Chinook
The newsletter of Columbia River Mensa

March 2025

Volume 4, Issue 1

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From Our Local Secretary (LocSec)

Bill Sheretz

Wow, can you believe it's March already? I've been very swamped by events at work (all the DOGE hubbub) and numerous family issues. Nevertheless - It's been an exciting time lately, filled with achievements and new observations. As we delve into the latest updates, I want to highlight some milestones and noteworthy developments that have caught my attention. One specific event stands out in this journey, and I think it's important for everyone to stay informed about it.

Some of you may be aware of what I refer to as the AMC Rhubarb. Though it's unlikely to affect Columbia River Mensa at this point, I have been monitoring the events from afar and I feel it's time to provide you all with the opportunity to develop your own opinions, if you so desire. In the interest of covering all the various perspectives, I will try to lay them out for you as best I can. To begin with, the **National Chair's Message Regarding the National Hearings Committee Decision** and the **Report of the National Hearings Committee** found in the January ***Mensa Bulletin*** obviously represent the AMC establishment viewpoint. I have asked Tim to include both Michael Eager and Dan Burg's columns as submitted for publication. Michael was our elected Region 8 Vice Chairman until recent events and Dan Burg is the volunteer who stepped forward to act as Regional Coordinator until a special election is held to replace the Regional Vice Chairs who were removed. Lastly, Brad Lucht, a Life Member of Mid-America Mensa has prepared a rather comprehensive record of events which covers the events in great detail. Brad's "What Happened" is located here:: https://tinyurl.com/MensaHearingsInfo .

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To the mind that is still, the whole universe surrenders.

-Lao Tzu

Newsletter Editor's Note

Tim Dees

This issue includes some notices of virtual events sponsored by other Mensa chapters and members. We haven't published notices like these before, but not because they're scarce. If you find these of interest, please let me know and I'll look for more.

Much of the issue dwells on the unpleasantness ongoing with the governing body of our national chapter, what we sometimes call "Big Mensa." We felt we had an obligation to make these problems known, even if the typical Mensan hardly notices. I hope the contested issues can be resolved quickly for the benefit of the organization, but I can't say I'm optimistic. All large organizations seem to undergo these "growing pains" from time to time.

I continue to welcome member-generated content for our newsletter. Don't let

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Message from the Chair

Lori Norris, Chair, American Mensa

The following is a decision (https://www.us.mensa.org/lead/hearings-committee-report/)from the National Hearings Committee, which is not a subset of the AMC (American Mensa Committee). It is posted here because the decision—and the situation which engendered it—are unprecedented in American Mensa's history. The decision has such a major effect on the governance of Mensa that it is important to post it to the membership in this manner.

The AMC is working on installing Regional Coordinators for the affected Regions as soon as possible to serve until RVCs can be elected to serve for the remainder of the term. A Regional Coordinator is a full member of the AMC in all respects – a seat at the table, able to speak and to make motions, having the same funding and the same regional budget as any other RVC – except the right to vote. If the AMC could install replacement RVCs ourselves, we would do so, but we cannot because of applicable law.

Appointing Regional Coordinators is something we can do, and we are doing it.

The point person for appointing Regional Coordinators is First Vice Chair Jon Gruebele. Jon is also available, as are other members of the AMC, to provide any assistance or guidance to the Local Groups.

Lori Norris, Chair
American Mensa

LocSec Message, continued



On a much more pleasant note, yesterday I received this rather beautiful ***Prolific Owl Award*** for 2024 from American Mensa. Thanks to all of you who made this achievement possible.

Letters, Stories, Travel Misadventures and More!
Isolated M SIG monthly newsletter serves as a communication forum for Mensa members around the world – currently 80 countries. Subscription information: ruthdanielle@hotmail.com.

Across the Board

Dan Burg, Regional Coordinator for Region 8

I hear the questions. "Who are you? What is this Regional Coordinator position you claim to have? Where is the regular RVC column?" Here are some answers.

A Regional Coordinator is like an RVC. One is appointed when an RVC position is vacant and serves until another RVC is elected for that Region. When another RVC is elected, the Regional Coordinator position goes away.

A Regional Coordinator has almost all the same rights and responsibilities as an RVC. Regional Coordinators are members of the AMC with the right to speak and to make motions. They have the same regional budget as RVCs, the same funding to attend meetings as RVCs, the same responsibilities within the Region as RVCs, and everything else is the same as RVCs except the right to vote on the AMC. The answer as to why this position exists and why it is non-voting is long and complicated, and I can go into it individually if anyone wants me to, but the short answer is that it has to do with New York State law. New York law is important to this because American Mensa is incorporated there.

As I said, the Regional Coordinator position here will go away when an RVC is elected for Region 8. I will not run for RVC; when one is elected, I will go away. So who am I, anyway?

I've been a local, regional, national, and international officer of Mensa. Currently I chair the National Bylaws Committee. I've never been an RVC, but I was Assistant RVC8 for a term a few years ago. I've also been a LocSec, a Newsletter Editor, an Area Coordinator, an RG chair, a Testing Coordinator, a Proctor, a scholarship reader, and (you get the idea). Nationally, I was on the AMC for 14 years, with the last two as Chair in 2013-2015. I have a lot of experience in a lot of different areas on the AMC, and expect to be plugged in wherever I'm needed over however long I'm there this time.

Why I am here rather than the regular RVC for Region 8? This is what happened: Something occurred during the September 2024 AMC Meeting that led to the then-RVC8, seven other RVCs, and two appointees being brought up on charges of having committed acts inimical to Mensa. Such charges are heard by the National Hearings Committee, a body of three former officers who are not currently on the AMC. Each of the ten was found to have committed acts inimical to Mensa, and one of the penalties imposed was that they were removed from the AMC with immediate effect. That is why there is not an RVC8 at the moment and why a fill-in Regional Coordinator is needed.

I never thought I'd be back on the AMC, but I also never thought the AMC would lose half its members. I think I can be of use to Region 8 and to American Mensa. I look forward to your questions and comments.

Dan Burg, Region 8 Coordinator
RC8@us.mensa.org

Newsletter Editor's Note continued

your ExComm members dominate the conversation here. If you have a topic that interests you, other Mensans may feel the same way. I've been writing professionally for over 30 years, but my first efforts were for an organization newsletter not unlike this one. That work got noticed and led to other, more profitable things. My contact information can be found on the last page of the newsletter. Microsoft Word format is preferred, but I can handle just about anything except a PDF.

Current Mensa Chaos

Michael Eager

American Mensa is in chaos. That's clear. On January 14, the National Hearing Committee removed the majority of the American Mensa Committee (Mensa's board of directors), claiming that these ten directors violated the bylaws in some undefined fashion at an AMC meeting where nothing happened which caused harm to Mensa in some indeterminate fashion. The Hearing Committee and the AMC leadership ignore that removal conflicts with our Bylaws and the Mensa Constitution and is violation of New York State law. Not only were these ten people removed from the AMC, they were removed from any other position within local Mensa groups for many years to come.

At a stroke, the Hearing Committee disenfranchised 80% of the members and removed ten of our most active volunteers. The Hearing Committee report suggests that something truly horrible must have happened. We've been accused of trying to destroy Mensa, called lawless, and accused of criminal conduct. Nothing could be further from the truth. Chair Lori Norris and the Hearings Committee hide behind an extreme confidentiality policy which prevents us from defending against these baseless and defamatory accusations.

This was nothing short of a coup. This was an effort, led by the minority on the AMC, to remove the majority and install minority rule. It seems to me that Chair Norris and First Vice Chair Jon Gruebele were not happy with the election last year so they want a do-over, excluding the people who were elected.

When I was elected, I got a view of the AMC from the inside, which turned out not too different from my view from the outside. The AMC leadership was resistant to any suggested change, particularly not from new AMC members. I took my role as director seriously, looking for ways to improve the organization and enhance member involvement. What the AMC leadership wanted apparently was to have RVCs and appointed officers who were compliant and understood that their role in the organization, as they viewed it, was as observers, not leaders.

We were gaslighted, fed false or misleading information, and ignored. Like with past AMCs, members who didn't fall into line with the leadership's ineffective policies were bullied or blocked, and if that didn't work, simply ignored. Rather than create a collaborative working environment on the AMC, Chair Norris allowed a toxic and hostile environment to develop, where she was not trusted to be either honest, open, or supportive of any but her coterie.

The previous AMC, led by Chair Norris, was notable for having nothing that they could claim as an achievement. They were responsible for the largest decline in membership, the largest increase in dues, and the largest American Mensa budget. What was different with this AMC was that the new members were willing to look at American Mensa's real problems and try to address them. This was not welcomed by the entrenched AMC leadership. Another difference from the past was that the new members were able to collaborate and compromise to produce proposals which the majority of the AMC supported. The AMC leadership, in the minority, was unwilling (perhaps incapable) of collaboration or compromise, and consistently opposed any majority proposals.

The removal of the ten directors, facilitated by Chair Norris, is in violation of New York State law. The rump AMC, led by Chair Norris, intends to hold meetings, despite not having a quorum as defined by New York State law. Norris and Gruebele, along with Election Committee Chair Thomas Thomas, intend to hold special elections to replace the removed RVCs, despite there being no provision in the Bylaws

What I'm Reading

Bob Hunt, CRM ExComm Member-at-Large

I enjoy reading Caroline McCullagh's column in the Mensa Bulletin every month, and every once in a while her review of a book sparks enough interest that I take a step or two towards acquiring it. Because of a personal bias and some still open spaces in the library book shelves, I give priority to hard bound copies. I don't do tablet-based e-books for the most part, as I like the tactile experience of a book. Some of her suggestions go into my Amazon Wish List so that the always complaining family has something to give me for birthdays and Christmas.

Caroline's review of a book by Cherie Fruehan called *Dinner With The Hawthornes* sparked enough interest that I wanted to get a copy sooner than the next gift event. I found that, while it was available on Amazon, further web searches uncovered her web page and an explanation that purchasing direct increased her income from each sale. I ordered the book even though it doesn't come hardbound. It came with a note from Cherie handwritten inside the front cover.

The book is unique in its plot, engaging and easy to read and stay in, and delightful with some interesting characters. The plot keeps twisting in surprising directions and there are even some moments of humor wrapped in the drama. At 196 pages you could knock it off in a long lazy afternoon with a good cup (or several) of tea.

I'll quote here from the back jacket blurb:

Rochelle Hawthorne is good at gardening. She is good at everything.

As she lifts a pointed shovel from the rack in the secluded garden center, she wonders if she'll also be good at disposing of her husband's dead body.

All this time, Rochelle believed she was the one who was broken—her barren womb unable to hold a child, the only thing she's ever wanted in life. Until she accidentally finds the crumpled and faded paperwork in her husband' briefcase—the one that tells of a secret, a secret he's hidden from her for eight years.

It's a secret that will change the course of their lives forever.

He will pay.

As Rochelle devises a plan, an unexpected discovery and dinner party revelations between friends will unearth scandals, other secrets, and in the end, something Rochelle won't dare tell anyone.

The reviews on Amazon give it four stars and it was given Honorable Mention by the 2020 Writer's Digest Self-Published Book Awards. Check it out!

Bob Hunt
Twisp, WA

Current Mensa Chaos, continued

for special elections.

Like others, I'm outraged by this. I encourage you to go to https://www.reformmensa.org/ and sign the petitions there. Go to https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-restore-fairness-in-american-mensa and contribute to support our legal action to oppose this coup.

Editor's Note: Michael Eager is the former Regional Vice Chair for American Mensa Region 8, which includes Columbia River Mensa.

Virtual Meetings and Events



This is a Zoom meeting. Please register at https://livepresentation.link/APR.
You will receive a confirmation email from Zoom that will contain the link needed to join the presentation.

Amidst the desperate background of World War II Nazi Germany, two charitable organizations in Britain developed a program to evacuate Jewish children and place them with volunteer English families. What became known as the Kindertransport rescued 10,000 children between December of 1938 and the start of the war in September of 1939.

On Sunday, May 18, SFRM's Zoom Presentation Series will host one of the survivors of Kindertransport who will relate his experience.
To find out more, visit https://sfpresentations.online/info/



North Richland Wrecking Crew



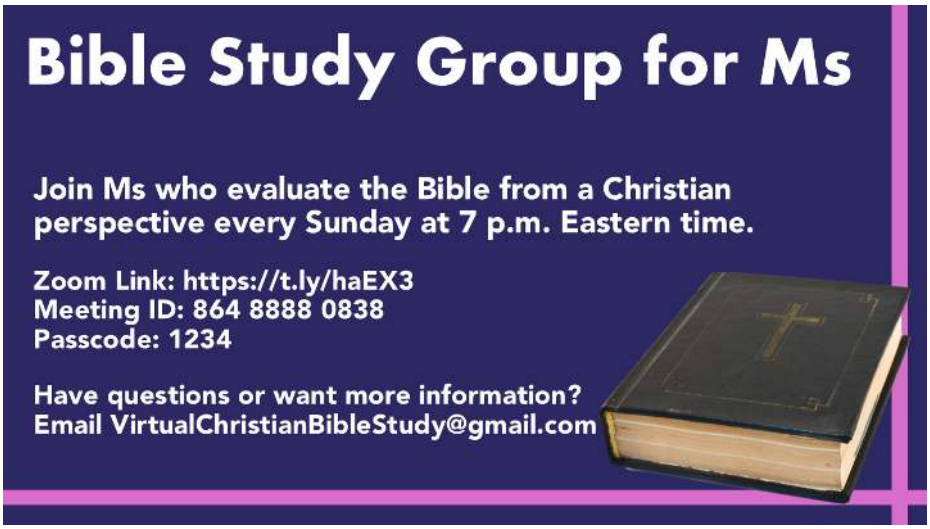
Our weekly lunch gathering continues to be well-attended, despite me not updating the calendar last issue (mea culpa). The North Richland Wrecking Crew (NRWC, as christened by Mark Mitchell) meets at 1:00 PM every Friday at one of seven venues. If one of our venues isn't available when it comes up in the rotation, we look for a new place to try.

If you have been on the fence about attending a Mensa function, the NWRC is a good place to get your feet wet. Most everyone is or has been an active member of Mensa, but we stress that both Mensans and non-Mensans are always welcome. The group is congenial and the conversation is always eclectic. Among the regulars are a couple of retired military NCOs, a retired cop, a few engineers, a physicist or two, and other STEM-type folks.

The NRWC table can be identified by looking for Percy the Owl, pictured at right.

Tim Dees maintains a mailing list sent each week, reminding everyone of that week's venue. If you would like to be added to the distribution list, send an email to treasurer@crm.us.mensa.org. The schedule for the next few weeks is below.

- March 21: Isla Bonita Mexican Restaurant, 1524 Jadwin Ave., Richland
- March 28: Lil' Moon Diner, 3790 W. Van Giesen, West Richland
- April 4: Shogun Teriyaki & Sushi, 760 Dalton St., Richland
- April 11: Ann's Best Creole & Soul Food, 1901 Terminal Dr., Richland
- April 18:: Baby J's, 2243 Stevens Dr., Richland
- April 25: Family Garden, 1340 Jadwin Ave., Richland
- May 2: Fresh Leaf, 1080 George Washington Way, Richland
- The rotation thereafter continues with Isla Bonita.



Too Smart to Be a Cop?

Tim Dees

Is it true that police departments won't hire people with high IQs? That happened once, and cops have been taking flak for it ever since.

In 1997, Robert Jordan tested to become an officer with the New London, Connecticut Police Department (NLPD). One of the test components was the Wonderlic, which happens to be one of the same tests Mensa uses to qualify candidates for membership. Jordan got a score of 33 on the Wonderlic. A 98th percentile, Mensa-grade score is about 39 on the standard Wonderlic forms. Mensa uses a proprietary form for testing.

The manual that came with the Wonderlic listed the typical scores for people in different professions. The typical police officer score was around 21. A score of 39 was well above the median for any of the professions listed in the manual. The people making the hiring decisions at the NLPD decided that Jordan would likely be bored with police work in a short time, and would leave the department before they had recouped their investment in training him. They turned him away.

When Jordan learned the reason he wasn't hired, he filed a lawsuit against the City of New London, claiming that the city had denied him equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and of Article 4, Section 20 of the Connecticut Constitution. Jordan lost both at trial and on appeal. The court held that there was a "rational basis for the policy" and no equal rights violation had taken place.

Jordan moved on and became a state correctional officer. He retired out of that career.

The press had a wonderful time with this story, as it allowed them to mock the police and make them appear inferior to people in other occupations, especially their own. And cops have been hearing about it ever since. Rather than check out the basis for the story, people are happy to believe that police applicants with high intelligence are rejected, leaving only the mediocre minds in the ranks.

Most police agencies are happy to get the brightest applicants they can find. The military and the police, recruiting from similar age cohorts, are having the same problems getting applicants. Only about 20% of that population segment meets the minimum qualifications. The rest are too fat, too out of shape, are habituated to stimulant drugs (some legal, some not) or marijuana, have criminal records, or lack basic educational skills. When someone walks in and pegs the meter on the written test, they become a valued commodity.

Police work does not require a genius intellect. Some of the best cops I know never did well in school, but had different types of "intelligence." One of my field training officers barely squeaked out of high school and probably had to look up the statute number for burglary every time he took a report on one. People, though, he knew. He would see a man walking down the street, moving away from us, a block away. "That's Joe Bloggs. I busted him two years ago in Idlewild Park when I caught him shooting heroin. He went to Wooster High and his sister is a nurse at St. Mary's. His dad was dying of throat cancer. He usually knows who is selling stolen property on the street. Let's go talk to him." He would be right, every time. I felt very fortunate to have him as a trainer. That's not the kind of intelligence you can test for.

I never had that kind of skill, but I did have a knack for statutes, case law, and other legal esoterica. It wasn't uncommon to get a call over the radio to switch to a car-to-car channel and be asked, "What's the NRS [Nevada Revised Statutes] for possession of a fake ID?" I could come back with "NRS 205.465." I did the same thing as a court bailiff when the judge wanted to amend a complaint.

continued next page

Reach

Judy Unger

My hand reached out to touch
But there was no one there
My hand reached out for warmth
But there was no warmth there
My hand reached out to show my love
But there was none to share
My hand stayed in hope
But hope just moved away

Bravely, tentatively now
My hand moved out again
My hand reached out to find another
But my hand was left alone
It waited, waited, waited
Perhaps there was still hope
But all hope moved away

Too Smart to Be a Cop?

(continued)

He asked me several times, “How do you do that?” I always had to say, “I have no idea.”

In police work, in the military, and in just about every other cooperative endeavor, recognizing, cultivating, and valuing special skill sets helps build the team and advances the mission. Sometimes those skills are borne out of native intelligence, sometimes out of tasks practiced for the 10,000 times Malcolm Gladwell says are necessary for mastery, and sometimes even the person who is good at that skill doesn’t know where the skill came from. When you find those people, treasure them and count your blessings.

By the way, of the 300 sworn officers who worked at the police department with me, two others were Mensa members. I knew of several others I’m pretty sure would have qualified. No one got screened out for being too smart.

Executive Committee Minutes
February 20, 2025

In attendance: Local Secretary – Bill Sheretz, Treasurer / Proctor / Newsletter Editor – Tim Dees, Member-at-Large, Bob Hunt.
Open positions: Program Chair, Publications Officer, Scholarship Chair
Call To Order at 7:15

ExComm Officer reports

LocSec: Columbia River Mensa Snapshot
Asst LocSec: absent
Treasurer: Treasurer's Report

As of February 20, 2025:
Checking: $ 8955.71
Cert. of Deposit: $ 2684.05
Expenses this year:
Newsletter printing and postage: 339.93

Review / Approve Treasurers report: Approved
Member-At-Large: Scrubbing membership list
Testing Chair: A test session is scheduled for Saturday, April 19, at the Mid-Columbia Library in Kennewick. Proctors-in-Training Bill Sheretz and Thomas Cleveland will have the opportunity to complete one of their required test observations. There was a motion to reimburse Thomas for mileage (he lives in Wenatchee) if he chooses to participate - Approved.

Actions Still in Effect (Old Business)

Conditionally reimburse test / prior evidence fee – only if the candidate joins CRM –
Approved at July 14, 2022 Excomm
Member Appreciation Dinner – March / April ?

New Business

AMC Brouhaha – publish all three (Dan Burg's letter, Michael Eager's letter & the link)
Strategic Plan – On hold
Our Gifted Youth transferred his membership to San Francisco Regional Mensa
March ***Chinook***
Leadership Development Workshop / Membership Meeting (March?)
Being on the ExComm isn't scary
Specific invitation to Millennials / Gen X via email
LocSec – will send out a poll soliciting activities
Barbecue?
Any other suggestions - Zoom events, in person events
For the good of the order
Adjourned: 7:45 PM

Submitted: *William C. Sheretz* February 20, 2025
Local Secretary – Columbia River Mensa

MENSA

Local Group Snapshot

As of 3/11/2025

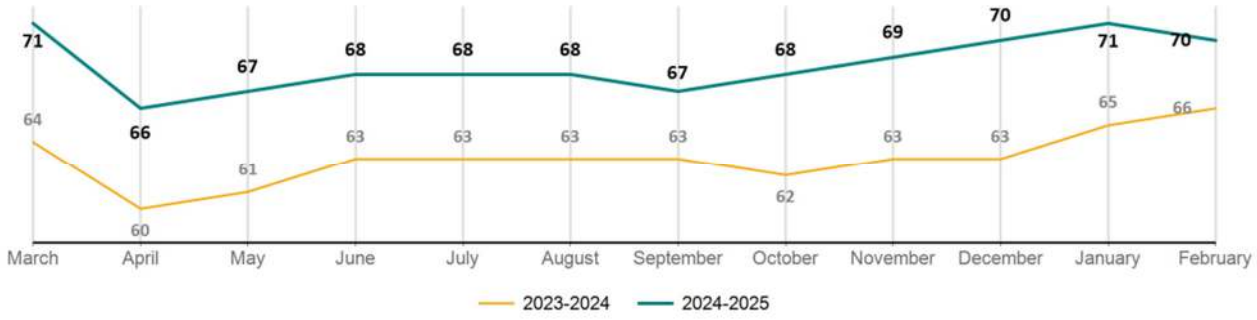
R08-989 Columbia River Mensa

Current Membership 70 **Current Year Lapsed** 0

Local Group Class V

Primary: 69 (98.57%)
Additional: 1 (1.43%)
Life: 19 (27.14%)

Local Secretary Bill C Sheretz (541)999-8718 sheretz@waypt.com



Newsletter Distribution

Print: 32 (45.71%)

Electronic: 38 (54.29%)

Newsletter Information, Twelve Month (Received / Uploaded to National website)

Oct 2024	no / no	**Jan 2025**	no / no	**Feb 2025**	no / no	**Apr 2024**	no / no
Dec 2024	yes / yes	**Sep 2024**	yes / yes	**Jun 2024**	yes / yes	**Mar 2024**	yes / yes
Jul 2024	no / no	**May 2024**	no / no	**Aug 2024**	no / no	**Nov 2024**	no / no

Website: https://crm.us.mensa.org



Columbia River Mensa Executive Committee (ExComm)

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Bob Hunt, Member-at-Large
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Columbia River Mensa is the chapter of American Mensa local to most of Eastern Washington. Mensa is an international society whose sole qualification for membership is a score in the top two percent of the general population on a standardized intelligence test. The word ”mensa ”translates to “table” in Latin. The name “Mensa” is reminiscent of “mind, table, month,” which suggests a monthly meeting of great minds around a table.

Mensa has three purposes, which are outlined in its constitution. They are:

1. To identify and foster human intelligence for the benefit of humanity.
2. To encourage research into the nature, characteristics and uses of intelligence.
3. To provide a stimulating intellectual and social environment for its members.

We’re on the Web!

http://crm.us.mensa.org

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