

⚓ **Palm Beach County Mensa** is in the spotlight this month, last of the dozen Region 10 groups that I have covered in this column. Major cities in this group are West Palm Beach, tony Palm Beach, Fort Lauderdale, Boca Raton, Jupiter (Burt Reynolds' hometown, once upon a time), and various small-town jewels along the Gold Coast.

With more than 300 members, this group has the numbers to be a strong player, but remains a quiet enclave of a higher-than-expected life-member population as well as a higher-than-expected non-active member population. Interesting mix. Certain activities are First Fridays and once-a-month dinners.

Palm Beach County is the largest county east of the Mississippi, with an 80-mile coastline, so geography keeps members apart somewhat. North county and south county coordinators try to organize events to please everyone. But you know how that goes. . . .

Come to the Keys in November!





**COMING EVENTS.**

November 8-10, Mini-Gathering in the Middle Keys, Lime Tree Bay Resort, Long Key, MM 68.5, 305-664-4740. Call or email Hank Harris, 305-945-5543, [ha3nk@bellsouth.net](mailto:ha3nk@bellsouth.net).

January 31-February 2, Smarti Gras 2003, <http://>

[www.centralflorida.us.mensa.org/](http://www.centralflorida.us.mensa.org/). *Laissez les bons mots rouler!* Plan now to attend this RG organized by Central Florida Mensa!

February 14-16, 2003, ValenTime RG, <http://www.nwflorida.us.mensa.org/>, for details for Northwest Florida's first-ever RG!



*Welcome to Tampa Bay Mensa!*

Lee Houser\*  
Joe Jenkins  
Allison Jirsa\*  
Margaret Ann LaChance  
Gerard L. MacDonald  
Louis T. McDaniel\*  
Matthew G. Pimentel\*  
Daniel J. Schentrup\*

John Daniel Schutt  
Jeff Shea  
Eric Spencer\*  
Raymond Vince\*  
Eve R. Weiss  
Donna Wood  
Robert A. Zilay\*

\* = New member; others are moves in or reinstatements.



**EXCOMMUNICATIONS***August Minutes**Chris Drumm, Scrivener*

Maxine Kushner called the meeting to order at 2:30 P.M. Present were Kathy Crum, Dan Chesnut, Chris Drumm, Dana Groulx, Maxine Kushner, Barbara Loewe, Max Loick, Mary Matthews, and Sylvia Zadorozny. Also present were Chris Clement, Richard Manno, Jerry Merchant, and Kathy Zadorozny.

Barbara moved that the minutes from the June ExComm meeting be accepted as e-mailed. Sylvia seconded; all in favor. The minutes are printed in the July 2002 *Sounding*.

**Treasurer's Report — Kathy Crum.** The May 2002 Tampa Bay Bash produced a net profit of over \$2,000. Financial reports were distributed to all ExComm members. Received advertising revenue from Serge Villani for \$90 (one year's worth). Expenses and income are in line for the year. Our CD renews in January 2003. The current interest rate is 5.35% for 18 months.

**Editor's Report — Mary Matthews.** The September Crewe List is a work in progress. Many members offered to do presentations. Our local group had 110 lapsed members as of June 30, of whom 30 had been members for at least 12 years (joined before 1990). Mary was pleased to announce contributions: to the *Sounding*, \$175; to MERF, \$10; to the TBM Scholarship Fund, \$155. National reimburses our local group

\$8.15 annually per member for the *Sounding*. Our cost is \$9.21. Do we need to print a New Members Handbook? TBM bylaws need to be updated and submitted to National, and the members must vote to approve them.

**Calendar Editor's Report — Dana Groulx.** Dana will be resigning as Calendar Editor as of August 26. National requires we publish a monthly calendar. Any volunteers?

**Testing Report — Dan Chesnut.** Dan apologized for his late arrival. On behalf of our Testing Coordinator, Dan reported that testing on August 24 in Oldsmar, information is on our web site.

A reporter for the *Tampa Tribune* wants to take the test. The paper should pay for the test, we cannot "comp" the fee. In the past, a reporter from the *St. Pete Times* took the test, almost made the top two percent.

**Publicity Report — Maxine Kushner.** Sent information on testing to the local papers.


**Publisher/Circulation Report — Max Loick (Interim).** The Post Office is supplying more of the forms that we need. We still need a Circulation Officer willing to take the *Sounding* to the St. Pete post office monthly. The Publisher position is still open. The one requirement is a St. Pete residency.



**Old Business** — Maxine Kushner. Chris Clement has volunteered his Hotel Management class to write a proposal to the St. Pete Travel/Convention Bureau. We will try to move the Bash "Back to the Beach" for 2003. We discussed some basic needs, such as being able to bring our own food and drink, size and availability of meeting rooms, handicapped accessibility, and 24-hour hospitality.

Chris Clement has also volunteered his property in north Hernando county for a Fall Camp-

Out. We can picnic during the day, camp out at night. Toilet facilities, electricity, and running water are available. The date is the weekend of Nov. 9-10. TBM will supply grill items (burgers (meat and veggie), hot dogs) and paper supplies. Bring your own drinks and side items to share.

The next ExComm meeting will be at Max Loick's in St. Pete on Sunday Oct. 13 at 1 p.m. Kathy Crum motioned we adjourned the meeting, Mary Matthews seconded. All in favor, no one opposed. The meeting ended at 4:56 p.m. 

## October Minutes

Mary W. Matthews



Maxine Kushner called the meeting to order at 1:24 p.m. Present were Kathy Crum, Dan Chesnut, Dana Groulx, Maxine Kushner, Barbara Loewe, Max Loick, Mary Matthews, and Sylvia Zadorozny. Also present was Jerry Merchant.

Dana moved that the e-mailed minutes from the August ExComm meeting be accepted as amended. Sylvia seconded, all in favor.

**Treasurer's Report** — Kathy Crum. Financial reports were distributed to all ExComm members. Expenses and income are in line for the year, although costs for the *Sounding* are beyond what was budgeted, due to a new printer, a higher average page count, the expense of the annual Crewe List, and the recent increase in postal rates. (Luckily, some

of these costs are offset by the generous donations many members made to the *Sounding* this July.)

Our CD renews in January 2003, and Kathy is searching for the most advantageous interest rate.

**Publications Report** — Mary Matthews

**Newsletter.** The ExComm discussed Barbara's suggestion to have our printer fold and staple the Crewe Lists each September. Mary will explore whether this will be financially feasible. Mary applauded the work of Ronan Heffernan as the *Sounding's* new calendar editor and stressed that the mistake in the October calendar was hers alone.

**Web Site.** Barbara moved, Dana seconded, that Mary Matthews be appointed TBM's new Webspin-

ner; all in favor. Several members of the ExComm expressed their approval of the new look of our web site. When asked for suggestions for information they would like to see on the site, the ExComm requested that links be added to information about other groups' RGs, particularly in Region 10.

**Member Handbook.** TBM's current Member Handbook is both out of date and out of print. Mary will produce an updated version and send it to the ExComm for its review. She will also spearhead the revision of TBM's official Bylaws, which will eventually (after a lengthy approval process) be included in the Handbook.

### Membership

**Sounding.** The ExComm approved Membership Officer Frank Clarke's current practice of sending copies of the *Sounding* to individuals to whom the National Office has extended offers of membership.

**New and Prospective Members Open House.** The ExComm agreed that it would be a good idea to revive the practice of holding an NPMOH several times a year. Plans were made to hold the next NPMOH on a Saturday in December, preferably the 14th or the 21st, depending on the schedule of the centrally located host (to be named). As with TBM's other ExComm-sponsored events, there will be no charge for the NPMOH. The ExComm will provide soft drinks, and participants will bring along pot-luck dishes to share,

as well as whatever non-soft drinks they might wish to imbibe. This particular NPMOH will also be TBM's holiday-season party, which all members are invited and encouraged to attend.

### Old Business — Maxine Kushner

**2003 Bash.** Both Barbara and Sylvia reported that our contact at last year's Bash hotel said that a big convention will be coming to Tampa next May, so that whatever location we choose should be chosen in the very near future; usually we begin accepting reservations for the RG in late October at the Space Coast RG. Our Honchos are continuing to work on determining the RG's location.

**Fall Camp-Out.** As she did with the picnic in April, Maxine will send out postcards to the membership inviting them to our fall camp-out, on property in north Hernando county owned by Chris Clement. (See the August minutes and the Calendar for further details.) Maxine will consult with Chris on logistics.

**New Business.** Maxine reported that scholarship chair Roger Preslar has relayed the exciting news that, beginning in 2003, MERF and TBM will be offering TWO scholarships in our annual essay contest. (See page 22 for full contest details.)

The next ExComm meeting will be held immediately before the December NPMOH, at a place and time to be determined. After a unanimous motion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:22 p.m.



**RECOVERING GRANKEE***American Mensa's Early Years**Mary W. Matthews*

Mensa was born in England on October 1, 1946, the brainchild (so to speak) of Roland Berrill, Lancelot Lionel Waring, and Sir Cyril Burt. None of the three envisioned a large organization; Berrill thought that 600 would be the ideal number of members.

Late in 1949, when he was newly out of the army, a 27-year-old named Victor Serebriakoff [pr. Sarah brie ACHE off] took the home test, and based on his score (in the top one percent), was invited to join Mensa. The brochure that Berrill sent him promised that he was now one of an "aristocracy of the intellect" whose opinions and advice might be useful to the Powers That Be.

It was several months before VVS actually attended a Mensa event. "The first encounter of the tyro member with Mensa colleagues remains traumatic, even today. Mensans are recruited largely by post and every member [who] actually joins in our activities (usually a minority) has to pass this hurdle of anticipated embarrassment. What is one to expect from such a concentrated group of advanced intelligences? Can one possibly be up to this high standard or will one encounter compassionate smiles of embarrassment whenever one opens one's foolish mouth?" he wrote in 1985.

His first Mensa meeting, he said, was "absolutely splendid." He quickly became "hooked on the addictive drug, Mensa." He seems to have loved Berrill.

In the first few halcyon years, Berrill, who was independently wealthy, supported Mensa financially and did virtually all the work. But Berrill was an autocrat whose eccentric beliefs included astrology, phrenology, Scientology, palmistry, and clothing for men so flamboyant it would make Louis XIV blush. Late in 1951, a cadre of leaders attempted to introduce democracy to Mensa. Feeling betrayed, Roland Berrill became completely demoralized. He stopped caring, stopped paying for everything, and stopped virtually all the work he had been doing. A few weeks later he resigned as Secretary. Membership dropped from about 300 to about 120 — 60 percent.

On October 5, 1953, Victor Serebriakoff, who couldn't forget the exhilaration of his first few experiences with Mensa, took over and became *de facto* Secretary, Chief Executive, and Principal Officer of Mensa. It is VVS's untiring volunteer work that saved Mensa and made it what it is today. He was 31 years old.

In the late 1950s, Mensa went through a period of exponential

growth. From 120 members in fall 1953, membership climbed to 600 in May 1959 — Berrill's ideal stopping-point.

Naturally, everyone who worked for Mensa did so as a volunteer, in his or her spare time. Serebriakoff delegated responsibilities to a Committee that included an editor for *The Mensa Correspondence*, an RG coordinator (called by another title), and an FM named Joyce Mumford, a young mother of three who handled all of Mensa's recruitment and office functions from her home, including using a duplicating machine to produce the *Correspondence*.



In 1960, the *Village Voice* published an article about Mensa. The result was a flood of inquiries from New York and many other states — much to the surprise of Serebriakoff, who appears to have thought of the *Voice* as a sort of free throwaway.

One of those inquiries was from Peter Sturgeon, whose IQ had already been rated in the top one percent. Peter Sturgeon, the older brother of renowned fantasy writer Theodore Sturgeon (who went from the fifth grade at age 11 to the ninth grade at age 12 — and whose stepfather *still* called him and his brother stupid), was a chemist and medical writer who lived in Brooklyn. Sturgeon asked Joyce Mumford for the names of other New York Ms and called the first Mensa meeting held outside England. On September 30, 1960, American Mensa, the first national Mensa outside England, was born,

with five members. (However, AML did not become an official corporation until 1965.)

By September 1961, Mensa had 1,550 members worldwide — 13 times the number in October 1953. Its leadership discovered that trying to handle recruitment in the United States from a young mother's kitchen in Chessingham, England — with international mail spending months aboard ship each way — was not exactly a speedy process.

Peter Sturgeon persuaded Victor Serebriakoff to persuade his Committee to send him to the U.S. to help set up American Mensa. It was an outrageous idea, especially considering that in November 1953 Mensa's entire treasury had consisted of 25 pounds. It worked.

Early in 1961, a young public-relations genius named John Codella joined Mensa. He and VVS spent the summer corresponding in anticipation of VVS's fall visit, designed to come just before England's AG, at which time VVS would report on his trip. It was a roaring success.

In Serebriakoff's opinion, the most important factor in replicating Mensa's structure was having the recruitment and office functions based in someone's home, preferably an FM like Joyce Mumford. The ideal candidate for the job turned out to be Margot Seitelman — a young mother of three, who was hired on the spot. American Mensa's office was based in Margot's apartment (and ultimately an office suite in her

apartment building) from 1961 until after her death in 1990 — at which time the much-loved Margot was belatedly made an honorary member of Mensa.

In November 1962, a year after VVS visited the U.S., American Mensa had 641 members. *The American Activities Bulletin* consisted of a few pages published inside the *Mensa International Journal*, the magazine that went to everyone in Mensa.

AML's first AG was held on June 15, 1963. "It was a huge, unexpected, and heartening success," VVS wrote. AML's first AMC was "democratically accepted," with John Codella as our first Chair — Peter Sturgeon being occupied with his duties as LocSec of New York Mensa. Codella served as Chair from 1961 to 1966, during which time AML went from 100 to 9,000 members. *The History of Mensa* says that Codella was "the man [who was] most instrumental in the skyrocketing of American Mensa's membership."

All was not wholly peaches and cream in AML's first years. In *Mensa: The Society for the Highly Intelligent*, VVS describes what has become a familiar process over the decades:

(1) A group of Mensans does good volunteer work and has some initial success.

(2) An out-group forms, consisting primarily of "misfits and under-achievers" (p.89), whose *raison d'être* appears to be to carp, criticize, and harass, later to slander, then to libel, the workers.

(3) The workers are eventually

harassed into saying, "I do *not* need this <bleep>!" and resigning, leaving a vacuum at the top that their assailants usually rush in to fill.

(4) The demolishers, left in charge, discover that their principal talents are destructive. "More usually it is found that what the new clique is good at and interested in, is criticism *tout court*. As managers and organizers they usually turn out to be supine and their talent for complaint is used upon each other" (p. 42). A period of "squabbling decline" sets in, and members either become apathetic or inactive or let their memberships lapse.

(5) "Some new set of active enthusiasts come [*sic*] forward," and the cycle starts again.

This first happened to American Mensa in the middle 1960s, through the agency of a group of men whom VVS called the Three Musketeers. They formed an organization called SIGRIM, the Special Interest Group for Reform in Mensa, that portrayed VVS as a vicious, unscrupulous, profiteering tyrant and John Codella as an autocratic elitist. They made both men's lives miserable with libelous accusations of arrogance, suppression of political opposition, and worse. The libelers even accused VVS of embezzling from his employer, and spread the falsehoods that his son was a delinquent and his 13-year-old daughter had had several abortions.

VVS wrote, "The most effective and able Mensa builder in North America and the first American Chairman [was] John Codella." (*The*

*History of Mensa* agrees, saying that “Sturgeon could not praise Codella highly enough.”) VVS continued that Codella after many months “[was] driven to resignation . . . by this long campaign of energetic and unscrupulous harassment.”

In a 1971 article in *The Mensa Journal*, Sander Rubin wrote that Codella “could not brook opposition to his views and surrounded himself with weaker people, keeping tight control over the policies of the organization.” Rubin talked about Codella’s “dogmatic elitism” and claimed that Codella, an “autocrat” as well as Rubin’s “opposition,” abandoned reason and principle and indulged in “incrimination by personal innuendo, speculation, and sheer false accusation and name-calling.”

Sander Rubin became Chair of AML three years after John Codella was harassed into resigning his office.

The ouster of John Codella for the crime of being outstanding even among Ms was the first time that Mensa’s dramatic growth in membership was slowed by the efforts of “misfits and underachievers.” It was by no means the last; Serebriakoff himself was forced to the periphery of Mensa for several years by the Three Musketeers, and AML went through another period of turmoil in the 1970s. The cycle that VVS described has happened at all levels of Mensa, from the international to the local.

Serebriakoff was right when he noted that Mensans are turned off by this sort of nonsense, and react by becoming apathetic or by letting

their memberships lapse. In the late 1980s, AML’s membership was well over 50,000; at the end of August 2002, it stood at 45,035. Naturally there are other factors involved — wars, political and economic crises, and so on all have their reverberations. When one’s retirement fund loses 40 percent of its value virtually overnight, Mensa’s dues suddenly seem much steeper.

Nevertheless, whenever sniping starts, Mensans should always look carefully at both the quality of the leadership, international, national, or local, that is being criticized, *and* at the motives and records of their critics. (And I intend no implications about Mensa’s current leadership, which I admire.) In more than 50 years, Mensa has had to expel only four members for “acts inimical” to our association, and it is always a step taken with the deepest reluctance. It is always difficult to accept that high intelligence does not necessarily walk hand in hand with noble aspirations.

Unlike gardens, Mensa does not need manure for fertilization. We need the kind of exhilaration and enthusiasm that Victor Serebriakoff showed when he brought Mensa back from the verge of death. 🏹

Fred Davis, “A Madcap History of Mensa, Part 1,” *Bushwhacker*, May 1976

Ted Elzinga, editor, *The History of Mensa*, New York: American Mensa, Ltd., 1990

Sander Rubin, “The Beginnings of American Mensa,” *The Mensa Journal*, No. 151, Nov. 1971

Victor Serebriakoff, *Mensa: The Society for the Highly Intelligent*. New York: Stein & Day, Publishers, 1985

Theodore Sturgeon, *Argyll: A Memoir*, Pullman, WA: The Sturgeon Project, 1993



**FOLD, SPINDLE, AND MUTILATE***Solid September FSM*

*Max R. Loick  
Interim Circulation Officer*

Well, the October FSM found its way through the day, even with the “party room” at Max’ apartments having been turned into a warehouse for contractors. It seems there was a water pipe break on the west end of the 8th floor.

Yes, it also flooded 7, 6, 5, etc., etc. down to the lobby!! There are cabinets, carpeting, paint, and all sorts of stuff filling the room as I write this.

But there was a table for assemblage and “staple-age,” and nine wits helping keep spirits awake: Mary Matthews and Jerry Merchant, Max Loick, Frank Clarke, Don Davis, Sylvia Zadorozny, Dan Chestnut, Margaret White, and Willa Harrison. When you see them again, say “thanks” for getting your newsletter to you.

Everybody else missed out on *Lebewurst mit sweibeln und must-rich*, a highly prized (or for some, a congenially loathed) delicacy often on Max’s table. Yes, there was normal snack stuff, too, and we ate most of it. I may cater the next one for more variety (cheers? I hear cheering in the background??!).

The December FSM is going to be held at Roger Preslar’s in Brandon (more below), so if you’re ready

for a couple hours’ fun with great wits, make plans accordingly.

Gadzooks, we missed Kathy Z. Away at college? Impossible, she was 14 just last year . . . Good luck, Kathy!

And we are still looking for a suitable replacement for me to become the new, highly respected, well paid raconteur(-euse) / Circulation Officer. Well, not so well paid, but . . .

Anybody who can take a day to prep the mailing, get to the USPS in St. Petersburg at 31st Street and 1st Ave. N. one weekday (Monday?) a month, find hosts for and run the FSM, and has a car to get from hither to yon will be considered. It helps if you have any job experience, but training is available.

Good thing too, ’cause I had forgotten how to do it and Mary had to pound simple routines through my cranium for several sessions. Good thing she’s not a nun, with one of those infamous rulers. . . . [*Actually, I named my 18-inch metal editor’s ruler “Ranavalona.” — MWM*]

We do have a nice list of “the usual suspects” to round up now and then, but it’s a very good thing to have some new places and faces to make the work lighter and introduce

more members into the “active” column. Please call me or Mary Matthews if you’d like to host an FSM. E-mail works too. We’ll bring everything to you except the snacks (for which you do get some reimbursement) and ask only for room to work and a table suitable to bolt on our two electric staplers.


If you haven’t hosted in the last six months, it’s a good time to consider doing it again.

Thank you all, for making the job so much nicer and easier. It really is fun most of the time.

November’s FSM will be hosted by Roger Preslar, at 2 p.m. on Sunday the 24th.

Directions: From I-75 South, take the SR-60 exit east towards Brandon; keep left at the fork in the ramp; merge onto Adamo Drive East/SR-60 which becomes Brandon Boulevard (go 3.2 miles); turn left onto Kingsway Avenue (Albertson’s

Supermarket is on the corner — go north half a mile); turn right onto Clay Avenue (go east half a mile); turn left onto Stone Drive (entrance to Hillside Subdivision) (go one block); turn right onto Green Cove Drive (go two blocks); turn right onto Hillrise Drive to 932 Hillrise Drive (the fourth house on the right).

For more information, call Roger Preslar at (813) 651-1150 or e-mail him at [PRESLARRL@aol.com](mailto:PRESLARRL@aol.com) or [rpreslar@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:rpreslar@tampabay.rr.com). 

*Next FSM:*

*Sunday, November 24,*

*2 p.m.*

*Host: Roger Preslar  
Brandon*

### *Students: Do You Have a Potential Teacher of the Year?*

Each year, the Mensa Education and Research Foundation presents a Distinguished Teacher Award for the best 500-word essay from a student on “A Teacher Who Changed My Life.”

The teacher (who had previously agreed to be the subject of the essay) receives a personalized plaque and an invitation to MERF’s Presi-

dent’s Event at the Annual Gathering. The teacher’s school receives a duplicate of the plaque and a donation of \$500.

For more information, please visit [http://merf.us.mensa.org/awards/distinguished\\_teacher/index.php](http://merf.us.mensa.org/awards/distinguished_teacher/index.php).

The deadline is February 1, 2003.

**T B M CALENDAR T B M CALENDAR T B M**

## *November 2002 Calendar*

*Ronan Heffernan, Calendar Editor*

Mensa events are open to all Mensans, their spouses, and accompanied guests. A party at a private home is a private event, and who may or may not attend is at the complete discretion of the host. Kitties mentioned in the calendar offset the cost of refreshments and are NOT optional.

Ronan Heffernan ((813) 907-8147) is the Calendar Editor. Please e-mail your calendar event notices to Ronan at [ronan@iotcorp.com](mailto:ronan@iotcorp.com) or give him a call at home. November 10 is the deadline to submit events for the December calendar.

**Hosts:** Please remember to mention any special concerns about your location, such as limited access for the handicapped, smoking restrictions, or presence of pets.

**Guests:** If you have special needs or restrictions, it is prudent to discuss them with your host before attending an event.

*November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>*

### **TBM NORTH COUNTIES PICNIC BARBEQUE AND CAMPOVER**

Previously scheduled for this weekend, the TBM Campout has been moved to the weekend of November 9 and 10. See below for more details.

*November 2<sup>nd</sup> - Saturday - noon - \$*

### **TRAVELER'S CENTURY CLUB**

Like Mensa, the Travelers Century Club has a single criterion for membership: One must have traveled to 100 countries. The Florida coordinator of the club is inviting all Mensans to its quarterly luncheon meeting, held at Mad Dogs and Englishmen. Mad Dogs is

**T B M C A L E N D A R T B M C A L E N D A R T B M**

located at 4115 South MacDill Avenue. Come out and meet some world travelers!

Jay Hines - 813-828-6353

*November 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> - Monday - 3:30 p.m. - \$2*

**CHILDREN'S GAME DAY/PLAY DAY**

For ages 0-10. Come join us. Bring your favorite games. For directions contact:

Linne Katz - 727-372-9438 -  
[LINNEKATZ@aol.com](mailto:LINNEKATZ@aol.com)

10037 Wheatland Road - New Port Richey

*November 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> - Tuesday - 6:30 p.m. - \$*

**TAMPA DINNER AT GINO'S RESTAURANT**

Please join us for dinner at Gino's Restaurant. We meet in the dining room around 6:30 p.m. Gino's (813-933-1089) is located at 10006 N. Armenia Avenue in Tampa. For more information contact:

Celeste Terken - 813-933-8700 -  
[onlyeaze@gte.net](mailto:onlyeaze@gte.net)

*November 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup> - Thursdays - 12:30 p.m. - \$*

**LUNCH BUNCH**

We meet at Piccadilly Cafeteria, on 11810 North Dale Mabry Highway (next to Barnes and Noble Bookstore), in Tampa. For directions, descriptions, and/or encouragement to attend, call:

Jim Perry - 813-837-3473 - [philart@gte.net](mailto:philart@gte.net)

*November 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> - Saturday and Sunday - 3 p.m. - \$*

**TBM NORTH COUNTIES**
**PICNIC BARBEQUE AND CAMPOVER**

Where: North Hernando County (near Citrus County line) on US 98. See [www.micrometer.com/bv.htm](http://www.micrometer.com/bv.htm) for more info, map, and RSVP contact (by Nov. 1, please).

What's Provided: hamburgers and veggie burgers,


*Continued on page 23*

## Happy November Birthday to:

- |    |                         |    |                        |
|----|-------------------------|----|------------------------|
| 3  | Dan Hill                | 20 | Ann Basso              |
| 4  | Jacquie Collette        | 21 | Thomas F. Incorvia     |
|    | James Spencer           | 22 | Max Robert Loick       |
|    | Charles Ernest Surprise | 23 | Joseph William Dunning |
| 5  | James B. Francis        | 24 | Patricia T. J. Farnum  |
|    | Deborah Jane Rupe       |    | Alan R. Walter         |
| 6  | Mary W. Matthews        | 25 | Susan Lytle Cornett    |
| 7  | Susan S. Anderson       |    | Malcolm D. Haynes      |
|    | Charles E. Greenwood    | 26 | Jason Doolittle        |
| 10 | Donna Ippolito          |    | Edward Jay Harshman    |
| 11 | Randall Chan-A-Shing    |    | Robert L. Monts De Oca |
|    | Barbara Loewe           | 27 | Howard Berry           |
|    | Paul N. Miller          |    | John D. Cattel         |
|    | Mildred L. Satterfield  |    | Norma Niemeyer         |
| 12 | Marjorie B. Mills       |    | Linda Jo Rice          |
| 13 | Ryan McKeon             | 28 | Carol Partington       |
| 16 | Celia McKee Swender     |    | Donald W. White        |
| 17 | Jack Theodore Brawner   | 29 | Audrey W. Silver       |
|    | Gene David Heath        | 30 | William David Gilmer   |
| 18 | James Moir Clement      |    | Howard C. Mayhew       |
|    | Norman Linton           |    | Zachary W. McLemore    |
|    |                         |    | Roland A. St Marie     |

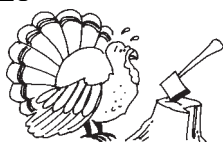


TAMPA BAY MENSA  
November

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> <i>Children's Game/Play Day</i> at Linne Katz's New Port Richey, 3:30 p.m.	<b>5</b>  <i>Tampa Dinner</i> at Gino's Restaurant Tampa, 6:30 p.m.	<b>6</b>
<b>10</b> <i>North Counties Picnic and Campover</i> second day  <i>Schedule your December events now.</i>	<b>11</b>  <b>Remember Our Veterans</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> <i>Children's Game/Play Day</i> at Linne Katz's New Port Richey, 3:30 p.m.	<b>19</b>  <i>Tampa Dinner</i> at Gino's Restaurant Tampa, 6:30 p.m.	<b>20</b>
<b>24</b> <i>FSM</i> at Roger Preslar's Brandon, 2 p.m.	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>



EVENTS CALENDAR  
 er 2002

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2  <i>Traveler's Century Club</i> Tampa, noon
7 <i>Lunch Bunch</i> at Piccadilly Cafeteria Tampa, 12:30 p.m.		8  <i>Deadline for</i> <i>Sounding</i> <i>submissions</i>	9  <i>North Counties Picnic</i> <i>and Campover</i> first day
14 <i>Mid-Pinellas</i> <i>Breakfast Group</i> at Village Inn Largo, 7:30 a.m. — <i>Lunch Bunch</i> at Piccadilly Cafeteria Tampa, 12:30 p.m.		15  <i>Card Night</i> at Terri Elston's Clearwater, 7:30 p.m.	16
21 <i>Lunch Bunch</i> at Piccadilly Cafeteria Tampa, 12:30 p.m.		22  TGTF at Horse & Jockey South Pasadena, 5:30 p.m.	23
28 		29	30  <i>Games Night</i> at Dana Groulx's Wesley Chapel, 7:30 p.m.

## MERF Scholarships

### *The Mensa Education and Research Foundation (MERF) and Tampa Bay Mensa Announce the 2002-2003 Scholarship Essay Contest*

MERF and Tampa Bay Mensa are accepting applications for MERF's annual scholarship contest. The only eligibility requirements are that the applicant be enrolled, for the academic year following the award, in a degree program in an accredited American institute of post-secondary education, and be a citizen or a permanent resident of the United States. For the general awards, the applicant need *not* be a member of Mensa nor qualified for Mensa, and the general awards are unrestricted as to age, gender, level of post-secondary education, and financial need.

Awards will be made on the basis of an essay of 550 words or fewer describing the applicant's career, vocational, or academic goal toward which the scholarship is to provide aid.

Entries will be judged and awarded at three levels: Tampa Bay Mensa,

regional, and national. Awards are made in amounts ranging from \$300 to \$1000.

Applications may be requested via US mail by sending a *legal-sized* (#10), *self-addressed, stamped* envelope (SASE) to:

Roger Preslar  
P.O. Box 1023  
Seffner, FL 33584-1023

All SASE requests for applications must be postmarked by **December 21, 2002**.

To download an official entry form via the Internet, visit the following URL: <http://merf.us.mensa.org/scholarships/zipfinder.php>

Essays and completed entry forms must be mailed to Roger Preslar at the above address and postmarked by **January 15, 2003**.

The Mensa Education and Research Foundation is a philanthropic, nonprofit, tax-exempt organization funded by gifts from members of American Mensa Ltd. and others. The Foundation works to identify and foster human intelligence for the benefit of humanity and to encourage research into the nature, characteristics, and uses of intelligence.



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**T B C A L E N D A R T B C A L E N D A R T B**

*Continued from page 16*

hot dogs, condiments, and paper supplies

Facilities: campsites, bathroom (one-step-up access), shower (outdoor)

**What to bring:** Covered dish (or something else to share), BYOB, games, crafts, musical instruments, tapes, records, CDs. Your own chairs would help, but I have a dozen or so. If you plan to camp over, suitable equipment is recommended.

**Also welcome:** children and pets

If the party is successful, it could become an annual event. (Remember, please RSVP by Nov. 1.)

Chris Clement - 727-784-0186

Callers: Please leave a detailed message

*November 14th - Thursday - 7:30 a.m. - \$*

**MID-PINELLAS BREAKFAST SIG**

Leave your home a bit early, and join us for breakfast on your way into work. The location is the Village Inn at Walsingham and Vonn Roads in Largo, bright and early at 7:30 a.m. Please call me in advance so I know how much space to reserve when I get there early.

Lori Puterbaugh - 727-399-2419 -  
*puterbaugh@mindspring.com*

*November 15<sup>th</sup> - Friday - 7:30 p.m. - \$2*

**CARD GAMES & GREAT SNACKS**

Love card games? Bring your favorite deck of cards & your favorite game(s). Teach your game to us, learn a new one, and/or play an old one! Smoking on patio only. Four indoor cats are on board. Hope to see you all!

On Top Of The World - West side of Belcher or call for directions. Parking on street or in visitor (V) spaces. Please do not park in numbered (assigned) spaces.

Terri Elston - 727-799-1151-

*TeriProfsr@aol.com*

2294 Swedish Drive #18 - Clearwater

*November 22<sup>th</sup> - Friday - 5:30 p.m. - \$*

**TGIF**

You don't have to be an Anglophile to enjoy the Horse & Jockey British Pub, but you do have to be prepared to celebrate TGIF! The Horse & Jockey is located at 1155 Pasadena Avenue South, South Pasadena. RE SMOKING: This is a pub and smoking is allowed, but smokers are asked to sit at the table nearest the bar.

Phoebe McCann - 727-546-4030

*November 30<sup>th</sup> - Saturday - 7:30 p.m. - \$2*

**GAMES NIGHT**

This month's Last Saturday Rotating Games Night is at Dana Groulx's in Wesley Chapel.

**Directions:** Head north on I-75. Exit at State Rd. 54 and turn left (west). Go through the signal at Old Pasco Rd. The first right turn after the signal will be the Lexington Oaks subdivision. After turning in, look for Belmont Village, which is the second village on your left. Dana's house is the fifth house on the left side.

Dana Groulx - 813-991-7868 -  
[dgroulx@mac.com](mailto:dgroulx@mac.com)

5410 Bold Venture Place - Wesley Chapel

*November 27<sup>th</sup> - Sunday - 2:00 p.m. - Free*

**FSM**

November's FSM will be hosted by Roger Preslar, at 2 p.m. on Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Directions:** From I-75 South, take the SR-60 exit east toward Brandon; keep left at the fork in the ramp; merge onto Adamo Drive East/SR-60 which becomes Brandon Boulevard (go 3.2 miles); turn left onto Kingsway Ave. (Albertson's Supermarket is on the corner — go north 1/2 mile); turn right onto Clay Ave. (go east 1/2 mile); turn left onto Stone Dr. (entrance to Hillside subdivision) (go one block); turn right onto Green Cove Dr. (go two blocks); turn right onto Hillrise Dr. to 932 Hillrise Dr. (4th house on the right).

Roger Preslar 813-651-1150

[PRESLARRL@aol.com](mailto:PRESLARRL@aol.com) or [rpreslar@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:rpreslar@tampabay.rr.com)

## Rocket Mom: Dreaming of the Right Stuff

Joni M. Fisher

Reaching middle age drove me to get in touch with my true geek self, my inner astronaut. Speed and power can be so seductive. First earning a pilot's license, then an instrument rating failed to satisfy me, because part of my life remained entrenched in low gear behind the wheel of the family van. So off I went to find satisfaction in a vehicle that suited the real me. That's when fantasy stepped in, because in my heart of hearts I knew I'd have had to win the Florida Lottery to afford my dream vehicle — the Space Shuttle.

My attraction to the Space Shuttle was lust at first sight. It cruises at 17,322 miles per hour accelerating from a standstill to Mach 1 in sixty seconds. Imagine the rush of being pressed deep into the driver's seat, *exceeding the speed of the sound of the booster rockets one minute after starting them*. The fastest NASCAR vehicle would look like it was racing in reverse with the shuttle. Wheehee! Now, wouldn't that kind of acceleration come in handy for merging into highway traffic? No one would dare tailgate me, either, thanks to the plumes from the solid rocket boosters. And talk about the ultimate in off-road vehicles: This machine doesn't need roads.

And wait, it gets better. It seats

seven with room to spare. These five-point-harness seatbelts go far beyond the highway safety recommendations. And talk about trunk space? The Space Shuttle hauls 22,000 pounds of gear, the equivalent of three and a half disassembled Lincoln Navigators. Field trips with the band become no problem — tubas, drums, and all. The kids will certainly vie over which one gets to ride in the front seat.

Take the Space Shuttle for a test drive and watch other drivers gape in admiration. A Harley engine turns heads with its distinctive powerful growl, but one shuttle booster rocket can drown out an entire Harley rally.

While a salesman cooed about tinted windows of the new Ford Expedition, I dreamt of the shuttle's thermal protection system that keeps the passenger area cool even when external temperatures soar to 2,300 degrees Fahrenheit. Features like four-wheel anti-lock brakes and side airbags just sound lame compared to deployable twin parachutes.

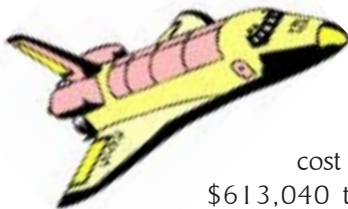
When another salesman pointed out the nifty TV/VCR in the Oldsmobile Silhouette, my mind envisioned the shuttle's closed-circuit television system, spiffy S-band phase modulation transceiver, and state-of-the-art Ku-band rendezvous radar.

The shuttle's sales representatives would never point out cup holders, or the vanity mirror or any of the other stuff unenlightened salesmen feel compelled to show women. No sirree. If I were buying my dream vehicle, a team of engineers would fly in to answer my questions. They'd paint it whatever color I wanted. It would be made to order. I would demand that the engineers do something no automobile manufacturer has managed — design a place where a woman can stash her purse within reach. That single feature would make me the envy of the car pool set.

Okay, okay, beyond terrific bragging rights, would the Space Shuttle satisfy my other needs? The Toyota 4Runner has well-labeled controls within easy reach, whereas the shuttle has 100 times more displays and controls. Sigh. Even to an instrument-rated pilot, the shuttle's control panel looks daunting. I'll bet the owner's manual comes in volumes. Who wants to read those things?

There were no mileage statistics in the Space Shuttle press kit, so I e-mailed one of the friendly geniuses through the NASA home page. After he stopped laughing, Dave Williams, of the National Space Science Data Center, gave a rough calculation of 400,000 miles a day. Based on my driving style, which is to go as

far as possible per tank, I used the maximum flight time recommended for the space shuttle — 18 days. At 400,000 miles per day, that comes to 7,200,000 miles between fill-ups. Of course no mere van or SUV can compete with that, but the fantasy started to unravel when I discovered that refueling the space shuttle would require going to the Kennedy Space Center in Florida or the Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.



When I bought my previous mom-mobile van in 1991, a fill up cost \$21. In 1991, it cost \$613,040 to fill up the space shuttle. Hmmm. I'm afraid to calculate what it would cost now. It's one of those situations in which if you have to ask, you probably can't afford it. So fuel charges would consume the rest of my imaginary lottery winnings.

Then there's the problem of vehicle size. The space shuttle wouldn't fit in the garage, even if my husband parked his car in the driveway. Though I'd always be able to find the Space Shuttle in the mall parking lot, does this feature outweigh the other drawbacks?

My dream vehicle couldn't tow a boat without melting it. Parallel parking would be out of the question. How would I execute a U-turn on a four-lane road to backtrack to the intersection I missed? Would the Space Shuttle possess that wonderful new-vehicle smell?



Lottery winnings aside, the deciding factor would have to be availability. New shuttles just aren't on the market. Really, deep down, who wouldn't prefer a new vehicle instead of a used one? Of all the vehicles I test-drove, the Toyota 4Runner emerged the winner; though it was a slower, less fuel-efficient production vehicle than the Space Shuttle, a new 4Runner suited my lifestyle. True, it was a sacrifice of speed in favor of handling, but all vehicle buyers contend with such choices.

So to satisfy my mid-life yearnings, I bought the Toyota 4Runner Limited Edition in Millennium Silver and named it Rocket. My front license plate reads "FLY." You'll recognize me as a forty-something woman hauling a car full of teenagers through central Florida. I'll be embarrassing my daughter by playing the "Top Gun" soundtrack on nearly full volume, riding with the moon roof open, and letting the wind blow through my hair. Can't do that on the Space Shuttle.



## *Worst News of the Year*

Jane Davis of Plant City — 397 Whisper Oaks Drive — has just written the *Sounding* with terrible news: She has contracted a rare form of cancer, "most likely terminal, as it is so rare that there are no treatments for it other than to slice and dice and then to pray." Jane joined Mensa more than 10 years ago, and has been an ornament at FSM and other events.

Jane bought her home in Plant City last year, but now she feels that she needs to move back North for the complete course of the "slice and dice" treatment (along, no doubt, with the usual radiation and debilitating meds). She writes, "It is imperative that I sell the place I bought last year, as my children are not old enough to move here," and she wants (not surprisingly) to be with them.

Jane is selling her home for an asking price of \$54,000, but "the price

is negotiable, since I do not have time to deal with any extra hassles."

If you have been considering moving to Plant City (the Strawberry Center of the Universe!), please visit Jane's page at Yahoo Real Estate: [http://list.realestate.yahoo.com/display/realestate?ct\\_hft=detail&cc=realestate&cid=realestate-1034985355-6308761&cr=Florida&cpcy=Plant+City&fullnodeid=750007014&intl=](http://list.realestate.yahoo.com/display/realestate?ct_hft=detail&cc=realestate&cid=realestate-1034985355-6308761&cr=Florida&cpcy=Plant+City&fullnodeid=750007014&intl=)

Jane asks that if you know anywhere else she can advertise her house — for example, on an employee bulletin board — or if you know of anyone who is househunting in the Tampa Bay area, to please get in touch. Her e-mail address is [jadelion2000@worldnet.att.net](mailto:jadelion2000@worldnet.att.net).

Good luck, Jane. Your friends in Tampa Bay Mensa will pray for you, and for a miracle.

**WELLS-SPRING***The Dead Weight of the ILWU**Erin Wells*

Inspiration for this column struck while I was watching CNBC. Let me preface my remarks by saying that I am an economist and, according to Mary, economists are “relentlessly rational.” I warned her that when economics became the topic of this column, things could get ugly. Prepare yourselves.

On September 30, a labor lock-out started at the main Los Angeles/Long Beach port, which is the busiest port in the country (second is New York/Newark). Companies that rely on that port for imports were aware of the suspected slow-down that precipitated the lock-out, so they were already stockpiling inventories and making contingency plans should the lock-out continue into the winter shopping season.

Economists were not concerned at that time. Negotiations proceeded until October 9, when President Bush decided, with the help of his advisors, that it would be best for him to invoke the Taft-Hartley Act, citing concern for the nation’s “health and safety.” This resulted in workers being sent back to their jobs for an 80-day “cooling-off period” and (everyone hopes) prevented further economic damage.

(For the record, the Taft-Hartley

Act has never permanently resolved a labor dispute; it is a stopgap measure at best.)

I have taken such an interest in this labor dispute because of its underlying cause.

The basic idea behind unions is not objectionable at all, even to a hard-hearted economist like me. People deserve safe and comfortable working conditions and fair wages, especially in an advanced country like ours, and unions are good insofar as they protect those rights (although I believe that society’s values have changed so that good working conditions and fair wages could be achieved now through media and activist attention to offending firms). It is when unions cause inefficiency by acting to prevent natural production advancements that I take issue with them.

There have been many conflicting reports in the media regarding exactly what this labor dispute stems from. Some news outlets have even been remiss and called it a strike. So here are a few quick facts to clarify:

\* This is a labor lock-out by the Pacific Maritime Association (port management), initiated because they claim that dockworkers were engaged in a slow-down.

\* The alleged labor slow-down was initiated by the International Longshoremen and Warehouse Union (the dockworkers) because the PMA wants to install common technologies like bar-codes and the types of “fast passes” used in toll booths. The PMA maintains it is necessary to implement these technologies so it can remain cost-competitive while expected cargo volumes double over the next decade.

\* The ILWU wants a guarantee that the jobs created by these new technologies will be under their umbrella because the PMA is resisting that right now, leading the ILWU to believe that PMA wants to farm these jobs out to nonunion labor.

\* Because this labor dispute is not about working conditions, wages, or benefits, I believe it can be fairly argued that it is about greed. The average dockworker makes \$80,000 a year. Experienced foremen often make \$165,000. I have never worked on a dock but, while I am sure it is hard work, it is not brain surgery. Even though they perform an important function for the import/export economy (and all businesses relying upon them — which is everything), I am certain that their value to society is not quite that high.

However, arguing that the dock-

workers are greedy is simply a value judgment. Mensans like the hard facts. Economists do, too, so I know these facts well. When a union (or any organization) stands in the way of a production technology advancement that will lower costs (or keep costs constant) while increasing or maintaining the quantity produced, it is inefficient for the economy as a whole and produces what we call deadweight losses. “Deadweight loss” is an economic term for making the

whole worse off by making one group better off through a change that alters the market’s equilibrium. The union is made better off at the expense of America’s consumers as well as the whole of America’s ports, which are less advanced than most ports for the rest of the developed world because of disputes like this one.

In an October 2 *Wall Street Journal* article posted online, ILWU spokesman Steve Stallone is quoted as saying, “We’re agreeing to let them bring in the technology. In return, we want any new jobs that are created by the technology to be ILWU jobs.” Mr. Stallone and the rest of the ILWU seem completely unconcerned with the far-reaching (and negative) economic consequences of such an outcome.



## *Aging, Where is Thy Sting?*

*Brigitte M. Walker*

Here I lie, just like a sack of potatoes, unable to get up on my own. The mattress is hard and lumpy, my nightgown is soaked with sweat and other fluids. Everything hurts. "Nurse!!" I cry again and again. No one rushes to my side. . . .

This is how I pictured old age when I was in my fifties. I knew I was far from that condition; I still had my physical strength, my optimism during times of illness. Yet, like bubbles from a witch's cauldron, my fear of aging burst to the surface from time to time.

Old age loomed closer when I entered my sixties. Suddenly, my body let me down in surprising ways. My first fall: a bruised rib, a twisted knee. From then on, I thought often about the impending day when I would no longer be the captain of my fate. The idea of having to rely on others for my most basic needs made me anxious, even panicky.

How did I cope with this view of aging? I had a teacher, an expert in this field: my mother-in-law. My husband and I married in our sixties. For the first time I had a mother-in-law. She came to live with us when I was 60 years old and she was 95. A hip ailment left her unable to walk, so she traveled by wheelchair. In pain from arthritis in her knees and hands,

she still saw all the beauty in this world, especially in Florida. Sitting in our backyard, she marveled at the profusion of blooms, the huge cacti, the floating butterflies and colorful woodpeckers. She never complained. She loved me, her daughter-in-law, so much that she always emphasized to anyone: "This is my REAL daughter!" How could I help loving her?

Whenever I went shopping, I took her with me, pushing her chair all over town. The merchants got to know her well. She had a greeting, a funny story, a sweet compliment for everyone. As the years flew by, she became ever more feeble. Soon she was totally dependent on me, to bathe her, dress her, later on even to change her diapers. Do you think I ever minded? Her gentle nature and smiling "Thank you" were all it took to make me eager to help. She was with us past her 101st birthday, and she is locked forever in my heart.

No longer do I have such dread of becoming old and sick and dependent on someone else. I know now: It is my attitude that counts. If I have a smile for everyone, if I bear pain and distress without bitterness, and if I keep on loving people, I shall find that my call for help will be heeded. Some loving person will take care of

me so that life can still be tolerable, even worthwhile and happy. Yes, I shall get older; some day I may be

helpless, needing care from others, but the terror is gone.  
Thank you, Mama!



**14. Ownership by Foreigners below**

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PS Form 3526, October 1998 (Revised)

**URBAN COWBOY***Regrets, Installment Three**Bud Urban*

More things I regret. . . .

From second grade through high school, I was two years younger than my classmates. My mother was responsible for this, in more ways than one. Although my parents were of Masonic persuasion, Mamma figured out that she could get me into St. Patrick's school in second grade instead of kindergarten in the public schools. It was not for me to say if this was bad or good. I had nothing to compare it with.

Had I been as old as my classmates when I got to public school, I might, even in those days, have wound up in some gifted program. I wouldn't have wanted that.

Before my days at the nunnery I had been subjected to preschool at the university school, where they trained bad teachers. I got nothing out of it. If smart people stayed out of teaching in droves then, you should have seen how things were 15 years later and thereafter. Teaching tended to get the extremely dedicated or else those that couldn't make it elsewhere. You could afford to be extremely dedicated if your parents were rich professionals, such as bootleggers.



I was put into public school in the fourth grade. The teachers quit praying, thank God, and in general were very good. Then in the summer following the sixth grade, I was thrown back into university school so that I would "learn to swim." I wished they had just let me drown. I guess that says it all — just let me say that student teachers had kids doing the teaching. That can be excellent at university level, but it wasn't in University school, sixth grade.

Kids should not be allowed to think they have carte blanche to supervise other kids. Back in public school they had the Safety Patrol. These were kids who acted as crossing guards. I told one of the teach-

ers I didn't believe in that. From her shock you would have thought I had eaten the Easter bunny. I see only adult crossing guards now. I hope the schools received enough lawsuits to

bring them to their senses.


One of the worst places for kids to bully other kids would seem to be the Boy Scouts. I never met a Boy Scout I didn't dislike. A couple of my doctor

friends were scoutmasters, but nobody's perfect. I would have wound up a scout, but you join by age. I couldn't join with my classmates. and it wouldn't have felt right to enlist with kids two grades behind me.

Physical education (gym): I got along fine without it in college and would have been better off without it the whole way. I did not enjoy classes that were not co-educational, and that seemed to be too great a modification for the schools to make. They put me in "corrective gym," because I had a big belly. Then they found some brat sadistic enough to push on my feet so my knees compressed my belly, and that was supposed to make it

smaller. Better I should have played ball.

Better to let the jocks do sports and let physicians handle physical problems. So they don't do well. Well, some day they will.

And ultimate sadism: the armed services. Why, I don't know, as the chicken disappears in combat and we're all on the same side. Why are you treated as though your superiors are all your enemies until they start hauling away the dead? Probably some hangover from European practices. Anyway, I am told, these evils culminated in Viet Nam with the practice of "fraggging." Both the non-leaders and non-followers should be ashamed. 



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## A Father's Story: September 27, 2002

B. Valsavage

Today is a milestone in my life as a parent. On this day eighteen years ago my only child was born. I was 29, and married four days shy of one year. At that time I was struggling with a new business, a young wife, and the pending changes fatherhood would most certainly bring. Still, I had no feeling of dread. As far back as my memory reaches I had always wanted a little girl. This desire may, in part, be due to the example my stepfather set with my younger sister — she being his only biological child. Though as far as love goes, he is my Dad and very special to me. And I think of him as the most important man in my life.

As for my own child, she was born at home with the aid of a midwife. I was there and helped in the delivery. It was very cool! I helped her through the birth canal, cleaned her up, then tied off and cut the cord. She was this incredible little being. And since no drugs were used, our baby was very alert. As she rested on her mother's tummy from her traumatic journey, I waved my finger in front of her bluish eyes. She gazed up at me, reached out, and wrapped her whole



hand tightly around my index finger. I was smitten, and my love for her was ever secured. This was a defining moment for me as a father. Her porcelain white skin and tiny features are forever locked deep within my heart. Her whole hand could fit right in the center of my palm!

For the next four days, while her mother recovered, I was in constant attendance upon her. I changed, bathed and dressed her. I was four inches off the ground the entire time. And I have spent the ensuing eighteen years preparing her for the harsh realities of the real world. And the last five of those years I have done so without a mate. I have taken my responsibilities in earnest. I am sure I've used poor judgment at times. And will, no doubt, drop the ball a time or two yet. But my intentions and motivations can never be questioned.

A marriage mate's status may not be forever, but your child will *always* be your child. And I hope, when I'm a very old man, my memory will bring back to me that very special event, eighteen years ago today, when my life and who I am changed for the better, forever!



**INTERNET FLOTSAM***Why DID the Chicken Cross the Road?*

Dr. Seuss: "Did the chicken cross the road? Did she cross it with a toad? Yes! The chicken crossed the road, but why she crossed, I've not been told!"

Captain James T. Kirk: "To boldly go where no chicken has gone before."

Grandma: "In my day, we didn't ask why the chicken crossed the road. Someone told us that the chicken crossed the road, and that was good enough for us."

Fox Mulder: "You saw it cross the road with your own eyes. How many more chickens have to cross before you believe it?"

Martin Luther King, Jr.: "I envision a world where all chickens will be free to cross roads without having their motives called into question."

Margaret Sanger: "No hen can call herself free, or a road-crosser, who does not own and control her own feathers."

Ernest Hemingway: "To die. In the rain."

George W. Bush: "I don't think I should have to answer that question."

Emily Dickenson: "Because I could not cross the road / She kindly crossed for me. / That chicken laid an egg that was / Delicious with my tea."

Susan Sontag: "A chicken crossing the road is not relevant. What is relevant is the critique of the crossing."

Ronald Reagan: "What chicken?"

Janet Reno: "I'm going to devote the rest of my career to assuring that chickens have the right to cross any road they want to in Florida."

Einstein: "Did the chicken really cross the road, or did the road move beneath the chicken?"

Karl Marx: "It was a historical inevitability."

Martha Stewart: "A properly dressed chicken may cross the road, and that's a Good Thing — but be sure to sell your chicken stock if you hear any rumors about oncoming traffic."

The American Mensa Committee: "Because she was an egghead."

Freud: "The fact that you are at all concerned that the chicken crossed the road reveals your underlying sexual insecurity."

Bill Clinton: "I did not cross the road with THAT chicken. . . . It depends on what the meaning of 'chicken' is."

Hillary Clinton: "I'm proud to say that that chicken was a constituent of mine here in the great state of New York, and a Yankees fan."

Aristotle: "It is the nature of chickens to cross the road."

Bill Gates: "I have just released e-Chicken 2000, which will not only cross roads, but will lay eggs, file your important documents, and balance your checkbook — and Internet Explorer is an inextricable part of e-Chicken."

Maya Angelou: "There is a true yearning to respond to / The crossing of the road. / So say the Asian, the Hispanic, the Jew, / The African, the Native American, the Sioux, / The Catholic, the Muslim, the French, the Greek, / The Irish, the Rabbi, the Priest, the Sheik, / The Gay, the Straight, the Preacher, / The privileged, the homeless, the Chicken. / They hear. They all hear / The road longing to be crossed."

The Bible: "And God said unto the chicken, 'Thou shalt cross the road.' And the chicken crossed the road, and there was much rejoicing."

Colonel Sanders: "I missed one?"

**DONNA'S DIARY***Death by Shakespeare**Donna Myhrer*

This month I am going to try something different. I will supply the line from the Bard that the character in one or another of his plays says

just before the character dies. Then I will make it really easy by listing four characters' names, and all you have to do is pick the correct speaker.



1. "I kiss'd thee ere I kill'd thee: no way but this, / Killing myself, to die upon a kiss."

- A. Romeo            C. Hamlet  
B. MacBeth        D. Othello

2. "The stroke of death is as a lover's pinch, / Which hurts and is desired."

- A. Lady MacBeth    C. Portia  
B. Cleopatra        D. Jessica

3. "O true apothecary! Thy drugs are quick. / Thus with a kiss I die."

- A. Romeo            C. Othello  
B. Hamlet            D. Iago

4. "My sickness grows upon me."

- A. Lady MacBeth    C. Goneril  
B. Regan             D. King Lear

5. "Mine and my father's death, come not upon thee, / nor thine on me!"

- A. Iago                C. Laertes  
B. MacDuff         D. Romeo

6. "He has my dying voice; / So tell him, with the occurrents, more or

less / Which have solicited. The rest is silence."

- A. Romeo            C. King Lear  
B. MacBeth        D. Hamlet

7. "Yea, noise? Then I'll be brief. / O happy dagger! This is thy sheath! / There rust and let me die."

- A. Lady MacBeth    C. Juliet  
B. Lady MacDuff    D. Duncan

8. "O, yet defend me, friends. I am but hurt."

- A. King Claudius    C. Brutus  
B. Tybalt             D. Hamlet

9. "O, I could prophesy, / But that the earthy and cold hand of death / Lies on my tongue: no, Percy, thou art dust / And food for . . ."

- A. Mercutio         C. Romeo  
B. Tybalt             D. Hotspur

10. "The drink, the drink! I am poison'd!"

- A. Lady MacBeth    C. Ophelia  
B. Queen Gertrude   D. Juliet

11. "Thou, wretched boy, that didst consort with him here, / Shalt with him hence."

- A. Tybalt            C. Romeo  
B. Mercutio        D. Shylock

12. "Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life, / And thou no breath at all? Thou'll come no more, / Never, never, never, never, never! / Pray you, undo this button: thank you, sir. / Do you see this? Look on her, look, her lips, / Look there, look there!"

- A. King Lear        C. Richard III  
B. Hamlet            D. Othello

13. "A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!"

- A. King John        C. Richard III  
B. King Claudius    D. Hamlet

14. "Ask me not what I know."

- A. Portia            C. Cordelia  
B. Goneril          D. Queen Gertrude

15. "And damn'd be he that first cries 'Hold, enough!'"

- A. King Lear        C. Hamlet  
B. Laertes          D. MacBeth

16. "Help me into some house, Benvolio, Or I shall faint. / A plague o' both your houses! / They have made worms' meat of me: I have it / And soundly too: your houses!"

- A. Tybalt            C. Mercutio  
B. MacBeth        D. Othello

17. "My heart hath one poor string to stay it by, / Which holds but till thy news be utter'd; / And then all this thou seest is but a clod / And module of confounded royalty."

- A. Richard III      C. Henry IV  
B. Richard IV      D. King John

18. "A guiltless death I die."

- A. Desdemona      C. Juliet  
B. Cleopatra        D. Regan



### ANSWERS TO DONNA'S QUIZ.

- |      |      |      |       |       |       |
|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. D | 4. B | 7. C | 10. B | 13. C | 16. C |
| 2. B | 5. C | 8. A | 11. A | 14. B | 17. D |
| 3. A | 6. D | 9. D | 12. A | 15. D | 18. A |

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