



# *MVM\_Pire*

*Newsletter of Maumee Valley Mensa  
Region 3, Group 434*



*October  
2009*



*Politicians are like diapers. They both need  
changing regularly and for the same reason.*

*Author Unknown*

*Under Democracy, one party always devotes its  
chief energies to proving that the other party is  
unfit to rule – and both commonly succeed and,  
are right.*

*H. L. Mencken, 1956*



## Notes from “Ye Ed”

### More on the finances of the Newsletter (and last word on this subject for a while)

Until recently, I didn't concern myself with the economics of publishing this rag. Reimbursement rates appeared to be somewhat higher than costs. Life was good. My practice is to buy rolls of stamps and boxes of seals and inventory any that I don't use. While convenient for me, it makes it difficult to generate a cost/copy number for the newsletter. Last month I collected the specific costs.

For September, I printed 83 copies of the NL. Each copy consisted of four sheets of paper, printed both sides. Office Depot charges 3¢ per printed side and 26.3¢ per folded/stapled copy (regardless of number of pages). Seals are purchased in boxes of 480 for \$12.99, or about 2.7¢ each, and stamps are, of course, 44¢ each. Note that we don't print enough copies to use a bulk permit.

Printing:	83 copies X 8 sides/copy X 3¢/page	\$19.92
Folding/Stapling:	83 copies X 26.3¢/copy	\$21.83
Seals:	83 seals X ~2.7¢	\$ 2.82
Sales tax	@ 6.75%	\$ 3.01
Printing/folding/stapling subtotal		\$47.58
Stamps	@ 44¢	\$36.52
Total		\$84.10

From our treasurer's financial report, we received \$79.55 from AML (this is calculated on a per-member basis), we earned 9¢ interest and paid a \$10.00 service charge on our bank account, which left us with a net loss of \$14.46. With about \$2100 in the kitty, we're good for about 12 years. My son (who holds an MBA) tells me that by using the IBG/YBG\* accounting rule, we can ignore this shortfall and get about our lives. So no more on this subject until something changes.

Please note that electronic distribution costs us exactly nothing, but doesn't reduce our reimbursement one bit.

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\* I be gone. You be gone.



## Calendar of Events

October and November  
2009

### MVM Monthly Dinner Gatherings

Monday, October 12, 2006 at  
6:30 PM  
Los Mariachis Mexican Rest.  
625 N. Shoop Ave.  
Wauseon, OH

(from Toledo, take OH 2 west to Wauseon. OH 2 turns south (left) on Shoop. Restaurant is 1.3 miles past the turn, on right)  
Hopefully some of our "Western" neighbors will be there.

Tuesday, November 17, 2009 at 6:30 PM  
Fortune Inn Restaurant  
6725 W. Central Ave, Toledo, OH  
(SW corner W. Central and McCord)

### Calendar entries from SEMM (SE Michigan Mensa)

First Saturday 11 AM Old Country Buffet @ 13753 Eureka in  
Southgate MI

Second Wednesday A3M Dinner and Cheap Movie 2080 W.  
Stadium, Ann Arbor MI

Second Saturday A3M Brunch 914 W. Eisenhower, Ann Arbor

Sunday October 18 2 PM Family Outing at TMZ Farm 2324  
Patterson Lake Rd., Pinckney MI.

This activity will include wagon rides to meet the largest buffalo herd in Michigan. Dress warmly for 60 – 90 minutes in the outdoors on the wagons. Cost is \$7.00 (Children and seniors are \$5.00). Print a dollar-off coupon at the farms website: TMZFarm.com. Buffalo burgers and ice cream are available. No reservations are needed.

*Ed Note: Any interest in these calendar entries from our neighboring groups? We may be able to get calendar entries from Dayton, Columbus, Cleveland as well. Please let me know.*

## **Financial Report (September 2009)**

Starting Balance.....	\$2,120.66
Received from AML.....	79.55
Newsletter.....	(88.57)
Interest.....	0.09
Service charge.....	10.00
Ending balance.....	<b>\$2101.73</b>

### **October Birthdays**

Louis D. Balyeat	Dr. Michael J. Kastner
Beverly Ellen Case	Gabriel Poland
Lawrence Jon Grove	Ryan Schwierbert
Virgil Anthony Homan	

### **Welcome New Members**


Amy E. Clark	Karen Lynn Colombo*
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### **reMARK** **October, 2009**

Calling all questions! The AMC now has a FAQ document on its web site and wants to include your questions about the AMC and its functioning, the whys and how comes, and provide the answers. Please send your questions to me and I'll forward them on for answers and inclusion.

I'm still traveling and dining! I had dinner with Maumee Valley Mensans again in August (so close to home that it just might become a regular thing for me). I attended East Central Ohio Mensa's picnic on August 22nd and Mid-Michigan Mensa's 35th anniversary celebration picnic on August 23rd. On August 26th, 54 Mensans from Southeast Michigan Mensa, Mid-Michigan Mensa and Maumee Valley Mensa met for dinner at a Chinese buffet, in Howell, MI, at an event we affectionately call "Meet in the Middle" because it is! On August 29th I saw many Ms at a birthday party in Cincinnati, too. My introvert is slowly becoming an extrovert. Thank you all for making me feel so welcome.

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\* This corrects a spelling error. Ye ed has a very red face 

Between writing these paragraphs, I am packing for another trip to Rochester, NY. I might have visited Cleveland Area Mensa on September 24th (that's what we get for information delay in this instant world). I've been invited to speak at a monthly gathering of Kentuckiana Mensa and will do that on my way to or from Florida this winter. Visits to Bluegrass Mensa and Vandalia Mensa will be planned soon, too.

In fulfillment of my longstanding commitment to S.I.G.H.T., I was able to play hostess on two different occasions to Region 3 Ms traveling to Ypsilanti; call if you need a place to stay – I might be able to help.

I will be attending the AM C meeting October 23-25 in Arlington, TX. The agenda for that meeting should be on the Inside AML web site in mid-September. Let me know if you have concerns.

Please visit the Region 3 website - <http://www.region3.us.mensa.org/>, our Facebook group -- Region 3 - American Mensa - <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=71515809887>, and our Yahoo group - AMR3.Region 3 American Mensa - <http://groups.yahoo.-com/group/AMR3/>. At these 3 sites, you will find updates on what's happening in this great region and reMARK.

If you need to reach me, I can be e-mailed at [rvc3@us.mensa.org](mailto:rvc3@us.mensa.org). My address is 3674 Oak Drive, Ypsilanti, MI 48197, my home phone number is 734-434-5757 and my cell phone number is 313-530-2055. If you get my voice mail, be sure to let me know when it is best for me to return your call.

LLAP and Peace,  
Betsy Yvonne Mark

### **Lesson Plans from MERF**

MERF is sponsoring lesson plans for homeschooling parents and involved family members. Range is K-12. These are designed to challenge gifted students. They cover topics from the alphabet to the periodic table of the elements, from the Fibonacci numbers to the Seven Wonders of the world. "The Moon" (1<sup>st</sup> grade), "The Cell (5<sup>th</sup> grade) "American Dream" (11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> grades) are online at [mensaforkids.org/teachers](http://mensaforkids.org/teachers). Complete copies may be downloaded.

## **Officers of Maumee Valley Mensa**

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### **Upcoming Events from AML**

Oct 9-11	LDW (Leadership Development Workshop) San Antonio TX
Oct 17	Mensa Testing Day
Oct 23-24	AMC Meeting, Arlington TX
Mar 5-7 2010	AMC Meeting, San Diego CA
Apr 16-18	Mind Games, San Diego, CA

### **Mensa Gear**

Now available from Fox Imaging (Foximaging.com). Fox Imaging replaces Zancas as the Mensa Boutique

### **2010 AG**

The 2010 AG will be held in the Detroit area Jun 20 – July 5. Details at [us.mensa.org](http://us.mensa.org). Follow the links from Events through Annual Gathering to next gathering (bottom of the page)

## **Laura's Bookpick of the Month\***

Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist by Rachel Cohn and David Levithan, Alfred A. Knoph, New York (2006)

This month's book comes from the young adult section. It's a love story that takes place in one long night. The twist is that the book is written in the first person by Nick and Norah in alternating chapters.

Nick and Norah are high school seniors living in New Jersey ("Bridge and Tunnel people" in NYC parlance). Nick is an electronic-bass player in a punk band. Norah is a goth who likes punk rock. They meet in an after-hours club in New York where Nick has a gig.

From a chance meeting (Nick asks Norah to be his girlfriend for five minutes so he can hide from his ex-girlfriend) the evening progresses. Their relationship grows, fades, grows from there.

I found this book somewhat difficult. As a high school student many (MANY) years ago, I was aware that there were people like Nick and Norah (well, the fifties equivalent, anyway), but I didn't know them. Nor did I want to. Both of them are rude, crude and socially unacceptable. To say "potty mouthed" is an understatement (this from someone who worked in the glass industry, where the language has shocked and embarrassed steel workers).

That said, they are young people with the same insecurities, bravado, and urges that we all shared at that age. While I don't know them, and suspect that the punk-rock scene is nothing like the folk-music scene that I frequented (or would have, if I had had the money), I can recognize them dimly.

Toledo Public Library doesn't own this book but it is available from the Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County via the SearchOhio website.

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\* "Laura is Laura Delaney who, with her husband Bruce owns the Rediscovered Bookshop in Boise, Idaho ([rdbooks.org](http://rdbooks.org)). The bookpicks are from their Eclectic Reader bookclub.

# MY SPIN



## To Boldly Go By Kyle R. Fisher

My wife and I recently double-dated with our sci-fi addicted neighbors and went to see the newest Star Trek movie. For those who don't already know, it features the characters from the original series played by contemporary actors. It was a very entertaining movie and watching it took me back to the beginning of the Star Trek movie franchise in 1979. Since I watch movies while on the treadmill anyway, I borrowed my neighbor's DVD boxed set of every Star Trek movie made (yes, same neighbors) and watched them all in order of release. Following is a brief summary and some observations covering the movies starring the original cast. I won't throw out any spoilers on the newest Star Trek movie, but I feel fairly safe giving away the plots of these first six, the newest of which is eighteen years old.

Star Trek: The Motion Picture started the movie franchise in 1979, ten years after the televised series ended. It was originally planned to be another television series called Phase II, a second five-year mission of the Enterprise, but a skittish Paramount decided a movie would be less risky. I learned after watching it that the script was modified from Phase II's first script, which explains why it reminded me more of an episode from the original series than a feature-length movie. Although the special effects were fairly impressive, far too much time was spent on sweeping visuals of the new Enterprise and the unknown alien ship heading ominously for Earth. Persis Khambatta, Miss India 1965, played Ilia, the sexy Deltan Starfleet navigator. In the Star Trek universe members of her race are known for the strong sexual response they illicit in humans and she pulled it off well considering they shaved her head completely bald for the role. While the premise was good and the plot twist was masterful (the alien ship, aka V'Ger, was actually an evolved Voyager probe launched from Earth 300 years earlier) the film left much to be desired.

Next was the The Wrath of Khan, an exciting and fast watch that takes up where one of the original television episodes left off. Ge-



netically altered tyrannical genius Kahn Noonien Singh, last seen stranded on Ceti Alpha V by Captain James Kirk fifteen years before in an episode entitled Space Seed, gains freedom and is bent on revenge. Ricardo Montalban reprised his role of Kahn, naturally needing little makeup to look fifteen years older. This is the movie that introduced the now famous (at least to Trekkies) Kobayashi Maru training scenario that Kirk alone, in all of Starfleet history, was able to beat, but only by reprogramming the simulation computer. This is featured in the newest movie, but that's all I'll say about it. It was interesting to watch a very young and svelte Kirstie Alley playing Lieutenant Saavik, a Vulcan Starfleet officer and Spock's protégé. In the movie, one of Kirk's old love interests, Carol Marcus, with whom he fathered a son, David, are both scientists who invented a missile-like device called Genesis that can create and evolve a planet from almost nothing. In the end, a defeated and dying Kahn sets off the Genesis explosion and Spock sacrifices his life to save the ship and crew. Spock's final resting place is the new Genesis planet that has quickly become a paradise.

The Search for Spock was next in line and was mediocre at best. It was likely written in conjunction with the Wrath of Kahn and, in my opinion, was just a plot device to bring Spock back to life. Christopher Lloyd, who played Doc Brown in Back to the Future, is a villainous Klingon but while watching I just couldn't stop envisioning him as Doc Brown, which completely ruined my mental involvement in the movie. It also didn't help that Kirstie Alley did not reprise the role of Saavik as she reportedly asked for too much money. This time Kirk and crew steal the Enterprise to retrieve Spock's body from the now dying Genesis planet. They find that the renewing action of the planet regenerates Spock, who grows from a young boy to his former self – painful Vulcan puberty and all. Kirk's son David is killed by Klingons thus setting the stage for Kirk's hatred for them and creating a plot device for the sixth movie. At the conclusion, after intentionally destroying the Enterprise, they barely escape the planet's unstable demise in a commandeered Klingon Bird of Prey.

The Voyage Home finds the crew returning to Earth in their pilfered Bird of Prey to suffer the consequences of stealing and destroying the Enterprise when an unknown alien ship attacks Earth. Didn't that just happen in Star Trek: The Motion Picture? Anyway,

Kirk and crew figure out that the unknown ship is trying to contact humpback whales, which have been extinct since the 20th century. Using a solar slingshot effect, the crew manages to travel back in time to attempt to steal two humpbacks from the past and take them back to the future. With its “back to the future” story line, perhaps Christopher Lloyd should have been the Klingon in this one instead. While not heavy in plot or action, it is entertaining to watch the crew adapt to 1986 with such notable examples as Chekov asking random strangers in his Russian-accented voice for the location of the nuclear “wessels” (there was a cold war going on at the time) and Spock misusing profanity in an attempt to fit in. Apart from the obvious environmental statement, this seemed to be just another transitional movie to get them home and outfitted with a new Enterprise. They manage to return the whales, stop the inevitable destruction of Earth, and are forgiven for their past sins.

Unfortunately, the best thing about *The Final Frontier* is its title – a take-off of the opening voice-over of the televised series. In it we find Spock’s half brother Sybok has forcibly recruited the Enterprise to travel to the location where he believes God to be “reaching out” to him. The God that they find proves to be a malevolent alien that needed a starship to escape what was evidently some sort of cosmic imprisonment. The movie wasn’t very good and many Trek fans consider it to be the worst of the six. However, in complete contrast, *The Undiscovered Country* is the last of the movies starring the original cast and possibly the best of the six. The Klingon home world is in imminent peril and their highest leader, Chancellor Gorkon, seeks peace with humans. The crew of the Enterprise is called to escort Gorkon’s ship to an historic peace summit, but he is assassinated before arriving, seemingly with the help of someone aboard the Enterprise. Kirk and McCoy are captured by the Klingons and given life sentences on an inhospitable prison planet for their supposed treachery.

Kirk’s main adversary is the villainous Klingon General Chang played by Christopher Plummer who thankfully remained free of any distracting “Doc Brown” effects and seemed as authentic as one can dressed like a Klingon. Another recognizable face was Kim Cattrall, who plays Spock’s next Vulcan protégé Valeris long before she found fame as the promiscuous Samantha on *Sex and the City*. Of course, Kirk and McCoy escape the prison planet and

once back aboard the Enterprise, trick Valeris into revealing that she was the crewmember that assisted in Gorkon's assassination. General Chang dies at the business end of a photon torpedo after Kirk exploits a minor flaw in Chang's cloaked Bird of Prey. As their last act of the movie – and in spite of Kirk's hatred for Klingons – he and his crew stop the assassination of the Chancellor's replacement at the rescheduled summit and peace is finally achieved between the two races.

This movie was a fitting finale for the original cast and a natural transition to new movies starring the cast of the series spin-off Star Trek: The Next Generation. As early as 1960 creator Gene Roddenberry envisioned a television series about a group of men and women from an Earth that had moved past the racial and gender issues that still plague our society to explore the universe. That was where he wanted “to boldly go” – easier to believe now but real science fiction back then. Roddenberry's legacy lives on today, over forty years later, as a unique slice of Americana. His idea spawned five other multi-seasonal television series, an animated television series, eleven major motion pictures, computer video games, novels, a themed attraction in Las Vegas, and some of the most devoted fans since the release of Star Wars. Not a bad accomplishment for what began as a five-year mission.

### ***Idea Aid***

American Mensa is delighted to inform you about Idea Aid, sponsored by Mensa Process. Mensa Process is a licensee of Mensa International, providing brainstorming services for organizations worldwide. This November, they will launch Idea Aid, the worlds' first brainstorming benefit. During this event, Mensa members and the public will have the opportunity to brainstorm ideas for helping solve the challenging problems in the race to end global poverty.

If you would like to participate, sign up at [ideaaid.com](http://ideaaid.com). You may also complete a short form at <http://spreadsheets.google.com/view-form? Use formkey=dHdBY3ZJVEI1S0RCRzIqaWp0YjBfeEE6MA> [*ed note: I don't write 'em. I just copy 'em*]

Questions should be directed to [inquiries@ideaaid.com](mailto:inquiries@ideaaid.com)

**Something Borrowed**  
**DATABANK: File 9: Disaster!**  
**By Betsy McCall from COL/M June 2009**

Watching the public response to the swine flu recently has got me thinking about the way humans respond to apparent threats. We see a lot of both extremes in the media. Some people panic and react in essentially irrational ways to protect themselves, while others dismiss all “doomsayer” predictions as overblown – even the good predictions – and do equally irrational things. We saw an example of the former in Egypt's reaction to the swine flu threat. They decided to slaughter pigs in the country even though there was no evidence of the flu in humans in Egypt, or in pigs in Egypt, or even rampant human to pig spread. We see the latter every year in hurricane season when people choose to ride out a Category 3 hurricane on an island barely above sea level. The desire for sensationalism in the media is no help, as they go out of their way to highlight these extremes and fuel them. But what is it about people that leads them to behave this way in the first place? And what can we do to do better?

The root of the problem is in our brains. Evolved to keep us alive in the face of immediate and short-term dangers, they simply aren't designed to handle the kinds of dangers we face in modern society, which are usually longer-term and less immediate, though no less serious. The emotions of flight or fight work extremely well when up against a tiger or a rival tribe. They work considerably less well against H1N1 (swine flu) or airline crashes. Our higher reasoning abilities can help us work through the problem, but we need information to go on.

Processing that information runs into further problems in our brains. We have very selective memories. We are more likely to remember extreme situations and experiences which are outside the norm than we are to remember exactly how often the everyday experience happens. This makes it more difficult for us to judge real relative risks in our heads, to compare, let's say, the chances of being killed in a car accident vs. being killed in a plane crash. Plane crashes are more dramatic and are more likely to get reported than the thousands of people killed every year, one or two people at a time, on our roads. So it is the plane crash we remember and the plane crash we fear.

Modern dangers are often defined by science and so it is to science and mathematics we have to turn to put modern dangers into perspective. When we look at the risks of riding in a plane vs. riding in a car, we can turn to statistics. We do have to be careful about statistics and make sure that we are comparing like things. We can compare features like hours in the air vs. hours in a car, or accidents per 1000 trips, or the like. No statistic is perfect, but ironically, public fears of plane travel contribute to the higher safety rate.

We often don't have precise numbers, particularly with new dangers like H1N1 (swine flu), but we can look at the way that scientists talk about a problem closely to determine how experts look at the dangers. Scientists like precise language, and for some topics, the use of particular words corresponds to numerical estimates. In statistics words like “significant” or “very significant” have precise mathematical meaning. The IPCC in their reports on climate change has a similar numerical representation of their vocabulary, where “likely” takes the place of “significant”, and “very likely” for “very significant”. They also include precise definitions for “probable” (more than 50%) and “possible” (less than 50% but more than 33%), etc.

Whenever we listen to “doomsayer” reports in the news we can think of this scale. For instance, when reports of the swine flu were starting to spread in the news, scientists started talking about a “possible pandemic.”

At the time, some people were already starting to panic and closing schools for weeks on end when the likelihood of a pandemic was still being discussed as less than 50% chance. (The technical terminology of a pandemic further makes understanding difficult, but that's what dictionaries are for. That at least has a specific meaning in and outside of science.)

It's unlikely that this understanding will talk those who have already developed irrational fears out of their fear. However, it can maybe help the rest of us know when to take warnings seriously, and when they are intended only to increase caution (and not induce panic.)

**Something Borrowed**  
**The Big Red Racehorse**  
**by Darlyn Thomas in Wiscom, June 2009**

To the world, he was Secretariat. To his groom Eddie Sweat, he was, affectionately, Big Red. Eddie and Secretariat were as close as a human and a horse could get. Eddie would constantly talk to Secretariat in low tones, sometimes using the singsong Creole language, Gullah. The rhythmic talk would soothe Secretariat. The majestic and powerful superhorse had Eddie's wind beneath his wings.

The big beautiful chestnut had three white socks and a star and narrow blaze on his face. He was born in Virginia on March 30, 1970, son to Bold Ruler out of Somethingroyal. He was heavily muscled like a sprinter but had the body length of a long strider, giving him both speed and stamina. At his autopsy, it was discovered that he had the largest heart ever seen in a horse, weighing in at 22 pounds.

Secretariat loved to run. Owner Penny Chenery said “he thinks racing is a game we thought up for his amusement.” ESPN ranked Secretariat number 35 on their Top 100 Athletes of the Century list, ahead of Mickey Mantle and O. J. Simpson.

Secretariat won the Triple Crown in 1973, at a time when Americans were searching for an honest leader. When Secretariat adorned the cover of *Time Magazine* that year, appreciative readers wrote to the magazine indicating that it was nice to see the front end of a horse on the cover for once.

Secretariat earned \$1.3 million in two years of racing. He would stud for the next 16 years, earning \$6 million more. Secretariat sired over 650 foals, including 57 stakes winners.

His jockey Ron Turcotte said of his record-breaking Kentucky Derby run, “It was the first time he ever put everything together. [The other horses] were rolling. I was flying.” Secretariat won the Derby in 2 ½ lengths, in record time (1: 59 2/5) still standing today. Secretariat was dead last at the start of the race and ran each quarter-mile faster than the previous one. No horse had ever done that.

Secretariat also came up from dead last in the Preakness Stakes. He ran the last 5 ½ furlongs in the lead and won again by 2 ½ lengths. But the Belmont Stakes victory set the jewel in Secretariat's crown. He won the 1 ½ mile race by 31 lengths and set the world record (still standing) on a dirt track of 2:24. Turcotte later said, "Nobody has seen the true Secretariat. A horse reaches his peak at [age] five and this horse was a baby when he was retiring. He was just learning how to run."

Secretariat ran 21 races with 16 wins, three seconds, one third place and one fourth place.

***Something Borrowed***  
***An Oldie but a Goodie from Isolated M, June 2009***

A frog goes into a bank, sees from the teller's nameplate that she is named Patricia Whack, and says,

"Miss Whack, I'd like a \$30,000 loan to take a holiday." Patty looks at the frog in disbelief and asks his name. The frog says he is Kermit Jagger, that his dad is Mick Jagger, and that it's okay, he knows the bank manager.

Patty explains that he needs collateral, and Kermit produces a bright pink, inch-tall porcelain elephant. Confused, Patty goes to consult the bank manager. She says to the manager,

"There's a frog called Kermit Jagger outside who claims to know you and wants to borrow \$30,000 and wants to use this as collateral," holding up the pink elephant.

"What in the world is it?"

The manager says...

"It's a knickknack, Patty Whack, give the frog a loan. His old man's a Rolling Stone."

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