Excerpts from the December 1998 MIND The Newsletter of Central Indiana Mensa

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PUBLISHING STATEMENT

Central Indiana Mensa, a Local Group of American Mensa Ltd., publishes MIND monthly. Mensa, a not-for-profit organization open to all persons scoring in the 98th percentile on a standardized intelligence test, neither endorses nor opposes the opinions reported in MIND, which remain those of the individual contributors.

CONTRIBUTION GUIDELINES

MIND accepts contributions from all interested parties, with preference for publication going to members of Central Indiana Mensa. **Contributions should reach the Editor's postal box 50946, Indianapolis, IN 46250 at least twenty days before the 1st day of the publication month. Materials must take the form of legible written copy and/or camera-ready art. Please do not submit items on magnetic media.** Contributions may undergo editing for length and to eliminate patently offensive remarks, including personal attacks. The Editor must know the name of any contributor before publication; however, he will withhold that name from the public on request.

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MY PIECE OF MIND GEORGE DUNN

Well, now that I believe I have the correct spelling of "Hagemier," we can proceed with confidence.

Among the challenges of this column is coming up with a fresh approach to an old chestnut: deadlines. Usually, I fear the challenge goes unmet, but this time I came up with a twist, which, even if it proves nonefficacious, at least amuses me.

The deadline for the MIND is the 10th or 11th of the month (8th in February), twenty days before the end. Think of the first nine or ten days of each month as the "*live*line," and that 10th or 11th as the *dead*line. Does that sort of call up the proper spirit? Ten days or so from the arrival of your MIND to compose a response to something you read there and mail it in.

I'm not opposed to taking contributions after the deadline, say at the Monthly Meeting, as long as the contributor recognizes that he/she has actually missed the cutoff and the artcle may or may not appear. Recently, one member handed me an article at the MM, *then took it back* for more tweaking, asking me as she did so, "well, what's the *absolute* deadline?"

Has everybody seen that office sticker which begins, "Poor planning on your part..."?

Of course, those who are responding to the monthly themes, published three months in advance, or who have spontaneous works, can pop their stuff in the post *months* ahead.

* * *

When I was in the Army, I learned a universal assertion that "Ten percent never get the word." No matter how thoroughly information was disseminated, a significant minority always received it garbled or not at all. To that axiom, I can add only two corollaries: 1) it's not confined to the Army, and 2) sometimes ten percent is very optimistic.

Moreover, every time we send a message, a significant fraction of it falls out, sure as leaves fall in the autumn. If the message is a *change* to a previous message, that fraction goes way up. Intelligence, authority and/or vigor of expression are NOT antidotes to this damage; however, offhandedness can be an aggravating factor.

We are creatures of habit. We expect things to happen at certain times and places. Add that to the rule above and realize that "leaving word" or telling someone *once* of a new procedure is a formula for fiasco.

* * *

Oh dear, I see the curmudgeon in me is coming out too much, so let's make a

deliberate attempt at some Happytime News:

*

Central Indiana Mensa is going to be more vigorous in 1999, and a bit more disciplined. With 50-plus in attendance at Monthly Meetings, we've outgrown the Crooked Creek Clubhouse and will be switching to larger quarters, possibly our former digs at Riley Towers.

Congrats to former Central Indiana M Jerry Irish, now LocSec and Proctor of Fort Wayne Mensa.

*

Unity Commitment Purpose LOCSECTION GREG CRAWFORD

This LocSec stuff is starting to be fun. Of course, that's because so much is happening and all of it is good. For those of you who have been to our recent monthly meetings, it has been obvious the quality of our speakers, programs and refreshments has improved. Already, the word is getting around, so attendance is on the upswing.

Likewise, our overall membership has grown since this time last year and there is no reason to expect less between now and 2000! That said, we need your help. Now, after listening to many comments from a number of our members, there is no doubt Mensa needs to move its monthly meeting to larger quarters. We just don't fit in our current venue. And we sure won't be able to squeeze in any more. What we need is a larger and more advantageous meeting site. Do you have one in mind?

Here are some of our requirements: Any site must have space and chairs for fifty or so folk; maybe more. The meeting place must have handicapped and wheelchair access as well as basic kitchen facilities; expecially a fridge and sink. It must allow carry-in food and beverages and must be available every month from 6 p.m. through midnight. And, of course, the area must be safe, with adequate, well-lit parking.

Unfortunately, it must also be cheap because we just do not have deep pockets. So sad, but so true.

We're not asking for the impossible, eh? Actually, we have some ideas, but no clear-cut winner yet, so please put on your thinking cap and look around. With enough of us beating the bushes, maybe a hot meeting place will turn up. Call either George Dunn or me (our home numbers are inside the back cover of this MIND) if you have questions, comments or ideas.

Otherwise, have a happy holiday season, especially if you can come to our annual party at The Days Inn in Castleton. Traditionally our biggest turnout of the year is there and you and I should be too.

LET'S DO IT!

Dave Huey

Peace

Is peace possible in our world? I don't know. I think it was Socrates who said, "Only the dead have seen the end of war." Implicit in that statement is the assumption that the human race is predisposed toward aggression, conflict and violence. I'm not sure I would agree with this assumption. For every act of ill will, we can find at least one act of extraordinary kindness, love and good will.

We like to think that our species is heading in the right direction. We all hope that while the human race moves forward in the areas of technology, knowledge, science and innovation we are also moving forward morally. Are we? It's hard to see. When impeachment hearings are proceeding against an American president for only the third time in history, when IRA and other extremist terrorists are still bombing men, women and children, when India and Pakistan are proving their expertise in nuclear warfare and drawing lines in the sand, it's hard for us to say that the human race has taken even one small step forward since the first cave man killed another with a rock, or since Cain slew Abel.

I heard an interesting interview of a book author this morning on National Public Radio. This man is a chemist by training, but he theorizes that as societies have developed their left-brain potential by inventing and learning alphabets, they have also enhanced another left-hand stronghold: agressiveness and violence. If I understood him correctly (I apologize for not remembering his name), he's saying that the introduction of alphabetic language to a civilization is the beginning of the end for that civilization. He said that left-hemisphere functions include language, logic, math and the ability to make plans to hunt down and kill animals for food. Right-hemisphere functions include the mothering/nuturing instincts that both men and women have, the ability to recognize someone's face, love and even the ability for a mother to take one look at her baby's face and know that he needs his diaper changed.

To be fair to the book's author, his message wasn't all doom and gloom. He said (I believe correctly) that our American society is moving away from alphabetic language. 50 years ago, people would talk about books they had read. Now, people talk more and more about a program they saw on TV or a movie or a photo or a video they saw. We are becoming more visual and iconic. In other words, our own relative illiteracy might end up saving us from ourselves. That was the closing message of this author, and I share his positive viewpoint for our future. Do you?

[I have to give this marks for a novel approach, even if the conclusion, "literacy leads to violence," is a bit hard to swallow. In counterpoint, I might note that I just finished Thomas Cahill's <u>How the Irish Saved Civilization</u>, wherein he observes that as the teachings of the literate Christian Patricus (St. Patrick) supplanted those of the Druids - who banned writing as a threat to memorization - the slave trade and the head-hunting all but ceased within a generation.

Phylogenetically, the areas of the brain responsible for aggression are far older that the neocortical regions where language reposes. -Ed]

Central Indiana Mensa Christmas/Holiday Party

Days Inn at 8275 Craig St (just North of 82nd, West of Shadeland), Indianapolis, IN 46250.

Click here for a map.

Festive dress appreciated

As in past years, this will be a modified potluck pitch-in; Mensa will supply the bird and possibly the ham; you will bring a side dish or five bucks (in addition to the \$5 door charge) to facilitate last-minute grocering. To keep things organized, please bring the type of side dish corresponding to the initial letter of your last name, thus:

A thru F bring salads and dressings G thru M bring vegetable dishes, casseroles, etc. N thru T bring desserts, and U thru Z bring breads and rolls.

As usual, we will have a "Gimme-Brabbee" Gift Exchange. If you wish to participate, please bring a creatively-wrapped gift under \$10. This year we will probably limit the number of exchanges to four.

Those who come from afar or for any reason wish to sleep over, may reserve rooms by calling (317) 841-9700. The hotel serves a compli-

GORDON LAMB

Do not read if you are illiterate!

These warnings appear on actual manufacturers' instructions:

ON MY WIFE'S HAIRDRYER: * Do not use while sleeping.

ON A BAG OF FRITOS CORN CHIPS: * You could be a winner! No purchase necessary. Details inside.

ON A PACKAGE OF DIAL SOAP: * Directions: Use like regular soap.

ON A BIRDSEYE FROZEN CAKE: * Serving suggestion: defrost.

ON A HOTEL-PROVIDED SHOWER CAP IN A BOX: * Fits one head.

ON TESCO'S TIRIMISU DESSERT: * Do not turn upside down. (This is printed on the bottom of the box.)

ON MARKS & SPENCER BREADPUDDING: * Product will be hot after heating.

ON PACKAGING FOR A ROWENTA CLOTHING IRON: * Do not iron clothes on body.

ON BOOTS' CHILDRENS COUGH MEDICINE: * Do not drive car or operate machinery.

ON NYTOL (a sleep aid): * Warning: may cause drowsiness.

ON A KOREAN KITCHEN KNIFE: * Warning: Keep out of children.

ON A STRING OF CHINESE-MADE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS: * For indoor or outdoor use only.

ON A JAPANESE FOOD PROCESSOR: * Not to be used for the other use.

ON SAINSBURY'S PEANUTS: * Warning: contains nuts.

ON AN AMERICAN AIRLINES PACKET OF NUTS: * Instructions: open packet, eat nuts.

ON A SWEDISH CHAINSAW: * Do not attempt to stop chain saw with your hands.

[When I was a boy, far too many summers ago, we had these wonderful little spherical firecrackers which provided a feisty little "bang!" and a puff of smoke when thrown with sufficient force (a rubber-band slingshot made a great launcher) against some hard surface. They came in triangular packets of ten, in various colors (like little billiard balls), and on those little packets these words appeared:

"EXPLOSIVE. DO NOT EAT."

-Ed]

Random Sample © by Julie A. Yates Harkey

Flathead Treasure Truck

A collection of animals is a menagerie. Is there a word for a collection of vehicles? Ted says, "neat stuff." Mechanerie? Assemblage? We have an assemblage of cars and trucks, from the 1937 Ford truck in the garage, currently in use as a cat house, to my 1995 Ford Taurus, veteran deer hunter. In between are three more trucks and a car, three of which make sounds in response to a turn of the ignition key; sometimes resounding sounds.

The latest addition to our collection began with a phone call from our friend Greg, who had discovered a treasure in the wild. It was one of his students, actually, who found the elegant old lady languishing in a weedy side yard of a southern Missouri farm. She is a 1941 Ford pickup truck that spent most of her life as a Colorado ranch truck before the current owner put five new tires on her, and towed her home as a project for his son. Some time in her ranching days she received an engine transplant, and now has a 115 horsepower flathead V8 industrial engine. That, in case you didn't know, is the biggest flathead ever made. What's a flathead? You'll have to ask Ted that. All I know is that whenever Ted and Greg mention the word flathead, they get this funny

glazed look in their eyes, and they begin to resemble Indiana Jones.

The price was right (a steel!) so on the first Saturday in October, Ted and I hitched a trailer to the shop truck and headed south. Several stops and fuses later, after resolving a problem with the trailer lights, we crossed into Illinois and were really on our way. We arrived at Greg and Sherry's place sometime in the vicinity of midnight. The next day was bright, clear, and hot. I know this has been an unusual year for weather, but I didn't expect 95 degree temperatures in October. We headed south once more, to a farm south of Cape Girardeau.

We arrived to find that the description we had received was accurate. The truck did indeed have five new tires, had very little rust, no dents, and had been in running condition when she was parked. She was parked, however, in 1983. Tall weeds nearly hid the truck from view, and Greg had to cut down a small sapling or two so they could get to her. Mostly Sherry and I sat in the shade and drank ice water while the guys extricated their prize from her weedy home of 15 years.

Part of the fun of that day was watching Greg drive an old Allis-Chalmers tractor. I've not heard anyone sweet talk a tractor before, but Greg did it in style. The truck was still on the towing dolly that she rode from her Colorado home, so the guys attached a chain to the dolly. Greg and Allis cheerfully extricated the truck from the weeds, and soon she was sitting proudly in mid-farmyard. Then the fun started. Ted and the owner discussed the merits of many new (still in the box) parts, such as water pumps and carburetors, while Greg discovered surprises in the bed and cab. Among these were parts to an old Victrola, and an extra rear end. So what, you ask? Ah, you should have seen their faces. Treasures, indeed.

Next, off came the dolly, and the truck once more stood on she own four wheels. After all this time, the tires (after being pumped up) still held air. For a long enough time, at any rate, to be winched up on the trailer. Off we went, with our prize and an assortment of spare parts. We made it to Greg's place, where Ted christened the truck with a can of beer. Then came more exploring. They found the original jack and lug wrench, along with clutch plates and assorted spare parts. The hood creakily opened, revealing the flathead. It doesn't look flat. In fact, it rather resembles something from the X-files or Outer Limits.

After a nice dinner at Greg and Sherry's, we headed home. The trip was a long one, all after dark. We pulled in the driveway about 1:30 am on Monday morning. The trailer had to be at work that morning, so Ted and I unloaded the truck. Two of the tires were now flat, right front and left rear, so this was quite a task! Between the winch, a bit of help from gravity, and a lot of pushing and muttering, we managed to get the truck onto the ground. She now sits, waiting to be restored. The first part of that will involve pulling the engine (sounds painful, like pulling a tooth!) and rebuilding said engine. Greg has promised to come help with that.

To be continued

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by Ba	asil Wentworth	

140 FIGURATIVELY SPEAKING

A figure of speech to abhor Is the gaffe known as mixed matador 'Stead of ears and the tail, He gets tears in his ale, Causing flooding all over the floor.

> Yes, our language has queer quips and cranks With anomalies rife in its ranks: When invited to mention A formal declension Of "thank you", one answers "No, thanks".

Some adverbs are how? when? and why? While others ones end in L-Y, But you find in the annals Of commercial channels, The favorite ad verb is "BUY!"

> The judicious one wisely bewares Grammatic delusions and snares --He will staunchly refuse Invitations to use An insentive verb, like "who cares?"

He said, "The job's yours -- on condition That you're able to fulfill its mission; So describe for me your Work history -- be sure To enumerate each pre-position."

* * * * *

There is one thing I shudder to see. It's the speaker whose bent seems to be be To invite you "Stop by To see Mamie and I" --They only have "I's" for "me".

IT'S BEGINNING TO LOOK A LOT LIKE CHRISTMAS

Nancy White

On Sunday, December 6, from 11:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., we are going to be Santa's Elves, Engineers and assorted other Helpers at the Indiana State Museum's recreation of L.S. Ayres' Santa's Train! This is always a "fun" event and this year an even dozen of us can participate. Except for the two Engineers, training is minimal but encouraged; for the Engineers it is required as the train is tricky as it is old and a bit cranky. But working with the largest electric train you ever dreamed about is worth it! But we Shopkeepers, Ticket Takers, Photographers, and Elves also have a great time.

I loved L.S. Ayres at Christmastime and, if you grew up in Central Indiana, I'll be you did, too. It was magical in a way nothing is today. Almost as magical is sharing it with today's children and watching others of yesterday's children remember.

If you would like to participate, please call me at 632-4747 before noon and 7:00 - 11:00 p.m. are best.

To Keep In MIND

Upcoming Gatherings and Events

*** 1998 ***	
December 11-13	AMC Meeting, Charleston, SC; Contact Gilbert Krebs, Gill@chat.com
December 12	Central Indiana Mensa Christmas/Holiday Party Days Inn 8275 Craig St (just North of 82nd, West of Shadeland). See details elsewhere in this issue.

*** 1999 ***		
January 29-31	Circle City RG "Party Like It's 1999" Best Western Waterfront Plaza Hotel, Indianapolis. (Hotel's phone: 800-528-1234, 317- 299-8400. Mention you're with the Mensa RG Group when reserving a room. \$65 per night up to 4 per room.) Registration: \$50 through December 31st, \$60 thereafter. All meals included. (Fri supper, Fri late-night ice-cream, Sat bkfst/lunch/supper, Sat late-night ice-cream, Sunday bkfst.) 24 hour hospitality and game rooms. Wine and Cheese Tasting. Scholarship Book Sale. DJ Dance Night. Joke-Off. Improv Night. Quiz Bowl. Hell's M's. True Greed. Ice Cream Orgy. Subs, Pizza, Chicken, M & M's. Win, Lose or Doodle. Also Featuring : All Female Speakers, including the former head of the Indiana Democratic Party, investment and estate advisors; Gypsy Moon, the National Queen of the Hobos; disaster rescue specialists, and more. Poolside folk music sessions Friday and Saturday nights. Bring your banjo or guitar. Saturday morning exercise. A caricature artist to capture YOU. An ongoing writer's contest; to enter, bring any original work can be fiction, prose, poetry, or non-fiction, it must be typed and unsigned and will be posted for all to read and vote on. Registrar: <u>Karen Wilczewski</u>	
February 26-28	Wild Kingdom RG, St. Louis, MO; Holiday Inn Southwest/Viking, 10709 Watson Road, St. Louis, MO 63127; (314)821-6600 or (800)682-6338; rooms \$59; Registration: Gary and Sara Gadeken; ggadeken@inlink.com; Web site.	
March 26-28	Tropical Paradise Cruise , Best Western Midway Hotel, 7711 West Saginaw Hwy, Lansing, MI 48917; rooms \$65; Registration \$45 to 2/28, \$50 after; checks to Mid-Michigan Mensa RG; contact: Elizabeth Evangelista.	
April 30 - May 2	SEMMantics 21 Contact Betsy Y. Mark. <u>BetsyYMark@aol.com</u>	
July 1-5	Orange County AG ; Hyatt-Regency Long Beach, (800)233- 1234; rooms \$99 - \$119; Registration: \$49 to 12/31; \$59 to 5/31; Greg de Hoogh	
October 1-3	CAMbake Contact Concetta E. Bartosh	

*** 2000 ***

July 5-9	Delaware Valley Mensa AG (Philadelphia) (Joint AG with
	Mensa Canada)

Primer for the January Topic:

"Advice"

There are two types of advice: the kind we get and the kind we give. Of the kind we get there are also two types, good and bad. (The kind we give is always good.)

There are also two ways to get advice: asking for it and having it "volunteered" to you. For each of these, there are two types: the advice we take and the advice we ignore.

Finally, there are two consequences of advice, although, curiously, there should be four. If advice is followed by success, the first consequence is that the advice-giver claims the credit; if the outcome is failure, the advisor says, "You should have listened to me."

The missing consequences are, "Looks like I gave you a bum steer, too bad you listened to me / good thing you didn't."

As we've all heard, advice is cheap, in the sense that it only requires a few breaths of air, or at most, a little correspondence. On the other hand, some feel giving advice incurs some responsibility.

Psychiatrists, psychologists and other mental health workers are taught to *avoid* giving advice to patients for just this responsibility reason. Actually, this "reason" has two parts, one therapeutic, the other legal.

Dysfunctional people often play a "game" wherein they try to prove that other people are as mixed up as they are. To that end, they solicit "advice" which they "follow" in such a way as to deliberately undermine the results. They then return to the advice-giver with the report, "Well, *your* idea didn't work."

Then again, if the professional gives in to temptation and makes a recommendation, he/she could be on the hook if something goes terribly wrong, as it does now and then with disturbed people. The best known example is probably the shrink who told Hinckley's parents to throw him out of the house, just a few days before he tried to whack President Reagan.

Amateur advisors, who believe they have total deniability for consequences, sometimes like to tell people to do things just to make a little trouble. Is everyone familiar with the "helpful" co-worker who suggests to the new person how he or she can "impress" the boss?

As advice givers, we, of course, have only pure motives, stemming from our superior grasp of how other people should run their lives, or at least deal with certain crises.

As the recipients of advice, we probably have to recognize that in some cases it was pretty darned good. Even if we asked for it, and especially if we didn't, it was hard to follow just because it *was* advice, and not our own idea.

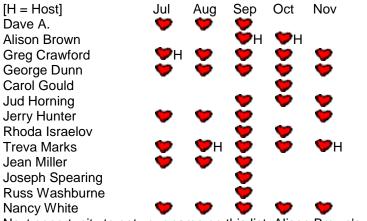
How much credit should the giver of successful advice get, and conversely,

how should we apportion the blame when advice goes south?

Most advice is at least a first cousin, if not a fraternal twin, to *criticism* (known to all critics as "constructive" criticism) and an acknowledged ratio of *at least* 1:1,000 applies to the value of remarking on a problem relative to the value of correcting it.

Meanwhile, the sheer volume of advice, coupled with its frequently flexible interpretation, insures that just about everything that's done is either due to or against somebody's advice.

MINDBENDING HONOR ROLL



Next opportunity to get your name on this list: Alison Brown's place, Dec 27.

BULLETIN BOARD

Teresa Fisher: In early September Joanne Ortman had a stroke. She is currently in a rehab hospital and would greatly appreciate cards, letters, visits and phone calls. Her phone number is (312) 908-1150, and her address is: R.I.C., Room 420, Bed 2; 345 East Superior; Chicago, IL 60611

Positive Change Network: Fourth Tuesdays 6:15 - 8:45 at Library Services Center, 2450 N. Meridian. Information: 925-9297.

SPAN Program: Earn college credit while still attending High School. 10th, 11th and 12th graders who have SAT of 1010 and complete IUPUI placement test may take 100 and 200 level classwork. Info: (317) 274-2660.

Women of Vision Network: 5:30 every Wednesday at Cynergi Bookstore, 6358 Guilford. (Broad Ripple) 841-3912. **Teresa Fisher**: Bring back the Mensa Register! This invaluable member-to-member document hasn't been reprinted for six years! Restore this gem to the membership before the AMC spends any more money on monuments to itself in Texas.

David Schulman [from June '98 Bulletin]: I strongly advocate that the [MERF-owned office building] be suitably named in Dave [Remine's] honor. I would be proud to address future correspondence to "American Mensa at Dave Remine's House."

Friends of Jung: First Thursdays. Information: 466-9214.

Holistic Health Care Practioners: Monthly meetings at First Congregational Church, 7171 North Pennsylvania. Dorothea Mueller Goold, 581-0535, for info.

Nancy White: The Indiana State Museum is re-creating the L.S. Ayres Christmas Train and we can be Elves, Engineers, Ticket Takers, **PFLAG** (Parents, Family/Friends of Lesbians and Gays) a gorup for support and education. Second Sundays, 2:00 p.m. at St. Luke's Methodist Church. 86th Street, near Meridian. etc. The date is Sunday, December 6th, from 11:30 am to 4:45 p.m. To volunteer, call me at 632-4747 any day before noon and between 7:00 -11:00 p.m.



Email us at: indymensa@yahoo.com