

# Excerpts from the April 2000 MIND

The Newsletter of  
[Central Indiana Mensa](#)

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## MY PIECE OF MIND

GEORGE DUNN

### Rise Early, Work Hard, Win the Lottery

As I hope you've already noticed, we hit the writers jackpot this month on the theme "Coffee." Who'da thunk it, especially after the unimpressive showing on our "Big" February theme?

We may need to reassess our topics: those academic assignments get good response in the surveys, but it's the homely little themes that bring in the actual essays.

\* \* \*

Speaking of the themes, it seems it never gets said too often that people are free to write on anything they please; the announced themes are there for inspiration, not proscription. Why, just last night a fairly active participant in our Group gave me twenty minutes of phone on why the May theme isn't quite feasible. I wonder if somewhere in the back of the writers' minds there isn't the

notion that their articles are going to be graded.

\* \* \*

Well, it's coming up on election time. Oh, no; not whichever of the four-letter guys gets to the White House: Mensa elections. There's going to be a new LocSec, some changes on the ExCom and a new direction for Central Indiana Mensa. Those of you who have feeling about canceling this, not canceling that and starting up this other thing are going to have your opportunity to influence the outcomes.

I know there's some reticence to step forward for office because it appears to be a thankless job. Well, we don't want folks to enlist under false assurances, so we are talking about a minimum of 24 hours a year just attending ExCom meetings, and the LocSec can count on quite a bit more. Each duty performed is more time out of your busy schedule, but y'know, there's a certain irreducible connection between the things we do and the people who are available to turn the crank. If you like RGs, somebody's got to put them on; if you go to Monthly Meetings, somebody's got to rent the room, if you belong to a Local Group, somebody's got to satisfy the AMC's requirements for one.

\* \* \*

Oh, last month we mentioned a possible Northside locale for the Monthly Meetings, since some folks don't care for the downtown venue. We checked it out and it's nice but maximum capacity is 25-30, so it's "no go" for general meetings. However, if there are northsiders and Hancock County members who would like to have a moderately-sized local activity (the rent is \$60), much as the Southsiders used to, let the ExCom know.

\* \* \*

We've instituted a new wrinkle at the Monthly Meetings, thanks to a suggestion by Rocio Carrasco: before the main speaker, a Local Group member has 10-15 minutes to reveal something of personal interest and possibly entertainment/educational merit. Consider being that person in the coming months.

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## **LOCSECTION**

### **Grace Falvey**

All the bills from this year's Regional Gathering have been paid, and it looks as if we have realized a profit of \$511. In addition, the book sale brought in \$60 for the special projects fund.

There was a time when we would have been dazzled by these figures. Our first RGs were very laid-back affairs held in state parks around Indiana and attended by dozens of local members. The only financial goal was to break even.

Over the years, we moved to Indianapolis and began to attract more RG "junkies" to the meeting, while the participation of local members dwindled. The events also became more profitable, and we came to rely on that income to support other activities.

We are at a point now where the local members' lack of interest in the RG is

eroding our ability to plan and carry out a successful event.

I have never understood why more local members don't attend. Several of those who were there this year have volunteered favorable comments on the weekend's activities, specifically the Friday-night events, the chicken dinner, the sessions on nutrition and financial planning, the wine tasting and the children's program. (The "Pied Piper," Alan Schmidt, was asked by the youngsters at this session whether he would be back next year.)

Next year. Aye, there's the rub. Or perhaps I should say, "Oy." Most of the people who worked this year's RG have given their all, and there are no new volunteers in the pipeline to carry on. The same is true for the ExCom, which is now down to seven members, with no replacements in sight.

#### ARE YOU READY?

This is an election year for our chapter, and we will need volunteers to serve on the nominating committee. They, in turn, will need to find others willing to run for office. Any member who wants to discuss helping in one of these categories can reach me at (317) 842-6246. I'd be happy to talk with anyone who's interested in chairing an RG in 2001.

I should say here that anyone taking on these jobs will not be without support. I could whisper a couple of names to the chairman of the nominating committee that would make the search for candidates a bit easier, and I know where the RG Chairman can find a few people willing to help with that project. But success in either area will require the addition of some new workers.

#### OR NOT

Suppose we have to give up on the idea of holding an RG, thereby losing its financial support for our monthly meeting and other activities. Suppose we can't find enough people for a nine-member ExCom and have to rely on a smaller group for ideas and organization. Perhaps we are overdue for a change.

We might adopt the Evansville model, where the LocSec gets curious about some place or activity in the area, arranges for a tour, and joins a handful of members to visit the site. Or we could have monthly meetings similar to those held in Louisville, where the members go out to dinner at a restaurant with everyone paying his or her own tab. No fuss, no muss; no work, no expense.

What does the future hold for Central Indiana Mensa? The answer is entirely up to you.

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## LETTERS

### To the Editor:

In the grip of passion, the most honest man will sometimes state things a little beyond the truth. This is not lying, certainly not as our President practices it; it's more a matter of simplifying on the bias. The trouble with biased simplification is that it's so slightly off the truth that very little time passes before even the author starts to remember it that way. I dislike to quibble, but I feel that sincere but misleading statements deserve to be challenged lest silence be taken for confirmation. I will address two. We did not run out of diet drinks at the RG; we ran out of some people's preferred diet drinks. I realize

that if one drinks nothing but Diet Coke then Diet Pepsi is a disappointment, but this is not the same as having to go thirsty. We DID run out of deli meat. As Hospitality Chair, I deny this was the result of chintzy provendering. Based on the consumption of only HALF the pizzas the night before, the quantity of meat was adequate to generous. I don't know how it went so fast as I was out of the area on a grocerying errand, but I did note upon return that while the meat was gone, the buns were nearly untouched, suggesting that someone or someones helped themselves to meat in shall we say a greater than sandwich quantity.

There were some real problems with the RG, enough to put its continuation in doubt, but little good is served by exaggerating them.

**George Dunn**

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**To the Editor:**

In response to Greg's comments on the RG and other comments on the state of Indy Mensa:

Yes, there are problems but it's not that bad. Many folks had a good time at the RG. Kiki mentioned in ChiMe having a good time. I had a good time though I'd liked to have seen more of you and for reasons I won't go into here I had to leave early.

I am a member of Central Indiana Mensa by choice. Lots of things have happened to me over the years and in Indianapolis I always found someone to talk to who seemed to understand. You folks are a great bunch of listeners.

I'm not currently a churchgoer but as a child I was heavily exposed to Bible stories including the one about Mary and Martha. Mary was off preparing food while Martha listened to what Jesus had to say. Jesus said she had made the better choice. Maybe there is a lesson here. Of course events must be organized where listening can take place but things can be kept as simple as possible.

I hope it works.

**Joanne Ortman**

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**To the Editor:**

The following addresses Mr. Crawford's article on the recent Indianapolis RG.

In all franknes, I thought this year's Indy RG wasn't that bad. I didn't attend the whole weekend, but I got out of it what I wanted. It was everything a schmoozefest should be, and surplus pizza, too. Considering the hazardous weather, I'd say the turnout was OK. Moreover I applaud those people who used their Mensan noodles and stayed away from Indy or left early during this untimely mess of a snowstorm. A mere party isn't worth risking life and property, right? Of course not.

As for the civic ambiance of the RG, I observed some people assuming their usual roles and duties, which was a good thing. I saw others helping with what

they could, which was also good. One cannot ask any more than that.

I think most people are sincerely interested in the RG; they just don't know what to help out with. Asking "Can I help?" after the RG is underway is not effective because the people being asked are too busy themselves to prioritize or assign duties.

Now, if volunteers are not there to begin with, no amount of begging or shaming will produce them.

If attendees are not willing to contribute the necessary labor (e.g., transporting and storing food), they should not be so exacting in their demands for special refreshments.

Moreover, the RG organizers should not be afraid to cancel the event if the necessary labor pool is not available.

Better to cancel an RG doomed to failure than to go forward with it only to disappoint.

A cancellation may be regrettable, but I think it would breathe fresh air into future events. A hiatus from the RG would allow us to:

- \* better plan;
- \* impress people with the need for volunteers;
- \* recover from burnout.

In conclusion, it was a nice little RG which could have been better, but was hardly a bust.

Greg, it's O.K.

**Rocio Carrasco**

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## **Colleen Fitzgerald**

Back in 1773, a crazy bunch of guys got dressed up like Indians, took some crates full of tea, and did the only reasonable thing there is to do with such stuff: they dumped the whole lot of it into Boston Harbor. Later, they made up some story about taxation and eventually started a revolution, but the important thing is, that's when America began drinking coffee.

Coffee has played an important role in history, and remains an important commercial product. It is second only to oil as a world commodity. One in every 177 people on the planet is employed in the coffee industry. The average American coffee drinker enjoys 3.58 cups of coffee a day. (The other 0.42 cups are spilled on neckties and original documents.) In Scandinavia the average annual per-capita consumption is 26.4 pounds of coffee or roughly 1200 cups per year, for every last man, woman and child. I don't know how to figure out the fraction, since their cups are metric.

William Penn paid \$4.88 for a pound of coffee in 1632 (about the time the entire island of Manhattan went for twenty-four bucks). The French philosopher Voltaire reportedly drank 50 cups a day. Those guys were real coffee lovers. Frederick the Great had his coffee made with champagne and a bit of mustard. That guy, well, he was just weird.

of all addictive substances...

Today, of all addictive substances, coffee is the most socially acceptable. You can't always walk around with a cold beer in your hand, but even in the stodgiest stall meeting it's OK, even good form, to bring a cup of coffee.

I am something of a connoisseur of coffee; just as some people can tell good wine from bad, even if neither one has a screw top, I can taste the difference between Colombian and Costa Rican; Starbuck's and Caribou; regular and decaf; instant and perked; auto-drip or filter.

Some people would be surprised to know that I don't drink a lot of coffee. I'm not even obsessed with it, really (Preoccupied, maybe). I just like it. It's one of my favorite things on earth. If there's a better smell in the world than fresh-ground Kona coffee, I can't imagine what it would be. My first thought in the morning, even before I get out of bed (besides "How long can I stay here?" or "What did you say your name was again?") is "I need coffee." If a plane crash trapped me for ten weeks in the Andes with nothing but soccer players to eat, coffee is the first thing I'd want when I got back to civilization.

I like my coffee the way I like my men: strong and hot with just a touch of sweetness. The best coffee is very fresh and has real dairy in it, preferably half and half, since worry I don't get enough fat in diet. (The coffee in Purgatory is instant decaf with non-dairy creamer.) After dinner in Hell (liver and Lima beans with mincemeat pie for dessert), you get herbal tea, plus you have to help with the dishes.

You never know where you're going to find the really good stuff, or the truly bad. Even some coffee shops have terrible coffee; Arabica coffee is quite bitter; Starbuck's tastes burnt. On the other hand, Cafe Espresso at Border's Books is pretty good, and Caribou Coffee is excellent. The best coffee in downtown Cleveland comes from Cork & Beans on the lower level of the Huntington Building; they make even Costa Rican taste OK. The absolute best cup of coffee I can remember came from a Sunoco station off I-70 somewhere between Dayton and Indianapolis.

There are those who theorize that there are health hazards to drinking coffee. My brother John once had to consult his doctor, because every time he drank coffee, he'd get this terrible pain in his eye. The doctor advised him to take the spoon out of the cup and he was fine.

If I ever read that drinking coffee is bad for you, I'll give up reading. I find that there's nothing more therapeutic than a good cup of Joe, especially when combined with a hot bath and a good book. Coffee will pep you up when you need a lift, and is warm and soothing when you want to relax. A cup of coffee will even stop an asthma attack (I know that for a fact, since I am likely to start wheezing if I wake up and there's no coffee in the house.) Fortunately, I don't have a problem with caffeine; decaf is like kissing your sister.

The coffee I make at home has gotten progressively stronger over the years; it's almost to the point now where the spoon will stand up by itself. At this pace, eventually I'll have to serve it with an ice cream scoop. My son will sometimes complain that my coffee tastes like dirt. I tell him that it should -- it was ground this morning.

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**Dom Jervis**

**Coffee?**

No thanks, I never touch the stuff. Yuk!

Interestingly, this opiate of the masses is being used today to:

- \* Increase the stress level of our society.
- \* Make exorbitant profits for those abetting this collective angst, and
- \* Make life less fun.

It wasn't long ago when friends would, after an eight-hour work day, meet for a beer or two. Today, doing so makes you a criminal, thanks to the efforts of Mothers Against Drunk Driving, insurance companies and the legal system. Recognizing that de jure prohibition did not work, implementing it on a de facto basis has stealthily but effectively caused the use of the best legal stress-reducer in our society to decrease sharply.

Recognizing that people still needed some type of buzz to cope with life, the power elite pushed coffee as the new panacea. This was easy, since it was already firmly established in the American cultural tradition.

Couple this with the fact that American companies universally wailed about needing to become more competitive to survive in the World Business Community. This they claimed, required higher productivity. The most economical means to accomplish this was to compel workers to put in longer hours with no increase in compensation, along with the passage of laws that allowed them to do so legally.

Still, the human body has its limits. How to push them? Coffee, a beverage already recognized as the morning sacrament! They figured out that, if coffee is provided to employees throughout the work day, it benefits the company, the deceitful perception that the company is actually doing its employees a favor!

Now the same old cup of Mud day after day gets old, even to the most ardent coffee lover. How to change things to keep it interesting, and keep the masses downing life-threatening quantities of the sludge? Enter the flavor of the day! Kenyan Blend one day, Sumatran Roast the next, and for all anyone knows, it could all be the same swill!

Now, given people's innate snob-appeal, they wanted to become experts in all of the coffees available, regardless of the price. Thus was born the coffee bar, with its \$2.50 price tag per cup. I'm not that old, and I remember when it was fifteen cents.

So, instead of workers relaxing after an eight-hour day with a cold beer, they now work at the office until all hours of the night, gassed up on an overpriced coffee. Microsoft makes no apologies for the fact many of its employees are working at 2:00 a.m. Other companies give their employees T-shirts that say, "Ninety hours per week, and loving it!"

And people wonder why job-related stress and workplace violence are at an all-time high? Duh!

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**Warren Ward**

**Coffee - Our Good Friend**



I am not a smoker, but like all Americans, I have read a lot about the addiction. Most smokers report that they can use their cigarettes in one of two ways, either to get/keep them going, or to relax. When you think about this, it is hard to believe that a stimulant can somehow become relaxing, but that is just how I use my coffee. While the morning "wake-up" cup is as much a part of my daily routine as turning on my computer, the cups I enjoy most are those with, or especially after a meal, those in which I allow a stimulant to relax me.

### a number of relaxing rituals...

Coffee has a number of relaxing rituals associated with it which certainly help. The waitperson comes over solicitously to ask if we'd like a refill. We deal with sweeteners, creamers, flavors, gentle stirring -- somewhat complicated, but relaxing just the same. In a business setting, coffee eases the mood; sounds like a safe first date, too -- "Let's meet for a cup of coffee."

### Getting folks coming and going...

Coffee also has its darker side. We have good friends who expend considerable effort worrying about the grind of their beans, which flavor of creamer to use and which of the expensive imported blends they will try today. My wife Janet works for an organization based in Seattle and must travel out there several times a year for various meetings. She reports that there is a coffee stand on almost every corner, often two of the same brand across the street from each other, getting folks both coming and going. On one visit, friends took her to visit the tulip fields, out in the country more than 100 miles north of Seattle.

### Row upon row of beautiful flowers....

What did she find? Row upon row of beautiful flowers, punctuated by Latt stands every few hundred feet, so the fanatics could relax with their favorite brew. Although I can't imagine anyone paying their last \$5 (or is it \$6, now?) for a Double Grande Latte Lite with Mocha, we must admit that - just as with bottled water, we are now paying a lot more for a basic beverage than we once did.

In a recent Coke annual report, they commented on the possibility of increasing the consumption of their beverages in the US. The answer? We can always do better as long as people still take coffee breaks. Perhaps part of coffee's popularity is that it remains a small luxury, an inexpensive way to visit an exotic land by enjoying one of its products, especially when sharing the time with friends. Whatever the appeal, I can hardly imagine our doing without it.

*[Back in the days when Coke's secret ingredient was  $C_{17}H_{21}NO_4$  instead of  $C_8H_{10}N_4O_2$ , one of their ad pitches was "the thinking man's coffee." -Ed]*

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## George T. Appleton

### Coffee Clouds

As a teacher, I could only spend time in Death Valley in the summer to look for one or another of the lost treasure sites, so I would drive at night and be where I could get an early start. The two things Death Valley has the most of in summer are heat and wind. Why, the night I drove in, on a search for the Lost

Gunsight silver outcrop, it was so windy that the boulder were blowing across the East Side Road, along with the occasional burro. Most of the burros knew to just go along with it, but I did see one (before the wind whipped my headlight beams off to the right) who was facing east, into the breeze, his little legs going just as fast as they could, while he was traveling west. At one point, the poor little thing tried to take a breath, and that wind just blew him up like a balloon. He died, of course, of jack-assphyxiation.

Anyway, I knew the road, so I turned west to the West Side Road (the wind blew the headlight beams right back into the lamps then, but as soon as I got into the lee of a mountain things were all right). I camped for the night at the foot of a cliff - a promising spot 10 find the Lost Gun sight.

I overslept, but thought I still had time for a cup of coffee before going off to make my fortune, so I got over to the little camper stove, filled the cup with water and instant coffee and tried to light it. Just then, the sun peeked over the Funeral Mountains and full on my campsite. The first two matches I used, the sun melted the flame so it dripped onto the ground before I could get the stove going. The third time, though, I sat so my shadow was over the stove, and it lit lust fine. Coffee was heating, and soon I'd be ready to move out.

Thinking of that, I reached for the rock hammer - and moved my shadow away from the stove. Instantly, the coffee brewing burst into a cloud of brown steam which slowly rose up the cliffside.

I really needed that coffee

I didn't bring much extra water, couldn't afford to waste it, and I really needed that coffee to get me going, so I grabbed the cup and started up the cliff underneath the brown cloud.

The higher I climbed, the cooler it was, and soon the cloud began to condense and the first drops of coffee started to rain out of it. By skillfully moving to catch them, I began to fill the cup. Higher up yet, a much smaller cloud concentrated its rain, so I got nearly all of it into my cup before the cloud rained itself out. Finally I had my morning cup of coffee, but I had to sit up there on a ledge for twenty minutes before it was cool enough to drink.

Didn't find the lost Gunsight that trip. Well, maybe next time.

[Reprinted from Mind Bets, newsletter of Southern Nevada Mensa, December 1999; William G. Raley, editor]

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**Ken Kleist**

### **Coffee**

Coffee is known to contain the highly addictive drug caffeine. As such it should be subject to rigorous control and strict regulation by the Food and Drug Administration. Manufacturers are known to manipulate the levels of this drug in products sold to the unsuspecting public.

Coffee, both with and without caffeine, appears to increase the muscle tone of the sphincter that closes off the esophagus and to increase acid production in the stomach. For persons who are subject to heartburn it is recommended that they should forego coffee.

Contrary to popular mythology, coffee does not sober up a drunk. When a drunk consumes vast quantities of coffee in a misguided attempt to counter the effects of alcohol, all he becomes is a wide awake drunk. Drinkers who would otherwise quietly sleep off a drinking binge behind the wheels of their cars in parking lots are driven to cause mayhem on our streets and highways.

How long will our society continue to allow the unrestricted and unregulated sale of this hazardous drug delivery system to our young people?

If we had new laws to outlaw the sale, use, or possession of coffee we could easily increase our prison population many fold. This would create many thousands of new jobs in our criminal justice system, assure the financial security of the esteemed (or should that be esteemed, as in cafe latte) members of the legal profession.

Don't we realize that just a few more laws and a little more regulation will solve all the problems of society? Have we learned nothing from the past?

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## **Nancy Eubank**

"Yes, I take my coffee black," I lied. Eighteen years old, I was embarrassed to tell my first boss on my first day of my first job that I had never had coffee. The job was for an insurance company located in the old Bankers' Trust Building on Ohio Street in downtown Indianapolis -- a building that had beautiful, open stairways. I drank a lot of coffee every morning thereafter and trotted down and up those staircases often to the restrooms one floor below us. The job was a one-man, one-woman (me) operation. I liked the coffee, my boss liked me. He sat on my desk and talked to me several times that summer of my eighteenth year. I looked for another job during my lunch hours.

There were more people around in the offices of the "500" Festival Associates. And my boss was woman. She gave me the job of brewing the coffee. The first day, I took all of the pots, filter baskets and cups and washed them with warm water and soap, then cleaned Mr. Coffee inside and out. Everyone raved about how good my coffee was!

When I was a little girl, my parents drank coffee together at the dining table every evening after supper had been cleared off. This was their private time. The five of us children were closed out of the room by glass-paneled French doors. Of course, since I wasn't allowed in there, that's where I wanted to be. Never one for subtlety, I would stand and stare through the doors at my parents drinking coffee, smoking cigarettes and discussing all sorts of interesting things. Alas, I was the fifth child and they had gotten very good at tuning out distractions.

Yes, coffee is a grown-up thing. One of the "perks" (no pun intended) of being an adult.

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## **Bob Thomas**

### **Not a New Century Yet!**

If you are still having trouble convincing people that this is not yet a new century, if you're having trouble getting them to see the logic, then maybe this combination of GRAPHICS and LOGIC will help you convince them.

We are NOT in a new century. That is NOT a matter of opinion NOR a matter

for debate; it is a simple matter of **grade school counting** of years, or marbles, or anything else.

**1** is the **first**, **99** is the **99th** and **100** (one hundred is the **100th** and **last** in a pile or in a century. Number **101** is the **first** marble or year in a new pile of marbles or a new century.

**199** is the **99th** and **200** (two **hundred**) is the **100th** and **last**. **201** is the **first**.

**1999** is the **99th** and **2000** (20 **hundred**) is the **100th** and **last** year of the century!

**2001** is the **first** year in a new century! **One** means **first**.

*[Those who are into conspiracy theories may enjoy the allegation that the confusion over the turn of the millennium stems from the corporations whose marketing departments wanted a maximum "event" to advertise in connection with new product lines, Of course, that event now being past, they will all suddenly realize the Millennium is still coming up in time for the next revolutionary improvement. - Ed]*

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**B** \_\_\_\_\_  
**A** \_\_\_\_\_  
**S** \_\_\_\_\_  
**I** \_\_\_\_\_  
**L** \_\_\_\_\_

by Basil Wentworth

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## To Keep In MIND

### Upcoming Gatherings and Events

*** 2000 ***	
May 5-7	<b>SEMMantics 22</b> , Ann Arbor MI. Registrar: <a href="#">Betsy Y. Mark</a> . Registration \$50 to 4/28; \$55 after; hotel: Clarion Hotel, Atrium and Conference Center, 2900 Jackson Rd, Ann Arbor, MI 48103 (734)665-4444, \$65.
May 5-7	<b>Year 2000 Mensa Mind Games</b> Atlanta, GA; Summer Suites Hotel, 1899 Sullivan Rd, College Park, GA (770) 994-2997, \$75; Registration \$55 by 4/29; Registrar: Mary Dwyer Wolfe, PO Box 1371, Stone Mountain GA 30086, email: Y2KMGA@us.mensa.org
June 9-11	<b>DAMNations Lucky 13</b> , Dayton, OH; Howard Johnson Lodge, 7575 Poe Ave, Dayton OH, 45414 (937) 454-0550; rooms \$45; RG Registration \$60 to 5/31, \$69 walk-in; contact Nita Fields, <a href="mailto:Needtoread@aol.com">Needtoread@aol.com</a> .
June 30-July 2	<b>Canadian AG</b> Torono, Ontario; dharris@eco-on.net
July 5-9	<b>Philly Phrolics Delaware Valley Mensa AG</b> (Philadelphia) (Joint AG with Mensa Canada) <a href="http://www.libertynet.org/dvmensa/ag2k/">http://www.libertynet.org/dvmensa/ag2k/</a> . Register with American Mensa Ltd., 1229 Corporate Dr. W., Arlington TX, 76006-6103.

<b>July 28-30</b>	<b>Mensalypmics Down Under</b> , Columbus, OH, Days Inn, 1212 E. Dublin-Granville Rd, Columbus, OH 43229; (614) 885-9696; rooms \$39; RG registratio: \$50 to 5/31. \$55 after; Steve Herrick, <a href="mailto:Steve_Herrick@compuserve.com">Steve_Herrick@compuserve.com</a> .
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**\*\*\* 2001 \*\*\***

<b>July 4-8</b>	<b>North Texas Mensa AG</b> (Dallas)
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**\*\*\* 2002 \*\*\***

<b>July 3-7</b>	<b>Phoenix AG</b>
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## Warren Ward

### The Symbol of Peace

Symbols clearly do have power. Way back in the Swinging Sixties, when I was a rebellious hippie, symbols were critical. The ones we used to stake our claim to the opposite of whatever our parents held dear were bell-bottoms, tie-dyes, flowers and peace symbols. Janet's wedding dress featured peace symbols ribbons for decorations and she wore peace symbol earrings.

Another favorite symbol was the *two-fingered salute*\*, the Peace Sign. This was quite a flexible means of communication. In the earliest, most naive days, we thought flashing the peace sign would somehow end the war in Vietnam. It meant "hi" when seeing a friend, or perhaps "I'm one, too" when meeting another long-hair in a new town. Depending on the giver's facial expression, it could be used sarcastically, as in "nice bell-bottoms, Dad." Three days without sleep causes my recollections of Woodstock (the Real One) to be a bit blurred, but I feel sure that many peace signs were exchanged there in rural New York as new friendships were formed.

Being an aging hippie, I thought I'd be more accepting of different styles than my parents were, but I can clearly remember being put off by the tight pants and tough attitudes of the Punk bands and their followers in the early 80's. The baggy skateboarders of the later 90's were much closer to the expression that we were comfort able with in the 60's.

In our lobby, Steve and I have a nice assortment of magazines to allow people to expand their minds while waiting. I now see that clothing very similar to what I remember so fondly has come back around. The covers feature plenty of bell-bottoms and tie-dyes; a few articles even mention the bands I enjoyed in a positive light.

I was driving through downtown Columbus the other day, when I slowed to allow a young, bell-bottom-clad woman to cross the street in front of me. She smiles and flashed me the peace sign. I smiled back, then when I got back to the office, asked our 25-year-old receptionist what was up — was it back, too? "Yup," she replied, "she *peaced* you."

Just when I was feeling like the world might turn out OK after all, it occurred to me: what if the jay-walker had really meant, "nice hair cut, Gramps" when she made the sign. Clever, these kids and their powerful symbols.

[\* I simply can't pass up the chance to bore the readers with the datum that the two-finger gesture is only a peace sign when the knuckles are toward the giver. When the knuckles are toward the recipient, it means, approximately, "up yours."

Wait - there's more: this particular insult has an auspicious history, going all the way back to the Hundred Years' War. After the French defeat at Agincourt, the Welsh bowmen, whose peasant archery had slaughtered so many of the French knights, taunted their defeated foemen with the gesture, as though to say, "With these two fingers (the ones that drew the bowstring), we beat your armored chivalry." The precise meaning faded as bows were replaced by more lethal weapons, but the notion of hostility lived on. - Ed ]

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## Later, the Tuscarora George Dunn

### Cupajo

I'm probably unAmerican, but I don't drink coffee. It's not that I have moral objections to it, or that I retch violently at the smell, I just never developed a taste for it.

O.K., I do have the occasional chilled latte, but that's more milk than coffee, which I think is coffee in its proper place - as a flavoring.

Also, I have, rarely, used the stimulant properties of caffeine by means of its most readily available natural source, and I enjoy the aroma of coffee, both roasting and brewing. I like pine scent, too, but I don't drink floor cleaner.

You would think that a non-affection for coffee would be no more problematic than a disdain for turnips, there being plenty of other pseudo-nutritive fluids around. The snag to such thinking is that coffee is almost synonymous with hospitality. Except for serious boozers, the first thing a guest is offered is a cup of java. As far as I know, no one has ever been asked, "Can I get you a turnip?"

This means the *acafenado* must start almost every visitation by spurning a gesture.

Then there's the problem of *providing* the coffee. I keep the stuff on hand, but only in its instant form, which, apparently, seasoned coffee lovers can detect, despite those commercials to the contrary. At the very same RG for which I won an award for running Hospitality, I got chewed out by a chap who counted his whole weekend as ruined because he didn't get "real" 24-hour coffee.

Lastly, in business situations, coffee preparation is all wrapped with social status. "Getting coffee" is a mark of subordination, yet only trusted servants are allowed to do it. Sending a non-imbiber for the stuff is dicey, since he obviously won't get it right, but excusing him if he's lowest in rank is awkward.

All the forgoing, I must add, applies to casual coffee users. Heaven save me if I fall in among *serious* bean lovers. These are not only the epicures who can tell Hawaiian from Jamaican grounds by diffraction spectra, but common mokes with uncommonly firm opinions about the constituents of "good" coffee. These, I note, most frequently touch on searing heat and maximum viscosity. Most disdain such contaminants as sugar or cream, but others insist on specific brands of additives. So far I've not met anyone who thinks vessel

shape terribly important, but I expect that day to come. The 14-oz mug and the demitasse will some time be joined by who knows what subtly improved flagons.

Y'know, though, while it is definitely too late to turn me into one of those "gotta have my cup" folks, I think I could like coffee a lot better if it just wasn't so damn *hot*. I don't like hot drinks; there seems to be something oxymoronic about heated beverages. Drinks are supposed to quench thirst; cool liquids do that best.

Yes, there's also hot tea and hot cocoa; I don't much like those either. *Iced* tea is great, and cocoa tastes much better warm with one's tongue unscalded. Hot soup is OK, because it has solid parts; hot oatmeal is essential and things like potatoes and pork chops should at least hit the plate hot, but they're *food*.

If coffee customs come around to cold, cool, or even warm, get back to me.

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[H = Host]	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dave A.	♥	♥	♥									
Alison Brown												
Rocio Carrasco			♥									
Greg Crawford		♥	♥									
Janette Greene Dollar	♥											
George Dunn	♥	♥	♥									
Marcele Everest	♥H		♥H									
Grace Falvey			♥									
Marion Harcourt	♥											
Jud Horning	♥	♥	♥									
Jerry Hunter		♥										
Dom Jervis		♥										
Treva Marks		♥H										
Bob Thomas	♥											
Doris Thomas	♥											
Nancy White	♥	♥	♥									
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

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If you know of a Mensan who has suffered a setback **or** who has something to celebrate, (*especially* to celebrate) please contact Petra with the information; she will send a card on behalf of the Local Group.

(address and phone # deleted for web page)

[pritchie@ibj.com](mailto:pritchie@ibj.com)

**Shirley Washburne: Cheap Movie SIG** will probably meet Thursday, April 13, at the Hollywood Bar & Film Works, 247 South Meridian St. (park in Union Station garage next door for \$1), but **call Shirley Washburne at 839-9282 to make sure**. Movie titles and showtimes change weekly, so check movies page of the Star.

**Joseph Zanca:** After seven years, the Mensa Membership Directory is being revised! The 1999 edition will be available in late September from the Mensa Boutique. Order by credit card at 1-800-MENSA4U. \$30.

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