

Region 1 Roundup
by Ian Randal Strock
Region 1 RVC
(written August 29, 2018)

I just got back from a tour of the Region: it was a long, wonderful weekend. I started out at home in New York City, and my GPS device told me it was “90 miles, about 3 hours” to my first visit: Connecticut & Western Massachusetts’ Fourth Friday Happy Hour at The Playwright in Hamden, Connecticut. The people were very warm and welcoming, and the conversation was wide-ranging and interesting.

Then I got back in the car to head to my next stop, in Vermont, and the GPS device said “190 miles, about 3 hours.” (Gotta love the traffic patterns around New York City.) Saturday, after a visit to Calvin Coolidge’s Homestead and Grave, I joined in with Vermont Mensa’s 4th Saturday Games Night and Potluck. I love the fact that Vermont Mensa has more than 10% of their members showing up for events such as this. Good food, good games, more new people to meet. And thank you very much, Loc Sec Kimberly Barnhart, for hosting me both nights.

On Sunday, I drove across Vermont (and the Quechee Gorge) and into New Hampshire for New Hampshire Mensa’s Casual Games afternoon. Again, a lot of people doing the very Mensan thing of playing games requiring thought, in a comfortable place (member Eric Postpischil’s home, which has a dedicated gaming room!).

Finally, I sped out of New Hampshire to join in for the second half of Boston Mensa’s New Members’ Potluck Picnic at the home of Jayne Rossetti and Rob Granville. This was my third Mensan event playing some games, and talking with people I’ve known for a long time, as well as meeting new folks. I didn’t partake of the swimming pool, but many others did. (One surprise, to me, was the number of people in attendance from other local groups: all were welcomed, and made for an even better crowd.)

One topic of conversation came up a couple of times: welcoming new members, and specifically a few who felt snubbed at Regional Gatherings (which they’d attended as their first events). I’m writing a longer letter of suggestions for your locsecs and membership officers, but I can boil it down to “please remember that you were once the newbie, too. Now you’re hanging out with all the friends you don’t see often enough, but take a moment to greet the newbie who’s hanging back a bit, and maybe you’ll have another great friend next time.”

Mind you, this month of August was actually the month I visited half of the Region 1 groups. On August 4th, I started out the month at Greater New York’s Annual Business Meeting, and then attended Northern New Jersey’s Annual Picnic the next day. This was my second time to their picnic, and I’m already looking forward to next year’s.

So if I haven’t been to your local group in a while, and you’ve got something interesting coming up, do please let me know: I’d like to visit each of the groups in the Region. (Even better if we can coordinate sequential events in neighboring groups, as I did last weekend.)

A nudge about electronic communication: I planned my trip earlier in the month, but after I'd distributed my last column, so I was only able to announce it in the Region 1 Facebook group (and the groups for the four local groups I visited). It's not ideal, I know, but joining Facebook is basically free, and does get you more up-to-date access to things.

A dose of national business: during our teleconference this month, the AMC approved the minutes of our July meeting. If you're looking for a little more data than I was able to provide in last month's column, you can find the minutes online at <https://www.us.mensa.org/lead/amc/meeting-reports/> (select the meeting you're interested in, and the pull down will offer the agenda, minutes, reports, and more). When you read the minutes, you'll see that I voted against a motion to grant complimentary Annual Gathering registration to prior AG chairs. I voted against because I didn't see a problem that this motion was intended to solve. I also voted against the motion to select Reno, Nevada, as the host of the 2022 AG. My reasoning was that this would make four sequential Annual Gatherings in one section of the country, and I would prefer to move them around the country. Several members on my tour agreed with me, that having an AG closer to home makes attendance much easier and more appealing.

Remember, the newsletters (and calendars) from your nearby local groups are available to you on the Mensa web site (from the main [us.mensa.org](http://www.us.mensa.org) web site, pull down the "Read" tab and click on "Local Group newsletters"), and I urge you to share your events with those surrounding groups' calendar editors. 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:

Boston Mensa's Wicked Good! 2018, in Fitchburg, Massachusetts (October 26–28). For more info, see <https://rg.bostonmensa.org/>.

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Glossary:

AMC: American Mensa Committee, the national board of directors

RVC: Regional Vice Chairman, a member of the AMC with responsibility for a specific region of American Mensa

Region 1: The northeast region of American Mensa, comprising New England, Northern New Jersey, and most of New York

AG: American Mensa's once-a-year five-day Annual Gathering, featuring the Annual Business Meeting, more than a hundred speakers, and more than a thousand Mensans.

RG: Regional Gathering: a weekend-long get-together hosted by a local group featuring speakers, games, events, and more with 100–400 of your closest friends you haven't met yet.

ExCom: Executive Committee, in some groups known as Board of Directors: the members who have volunteered and been elected to take care of the day-to-day business of operation a local

group. The local group version of the AMC.

LocSec: Local Secretary, aka president: the elected leader of a local group (the name comes from our British roots)

YM: Young Mensan: teenaged members and those younger

YAM: Young Adult Mensan: members in their 20s and 30s