



DelaMensa

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Steve's Corner

By Steve Michel

The world has been in direct competition with each other. No, I don't mean in manufacturing or, worse, war. I'm talking about the Olympics. Living vicariously through the efforts of others. Remembering what it was like to be able to even think about being able to accomplish some of those feats (for most of us, at least). Wondering if someone "my age" can do that. Thinking that it is time to get back to exercising. Realizing how much the Olympics are making me tired – from staying up so late to watch them! Thank goodness for the DVR. Personally, I haven't looked at a news website in a week because the last time I did, I was shown a spoiler of (something like) "U.S. wins gold in _____." Oh great, thanks – now I don't have to watch it tonight. Appreciate that...

And with all that going on, I'm reminded that the next Regional Gathering (RG) is that much closer. For more details and continuous updates, refer to the dedicated RG page on the DEM website.

As another reminder, this year is an election year. We still don't have an election chair, so if you are interested, please contact me or any other member of the ExComm (addresses are contained in the newsletter or on the website). The requirements of the election chair are to gather the ballots (both paper and electronic), tally the votes, and report the results.

All offices are open for nominations. You may nominate yourself to run for an office. What offices are available? All of them: Local Secretary (aka Chairperson), Assistant Local Secretary (aka First Councilor), Membership Chair (aka Second Councilor) and Treasurer (aka ... Treasurer).

Directory of Local Officers

LocSec	Steve Michel	302 832-2665	sdm1177@yahoo.com
1st Councilor	Cindi Era	302-898-0093	lightintheclouds15@yahoo.com
2nd Councilor			
Treasurer	Dee Richardson	302-892-2299	busydeec@comcast.net
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Downstate Coord	Duke Brooks	302-727-9868	dukebrooksled@gmail.com
Editor	Keith Johnson	302-242-8201	keith.johnson@hughes.net
RVC-2	Marc Lederman	717-308-1221	RVC2@us.mensa.org

Three of the four current office holders are planning on running for the same or a different office – but don't let that dissuade you from running for an office if you are interested.

We are expecting to include a revised copy of the DEM by-laws to be included with the election ballots go out, They are still being finalized and need the blessing from National before they are put up for vote.

Our relatively new Downstate Coordinator – Duke – is starting to plan some activities downstate. These events are open to all members and guests (when permitted / appropriate). In August, there is a DAFB tour planned. Details are on the DEM events page.

As always, just a reminder that if you have any ideas for an event, please contact a member of the ExComm.

Enjoy the rest of the Olympics and try to stay cool during this summer heat we've been experiencing.

Next Month - Regional Gathering

Delaware Mensa will hold its sixth annual Regional Gathering 21 to 23 September. Time is running out to get a room at the RG hotel, Crowne Plaza in Claymont. The hotel has wireless internet, Continental breakfast, refrigerator and microwave in the room, and a pool and fitness center available.

Time is running out, too, to register for the RG before the price goes up -- the theme this year is Music, Music, Mu-

sic. We have two musical acts, karaoke, and seminars during the day. Then there is hospitality with plenty of snacks, drinks, and socializing.

Come on out and join us. New hotel, with great facilities, here in little old Delaware.

Please visit our Web site at <http://delaware.us.mensa.org/index.htm> for updates

Delaware Mensa Calendar

Grab your personal calendar and write down some events!

- Wed, Sept 5 6 to 8 pm, Games Night, at Traders Cove, Penn's Place, 206 Delaware St, Old New Castle. [Not a Mensa event] **First Wednesday of each month.** Bring a game, or just join the group. For info, e-mail Maria at legalady@magpage.com or call 302-893-5118.
- Tues, Sept 11 [NEW DAY] 6 to 8 pm, Happy Hour/ NTN Trivia Night at [Stewart's Brew Pub](#), Governor's Square, Route 40, Bear. **Now the Second Tuesday of each month.** For info or to RSVP, e-mail Steve at sdm1177@yahoo.com or call (302) 832-2665.
- Mon, Sept 10 11:30—? Second Monday Lunch Bunch –New Location– Purebread Deli in Greenville, north of Wilmington on Rt 52, for lunch and stimulating conversation. Info: Dee Richardson at 302-892-2299
- Sept 21-23 Starting 3 PM Friday, Delaware Mensa Regional Gathering, Crowne Plaza hotel, Claymont DE. See page 5 for more info.

Your event here!!

DM

WHAT Are You Reading?

I recently finished reading ***Pride and Prejudice and Zombies***, by Jane Austen.

The publisher presents this as the original version, before government censors forced Ms Austen to remove mention of zombies to protect more sensitive readers. The text of the two books is at least 90 percent identical, and the underlying themes

of human emotion overcoming artificial class barriers are untouched, but I found the version with zombies to be much more readable.

Compare the opening sentences: "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife." versus "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a zombie in possession of brains must be in want of more brains." Although both versions are written in a style more popular in the days before literature competed with movies, television, internet and social media, I think it is obvious which one will more likely hold a readers interest.

While it is an open question which version is closest to the original manuscript, the ongoing war on zombies in England provides a much better explanation of the quartering of militia troops in Meryton than anything presented in the traditional version.

(SPOILER ALERT) The principle protagonist, Elizabeth Bennett, still has a painfully winding path to follow to her eventual love for Mr. Darcy. The fight scene resulting from his first proposal of marriage is reminiscent of movies of the Errol Flynn/Douglas Fairbanks era of swashbuckling epics. Elizabeth's verbal conflict with Lady Catherine over her budding relationship with Darcy becomes physical, resulting in the death of several Ninja bodyguards and



Elizabeth with a knife at the throat of a helpless Lady Catherine.

Overall, it is an interesting study in how the changing of a few words has altered the content of a well known book, and how it can affect the interest to an audience with other potential entertainments.

Marc My Words

by Marc Lederman, Region 2 RVC

Congratulations to Donna Campbell, the Gifted Children's Coordinator from Metropolitan Washington Mensa (MWM). Donna was awarded a Gifted Children Coordinator Award at the Annual Gathering in Reno.

Two teams from our region finished in the top 20 in the annual CultureQuest® competition. The Gordian Knots, captained by Stephanie Smilay from MWM, finished in 4th place. The Carbon-Based Life Forms, captained by Elaine Broday from Delaware Valley Mensa, finished in 18th place. Both teams won money for their chapter scholarship funds. I'd like to thank all the teams from our region who entered the competition.

The next big event in our region will be Delaware Mensa's sixth annual Regional Gathering (RG) from September 21 - 23, at the Crowne Plaza Hotels & Resorts in Claymont, Delaware. Their theme is Music, Music, Music! Please check out their website <http://delaware.us.mensa.org/rg12.htm> for more information on this event.

The AMC meets in Texas September 7 & 8. You will find the agenda on the AML website, at <http://www.us.mensa.org/meetingreports>, and then select the 2012-09 meeting from the dropdown menu. This meeting is expected to include a motion to change the dues rate for the next membership year. I look forward to hearing comments on that, and other, motions from our members.

Celebrations

A Happy Birthday to these Mensans :

Name	Birthday
Carl G Moore Jr	2-Aug
Helen Ohlson	5-Aug
Martha P Lankford	9-Aug
George Edward Majors	10-Aug
David A Bailey	17-Aug
Lauren A McMillan	20-Aug
Chris A Quintanilla	21-Aug
Terri Eros	22-Aug
Robert C Auer Jr	23-Aug
Thomas R Keane	28-Aug
David Moak	29-Aug
Bettymae Berry Doyle	30-Aug
Jeffrey 'Thom' Hawkins	3-Sep
Roy V Jackson	4-Sep
William F Bialk	12-Sep
Joseph E Berry	13-Sep
Henry Milligan	16-Sep
Karl Boettcher	17-Sep
Paul G Stitik II	17-Sep
Anthony Eros	20-Sep
James E Bradley	21-Sep
Lorelei Hunt	22-Sep
Gerald E Lenis	22-Sep
Richard Joseph Hartland	23-Sep
David Lee Sechler	26-Sep
Frederick W Bryner	27-Sep

(And also to those who don't wish to have their birthdays published)

Congratulations, and a Happy Mensaversary to these members who celebrate their Mensa anniversary this month:

Name	Years membership:
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August Anniversaries:

Alan Charles Emsley	32
Steven M Allison	13
Walter Crowe	8
Richard Schneider	7
Karen Kinkel	4
Lloyd A Teitsworth Jr	4
Joseph McCain	2
Richard T Dillard	31
Maria Aprile Sawczuk	13

September Anniversaries:

Jodi L Walker	9
Jacob Weyer	7
Nicole Perefegé	7
Susan Irwin	3
Daniel Fried	3
Deborah Munson	2
Shirin Skovronski	2
Douglas Alan Hyde	1
Pamela Lee Hyde	1

The Easter Island "Heads" Have Bodies

by **Chris Higgins**

Maybe this isn't a newsflash to anyone but me, but, um, **the Moai "heads" on Easter Island have bodies.** Because some of the statues are set deep into the ground, and because the heads on the statues are disproportionately large, many people (myself included) tend to think of them as just big heads. But the bodies (generally not including legs, though there is at least one kneeling statue) are there — in many cases, underground. What's even more interesting — there are petroglyphs (rock markings) that have been preserved below the soil level, where they have been protected from erosion. [This research report](#) has been making the rounds; it discusses recent progress by The Easter Island Statue Project (EISP) to uncover, study, and catalogue two statues. It includes (among the dry details of the research) a day-by-day journal of the work, as well as remarkable photographs showing the petroglyphs and team members excavating. Above is an image from a previous excavation (source unknown) that shows you the scale of the statues, and how deep they were buried. (Note: visitors are prohibited from climbing on

the Moai; the expedition pictured above appears to pre-date the EISP and the current practice of conservation.)

For more on the Easter Island statues, read [more about the EISP](#), read their [extensive research reports](#), and check out the [Wikipedia page on Moai](#) (which also discusses the fairly well-known fact that many of the statues [used to have hats](#) or possibly top-knots, known as *pukao*). Also interesting is the [back story](#) of archaeology on Easter Island (also known as Rapa Nui); apparently the island has been the subject of archaeological research for 119 years.



photo from Thor Heyerdahl's book *Easter Island: The Mystery Solved*.

(from Mental Floss.com)

Does wedding rice really make birds explode?

Throwing rice at a newly married couple has been a tradition for thousands of years, possibly going back as far as the ancient Assyrians and Egyptians. The idea is to give the newlyweds good luck, fertility, and abundance using this symbol of a good crop. More recently, wedding meddlers have cautioned against throwing rice because it can kill birds who swoop down and eat it after the human revelers have left for the reception. The rice grains, absorbent as they are, supposedly start sucking up water in the birds' moist innards and cause them to violently burst.

It's not clear where this idea came from, but wherever it came from, you can quit worrying about the birds. The reality is that rice poses no harm to them. Wild birds eat uncooked rice all the time with no ill effects. Many types of waterfowl, shorebirds, and migratory birds depend on flooded rice fields to maintain fat in the winter. A bird called the bobolink eats enough rice that it's considered a pest by farmers and has earned the nickname "ricebird."

Besides the numerous birds that regularly eat rice and don't explode, another thing to consider is the fact that dried rice grains are pretty slow to absorb liquid unless it's boiling, which birds' stomachs certainly aren't. Their internal temperatures generally range from 100.4 to 107.6 degrees F, well below the boiling point of any liquid that would be inside them. Even if birds did have boiling guts, any uncooked rice they consumed would be broken down well enough by their crops and gizzards that the pieces shouldn't cause any problems as they expand.

That's theory, but how about an experiment?

That's what James Krupa's students at the University of Kentucky thought. During the spring 2002 semester, Krupa and his 600 biology students decided to test the exploding bird myth with a series of experiments. They looked at the expansion of different types of grains, considered the

strength of birds' digestive organs, and tested an all-rice diet out on the professor's pet birds.

The first notable thing they found was that white rice increased in volume by 33% when soaked, while bird seed expanded by 40%. If rice was going to make birds explode, then we'd already doomed them anyway with bird-feeders full of seed. More expansion was seen in instant rice, which expanded 2.4 to 2.7 times its original volume when soaked. Of course, it is less likely anyone would throw instant rice at weddings.

But what if they did? To see if instant rice could burst a bird from the inside out, Krupa and his students built model bird crops from very thin plastic and from wet paper bags, and filled them with various grains and water. None of the plastic crops exploded, but a paper bag filled with instant white rice expanded and ruptured in about 15 minutes.

Not satisfied with their bird-gut surrogates, the students begged Krupa to test the rice out on real birds. Krupa felt confident enough that no birds would be harmed based on their previous results, so he agreed to turn the flocks of doves and pigeons he kept at home into guinea pigs. He fed 60 of his birds a diet of nothing but instant rice and water for a day, and monitored them for signs of distress or discomfort. Krupa reported that no birds choked, exploded, or otherwise were injured or died. None of them threw up or even showed any sign that they were in pain; they went through their all-rice day with no problems.

Birds, it seems, have no problem with rice, but this doesn't mean that it's perfectly safe to throw at weddings. The fear of slip and fall injuries and the lawsuits that go with them have led some wedding venues to ban rice—not for the birds, but to keep themselves out of court.

(from Mental Floss.com)

What makes Fancy Ketchup so fancy?

By Matt Soniak -

Consider the following ingredient lists:

McDonald's Fancy Ketchup: Tomato concentrate from red ripe tomatoes, distilled vinegar, high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, water, salt, natural flavors (vegetable source).

Heinz: Tomato concentrate from red ripe tomatoes, distilled vinegar, high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, salt, spice, onion powder, natural flavoring.

Hunt's: Tomato concentrate made from vine ripened tomatoes, high fructose corn syrup, distilled vinegar, corn syrup, salt, less than 2% of onion powder, garlic Powder, natural flavors.

Although the ingredient proportions differ slightly and the spice blends aren't identical, all three of these ketchups are pretty much the same. So what makes the McDonald's ketchup fancier than the others?

Turns out, it's nothing special on the ingredient list. According to Heinz, "**fancy**" is simply a **USDA designation that producers are allowed to use for marketing if their product meets the standards of US Grade A/US Fancy tomato ketchup**, which possesses a better color, consistency and flavor, and has fewer specks and particles and less separation of the liquid/solid contents than US Grade B/US Extra Standard Ketchup and US Grade C/US Standard Ketchup.

What goes into ketchup grading? Testers look for a lack of tomato skin and seeds in the product, a smooth, uniform texture and a total acidity over one percent, among other things. For a thorough explanation of what all goes into ketchup grading, see this USDA manual at

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRD3105648>

(from Mental Floss.com)



Music, Music, Music

Delaware Mensa's Sixth Annual RG

September 21 to 23, 2012

*A long long time ago, I can still remember how
That music used to make me smile
And I knew if I had my chance,
That I could make those people dance
And maybe they'd be happy for a while*

But, ... you know, you will have that chance, when we have Karaoke on Saturday. And if you don't feel the need to sing, maybe you'd enjoy listening to some music - Todd Chapelle is coming back Friday night- or talking about music, or talking about listening to music. All of that stuff, plus food, yeah, food like you've never seen before (unless you go to Mensa RGs a lot.) And games, and old friends, and new friends. How could you even think of missing this gathering, and it's in a new location, too.

And we'll be singing: Bye bye Miss American Pie ... oh, and there will be pie too – cant miss this one!

Sixth Annual Regional Gathering
Claymont, Delaware
September 21-23 2012

RG Registration fees:

- ◆ Up to and including August 31: \$60 (Sat only \$50)
 - ◆ Through the event and at the door: \$70 (Sat only \$60)
- Rooms include:
- ⇒ Free wireless internet
 - ⇒ Free Continental Breakfast
 - ⇒ Refrigerator, microwave and coffee maker in all rooms
 - ⇒ Pool, fitness center
 - ⇒ Handicap Accessible rooms available

NEW LOCATION:

(Make your room reservation separately—Tell them you're with Delaware Mensa!!!)

**Crowne Plaza -
Claymont DE**
630 Naamans Rd
Claymont, DE 19703
302-792-2700

Rooms are \$89

Pictures may be taken during the RG. If you choose to not have your picture taken, please inform any person with a camera.

-----Detach and send with registration-----

Make checks payable to: Delaware Mensa. **Send registration form and checks to:** Dee Richardson, 3101 Duncan Road, Wilmington DE 19808
For more information, or to register online, go to www.delaware.us.mensa.org/rg12.htm !

Name: _____ Local Group: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Number of people registering: _____ Amount included: _____

Name(s) on badge(s): _____

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

This newsletter is sent to members of Delaware Mensa each month (more or less), but is also going out to prospective members who have qualified for membership. If you are one of those prospective members, allow me to add another invitation to you to join Mensa. The organization is both big and small, you can enjoy it at whatever level suits you.

SEPTEMBER 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
						1	
					Full Moon		
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
			Games Night at Trader's Cove				
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
	Lunch Bunch	Happy Hour/NTN Trivia Night-Bear				New Moon	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
					DELAWARE RG 2012		
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
DE RG 2012	DelaMensa Deadline						
30			Games Night at Trader's Cove				
DelaMensa			6	August/September 2012			