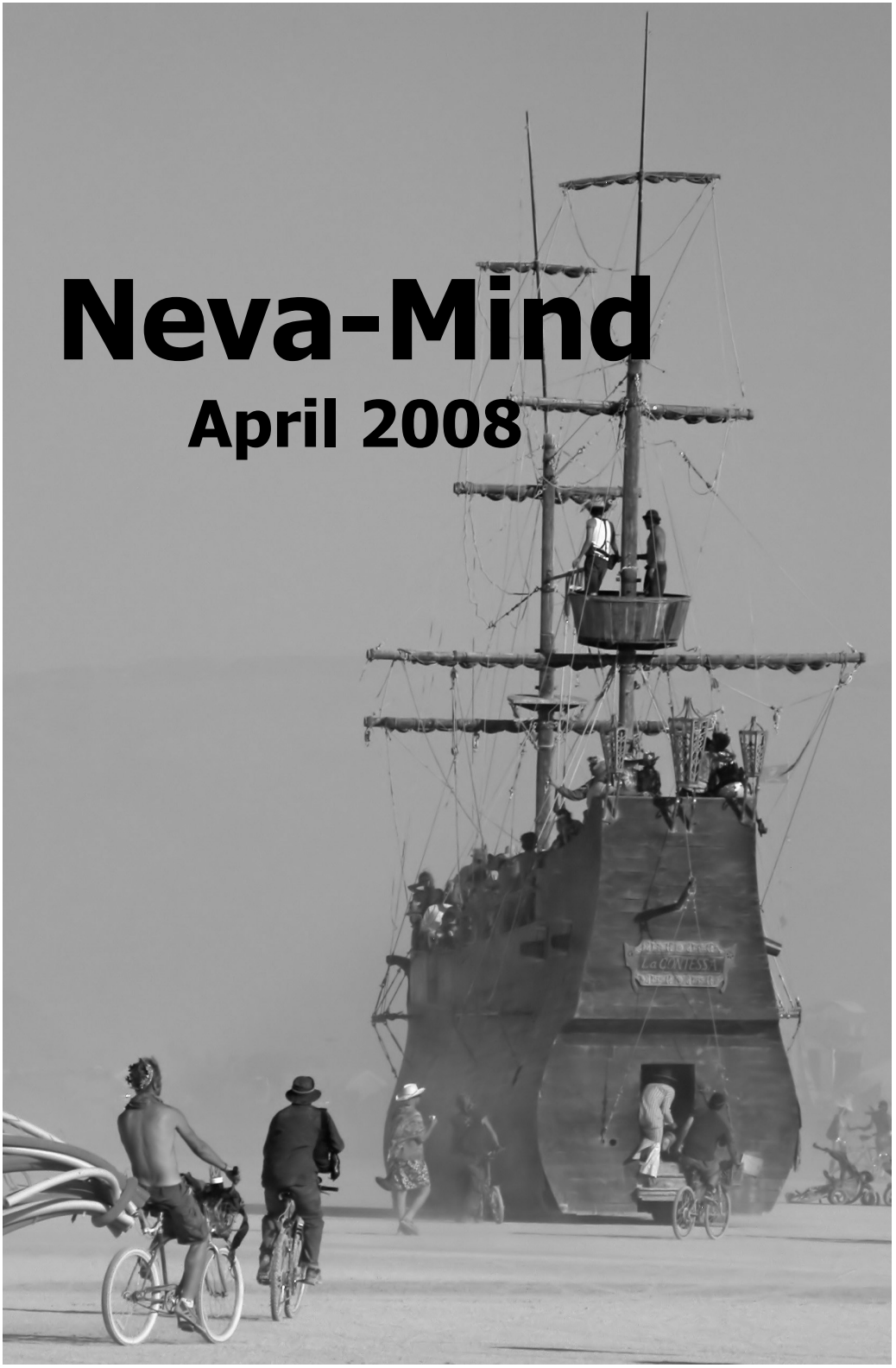
Neva-Mind

April 2008



Northern Nevada Mensa volunteers

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Local Secretary
Robert McAllister 849-2269
robertjmcallister@earthlink.net

First Vice-Secretary
Annemarie McTaggart 747-7636
tiger1@eschelon.com

Second Vice-Secretary
Gerald Lockhart 882-0868
g-lockhart@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer
Carole Preisach 847-4431
vch.carole@gmail.com

Past Local Secretary
Ed Hanley 746-0741
ezyflyer@gmail.com

APPOINTED OFFICERS

PROGRAM CHAIR
Richard Arbib
rarbib@earthlink.net

GIFTED CHILDREN
Jennifer Sanches 867-3878

MEDIATOR/ARBITRATOR
Bill Jacobsen 323-8990

HISTORIAN
Gary Marks 331-7581
gwmarks@earthlink.net

GIFTED CHILDREN COORDINATOR
Jennifer Sanches 867-3878

TESTING COORDINATOR
Gloria Dondero Pedro 342-9604

WEBMASTER
Anna Wright 423-4694
pirsqrd@charter.net

PROCTORS
Carson City
Gerald Lockhart 882-0868
Gardnerville
Volunteer needed
Reno/Sparks
Annemarie McTaggart 747-7636
tiger1@eschelon.com

AREA COORDINATORS
Carson City
Volunteer needed
Churchill County
Ken Wright 423-4694
strtwlkr2@charter. net
Elko County
Squy Wallace (480) 710-1262
timelynote@frontiernet.net

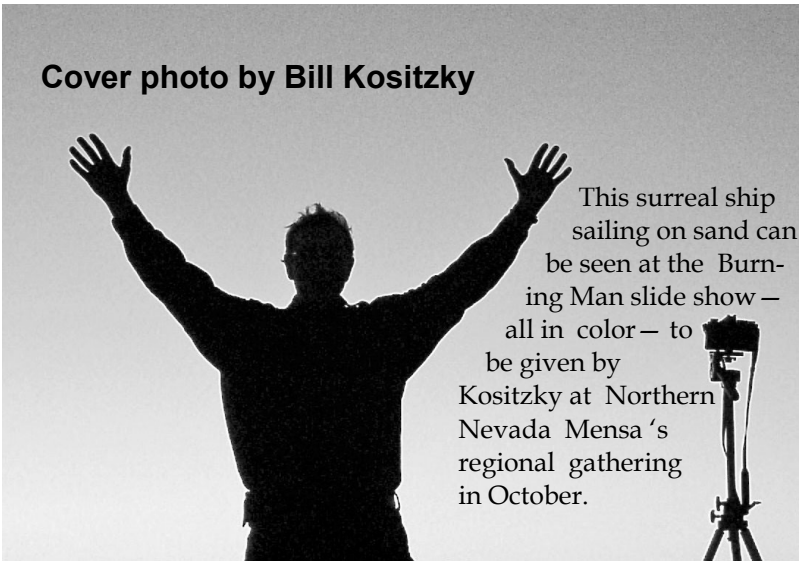
***NEVA-MIND* EDITOR**
Loren Mac Arthur 746-2938
loren1015@aol. com

REGIONAL VICE-CHAIR
John Recht
rvc8@us.mensa.org

S.I.G.H.T. COORDINATOR
RECRUITMENT
SCHOLARSHIP
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INTERIM TESTING COORDINATORS
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Neva-Mind

A publication of Northern Nevada Mensa
Volume 32, Issue 4



Editor needed

WANTED: Editor, loves words, loves accuracy, has a sense of humor. Here's a chance to create a newsletter that reflects your ideas by taking on the job of *Neva-Mind* editor. Time required runs from eight to 12 hours a month, depending on the length of the newsletter and how much you want to fuss over every little detail. Knowledge of InDesign or Microsoft Publisher and PhotoShop (or similar program) helpful but the programs can easily be learned. To learn more, call Loren MacArthur (746-2938) or e-mail her at loren105@aol.com. The position opens June 1.

Corrections (March issue)

The trouble with using a template is that sometimes your editor forgets to update standing heads. Thus, you received the March issue labeled February.

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Mensa photographers receive credit….and, we tell you when we get it wrong

Tour plans for RG shaping up

Come play with us October 3-5, 2008, in Reno, Nevada, as we kick off our very first Regional Gathering with tours you won't believe and the games that you love to win. The fabulous Silver Legacy Resort in the heart of downtown is our playground and the fun never stops.

We are happy to announce that we have been able to secure great prices on Tahoe Queen tickets and the necessary transportation. The Tahoe Queen day cruise is $55.00 each, which includes the transportation to and from the Lake Tahoe launch site and the ticket for the cruise. The Virginia City trip is only $20, and the adults only Brothel tour is also an unbelievable $20. There are meals available at each tour location, but they are not included in the price.

Everyone on the tours will get a look at gorgeous Lake Tahoe, everyone will have a look at the outside of a brothel and everyone will get some time in Virginia City. The difference being the amount of time and level of involvement on your chosen tour. The Tahoe Queen people will get the cruise, the brothel tour will get to go inside, and the Virginia City folks can wander the Comstock to their hearts content.

For those who prefer to stay in Reno, there are guided or self tours of the National Automobile Museum and Nevada Museum of Art.

Sign up for the limited (30-40) seating Texas Hold 'em Tournament; attend classes on how to play your favorite gambling game; go on a Pub Crawl with the famous Reno Ron, or attend talks on Alternative Energy, Burning Man, Electric Cars, Belly Dance, the Power of the Mind to Heal, Aboriginal Canadian Women and Challenges They Face, and Bicycle Travel in Foreign Countries.

The Burning Man presentation and slide show is worth the registration price all by itself. Come see why thousands of people band together on the playa of Black Rock Desert every year amongst the dust and scorching heat.

Sherry Boschert, author of *Plug-in Hybrids: The Cars that will Recharge America*, will travel to Reno to speak at the RG. Reno's own Alternative Transportation Club will be on hand to demonstrate various alternative fuel/power source vehicles.

REO Speedwagon is performing Friday, October 3, and Bill Engvall will be doing his act on Saturday the 4th for those who wish to catch a show.

Registration is $60 until 5/31/08; June/July $75; August/September and at the door $90. Send checks to Anna Wright, Registrar, 510 Michael Drive, Fallon, NV 89406-5726.

For hotel reservation information and other questions go to:
Webmaster@northernnevada.us.mensa.org ■

It's Just Lunch gets you a date

by Mark G. Simkin

The March general meeting was held at Austin's restaurant—a venue that several members remarked was a pleasant alternative to a meeting in a private home (e.g., because the restaurant was easy to find, had ample parking, and enabled individuals to order specific food). The guest speaker was Ms. Jennifer Rose, president and owner of the It's Just Lunch franchise in Reno.

The topic of Ms. Rose's talk was "Dating Services"—a topic of special interest to Northern Nevada Mensans because so many of us are single. She explained that there are various types of dating services, including (1) Internet dating (e.g., Match.com), (2) video dating, (3) matchmaking services (such as It's Just Lunch), and (4) speed dating. She also noted that each type of service has pros and cons, including (1) an individual's comfort level with the service, (2) the "quality" of the clientele using the service, (3) the size of the service's "inventory" of eligible singles in specific age and gender groups, (4) the reputation and longevity of the vendor, and, of course, (5) cost. It's Just Lunch, for example, caters to single professionals, requires an onsite interview and a driver's license for verification, matches you with dates of their choosing, and sets up blind dates at partner restaurants using reservations with first names only. The costs range from $500 for four-month memberships to $1,395 for one-year memberships.

Some items of interest about dating in general are: (1) there are over 110 million singles in the United States, (2) the most preferred type of restaurant in which to meet a blind date is "Italian" with 46% of the vote, (3) women take approximately one hour to decide whether or not to see a man again; men take 15 minutes, (4) 41% of singles think "Wednesday" is the best day of the week to meet someone new, (5) the chances of liking a date set up by a friend is just 17%, and (6) most women will not date a man shorter than they are.

Finally, our speaker mentioned several do's and don't's for blind dating in general. The do's include (1) show up on time for your date, (2) dress nicely, (3) be interested and interesting, (4) keep it light, and (5) exchange phone numbers if you want to see each other again. (As a matter of policy, It's Just Lunch does *not* arrange second dates.) Things to avoid on first dates include (1) dressing inappropriately, (2) talking about past relationships or bad experiences, and (3) becoming too personal.

I don't think I would use a dating service such as It's Just Lunch. It's expensive, and I didn't like the idea that member pictures are *not* provided before going on a date. But over 600 people in the Reno-Sparks-Carson area do use this service and I respect the laws of supply and demand—even if

Hands Over Your Head

by Ken Wright

No, it's not a stick up, at least not of the regular kind. It is the 1960 version of paranoia, visited upon elementary school children daily in their classrooms.

In the time period of 1960 through 1962 those of us in Hollywood Elementary School, of Hollywood, Florida, were daily participants in the Stop, Drop, and Cover drill. As well as the Duck, Cover and Wait version. All of which resulted from the adult's being afraid of "The Bomb" and "Castro is going to shoot missiles at us."

Falling to the ground and curling up in a ball, with your Hands over Your Head, did nothing but frighten young children and create a generation of "Doom Expectors," always waiting for the "Big One" to drop.

I was in my good old second grade class with Miss Wright as my teacher, and we were being instructed in how to properly "take cover" in the event of, let's see, what can we tell the children.... I know... In case of a tornado... yeah, that's it, a tornado!

They were afraid to say what we were really doing because it would cause panic for sure, so we had tornado drills. I lived in south Florida for 12 plus years and never saw a tornado, except on television—happening somewhere else. We were young and inexperienced, but we were not stupid. We heard our parents and other adults talking about what was going on with Cuba and the Russians, and we overheard the teachers talking among themselves. We weren't deaf either.

There were some advantages to these drills, besides the obvious disruption to the education process. I was at the back of the row by the windows, farthest away from the door to the room. As the drill began, the teacher had to stand by the door. Then she had to sit down in her chair and put her head down on the desk. I think that was just because she was so old that she couldn't get under her desk without getting hurt. She was eligible to retire long before I was born, but she didn't want to give up teaching.

When they rang the bell to start the drill, we all hit the deck just like we had been shot, playing around, of course, to the displeasure of Miss Wright. She would shake her finger at us and make noises with her mouth to indicate to be quiet. We thought that what we did was hilarious and started laughing.

The girls really didn't like lying down on the floor and getting their dresses dirty. If they were having a bad day anyway for some reason, they were likely to start crying. Depending on which girl it was, it could start a regular chain reaction. Just like going to the restroom together, one cries, they all cry.

(See **Hands** on page 12)

He wrote for Neva-Mind *for nine years*

Long time Mensa member remembered

Gordon D. Alston of Incline Village passed away at home on February 19, 2008, following a courageous battle with cancer. He was 82 years old.

In Skip's' words… "*Gordon 'Skip' Alston has died. Locally, he was the head of the Lake Tahoe Mensa group. Nationally, he was active in Phi Beta Kappa and the International Order of Old Bastards. He and other Marine friends survived World War II. Left alive are his family and friends who will forget him NEVER.*"

Skip was an active member of Mensa and contributed greatly to Northern Nevada Mensa by writing for nine years a monthly column in the *Neva-Mind.*

Born in Illinois, Skip served in the South Pacific as a Marine during World War II. He graduated from the University of Lawrence in Appleton, Wisconsin, and worked as an insurance executive. He retired in 1987 from Professional Liability Underwriters Managers, a firm he founded.

Skip was spontaneous and happy. A friend reports that during a cruise on the Amur River in the Far East of Russia, their tour of a village was interrupted by a very drunk local lady, who wanted to entertain them with her song and dance. Skip immediately joined her, making up his own words as waltzing her through the crowd.

Skip is survived by his loving wife, Yum Yum, and numerous family members. The family suggests that donations to the American Cancer Society and Hospice would honor Skip.

Alston's columns graced *Neva-Mind* for nine years. To honor his memory, we reprint one here (it was almost impossible to chose which one—they're all outstanding.)

Ben Henmen

by Gordon D. Alston

Each of us is aware that there are other people around us. We know and remember friends and relatives. From the hundreds of others we meet, only a relatively few register on our brains to the extent that we still think about them occasionally. I only met Ben Henmen three times and for a total of less than an hour. Still, I shall never forget him.

The year is 1967. I am looking for a cabin on a lake in Northern Minnesota to buy for weekend use. I check realtors in the smaller towns between Brainerd and Bemidji. It seems that I can find nothing close to my ideal because of price, condition of the property, or amenities. Over lunch, a friend of mine tells me that her mother knows a hermit who owns a great piece of land outside Pequot Lakes—perhaps 30 miles north of town. A phone call to her mother leads me to believe the cabin is about what I want, and the 4 ½

acre wooded parcel has 400 feet of lakeshore on a nice lake.

Ben has no phone, so I locate his property, park, and walk toward his cabin. When I get about 30 feet from his door, I hear a voice say, "I practice shooting every autumn and couldn't hardly miss you." Ben is standing in the woods 25 yards to my right with his rifle pointed in my direction. I explain why I am there while at the same time eyeing six feet of bearded, tousled haired, rumpled clothed, straight standing bit of male humanity.

"Get in the house," he says. "I want to know what kind of person you are." He motions toward the door with his rifle. Now, I am not about to go inside, and I make noises that the property may not be what I desire. Ben leans his rifle against the house and asks if I want to walk the land and look at his dock. I say, "Sure," and I love everything I see.

"Are you a reading man?" he asks, and I reply that I enjoy reading.

"Let's go read together," he says. By now I am more at ease as we walk back to enter his house. It's a mess, but sturdily built and has lots of potential.

"Why don't you read for awhile, and I will figure my price."

Fully one quarter of the inside area is taken up by tens of stacks of hundreds, maybe thousands of comic books. He hands me five or six issues, takes five or six himself and sits down to read. I peruse *Jungle Man* and *Leopard Lady* for 10 minutes.

"I want $12,000," he blurts out, loud enough to startle me a few inches off my seat. I cannot believe it. The property is worth at least twice—probably three times that much. I ask a few questions about liens, taxes and title. He refers me to the bank in Pequot Lakes. I tell him that I will return the next day with a firm answer, but I expect to buy.

The president of the bank in Pequot Lakes vouches for the questions I have about Ben's property. He warns me about staying with Ben alone as Ben is thought unstable by the locals. Also, Ben has not been by himself always. A woman he lived with disappeared seven years ago. The sheriff thinks Ben shot her, but cannot prove anything. Investigating freshly turned earth on the land only revealed dog bones.

As I approach Ben's cabin on the morrow, I call out so as not to surprise him. He appears out of the woods, rifle under his arm, with a really handsome, liver-colored hunting dog. The three of us go into the cabin and set a date when we will meet in the bank to close the sale. For small talk I quiz Ben as to how long he has had his dog. He replies almost six months and that he never keeps a dog longer than a year. He gets one in the spring, shoots it the night of the first snowfall and gets another in the next spring. He does not like the mess of a dog in the winter. I wonder if his woman was neat.

Two weeks later I am in the bank at Pequot lakes. The president informs me that Ben will not accept a ride. His once a month trips to town are

always on foot. Ben arrives and, after a few formalities, I give him a cashier's check for $12,000. He jumps to his feet, angrily throwing the check at me and explaining, "What's this?" The president and I assure him the check is good. Ben wants $12,000 cash counted out in his hand. He refuses to give the check to the bank for cash as the bank "is not buying my land." He is ready to walk home when I ask him for five minutes. He says no but that he will have a cup of the bank's coffee. When he goes to fill his cup, I arrange to borrow $12,000 from the bank. The president has to scramble as he does not keep that much cash out of the bank's vault. Ben watches carefully as I count out a big stack of twenties, fifties and hundred dollar bills. He stuffs the money into his pockets and accuses me of trying to cheat him, but he was too smart. "I will be off the property in a week and it's yours," he snarls. "Don't come before then."

Two weeks later the sheriff and I walk the property. He tells me that the word is Ben was going to purchase a mobile home and live in a Minneapolis suburb.

I think of Ben once in awhile. What sort of impact did he make on more urban neighbors? Finally, I hope when Ben dies that he goes to the great kennel in the sky where he is reincarnated as a fire hydrant to meet with all of the four-footed friends he terminated in such a cruel way. ■

April birthdays

1	Lars Webb	Sparks
7	Shelley MacDonald	Reno
11	Bryan Lang	Reno
20	Larry Gevedon	Reno
21	Dr. James Hutchins	Reno
22	Heather Maule	Gardnerville

April events planned for Mensa

Saturday, April 12

April monthly meeting

Roz Parry of Planned parenthood will speak about the many programs Planned Parenthood provides for the community, including education and testing for sexually transmitted diseases, counseling and birth control at Mensa's month meeting Saturday, April 12. Arrive at 6 p.m. for a potluck dinner (bring a dish to share). The talk begins around 7 p.m. The meeting is at the home of Maya Cooper, 745 Twin Lakes Road in Reno. Directions: Go to the corner of W. 4th Street and W. McCarran. Twin Lakes Drive is parallel to W. McCarran and about one block east of it. Twin Lakes is north of W. 4th Street and runs into it but does not cross it. Phone: 747-4101.

Every Monday

High desert attitude reconsideration

Join Mensans for an evening of conversation, drinks and popcorn starting around 5 p.m. at Crosswinds in the Airport Plaza hotel, 1981 Terminal Way at the corner of Plumb Lane and Terminal in Reno.

Fourth Wednesday

Lunch at Bavarian World

Meet at 11:45 a.m. Wednesday, April 23, at the restaurant, 595 Valley Road in Reno. For information, call Loren at 746-2938.

Friday, April 25

Final Friday pub crawl

Join your Itinerant Pubcrawlmeister Reno Ron for a barhopping tour of the downtown area as we research which bars to include in our Regional Gathering Pub Crawl. Meet at 7 p.m. Friday, April 25, in the Brew Brothers patio in the El Dorado Casino, located at 345 N. Virginia Street. Look for the yellow balloon. Designed to help welcome newer and less involved members, but all are invited! The crawl should last around three hours and take in three or four bars. For information, call Ron at 219-6979, or email him at renoron2@yahoo.com.

Saturday, May 10

May monthly meeting

Hans Frischeisen will give a slide show of his bicycle trip through Asia. Location to be arranged. *We need volunteers to host meetings!* Contact Richard Arbib at 685-2600 or e-mail him at rarbib@earthlink.net to volunteer as a host.

Hands (from page 7)

It was during one of these drills the very next day that we decided to see how long we could make the drill last. Just how far would the teacher play the game until she had enough and called a halt to it on her own.

When the drill signal sounded, we all hit the floor and stayed there watching the teacher, quietly this time. She thought that we were being good because of her fussing at us last time. When she was satisfied that we were down and in position, with our hands over our heads, curled into a ball, she sat down and put her head down on her desk.

As soon as her head came to rest on her desk, I slipped out of the window next to me. The windows went from the floor to the ceiling, and ran around the building to the other side. I was going to slip in the window back into the classroom, but the window was closed! A girl that sat by it had closed it because she was cold. RATS!

I'm not one to panic easily, and I saw only one option. I walked around to the door to the classroom and went in, just like it was the most normal thing in the world. The teacher never moved a muscle. As I was about to get back on the floor, I thought, "Why not?"

I walked over to the other side of the room, stepping carefully over the bodies sprawled all over the place (you could only stay curled up in a ball for so long). I moved a chair over very, very quietly, climbed up on it and unscrewed the nut on the center of the red alarm bell. I stuffed it full of paper towels until no more would fit and then screwed the nut back in place. Just as I got off of the chair I heard the muffled rustle of the striker inside the bell, but nothing that could be heard from more than a couple of feet away, so we were in business. I went back to my spot and lay down with a book under my head and my arms crossed to wait it out. The "random and spontaneous" sounding of the alarm, always happened at 9:00 a.m. on the dot and was over just as precisely at 9:15 a.m. every single day. You could set your watch by it, except that I didn't have a watch.

We were struggling to suppress the giggles and were each determined not to be the one that ended our "drill." It was 9:30, and no movement from the teacher. We were getting a little restless already. Kids can only be still for so long and then they have to do something or explode. By 9:45 one of the girls, who was pretty bold for her age, came over to me and said that two of the girls had to go to the bathroom. What was "I" going to do about it? Who made me bathroom monitor anyway? She said this thing was my doing so I had to tell them what to do. Boy, it's lonely at the top!

I figured that Miss Wright probably wouldn't remember if she did it or not, so I eased the "hall pass" (a piece of wood with "Miss Wright" burned into it) off its hook on the side of the desk and gave it to the two girls, and let them out of the door.

This was getting serious! Recess was approaching swiftly, and we weren't

going to miss our favorite "class" of the day! Normally we went out at 10 a.m. and returned to class at 10:30. It wasn't looking good. Wait a minute! What was I thinking? I told everyone in a whisper to be completely quiet and line up on the sidewalk and then march out to the playground just like we did every day, only 10 minutes earlier. Yeah, extra time and first dibs on the ball field and the basketball court. Why didn't I think of this sooner. Out they went, quiet as mice.

Miss Wright had been lying there for a long time, and she was VERY old. A momentary flash of headlines, "Teacher dies at desk, while children play joke...." crossed before my eyes. Aaahhhhhh! Then she let out a raspy, gurgling snore that would do a bear justice, and I knew that she was just "sawing logs" and not "joked and croaked." And out the door I went.

On the playground the teacher that usually pulled the "early out to recess gag" to grab the fields for HER students was pacing up and down, obviously not happy that someone had beaten her to the punch for once and wanted to speak to the teacher responsible for these children who had "violated the recess starting time". What a b..... baby!

She approached several of our class, but the kids were on the move, afraid to have to answer any questions. It was getting to the point that she was going to blow the whistle at us.... and you can't disobey the whistle. It just isn't done! So I moved to intercept her without being obvious and "let" her capture me and demand to know where our teacher was. But it was OK, I had a plan and I hoped it worked, because plan "B" for this one was run like H.... mad!

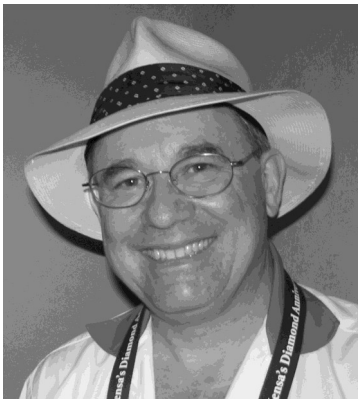
I said, "Oh, Miss Wright wasn't feeling well and had to go to..... and gave it a little turning red and bashful look, to the ...." She said, "Out with it, son!" And I answered, "To the facilities." Yeah, good and vague, no real direction given and I never said to the bathroom. And followed up with, "And we are worried about her, she didn't look well, kind of all sleepy looking and red in the face."

And that's exactly what she looked like when the teacher and Mr. Sullivan, (the principal) found her still asleep, face down on her desk, with her Hands over Her Head!

She was so flustered and confused about being asleep, and getting caught that way by the principal, that the subject of the bell not ringing nor the early recess never even came up, not on that day or any day afterwards.

As far as their stupid drills were concerned, I'd much rather get blown up by a missile or bomb while I was playing ball instead of hiding under a desk, counting B & B.... you had to ask, didn't you .... bubble gum and buggers ! Now there's a good reason to put your Hands over Your Head! In case they fall on you!

And that's the way it was in the 1960's, when the World was "smaller" and so was I. ■



Northwest Passages

by John Recht
RVC Region 8

Growing up in Chicago, I had a rather two-dimensional view of the world. The citizens of Flatland would have felt at home on the Illinois prairies, and it was no wonder that people in Chicago felt obliged to build skyscrapers so that they could see a more distant horizon. (Okay, it was so they could make a lot of money. But they wanted the view, too.)

I was fascinated by the tall buildings downtown. One of my favorites was the Monadnock Building, which I used to stand beside while waiting for the bus to take me to the Astro Science Workshop at the Adler Planetarium.

The north half of the Monadnock was finished in 1892 and was designed by John Wellborn Root. According to a sign on it, the half of the building designed by Root was the largest exterior wall bearing structure in the world, with brick walls six feet thick at the base. Looking up from the corner where I stood, the Monadnock seemed incredibly solid and massive, something like a mountain. But as much as I enjoyed the Monadnock, and the bit of excitement that I felt as I wondered whether a brick would fall on my head from hundreds of feet up, I knew that it wasn't enough; I had to see some real mountains.

A couple of years passed before I found myself on my way to Colorado for the first time, dashing across the plains to see for myself those glorious Rockies. And see them I did, along with Aspen when it was a hippie haven in the summer of '69. What incredible sights I saw, and what marvelous adventures I had! I went back twice more in the next several years, and each of those trips was wonderful as well.

Though my path has rarely taken me back to Colorado in the many years since, the memories of my first few visits still shine. They were in every way among the peak experiences of my life. And now, thanks to Mensa, I will have the opportunity to be there once more, for the Rocky Mountain High-IQ AG, along with my many friends and my loving family. Come join us, and see for yourself how glorious the Rockies are! Visit www.ag.us.mensa.org for details and registration. More than 1,300 have already registered so far,

promising that this will be one of the biggest AGs ever. Looking at the program and what the area has to offer, I have no doubt it will be one of the best.

Speaking of gatherings, I also recommend that you all come join me in Portland for BeaveRG XI: Power Surge, the Oregon Mensa RG. Thanks to alert reader Thomas Wilson of Redwood Empire Mensa, I now know that the dates I gave for the RG previously this column were in error; the correct dates are May 2 to 4. Visit http://www.oregon.us.mensa.org/rg/ for details and registration, and I hope to see you there!

Normally I close my column with invitations to attend upcoming events that provide excellent opportunities to make the most of your Mensa membership. This time, however, I will add some comments about Mensa politics.

For nearly three years I have served as the Regional Vice Chair of Region 8, and it has been a delightful experience for me. I have enjoyed promoting communication among members, leadership development, membership development, fundraising, and fiscal responsibility at the national and local levels, and in recent months I have been greatly encouraged by new initiatives in strategic planning that I helped bring about. There is little room in my monthly column to go very deeply into these topics, but I am always willing to discuss them. Please write to me at rvc8@us.mensa.org or come talk to me at an RG, and I will be happy to oblige.

I am also looking forward to new pages on the AML Web site devoted to our strategic planning initiatives, and I expect there will be significant involvement from the membership in response to what is posted there. This will in turn inform the planning process, providing answers to all who want to know "What are the national projects that our dues money supports?", "Are our dues dollars being spent well?", and "What should the National Office be doing to support members and local groups?" I will keep you informed about progress in this area, and thank you for your continued interest and support

> Long stormy spring-time, wet contentious April, winter chilling the lap of very May; but at length the season of summer does come.
>
> — Thomas Carlyle
> from *Chartism*, 1839