

THE WIRE



Volume 2, Issue 3

May/June 2012

From The RVC by Bob Cox

Travel can be expensive these days. To save you money, some major events have been lumped together this year. The Annual Gathering is in Reno Nevada July 4 - 8. Arrive a day early for the Colloquium on Social and Video Gaming. There is also a one day Leadership Summit for LocSecs and Asst. LocSecs on Sunday, July 8. For the Summit, registration is free. (You must be registered for the AG.) Lunch and evening Hospitality are provided. AML will pay for Sunday night accommodation.

Some more money saving news: the AG hotels are having financial difficulties and have reduced the room rates for some days at the AG. If you have booked at an earlier rate, you will get still get the lower rate.

One weekend in May, I visited two North Carolina groups, Triad Mensa and Mensa of Eastern North Carolina. In Triad, I had the pleasant privilege of presenting a plaque from the group to Ellen Muratori for all that she has done, and continues to do, for the vitality of the group.

South Coast Mensa held their election of officers and elected Dr. George Hartley as LocSec.

Seventeen students from our region are receiving scholarships ranging from \$300 to \$1,000 from the Mensa Foundation. Many of our Local Groups also give scholarships. The Foundation gives a scholarship for every group that takes part in the program. If you would be willing to be Scholarship Chair for your group for the coming year, please let your LocSec know. In the new year, the Chair will be looking for judges to read and score the essays. This is a great way to be involved with just an hour or two in a small group setting or even in your own home.

This will be your last newsletter if your membership expired and you failed to renew. Don't let that happen. You could miss out on so much that Mensa membership offers in your group, and on the larger scene. There are SIGs, publications, the Web, and so much more. Renew today. Enjoy Mensa.

SIGN UP AND GIVE SCHOLARSHIPS IN YOUR COMMUNITY! - Julie Boone

Each year, the Mensa Foundation awards tens of thousands of dollars in scholarships, based solely on written essays, to individuals attending universities and colleges around the country. Just last year, the Foundation gave scholarships totaling more than \$70,000. And each year, there are deserving students who are not eligible to receive scholarships because the Local Groups in their areas (more than 40 last year) may not have the time or volunteers to administer the program.

To ensure the widest reach for the scholarship program, the Foundation relies on Mensa volunteers at the local level. It's only through the dedication of these volunteers that the scholarship program is able to bring financial support and the Mensa name to hundreds of students around the country. If your group has never participated before, it's simple for you to change that; contact your LocSec and volunteer to be your Local Scholarship Chair! Then find a few local volunteers to help read the essays from students in your geographic area. The Mensa Foundation scholarship program accepts applications and essays between Sept. 15 and Jan. 15 every year. Local Scholarship Chairs are expected to review and score essays before Feb. 15.

LocSecs have until Aug. 1, 2012, to visit www.us.mensa.org/scholarshipsignup, agree to participate and designate their Local Scholarship Chairs for the coming year. For more details on the Mensa Foundation scholarship program, visit <http://www.mensafoundation.org/scholarships>.

Looking for contributions from Wiregrass Mensa members!

- ARTICLES
- PHOTOGRAPHS
- STORIES
- ALL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME!

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Inside this issue:

FROM THE RVC 1
By Bob Cox

SIGN UP AND GIVE SCHOLARSHIPS IN YOUR COMMUNITY!

KIDS SCORE BIG WITH MESA IN MAY 2

AG12 HOTELS LOWER RATES ON MESA ROOM BLOCKS

LOCAL NEWS 3

EDWIN MARTY AS GUEST SPEAKER

MORE LOCAL NEWS 4

FAREWELL....

NOT ALL HIGHLY INTELLIGENT PEOPLE ARE ARROGANT PRICKS 5
~ AMY SUNDBERG

THE WIRE

Kids score big with Mensa in May

~ Julie Boone



TIME TO RENEW
YOUR MENSA
MEMBERSHIP?
CONSIDER
BECOMING A
LIFETIME MEMBER!

MEMBERS CAN RENEW
ONLINE AT
WWW.US.MENSA.ORG/
RENEW OR BY CALLING
888/294-8035 EXT. 199
TOLL FREE DURING
REGULAR BUSINESS
HOURS. OUR MEMBER
SERVICES TEAM STANDS
READY TO ASSIST!

Know anyone who's looking for something new to explore this summer? American Mensa is running a special promotion in an effort to maximize the impact of all the recent international media attention on Mensa's youngest members. Just in time for the end of the school year, kids (of all ages) can qualify for Mensa membership for free through the end of May. All they need is a qualifying test score from one of more than 200 standardized intelligence tests; many students have taken one or more of these at school and are often not aware of it. They can view a partial list of accepted tests and scores (for kids, adults, military, etc.) at <http://www.us.mensa.org/testscores>.

To get their scores evaluated at no charge, applicants should complete and return the Mensa membership application (<http://www.us.mensa.org/application>) before 11:59 p.m., Central, on Thursday, May 31, and put "May PE" in the "Name of Special Promotion" box.

AG12 hotels lower the rates on Mensa room blocks

The AG12 Committee has been advised by Circus Circus Reno that it will soon offer reduced Internet room rates during the dates of the Annual Gathering, July 4-8. The Sunday-Thursday room rate will be lowered to \$45 plus \$9 in fees and taxes. Because the hotel has 1,400 rooms to fill – and Reno properties vie for midweek bookings – the committee's impression is that this sale will continue until all rooms are filled, probably right up until the AG.

If you are registering for the Annual Gathering and are making your room reservation – or moving from one hotel to another – please be aware of the following:

- Internet "deals" have small print. Pay special attention to the "city fee" and the "resort fees" that are added when booked with an Internet code but are, however, contractually waived when booked with the Mensa code. Additionally, many properties have a non-refundable first night charge put through at the time of booking.
- The AG has reserved all meeting space in both the Silver Legacy and Circus Circus. Most of the AG programming will be in the Silver Legacy, which has more space available; kids' and teen programming is planned in Circus Circus, along with the Debate Room and a few other overflow functions.

The AG12 contracts were negotiated and signed in 2007 and 2008, well before the recent economic downturn. The hotels are doing what they deem best given today's economy, and AG attendees are benefiting greatly. Your registration fee includes four Continental breakfasts, two lunches, three dinners, full snacks and beverages (including beer and wine); additionally, the AG's three-meal package is a terrific value.

This is a great opportunity to arrive early and stay late with your savings! Why not plan to come in a day early and enjoy a special pre-AG event? On Tuesday, July 3, you have your choice of Colloquium 2012.2: "Social and Video Games and Why We Play Them" or "Mensa on Steam!", the chartered steampunk/OldWest train trip to historic Virginia City. Get more information in the Tours section at <http://www.ag.us.mensa.org>.

It's shaping up to be the most outstandingly valued AG in the past two decades! Get more information and register today at <http://www.ag.us.mensa.org>. ~ Howard Prince



Volume 2, Issue 3

LOCAL NEWS

Wiregrass Mensa will be meeting this Saturday night, May 26 at 6:00 pm, at the Asia Bistro in Montgomery on Vaughn Road near the intersection of Taylor Road. Please come!

We are planning to combine the May/June group meeting and the July/August for a summer break. Hopefully, during our July/August meeting we will be having a special speaker, Edwin Marty, with the Hampstead Institute. He will have available and will be signing copies of his new book *Breaking Through Concrete*.

More information will be coming soon.

EDWIN MARTY WITH THE HAMPSTEAD INSTITUTE AS GUEST SPEAKER

Edwin Marty is currently director of the Hampstead Institute in Montgomery, Alabama. Before returning to his home of Alabama to start urban farms in Birmingham and Montgomery, Edwin earned a BA in Anthropology from the University of Oregon and completed an "Apprenticeship in Agroecology" from the University of California, Santa Cruz. He went on from UC Santa Cruz to work on sustainable farm projects around the world, including Mexico, Mongolia, Australia, and Chile. He also worked as an instructor for the Outward Bound School for four years in Northern Washington.

Returning to Birmingham in 2001, Edwin worked for Southern Living Magazine as a Garden Writer while establishing Jones Valley Urban Farm. In 2006, Edwin left Southern Living to begin working as the full-time Director of Jones Valley Urban Farm. Since then, the farm has grown to include over 28 acres of urban farm land, employs twenty people and teaches thousands of youth every year about growing and eating good food. He has also consulted on numerous urban farm projects around the country, including work with the American Institute of Architects Sustainable Design Assessment Team project in Detroit, MI. He has recently completed a book about urban farming in America called *Breaking Through Concrete*, to be published by the University of California Press in the winter of 2011.

In 2011 Edwin resigned as the Director of Jones Valley Urban Farm and accepted a new position with the Hampstead Institute in Montgomery, Alabama. Edwin will be assisting with the development of a two acre farm in downtown Montgomery, youth education programs, and the development of a state-wide food policy council. He will also be working as a consultant to assist communities throughout the country in developing sustainable food systems. Edwin is married to the mixed-media artist Andrea Buchanan Marty and has a two year old daughter named Edie Rains. They have a dog named Rooster.



Edwin Marty teaching chicken care to the Montessori School at Hampstead elementary classes at the Hampstead community farm on Taylor Road in February.



When you need to travel, now you know where to start. Enjoy your trips!

www.us.mensa.org/travel

BE SURE TO LET
YOUR FRIENDS
KNOW NOW IS
A GREAT TIME TO
BECOME A
MEMBER OF
MENSA!

THE WIRE

UPCOMING WIREGRASS EVENTS

May 26th
AT 6:00
ASIA BISTRO,
MONTGOMERY, AL

Our April
meeting at the
Golden Crane
in Troy, AL



We were glad to see Amy Hightower joining Brandon and Charles!

July/August
Meeting—speaker
Edwin Marty
Details will be
announced later

THE END OF
TIME ANNUAL
GATHERING

JULY 4—8
IN RENO, NV



Welcome to Larry and Ann Milana

Farewell....

It is my sad duty to report that John Paul Leofsky, 56, a resident of Montgomery, AL, passed away Saturday, May 19, 2012. A Memorial Service was held at Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Montgomery on Tuesday, May 22, 2012.

John was a very active member of the Montgomery - Wiregrass Mensa Group in the 1990-1998 time period. He was a regular at the Wednesday lunch meetings and the once-a-month movie at the Capri Theater in Montgomery. He frequently attended the monthly meeting as well.

Les Lester Holmes

Volume 2, Issue 3

Not All Highly Intelligent People Are Arrogant Pricks April 24, 2012 by Amy Sundberg

Someone made a rather plaintive comment in [this Google+ conversation](#), and it's been stuck in my mind ever since: "So, again, what is the point of being smart if it does nothing for you? If you really are so smart, why can't you get what you want?"

There are so many myths floating around about being smart and what that might mean. Even defining "smart" is full of pitfalls. I realized when I tackled the subject of intelligence a few weeks ago that it was a bit taboo, but I didn't realize the full extent of it until I was reading other people's reactions. So of course I had to write a follow-up.

A Few Intelligence Myths Exploded:

What is the point of being smart? There is no intrinsic point. It is not something you choose for yourself, just as you can't choose to be naturally athletic or flexible or have perfect pitch (although I keep hearing rumors there are ways to train this) or be gifted with languages. There are things you can do to take advantage of any of these things (hard work and training), but not everyone will choose to use these skills or have the opportunities to do so. In the same vein, recent studies suggest it is quite possible to [train](#) yourself to be [smarter](#) if you are interested in doing so.

Smart people can get what they want. Ha! I wish. I don't know if any studies have been done on this subject, but I haven't read anything about how smart people are so much more happy than less smart people. Plus, what if a smart person wants something that requires additional skills besides just being smart (and most accomplishments do require additional skills)? And what if said smart person doesn't have the right additional skills and fails (for whatever reason) to develop them? Or what if the smart person in question is on track to get what she wants and then is deterred by any of a host of reasons, including ill health (either hers or a loved one's), economic realities, or her background? Or what if the smart person *does* get what she wants and it just doesn't look like the societal norm?

Smart people look down on those who they perceive as less smart. First off, I [mentioned before](#) that many genius-level people (and perhaps particularly women) suffer from impostor syndrome, meaning they don't believe they are as smart as they are. Secondly, I also mentioned [the Dunning-Kruger effect](#) and [the false consensus effect](#) back in March: the idea that people who are above average (including having above average intelligence) tend to assume everyone is just the same as they are unless presented with quite explicit proof to the contrary, thereby often underestimating their own intelligence. How all these people who don't even realize how intelligent they really are can be looking down on everyone else is beyond me.

Secondly, even if they do realize they are intelligent, that still doesn't mean they feel superior. Sure, there are a few people who do, but just because you are smart does not mean you are automatically arrogant and non-appreciative of other people's abilities. Which leads me to my next point...

A specific kind of intelligence is more important than anything else. Um, no. There are many kinds of intelligence, and basic IQ test-measured smarts are no more useful than a host of other mental attributes. These include emotional intelligence, charisma, experience, wisdom, empathy and insight, kindness, courage, determination, a strong work ethic, and leadership skills. For example, if a very intelligent person wants to complete a difficult project but is not willing to work hard to do so, they probably won't do as well as someone who isn't quite as intelligent but is willing to work her ass off. Ultimately what matters about our lives is what we choose to do with them, not whatever set of attributes we start out with. Intelligent people who realize the truth of this aren't likely to be very arrogant at all.

Any other intelligence myths you can think of? (Besides the whole "women aren't as intelligent" thing we already talked about.) I'd love to hear from you.

Thanks for posting this blog on the Wiregrass Mensa Facebook page, Laurel Akin!

LETTUCE WRAPS



Asia Bistro has great lettuce wraps!

BE SURE TO
SEND ME
PHOTOS,
ARTICLES,
STORIES AND
OTHER THINGS
FOR OUR
NEWSLETTER!

BARBARA