

# PensaMensa Newsletter

December 2007

- :: [ExComm Minutes](#)
- :: [Israel, Egypt and Jordan - The Journey of a Lifetime!](#)
- :: ["M"embership News](#)
- :: [Seven Trivia Questions](#)
- :: [Cryptograms by Jill Russ](#)
- :: [The Tenth Story](#)
- :: [Cryptogram solutions](#)
- :: [Calendar](#)
- :: [A Chess Problem](#)
- :: [President's Page](#)
- :: [Officers of Northwest Florida Mensa](#)
- :: [Curmudgeon's Corner](#)
- :: [ValenTime!](#)
- :: [Mea Culpa Corner](#)
- :: [Answers to Seven Trivia Questions](#)
- :: [Milestones](#)
- :: [Précis](#)
- :: [Holiday advice](#)
- :: [Editorial Policy](#)



**Don't miss the best party of the year!** Annual Christmas Party/Open House at Jo and Bob Horne's home, 641 Merioneth Court NE, Fort Walton Beach. (ExComm will plot in a corner sometime.) The basics will be provided, but it's a potluck event, so please bring something in the way of food and/or drink to share and join the party.

All members and their families and friends are welcome.

***New members are especially welcome - we love new faces!***

Info: Bob Horne, [rhone@cox.net](mailto:rhone@cox.net) or 315-0255.

*Directions: Take either Beal Pkwy. or Eglin Pkwy. to Racetrack Rd., turn north off Racetrack on Mooney Road, left on Merioneth Drive, then left into the cul-de-sac that is Merioneth Court. It may be necessary to park on Merioneth Drive, as parking is limited.*

***Thanks to Marianne McDonald for her painting, Tropical Fruit, which we publish as a non-partisan, nonreligious reminder that Christmas is a celebration of life: a time for remembrance, and for sharing our good fortune.***

# ExComm Minutes

## by Micah Butler

This meeting was held in the home of newly appointed vice-president Micah Butler in Pensacola, FL. Attendees were John and MaryAnn Mochan, Bob Ulrich, Art Krzeminski. Meeting was called to order at 14:10.

**President:** Nothing worth reporting :- p

**Vice President:** The LDW which was held in Plant City, FL on November the 3rd was quite informative. Topics were covered in one day of conference by various speakers including one representative from National. Purpose for the meeting was to make known what services and information National is available to give us to aide in bringing new members in as well as different ways to keep new members. Micah Butler, Terri Culbertson, and Dana went as a representation of our chapter. Many things were discussed amongst those who went and we all found out Terri drives really fast, Dana drives slow (but for a reason), and Apalachicola is a good place to stop for oysters but is really out of the way.

**Treasurer:** A separate report will be included later. The search for a new Auditor is afoot currently as well. We are in need of an immediate auditor for our books. Jerry used to be the auditor but he's now the treasurer so that doesn't work anymore. If you would like to volunteer please contact your favorite member of the ExComm.

**Membership:** See new members column for detail information. We are encouraging all members, old and new, to check and update membership information with National. A hyperlink will be provided.

**Old Business:** It's old, so nothing new. None reported.

**New Business:** RG for this year is beginning to come together well. Terri Culbertson has been appointed Program Director. We currently have 25 people registered but look to have close to 90 or more in attendance. Members intending to attend are encouraged to register early to make possible the purchasing needed supplies without having to go to money stored for other purposes in the interim. For list of planned events please refer to the ValenTime flyer for the RG

Next meeting will be held in a corner during the Annual Christmas party. Meeting adjourned 14:56

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# "M"embership News

by **Bob Ulrich**

Our group had a net gain of 3 members in October 2007 bringing our membership total back up to 190 members. Our membership totals at the end of October in the past is as follows: October 2000 - 133 members, October 2001 - 143 members, October 2002 - 165 members, October 2003 - 185 members, October 2004 - 202 members, October 2005 - 191 members, October 2006 - 197 members, and currently October 2007 - 190 members. As you can see we have been in the neighborhood of 200 members for the last 4 years.

The relocation statistics were neutral to us in October. There were 2 local Mensans who moved away and there were 2 Mensans who moved in. Leaving Northwest Florida were **Jennifer Clark**, who relocated from Pensacola to Spenser, NY, and Robert Baucom, who went from Defuniak Springs to Hillsborough, NC. Good luck to both of you in your new location. Replacing them on our roster are **Grady James**, who moved from Ayer, MA to my area, Navarre and **Olest Byrd**, who is back at his old stomping ground in Panama City after a brief 4 month stay in Blairsville, GA. Welcome and welcome back to you two.

The 3 other additions to our local are 1 reinstatement and 2 new members. Coming back to Mensa after an extended absence is **Christopher Stafford** in Pace. We hope this stay is a long and happy one. Brand new to Mensa are **Brittany Gough** in Pace and **Elizabeth Osborne** in Niceville. Welcome to the group to both of you.

Just to expand a bit on something I mentioned in last month's column. I encouraged all of you to have anyone you know who thinks they might qualify for Mensa to go ahead and test. Our National Office informed me that during the last 9 months of 2006, 65% of those people who took the test passed, and 78% of those who passed also joined. So anyone who thinks he or she might pass our test probably will.

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## Cryptograms

by **Jill Russ**

Easy Level

KJLKBC DQV SXD QKOD WH BWPF ZXGJV LGSX K

TWLDJ CW SXKS LXDQ BWP BDJJ SXD QKOD LGJJ

ZKFFB. ~AGJJ ZWCAB

### **Challenge Level**

The Challenge Level includes the "space" as part of the cryptogram. In other words, the letter R might actually be the space, and a space might be a letter. The end of each line of the cryptogram is the end of a word.

GWCWCQWGLEUJFOLS\_LENWLEUCUG GUR

OUYLRUGGSWJLFQUYELOW\_EWGJFO.

~JFDWLKFGPWASW

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## **The Tenth Story**

### **RVC Column for Region 10**

I wish that everyone reading this could have been with us at the Leadership Development Workshop on November 3. Most of us could benefit from the type of information ably presented at the LDW by 1st Vice Chair and former RVC Elissa Rudolph, former RVC Janice Johnson, and national Public Relations Director Catherine Barney. Eleven of our twelve Florida Local Groups had at least one person attending the LDW, and we had only one no-show, which was a very positive thing. I hope that the knowledge and suggestions from the LDW will prove to be helpful to the 36 attendees and their local groups. Many LocSecs were in attendance, as well as one soon-to-be LocSec. Most, but not all, of the attendees were present or future office holders. Something to consider: your local group might wish to work on scheduling a leadership retreat, which is sort of an LDW on a smaller scale. These are scheduled close at hand, so more local people should be able to attend. You can find out more about Leadership Retreats in the LDW Handbook, available for download on the national website. I am looking right now at the member demographics for Region 10. We have a total of 3696 members in Florida (which I stated incorrectly at the LDW as closer to 5000). Our 12 groups range in membership size from Tallahassee, with 92 members, to Tampa Bay Mensa, with 635. The most interesting facts involve the different age groups represented in our demographics. We have 1402 members belonging to the Baby Boom Generation, and we now have 841 GenX Mensa members in Florida! That is approximately 30% of the membership in Florida. No wonder we are hearing so much from and about them. And we need to listen, as they are the generation not just the future of Mensa, but the here and now of Mensa. We are seeing more and more of them in leadership positions, and rightly so. We should encourage both their participation and enthusiasm. Many good events coming up: January 18-20, 2008 - Smarti Gras RG - at the Renaissance Hotel near the airport in Orlando. Details and form can be found on the Region 10 website. ([region10.us.mensa.org](http://region10.us.mensa.org)) February 15-17, 2008 - ValenTime RG - at the Holiday Inn in Destin. Link to the form is on the Region 10 website. May 23-26, 2008 - Tampa Bay's ARRR-RG - at the Hampton Inn and Suites in Ybor City. Contact registrar [katshe@aol.com](mailto:katshe@aol.com) I risk being politically incorrect, but I wish you a Merry Christmas and the Warmest of New Year's, anyway. Happy Holidays!!

**Maggie Truelove, Regional Vice Chair, Region 10**  
3333 Honeysuckle Lane, Orlando, Florida 32812;  
407-855-9078; truluvs@cfl.rr.com; rvc10@cfl.rr.com; rvc10@us.mensa.org

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## Cryptogram solutions

### Easy Level

Always end the name of your child with a vowel, so that when you yell the name will carry. ~ Bill Cosby

### Challenge Level

Remember, today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday. ~ Dale Carnegie

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## Calendar

Where no specific phone number is given, call 850-585-3194.

**Friday, Dec. 7, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. First Friday in Pensacola, L-o-n-g Lunch at Scenic 90 Café**, 701 Scenic Highway, Pensacola. Drop in for a long visit if you can, a short one if you can't. As you enter the restaurant, go to your right and to the rear.

**Saturday, Dec. 8, 11:30 a.m. Second Saturday in Panama City. Lunch at Chef Imondi's Downtown**, 448 Harrison Avenue.

**Tuesday, Dec. 11, 6 p.m. Supper Club in Pensacola, Hall's Seafood**, 920 E Gregory St downtown Pensacola. Call Dan Murray on his cell phone, 455-6339, after 7 p.m. or on weekends please.

**Friday, Dec. 14, 5 p.m. Happy Hour!** We will go to **Hog's Breath**, in Destin on the north side of Highway 98, across from Harbor Docks Restaurant. It's popular for good food, ambience and prices. Dave Howard is our coordinator - he and Tehane will be there at 5 p.m. Info: Davhoward01@embarqmail.com or 897-5702.

**Saturday, Dec. 15, 2 p.m. Annual Christmas Party/Open House at Jo and Bob Horne's home**, 641 Merioneth Court NE, Fort Walton Beach. (ExComm will plot in a corner sometime.) The basics will be provided, but it's a potluck event, so please bring something in the way of food and/or drink to share and join the party. All members and their families and friends are welcome. Info: Bob Horne, rhorne@cox.net or 315- 0255.

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**Friday, Dec. 28, 11:30 a.m., Last Friday in Shalimar. Lunch at Shalimar Cheers Pub**, 1270 North Eglin Parkway: their # is 651- 2740. It's at the back of a yellowish office building immediately north of the courthouse, turn at the red-and-yellow sign and go through the parking area all the way to the back and to the right.

**Saturday, Dec. 29, Newsletter Assembly and Games at the home of John and Mary Ann Mochan**, 616 Overbrook Dr., FWB. John will make brownies; bring your favorite goodies or beverage; fold, staple, mutilate and stamp, get your newsletter early and play games. Info: [jmochan@cox.net](mailto:jmochan@cox.net) or 585-3194. **Tentative January Events:** Jan. 4, Lunch, Pensacola; Jan. 8, Supper Club, Pensacola; Jan. 12, Lunch, Panama City; Jan. 11, Happy Hour, TBD; Jan. 18, Annual New Year Party, Pensacola; Jan. 25, Lunch, Shalimar; Jan. 26, Newsletter/Games Day, FWB

**SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS**

**Motorcycles SIG.** Dan Mazzeo of Gulf Breeze is vetting the idea of a SIG for anyone having an interest in motorcycles (owning one is not a requirement). Contact Dan at [onegoodengineer@aol.com](mailto:onegoodengineer@aol.com) or 850- 206-4213.

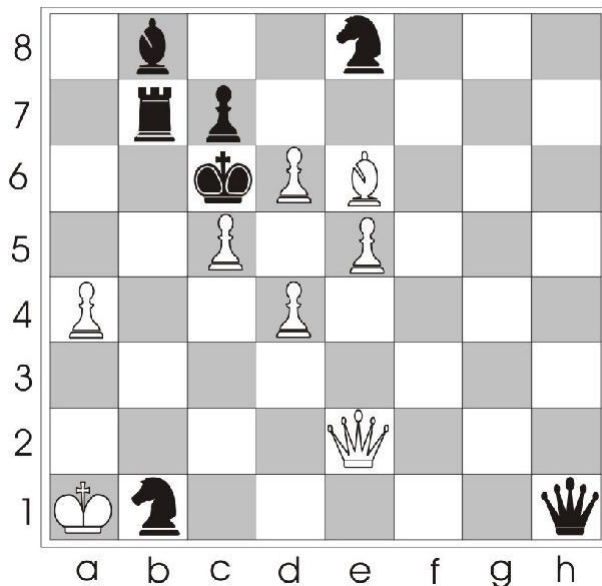
**Photography SIG.** Dan Murray in Pensacola (455-6339) found out there was no camera club anywhere near him, so he started one.

**Pinochle SIG.** Contact Bob Mundorff in Navarre at (850) 939-5882 or [pinochledd@aol.com](mailto:pinochledd@aol.com) .He will coordinate dates/times/schedules and is willing to host the games. For beginners too.

**Shooting SIG.** Contact Bob Mundorff in Navarre at [pinochledd@aol.com](mailto:pinochledd@aol.com) or 939-5882 to go shooting during the week at the Escambia River Muzzleloader's range - modern small arms allowed.

**MATE IN THREE - WHITE TO MOVE**

**A Chess Problem**



**from Lars Runar**

**Solution to November problem:**  
1. - b8Q

Reprinted by permission from Chess Training in 5333+1 Positions by Laszlo Polgar © 1994 Konemann Verlags gesellschaft (Algebraic notation)  
Reprinted by permission from Chess Training in 5333+1 Positions by Laszlo Polgar © 1994 Konemann Verlags gesellschaft

**President's Page**

**by John Mochan**

The Holidays are upon us and I hope they find you in good health and spirits. Our group is slowly growing and we would love to see everyone (especially the newest members) at an upcoming event. The Christmas party at the Hornes' will be December 15th in Fort Walton Beach. This is the best

attended event of the year and your chance to meet a lot of new friends. Please stop in, even if you can only stay a little while. In January we will again have our New Years party at Hal and Mabel's in Pensacola. The food will be great, as usual. Bring a dish if you can.

The planning for February's ValenTime Regional Gathering is going very well. I've got 25 people signed up so far and expect to get about 100. This might be our last opportunity to use the Holiday Inn, Destin so don't miss it! Please register early to give us the cash for supplies. And reserve a room with a great view of the Gulf for the weekend.

When was the last time you updated your personal information with American Mensa? Check it out and also check on how much of it you want released or withheld. We plan to publish a membership directory again soon and we want to be accurate.

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## Officers of Northwest Florida Mensa

**President:** John Mochan (850) 585- 3194; 585-5067; 616 Overbrook Dr., Fort Walton Beach, FL 32547-3528; [jmochan@cox.net](mailto:jmochan@cox.net)

**Vice President:** Micah Butler (850)723-8305; 8196 Lode Star Drive, Pensacola, FL 32514; [mjb28@cox.net](mailto:mjb28@cox.net)

**Treasurer:** Jerry Gilbert 850-862- 4800; 700 Trowbridge Ave., Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32547

**Membership Officer:** Robert Ulrich 850-939-6870; 7025 Pro Am Ct., Navarre, FL 32566, [bulrich@mchsi.com](mailto:bulrich@mchsi.com)

**Editor:** Bobby Sikes Wicke 850-862-2874; P.O.Box 252, Mary Esther, FL 32569; [bobwick@cox.net](mailto:bobwick@cox.net)

**Northwest Florida Mensa Home Page:** <http://www.nwflorida.us.mensa.org>

**Arbitrator/Mediator and Test Proctor:** Steve Brumm (850) 747-3233; Panama City, FLAD4WT@aol.com

**Gifted Child Coordinators:** Jill Russ (see Webmaster listing below for contact info), and Debi Dunkerley, 850-469-4602; 3941 McClellan Road, Pensacola 32503; [davendebi@cox.net](mailto:davendebi@cox.net)

**Panama City Coordinator:** George Chancellor 850-874-0154; 7523 Coleridge Road, Panama City, FL 32404; [georgec584@aol.com](mailto:georgec584@aol.com)

**S.I.G.H.T Coordinator & Test Proctor:** Mabel Loesch 850-433-2358; 2140 E. Scott St., Pensacola, FL 32503- 4957; [mloesch@bellsouth.net](mailto:mloesch@bellsouth.net)

**Test Proctor:** Joanne Horne 850-315-0255, 641 Merioneth Ct., Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32547; [johorne@cox.net](mailto:johorne@cox.net)

**Webmaster:** Jill Russ 850- 678-9169, 12 Corbin Ct., Niceville, FL 32578; [jillsruss@yahoo.com](mailto:jillsruss@yahoo.com).

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## Curmudgeon's Corner

### Feeling curmudgeonly? Send it in!

Tough choices:

- between "the devil made me do it" and "it was God's will;"
- between "mea culpa" and stonewalling.

Pain is like men: you might as well put up with both until they cause you more grief than you can sleep

with.

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# Israel, Egypt and Jordan - The Journey of a Lifetime!

**By Jim and Roberta Harris**

**Egypt:** After finally getting through security in Israel, we landed in the hot, dusty and noisy city of Cairo. Driving in Cairo is something to experience! There are few traffic lanes, and the ones that are marked are totally ignored. Three lanes of traffic can easily be made into 4 or even 5 - wherever there is a space, if your vehicle can fit through it, it's fair game to do so. Also, we saw very few cars not dinged, dented or smashed!

Our hotel was once a palace converted to a Marriott. After looking at the interior splendor of chandeliers, statues and gilded mirrors, we can only imagine the palace during its prime. Our first full day took us on a city tour and to the Cairo Museum of Egyptian Antiquities. With over 107 rooms of artifacts, mummies, sarcophagi, and massive statues of gods, goddesses and pharaohs, it would take months to see everything. Our next stop was Giza, home of the most famous and easily recognizable pyramids and of course, the Sphinx. Sakkara was home of the Step Pyramid, which is the oldest of Egypt's 97 pyramids.

Our next flight on Egypt Air took us to Luxor for our seven day Nile River cruise. From here we would take daily excursions to view some of the most colossal statues (Abu Simbel - shown in the movie Death on the Nile); the largest temple complex in the world covering over 100 hectares (Karnak - also seen in Death on the Nile); the only known temple Cleopatra visited and has her name in hieroglyphics (Dendara); the most important archaeological site in the world (Valley of the Kings, Valley of the Queens and The Colossi of Memnon); and the best preserved cult-temple (Temple of Horus located in Edfu). While visiting the Valley of the Kings, we were able to walk into three tombs, many of which were very brightly colored and buried deep into the mountains. King Tut's tomb is located here.

The Nile River is a major part of the lives of the farming community and also a source of water for all of Egypt. Very small canoes were used to cross the river for taking crops and supplies. Children, especially boys but a few girls, were often seen swimming and splashing in the river. Our time in Egypt went too fast and we've barely covered the surface. Just prior to catching our flight to Jordan, we visited the tomb of Anwar Sadat - a definite highlight!

**Jordan:** This is the first country we ever entered that x-rayed our luggage before we could leave the airport! The temperature was much cooler than we had experienced in our last two countries due to the altitude of Amman, about 6000 ft. above sea level. We were taken to several Roman ruins, one of the best being in Jerash, Jordan. This is one of the few ruins that has not been scavenged for its stones. Jerash is so well preserved, it is easy to see where homes stood and the ruts in the stone roads from chariots of centuries ago. We saw a show demonstrating Roman army formations and a chariot race. We also visited the Ajlun Castle, a fortress high in the mountains that allowed breath taking views all the way to the Dead Sea. This castle is important to the Muslims as the Arab forces of Saladin

successfully fought off the Christian Crusaders in the 12th century.

On our way to Petra, we stopped by Mt. Nebo, the burial place of Moses. The Church on this site has one of the best preserved mosaic floors depicting biblical events. Then Petra! After walking through the gorge for about 1.5 miles, we saw the Treasury! While it's called "The Treasury," it is actually a holding cave to mourn the dead. The ancients would then carry their loved one off to a nearby cave where other family members were buried. Petra also has an ancient church that contains the oldest mosaic floor depicting historical events. Our final day in Petra gave us the opportunity to take a jeep ride in Wadi Rum, the desert made famous by Lawrence of Arabia. We visited Lawrence's Spring, a stream running out of the mountain side and rumored to be where Lawrence washed during the Arab Revolt against the British. This day also included a swim in the Dead Sea. What a remarkable experience! If you gingerly sit in water just over the ankles and stretch out, you will float! We covered ourselves in the Dead Sea mud, which is proclaimed to cure everything from skin disorders to arthritis. We must say, after rinsing the mud off, our skins were as soft as the proverbial baby's butt.

It was then time to return to Cairo for a final short night, as we had to catch our plane back to the US the following morning.

**Cuisine:** We ate a lot of lamb and some goat in all three countries. It was very good except for Jordan, where the lamb and goat were gamier tasting. Other than that, while each country called the food different names, it was essentially the same. Lots of hummus, baba ghanoush, tabulah, falafel, pita bread, olives, olives and more olives! We also ate beef bacon in Egypt, which was quite good!

*Next month: final chapter - cultures and politics.*

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## Seven Trivia Questions

**Dr. Dan Finley, Brain Bowl Coach & Health Sciences Professor, Gulf Coast Community College, Panama City.**

Dr. Dan invites you to submit a guest trivia question to [dfinley@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:dfinley@gulfcoast.edu) for possible inclusion in future columns.

1. For what is Grover's Mill, New Jersey best known?
2. What is the meaning of the word "sybaritic"?
3. What is St. Vitus dance?
4. What board game created by Alfred Butts was previously named Lexico or Lexiko (1931), It, Criss-Crosswords (1939), and Logo-Loco before gaining it's current name in 1947?
5. What is the name of the jargon that in England is called back slang? Using such words as "ixnay" and "amscray," it is sometimes used by children for amusement or to converse in perceived privacy from adults or other children. Benjamin Franklin also used this "mystery language: in some of his publications.
6. Who was the only U.S. president to have earned the Boy Scouts of America rank of Eagle Scout?

7. In the realm of journalism, what is the significance of "30" (thirty)?

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## ValenTime!



### ValenTime RG on the Gulf

February 15-17, 2008

*The dolphins are smiling because we've got*

♥Bob & Lynda's wonderful chili (beef, turkey or voggie), Mabel's famous jambalaya and cornbread, and a CHOCOLATE LOVER'S ORGY on Friday night. Saturday starts with a continental breakfast, then sandwiches and salads for lunch and a Saturday night fried chicken and salads picnic, or you can visit a renowned Emerald Coast restaurant.

♥Hearts Tournament, interesting speakers, a Pirates Dance and more.

♥All weekend: great Hospitality overlooking the Gulf from the ninth floor; hot tub, indoor swimming pool, white sand beaches, and ocean waves.

♥Sunday morning, our popular auction, and box lunches to go.

**Registration:** \$45 per person if paid by January 15, \$50 per person at the door. Please make checks payable to Northwest Florida Mensa, and mail this form to:

**Registrar — ValenTime, 616 Overbrook Dr., Fort Walton Beach, FL 32547-3528.**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact:** John Mochan, (850)-585-3194, [jmochan@cox.net](mailto:jmochan@cox.net).

**Rooms:** Call the Holiday Inn, 1020 Highway 98 East, Destin, FL 32541. Phone 850-837-6181, toll free 877-837-6181, FAX 850-837-1523. Tell them to give you the Mensa rate, ranging from \$80 to \$120 per night depending upon the view.

Visit us at: [nwflorida.us.mensa.org](http://nwflorida.us.mensa.org)

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## Mea Culpa Corner

Jen Clark wrote: I looked up the reverse PIN story on snopes.com and it is not true. Several legislative bodies have attempted to make it true, but the bills have died. Bob Elens also pointed out our lack of research, but kindly added "enjoy the newsletter, looking forward to it each month." Finally, Lars

Runar joined the chorus.

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## Answers to Seven Trivia Questions

1. Grover's Mill is an unincorporated area near Princeton, New Jersey made famous as the landing site for the fictitious Martian invasion, depicted in Orson Welles' hysteria-provoking 1938 radio broadcast of *The War of the Worlds*. In the original H. G. Wells' book by the same name, the Martian landing takes place in Horsell Common in Surrey County, which is southeast of London.

2. As an adjective, 'sybaritic' pertains to a person whose primary interests are the pursuits of luxuries and gratification of the sensual appetites. Synonyms include voluptuary and sensationalist. When the word is capitalized, it refers to a native or resident of the ancient city of Sybaris. Sybaris was a Greek city in Magna Graecia, which is the name of the area in southern Italy that was colonized by Greece in the 8th century BCE. The city was sacked and destroyed in 510 BCE.

3. Chorea sancti viti (Latin for "St. Vitus' dance") is an abnormal involuntary movement disorder, one of a group of neurological disorders called dyskinesias. The term chorea is derived from a Greek word khoreia which means a type of dance, as in the quick movements of the feet or hands are vaguely comparable to dancing or piano playing. Also known as Sydenham's chorea, it is a disease characterized by rapid, uncoordinated jerking movements affecting primarily the face, feet and hands. It results from childhood infection with Group-A beta-hemolytic streptococci and is reported to occur in 20-30% of patients with rheumatic fever.

4. Scrabble, which struggled until it became a sensation in 1952 when Macy's Department Store began selling it. Butts determined the value of the tiles by carefully studying the use of words on the front page of the New York Times.

5. Igpay Atlinlay, also known as Pig Latin.

6. Gerald Rudolph Ford (1913-2006)

7. In the days of typewriters and teletypes, a writer would put "30" at the bottom of the last page of a story to signify there were no more pages. There are different theories concerning the origin of the symbol, from Morse code, to the number standing for the standard number of lines in a story at the turn of the century, to simply beginning when someone wrote, "B.O." to signify, "book over."

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## Milestones

**Mensaversaries:** As of this month, the following Mensans have maintained continuous membership in American Mensa Ltd. for the years shown. These anniversaries may not accurately reflect the total number of years in Mensa if a break in membership of one or more years has occurred.

24 Robert Mundorff

15 Archie Hovanesian Jr.

13 Linda Rae Campbell

10 Larry Caley

10 Basil Fossum  
9 William Browning  
9 Richard Engelland  
9 Donald Hines  
9 Milton Rogers  
8 Donald Kornegay  
6 Scott Kaufmann  
4 Shirley Branan  
4 Colby Van Atta  
3 Kristen Augustine  
3 J. Cameron Pouncey  
2 Tara Taylor

**HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS!**

5 Bill Campbell  
5 David Dunlap  
9 James "Cheever" Lambert  
11 Lars Runar  
16 Sally Garst  
16 Lauren Smith  
17 William Graham  
19 Laura Dolly  
20 Morrie Beitch  
21 Kristen Augustine  
27 John Mochan  
28 Daniel Cole  
28 Joseph Yates III

*If your birthday isn't listed, it's because it is not on the membership roster we get from the national office each month - and that's because you instructed National to withhold it. Please go to [us.mensa.org](http://us.mensa.org) and change your listing (or write to the address in your Mensa Bulletin, or call them). We promise not to tell anyone how old you are.*



Mensans at the Krewe of Columbus Ball: MC Bob Horne; Jo Horne; Queen Marianne McDonald; and King Jim Harris.

*Photo by Ruth Cullen*

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# Précis

## Fraser Sherman

*The way they did it in the old days: LEVIATHAN AND THE AIR PUMP: Hobbes, Boyle and the Experimental Life* by Stephen Shapin and Simon Schaffer looks at the controversy between Robert Boyle - whose experiments creating a vacuum with an air pump were held up as proof that scientific experiments could determine "matters of fact" - and philosopher Thomas Hobbes, who held that without an underlying philosophy to explain them, what we saw in experiments no more proved facts than what we saw in dreams. As the authors note in the introduction, this shows how the kind of scientific thinking we take as a given was once radical and dubious; an interesting, look at a pivotal moment in science.

**WORLD OF THE CASTRATI: The History of an Extraordinary Operatic Phenomenon** by Patrick Barbieri, is an exhaustive look at the legendary singers of seventeenth and eighteenth century opera from the creation and training through their often flamboyant lives and the sumptuous world of Italian opera, where six hour performances were typical (with opera-goers socializing, eating, gambling and only paying attention to the show during the big arias by their faves). Barbieri concludes there's much that will never be known since the singers left no memoirs and we only have recordings of one second-string castrati from the late nineteenth century (by which time the extensive, demanding training the great ones underwent was gone with the wind); despite this, entertaining and interesting.

*And another reminder that Act4Murder will be performing "Murder Under the Mistletoe" twice for the public in December. If you want to catch me as sleazy whoregoat "Dick Sticksit," check out Act4Murder.com for times and places.*

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## Holiday advice

**To my friends who enjoy a glass of wine... and those who don't:**

As Ben Franklin said: "In wine there is wisdom, in beer there is freedom, in water there is bacteria." In a number of carefully controlled trials, scientists have demonstrated that if we drink 1 liter of water each day, at the end of the year we would have absorbed more than 1 kilo of Escherichia coli, (E. coli) - bacteria found in feces. In other words, we are consuming 1 kilo of poop.

However, we do NOT run that risk when drinking wine & beer (or tequila, rum, whiskey or other liquor) because alcohol has to go through a purification process of boiling, filtering and/or fermenting. Remember: Water = Poop, Wine = Health. Therefore, it's better to drink wine and talk stupid, than to drink water and be full of shit.

There is no need to thank me for this valuable information: I'm doing it as a public service.

*~ Holiday advice from David Luther Woodward*

## Editorial Policy

**PensaMensa welcomes your articles and artwork!!** Submissions must show name, address, phone,

and may be edited for clarity and space. Please enclose an SASE if you want your material returned. Deadline for submission is the 15th of each month.

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