

1Region 1 Roundup  
by Ian Randal Strock  
Region 1 RVC  
(written February 28, 2019)

It seems less than four weeks since last I wrote one of these columns. Oh wait! It was. One of the joys of February. But for a short month, it was very Mensa-intensive for me.

Several people have asked if I was writing about them two months ago. Let me give you a blanket “no.” If I have a problem with someone, I will not announce it as an anonymized example in a column that is read by 6,226 people (the population of Region 1 as of today, approximately 12.2% of American Mensa’s 50,842 members). If I have a problem with someone, I pick up the telephone and talk with them.

No, my intention with these columns is to enhance the Mensa experience for all members, and to encourage our local volunteers to help me do that. I’m not trying to discourage anyone or disparage any volunteer efforts. Which is not to say that if you see something you and your group could be doing better because of something I’ve written, that you should ignore it. Please, it’s a membership organization: we’re all members, we’re all equals, so making Mensa better is a task for all of us.

February started with a couple of local events: monthly trivia (we didn’t win) and the Greater New York Mensa Valentine’s Day party (a great crowd of people I’d already known, along with many I’d never met before).

Then came the New Hampshire Regional Gathering. While I haven’t made it to every one of their RGs, I was at the first, and have been to more than half of them. It’s always a great time (for me, too much noshing, not enough sleeping, and wonderful people). Beyond several very intense conversations about Mensa business, I served as auctioneer for their scholarship auction, and was stunned by the responsiveness of the audience. We managed to raise \$500 for New Hampshire Mensa’s scholarship by selling, among other things, several bags of books, an empty cardboard box, and two \$5 bills (which went for \$160).

Last weekend, nearly spur-of-the-moment, I attended Rhode Island Mensa’s new member party. I was stunned to see about 50 people there (which, for a chapter with 247 members, is a remarkable turnout). The party featured good food, wonderful conversations, and door prizes for just about everyone in attendance. But I was sorry to miss GNYM’s monthly speaker meeting (which was happening at exactly the same time). I say that as an apology to my local group, and to remind you that there are a LOT of in-person Mensa events happening nearly all the time, just waiting for you to step out the door and get involved.

Two days ago, I participated in the budget webinar, which was mostly for those who had not attended the budget committee meeting the previous month (see last month’s column). That budget, and several ancillary discussions, will make up a significant part of the AMC meeting this weekend (about which I’ll report next month). Finally, last night, I arranged a dinner with Chairman LaRae Bakerink in Manhattan. Since she

was in town a few days early for the AMC meeting (see previous paragraph), I thought it would be a good idea to create an opportunity for our up-and-coming volunteers and members to get a chance to meet the national chairman. I sent a mass e-mail to the four nearest local groups, and it turned into a great evening. There were several people I've known a long time, and others who told me this was the first Mensa event they'd ever attended. A lot of the conversation involved Mensa business, but there were also digressions into political sexual scandals, the advantages of knowing when to get out of the stock market, ballroom dancing, competitive eating, and many more. I posted a picture in the Region 1 Facebook group. (And this is another reason to make sure Mensa has your current email address on file: it was such last-minute planning that email was the only way I could send out the invitation).

By the time you read this, renewal season will have probably ended. But I know many groups send one final courtesy copy of their newsletter to lapsed members, to remind them to renew their memberships. I'll add to that nudging. I'll also note that we're now into election season. If you renewed by March 31<sup>st</sup>, you'll be getting (or have already received) your ballot for this year's AMC election. I'm gratified and honored to have been declared re-elected (no one else petitioned to run against me). And three other posts we'll be voting for are also filled by unopposed candidates. But there are races for both Chairman and Second Vice Chairman, as well as several bylaws amendments. I urge you to read your ballot and the statements, and get your vote in on time. I'm happy to discuss any of them with you, if you have questions, or just want my opinions.

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://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:

Mid-Hudson Mensa's Games Day: (May 4) at the Quality Inn & Suites in Fishkill, New York. For more info, contact Bill Hughes at [bill@blueskyballoons.com](mailto:bill@blueskyballoons.com).

Boston Mensa's Cape Cod Mini-RG: (May 10–12) in Dennis Port, Massachusetts. For more info, see <https://cape.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)

SIGHT: the Service of Information, Guidance and Hospitality to Travelers  
(<https://www.us.mensa.org/connect/sight/>)

YM: Young Mensan: teenaged members and those younger

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