

The Constellation

May 2011

Rochester Area Mensa



Greetings.

It's taken a while but finally some of our trees have that 'Spring' look, like the apple tree in the photo below. I'm sure you'll all agree that it feels good to get outside even if it's to mow the lawn, just like those sheep are doing. Enjoy.

Tim Wright
editor of The Constellation



reMARK

June, 2011

Betsy Yvonne Mark, RVC3

This is going to be short and sweet. I have been very busy since returning home from Florida with my duties as Registrar for SEMMantics XXXII, the Seminal Event of 2011, Southeast Michigan Mensa's Regional Gathering. A fabulous event it was. There were attendees from the entire region, as well as from California, Florida, Illinois and our neighbors to the south, Canada. I heard wonderful things about Dayton's Regional Gathering and was truly sorry to have missed it for the first time in years. If you have never attended a regional gathering, please do so soon and attend one in our region. I've attended gatherings across the nation and Region 3's are the very best! See the list below.

Register Now! The price is going from \$100 to \$110 after June 15 for the Annual Gathering in Portland, Oregon: A Great Journey West, June 30-July 4. Tour announcements and other information may be found at [this link](#). The registration form can be found at [this link](#).

I will be there and hope to see you at the Region 3 Meet and Greet.

Register now for the following Region 3 events:

- July 29, 2011 - July 31, 2011 - Columbus Regional Gathering; The Write Stuff in Columbus, Ohio. Enjoy the pool, games, speakers and family track. Guests: NYT best-selling authors William H. Keith and Kenneth Sewell. All meals included with registration; complimentary hot breakfast with room reservation. Ramada East Airport Hotel, 4801 E. Broad St., Columbus, OH 43213; 614/861-0321. Contact Julia at her email
- September 2, 2011 - September 5, 2011 - Western PA Regional Gathering; The Birds and the Bees in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Programs, Tournaments, Games, Food, Friends and Fun - pool and hot tub. Two catered meals included in registration. Radisson Hotel, Pittsburgh (Greentree), 412 922 8400 or 800 333 3333 ask for Western PA Mensa rate. Contact: Marty Flowers (email), WPAM website: <http://wpam.us.mensa.org>
- December 2, 2011 - December 4, 2011 - Cincinnati Regional Gathering; Just for Your CAMusement! in Cincinnati, Ohio

I am looking forward to seeing you soon.

LLAP and Peace,

Betsy
Betsy Yvonne Mark
Email,

3674 Oak Drive - Ypsilanti, MI 48197

734-434-5757 (Home) or 313-530-2055 (Mobile)

Region 3 Website - <http://www.region3.us.mensa.org/>

Yahoo group - <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AMR3/>

Facebook group - <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=71515809887>

May 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14 
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 	28
29	30	31		June 2 	June 3, F.S.M.	

May 2011 Events

Saturday, May 14 6 PM **dinner**; music ‘til 9:30 PM. Back in 2009, we enjoyed the Mariachi band; this time it will be the eclectic acoustic music duo Meyer & McGuire (classic folk, country, rock, bluegrass, Irish, original tunes). Satisfy your craving for Mexican food, from tacos and burritos to chicken in “mole” sauce! 60 different tequilas are available, as well as desserts such as caramel custard flan and pastel tres leches. Location of **Rio Tomatlan** is 5 Beeman St., (corner Main) Canandaigua. Take I-90 exit 44 onto Rt. 332; turn left at the third street past the railroad tracks. Rio tomatlan is on the right and public parking is on the left. <http://www.riotomatlan.com/> or (585) 394-9380.

Friday, May 27 7 PM **Ice cream social**. The flowers are blooming, so let’s savor the flavors of summer at **Shark’s Custard & Candy**, Routes 5 & 20, Bloomfield (aka 50 State St.). Located ¼ mile east of Mendon - Ionia Rd. and 1.4 miles west of Rt. 444, homemade hard ice cream is available and delicious! (585) 657-4429.

Thursday, June 2nd **First Thirstday**. At **McGregor's** on Jefferson Road in Henrietta, just down the road from Southtowne Plaza. If you like a good brew, you’ll certainly appreciate the many offerings at McGregor’s, and the prices aren’t bad either. They also have an extensive menu.

Friday, June 3rd, **Fold, Spindle and Mutilate**. At **Tim's place**, 18 Pecos Circle, West Henrietta, NY. 7 PM. Please call 334-6063 for directions.

Note: In the unlikely event that there is a problem with our reservation when we arrive, we may need to make a decision to move to another venue on the spot. We will wait a half hour before moving to allow for late arrivals, so try not to arrive later than this so you know where we are in the event of a move.

Don’t see your favorite event or venue? Contact Tim by May 25th to suggest a new item for the June newsletter.

A member's perspective on our member benefits

by Dwight Payne

Mensa in Georgia (www.georgia.us.mensa.org)

As Mensa members, we are entitled to certain benefits and perks offered by a number of companies. A lot of these benefits may not be of interest to everyone; for example, I have no need of a “VIP Pet Insurance” discount. The secret, of course, is to find benefits that apply to your own personal tastes and lifestyle.

For example, my favorite perk is the one offered to Mensa members by Choice Hotels (which includes Comfort Inn, Sleep Inn, Quality Inn, and EconoLodge, among others). They give us 20 percent off their published rental rate. Just last week I was out of town for a seminar. I stayed at a Quality Inn and saved \$15 that night on my room. Next month I am going out of state for an event and have already made my room reservations for my

four-night stay. My savings for that stay, plus the one from last week, total \$86.04 off the published rate. I have already saved more than I paid for my Mensa dues for this year and it is only February!

My experience with benefits from other companies has not been as positive. Alamo, Hertz and National car rentals all offer us discounts and/or unlimited mileage on their rentals. However, my experience is that I can almost always find a rental car company that will offer me unlimited mileage and some kind of discount or special. Try as I might, I have never saved any money using these particular Mensa benefits. Likewise, I have heard others say that there was no real discount to the GEICO insurance benefit. And just this month, I heard that Bank of America will begin charging a \$59 annual fee for its “Mensa” credit card.

The real question is whether we are getting the benefits that should come to an organization with 50,000+ members. I’m not so sure that we are.

I took a look at the Web site of the Professional Disc Golf Association (www.pdga.com) to see what perks came with being a member of that organization. First, let me say that I having nothing for or against people who throw plastic discs. I found the site completely at random while Googling for organizations offering benefits to their members. Second, you don’t have to be a professional disc golfer or even own a Frisbee to become a member of the PDGA and be eligible for its benefits. You just have to pay its membership fee. A review of the benefits offered to PDGA members showed perks similar to our own. They also get 20 percent off published hotel rates through the Wyndham Hotel Group (Red Roof, Howard Johnson, Ramada, Days Inn, Super 8). There were also some car rental companies offering discounts and/or unlimited mileage. There were others but, all in all, it was comparable to our own list. It left me asking this question: “If we’re so smart, why don’t we have better member benefits than do people who throw Frisbees at trees?”

[InterLink: Clarifications on our benefits cited above: There are products to which rental car companies will not attach additional discounts; these products are typically cars at locations with excess inventory during a specific rental period. The GEICO insurance benefit is not a guaranteed discount. Most members will qualify for this discount; however, those with excellent driving histories may not receive additional discounts. In early February a very small portion of Bank of America customers (less than 1 percent of Mensa cardholders) were notified of an annual fee being added to their accounts as of May 2011, based on individual relationship parameters with the cardholders.

The Membership Committee regularly reviews potential member discounts with regard to benefit to the number of members and avoiding too much overlap with other offerings. Please direct your ideas for future member benefits and services to Membership Director Paige Faulkner at (email)

Good Wine Cheap (and good food to go with it)

By John Grover

Various family obligations, concerns and celebrations over the past few months have found us traveling frequently along the NYS Thruway to Western New York. The most recent trip gave us the opportunity to make a quick side trip down the west side of Cayuga Lake. There we discovered not only delightful wines, but another example of the extraordinary cuisine that the Finger Lakes region is becoming known for.

The Finger Lakes have received world-wide recognition for its Rieslings. This month we are comparing three distinctly different wines made from that same grape. And, somehow, I would like to say each one is better than the next. (Wow! Is that even logically possible?) The first is the 2008 Dry Riesling from Swedish Hill Vineyard. This wine has the nice floral nose and rich fruit of melon and pear common to the Riesling grape. But, it is placed into a class of its own by the steely dry minerals and long finish reminiscent of the great white food wines of France and Germany. This wine is available for \$16 a bottle at the winery. An additional 15% is taken off for buying a case.

The second wine is the 2009 Dry Riesling from Hosmer Winery. This wine is one of our long time favorites exhibiting brilliant tastes of apple, peach and citrus. It is made distinct and more complex by the clear spice and floral notes in the taste and nose. This wine is fine as an aperitif or with Indian or Asian cuisines. It is available for \$13 a bottle at the winery. It becomes a super deal when you take off the 15% discount on a case.

The third wine is the 2008 Riesling from Sheldrake Point Vineyard. This sweeter version of a Riesling (3.6% residual sugar) offers absolutely luscious tastes of honey, peaches, pears and tropical fruit. The words that could describe this wine include: complex, rich, full and round; but, I like the term “luxurious”. It is available for \$15 a bottle at the winery. And, the 20% discount for purchasing 12 bottles supports Grover’s Law of Acquisition – “Buy by the Case”.

Classic Pate’ (contributed by Chef Samantha Izzo-Buyskes of the Simply Red Bistro at Sheldrake Point

Vineyard and Latourelle Resort and Spa. A visit to this restaurant is in itself worth the trip.)

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp butter
- 2 tbsp oil
- 2oz slab bacon cut into chunks
- 3 large Shallots peeled and sliced
- 8oz chicken livers
- 1tsp each salt and pepper
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- ¼ cup currants
- ¼ cup pitted dates,

- ½ cup melted butter

In a medium sized pan over medium heat melt the butter and oil. Add in the bacon and shallots and caramelize. Add in the chicken livers and sauté 5 minutes. Add in the salt and pepper, currants and dates sauté 5 more minutes. The liver should still be pink. Remove the pan and allow to cool. In a food processor blend mixture with the heavy cream until smooth. Spread into a dish, top with melted butter and allow to set up in the fridge. Serve with pickled onions, hard-boiled egg, whole grain mustard and baguette.

I hope that you will contact me with your comments and favorite wines at my email. I will be happy to share them with the broader Mensa group.
