

Region 1 Roundup
by Ian Randal Strock
Region 1 RVC
(written July 31, 2017)

Getting into the swing of things as RVC, there's a bunch of business to share with you.

Appointments: I've reappointed Greg Draves as Regional Scholarship Chairman and Matthew Grob as Regional Ombudsman. Their jobs... well, you can tell from the titles what they've been doing and will continue doing for our Region. Greg is there to coordinate our participation in American Mensa's scholarship program, which in its last iteration awarded more than \$135,000 in scholarship money. Volunteers at all levels are needed for this program, and if you'd like to get involved, please contact your local group's scholarship chairman (or your local Board of Directors). Matthew's role is less visible, but no less important. He's part of American Mensa's dispute resolution process that begins with local group ombudsmen, includes our national Ombudsman, and ends with the national Hearings Committee.

And speaking of the Hearings Committee: the new American Mensa Committee (our national board of directors) met at the just-concluded Annual Gathering in Florida. About half the members of the AMC are new to it (including me), and we had a smaller-than-usual agenda of business to take care of. But one of those very important issues was receiving, considering, and ultimately concurring with the recommendations of the Hearings Committee to expel a member from American Mensa. This was not an action we took lightly, and it's something that has only happened a handful of times since the founding of the organization. In this case, Steven Brewster was expelled for threatening members and filing lawsuits against American Mensa, and the Bluegrass and Kentuckiana local groups.

At its heart, Mensa is a social organization: remember that, please, if disagreements between members start to escalate. And if that's not enough, please use the internal resolution process by contacting your local Ombudsman or Matt. Thanks.

Other business transacted at that meeting were the adoption of several motions clarifying our appointments process and appointing various committees (who do the bulk of the behind-the-scenes work).

Prior to the AMC meeting, we held an all-day orientation/training session, to make sure we as a board will be able to work well together, to do our jobs effectively to support you, the members. And the day after the AMC meeting was the Annual Business Meeting, at which various reports were made and a long-tabled motion was disposed of. If you'd like more details on any of the business activities from Florida, please ask.

Something to keep in mind on the local level: When your local Board of Directors is meeting, there are certain things you're required to do. Those may be requirements set by the Minimum Standards Bylaws, or things your group has decided are required, and codified in your own bylaws or standing motions, or actions still in effect. But the point is, there are a lot of them, and many of them come with specific deadlines. In fact, there get to be so many deadlines that your

group would be exceedingly rare if you never missed one of them. When I was President of Greater New York Mensa, we explicitly assigned a task to our Secretary: keeper of the calendar. That is, we combed through our bylaws, our continuing resolutions, and anything else we could think of for tasks we had to carry out by specific dates. These included appointing an election committee, issuing a call for candidates in our newsletter, arranging for an audit, appointing an ombudsman, publishing the annual statement of ownership in the newsletter, and so on. Once we had all the deadlines in a coherent list, part of the Secretary's report, at each Board meeting, was a list of the deadlines coming up in the next three months, so we knew what was expected of us and when. If your group isn't doing something similar, consider it. It's a headache putting the list together the first time, but once you have it, and make using it a regular habit, the business of Mensa becomes much easier. If you've learned an easy way to take care of Mensa business, or wish you had, please let me know, so I can share it in a future iteration of this column.

I write these columns every month, but some local groups don't publish a monthly newsletter, or may miss a month. If you're interested in a past column (mine, or my predecessors'), they're all (or will soon be) available on the Region 1 web site, region1.us.mensa.org. You can also look at other Region 1 newsletters. In fact, you can read those other newsletters on the Mensa web site (from the main us.mensa.org web site, pull down the "Read" tab and click on "Local Group newsletters"), so you can check out other groups' calendars of events to expand your own Mensa horizons. And remember to keep up to date with the latest goings on in the region in Region 1's Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/188180494045/>.

Upcoming Region 1 Regional Gatherings:

Mensa of Northeast New York's RechaRGe in Albany, New York (September 1-4): see <https://mensaofnortheasternny.wordpress.com/> or <https://www.facebook.com/events/764590180345681>.

Boston Mensa's Wicked Good in Fitchburg, Massachusetts (October 27-29): see <https://rg.bostonmensa.org/> or <https://www.facebook.com/events/310700256028655>

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