



Boston's Beacon

Volume 40, Issue 4

April 2016

You're Invited!

*Boston Mensa's New/Old Member
Meet and Greet Potluck*

**Saturday, April 16th at 6 p.m.
Rick Kovalcik's House in Newton**

This is a great opportunity for new members to meet other members from around the state in a casual atmosphere at the home of Rick Kovalcik in Newton Centre. This is three short blocks from the Newton Centre stop on the D / Riverside Branch of the MBTA Green line. There is also plenty of on street parking.

We are planning on all the usual Mensa activities: good conversation, good food, and good drinks. Hopefully the spring weather will cooperate and people will be able to enjoy the screened-in porch. But even if the weather doesn't cooperate, the house is plenty big enough for a great party. There are three cats in residence who will probably be hiding. We'll provide some delicacies, wine, beer, and soft drinks.

Please bring an interesting food item to share for the Potluck Dinner and anything special you wish to drink.

RSVPs (on Meetup or to kovalcik@alum.mit.edu) with what you're bringing are appreciated but not required.

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MensaMeyer@aol.com 508-829-6700

Asst LocSec: Wendy Birchmire

wab@birchmire.com 781-444-8213

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rk@mit.edu 617-244-4590

Member at Large: Dennis Higbee

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Member at Large: *vacant*

Member at Large: Gary Schwartz

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S. of Boston Area Coord.:

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This month's **Beacon Proofer**s: ExComm, Jayne Rossetti, Dave Rutherford, Jean Ahearn, Bobbi Carr, and Chris Sullivan. [Please email the Managing Editor (editor@bostonmensa.org) if you would like to proof the *Beacon*.]

Local Publisher: Lynn MacDonald; 17 Eskimo Way, N. Billerica, MA 01862

Please send any Classified Ads for the *Beacon* to editor@bostonmensa.org.

Printed by **Francis Vigeant, Salem, MA**

From the LocSec

by Ed Meyer

Rick Kovalcik will be hosting our annual New / Old Member Meet and Greet party at his home in Newton Centre, MA at 6:00pm on Saturday evening April 16, 2016. This is a great opportunity for new members to come out and meet their fellow Mensans. Look for details and directions in this edition of the *Beacon*. BTW, we would like to thank Rick for again being Boston's chair for Mensa's annual scholarship contest.

Boston Mensa's Cape Cod Mini-RG is coming up May 6-8, 2016. Register online at: <http://cape.bostonmensa.org>. For all you "Phantom Ms" out there, our Mini-RG is a great place (especially for new members) to come out and meet your fellow Mensans in a relaxed social setting. See this month's *Beacon* page 7 regarding hotel reservations.

At our February 22, 2016 Executive Committee meeting we unanimously appointed Jayne Rossetti and Rob Granville to co-chair our 2016 election committee. Sonia Verrochi was also appointed to serve on the committee. If you have questions concerning our elections, please contact Jayne at: Jayne.r@verizon.net (See election requirements under Section 7 of our bylaws at: <http://boston.us.mensa.org/chapterdocs/Boston-MensaByLaws.pdf>) Reminder: This year, after serving for six years as your LocSec team, Wendy Birchmire and I will be stepping down and not running for re-election.

Karen & Otto Kunz will be hosting the 29th annual Spring Fling at the Ugly Fox Lounge party at their home in Shrewsbury, MA at 7:00pm on Friday June 17th. Please see the Kunz's announcement with information and directions for this very popular social event in this edition of the *Beacon*. Note: We believe this may also be their 175th published event(!). Karen & Otto, thank you for all you do for Boston Mensa!

March was Mensa membership renewal month. The Mensa membership year begins April 1st and ends March 31st of the following year. Per our bylaws, if you have not renewed your membership you will be removed from our newsletter distribution list and you will also be removed from our Facebook and Meetup sites. You can renew online at us.mensa.org/renew or by calling 1-888-294-8035 ext. 199 during regular business hours. You can also update your payment information at us.mensa.org/profile.

Beacon editors Ben & Patti McCarty, have asked that members send in any pictures and/or articles you'd like considered for the *Beacon*. Suggestions for improving our newsletter are also welcome. Send submissions to: editor@bostonmensa.org. Suggestions for changes may be sent to the editors or to any member of the ExComm.



Region 1 Roundup

by Lisa Maxwell

News from National:

The March 19, 2016 AMC (board) meeting covered a number of important topics and issues, among them discussion and approval of the 2016-17 budget, updates to AML's (American Mensa Ltd.) strategic plan, changes to the national publications guidelines, as well as discussions and updates on a variety of topics.

Did you know that national elected and appointed representatives and committee chairs post their quarterly report prior to each scheduled AMC meeting? All AMC meeting agendas, minutes and quarterly reports can be found here: <http://www.us.mensa.org/lead/amc/meeting-reports/>

If you are reading this, then you renewed your membership - thank you! Please remind your friends who may have missed the March 31st renewal date that it's not too late to rejoin.

National events:

CultureQuest® will be held on Sunday May 1st. A team trivia competition, its intent has always been to promote and test cultural literacy. Facing questions that range from film to politics, from literature to geography, from music to history and farther afield, Mensan teams of up to five members gather in their neighborhoods on a single day across the U.S. and Canada and, for 90 minutes, compete for cash prizes and cultural literacy bragging rights. For more information go to: <http://www.us.mensa.org/attend/culturequest/>

Chicago Area Mensa will host the annual Mind Games® competition April 15-17, 2016. Mind Games is one of the leading board game showcase competitions in the United States and attracts Mensa members from across the globe. For details: <http://mensamindgames.com/>

Regional news:

Want to know more about what your elected/appointed regional and national officers do? Contact me with your questions, concerns, issues, or just to say thanks for being a volunteer. And by the way - thank YOU to those of you who volunteer in your chapters.

I personally want to thank our Region1 Assistant RVC Bill Zigo (Ziggy) for all he does. Our region is large and diverse; having him on our regional team has been a great help. Want to join the team? We'd love your help in promoting activities, assisting local groups as needed, and helping to keep Region 1 vibrant and fun.

Just a reminder... Upcoming Region 1 events:

May 6-8 is Boston Mensa's Cape Cod Mini-RG. To register: <http://cape.bostonmensa.org/>

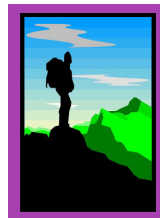
May 20-22 is Maine Mensa's "The Best <Fun&Games> mini-RG - EVAH!" To register, call/text (207)577-6362 or email durhamme@yahoo.com.

This month's question for you... What one thing would you suggest to your local/

regional/national Mensa representatives that you feel would greatly improve our collective experience as members of the organization?

What other information would you like to see in this column? Let me know...

Lisa Maxwell; 617-335-1484; RVC1@us.mensa.org



Spring Mountain Climb May 20 – 22, 2016 North Conway, N.H.



New England has wonderful mountains, enjoyable seashores, and lively cities. New England also has Mensa! This spring, come on up and enjoy both hiking and Mensa, at that wonderful time when the snow has (finally!) gone, the bugs have not yet arrived, the days are long, and the weather is wonderful!

We will be once again at David Heimann's ski club lodge, Skiwheelers Ski Club in North Conway, NH (see www.skiwheelers.org for further information). The lodge is a lovely 19th century building, originally built as an inn. In the 1970s it was used as the location for the movie *Return of the Secaucus Seven*. It is close enough to the center of North Conway to be easily accessible to all the shops and activities there, yet far enough away to enjoy the peace and quiet of the woods, trees, and country roads.

The weekend is low-key and basically unstructured. The one planned activity is; you guessed it, hiking! Depending on preference, we can go to a mountain peak or other desination worthy of a good day hike, or take a couple of hours over easy terrain to reach a viewpoint, waterfall, or other point of interest. Of course, one can also do more relaxing activities such as a short walk or drive, some shopping (North Conway has a few places!), or hanging around the lodge (there's a TV, pool table, piano, books, games, and videos).

The weekend includes two nights' accommodations, two full breakfasts, Saturday dinner, and snacks and soft drinks (BYOB for anything stronger), for just \$70 per person. Registrations without accommodations are \$35 (North Conway has various hotels and lodgings, as well as some good nightspots).

We generally pick out the hikes on Friday night, and leave right after Saturday breakfast (around 9:30 or so), stopping at a store on the way to the trail for people to buy sandwiches and the like for lunch.

To sign up and reserve a place, send a check for \$70 per person to David Heimann, 65 Cornwall St. #206, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130. You'll receive confirmation and directions to the lodge by return mail, email, or phone call. If you need more information, call David at (617) 524-4531, email him at heimann.david@gmail.com, or call Bob & Brendy Horn at (781) 843-5581.

So there it is: wonderful weather, wonderful mountains, invigorating countryside, great people, and of course Mensa, all in one wonderful weekend!



Spring Fling 29 at TUFL!
Ode to Igor Stravinsky
Friday, June 17th, 2016 7pm

Igor Stravinsky was born on June 17th, 1888. Our first June Mensa gathering was held on June 17th, 1988, and this year's gathering falls on the 17th as well. Happy Birthday, Igor, wherever you are! Join us if you will at the home of Otto and Karen Kunz for our 29th annual June gathering! This event has moved over the years from our first apartment in Worcester to a small house in the Tatnuck neighborhood to its current home in Shrewsbury since 1998. There will be food, music, games and quite a quantity of terrible jokes. We look forward to seeing you and sharing this happy time together at this family-friendly and convivial event. Please bring your favorite beverage and/or a munchie to share. Questions? Call 508-UGLY-FOX (508-845-9369)!

Directions to Spring Fling 29 at The Ugly Fox Lounge:

GPS: 42 Monroe St., Shrewsbury, MA 01545

Phone: 508-UGLY-FOX (508-845-9369)

From the North and West: I-290 to Exit 23 (Route 140 South), follow Rt. 140 through the center of Shrewsbury (see gazebo on right, library on left and traffic light straight ahead), go straight about 0.4 miles and turn right immediately **before** next traffic light (about 50 feet) onto Kennilworth Road. **** Go up the hill, stop at the stop sign and go straight. That road bears right onto Monroe Street. We are in the 5th house on the left, a yellow and brown faux-Tudor split-level, #42.

From the South and East:

From Route 9, get on Route 140 North. Turn left about 50 feet after the second light onto Kennilworth Road and proceed from **** above.



Boston Mensa Meetup
 Join Boston Mensa's Meetup group today!

Get Event Notices and Reminders
 See Who's Coming
 RSVP Online
<http://www.meetup.com/BostonMensa/>

Cape Cod Mini-RG

May 6 – 8, 2016



Register online at <http://cape.bostonmensa.org>

Join us on beautiful Cape Cod for a relaxing, unstructured weekend of socializing and hospitality with old friends and new. Visit Provincetown, enjoy great seafood, go whale watching, antiquing, bicycling, or just sit back and listen to the ocean. Play games while overlooking the sea. Enjoy drinks on an oceanfront deck. A great RG for first-timers!

As of March 4th, the Corsair hotel rooms are completely booked but, no worries, overflow guests can now book at the Sea Shell Motel next door at a rate of \$90 plus taxes. Guests can go to their website www.seashellcapecod.com and book their reservations with a notation about being a part of MENSA and they will get in touch. The other option is to call their office at 508-398-8695 and leave a voicemail.

Friday dinner and Saturday and Sunday breakfasts are included in registration (served in Hospitality). You're on your own for Saturday lunch and dinner. Most folks go day-tripping Saturday and then out to local restaurants in groups in the evening.

Our next ExComm meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 19, 2016 at the Kovalcik home – 19 Chesley Rd., Newton, MA. Food at 6:30pm, meeting at 7:00pm.

April's question: When was the first national park created in the United States and where?

To get your name in print and earn bragging rights, be the first to send your answer to editor@bostonmensa.org.

Welcome New Boston Mensa Members!

Anthony Ausiello, Wakefield
 Arthur S Morris*, Wakefield
 Barry Kevin Horne Jr*, Holbrook
 Brian Iacaponi*, Wareham
 Carlos A Bribiescas*, Woburn
 Courtney Megan Scott-Howard*, Melrose
 David Donovan Long**, Taunton

Dr Steven C Rice*, Buzzards Bay
 John Martin, Northborough
 Jorge Calzada*, Needham Heights
 Kevin J Tierney, Newton
 Ruben F Salinas, Andover
 Terrasa Ulm, Worcester
 Troy D Korhonen, Boston

** moved in ** member by preference*

Election Notice

From Jayne Rossetti

I was honored to be asked to co-chair this year's Boston Mensa election committee along with my husband, Robert Granville. Here are the Elected Executive Committee Officer positions for which we seek nominees (according to Boston Mensa Bylaws Section 4.2.1):

Local Secretary and Assistant Local Secretary
Editor
Membership Secretary
Recording Secretary
Treasurer
Members-at-Large (4)



Please note that LocSec and Assistant LocSec are voted on as a slate. If you are interested in either of those two positions, team up with a colleague and submit one nominating petition between you. NOTE: The current Local Secretary and Assistant Local Secretary are not running for reelection. To create a petition: on a piece of paper, write your name, your Mensa membership number, the ExComm position for which you want to run. Gather legible signatures and (if known) Mensa membership numbers of at least ten other current Boston Mensa members who support your petition. Submit the petition to the address below by 5:00 p.m. on May 31, 2016.

For encouragement, or to find out what any particular job entails, you are welcome to talk to any member of the Election Committee. Alternatively, you can find job descriptions within Boston Mensa's Bylaws, which are located in the Boston Mensa area of American Mensa's website:

<http://boston.us.mensa.org/chapterdocs/BostonMensaByLaws.pdf>

Candidates' statements (up to 100 words) and optional photos should also be submitted to me by May 31, 2016. Feel free to include them with your mailed petition, or email them to me at jayne.r@verizon.net. The Beacon will publish candidates' statements for contested positions in the July 2016 issue, after which time members will vote. The next two-year term for the ExComm begins on October 1, 2016.

The Election Committee consists of: Robert Granville, Sonia Verrochi and me (Jayne Rossetti, Chair, 978.486.9596, jayne.r@verizon.net).

Submit petitions to: Boston Mensa Elections, c/o Jayne Rossetti, 8 Valley Drive, Littleton MA 01460

Calendar Symbols

⊘	No Smoking	☑	Smoking Allowed
☰	Food Available	☑	Soft Drinks Available
🍷	Alcohol Served	☑	No Alcohol Allowed
\$	Cost Involved	🐈	Cats
♿	Handicap Accessible	♿	No Handicap Access
Ⓟ	Parking Available	🚇	MBTA Accessible

Calendar of Events April 2016

Host Reimbursement Policy:

Members of Boston Mensa who list and host an event may be reimbursed up to \$100 for receipted expenses per calendar month.

Photo Policy: *Those wishing not to have their pictures published should notify photographers at events.*

Friday April 1

EDITORIAL DEADLINE

12:00 PM Every 1st
Editorial submissions for next month's *Beacon* must be received by the 1st. Contact Patti McCarty: editor@bostonmensa.org to discuss.

CALENDAR DEADLINE

12:00 PM Every 1st
Event notices or changes for next month's *Beacon* must be received today by Mike Genovese at thebeaconcalendar@verizon.net.

FIRST FRIDAY LUNCH ON CAPE COD

12:30 PM Barnstable Village
1st Friday Dolphin Restaurant

We usually meet at the Dolphin Restaurant in Barnstable Village. Please call Louise at 508-888-4178 or email Susan Gable at sgable@cape.com to let us know if you will join us. We occasionally get the urge to try a new restaurant, so be sure to contact one of the hosts to confirm where we're meeting.

Sunday April 3

MA STATE POLICE FIREARMS SAFETY COURSE

9:00 AM Marshfield
One Time Marshfield Rod and Gun Club
Meredith Knowles, a member of Boston Mensa, is offering a course that will provide participants with the certificate they need to apply for a license to carry in MA. The class is 4 hours long and will include classroom training and live fire. Cost is \$200. Payment must be made in advance of the start of the course. To make payment arrangements, contact Meredith at: meredith@meredithknowles.com. For questions or more info, contact Meredith at the email above or at: (617) 901-6529.

Tuesday April 5

WATCH A CHEESY MOVIE

7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Framingham
Floating Matt Stone

We meet every Tuesday night in my 15-seat theater. We always start with a pre-show at 7:00, which is usually two episodes of a TV series. Past shows have included *Murder Most Horrid*, *Todd and The Book of Pure Evil*, *InSECURITY* and more. The main feature starts at 8:00 and is usually a B-grade sci-fi or horror flick, a black comedy, or a light action/adventure. I usually announce the current feature Sunday night via email. FMI, call Matt at 508-879-4639 or email him at: muttstain@aol.com.

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April 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	31	1 12:00 Editorial Deadline 12:00 Calendar Deadline 12:30 Cape Cod Lunch	2
3 9 AM Massachusetts State Police Firearms Safety Course	4	5 7:00 Watch a Cheesy Movie	6 6:15 N.S.F.S.O.B.	7 6:30 Roving Ethnic Gourmands 7:30 Strategy SIG/Play Games	8	9 6:00 2nd Saturday Dinner
10 1:00 Games Afternoon	11	12 12:00 Downtown L.B. 7:00 Watch a Cheesy Movie	13 6:30 D.I.D. (Dining in Dedham)	14 4:00 Beacon Proofing 7:30 Strategy SIG/Play Games	15	16 6:00 New/Old Member Meet and Greet
17	18	19 2:00 Writing Group 7:00 ExComm meeting 7:00 Watch a Cheesy Movie	20 6:30 Moody Munch	21 7:30 Strategy SIG/Play Games	22 7:00 Mensa & Intertel	23
24	25	26 6:15 F.S.O.B. 7:00 Watch a Cheesy Movie	27 6:30 Harvard Dinner	28 7:30 Strategy SIG/Play Games	29	30 6:30 Lost Supper
1	2	3	4	5	6  Cape Cod Mini-RG Begins	7  Cape Cod Mini-RG Continues

Wednesday April 20

MOODY MUNCH

6:30 PM Waltham
3rd Wednesday Various Locations

Welcome to Waltham! I've moved and stepped down from the Hahvahd Din-nah, but that doesn't mean I want to stop hosting! We'll be dining at a different Moody Street (Waltham) restaurant each month. Each month we will pick a different restaurant and announce it on Meetup. Come for the food, stay for the company! RSVP on Meetup or contact the host, Sean Guerino, at imightbegiant@email.com.

Thursday April 21

STRATEGY SIG / PLAY GAMES

Weekly Event

Friday April 22

MENSA AND INTERTEL

7:00 PM Newington NH
4th Friday The Great Oriental Buffet
Menstel meets at the Great (Oriental) Buffet in Newington, NH on Woodbury Ave. opposite the east side of Fox Run Mall. Welcome are Mensa, Intertel, and members, relatives, friends, NH, ME, MA prospects. Traveling members most welcome. RSVP to Walter at 603-436-7250.

Wednesday April 26

F.S.O.B.

6:15 PM Kingston
4th Tuesday Charlie Horse
(Far-South-Of-Boston) The Charlie Horse is cozy, convenient, and has hearty and reasonably priced food and drink. Join us as we keep this congenial South Shore M event going! Have a question? Need

encouragement? Contact Chris Sullivan:
sullicj1@gmail.com

WATCH A CHEESY MOVIE

Weekly Event

Wednesday April 27

HARVARD DINNER

6:30 PM Cambridge
4th Wednesday Various Locations

A new twist on an old favorite. Plan on expanding your culinary experience as we dine in Harvard Square. Location varies but is always in Cambridge. For details and directions, please visit our Meetup site or email Wil Howitt at wil@otolith.com

Thursday April 28

STRATEGY SIG / PLAY GAMES

Weekly Event

Thursday April 30

LOST SUPPER CLUB

6:30 PM Worcester
Last Saturday ☉ Call for location

Join us as we meet at a Worcester area restaurant. For location/directions, call Chris or Dave at 508-853-3762 or email Dave at wa6ilt@amsat.org.



Directions

Allston

Sunset Grill & Tap

130 Brighton Ave. 617-254-1331
See <http://www.allstonsfinest.com>.

Barnstable Village

Dolphin Restaurant

3250 Main St (Rte 6A) 508-362-6610
See <http://www.thedolphincapecod.com/location.html>.

Billerica

Lynn MacDonald & Paul Mailman

338½ Treble Cove Rd. 978-663-9389
Rte 3 Exit 28, R (from either direction) ~¾ mile to driveway for 338½ on L, with broken white fence, opposite "Speed Limit 25" sign. Park in the driveway; enter up-stairs side deck.

Braintree

The Chateau

535 John Mahar Highway 781-380-8770
See www.chateaurrestaurant.com/brain-tree for directions.

Boston

The Hub Pub

Province Street 617-227-8952
See www.thehubpub.com.

Cambridge

Qdoba Mexican Grill

1290 Massachusetts Ave. 617-871-1136
See www.qdoba.com

Dedham

Bamboo

55 Ariadne Rd. 781-444-8213
See www.bamboogourmet.com.

Framingham

Matt Stone

33 Fenelon 508-879-4639
Mass Pike to Ex. 13, R onto 30W, pass several lights, R onto 9W (no choice). 2nd light is Temple; use R lane to make L turn (jug handle). At stop, L onto Salem End. At 1st light, R onto Winter. Just past 35 mph sign, R onto Dunster, at end of road L onto Edgewater. Keep R of island, and turn R onto Fenelon. Blue house on R. *Please note:* Park only on the EVEN side of the street.

Kingston

The Charlie Horse

99 Main St. 781-585-5550
For directions, go to:
<http://www.thecharliehorse.net>

Newington, NH

The Great Oriental Buffet

5 Piscataqua Dr. 603-559-9880
From Portsmouth Traffic Circle, go N on Rt. 4/16/Spaulding Turnpike about a mile to Exit 1, R to 2nd light, L onto Woodbury Ave., look for restaurant a short distance on R.

Waltham

Karibu Restaurant

10 Crescent St. (781) 899-7444
For directions, go to:
<http://www.karibuwaltham.com/>

Worcester

O'Connor's Restaurant and Bar

1160 West Boylston St. 508-853-0789
I-290W to I-190N, just before Worcester. From I-190, take ext. 4, Rte 12 (West Boylston). Go R off exit ramp. O'Connor's is on the L. www.oconnorsrestaurant.com.

Directions to the Meet and Greet Potluck

By car, take the Mass Pike to exit 17 (Newton Corner). Follow signs to Newton Centre which will put you on Centre St. (When coming off the Mass Pike heading east from route 128, stay to the right. Centre St. will be the first street on the right. When coming off the Pike heading west from Boston, go 3/4 of the way around the "circle" around the hotel over the Pike.)

Continue on Centre St. for 2 miles to Newton Centre. Immediately after the large parking lot on left, turn left onto Beacon St. *Go 2 blocks and turn left onto Chesley Rd. just after Murray's Liquors and Cambridge Savings Bank on the left. If you pass a Gulf Station and US Post Office on the right, you have gone too far. The house, a gray colonial with white and red trim, is the fourth house on the left. You must park on the right hand side of the street facing in the direction of travel OR YOU MAY BE TICKETED. Alternatively, you may park in the driveway to the right of the house as you are facing it.

Or, take Route 9 to Centre St. Take Centre St. 1 mile to Newton Centre. Immediately after yield / merge and before the large parking lot, turn right onto Beacon St. Continue from "*" above.

Or, from Route 9 heading west, exit after Legal Seafoods and the Chestnut Hill Cinema onto Hammond Pond Parkway. Go right onto Hammond Pond Parkway. Take Hammond Pond Parkway to the end. Go left onto Beacon Street. Go about 1/2 mile. Take second right after the light (opposite Gulf Station and just before Cambridge Savings Bank on right) onto Chesley Road. The house, a gray colonial with white and red trim, is the fourth house on the left. You must park on the righthand side of the street facing in the direction of travel OR YOU MAY BE TICKETED. Alternatively, you may park in the driveway to the right of the house as you are facing it.

By MBTA, take the Riverside (D) Branch of the Green Line to the Newton Centre stop. Go upstairs on the station / outbound side and turn right onto Union St. Go 3 blocks crossing Langley Rd. and Beacon St. Union St. turns into Chesley Rd. The house, a gray colonial with white and red trim, is the fourth house on the left after crossing Beacon St.

By GPS, N42 19.911 W71 11.444 +/-.



Youth Photography Contest

Maryland Mensa's gifted youth program welcomes photographers from across the country to enter its 2016

Picture Your Abilities: The Wonders of STEM photography contest for a chance to win a variety of prizes. Winning photographs will be featured in an upcoming edition of M-Anation, Maryland Mensa's newsletter. Membership in Maryland Mensa is not required to enter the contest. Entries must be received by April 30. For more information, go to <http://maryland.us.mensa.org/PictureYourAbilities>

Congratulations

Lano Balulescu

for being the first to send in the answer to last month's *Beacon* question!

March's question: What is the Platt Amendment?

Lano's answer: The Platt Amendment (March 2, 1901) stipulated seven conditions for the withdrawal of U.S troops remaining in Cuba after the Spanish American War and an eighth condition that Cuba accept the original seven conditions.

Congratulations, April Anniversaries!

5 years: David L Griffeth, Franklin
5 years: Jonathan Lange, Wellesley
5 years: Jorge Calzada, Needham Heights
5 years: Nicholas P Swett, Abington
5 years: Warren A Parad, Wakefield
10 years: Chad Ervin, Medford
10 years: Correna S Lukas, Ashburnham
10 years: Donald K Jones, Swampscott
10 years: Fred Fisher, Natick
10 years: Gloria E Lord-King, Waltham
10 years: Lauren Cohen, Belmont
10 years: Peter F Symosek, Waltham
15 years: Dr David R Wheeler, Boston
15 years: Mary E McDermott, Orleans
20 years: Carole Lefebvre, Westwood

20 years: Dr Paul Warren Flagg, Hubbardston
20 years: Jeffrey P Shipnes, Brighton
20 years: Margaret W Plum, Boston
25 years: Glenn Rochon, Leominster
30 years: Alan Roy Punke, Newton
30 years: Charles R E Wahl, Hudson
30 years: Eric Paul Olson, Boxford
30 years: John Joseph Soter, Wayland
30 years: Robert Preston Kinsman, Billerica
35 years: Dr Peter M Bradley, Westborough
35 years: Joanne M Norris, Hudson

Response to "What is Human?"

by Barry L. Lamont, M.D.

Brian Stoddard's piece in the February *Beacon* says less than it seems to. He posits the existence of an immaterial spirit as the source of consciousness, and then argues that a human-built android would be incapable of consciousness without this ethereal substance. His argument is a series of premises: if this substance exists, and if it is the source of consciousness, and if it can not be infused into an artificial brain, then an android will never have consciousness as we understand it. Fair enough - but how would we know?

Such a substance, by his own definition, is outside the realm of empirical science; so we can not try to detect it directly, or detect its absence. All we can rely on, therefore, is the behavior of the android - including what it reports about its own thoughts. If a sufficiently complex artificial intelligence can duplicate the responses we expect from a creature with consciousness and an inner life, then having already posited that we can't actually look for this immaterial spirit inside their heads, on what basis can he argue that they really aren't conscious?

This is, in fact, a thinly disguised religious statement: "The soul (to use the customary word for his immaterial substance) is created by God at the moment of conception." But in disguising it, he has actually compromised his own argument.

If we are discussing something created by God (if capital He exists), then presumably no human creation will have a soul - assuming, of course, that God isn't perfectly prepared to put souls into artificial intelligences once we have made them advanced enough, an assumption which, like all assumptions about God, might be hard to justify. But if this immaterial substance has a more undefined origin, Mr. Stoddard can justify no other assertions about it whatsoever. Perhaps this substance is naturally attracted to the appropriate substrate - say, a sufficiently complex brain; in that case, why could it not spontaneously attach itself to an android as easily as to a human? Perhaps, if we possess it ourselves, we can unknowingly transfer or transfuse it into our own creations. So even allowing that such a spirit-matter might exist, there is no reason to assume that androids couldn't have it as well.

Galileo's observations about the Solar System were upsetting, for quite a number of reasons - one of which was the widespread belief that the moon was perfectly smooth, a belief thrown into disarray when Galileo not only observed mountains on the moon, but (using basic geometry) made a pretty good estimate of their height, based on the length of their shadows. One author, trying to smooth over both the controversy and the moon itself, wrote that Galileo was quite correct: the visible surface of the moon was indeed mountainous and irregular; but the visible surface was covered by an invisible layer of perfect smoothness, so the old belief was correct as well. Galileo, ever the wag, replied that his esteemed colleague was quite correct about the invisible layer - but had failed to observe that it was piled up into mountains four times the height of the visible ones!

That's the problem with immaterial and undetectable things - you never know whether you are right about them. - *Barry M. Lamont, M.D.*

Response to Dr. Lamont's Comments

by Brian Stoddard



Dr. Barry Lamont refutes my essay saying the arguments I propose are less than they seem, and reduces the structure and content of my essay to a few if-then statements at the beginning of his rebuttal. Fair enough ostensibly, since I am proposing what I refer to as spiritual substance, neither mind nor material, which he considers something invisible and likely nonexistent, and fairly enough in a way - hardly provable or ever detectable, at least of course beyond the capacity of currently existent scientific instruments, and possibly difficult to truly substantiate ever, in a truly real fashion or sense, at least at the present stage of knowledge and science. Phenomena after all must necessarily pass the harsh and sometimes rigid test of the scientific method to be considered true, and I am a believer in this accordingly and necessarily. I am not simply crazy, after all.

A veiled religious argument my essay is not. I am a Buddhist for the most part, alluded to tangentially in my essay, a religion not ordinarily theistic, and while I'm not entirely atheist, God does not necessarily come into my arguments as an assumption. I don't need this assumption necessarily.

The Celtic Druids, the Pythagoreans, and the Buddhists, believed in the transmigration of souls. Consciousness is a unified quality, not simply the soul. Soul entails, to my mind, perception and conception, and traces of memory as well, not simply pure and clear consciousness. Consciousness is conserved in the universe, to my mind, as matter and energy are, and conditions other necessary parts of what is soul; but the soul and consciousness are not equivalent. Souls may migrate as a collection of qualia, but consciousness is awareness purely and simply. Consciousness is something more inherent, or perhaps transcendental, not something attached by God to the brain or infused arbitrarily. Having said that, souls entail consciousness and are conditioned by it, though not are it. Consciousness conditions other parts of the soul, and is, to my mind, eternal and indestructible, without beginning or end, and more temporal than spatial, though perhaps neither as such.

The Turing Test, applied to judging the ostensible speech and actions of an android, and only these as criteria for awareness, as the behaviorist in psychology judges simply external human speech and action, and comes to a darkling and obscure conclusion of consciousness, that somebody is necessarily home, beyond and without other considerations, would neither prove nor disprove an android is conscious, but according to Turing and his test, according to him, would prove so. But this is of course might be considered absurd to anyone with even a modicum of common sense, to my mind.

Strangely enough, I don't say in my essay something ethereal couldn't accompany an android brain. Lamont seems to ignore the fact that I leave this possibility open. But I tend to think nonetheless that something like the brain, product of millions of years of evolution, would more likely have consciousness as an inherent quality, or at least a transcendent one - outside of time and space, that is - and that, however

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sophisticated, an android brain would not necessarily simply inherit or accommodate the quality called consciousness.

Spirit and consciousness, while not detectable directly by the instruments of empirical science, may rather be deduced. The 13.7 billion year old universe is expanding and accelerating faster than the speed of light according to science. In order to account for this accelerating expansion, and the push and pull of gravity in the known universe, dark matter and energy have to be deduced and posited, even though they are not detectable really, invisible but most likely present – according to logical deduction, not direct detection. – *Brian Stoddard*

Ex-Comm Meeting Minutes APPROVED December 1, 2015

A regular meeting of the Boston Mensa Executive Committee was called to order by LocSec Ed Meyer at 7:00pm at Rick Kovalcik's home in Newton, MA.

Present: Wendy & Tom Birchmire, Dennis Higbee (by phone), Rick Kovalcik, Ben & Patti McCarty (by phone), Ed Meyer, Liz Modesitt (by phone), Gary Schwartz. Guests: Phil Baun, Al Beecy, RVC1 Lisa Maxwell (by phone), Lia Olsborg, Sonia Verrochi. Absent: Jeff Prowse (2)

Email votes since our last meeting: None

Unexcused absence Count: Jeff Prowse (2)

The minutes from our October 19, 2015 meeting were presented and approved as submitted.

Officer and Committee Reports

1. **LocSec:** Ed Meyer noted that from all reports the 2015 Wicked Good RG! went extremely well. Far above expectations.

2. **Testing Coordinator:** Wendy Birchmire told us that we tested more than two dozen candidates during October Test Month.

3. **Treasurer:** Tom Birchmire reported that we spent \$4,592.48 (see attached breakdown) on the 2015 Great Wolf Lodge RG. Per Tom, on average we receive apx. \$1,000 per month in funding from AML each year and we net apx. \$700 per month (\$8,400 per year) after Beacon expenses. After all expenses we currently have \$27,565.16 in our bank account.

Ed Meyer made a motion "***To have Boston Mensa pay up to \$5,000 to fund the 2016 Wicked Good RG!***" at the Great Wolf Lodge." Seconded by Rick. This motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished business

1. **2015 Wicked Good RG! update** – Wendy Birchmire / Phil Baun

Wendy Birchmire and Phil Baun reported that the RG went better than expected. Per Wendy Birchmire the Great Wolf Lodge staff was easy to work with. We were able to confirm the weekend of October 28 – 30, 2016.

Ed Meyer made a motion "***To have Boston Mensa pay up to \$5,000 to fund the 2016 Wicked Good RG! at the Great Wolf Lodge***". The motion was seconded by Rick Kovalcik. After a short discussion this motion passed unanimously.

2. **Update: Scholarship review committee** – Rick Kovalcik

RVC1 Lisa Maxwell joined us by phone to discuss Scholarship rules. Rick Kovalcik will put the following notice in the January Beacon seeking judges and Ed Meyer will put a similar notice in the LocSec letter: ***Scholarship Judges Wanted: We are looking for 3-6 people to judge scholarship essays for the annual Mensa Scholarship Contest. This would entail reading in late January or early February about 50-100 essays (provided electronically or by paper if you prefer) and grading them numerically according to the contest rules. Once we pick our top essays they are then passed on to Region 1 for grading at that level. If you are interested or want to see the contest rules, please email scholarships@bostonmensa.org.*** Rick Kovalcik stated that all essays must be in by January 15th of each year and our committee must complete judging by February 15th each year.

New business

1. Appoint RG co-chairs for our 2016 Wicked Good! RG and our Mother's Day Cape Cod Mini RG – Group discussion

After a short discussion and a motion by Ed Meyer with a second by Gary Schwartz we unanimously approved Wendy Birchmire and Phil Baun to serve again as our 2016 Wicked Good RG! Co-Chairs.

After another short discussion and another motion by Ed Meyer with a second by Gary Schwartz we also approved Merrill Loechner to serve as Registrar with Jayne Rossetti and Susan(sic) Hill to serve as Hospitality Co-Chairs with Lori Norris to serve as 'hospitality mentor' for our 2016 Cape Cod Mini RG. Gary Schwartz has also volunteered to help with hospitality at the 2016 Cape Cod Mini RG.

2. **Reimbursement for LDW Hotel expense** – Ed Meyer

Allison Rainville and Phil Baun attended the November 2015 LDW in New York. At the RG Allison asked if the ExComm would consider reimbursing her \$90.06 for her hotel expense to attend this event. After a short discussion Rick Kovalcik made a motion that we ***"Reimburse Allison Rainville and Phil Baun for their hotel expenses to attend the 2015 LDW in NY with the understanding that this approval does not establish a precedent for future reimbursements."*** Rick noted both Allison and Phil's past contributions to Boston Mensa as a rationale for approving these reimbursements. After a second by Tom Birchmire this motion was unanimously approved.

3. **Gifted Youth Coordinator** – Ed Meyer

Thanks to RVC1 Lisa Maxwell's efforts, Matt Ventura (401) 366-2900 (giftedyouth@region1.us.mensa.org) from RI Mensa has been officially approved as the Region 1 (New England and eastern New York) Gifted Youth Coordinator.

Under current Mensa bylaws our GYC must be a Mensa member but, properly

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vetted, non-Mensa parents are allowed to serve as assistant GYC's. We have two parents, each of whom has already been CORI checked, who have volunteered to serve as assistant GYC's. RVC1 Lisa Maxwell has suggested that we have them contact Matt Ventura to discuss becoming 'Co-GYC's'. Ed Meyer will email the two volunteers and ask them to discuss details of being an assistant GYC with Matt Ventura before I appoint them at our February 29, 2016 meeting or by email vote earlier.

4. **RG Badge Holders** – Ed Meyer We took no action on this agenda item.

5. **Wicked Smaht – Boston Mensa T-Shirts** – Ed Meyer

Our *Wicked Smaht* T-Shirts continue to sell well. After a short discussion Ed Meyer made a motion to purchase an additional 36 T-Shirts to be sold at \$15 each. This motion was seconded by Gary Schwartz and passed unanimously.

6. **Under Other:** Al Beecy proposed that we spend up to \$150 per year for an SSL certificate to protect information exchanged with our web site. Rick Kovalcik ***'Moved to authorize Al Beecy to spend up to \$150 per year on an ongoing basis for this SSL certificate.'*** The motion was seconded by Wendy Birchmire. After a short discussion this motion was approved unanimously.

Next Meeting and Adjournment

Our next meeting will be held at the Birchmire home on Monday February 29, 2016. Food at 6:30pm Meeting at 7:00pm Tonight's meeting was adjourned at 8:57pm.

Minutes submitted by Ed Meyer (temporary Recording Secretary).

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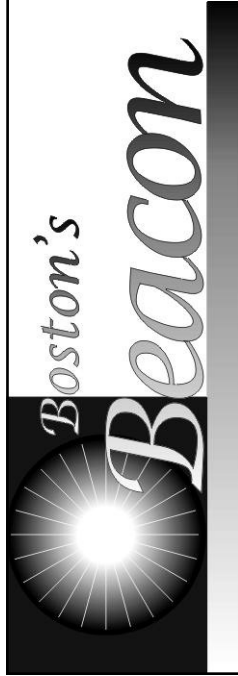
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Happy April Birthday, Boston Mensans!

4/1 Patricia Hartnett, Watertown	4/16 Brian Fitzgerald, South Boston
4/2 Christopher Morgan, North Chelmsford	4/18 Jonathan Gray, Medfield
4/3 Charles Garland Bagg, Fitchburg	4/19 Herbert Neuman, Concord
4/3 George Kasotakis, Boston	4/20 Cindy King, West Townsend
4/4 Kimberly McCollough Thurler, Norfolk	4/20 Elika Trifonova-Kloter, Boston
4/4 Marie Carnegie, Foxboro	4/21 Caitlin Farrell Rouse, Harwich Port
4/4 Robert A Schwartz, Lexington	4/21 Morgan A Turano, Arlington
4/5 Frederick P Andersen Jr, Methuen	4/22 James E Zoino, Carver
4/5 Rodney P Hughes, Brookline	4/22 Kirsten S Sigrist, Medway
4/5 Sean McCarthy, Braintree	4/22 Peter Sigrist, Medway
4/5 Stephen M Sullivan, Brookline	4/23 Christopher James Granniss, Salem
4/6 Emmy Hessler, Natick	4/23 Masao Kinoshita, Boxborough
4/7 Adam L Jablonski, Norwood	4/23 Richard S Gilmore, Danvers
4/7 Dr Peter M Bradley, Westborough	4/24 Chad Ervin, Medford
4/7 Jennifer O'Hearn, Hanover	4/24 Hal Tepfer, Lexington
4/7 Kyle Kellinghaus, Salem	4/25 Anton Chernoff, Littleton
4/7 Michael Edwards, Walpole	4/25 Louise Ina Hetzler, Westborough
4/8 John Edward Cribben Jr, Bridgewater	4/25 Mark Hanford, Waltham
4/8 John Offerman Sindall, Concord	4/25 Nancy Ann McShea, Worcester
4/9 Alison L Fraser, Marlborough	4/25 Otto Edgar Kunz, Shrewsbury
4/9 Kevin R Lowney, Weymouth	4/25 Stephen Todd, Shrewsbury
4/9 Robert Gaudette, Milton	4/25 Thomas Stanley, Medford
4/10 Patrick D Preston, Boston	4/26 Gregory Boumil, Andover
4/10 Sara Delaney, Boston	4/26 Kenneth Lee Thompson, Boxford
4/11 Brett Kirkland, Boston	4/26 Stephen Joseph LeBlanc, Wrentham
4/12 Allan Cameron, Walpole	4/27 John DeFilippo, Lincoln
4/12 Kelli Collomb, Lynn	4/27 Michael David Kagen, Northbridge
4/12 Scott F Hokanson, Plymouth	4/27 Richard Joseph Seron J D, Quincy
4/13 Bryce Orion Platt, Malden	4/28 Bruce Sawyer Johnson, Weymouth
4/13 Daniel C Arpino, Dedham	4/28 E Grace Noonan, Natick
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4/14 Stephen J Roe, Leominster	
4/15 Ari Marcus, Needham	
4/15 Steve Wigall, Lawrence	
4/15 William G Brown, Boston	
4/16 Benjamin Curry Harper, Boston	

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