



March 2009

Mid-Mensan

The Newsletter of Mid-Hudson Mensa



Contra Dancing
Picture courtesy Andi Weiss Bartczak

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The deadline for contributions for each issue is announced in the calendar of the **previous month's issue**. **Anything not received** by then will be held for consideration for the following issue. Contributions must be signed by the author or artist but may be published using a pen name or anonymously.

Got an event
you'd like to see
on the
calendar?

Send it in!
Be sure to include full contact information and utilize our clever codes to let folks in on the nature of your event.
See you soon!

Notes from Newburgh

Eve Hinderer

“I’m so smart I’m stupid” is a maxim I formulated for myself some time ago, but understandably enough, I’ve been **dragging my feet writing** about it. What finally broke the ice was reading Chairman-R-U’s in the February Bulletin. A member’s letter was published, whereby they discussed avoiding Mensa events for three years because they were “ill-equipped to intelligently discuss many subjects.”

Through my involvement in Facebook (worth a column all by itself), I recently met with someone I’d not known in high school, but who’d become my online ‘friend’. His life had some parallels with my own, most notably dropping out of Drew University after five months. I, in fact, did complete my undergraduate degree, but only after 20 years of dropping out four times. Anyway, we met at an eatery in Woodstock and had a pleasant enough exchange last almost two hours. Later though, it felt as though my skin had been slaked with the cloying anxiety I’d suffered all through my years at the Bronx H.S. of Science: that I wasn’t good enough to do or be anything.

It wasn’t until years later through a convergence of circumstances including, as I’ve oft alluded to in these columns, some psychological work, that I discovered a Self. This Self trusted the evidence of her own senses, knew that her feelings were never long, and was exhilarated at the transformation of her world into something she could sample and learn to know in her own time. Coincident with this revolutionary self-discovery was the political-cultural earthquake of the ‘60s, and I became involved in the beginnings of the women’s movement. All the hard work I’d put into a personal liberation

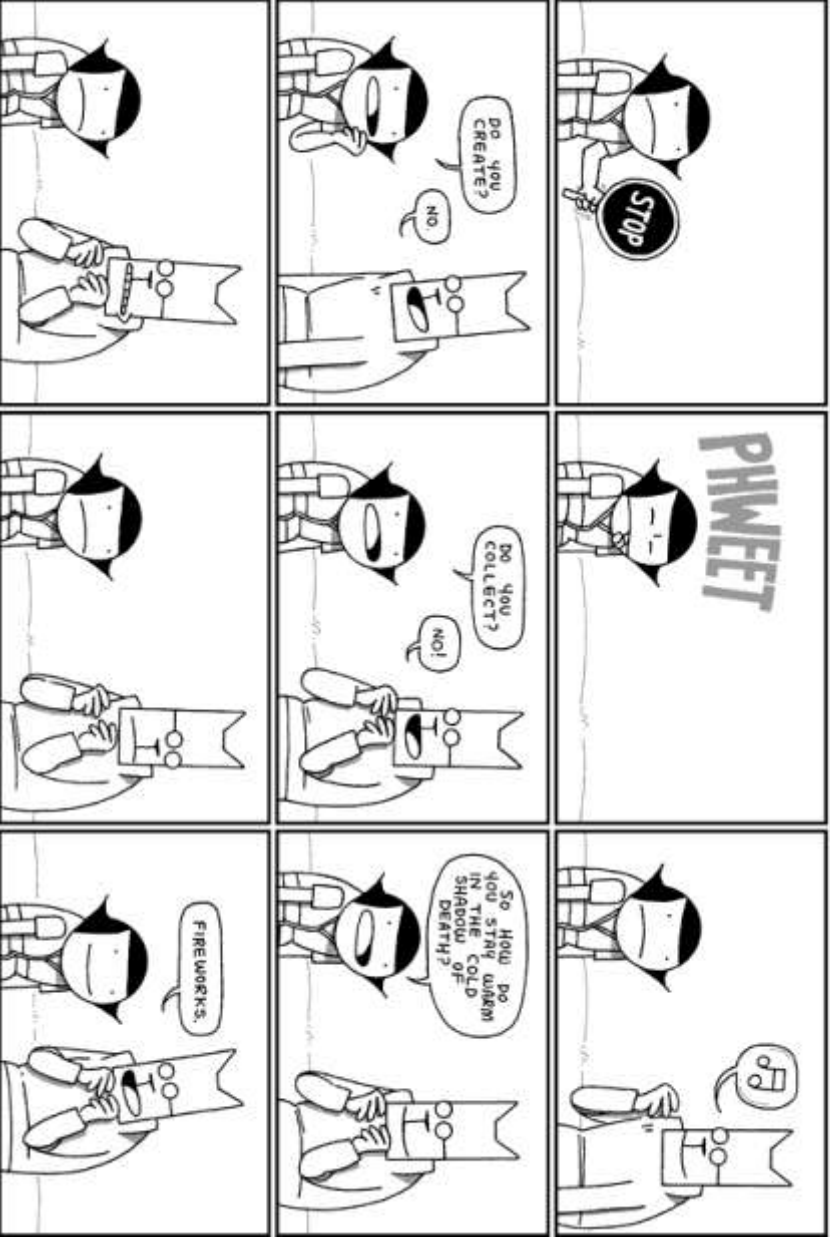
now became the common property of my sex as we learned to turn the personal into the political. One of the most amazing things that’s happened to me on Facebook, in fact, was performance artist Phoebe Legere writing me an email, quoting from my papers at the Smith Archives: “personal transformation as the starting point for revolutionary theory and practice” “You are FASCINATING,” she commented, promising to read my papers as soon as she had a moment.

Anyway, let’s jump forward to the past. Abraham Lincoln has been much referred to in the current media because of numerous resonances with our current President. Certainly the historical closing of a circle in the election of an African-American Commander-in-Chief is the most obvious, but both also have a canny and unerring ability to draw on their native intelligence. In a stunning synchronicity, I opened my Reader’s Companion to World Literature last night to see if it had a reference to Louis-Ferdinand Celine, one of my favorite authors. Unsurprisingly it didn’t, but immediately flopped open instead to Abraham Lincoln. As is one of every American’s favorite stories, Lincoln wrote down his Gettysburg Address en route, on an envelope. Being mostly self-educated, and presumably not subject to the environmental stresses of competition or self-consciousness, he allowed himself the simplicity of falling back on his own resources, not bothering to worry how the words he would find might stack up against historical oratory. The Reader’s Companion then goes on to gush “it shows most skillful alliteration, assonance, climax, balance and antithesis.” Need I say more?

So relax for a change, and enjoy the roots of genius in your own stupidity.



Crossing Guard



Comic courtesy of Dorothy Gambrell, www.catandgirl.com. Used under a Creative Commons License



Chuck Whitesell

Happy Birthday to members of Mid-Hudson Mensa born in March:

- 3/1 Irving G. Roth, Michele Marcia Schwartz
- 3/2 Georgianna Askoff
- 3/12 Clay V. Morrissey
- 3/14 Kevin McKenzie
- 3/19 Frieda H. Allen
- 3/20 Eugene Patrick Garvin
- 3/23 Sidney Zecher
- 3/25 Nancy Keskula
- 3/31 William Dennis Hughes

Happy Anniversary to members of our group who joined Mensa in March:

- 2008 Gary Berkson, Elizabeth Hollenbeck, Catherine M. Johnson CNM, Jessica N. Konikowski, Benita Ann Lehmann, June L. A. Noble, Susan Tomaski, Richard J. Warren
- 2003 Stephen Gagliardo
- 2002 Martin Miller, Toniel A. Speidel

- 2001 Harold Fraude, Nathan Louis Rosenblum, Robert Sarno, William Zykoff
- 1989 Elizabeth McAllister
- 1988 Judy Sulsky
- 1987 Eric Joseph Kollenberg, David Mark Schwartz
- 1986 Edward S. Gershuny, Eve Hinderer
- 1984 Ronald Howard Kivel, Agnes Rita Laub, Stephanie Walker
- 1983 Susan Lee Berbec
- 1978 Thomas W. Masterson
- 1976 Nancy Jane Keyes Crosby
- 1974 J. Philip Zand

Farewell to Georgianna Askoff and Steven M. Michalek.

Welcome back to member James Byrnes of Goshen, Thomas Conroy of Beacon, Maria Pavco of Newburgh, Kim C. Souza of Lagrangeville and Karen Tooma of Highland Mills.

Welcome to member Scott R. Gangemi Ritchie Sarmiento who joins us from Mesa, AZ and Jeremy W. Lymburner who joins us from Silverdale, WA.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Eve Hinderer will be giving a reading at The Falcon in Marlboro, NY on March 28. There will be a performance by Chris Cubetta and the Liars Club, which begins at 7 PM. Eve will read between sets. Admission is free.

Keep the Date

Wednesday, April 15th will be a joint meeting with the Mid-Hudson Sierra Club, in Poughkeepsie. Details in the next newsletter.

Bylaws Passed

The bylaws passed unanimously, and were accepted by National. Thanks to everyone who voted.

GENE-BASED TESTS aim to read a disease's future [re cancer, organ transplantation] by determining the pattern of expression of genes. These tests are largely unregulated, with little knowledge of accuracy [is the data used misleading?] or how the tests are performed. In the U.S. they are considered laboratory tests and allowed on the market without scrutiny of the basis of their science, if only a single lab uses the test. Some want prognostic tests regulated like medical devices. "Science", Vol. 315 (2/16/07), p. 924

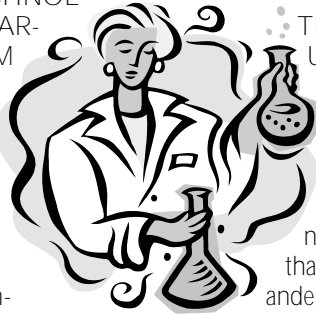
DEVELOPER OF A COMMERCIALY VIABLE TECHNOLOGY TO REMOVE CARBON DIOXIDE FROM AIR can win the \$25 million Virgin Earth Challenge award from entrepreneur Richard Branson. This technology will have to be able to remove at least one billion tons of this greenhouse gas from the atmosphere a year. Ibid., p. 925

SYMPTOMS OF RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS range from sore and stiff joints to chest pain or shortness of breath from inflammation of the lining of the heart or lungs. The inflammation comes from an immune system that attacks normal tissues. Despite new treatments that focus on controlling the immune response, joint destruction and disability continue to progress in many patients. A new approach is suggested that would target a cell that is unique to the joint [synoviocyte] although not part of the

immune system. Synoviocytes in rheumatoid arthritis sufferers are invasive and aggressive, reminiscent of malignant cells. Ibid., p 952

MICROORGANISMS (BACTERIA) are estimated to contribute more than 1/3 of all biomass on Earth. They are essential for cycling nutrients, directly influence Earth's climate and have intimate relationships with plants and animals. However, our knowledge of their intimate details is scarce, because most microbes can't be cultured in the laboratory.

"Science", Vol. 315 (2/23/07), p 1126



THE HUMAN BRAIN IS UNIQUE. What makes it so? The average human brain is nearly four times as large as that of our nearest relative, the chimpanzee, but human frontal lobes are not proportionately larger than those of other apes. Neandertals had bigger brains than ours but didn't develop art. The ape lineage has evolved an entirely new type of brain cell, but the human brain has microanatomical structures and connections between nerve cells that our ape cousins lack.

"Science", Vol. 315 (3/2/07), p. 1209

REDHEADS with light skin can't tan and their risk for melanoma skin cancer is double that of non-redheads. This is due to two defective alleles in a gene for a receptor on the surface of the cells that make melanin, the skin and hair pigment. Having even one defective allele for this gene raises the risk of

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RVChat

Lori Norris

Okay, March has arrived. When does Spring begin? I'm anxiously looking forward to it. This has been a long winter in Rhode Island, much more snow than usual. 2009 started with a bang for me, okay more like a whimper. On January 1st, the last day of our vacation in Mexico, I fell off a sidewalk and badly sprained my ankle. Well at the end of January I **learned that I didn't just sprain it, I fractured it.** As a result, my mobility has been limited for some time. But the most pleasant surprise was the courtesy of complete strangers. On January 2nd we flew home from Mexico. Fortunately, the airports provided me with wheelchairs. Porters would let us cut lines and, obviously, it took more time to get through security. People were extremely courteous and, even though it was the height of **vacation travel season, didn't seem to mind us cutting line.** They seemed more concerned that I was alright. Since my injury many people, friends and strangers, have been extremely helpful. Restores my faith in humanity.

In case you haven't heard, American Mensa's election season is approaching. As no one choose to run against me, I have been declared the winner for the seat of Regional Vice Chairman (RVC) for a second term running

from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2011. If **you're interested in running for the position in 2011,** please feel free to discuss the job responsibilities and pleasures with me. I have enjoyed being your RVC and look forward to another two years. There will be several bylaws amendments on the ballot this year. These amendments are available on the AML website and will be included on the ballot and in the *Bulletin* along with pro and con statements. Should you have any questions relating to these amendments, I am available to discuss them with you.

Upcoming Events: **Boston Mensa's Cape Cod weekend** will be held the second weekend of May. And for those of you near New Jersey, see you at Snowball XXXV, March 6th – 8th (the 10th anniversary of Ron and my **first date, we'll be there celebrating.**) The 2009 CultureQuest® will take place on Sunday, April 19th. Reservations can be made until March 31, 2009. Mind Games® will be held in Fort Mitchell, Kentucky the weekend of April 24 through 26. The Pittsburgh AG (Annual Gathering) will be held July 1 – 5 in Pittsburgh, PA. This is probably the most convenient AG to Region 1 since the Philadelphia AG in 2000. Check out **AML's website for more information** on any of these events.

Lori

Prior Evidence Cost Rollback

Mensa National is reducing the fee for submitting prior evidence to qualify for Mensa from the prior cost, \$40, to the cost of 1999, \$25. Please tell your friends.

Program Notes

Calendar Editor Kevin McKenzie

R RSVP
S/N Smoking/Non
Y Yummies Welcome

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Pre-Scrabble Night Dinner

① Angela Tremain
Wed 3/11, 6:00 pm
Hyde Park - N/R

Heading to Hyde Park for Scrabble tonight? Even if you're not, join us for an early dinner at Thai House (728 Violet Ave/845-452-2186) for some pre-game fun and food. This restaurant was well-reviewed by the EEE crowd. Angela will save you a seat if you let her know you're coming!

Scrabble Night

① Bill Zigo
Wed 3/11, 7:30 pm
Hyde Park - N/Y

Bill Zigo hosts an evening of Scrabble and other word games the 2nd Wednesday of each month. Bring your favorite word game and a donation to the snack table, and call Bill to RSVP or for directions.

Games Night

① Bill Zigo
Sat 3/14, 7:30 pm
Hyde Park - N/Y

Bill Zigo is hosting out-of-town Mensans this weekend for MERF Essay Contest judging on Saturday afternoon, and he invites you to stop in that night to join them for games and conversation. One of the judges is our RVC, Lori Norris, so this would be a great chance to "Meet and Beat the RVC." Please contact Bill to RSVP or to inquire about directions or contributions

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If an event looks questionable because of the weather or other concerns, call the event contact or calendar editor for the latest information.

Directions to events may be obtained a variety of ways online; for example, www.mapquest.com, maps.google.com, and maps.yahoo.com.

Key to events:

- \$ Fee involved
- B BYO drink
- H Handicapped accessible
- K Suitable for kids
- K+ Suitable for kids over 10
- P Pets at event site

March

Activities

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
		Submis- sion Deadline	Scrabble Night/ Dinner 6:00, 7:30 pm Hyde Park			Games Night 7:00 pm Hyde Park
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Green Eggs & Ham 10:30 am West Park				Third Thursday Therapy 6:30 pm Pok		Spring Sol'tce Celeb 2:00 pm Camp Hall
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Vernal Eq Celebra- tion 2:00 pm Gardiner		EEE 6:30 pm Beacon				
29	30	31				
Ex-Comm 2:00 pm Lagrange						

Check us out on-line!

(We've been waiting for you.)

Mid-Hudson Mensa has a Yahoo! Group. Direct yourself to: groups.yahoo.com/group/MidHudsonMensa and sign up. There's a place to chat, a message board, an events calendar, pictures—check in, check it out, and share a bit of yourself with your fellow Mid-Hudson Mensans.

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to the snack and/or games table.

Green Eggs and Ham

① Nancy Keyes-Crosby

Sunday 3/15, 10:30 am

West Park—S

Same old celebration, same old Green Eggs, but some thing really new !!!! The location has changed. I am now at 24 Chambers Street. It's about .3 miles north of Floyd Ackert. The neighborhood is not as posh,(read seedy) and the street is pretty rough, but it's still that prestigious West Park address.

Third Thursday Therapy

① Charlie Rovner

Thu 3/19, 6:30 pm

Poughkeepsie—K+/H/N

Take a break from the hectic pace with some therapy at the Orient Buffet. It is located at the north end of the Poughkeepsie Plaza Mall on Route 9.

Coffee and Conversation

① Alice Tierney

Sat 3/21, 2:00 pm

Campbell Hall - N

Meet Alice Tierney and Ronnie Brown for coffee and conversation at Nobel Coffee Roasters, 3020 State Rt 207, Campbell Hall, at the intersection of Rt 207 and Stony Ford Rd. Snow or ice cancels.

Vernal Equinox Celebration

① Andi Weiss Bartczak

Sun 3/22, 2:00 pm

Gardiner Library

133 Farmers Turnpike (parallel to Routes 44/55 in hamlet of Gardiner), Gardiner, southern Ulster County

Our very own Mark Adams of the Adams Fairacres family will give us a slide show and discussion of gardening and marmots as well as a recipe for marmot in cream sauce. He will bring a demonstration fence to keep marmots (woodchucks) out of the garden. Mid-Hudson Mensa will provide liquid refreshments; please bring munchies. Mark Adams is an award-winning garden writer, president of Dutchess-Putnam-Westchester Farm Bureau and inveterate marmot-stalker.

Eclectic Eatery Expedition:

Piggy Bank

① Angela Tremain

Wed 3/24, 6:30 pm

Beacon - N/R

In case the arrival of spring hasn't brought warmer weather, let's head south. To Beacon, for some Southern barbeque! The Piggy Bank (448 Main St/845-838-0028) takes its name from its location, a remodeled bank complete with vault (now wine cellar). Does it deliver on its promise of delicious, slow-cooked smokehouse barbeque? Check out their menu at <www.piggybankrestaurant.com>, then let Angela know you're coming so she saves you a seat, and we can all find out together!

(Continued on page 11)



ARE YOU GAME?

Bill Zigo

At last summer's Annual Gathering, I got to play a fun word game, *Bananagrams*®, "The award winning anagram game that will drive you bananas!" published by Bananagrams. Last month, at my first Scrabble Night, Betty Olson brought the game, and I got to play it for the second time... and the third... and quite possibly the fourth! (I can't remember for sure)

At the start of the game, each player draws a number of tiles out of the 144 available - the number depends on the number of players. You then (frantically) assemble them in cross-word-fashion. The first player who does so yells, "Peel!" At that point, everyone must draw another tile. As soon as someone has used all his/her tiles, that person again yells "Peel!" and the process repeats. If you are stuck, you may yell "Dump!" which allows you to return one tile to the draw pile, but you must draw THREE to replace it.

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Executive Committee Meeting

① Chuck Whitesell

Sun 3/29, 2:00 pm

Lagrange

The next Ex Comm meeting will be at the home of Chuck Whitesell. This Board meetings are open to all members of Mid-Hudson Mensa. If you are interested, please contact Chuck for directions or additional information

The game continues until there are fewer tiles left in the draw pile than players in the game. At that point, whoever uses up all his/her tiles yells "Bananas!" That player's words are then inspected to verify they are all good. If they are, that player wins that hand. If not, the player is designated a "rotten banana," is out of the hand, must return all tiles to the draw pool, and play continues until a new winner is determined. There are no points scored in Bananagrams. Suggested play is first to win a certain number of hands.

There is no limit to the number of players in Bananagrams. The instructions suggest 8 is a good upper limit but imply it can be more, probably either with teams or very small draws. The play can be different with a larger group, as "Peel!" may be yelled quite quickly in succession by one or more players.

One hand of Bananagrams plays in approximately 5 minutes. Though when we played, we couldn't stop at just one hand.

March is
Mensa
renewal month.
Remember to
renew your
membership!

Pun of the Month

Jim Jelacic

I got this one from "Tarzan's Tripes Forever" on the web:

The Story of the Silent Monks

There is a monastery near Aspen, Colorado called Snowmass. All the monks have taken a vow of silence. They rarely speak. Each day begins with morning worship. The service starts when the head abbot comes in and chants, "Good morning."

The monks chant in reply, "Good morning."

They say not another word until evening vespers, when the head abbot comes in and chants, "Good evening."

The monks all reply in unison, "Good evening." Not another word is spoken until the next morning.

Several years ago one of the monks decided he had to break up the boredom of this routine. The next morning when the head abbot chanted, "Good morning," all the other monks responded "Good morning" except the one bored monk who, hiding his identity from the other monks, chanted, "Good evening."

Quickly, the head abbot sang in reply: "Some-one chanted evening. He must be a stranger." Send your favorite groaner to PUNS, PO Box 133, Esopus NY 12429 or jimjelacic@verizon.net

"Home, Home on the Range" TV Trivia

As familiar as this tune is, so were some of the old Western theme songs of TV land. See if you can name the cowboy and the show that these lyrics describe.

- 1) Who "wore a cane and derby hat?"
- 2) "This bold renegade / Carves a "Z" with his blade."
- 3) Who was "a fighter, a fearless and mighty adventurin' man?"
- 4) Who was "a knight without armor in a savage land?"
- 5) "From all the tales of the west / We'll remember best / Corporal Rusty and Private" who?
- 6) "All but one man died / There at Bitter Creek./And they say he ran away." Who was he?
- 7) "Long live his fame and long live his glory / And long may his story be told."
- 8) Who wishes "Happy trails to you, / Until we meet again.?"
- 9) "Who is the tall, dark stranger there?"
- 10) Who was "panther quick and leather tough / Cause he had figured that he'd been pushed enough?"

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melanoma more than threefold for those who have darker skin or hair. Ibid., p. 1219

POLLUTANT HAZES, made of microscopic aerosol particles, reflect sunlight back into space to cool the Earth but warmer particles warm surrounding air, suppress rain in smoggy areas by keeping water droplets too small to coalesce into rain, and weaken monsoons in Asia. Scientists are finding that aerosols can effect climate far from their source region. Heavy aerosol pollution over Asia is increasing cloud cover and rainfall over Australia. Aerosols appear to counter the slowing by global warming of the currents which bring warm water from the equator northward and cold water from the North Atlantic southward. Ibid., p. 1217

REGIONAL-SCALE NUCLEAR CONFLICTS may now be more probable than a nuclear world war. Eight nations are known to have nuclear weapons. Thirty-two nations have sufficient fissionable materials to produce weapons. There is a nuclear arms race between China, India and Pakistan, which could expand to include the two Koreas, Taiwan and Japan. Arab countries in the Middle East might acquire nuclear weapons to balance Israel, and in a few years, possibly Iran. Direct and immediate casualties, in the millions, would depend upon thermal radiation and radioactive radiation. Indirect casualties would result from extensive damage to infrastructure, long-lived radioactive contamination, psychological traumas, and fires releasing light-absorbing smoke into the upper atmosphere that would last for a decade and change the climate like a massive volcanic eruption. Ibid., p. 1224

Cryptograms
Jim Jelacic

Easy ("*" means capital letter):

K CEJP SE SVQ CWGQ WGT'S TQOQGGKJF, WS
WG SVQ GSZLWP ETQG CVE TQQP KII SVQ
KPBWOO.

Hard - no punctuation and grouped in five:

KXOHI SIQFM TURMT LOBRS XOFMT UWSNL
HUOLE SXXQU MBSIQ SLXSW OLRMY OXSIQ
EROBH XWJOP MUOSE LEMAL LIMBS IQ

And In Closing . . .

So, March is here, and with it, I hope, Spring. It's been a long, long winter, and I'm hoping the groundhog was wrong when he predicted six more weeks of winter (out of curiosity, has anyone ever verified that Puxatawny Phil is male? Or, like most "male" animal TV stars, is he secretly a female? After all, to quote Rosebud the Basselope, females are far less likely to piddle on the landscape.)

Anyway, it's time to start trying to figure out what we're going to do with the year. There are a great many Mensa events this month, perhaps you should go to one? We have 200-odd members in Mid-Hudson Mensa, and whenever I go to events (which, admittedly, is only a few times a year), I tend to see the same people. Or perhaps you'd like to share your talents with others, by means of the newsletter. Write a column, send in pictures, drawings, stories . . . any-

thing you can put on paper.

As for me, I'm going to try to simplify my life a bit. I used to take great pleasure in things that I had to fiddle with to get to do what I wanted, mainly computer-related things. Not so much any more; I just want things to work. I'm doing more and more of my daily work on a Mac; I'd use one at work if I could. I also tend to collect things, thinking that some day, I'll have a need for them. No more; FreeCycle and eBay are my friends. And though it wouldn't actually simplify my life, there's the continued quest for a stellar member-of-the-appropriate-sex; perhaps this year will be the year. Beyond that . . . I don't know, really. Go see concerts and comics as I can, find new writers and musicians and artists who I feel speak truth. Help my grandfather as I can and as needed, in the twilight of his life. I, personally, and the world around me, seems to be in a time of transition. I wonder where we'll end up, and who we'll be.

Answers

- 1) Bat Masterson, "The Adventures of Bat Masterson," "Zorro",
- 2) Zorro (Don Deigo Vega), "Zorro",
- 3) Jim Bowie, "The Adventures of Jim Bowie",
- 4) Paladin, "Have Gun, Will Travel",
- 5) Rin Tin Tin, "Rin Tin Tin",
- 6) Jason McCord, "Branded",
- 7) Wyatt Earp, "The Life and Times of Wyatt Earp",
- 8) Roy Rogers, "The Roy Rogers Show",
- 9) Maverick, "Maverick",
- 10) Johnny Yuma, "The Rebel",

TV Trivia

Cryptograms
Easy: A word to the wise isn't necessary, it is the stupid ones who need all the advice. Bill Cosby

Hard: Cleaning your house while your kids are still growing is like shoveling the walk before it stops snowing. Phyllis Diller

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