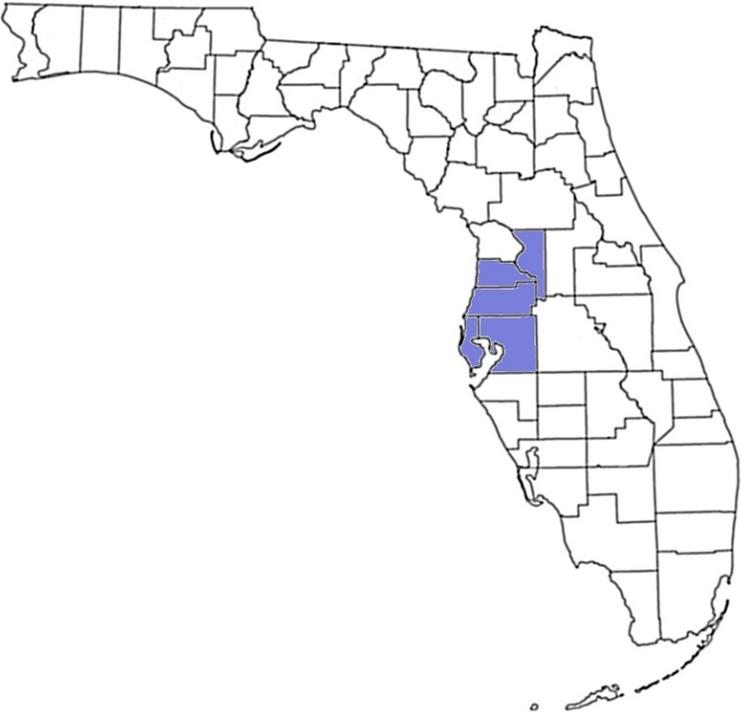


Tampa Bay Mensa

# Member Handbook

2011 Edition



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A note on page numbering: traditionally, the first page of real content would be page #1. However, for readers who are going to view this document electronically (PDF, Kindle®, etc.), having the page numbers in the Table of Contents, Index, and cross-references match-up to the actual page number of the electronic document requires that the page numbering start with the first physical page. By using this numbering scheme, a “jump to page” command will land on the expected page.

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# Chapter 1 Tampa Bay Mensa

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## Introduction

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Welcome to the 2011 edition of the Tampa Bay Mensa Member Handbook. Many thanks must go out to all the people who helped to put this together over time, but particularly to Ronan Heffernan for spearheading the latest series, starting last year. While we hope to continue to update the handbook as major changes occur - such as this past year's procedural change at the national level pushing towards electronic communication – most of the information provided within remains relevant over time.

For new members, this handbook will provide history and context for this society you've joined. For those members who have transferred into our chapter or renewed after a long absence, this will provide information specific to our chapter, which may have differences – minor or major – from your past experience. For existing members, this handbook may serve as a reference, both as a history of our chapter and of our current (as of this writing) policies and procedures.

As Sylvia Holt Zadorozny, one of our long-standing leaders, wrote in last year's edition, Mensa represents many different things to different members. Members join for a variety of reasons: as a casual social outlet (we have many local activities which can be found in our local award-winning *Tampa Bay Sounding* newsletter); to meet new friends (there are several married couples who met in Mensa); as a networking source (some members have found jobs through connections made in Mensa); for the group benefits available to members of the national group (discounts on insurance, magazines, books, travel, etc.); as a symbol of status (with the *Mensa Bulletin* proudly displayed on their coffee table); or just to see if they can. After joining, people find opportunities they hadn't considered, such as leadership opportunities (joining

our board, running our scholarship program, meeting new and prospective members through testing), outlets for creativity (writing for the local newsletter or national Bulletin, or online communities through Facebook or the national Forums), participation in SIGs (Special Interest Groups), which run the gamut from Accounting to Yoga, and a gifted children's program for their own budding young would-be Mensans. There's even SIGHT (*Service of Information, Guidance, and Hospitality to Travelers*) to help members on the road meet other Mensans across the country and abroad.

As with all organizations, the benefits you derive from Mensa will depend largely on how much you invest in learning about the club, as well as how much you invest of yourself in the group. Mostly, Mensa is about members meeting around the table (Mensa being the Latin word for table), and if you're interested in meeting other smart people, rest assured they also want to meet you!

Thomas George Thomas  
Local Secretary (President), Tampa Bay Mensa

## **TBM Overview**

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Tampa Bay Mensa is the local chapter of American Mensa serving the following Florida counties: Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, Hernando, and Sumter. As of November 2011, TBM has 720 members and is considered a large group within American Mensa.

We publish a monthly newsletter, conduct regular business and social events, award scholarships, and annually host a blowout Regional Gathering. Our members host over a hundred events per year, offering a wide variety of opportunities for fun and learning.

## **A Special Note to New Members**

---

Welcome to Tampa Bay Mensa. We are delighted to have you as a member, and hope that in our group you'll find something of what you were looking for when you joined Mensa.

There are two basic approaches to becoming active in Tampa Bay Mensa. We invite you to take either one, or a combination of the two.

**The extrovert's approach:** Attend a meeting. Read the papers and pamphlets (with which you have been inundated) later.

Turn to the calendar pages of our local publication, *Tampa Bay Sounding*, pick an event that is of interest to you, and come on over!

If you don't have a *Sounding* yet, call our Membership Officer or Local Secretary, and they'll let you know everything you need to know.

Unless "RSVP" is indicated on the calendar, just show up at the scheduled time and place and introduce yourself to the host.

Mensa is, to a large extent, a social club. Thus, many of our activities consist of abundant conversation punctuated by forays to the refreshment table. Intellectual stimulation is always available, but if you aren't in the mood for deep talk, there's usually someone willing to chat about almost anything from television to chicken curry.

**The introvert's approach:** Read this Handbook all the way through. It provides answers to the "most-asked" questions of new members. Read our monthly newsletter, *Tampa Bay Sounding*, to get to know some of the names and activities.

Contribute to *Sounding*. Send artwork, letters to the editor, and articles. Your name will be in print, and you may become a celebrity before you know it.

Call our Executive Committee members or appointed officers (listed in *Sounding*). They are eager to help you, and will be glad to answer your questions about Mensa and TBM's activities.

Attend a meeting. You might start with something close to home, then branch out as you feel more confident. Try at least a dozen activities before you make up your mind about what we're like. Each meeting is different. As in most large groups, we have a number of fluid smaller groups that tend to get together because they're compatible. Shop around for the people you feel at home with.

Host a meeting. You get to choose the refreshments and make the house rules, and you don't have to worry about getting lost on the drive home.

Start a Special Interest Group (SIG). One introvert in TBM started a Singles SIG. He took personal responsibility for collecting the kitty and writing name badges for everyone who attended. Thus, he got to meet everyone, learn their names, and talk to them in a structured setting.

And always remember: we introverts may be a 3:1 minority in the rest of the world, but in Mensa we're the majority!

## **Acknowledgements**

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Portions of this Member Handbook were taken from the Tampa Bay Mensa Member Handbook, created by Kent Akselsen in October, 1998. The TBM History, Glossaries, Policies, and “A Special Note to New Members” are taken almost entirely from that document.

Portions of the Member Handbook were taken from the website and printed materials of our national organization, American Mensa Ltd.

Most new portions of this Member Handbook were created by Ronan Heffernan, with editing assistance from Jay Johnson, Sylvia Holt Zadorozny, Thomas Thomas, and Erica Rogers.

## **Chapter 2      Member Resources**

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### **Newsletter – *Tampa Bay Sounding***

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The monthly newsletter of Tampa Bay Mensa is *Tampa Bay Sounding*, which is sent directly to every member\*. Each issue contains information from your local and regional officers, our Calendar of Events, important announcements, member contributions, and puzzles/games. Current and back issues of *Sounding* are available on our website.

If you would like to contribute articles, essays, opinion pieces, poems, short stories, puzzles, artwork, or other material to *Sounding*, please see the Submission Guidelines published on the inside-front cover of each issue. As there noted, the deadline for submissions is generally the fifth day of each month, for the following month's issue.

If you would like to place an advertisement in *Sounding*, that policy is also listed on the inside-front cover. Classified ads are free for members; quarter-page, half-page, and full-page ads can be run at the rates printed in the advertising policy.

Contact information for the Editor (along with all of the Officers) is listed on our website and on the “Officers Page” of every issue.

\* See the “Electronic Distribution” and “Additional Family Member” exceptions.

### ***Electronic Distribution***

In your member profile on the National website, you can choose to receive publications either electronically or on paper. If you choose electronic format, you will receive *Sounding* and most other materials via email, either as attachments or as links to the material (usually in Adobe® PDF format). For

those members who do not mind reading these materials on their computers or other electronic devices, this option reduces the financial and environmental costs of distribution.

For those issues that contain a ballot for the election of officers and/or to change bylaws, every member will receive a printed copy of the ballot which might mean that they receive a printed copy of that entire issue of the publication. Note that *Mensa Bulletin* will be mailed as a paper magazine, even to members who choose Electronic Distribution for their local newsletters.

On 27 March 2011, American Mensa changed the policy that designated paper copies of newsletters as the default. Effective September 2011, members who have not specified a preference regarding Electronic Distribution (and who have a 'released' email address on file in their profile) will receive their local newsletter electronically. If you wish to change your preference regarding Electronic Distribution, please make this change to your profile on the American Mensa website: <http://us.mensa.org/profileupdate>

### ***Additional Family Members***

Some households have more than one Mensan in residence, and these members can save money by signing up as “Additional Family Members”. As such, they will not receive a separate copy of *Mensa Bulletin* or *Sounding*; only one copy of these publications will be mailed to their address.

As with Electronic Distribution, every member will receive a printed ballot for every election. This might mean that they receive a printed copy of any publication issues that contain a ballot.

### **Calendar of Events**

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Our Calendar of Events is published in every issue of *Sounding*, and is available on-line via our website. Because there are editing, printing, and mailing lead-times for *Sounding*, the online calendar may have new or updated events that are not on the printed calendar. For email notifications about last-minute events, reminders, and cancellations, please subscribe to our “tbm-gm” email list (see page 13).

If you want to add an event to our calendar, please contact the Calendar Editor. Full contact information for the Calendar Editor is listed (along with all of the other officers) on our website and on the inside-back cover of every issue of *Sounding*.

## ***Crewe List***

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Every year, Tampa Bay Mensa creates a directory of members called *Crewe List*. The information printed about each member is controlled by the privacy restrictions that they specified upon joining Mensa (if any). Unless restricted by the member, every entry will contain their name, address, phone number, email address, and up to twelve PDQ interests.

The PDQ interests are also broken-out, with members listed for each interest. Members and event hosts are encouraged to use the information in this directory to find others who share interests.

For many years, *Crewe List* was integrated into an issue of *Tampa Bay Sounding*, and mailed to members. *Crewe List* is now printed as a separate booklet; if you would like a copy mailed to you, please contact our Membership Officer. Copies of *Crewe List* will also be provided to the hosts of our “frequent” events, so you can pick up a copy at most events.

Like all member directories in Mensa, *Crewe List* is not permitted to be released outside the group, nor used for commercial purposes.

Only the American Mensa Committee, or its designee, may authorize the commercial use of the American Mensa, Ltd. membership list or any portion thereof. Members may use this membership directory to facilitate personal, non-commercial communication with other members and for the benefit of their Local Group, a respective regional Mensa group, Special Interest Group or American Mensa, Ltd.

Any other use, reproduction, or storage of the information or its contents by any mechanical, photographic, optical, or electronic means is strictly prohibited without the express prior written permission of the American Mensa Committee, and any inquiries regarding permission should be addressed to the Member Directory, American Mensa, Ltd., 1229 Corporate Drive West, Arlington, Texas 76006-6103.

## **Website**

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The official website of Tampa Bay Mensa is: <http://tampa.us.mensa.org> On that site, you will find our Calendar of Events, contact information for our officers, an archive of back issues of *Sounding*, minutes from our ExComm meetings, links to join our email lists, and more.

## Email Lists

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Tampa Bay Mensa has three official email lists:

### General Membership

“tbm-gm” is an email list for official announcements and event announcements only, including event changes and cancellations. Any member of this list may post messages, but please restrict messages to the aforementioned topics only. Note that ideas and suggestions for new events should not be sent to this list. Only a single announcement about an event should be sent to this list, unless there is a change or cancellation. Traffic on this list is deliberately kept low for members who do not want to be inundated with emails.

To join this group, visit: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/tbm-gm/>

### Discussion

“tbm-discussion” is a noisy list that can be used for general discussion, including political flamewars. This list is an appropriate place to suggest and discuss new events.

To join this group, visit: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/tbm-discussion/>

### Gifted Children

“tbm-giftedchildren” is an email list administered by the Gifted Children’s Coordinator (GCC), and limited to child members, children of members, and others at discretion of the GCC and according to National policy. This list is moderated.

To join this group, contact our GCC: [giftedchildren@tampa.us.mensa.org](mailto:giftedchildren@tampa.us.mensa.org)

## **Member Handbook**

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This Member Handbook was originally intended to be a “pillow book” for newlywed Mensans, but the text was so incredibly boring that young couples invariably fell asleep with their marriages unconsummated. The problem was so widespread that the existence of the Gifted Children’s Program became imperiled! Feel free to recommend this Member Handbook to any Mensans who you know, except for newlyweds. Please think of the (potential) children!

This 2011 Edition is a minor update to the 2010 (or “MMX”) Edition, which expanded on Kent Akselsen’s 1998 Edition. A few items were added, and a few mistakes were corrected.

As with earlier editions, this Member Handbook focuses primarily on Tampa Bay Mensa, and is not a comprehensive Member Handbook for American Mensa. You can find a lot more information on the resources, programs, and benefits of American Mensa the National website.

## Chapter 3      National Programs and Resources

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### ***Mensa Bulletin***

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*Mensa Bulletin* is the national magazine for members of American Mensa, published ten times a year with combined issues in April/May and November/December. An on-line extension of the *Bulletin's* coverage is also available.

As with *Sounding*, generally only one copy of *Mensa Bulletin* will be sent to your address. The savings of mailing only one copy of these publications is the primary reason that “Additional Family Member” memberships are offered at a reduced rate.

### **National Website**

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The official website of American Mensa is: <http://us.mensa.org> This website has a searchable Member Directory, information about upcoming gatherings, member benefit information, national bylaws, financial statements, and more. You can also update your profile, change your address, and renew your membership on this website.

Much of the information on this website is restricted to current members of Mensa. When you joined Mensa, or renewed, you should have received a membership card attached to a letter. That letter contains your username and password, needed to access the restricted portions of the national website. If you do not have your credentials, there are instructions on the website for getting help.

## **SIGHT**

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SIGHT (Service of Information Guidance and Hospitality to Travelers) is a member-benefit program which is free to every dues-paying Mensan. SIGHT hosts are Mensans around the world who volunteer to help fellow members who are visiting their area. Hosts can help with information about attractions, local transportation, or even provide lodging in their homes.

As a SIGHT guest, when you visit an unfamiliar city or country, you not only receive a warm welcome and are treated as a special guest and a member of the family, but you get to attend events and visit places that the average tourist never hears about. As a SIGHT host, you get to meet and share experiences with wonderful, interesting, compatible people from all around the world.

For more information about SIGHT, you can visit the national website, or contact Tampa Bay Mensa's SIGHT Coordinator, listed on our website and on the inside-back cover of every issue of *Sounding*.

## **Gifted Children's Program**

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Highly intelligent adults join Mensa for its stimulating intellectual and social environment, as well as friendship and support. Yet Mensa is not an adults-only organization. Those same needs for friendship and support are present among highly intelligent children.

Meeting intellectual peers is more challenging for children due to limited contacts and mobility. This is where the Gifted Children's Program (GCP) comes in. American Mensa can furnish a safe, supportive and stimulating environment for Young Mensans, children of adult members and their minor guests.

The permanent email address for Tampa Bay Mensa's Gifted Children's Coordinator is: [giftedchildren@tampa.us.mensa.org](mailto:giftedchildren@tampa.us.mensa.org) Additional contact information is listed on our website and on the inside-back cover of every issue of *Sounding*.

## Special Interest Groups

Mensa has always encouraged members to congregate around their special interests. Official recognition of Mensa's special interest groups began on Sept. 13, 1965, when the first two SIGs were recognized: The Gifted Children Study Group and the Mensa Investment Club.

In recent years the total number of active SIGs has varied between 130 and 160. The SIGs program has evolved along with the Internet, now including many free on-line discussion groups. Many SIGs still offer a mailed newsletter and collect a small fee to help defray mailing costs. Some SIGs are open to non-Mensans, and many SIGs actively recruit Mensans internationally.

The National website has a current list of recognized SIGs, and contact information that you can use to join. Here is a partial list of those SIGs:

Active Ms	CoMic Books!	Hell's M's	M-Live	Recruitment
altSIG	Computer	Independent	M-Project	Strategies
Amateur Radio	Science	Scholars	Managers	Reel Thinkers
(hamSIG)	Creative	Innovation -	M-Reinsurance	Role-Playing
Ancient	Retirement	2% for 100%	M-Riders	Games
Cryptography	Depression	Investment &	M-Simplicity	RV and
Answers to	Support Group	Speculation	M-Spanish	Camping
Everything	DesignSIG	IQ (Intelligent	Martial Arts	Science Fiction
Ante-Ms	Diabetes	Quilters)	Mensperanto	& Fantasy
Anything Goes	Diogenes Club	Irish	Metacognition	Scrabble® By
M-2-M	Dog Crazy	Isolated M	Meteorology	Mail
Discussion	Earth Religions	Karaoke-Ms	Military History	Scuba
Art Lovers	Online (ERO-	Keepers of the	Moms with	Second
AvSIG	SIG)	Flame	More	Amendment
Bardolatry	Electronic	KnitSIG	Motorama	ShutterSIG
BIBLES - A	Music	L'ChaiM!	MPowered	siMpsons (R)
Secular Study	Fiction,	Linux Users	Parenting	Skeptic Service
bizMethics	Creative Non-	Group for Ms	Mystery Book	Ski
Blues-M	Fiction, Poetry	M Peggars	Swap	Space Vanguard
BS (bzzzz) --	Freed-M:	Muscle -	Mythology	TeenSIG
Bee Support	Intelligent	Weight	Naturist	Therapy Pet
Group	Liberty	Training SIG	NTN Trivia	Tolkien
Burning Man	Gardening	M-African-	Pagan, Occult	Transhumanist
Careerists	Gay/Lesbian	Americans	and Witchcraft	SIG
Chess for Fun	SIG	M-Asians	Parapsychology	VenoM
ChildFree M's	Gen Y	M-Atheists	Philately SIG	Warcraft Mpire
Chocolate M	Genealogy	M-Chef	Polyamory SIG	WebHEADS
Christian	(GeneSIG)	M-Coffeehouse	Problem Solvers	Windward
Classical Music	GenX M's	M-Cow	Progressive	Community
Clergy	Global Risk	M-Foodies	Theology	Writers
Club Med SIG	Reduction	M-Health Care	Rationalist-M-	
Comedy	Grammar Police	M-Investment	Discussion	
	Haiku	M-LDS		

## **Mensa Education Research Foundation (MERF)**

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You might hear the plaint: “With all that brain-power, why isn’t Mensa doing something to help make a better world?” MERF is working to do exactly that with the goal of the Foundation being the pursuit of excellence in areas of intelligence via the giving of scholarships and awards, presentation of programs, and education.

Each year the Foundation gives thousands of dollars in scholarship money to worthy recipients with no regard for age, area of study, or even Mensa membership, but by quality of essay alone, the same as our Scholarship program is run. Over the years several stimulating and educational Colloquiums have been run in different areas of the country by the Foundation, and their web site for gifted children, “Mensa For Kids”, is popular and growing. *Mensa Research Journal* is their subscription magazine published three times a year and features the best research into all aspects of intelligence and giftedness. More information about this ‘serious’ side of Mensa can be found at: <http://www.mensafoundation.org>

While American Mensa, Ltd. is a not-for-profit corporation, MERF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization. Donations to the Foundation are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Instructions on making donations can be found on their website.

## Chapter 4 Events

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Events in Tampa Bay Mensa are opportunities for members to get together and have fun, accomplish goals, or learn something.

There are a few “Official” events, that are organized and paid for by Tampa Bay Mensa as an organization. However the majority of the events on our calendar are “member-hosted” events.

### Official Events

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#### ***ExComm Meetings***

The Executive Committee (ExComm) of Tampa Bay Mensa meets six\* times per year, usually in the following months: February, April, June, August, October, and December. At these meetings the ExComm conducts group business, including hearing reports from officers, handling budget issues, appointing officers, etc. These meetings typically last two to five hours.

All members of Tampa Bay Mensa are welcome to attend all ExComm Meetings, and the locations and times are posted in *Sounding* and on our online calendar. The minutes of each ExComm meeting are posted on our website, and important items from those minutes are printed in *Sounding*.

For more information on the composition and duties of the ExComm, see page 35.

\* Technically there are seven ExComm meetings per year. In June, the ExComm meets before the election that decides the composition of the new ExComm. After the Election Supervisor certifies the election results, the old ExComm adjourns its final meeting, and the new ExComm then convenes its first meeting.

## ***Annual Meeting***

Once per year Tampa Bay Mensa holds an Annual Meeting. This is an opportunity for members to interact with the Executive Committee, make proposals, and raise concerns.

Please do not think that the Annual Meeting is your only such opportunity. All members are welcome at every ExComm Meeting, and the LocSec and ExComm would like to hear from members at any time. Up-to-date contact information for our officers is available on our website, and is printed in every edition of *Sounding*.

The time and place of every Annual Meeting is advertised in *Sounding*, and on our online calendar. The Annual Meeting is often held adjacent to another official event, such as a picnic, in an attempt to trick members into attending.

## ***Picnics and Socials***

Since 2002, TBM has held picnics in the spring and fall (one each). We reserve a shelter at a local park, and provide hot dogs, hamburgers, and veggie burgers. Members are asked to bring drinks and a side-dish or dessert to share.

These events have been very popular with new members, and for many, have been the first event that they attended. Typical attendance is around forty people.

Starting in 2009, TBM started hosting summer and winter “socials”. Due to weather, these events cannot be reasonably hosted in parks, so a hotel conference room or clubhouse is used. These events are also popular with new members.

## ***FSM – Fold, Staple, Mail***

To prepare our monthly newsletter for mailing, volunteers get together to fold, staple, tape, and apply mailing labels. This work typically takes five to eight people two to three hours. These hours of “mindless” work are filled with great discussion. FSM is definitely a “the-more-the-merrier” event, so come on out and meet some fellow members while helping out Tampa Bay Mensa.

## **Member-hosted Events**

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Most of the events in Tampa Bay Mensa are not “official” events hosted by the organization, but are events created and hosted by our members. Every member is encouraged to look for events that they might enjoy, and to create events and add them to our calendar.

Unless otherwise noted, all member-hosted events that are listed in our Calendar of Events, whether hosted in private homes or public venues, are open to all Mensans, their spouses, and accompanied guests. You have already been invited, and the event wouldn't be on the calendar if we didn't want to see you there!

For events in a private homes the host or hostess can place explicit attendance restrictions in their event announcement, and they may privately dis-invite individual members from events at their home. Except for those rare cases, all members are automatically invited to all listed events.

### ***RSVP***

Most events do not need an RSVP. Events that do require an RSVP, usually to secure a restaurant reservation, are so noted. For events that indicate that an RSVP is required, please contact the event host at least three days prior to the event. If you have not RSVP'd to an event, you can call the event host to see if there is still room. Note that not only might there not be room, but some hosts cancel events if there are no responses.

### ***Contacting Hosts***

If you want to call or email the host or hostess to confirm the event, or to discuss concerns or restrictions, please feel free to do so. If you have allergies (pets, food, smoke, etc.) or mobility issues, please contact the host or hostess, especially if they have not mentioned these issues in their event announcement.

### ***Kitty***

Event announcements might mention a “kitty”. This is a small fee, usually \$2-\$4, set by the host, to help defray expenses when the event is held in a home and refreshments and/or supplies are provided.

The kitty is collected in an easily identifiable container. While kitty amounts are mandatory, hosts often spend far more than the specified amount. Donations in excess of the kitty amount will be appreciated.

## ***Guests***

Unless otherwise noted, members are free to bring guests to all events. Guests often attend these events and are always made to feel welcome. Common “icebreaker” questions for ‘new’ people at events include, “How long have you been in Mensa?” or, “Did you just join?” Aside from such friendly attempts to learn about new people, no one bothers to distinguish between members and guests.

## **Long-standing Events**

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Many of the member-hosted events on our calendar are held every month, some of them multiple times per month. A short “blurb” about each event appears on our calendar, but here are some expanded descriptions and information.

Scheduling and contact information is subject to change much more frequently than the once-per-millennium update to this handbook, so check the calendar in *Sounding*, or on our website for up-to-date information.

### ***Bagels on the Beach***

Theresa Shadrick supplies the bagels and cream cheese, you bring your own beverage. This event is held on Indian Rocks Beach (west of St. Petersburg). There is free public parking on 19th-27th Avenues. Look for a pinky-beige (laundering accident) over-sized beach towel and a rainbow beach umbrella, near the 27th Ave beach access. Join us for bagels, conversation, swimming and shelling. Please RSVP [ed: Yes, using the English “please” is redundant.]

### ***Bowling Night***

Melissa Stephens hosts bowling at a local bowling alley. This is a fun event that has so far been successful in not attracting any skilled bowlers, so the scores are low and the conversation is key. Typical attendance is four to seven.

### ***Breakfast Gathering***

Lori Puterbaugh hosts a monthly breakfast in Largo. Gather for food and conversation. Please RSVP.

### ***Buzztime Trivia***

Thomas Thomas hosts two Buzztime Trivia events each month, one in Brandon, and one in northern Tampa. Buzztime is a national trivia network that you play in bars and restaurants. Each player has a wireless computer

(provided), that they use to answer trivia questions on a TV screen. You are competing against other players at your venue, and across the country. If you don't know Thomas by sight, look for the table with an owl. Typical attendance is four to seven people.

### ***Fossil Dig***

Theresa Shadrick has arranged, along with the Tampa Bay Fossil Club, access to the Cemex Vulcan mine in Brooksville, for a day of fossil hunting. When the exposed rock at this site was laid-down (about 25-million years ago), the site was sea floor, so the fossils are marine creatures: echinoids, sea urchins, dugong, etc.

All participants must sign a waiver of liability, which Theresa will have on hand. Child members, or members' children, must have a parent or legal guardian present to participate.

Participants drive their vehicles into the mine, and will have access to their vehicles, coolers, etc. There is no food or water available on-site, so please bring snacks and *plenty* of water. There are no bathroom facilities. It gets hot, so dress appropriately and bring sunscreen. Trowels and other small hand tools can be useful.

**IMPORTANT NOTE** : Participants **MUST** be on time! We enter the mine at 9am, and then the gates are locked. Anyone not there at that time will not be able to enter. It will also not be possible to leave the mine without an escort; not only are the gates locked (and un-manned), but this is a large working mine with many twisting, un-marked, service roads. Participants will be escorted out of the mine by a Cemex employee at approximately 2pm. There is usually an opportunity to be escorted out around noon, but this is not guaranteed.

Please RSVP as this event might be canceled, especially due to weather or lack of interest, so it is important to confirm. The Fossil Dig is usually only run in the cooler months of September through May.

### ***Fourth Friday Madness***

Cheryl Pohley and Ronnie Dubs host this dinner and discussion event on the fourth (not necessarily the last) Friday of every month, at an Olive Garden restaurant. This is a lively and well-attended event, with eclectic discussion. Typical attendance is around fifteen people.

## ***Games Night***

Sylvia Holt Zadorozny hosts Games Night. This is a very popular event, often having twenty or more attendees (usually split into two or more games). Some perennial favorites:

Trivial Pursuit®	Taboo®	Smarty Party®	Scattergories®
Tribond®	Outburst®	Times Up®	Cranium®
Boggle®	Nameburst®	Stage II®	TransAmerica®

## **GourMensans**

Papan Devnani started this event in 1982, while a member of Washington D.C. Mensa, and he brought it with him to Tampa in 1997. He finds great ethnic restaurants in the Tampa Bay area, and tests each one before scheduling a GourMensans event. These restaurants are all reasonably priced, and there should be at least one entrée on the menu for less than \$15. Past events have included: Indian, Venezuelan, Ethiopian, Korean, Polish, Greek, German, Lebanese, Indonesian, Irish, Pakistani, and others. This event *does* require an RSVP.

## ***Lunch Bunch***

A core group of regulars has been meeting for lunch every Thursday for at least twenty years, supplemented by a core group of irregulars and a cadre of snowbirds who live nearby in the winter. New members and guests appear from time to time and are especially welcome because they bring new stories, new interests, and new perspectives. We always have plenty to talk about, and often a long table so folks can move for a change of topic if they choose. The food is cafeteria-style, prices reasonable, and service friendly. We are never hurried, except by our other interests and commitments. Sometimes only two or three people appear, sometimes ten or more, ages ranging from 20 up with a majority around 50 to 80. Come one, come all!

## ***MHUNCH***

Merrell Fortner hosts “MHUNCH”, a warm, friendly lunchtime get-together, at various restaurants around the Lakeland/eastern Hillsborough area. It is important to RSVP for this event; MHUNCH events are subject to cancellation if there is a lack of interest.

## ***Reading Group***

Ronan Heffernan hosts a reading and discussion group at a restaurant in Tampa. Bring whatever books you have been reading, and talk about them, give them away (before your house collapses under the weight of all of your books), recommend them, or pan them.

Discussion takes off from the books that attendees are reading, and doesn't always fly off on a wild tangent. Most of the books tend to be non-fiction (history, science, biography), but there is a pleasant sprinkling of fiction (literature through pulp). Typical attendance is six to eight people.

## ***Shakespeare Watch***

Erica Rogers hosts this event that centers around watching a recorded performance of a Shakespeare play, and/or some related work (including modern adaptations). Discussion of the work, the performance, themes, and other topics inspired by the event follow. Typical attendance is six to ten people.

## Hosting an Event

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Hosting an event is a great way to meet more Mensans by creating new and fun events that will go on the Calendar. Most of the events in Tampa Bay Mensa are available only because our members decided to create them.

Anyone can host an event. Even if you live in a tiny apartment, you can host an event at a restaurant, bar, park, etc. You can start with an idea of something you think would be fun to do and build an event. If you think it's fun, chances are someone else will think so, too. We give you plenty of help to get started.

### ***How to begin?***

You need to answer the basic questions: who, what, where, when, and why. Fortunately, since this is a Mensa event, we've pretty much taken care of the "who". You can also count on the Mensans to supply several answers to "why".

### ***What kind of event?***

Different hosts will have different goals, and different constraints. You can host a "low investment" event, such as "Frisbee® in the Park, BYOF" or "Buzztime® Trivia" (a free electronic trivia game in many bars). These events will take less than an hour to plan, and a couple of (fun) hours of your time to execute.

You can host a "high investment" event, such as a large meal or party in your home, that could take several days to plan and execute. Most events fall in between those two extremes.

The first rule of creating an event is that it should probably be something that *you* want to do. After that, the field is wide open. If you don't already have an idea, then:

- Contact our Programs Officer, who will be happy to help plan, advise, advertise, and make your event a success. Contact information is in every issue of *Sounding*.
- Look at other Mensa groups to see what is on their calendar that is missing from ours (skip the events that require snow, terrain, or alligator-free rivers).
- Contact current hosts on our Calendar of Events. They have hosting experience, and are demonstrably at least somewhat gregarious.
- Look in the most recent *Crewe List*, to see what interests members have registered. In the 2009 *Crewe List*, we had 10 members who registered an interest in Gardening, and 26 in History (That's 36 members who would love a History of Gardening event, right?)

## ***Where to host?***

We have had successful events in/at: homes, restaurants, bars, parks, theme parks, baseball stadiums, bowling alleys, rock concerts, museums, horse tracks, library meeting rooms, hotels, clubhouses, NOAA weather stations, bike trails, and others.

The kind of event that you choose will be a big driver of the event location (not too many places to host a “Busch Gardens Outing”). If you have a lot of flexibility in location, you might consider geography, membership, and transportation. Perhaps you want a location near most of our members (Tampa, or most of Pinellas County). Perhaps you want an “under-served” area with a decent number of members near-by, but few events (e.g. Brandon or Spring Hill).

Warning: some parts of Tampa Bay Mensa’s geographic area have few (or no) members. For instance, we have no members in Sumter County, as of the time of this writing. You can get an idea of the geographic distribution of our membership from a recent *Crewe List*.

## ***When to host?***

Aside from the usual considerations of work, school, and your other activities, when picking a date and time for your event you might want to look at our Calendar of Events. There is certainly *nothing* wrong with scheduling an event that “conflicts” with another event on the calendar. We have over 700 members, and at the busiest nanosecond of a typical month, no more than 30 of them are engaged in a Mensa activity. There is no reason that we can’t have multiple events going on at the same time.

That being said, of all of those members, only about 50 are “highly active”, attending two or more events per month. So while you are free to “conflict” with another event, you might hurt the attendance at your own event, if you schedule for the same time as a popular event.

This warning about scheduling opposite a popular event is doubly true during our Regional Gathering weekend. Even our long-standing, regularly-scheduled events are usually canceled for that weekend. Many hosts and attendees of our regular events are at the Regional Gathering.

## ***Who is going to show-up?***

This is a common concern. Some newly created events are instant hits; many people come. Some repeating events take several iterations to build-up a fan base. Some repeating events were instant hits, but the popularity was driven by novelty, and interest diminishes.

If your venue is space-limited, and/or requires that you know the number of people who will come (common with restaurants), then your announcement should say that RSVPs are required. Even then, there might be members who just show up. To address this unfortunate situation, many event hosts add a small number (usually 3-5) to the number of RSVPs, when making a reservation.

The opposite problem is that of few, or no, people coming to an event. If that would bother you, here are some suggestions:

- Before announcing your event widely, personally invite some of the Mensans you have met, to see if any are willing to commit to coming. Finalize the date and most of the details before asking; they can't commit if you don't have the particulars.
- Invite some of your non-Mensan friends to your event. It is common for Mensans to bring guests, so it will not be unusual that your other friends are there.
- Deliberately choose to host only events that you will enjoy doing even if turnout is poor or non-existent.

## ***How do I advertise?***

You probably want your event to show up on our Calendar of Events. This is the primary vehicle by which our members find out about events, and is a resource used to keep track of the date, time, location, and contact information of the host.

This calendar is maintained by our Calendar Editor, with help from the Assistant Calendar Editor(s). The updates are performed on-line, and our website links to that electronic calendar. This means that you *can* add an event to the calendar with very little notice.

*Do not be seduced by the immediacy of the electronic calendar!* Many of our members rely on the printed version of the Calendar of Events that appears in *Sounding*. They will not see your event unless you submit it to the Calendar Editor before the *Sounding* print deadline (which is currently the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the prior month). Besides, even people who check the electronic calendar don't do it every day. For best exposure, try to advertise your event at least a month out.

Make sure that your event announcement is **complete** before sending it to the Calendar Editor. This means that you will need: event title, event description, date, time, location (with address), kitty-amount (if any), special instructions (e.g. things to bring), and your contact info (name, phone, email).

You might include directions to the venue, though this is becoming *passé* with the increasing popularity of web-based mapping/directions services and in-car GPS navigation. You might want to run the address through some of the more popular mapping services (Yahoo!, Google Maps, MapQuest), to make sure that the address is “found”, and that the directions are correct and sane. Some of our event hosts have included statements in their announcements like, “The directions to my house provided by MapQuest are wrong! Don’t use them!”

If this is not a public venue, you should include some of the following in your announcement:

- Allergen information (pets, food, smoke, etc.)
- Accessibility (for attendees with mobility issues)
- Special parking instructions
- Smoking locations (outside, patio, designated room, etc.)

## Email

Aside from the calendar, you can post an email to our “tbm-gm” email list (see page 13 ). This list copies your email to all subscribed members. The good news is that your email will be seen by many of our most active members. The bad news is that your email will only be seen by about 15% of our members.

Please send tbm-gm only one email about each event. That list is kept “low-volume” so as not to annoy members. You can spam the tbm-discussion list every day, but not tbm-gm. Most hosts who choose to send event announcements to tbm-gm do so a few days before the event (long enough to make plans, not so long as to forget said plans).

You will only be able to post messages to tbm-gm or tbm-discussion if you are already subscribed to that list. Instructions for subscribing are on our website, and information is provided on page 13 of this handbook. It might take a few days for your subscription to be approved, so subscribe to these lists as soon as possible.

## ***What do I need to supply?***

For events hosted in public venues, the event host does not usually supply anything. For events in homes, the hosts usually supply some level of refreshments. Some hosts will have sodas and water; some will have several kinds of snacks, sandwiches, pizza, etc. Whatever you want to provide is fine.

You can also suggest that guests bring snacks and drinks as part of your event announcement. Here are some items to remember (if needed): cups, napkins, plates, straws, name-tags, utensils, and marker-pens (for cups and name-tags). Don't forget other items needed for the purpose of the event (e.g. pens and paper for a handwriting-analysis event).

## ***Who is going to pay for all of this?***

Here's a spot of good news: to encourage people to host events, Tampa Bay Mensa will partially reimburse event hosts who incur expenses for events at non-commercial venues. The reimbursement is \$2 for each person who comes to the event, up to the amount of the costs. So if you host an event in your home, spending \$30 on refreshments, and 9 people show-up, you can send the list of attendees to our Treasurer, and get an \$18 reimbursement. Between this reimbursement and the kitty, you can (hopefully) break-even.

## ***What is the whole hosting process?***

If you have enlisted the help of our Programs Officer, they will already be walking you through this process. Otherwise, here are the steps to take:

- Finalize event details
- Notify the Calendar Editor (hopefully 30+ days in advance)
- Send an email to [tbm-gm](mailto:tbm-gm) (about 3 days before event)
- Have a great event
- Submit reimbursement request, with attendee list, to our Treasurer
- Optional: write a review of your event, to be published in *Sounding*, to pique the interest of potential future guests.

## Chapter 5      Gatherings

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There is a variety of events that are classified as “Gatherings”. These are generally much larger than normal Mensa events, and happen less frequently. Gatherings are also more likely to draw members of other local groups, or even other countries.

### **Gatherings (General)**

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#### ***Regional Gathering (RG)***

A Regional Gathering is a weekend-long get-together, sponsored by a local group. The usual model is that the RG occupies all or part of a hotel, with speaker presentations, continuous board games, scheduled participatory games (treasure hunts, “college bowl” style trivia competitions), Special Interest Group meetings, social mixers, a Hospitality suite, and more.

Registration is usually between \$50 and \$100 for the entire event, depending on the local group, the venue, the number of days, and the food and activities provided. The registration price usually includes some of the meals, in addition to Hospitality.

The registration price does not provide a hotel room, though there is usually a special group rate negotiated with the hotel for RG attendees. Most attendees (even those from the local area) prefer to stay at the hotel, since the party runs 24 hours per day.

## ***Annual Gathering (AG)***

Mensa operates in over forty countries around the world, and many of those countries have an “Annual Gathering” (AG). In the U.S., when we say “Annual Gathering”, it virtually always means the Annual Gathering of American Mensa. The rest of this section pertains to the American Mensa Annual Gathering.

The Annual Gathering, is the yearly national gathering for American Mensa. It is a five to six-day event, scheduled to include the Fourth of July weekend. Locations rotate each year. Recent sites have included: Las Vegas, New Orleans, Orlando, Birmingham, Denver, Pittsburgh, Detroit and Portland.

The AG is similar to an RG in that the same kinds of activities and socializing that can be found at an RG are found at the AG. The principal differences are:

- The AG is longer (5-6 days)
- The AG, with around 2000 attendees, is four times the size of the largest RG and boasts a correspondingly larger set of activities.
- American Mensa conducts its Annual Business Meeting at the AG

## ***Mind Games®***

The Mensa Mind Games® competition provides an opportunity for game manufacturers to compete in one of the most respected and recognized national games competitions, while having their games reviewed by some of the nation’s most avid game-players – members of American Mensa. Each year, 200 Mensan participants, or “judges,” play and critique games released in the past year and award the coveted Mensa Select® seal to the top five vote-getters. Past winners include Scattergories®, Trivial Pursuit® and Taboo®.

Mind Games begins on Friday afternoon and ends Sunday morning. Judges tend to play around the clock, breaking only for food, drink and sleep. Hospitality is open 24 hours, but unlike the Hospitality experienced at gatherings, it is intended only for quick refreshment between games.

## **Colloquium**

Once per year, American Mensa holds a “Colloquium”. The first Colloquium was held in October 1982, citing as its purpose: *To offer a forum for any interested Mensan to explore, debate, evaluate and offer judgment on a major issue of long-range importance to society.*

Using the format of that first event as a springboard, each Colloquium has made experimental changes, learning from previous experiences and trying new features. Colloquium participants come primed to discuss whatever topic is presented. The topics have included:

- Electronic Gaming and Its Impact on Society
- Weather Or Not
- Tracking Granny's Granny: The Genealogy Quest
- Aspects of Humor
- Revolution in Cosmology
- Earth in Mind: Fueling the Future
- Consciousness: Thinking on the Edge
- Medicine in the 21st Century
- The Politics of Politics
- Gifted Children: Identification, Education and Nurturing:  
Where Are We Today? Where Will We Be Tomorrow?
- Science & Society: Our Critical Challenges
- The Impact of the Arts on Civilization
- The Gifted in Society
- Forecasting a Valid Tomorrow: Destination A.D. 2000

## Gatherings (Specific)

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### ***TBM Regional Gathering***

With names like “Beach Bash”, “Busch Bash”, and “ARRR-R G”, Tampa Bay Mensa throws a Regional Gathering each year, usually on Memorial Day weekend. We book a hotel with conference rooms for speaker presentations and games, and a conference room or a hotel suite for Hospitality.

Attendees can stay at the hotel for the entire weekend (with a special group rate), or can drive to the hotel and return home to sleep. One-day and child rates are available.

Our typical attendance is 80-130 people, most of whom have had a great time at our past RGs, and are back for more. Many of the attendees are Tampa Bay locals, but our RG draws Mensans from surrounding groups and from around the country.

The venue changes often (see page 45 for a list of past TBM RGs, with venues). Some years we are at a hotel on the beach. Some years we are near Busch Gardens. Some years we are in Ybor City. Wherever the event is held, it is a blast!

### ***Other Regional Gatherings***

Many TBM members attend other groups' RGs, often the same ones year-after-year. Some attend huge RGs such as Chicago's “Weem”. More TBMs attend Florida RGs within driving-distance:

- “SmartiGras”                      January                      Orlando
- “Valentine”                      February                      Destin
- “FloRanGe”                      September                      Ft. Lauderdale
- “SCAM-o-Ween”                      October                      Cocoa Beach
- “Keys Micro-G”                      November                      Florida Keys

# Chapter 6      Volunteers and Officers

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## Overview

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The Executive Committee (ExComm) is the policy-making and administrative body which handles the business of Tampa Bay Mensa. Most of the work of keeping the chapter going is performed by the appointed officers. As in most chapters, there is a lot of overlap between the ExComm and the officers, but this is not required to be the case. We are always looking for volunteers to work as officers, assistant officers, and to run for ExComm.

## Executive Committee

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The Tampa Bay Mensa Executive Committee (ExComm) is comprised of nine members, three of whom must serve as LocSec, Deputy LocSec, and Treasurer. Members are elected for two-year terms, with four posts up for election in even years, and five posts up for election in odd years. For more information on elections, see page 40.

The ExComm meets at least every other month to perform the business of TBM. This includes: appointing officers, reviewing officer reports, handling financial matters, and planning official events. The rules and responsibilities of the ExComm are defined in the Bylaws (see page 55).

# Appointed Officers

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## Local Secretary

The Local Secretary (LocSec) is the equivalent of president of the local chapter. As the elected chief executive officer of our group, the Local Secretary is the official liaison with other groups and American Mensa. The LocSec also chairs our business meetings.

## Deputy LocSec

The Deputy LocSec presides at meetings in the absence or disability of the LocSec. In the event that the position of LocSec becomes vacant, the Deputy LocSec immediately and automatically becomes LocSec.

## Treasurer

The principal duties of the Treasurer are the keeping of the accounts, the safeguarding of the local group's funds and the periodic reporting of the group's finances to the Local Group and to American Mensa.

## Testing Coordinator

The Testing Coordinator, oversees the testing process for the group, coordinating and scheduling testing efforts. Testing Coordinators are nominated locally but appointed nationally by American Mensa's Supervisory Psychologist following the recommendation of the LocSec or RVC.

## Gifted Children's Coordinator

The Gifted Children's Coordinator ("GCC") may arrange whole-family activities, publishing information about speakers or resources of interest to the parents or grandparents of gifted children on the web.

The Gifted Children's Coordinator is nominated locally but appointed nationally by the National Gifted Children Program Coordinator.

## Membership Officer

The Membership Officer contacts new members and sends them a welcome packet containing information that is valuable to new members. The Membership Officer is also a great resource for members who have questions or want help getting involved.

## **Calendar Editor**

The Calendar Editor collects information from event hosts and maintains our online calendar. That information is provided to the Editor of *Tampa Bay Sounding*, for publication.

## **Editor**

The Editor collects material from officers, members, and other sources, and assembles the monthly newsletter, *Tampa Bay Sounding*.

## **Circulation Officer**

The Circulation Officer organizes the FSM (Fold, Staple, Mail) events, helps the Publisher prepare forms for the Postal Service, receives the mailing labels from National, and ensures that *Sounding* is delivered to the Post Office.

## **Programs Officer**

The Programs Officer helps members who want to host events by providing information and advice about event hosting, submitting event information to the Calendar Editor, etc.

If you have an idea for an event, or would like to host but need an idea, please contact our Programs Officer at: [programs@tampa.us.mensa.org](mailto:programs@tampa.us.mensa.org) and also read the section on Hosting starting on page 26 of this handbook.

## **Scribe**

The Scribe records the minutes of all business meetings of Tampa Bay Mensa, offers the minutes for comments and corrections, submits the minutes for publication on our website, and publishes relevant motions in *Sounding*. This position can be filled by a member of the ExComm, but experience has shown that it is difficult to participate in business meetings as an ExComm member and also act as Scribe.

## **Publicity Officer**

The Publicity Officer sends information about Mensa and Tampa Bay Mensa to local media outlets. This is especially important during testing or prior-evidence evaluation drives that are announced by American Mensa. Any inquiries from the media regarding Mensa or Tampa Bay Mensa should be directed to the Publicity Officer and/or LocSec.

## **Ombudsman**

The Ombudsman handles disputes and conflicts between members and Tampa Bay Mensa or between members and American Mensa. For this reason, the Ombudsman is not permitted to be a member of the ExComm.

## **Publisher**

The Publisher acts as liaison to the Postal Service, and maintains necessary paperwork for mailing *Sounding*.

## **SIGHT Coordinator**

The Tampa Bay Mensa SIGHT Coordinator acts as a point-of-contact for traveling Mensans looking for SIGHT services in our area (see page 16 for information on SIGHT) and can also help you find other SIGHT Coordinators around the world if you are planning to travel.

The SIGHT Coordinator is recommended by the local ExComm, and appointed by the National SIGHT Coordinator.

## **Election Committee Chair**

The Election Committee Chair, also known as the Election Supervisor, oversees the election for ExComm. For more information about the election process, see page 40. None of the members of the Election Committee are permitted to be members of the current ExComm, nor running for ExComm.

## **Scholarship Committee Chair**

The Scholarship Committee Chair assembles the Scholarship Committee and manages the scholarship process. This includes: advertising for entries, judging the entries, and awarding the scholarships.

## **Webmaster**

The Webmaster maintains the official website of Tampa Bay Mensa: <http://tampa.us.mensa.org> and the official email lists of Tampa Bay Mensa (see page 13).

## **Proctors**

Proctors conduct testing sessions to qualify Mensa candidates using the official tests provided by American Mensa. Proctors are appointed by American Mensa, and their work is coordinated by our Testing Coordinator.

## **Assistant Officers**

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For most of the officer positions listed above, there are positions for one or more assistant officers. These assistants might specialize in a subset of the normal duties of that officer (e.g. “Assistant Editor:Proofreader”), or they might be learning the entire role so that they can fulfill all of the duties of the office in case the officer is temporarily unavailable, or so that they will be ready to fill that office sometime in the future.

If you are interested in helping with the duties of Tampa Bay Mensa, either as an official assistant officer, or just on an ad hoc basis, please contact the sitting officer (if there is one) in your area of interest, or the LocSec. Assisting experienced officers is a great way for new volunteers to “get their feet wet”, especially if they aren’t sure that they can commit to becoming an officer directly.

## **Officer Email Addresses**

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American Mensa provides an email redirection service for most of the standard officer positions. When a new officer is appointed, the email address for that office is redirected to the new officer’s normal email address.

This feature allows for smoother transitions, since members can always send mail to the officer address, and that mail will be delivered to the correct person. Here are the email addresses defined for Tampa Bay Mensa:

locsec@tampa.us.mensa.org  
asstlocsec@tampa.us.mensa.org  
treasurer@tampa.us.mensa.org  
editor@tampa.us.mensa.org  
membership@tampa.us.mensa.org  
calendar@tampa.us.mensa.org  
testing@tampa.us.mensa.org  
giftedchildren@tampa.us.mensa.org  
recsecretary@tampa.us.mensa.org  
webmaster@tampa.us.mensa.org  
distribution@tampa.us.mensa.org  
postmaster@tampa.us.mensa.org  
sight@tampa.us.mensa.org  
ombudsman@tampa.us.mensa.org

## **Elections**

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Every June, Tampa Bay Mensa holds elections for vacant positions on the ExComm. The three-person Election Committee performs the following tasks: issues a Call for Candidates, certifies nominees, prints campaign statements, prints a ballot, and counts returned ballots to certify an election result. The Call for Candidates, campaign statements, and ballot are printed in *Sounding*.

In addition to the ExComm election, there might be other matters requiring a vote of the membership, such as a bylaws change. Those matters are also handled by the Election Committee, as part of the annual election.

In order for a candidate for ExComm to appear on the ballot, they must be a current member of Tampa Bay Mensa and they must submit a nominating petition to the Election Committee by April 15<sup>th</sup>. This petition must be signed by five other members of Tampa Bay Mensa.

The complete election rules are contained in the bylaws (page 61). Specific instructions, including contact information for the Election Committee, will be provided in the Call for Candidates in the March and April issues of *Sounding*.

## Chapter 7 History

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Here is a short narrative history of Tampa Bay Mensa, and a few tables listing officers and events.

### **Tampa Bay Mensa History**

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The first Mensa member in the Tampa Bay area was Tom Reesor, who joined in the summer of 1964. A year later, the first meeting (with six attending) was held in Clearwater. The group slowly grew.

By 1967, Mensa in St. Petersburg was under the leadership of Mary Jane Becker. While there were a few meetings at other homes in St. Petersburg and Tampa, most were held at Mary Jane's home in Viña del Mar.

In 1970, Mary Jane was forced to leave the area because of ill health. The local Mensa group fell into disrepair.

Several groups across the state were in similar disarray when, in 1973, Suzanne Wright decided to reactivate the group in Orlando. She got more than she bargained for, because National Mensa presented her with the middle section of Florida, coast to coast. Slowly the group in Orlando flourished. A few people from our area attended meetings despite the two to three hour drive.

In 1974, Dick Pennington, then a new member, instigated, along with Angela Nicholson and Mary Sanchez, a revival of Mensa on the West Coast. It took Dick only two meetings to find someone willing to take the leadership, Cynthia Fisher. The group wrote a letter to then RVC Nathaniel Weyl requesting our own group, separate from Orlando. He denied the request, stating that we had to prove ourselves a viable group before we could separate.

In 1975, the team of Angela, Cynthia, and Linda Brainard descended on the Atlanta Regional/AMC meeting with the intent of obtaining the desired permission. It was granted in February 1976. A set of bylaws was written, then

rewritten to conform to the standard bylaws of the AMC. With Linda Brainard as Editor and Cynthia Fisher as Publisher, the first issue of the *Tampa Bay Sounding* was mailed to 144 members, second class permit pending, February 1, 1976.

In 1977/78, Editor Steve Morrill worked with Angela Nicholson and Jeanne Kipe to organize the first Beach Bash at the Don CeSar in July of 1978. It was a great success.

Tampa Bay Mensa was sectioned into five geographic groups, each having its own Local Coordinator, Program Chairman, Publicity Chairman, and Proctor. The subgroups were: Tampa, St. Petersburg, Bradenton/Sarasota, Pasco/Hernando/Citrus/Sumter, and Clearwater/Largo (North Pinellas). In 1980, Cynthia and Steve swapped jobs: Cynthia became editor, and Steve became LocSec.

The year 1982 was another year of reorganization. The original group bylaws were rewritten. Dwight Gill became Proctor Coordinator to comply with a request from the National Office, and to cope with the changing proctor population in Tampa Bay Mensa. Cynthia Fisher was appointed National Publications Officer in 1983, and gave up the editorship of *Sounding* while remaining its Publisher. Evelyn Hollowell became *Sounding's* Editor.

Turmoil following the death of Local Secretary Roy Nilson in January 1987 exposed deficiencies in our bylaws, and a three-year effort began to revise them. In October 1989, the membership ratified the group's third bylaws which reduced the size of the Executive Committee to nine and provided (among other things) for staggered elections.

Under Dwight Gill's leadership, Bradenton/Sarasota separated from TBM and became Manasota Mensa in November 1989.

Our more recent history has been as a mature, smoothly-running local group. Members approved minor changes to our bylaws in 2003. We have seen continuous growth in membership and events. In 2005, Tampa Bay Mensa hosted Mind Games® thanks to Sylvia Holt Zadorozny, who then supervised games and tournaments at the World Gathering in Orlando in 2006. In 2010 we published an awesome Member Handbook, followed in 2011 by the dreck that you are now reading.

## **Table of TBM Local Secretaries**

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Cynthia Fisher	1976-1979
Steve Morrill	1980-1982
Patricia Berrett	1982-1984
Roy Nilson	1984-1987
Charlie Burgess	1987-1988
Maryl Curry	1988-1990
Frank Clarke	1990-1992
Kent Akselsen	1992-1993
Bert McIntosh	1993-1994
Shirley Denton	1994-1996
Jack Brawner	1996-1998
Dana Groulx	1998-2001
Sylvia Holt Zadorozny	2001-2002
Maxine Kushner	2002-2007
Thomas Thomas	2007-2009
Sylvia Holt Zadorozny	2009 – 2011
Thomas Thomas	2011 – present

## **TBM Treasurers**

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Mary Sanchez	1976-1977
Beth (Jamieson) Knowles	1978-1985
Leslie Linder	1985-1988
Margy Reinke	1988-1989
Rita Loy	1990
Dana Groulx	1990-1994
Kent Akselsen	1994-1998
Kathy Crum	1998 – present

## ***Tampa Bay Sounding Editors***

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Linda Brainard	1976
Steve Morrill	1976-1979
Cynthia Fisher	1980-1983
Evelyn Hallowell	1983-1988
Grant Logan	1988-1989
Billie Noakes	1989
Lissa Logan	1989-1990
Kent Akselsen	1990-1991
Doug Kinney	1992
Karen Eiler	1992-1993
Ben Crumpton	1993-1994
Christopher Thomas	1994-1995
Sylvia Holt Zadorozny & George Zadorozny	1995-1998
Sylvia Holt Zadorozny	1998-1999
Erin Wells	1999
Maxine Kushner	1999-2002
Mary Matthews	2002-2003
Maxine Kushner	2003
Sylvia Holt Zadorozny	2003
Jane Semones	2004
Maxine Kushner	2004
Thomas Thomas	2005-2007
Erica Rogers	2007
Thomas Thomas	2007
Theresa Hohmann	2007
Sylvia Holt Zadorozny	2007
Dana Groulx	2007
Maran Fulvi	2007
Kimberly Nerviano	2008
Joshua Moore	2008-2009
Sylvia Holt Zadorozny	2009-2010
Ronan Heffernan	2010 – present

Note: 2007 was not a year of flaky editors. It was a year in which we had no permanent editor, so we deliberately enlisted a series of guest editors to create one or two issues each.

## Historical Table of TBM RGs

<b>Year</b>	<b>Honcho(s)</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>City</b>
1978	Jeanne Kipe	Don Cesar Resort Hotel	St. Pete Beach
1979	Cynthia Fisher	Breckinridge Resort Hotel	St. Pete Beach
1980	Tricia Berrett	Breckinridge Resort Hotel	St. Pete Beach
1981	Margy Reinke	Holiday Inn Lido	Sarasota
1982	Margy Reinke	Colonial Gateway Inn	St. Pete Beach
1983	H. Peter Miner	Plantation Inn	Crystal River
1984	Betty Saunders	Hyatt Marina	Sarasota
1985	Margy Reinke	Bilmar Beach Hotel	Treasure Island
1986	Billie Noakes	Sheraton St. Pete	St. Pete
1987	Carol Dressel	Tides Hotel	St. Pete
1988	Eloise Hurst	Hyatt Regency Westshore	Tampa
1989	Dana Groulx	Hyatt Regency Westshore	Tampa
1990	Rita Loy	Bahia Beach Resort	Apollo Beach
1992	Dana Groulx, Barbara Loewe	Fort Desoto Park*	Mullet Key
1995	Dana Groulx	Colonial Gateway Inn	St. Pete Beach
1996	Kent Akselsen	Colonial Gateway Inn	St. Pete Beach
1997	Shirley Denton, Tricia Berret	Colonial Gateway Inn	St. Pete Beach
1998	Shirley Denton, Kent Akselsen	Colonial Gateway Inn	St. Pete Beach
1999	Peg Brawner	Colonial Gateway Inn	St. Pete Beach
2000	Peg Brawner	Travelodge**	St. Pete Beach
2001	Dana Groulx	Best Western All Suites***	Tampa
2002	ExComm	Best Western All Suites	Tampa
2003	Jack Brawner, John Raymond	Days Inn Rocky Point	Tampa
2004	Jack Brawner, Jacquie Brawner, John Raymond, Marsha Raymond	Days Inn Rocky Point	Tampa
2005	Dan Chesnut, Dana Groulx	Holiday Inn Select	Clearwater
2006	Sylvia Holt Zadorozny	Best Western All Suites	Tampa
2007	Thomas Thomas	St. Pete Hilton Bayfront	St. Pete
2008	Maran Fulvi	Hampton Inn & Suites	Ybor City
2009	Maran Fulvi	Holiday Inn Express	Clearwater
2010	Dana Groulx	Bilmar Beach Hotel	Treasure Island
2011	Theresa Shadrick, Melissa Stephens, Thomas Thomas	Hampton Inn & Suites	Ybor City

\* A Mini- RG, no hotel or programs

\*\* Formerly Colonial Gateway Inn

\*\*\* Near Busch Gardens (Busch Bash)

Note: because Tampa Bay Mensa hosted Mind Games® in the spring, the 2005 RG was held in October.

## **TBM Publication Recognition Program Awards**

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- 1976 Linda Brainard, Editor Special Mention: Best New Newsletter
- 1978 Steve Morrill, Editor Best Medium Group Newsletter
- 1980 Cynthia Fisher/ Steve Morrill, Editors Best Medium Group Newsletter
- 1983 Cynthia Fisher, Editor Creative Writing
- 1984 Evelyn Hallowell, Editor Creative Writing, Style, and Participation
- 1985 Evelyn Hallowell, Editor Medium Group Outstanding Achievement  
Special (posthumous) award  
Marie Halbert's cooking column
- 1992 Kent Akselsen, Editor Continuing Column  
Nikki Riggsbee's *Sirius Business*  
Special Mention  
Jack Row's column *Omnium Gatherum*
- 1993 Karen Eiler, Editor Presentation – Layout  
Presentation – Overall
- 1994 Ben Crumpton, Editor Presentation – Cleanliness
- 1995 Christopher Thomas, Editor Individual Recognition Awards – Essay  
*Ferry Tales: Landing in La-La Land* by Tom Reesor  
*Ben Thinkin'/Let's Get Real about Drugs* by Ben Crumpton  
Individual Recognition Awards – Fiction or Poetry  
*Concentration Camp* by Phoebe Solomon  
*Holding On, Letting Go* by Ed Kelley
- 1996 Sylvia Holt Zadorozny & George Zadorozny, Editors Overall Editorial Achievement  
Editorial – Continuing Column  
*Evanescence* by Evelyn Hallowell  
Entertainment – Puzzles & Games  
Entertainment – Fiction  
*The Globe* by Brigitte Walker  
Entertainment – Overall

- 1998 Sylvia Holt Zadorozny & George Zadorozny, Editors Entertainment – Poetry/Limmericks  
Service – Calendar  
Service – Member Recognition  
Service – Membership Roster  
Service – Overall  
Individual Achievement – Continuing Column  
*Ben Thinkin'* by Ben Crumpton  
Special Mention – “Most Thorough RG Reporting”  
Kent Akselsen, photos by Phoebe Solomon McCann
- 1999 Sylvia Holt Zadorozny, Editor Owl Award – “Best of the Best” – Medium Group  
Service – Member Recognition  
Service – Membership Roster  
Service – Overall  
Presentation – Photography  
Special Mention – “Best RG Reporting (Wonderful before and after coverage, certain to encourage participation)” for Shirley Denton
- 2000 Maxine Kushner, Editor Individual Achievement – Photography  
Shirley Denton – “Beach Bash '99”
- 2003 Web Awards Service – Calendar for Ronan Heffernan  
Entertainment – Puzzles & Games  
Mary W Matthews  
Special Mention – “Nice RSVP feature built into the calendar section and great acronyms list”
- 2007 Thomas Thomas, Editor Outstanding Newsletter – Large Group  
Special Mention Award Cool – Excellent – Wonderful member directory
- 2008 Joshua Moore, Editor Contributions for *Dream Date* by Bud Urban  
Ronan Heffernan, Webmaster Outstanding Website – Member Recruitment
- 2009 Ronan Heffernan, Webmaster Outstanding Website – Large Group

## Chapter 8      Reference

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### Member Glossary

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**Annual Gathering** or **AG**, American Mensa's AG is the largest gathering in all of Mensa International. It's a four to six-day convention held on or near the Fourth of July weekend. There are workshops, speakers, games, entertainment, and fun for everyone. The AG also serves as the annual business meeting for American Mensa.

**Beach Bash**, one of the names used for Tampa Bay Mensa's own Regional Gathering, especially when it is held at a beach hotel. More information is available on page 34.

**Bulletin**, see *Mensa Bulletin*

**Bylaws**, the basic rules of our organization. You received a copy of the *American Mensa Bylaws* when you joined Mensa. TBM's bylaws appear in this handbook, starting on page 55.

**Calendar of Events** appears in *Tampa Bay Sounding* and on our website. The calendar contains a summary of the month's scheduled activities, with descriptions of the events in the text portion of the calendar.

**Calendar Editor**, the Calendar Editor prepares the calendar page from all the meeting notices submitted by our members, submits it to the Editor for publication, and posts it on-line.

**Circulation Officer**, an appointed officer in charge of collecting *Sounding* from the printer, running FSM, and getting *Sounding* to the Post Office. The Circulation Officer works closely with the Editor and the Publisher.

**Colloquium**, a more serious gathering than the AG. Each Colloquium is devoted to a single theme (see page 33).

**Crewe List**, TBM's name for our annual membership directory.

**CultureQuest**, an annual competition between Mensa's local groups to raise money for local group scholarships. Each group fields a team or teams, which are given several pages of very difficult questions. No reference materials are allowed.

**Dues**, an amount collected by the national organization. A portion is returned to TBM for our operating expenses. American Mensa's membership year begins on April 1 and ends on the following March 31.

**Editor**, usually refers to the editor of our local monthly publication, *Tampa Bay Sounding*. The Editor collects material from columnists, typists, and various other sources, puts it all together, edits as necessary, and delivers it to the printer.

**Election Committee**, a group of three members appointed to round up candidates and run our local elections. The members of the Election Committee are not permitted to be members of the current ExComm, and are not permitted to run for ExComm while they are on the Election Committee.

**Executive Committee** or **ExComm**, the policy-making and administrative body which handles the business of Tampa Bay Mensa. Elections are held in June, and additional members are appointed (when necessary) to maintain a total of nine members. Executive Committee meetings are held at least every other calendar month and are announced in the calendar of the *Tampa Bay Sounding*. Executive Committee members are responsible for setting policy for TBM, but generally have other duties as well, since the more active members of TBM are most likely to serve on the Executive Committee.

**Fold, Staple, and Mail** or **FSM**, volunteers fold, staple, label, and sort *Sounding* to prepare it for mailing. Free refreshments and an early peek at the newsletter are rewards for an afternoon or evening of pleasant work and camaraderie.

**GC**, Gifted Child or Children, generally refers to children with IQs in the top two percent.

**Gifted Children's Coordinator** or **GCC**, an appointed officer who provides information to parents of gifted children and organized activities for Young Mensans and children of Mensans.

**Honcho**, the person who organizes and produces a Regional Gathering. The Honcho consults with the Executive Committee on major decisions, delegates as much as possible, and keeps an eye on everything at once.

**IQ**, Intelligence Quotient. Contrary to popular opinion, Mensans seldom discuss their IQs.

**Kitty**, a small fee, usually \$2 to \$4, to help defray the cost of refreshments at a party or meeting. It's usually collected in an easily identifiable receptacle placed near the refreshments.

**Local Secretary** or **LocSec**, a term from Mensa's English roots. It is the equivalent of president of the local chapter. As the elected chief executive officer of our group, the Local Secretary is the official liaison with other groups and American Mensa. The LocSec also chairs our business meetings.

**Membership Officer**, this local officer mails introductory brochures to prospective members, copies of *Sounding* to successful candidates, and a *Crewe List* and a Member Handbook to new members. The Membership Officer can also answer your questions regarding membership and activities.

**M**, Mensan.

**Mensa**, an international society in which the sole requirement for qualification for membership is a score at or above the 98<sup>th</sup> percentile on any of a number of standard IQ tests. Mensa is a not-for-profit organization whose main purpose is to serve as a means of communication and assembly for its members. Mensa is registered at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office as the collective mark of an international membership association.

**Mensa Bulletin**, the national magazine for American Ms. Each March and September issue includes a complete directory of national officers, local groups, international groups, SIGs, and member-to-member services.

**Mensa Education and Research Foundation** or **MERF**, a tax-exempt arm of American Mensa that supports education, awards scholarships and grants, and conducts research into intelligence. Order MERF's publication, the *Mensa Research Journal*, through the National Office (see page 18).

**Mensa International**, the parent club of American Mensa. The official website for Mensa International is <http://www.mensa.org>

**Mensa Logo**, the stylized "M" with a globe is Mensa's international logo. It was designed by Peter Devenish of Middlesex, England in 1969. As Mensa's official trademark, there are certain usage rules. For a list of rules, and to get approval to use the Mensa Logo, please contact the Name and Logo Committee of American Mensa Ltd.

**Mensa World**, a quarterly publication of the Mensa International Board of Directors, designed to be a communications link for Ms around the world. Get a peek into New Zealand or Singapore Mensa. Check the current *Mensa Bulletin* for subscription information.

**M&M**, two Mensans who are married to each other, or are in an equivalent partnership.

**National** or **National Office**, of American Mensa, Ltd. handles all our data processing and membership requirements. The staff at the National Office keeps track of our local members and provides mailing labels for *Sounding* each month.

**Newsletter Awards**, (see Publication Recognition Program)

**Nominating Committee** or **NomCom**, the group appointed to solicit and evaluate candidates for national election.

**Ombudsman**, an officer appointed to resolve disputes. There are Ombudsmen at both the local-group level, and the national level. Because the local-group Ombudsman mediates conflicts between members and the Executive Committee, this is the one permanent officer who is not permitted to be a member of the ExComm.

**Party Animal**, the person who has contributed the most to the party atmosphere of an AG or RG, as selected by members of the national Hell's Mensans SIG.

**Personal Data Questionnaire** or **PDQ**, a form that is issued and collected by American Mensa that allows members to provide information about themselves and their interests, and also to restrict how that information may be used and shared. Every member should receive a PDQ form with their new or updated membership card. The PDQ form can also be viewed and updated on the National website.

**Prior Evidence**, any means of joining Mensa without taking Mensa's proctored tests. Mensa accepts scores on over 200 different standardized intelligence tests as "Prior Evidence" of qualification for Mensa.

**Proctor**, a volunteer, appointed by AML, who conducts testing sessions to determine the eligibility of prospective Mensa members. The tests are scored at Mensa's National Office. Our current Proctors are listed each month in *Sounding*.

**Proctor Coordinator**, see Testing Coordinator. (historical note): until 2011, if the Testing Coordinator was also a certified Proctor, their title was “Proctor Coordinator”, rather than “Testing Coordinator”.

**Publication Recognition Program**, an annual contest to recognize the best local group newsletters and websites. Prizes are awarded in a number of categories (usually about 18), including “continuing column,” “humor,” “artwork,” and the “Owl.” The awards are presented at the AG.

**Publicity Officer**, prepares press releases, articles, and ideas for publicity, and helps publicize the annual scholarship competition sponsored by MERF. If someone from the media should contact you regarding Mensa, please consult with your Publicity Officer immediately.

**Publisher**, our liaison with the Post Office. The Publisher ensures that we comply with all postal regulations and keeps all postal forms current.

**Region**, an administrative subdivision within American Mensa. Tampa Bay Mensa is in Region 10. The coordinating officer of a Region is the Regional Vice-Chair (RVC).

**Regional Gathering** or **RG**, a local group version of an AG. RGs are many groups' primary fund raising activity. Each issue of the *Mensa Bulletin* includes a list of upcoming RGs around the country.

**Regional Vice-Chairman** or **RVC**, the Region's representative to American Mensa.

**Retest!**, a humorous declaration that a Mensan has done something so dumb that the test that qualified him/her for Mensa must have been in error.

**RSVP** (*Repondez, s' il vous plait*), most in-home meetings do not require a reservation, but restaurant gatherings often do. RSVP dates are noted in the Calendar of Events.

**Scholarship Chair**, works with the National Scholarship Chairman, the RVC, and our Publicity Officer to select candidates for local and national scholarships.

**Scribe**, the officer who take minutes at our Executive Committee meetings and submits them to *Sounding* and for publication on-line.

**Service of Information, Guidance and Hospitality to Travelers** or **SIGHT**, volunteer SIGHT Coordinators provide information on local activities and try to arrange accommodations with Mensa hosts for traveling Mensans who request them (see page 16).

**Sounding**, see *Tampa Bay Sounding*.

**Special Interest Group** or **SIG**, groups that bring members together to share an incredible assortment of interests. SIGs usually operate via newsletters (electronic or print) or exchange of correspondence (see page 17). Local SIGs are not necessarily nationally affiliated. *Disclaimer* : Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are voluntary associations of Mensa members, which operate independently. Tampa Bay Mensa is not responsible for actions taken by, at, or on behalf of, any individual SIG.

**Tampa Bay Mensa** or **TBM**, the Tampa Bay Chapter of American Mensa, serving Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, Hernando, and Sumter counties. With around 720 members (as of November 2011), Tampa Bay Mensa is the 26<sup>th</sup> largest of American Mensa's 139 local groups.

**Tampa Bay Sounding** or **Sounding**, our local group newsletter, published monthly. See page 10 for more information.

**Testing**, see Proctor.

**Testing Coordinator**, the coordinator of our testing program. The National Office sends names of potential Mensans to our Testing Coordinator, who passes them on to the appropriate Proctor for testing.

**Treasurer**, our chief financial officer, the Treasurer writes checks to pay our bills, keeps our books up to date, and prepares a financial statement to be printed in the *Sounding* twice each year. The Treasurer is one of the three officers (the other being Local Secretary and Editor) that National requires each group to have.

**Website**, Tampa Bay Mensa's official website is: <http://tampa.us.mensa.org>  
American Mensa's official website is: <http://www.us.mensa.org> The American Mensa site has links to all official Mensa websites.

## **Officer Glossary**

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In addition to the terms defined in the Member Glossary, the following terms might be of interest to officers and active volunteers.

**Alpha List**, (historical note) a monthly computer printout from the national office listing all of TBM's members in alphabetical order. The Alpha List was replaced by "E-Files".

**American Mensa Committee** or **AMC**, the elected and appointed governing body of American Mensa, Ltd.

**American Mensa, Ltd.** or **AML**, the legal name of our national organization.

**Actions Still in Effect** or **ASIE**, policies passed by the AMC that may impact local groups. The current set of ASIE is available on the national website.

**E-Files**, a set of electronic files listing of all of TBM's members. We get an updated version from the National Office every month.

**Group Labels**, a set of mailing labels sent by the National Office each month listing all of TBM's members in ZIP code order. The labels are used at FSM.

**InterLink**, a monthly electronic publication from the AML Communications Committee that provides a channel for communication among the National office, the AMC, local officers, and other interested members.

**Interloc**, (historical note) a former national publication that provided a channel for communication among the national office, the AMC, local officers, and other interested members. Interloc has been replaced with an electronic publication: InterLink.

**International Board of Directors** or **IBD**, Mensa's international governing body, it's made up of representatives from national groups.

**Leadership Development Workshop** or **LDW**, formerly known as Local Officer Training Session. This workshop, usually one to two days long, provides valuable information and training to officers and volunteers of local groups. Tampa Bay Mensa hosted an LDW in June, 2010. Tampa Bay Mensa hosted another LDW, cryptically titled "Secret Mensa World Domination Techniques Workshop" in June, 2011.

**Local Officer Training Session** or **LOTS**, See Leadership Development Workshop.

**Parliamentarian**, many local groups appoint a Parliamentarian to assist during formal meetings. The Parliamentarian is well acquainted with the group's bylaws and parliamentary procedure. Anarchists at heart, TBM's Executive Committee does not employ a parliamentarian.

**Qualified Prospects List**, a list of people who have qualified for Mensa, but haven't sent in their dues yet. National sends a monthly update of this list to our Membership Officer.

**ZIP List**, see "E-Files"

# **Bylaws of Tampa Bay Mensa**

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## **ARTICLE 1: NAME AND PURPOSE**

- a. The name of this organization shall be Tampa Bay Mensa (TBM).
- b. The purpose of TBM shall be to serve as a means of communication among and assembly for its members.
- c. TBM is a local group of American Mensa, Ltd. (AML), and is subject to the Constitution of Mensa, the Bylaws of AML, and the resolutions adopted by the American Mensa Committee (AMC). All Minimum Standards adopted by AMC are automatically a part of all local bylaws, whether or not these Minimum Standards are explicitly incorporated in these written bylaws.
- d. AML has granted a royalty free, non-exclusive license to TBM for the use of the mark “Mensa” and a logo, consisting of a globe over a stylized “M” within a border, in connection with the noncommercial uses of TBM. AML retains full ownership of the mark and logo and all statutory and common law rights in the mark and logo.

## **ARTICLE 2: GENERAL MEMBERSHIP**

- a. Membership in TBM shall be open to all members of AML in good standing in the geographic area assigned to the local group by AMC, or as otherwise assigned by AML.
- b. Members in good standing of TBM may be candidates for any office, vote in all elections, and draft and sign petitions for any purpose recognized by these bylaws, and may attend any meeting of the officers, of any committee, or of the general membership.
- c. All Mensa members are welcome to participate in social activities of TBM at the invitation of the host/hostess, but may not vote, hold office, or participate in business activities in TBM unless they are also members of TBM, unless they be the National Ombudsman or his/her designate, members of AMC in the discharge of their responsibilities or at the written invitation of the Executive Committee of TBM. (See articles 3, 5, and 6 for further information about the constitution of the TBM Executive Committee.)
- d. An annual open forum shall be held, at which any member of TBM may speak, make motions, and vote on matters pertaining to TBM.

- e. The AMC requires the bylaws of local groups to state that social activities for their members shall be held at least once per calendar quarter.
- f. Tampa Bay Mensa shall observe the preferences of members for data suppression and publication, as filed with AML, when publishing a local group membership directory/roster.

### **ARTICLE 3: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- a. The policy-making and administrative body of TBM shall be an Executive Committee (ExComm) of nine members elected at large: four in even-numbered years, and five in odd-numbered years. These, or replacements for the same, are the only voting members of the ExComm.
- b. The term of office of each normally elected ExComm member shall be two years, commencing with his or her seating, and ending with the seating of a properly qualified successor in the newly constituted ExComm two years later, except in the case of vacancy, resignation, death, failure to maintain membership in AML, or removal from office.
- c. A member of the ExComm may be removed from office by a written order stating the cause and signed by seven other members of the ExComm, or else by Recall Election.
- d. An election for recall of any ExComm member may be called by a petition citing the cause for such action, and signed by fifteen (15) members of TBM. Recall shall be effected by a Special Election of TBM, as in Article 8, on the stated question: "Shall (named officer) be removed from (his or her) office as a member of the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa?" Two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast must be affirmative for recall.
- e. Grounds for removal of any ExComm member from the ExComm by the remaining members of the ExComm shall include, but need not be limited to, reasons of malfeasance in office. Any ExComm member missing three regular business meetings during any twelve-month period is automatically removed from office unless such absences have been excused by the ExComm. Any ExComm member missing three regular consecutive business meetings during any twelve-month period shall be deemed to have resigned her or his office de facto and is automatically removed.

- f. Vacancies on the ExComm due to resignation, death, transfer, removal, recall, etc., shall be filled at the next regularly scheduled business meeting by vote of the remaining ExComm members, to serve until the next annual election. If required in order to bridge the remainder of the vacated term, a replacement shall be elected to a one-year term at this election.
- g. The ExComm may commit the assets of TBM and may perform all acts consistent with the orderly running of TBM affairs.

#### **ARTICLE 4: BUSINESS MEETINGS**

- a. Regular business meetings of the ExComm shall be held at least bimonthly, as set by the ExComm. Notices of all such meetings shall be published in the newsletter.
- b. Special meetings may be called by a vote of the ExComm; or by a petition signed by 10 current members of TBM; or by the Local Secretary, in all cases with at least a 48-hour notice to all members of the ExComm. The time, place, and purpose of any such meeting shall be stated in the notification, and no other substantive business may be acted upon at the special meeting. Attempts must also be made to notify the membership at large, especially members known to be interested in the stated business of the meeting. Any such special meeting shall be of either the “open forum” or “executive committee” variety, depending upon the nature of the special meeting, except that meetings called by petition of the membership shall always be of the “open forum” variety.
- c. A quorum of at least five members of the ExComm shall be required to hold an official meeting, and to confirm, authorize, adopt, ratify or to transact any business. If the official meeting has been called by a petition of the membership as described in article 4.b, at least five members of the ExComm must attend.
- d. A majority of those voting, but in no case less than four affirmative votes, will be necessary to carry a measure or transact business, except as explicitly stated otherwise in these bylaws.
- e. Rules of order may be adopted by the ExComm for its own proceedings and for any matters concerning TBM that are not otherwise specified in these bylaws.
- f. Actions taken at all meetings shall be reported in the next possible issue of the newsletter.

- g. Within the limits of these bylaws, the ExComm may adopt Guidelines governing all matters relating to the regular activities of TBM. Such Guidelines may be adopted and modified by a 3/4 vote of the ExComm, and shall remain binding on the ExComm and the TBM membership insofar as they continue in force.
- h. The ExComm may establish various special memberships, assessments, subscriptions, and/or other funds to be solicited from the local members, provided that the word “dues” shall never be associated with anything but the official AML dues, that no attempt shall be made to limit the basic membership rights of those who do not contribute, and that no representation is ever made to the effect that any such local fund or membership is obligatory. Benefits or other inducements to join or contribute to such funds, as well as the intended special use of the funds, if any, shall always be made clear as a part of every resolution and solicitation regarding such a fund.

## **ARTICLE 5: OFFICERS**

- a. The officers of TBM shall be the elected members of the ExComm; other officers appointed to specific positions by the ExComm; the Proctor(s) appointed to TBM by AML; and the SIGHT (Service of Information, Guidance, and Hospitality to Travelers) Coordinator, who is appointed both locally and by a National Officer. All officers shall be members in good standing of AML and of TBM.
- b. The ExComm shall appoint a Local Secretary [President], Deputy Local Secretary, and a Treasurer from its own membership.
- c. An Editor; a Calendar Coordinator; a Scribe; a Membership Officer; one or more Ombudsman/Mediator(s) and one or more Arbitrator(s) (which may be one person or two or more different people); and any other positions deemed necessary by the ExComm shall also be appointed, either from within the ranks of the ExComm or from the TBM membership at large. However, only elected ExComm members shall have a vote at ExComm meetings.
- d. The ExComm shall appoint an Auditor whenever there is a change in the office of Treasurer, or when there is any reason to doubt the accuracy of the financial reports normally provided. If neither of the above circumstances has occurred within the preceding year, then an Auditor shall be appointed annually, at the time other officers are appointed. The Auditor must not have been involved with the collection or disbursement of monies during the period being reviewed.

- e. Other officers or committee members to be appointed, as required, may include, but shall not be limited to, the following: Area Coordinators, Gifted Children Coordinator, Scholarship Coordinator, Public Relations Coordinator, Proctor Coordinator, Historian, and/or Major Event Directors.
- f. The ExComm may revoke any appointments by written order signed by six members of the ExComm, other than a replacement ExComm member.
- g. The term of office of all appointed officers and positions expires annually, upon the seating of a newly constituted ExComm, except for Proctors, who are appointed by AML; the SIGHT Coordinator, who is appointed with the participation of AML the Auditor, who serves only briefly; and the Major Event Director(s), who serve(s) without interruption until after the date of the corresponding Major Event(s) and reports as to the outcome have been made to the ExComm.
- h. Every former officer or appointee who has not been re-appointed to the same position shall turn over all files, office equipment, and materials pertaining to that position, to his or her successor as soon as said successor has been appointed, or else shall make arrangements to do so at a time and place satisfactory to the ExComm. In no case shall this be later than four weeks after leaving office, unless otherwise stated herein.

## **ARTICLE 6: DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

- a. The Local Secretary [President] is the chief executive officer of TBM. The Local Secretary shall preside over meetings of the ExComm; shall pass information to and from TBM in a timely fashion; shall notify AML of the results of elections and other changes of office within two weeks of the election or change; and shall coordinate with AMC. In case of a conflict of interest, the Local Secretary shall temporarily step down, in favor of the Deputy Local Secretary, for the duration of a single discussion or decision, but retains the right to speak, act, and vote as a member of TBM.
- b. The Deputy Local Secretary shall temporarily act in the place of the Local Secretary when the latter is absent or otherwise unavailable. In case of a conflict of interest while presiding over a meeting, the Deputy Local Secretary shall temporarily step down in favor of a substitute moderator, for the duration of a single discussion or decision,

but retains the right to speak, act, and vote as a member of TBM. In the event that the Local Secretary is unable to continue in office, the Deputy Local Secretary shall call a Special Meeting to select a new Local Secretary. During the interval between the end of the Local Secretary's time in office and the Special Meeting, the Deputy Local Secretary succeeds to the office of Local Secretary.

- c. The Treasurer shall handle the financial affairs of TBM; shall oversee the formulation of a budget, including the financing of the newsletter; and shall manage all other group accounts, while keeping clear and retrievable records of all these matters. The Treasurer shall submit financial reports to each regularly scheduled meeting of the ExComm and to the annual membership meeting, containing schedules of income, expenses, and balances for all funds under the control of TBM, including Major Events, RG, scholarship, and other special funds. These reports shall also be published in the newsletter twice a year at approximate six-month intervals. The AMC also requires that the Treasurer submit actual bank statements to the Local Secretary or to the Local Secretary's designee at least quarterly, and that the Treasurer maintain a list of equipment owned by TBM.
- d. The Editor shall be responsible for publishing the newsletter in accordance with the Guidelines and policies of the ExComm of TBM. The Editor may delegate tasks to various assistants and helpers, but shall retain responsibility for the results.
- e. The Scribe shall accurately record the actions of the ExComm; shall provide timely copies of these records to the Editor for publication and to the ExComm for the reading of the minutes of prior meetings; shall maintain permanent files of these records; and shall provide the ExComm and/or other TBM members with access to said records upon reasonable request.
- f. The Calendar Coordinator shall collect and assemble event and other schedule information from the members, and prepare a detailed monthly calendar for timely submission to the Editor.
- g. The Auditor shall examine all pertinent financial records in order to determine the state of the finances of TBM, as well as the accuracy and validity of said records, and shall oversee the transfer of the financial records if there has been a change in the office of Treasurer. The Auditor shall present a written report of the results of these activities to the next regular meeting of the ExComm for inclusion in the minutes. This report shall also be submitted to the Editor for publication

in the next possible issue of the newsletter. Upon completion of these duties, the office of Auditor shall terminate until the next appointment is made. The 1998 AMC “Minimum Standard Bylaws Changes” states that the Auditor must conduct her or his review annually during the month that the ExComm takes office.

- h. The duties of other positions shall be determined by the ExComm prior to any appointment to such positions, and a written job description shall be presented to each appointee at the time of the appointment. If any such position involves financial management, limitations on the budget shall be approved as a part of the appointment process.

## **ARTICLE 7: ANNUAL ELECTIONS**

- a. No later than January 15 each year, the ExComm shall name an Election Committee of three members, one of whom shall be designated as Election Supervisor. The Election Supervisor shall be responsible for certifying the candidates, conducting the election, receiving and counting the ballots, and certifying the results. The Election Committee shall determine, and cause to be published, those election rules and regulations not covered by these bylaws.
- b. No member of the Election Committee may be a current member of the ExComm, nor a candidate for elective office in the forthcoming election.
- c. A call for candidates for the ExComm shall be published in the March and April issues of the newsletter, along with the names and addresses of the Election Committee members.
- d. Every candidate shall mail or hand-deliver to the Election Supervisor, on or before April 15, a nomination petition containing the name, address, telephone number, and signature of the candidate, plus the printed names and signatures of five (5) members in good standing, accompanied by a campaign statement.
- e. The Election Committee may solicit petitioners, and shall attempt to ensure that there are sufficient candidates on the slate to exceed the number of open positions.
- f. The Election Supervisor shall validate all signatures against the most recent membership roster provided by AML; shall prepare a ballot of qualified candidates; and shall deliver this ballot to the Editor, along

with campaign statements, by the deadline for the June issue of the newsletter. The size and format of these statements may be limited by editorial guidelines published with the call for candidates.

- g. Ballots, instructions, the address of the Election Supervisor, and all campaign statements shall be published in the June issue of the newsletter. In addition, separately mailed ballots shall be sent to reduced-dues members who do not receive an individual copy of the newsletter.
- h. Balloting procedures shall be as in Article 9, below.
- i. Each TBM member shall have one vote for each post to be filled on the ballot. No more than one vote may be cast for each candidate per ballot. The appropriate number of candidates with the highest vote counts shall be declared elected to two-year terms; those candidates with the next highest vote counts shall be declared elected to any one-year terms that may be open.
- j. The Election Supervisor shall notify all candidates by phone or mail within a week after certification.
- k. The newly elected ExComm shall be considered seated as soon as voting results are certified.

## **ARTICLE 8: SPECIAL ELECTIONS**

- a. A Special Election must be held within 60 days of the presentation of a properly qualified initiative petition to a meeting of the ExComm, either regular or special, except for bylaws amendments.
- b. Prior to holding any special election, the ExComm shall name an Election Committee of three members, one of whom shall be designated as Election Supervisor, who shall be responsible for preparing the ballot, conducting the election, receiving and counting the ballots, and certifying the results.
- c. No member of the Election Committee may be a current member of the ExComm, nor an advocate of either side in the forthcoming election.
- d. The question to be voted upon in a Special Election must allow for an unambiguous selection among alternatives that must include a choice of “no” or “take no action,” and must be published along with the ballot, and in any issue containing arguments pro or con.

- e. The Election Supervisor shall prepare the ballot and instructions, and deliver them to the Editor on or before the deadline for the next possible issue of the newsletter.
- f. Ballots, instructions, the address of the Election Supervisor, and all arguments, pro or con, received by the deadline shall be published in the next issue of the newsletter. In addition, separately mailed ballots shall be sent to reduced-dues members who do not receive an individual copy of the newsletter.
- g. Balloting procedures shall be as in Article 9, below.
- h. A simple majority of those voting shall prevail, unless otherwise stated in these bylaws. A tie vote shall fail to pass.
- i. Having duly passed, a Special Election shall have the force of a 2/3 vote of the ExComm for any action not otherwise addressed by these bylaws.

#### **ARTICLE 9: BALLOTING PROCEDURES**

- a. As required by the AMC, all balloting shall be done by procedures that allow for full participation by mail for all members. All ballots must be sealed in an envelope, on the outside of which the voting member's full name and address is clearly legible in the upper left-hand corner, and must be given or mailed to the Election Supervisor and received no later than the third Saturday of the month of publication. Ballots that are received after this date, or that are not in compliance with these instructions, shall not be counted.
- b. The Election Supervisor shall validate the ballots by checking the name and return address against the latest TBM membership list from AML, as provided by the Local Secretary.
- c. The Election Committee shall open all valid ballots, separate all opened envelopes before reading their contents, and count the ballots.
- d. The Election Supervisor shall certify the results of the election to the Local Secretary, and send the results to the Editor for inclusion in the next possible issue of the newsletter. Tie votes shall be resolved by a coin toss conducted by the Election Committee.

In case there should be a recount request, the Election Supervisor shall retain the ballots and envelopes, including the unopened invalidated ballots, for thirty days. No challenge to the results may be instituted after this time has expired. Any actions of the ExComm during such a challenge shall be valid, nonetheless.

#### **ARTICLE 10: INITIATIVE PETITIONS**

- a. An Initiative Petition shall consist of a written document, signed by fifteen members in good standing of TBM, and presented to a meeting of the ExComm, either regular or special. The process of name validation may be observed by a delegation of petition signers and/or other TBM members, at their option.
- b. The full text of a validated Initiative Petition, or else its failure to be validated, shall be recorded in the minutes of the ExComm. Any anomalies or discrepancies noted by the observers shall also be recorded, as well as any resolution attempted by the ExComm.
- c. An Initiative Petition from the membership of TBM shall, if it so states, have the same force and effect as a motion or resolution made and seconded by members of the ExComm at the meeting at which the petition is validated. Such a motion may force the ExComm to consider any legitimate issue and to report their decision by roll-call vote. Such a motion, made to a Special Meeting called for a purpose unrelated to that petition, shall automatically be tabled until the next appropriate meeting of the ExComm, which may be a Special Meeting called by the same petition for that purpose.
- d. An Initiative Petition from the membership of TBM shall also, if it so states, call a Special Meeting of the ExComm.
- e. Alternatively, if it so states, an Initiative Petition shall force a Special Election for the proposed recall of any elected or appointed officer, for ratification of proposed amendments to these bylaws, or for any other issue, and using the procedure described in Article 11, without further concurrence of the ExComm, provided only that such actions do not conflict with these bylaws.
- f. Alternatively, if it so states and has been signed by five percent of the members in good standing of TBM, an Initiative Petition shall call a Special General Membership Meeting.

## **ARTICLE 11: AMENDMENTS**

- a. Amendments to these bylaws may be proposed by a two-thirds vote of the ExComm or by an Initiative Petition. Such proposed amendments must first be submitted to the AMC for its approval. Upon receiving such approval, they shall be published in the next issue of the newsletter.
- b. The second newsletter following initial publication of the proposed amendments shall publish such concise comments as may be received from the membership on the proposed amendments, a reprint of the proposed amendments, and the ballot.
- c. Ratification of amendments to these bylaws shall require a 2/3 affirmative vote of the votes cast in a Special Election, as in Article 8 above. The procedure shall be as follows:
  - i. The proposed amendments shall be published in the newsletter as described in 11.a.
  - ii. The second newsletter following initial publication of the proposed amendments shall publish (a) a reprint of the proposed amendments; (b) such concise comments as may be received from the membership on the proposed amendments; and (c) the ballot.
  - iii. The deadline for returning the ballots shall be no earlier than 90 days after the initial publication described in 11.a.
- d. In all voting for amendments to the bylaws, the first mailing of the proposed changes sent to all members, either as inserts in, or as part of, the local newsletter, or as a separate mailing, shall be at least 90 days before the deadline for returning the ballots.
- e. Proposed changes to these bylaws are not valid until they have been approved, first by the AMC as described in article 11.a; second by the membership as described in article 11.b; and third by the AMC after a second review. The AMC will inform TBM of the effective date of the new bylaws as amended following AMC review.

*A complete revision of the Bylaws of Tampa Bay Mensa was approved by vote of the membership in October 1989. Article 12, "Implementation of New Bylaws," was deleted in accordance with its provisions by resolution of the Executive Committee, June 16th, 1990. Several minor revisions were approved by the membership of TBM on June 20, 1998. Other minor revisions were approved by the membership of TBM in August 2003 and officially approved by National Mensa on December 2, 2003.*

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## **Policies of Tampa Bay Mensa**

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### **TAMPA BAY MENSA NEWSLETTER POLICY (88-01)**

1. The Editor [of the Tampa Bay Sounding] should abide by applicable provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws of American Mensa, Ltd., the Actions Still in Effect of the AMC applicable to the newsletter, the local group's bylaws and other governing documents, and the policy, if any, of the local group's governing body in regard to timely publication of material of interest to the membership, which may include, but is not limited to:
  - A. calendar of future events;
  - B. notices of future and minutes of past business meetings;
  - C. reports from local officers (including treasury reports and Nominating Committee reports);
  - D. local (and regional) Mensa campaign material, presented in as impartial manner as possible, and national and international campaign material, if appropriate;
  - E. group's bylaws and notices of any proposed amendments;
  - F. ballots for election of local officers, votes on bylaw amendments, any other local election issues, and results of elections;
  - G. membership roster, new member list;
  - H. at the Editor's discretion, notices of regional and annual gatherings or SIG functions;
  - I. reports from the National Office and officers and committees of AMC, and minutes of AMC meetings, as the editor deems appropriate.
2. A disclaimer stating that any opinions expressed in the newsletter are those of the individual members and not those of Mensa should be published in a prominent place in every issue, preferably in the masthead; for example: "Opinions expressed are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily represent those of any Mensa group or its representatives."

3. The newsletter should display in a prominent place its policy in regard to publication of letters to the Editor and other contributions; for example: “All signed correspondence addressed to TBS or the Editor will be considered for publication unless otherwise requested. The Editor reserves the right to edit freely for space or clarity.
4. The deadline for submissions should be stated in a conspicuous place.
5. The newsletter should prominently show names, positions held, addresses, and phone numbers of Tampa Bay Mensa officers, newsletter staff, and proctors. (By arrangement with local SIGHT and/or other SIG coordinators, the newsletter may contain similar information with regard to the SIG officers, as a service to members.)
6. The newsletter’s policy of accepting advertisements, if any, should be clearly set forth, including advertising rates.
7. The Editor should be guided by the group’s budgetary limits. The newsletter should be produced, reproduced, and mailed in as economical manner as possible consistent with good quality of materials, readability of the finished product, and timeliness of receipt.
8. The newsletter must conform to applicable regulations of the Postal Service – in accordance with the interpretation, if any, of the local post office – governing its class of mailing, including (but not limited to) regulations regarding frequency of publication, publication statements, mailing permit number, page numbering, date and volume and number issue, ZIP sorting of newsletters to be mailed, maintenance of accurate mailing and subscription records, advertising, publication of Statements of Ownership, Management and Circulation, subscription costs, and procedures regarding exchange subscriptions.
9. No copyrighted materials may be published without advance written permission of the copyright owner, except in cases where (a) use of the copyrighted material legally constitutes a “fair use” or (b) the materials were original materials of a contributor who offered the materials for publication in the particular newsletter. Copyrighted material reprinted must state the name of the owner and date of copyright and that permission was granted for reprint.
10. No material submitted anonymously should be published. On request, the Editor may withhold from publication, the name of the contributor or may use a pseudonym.

11. Material published in the newsletter should show the name of the author or artist, if known, except as provided in paragraph 10. Any materials reprinted from another Mensa newsletter should show credit, minimally the name of the author or artist and the name of the newsletter.

12. No ad hominem attacks on members should be published. No obscene, racist, sexist, or ageist material should be published. No libelous material may be published.

No material should be published that demeans any religious or ethnic group or creed. No pornographic or scatological material should be published, except when absolutely required in context. All material published in the newsletter should be within the bounds of good taste.

It is implicit that the editorship involves questions of good taste and judgment. In questions of whether to publish material that may be considered objectionable, the Editor should exercise his or her best judgment in accordance with reasonable standards, taking into consideration the diversity of the membership, the age of the youngest readers, the appeal to potential members, and the reflection on Mensa as a whole.

13. Bearing in mind that the newsletter is funded by members' dues, the Editor should avoid publishing material which reflects negatively on Mensa or its members, officers, employees, or agents unless fair space is simultaneously or promptly allotted for reply. If criticism of any of the above is published in the newsletter, the criticism should be constructive and should be directed at actions, omissions, or utterances, not at personalities.

14. The newsletter should further the purposes of Mensa and should take no position in conflict with Mensa's neutrality on non-Mensa issues. The fundamental purpose of the newsletter is to provide information about Mensa to members and to serve as a forum for members to express their opinions on matters relating to Mensa. This statement of purpose is not intended to preclude publication of material not related to Mensa, if the Editor believes it to be of interest to the members, or to prevent publication of members' opinions on non-Mensa matters, if the opinions are identified as such.

As far as possible, the newsletter should satisfy Mensa's purpose of fostering intelligence for the benefit of humanity and providing a

stimulating intellectual environment for members, and should preserve its essential function as a forum for the intellectual exchange of ideas among members, in accordance with the Constitution of Mensa, Article I, Sections A and B (1982.)

15. The Editor shall allow a balanced discussion of any controversial issues argued in the newsletter.
16. The Editor should not knowingly alter the meaning of intent of contributions to the newsletter.
17. Preference should be given to publication of material from local members.
18. Given sufficient contributions, the Editor should try to avoid writing more than a minimal amount of the newsletter (except in the capacity of reporter), or allowing ever issue of the newsletter to be written by the same few persons, or allowing any contributor to preempt a disproportionate amount of newsletter space. Regardless of how much time, effort, materials, and/or financial support are contributed by the editor or any other member, the newsletter is not to be considered exclusively as a means to expound the editor's personal opinions, or those of any other member.
19. The newsletter should reflect high standards of literacy, i.e. good grammar, spelling, and punctuation, and should be printed (or otherwise reproduced) in a readable type face and type size, and in a format that is attractive and orderly in appearance.
20. The Editor should familiarize him/herself with the content of the Mensa Editor's Handbook as soon as possible after assuming the editorship.

*The foregoing Policy on the Newsletter was proposed and ratified by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on 1 May 1998 and is policy 8801.*

*This policy was revised to match the Model Editorial Policy in the Editor's Handbook by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on August 15, 1992.*

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### **TAMPA BAY MENSA RECEIPTS POLICY (89-01)**

1. The policy of Tampa Bay Mensa is to deposit checks and other instruments to a TBM bank account within 10 working days of their receipt by an officer or designee. Such persons are hereinafter referred to as "receivers."
2. Receivers shall be prepared to issue a proper receipt for such funds.

3. The Treasurer shall provide blank deposit slips to the receivers for these purposes, and the receivers shall notify the Treasurer of deposits.
4. When extraordinary circumstance prevents timely deposit, such circumstance shall be reported by the receiver to the Treasurer so that the Treasurer may be able to answer any questions from the membership arising from such late deposit.

*The foregoing Policy on Receipts was proposed and ratified by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on 30 September 1989 and is policy 89-01.*

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### **TAMPA BAY MENSA CREWE LIST POLICY (89-02)**

1. Any Mensa member who makes a donation to TBM of \$5 or more may receive as a premium an additional copy of the most recent Crewe List (subject to availability).

*The foregoing Policy on the Crewe List was proposed and ratified by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on 30 September 1989 and is policy 89-02. It was modified on January 5, 1991.*

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### **TAMPA BAY MENSA POLICY ON LOCAL SIGs (90-01)**

The policy of Tampa Bay Mensa with regard to Local SIGs shall be:

1. Legitimate local and national SIGs are entitled to calendar listings in the Tampa Bay Sounding.
2. Local SIGs which are not part of a national organization are legitimized via recognition by the Executive Committee. Such local SIGs shall apply to the SIG coordinator for temporary recognition (not to exceed 90 days) in order to facilitate organizational efforts. Such application is to be accompanied by a written proposal of Goals, Focus, Organization, and planned activities.
3. All local SIGs, whether or not associated with national organizations, shall be open to all members in good standing (as defined by the bylaws) of Tampa Bay Mensa. There will be no limits on “associated membership,” that is, membership by non-Mensans.
4. All local SIGs, whether or not associated with national SIGs, shall have a minimum of two members designated as liaison to Tampa Bay Mensa, one of whom shall be the highest elected officer of the local SIG, and both of whom shall be members in good standing (as defined by the bylaws) of Tampa Bay Mensa.

5. The Tampa Bay Mensa SIG Coordinator shall be an ex-officio member of all local SIGs, and the liaison between the Executive Committee and the SIG.
6. The use of the name MENSA and the Mensa logo are governed by the Name and Logo Committee of American Mensa, Ltd.

Rationale: The foregoing policy is designed to systematize the way in which Tampa Bay Mensa interacts with local SIGs and the local manifestations of National SIGs. It should both encourage the formation of new, coordinated activities by members, and discourage the continuation of those activities which have lost membership support.

Implementation: The Local SIG Coordinator of Tampa Bay Mensa is authorized to implement the provisions of this policy immediately upon its ratification by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa.

*The foregoing policy was ratified by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on 10 Nov 1990 and is policy 90-01.*

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### **TAMPA BAY MENSA SUBSCRIPTIONS POLICY (90-02)**

The policy of Tampa Bay Mensa with regard to subscriptions to the Sounding shall be:

1. That future subscriptions and renewal of subscriptions to the Sounding shall be accepted only from Mensa members in good standing and selected others as defined by resolution of the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa.
2. Paid subscriptions to addresses within the boundaries of TBM may only be mailed to Mensa members at the member's normal address for receiving mail. Paid subscriptions for nonmembers may be mailed only to addresses outside the boundaries of TBM.
3. Complimentary subscriptions may be provided where there is a bona fide benefit to Tampa Bay Mensa, e.g. publicity.

Rationale: Mensa events in general, and Tampa Bay Mensa events in particular, are rarely open to the general public. It is a historical principle that our members are asked not to share calendar information with non-Mensans. Permitting non-Mensans subscriptions thwarts this policy.

Certain exceptions suggest themselves immediately: we provide complimentary copies to libraries and newspapers, among others, for the purpose of placing our name before the public. This is the essence of publicity.

Other reasons, as well, exist which warrant copies to nonmembers. Substantial latitude is granted the Editor and Publisher in this regard, subject only to the ordinary review by the Executive Committee.

*The foregoing policy was ratified by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on 10 Nov 1990 and is policy 90-02. It was amended at the regularly scheduled meeting on 19 June 1993.*

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### **TAMPA BAY MENSA POLICY ON SCHOLARSHIPS (93-01)**

Tampa Bay Mensa participates in American Mensa's annual scholarship program. Our participation includes appointing a Scholarship Coordinator (also known as Scholarship Chair). This person contacts local schools and colleges with information about American Mensa's scholarship program. The Scholarship Coordinator supplies information about the contest to our Public Relations Officer, who issues a press release.

The Scholarship Coordinator provides scholarship forms to contestants, receives the scholarship essays, evaluates the essays, and forwards the best of them to the national scholarship contest. The Scholarship Coordinator also provides the scholarship form and various reports to the Sounding. These items are considered official business and must be printed.

When financially feasible (as determined by TBM's Executive Committee), Tampa Bay Mensa awards a scholarship to a local entrant in American Mensa's annual scholarship contest.

The Executive Committee determines the amount (if any) of our local scholarship award while preparing our annual budget. The Scholarship Coordinator is promptly notified of the amount by the Local Secretary. The Scholarship Coordinator selects the winner or appoints a committee to select the winner of our local scholarship. The winner is selected no more than four weeks after the deadline to submit essays to the national contest and is announced in the Sounding as soon as possible.

A scholarship check is prepared, a press release is issued, and presentation of the award arranged. The Scholarship Coordinator contacts the Treasurer, Public Relations Officer, Calendar Coordinator, and Local Secretary for assistance with these tasks, as needed.

*This Policy was ratified by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on February 13, 1993 and is policy 93-01.*

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## **TAMPA BAY MENSA POLICY ON EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT (93-02) (SUPERSEDES POLICY 91-01)**

Tampa Bay Mensa reimburses certain expenses of our appointed and elected officers, subject to the following rules.

1. Expenses by members on behalf of TBM must be submitted for reimbursement within three months from the date the expenses were billed. Expenses submitted later than three months will be rejected.
2. An expense report must be submitted in writing. A standardized form is available from the Treasurer, but any format may be used as long as all necessary information is included. Copies of receipts, invoices, or bills attached to the expense report are adequate proof.
3. Consumable items required to do a specific job (such as staples for our electric staplers) may be purchased as required. Personalized items, such as stationery or business cards, must be approved by the Treasurer or LocSec prior to their purchase.
4. Tangible items (those that are not consumed during use) such as staplers or paper cutters must be approved by the Treasurer or LocSec prior to their purchase. Items over \$50 must be approved by the ExComm in advance.
5. All consumable or tangible items purchased with TBM's money remain the property of TBM. These items should be clearly marked or segregated, and passed on to the next member in that office. Tangible items should also be reported to the Treasurer, for inclusion in our inventory records. All items should be purchased in reasonable quantities, and at the lowest prices reasonably available.
6. Postage: Itemization of individual letters is not required. Officers whose activities include substantial correspondence may purchase rolls of stamps in advance. These stamps should be kept separate and clearly marked as property of Tampa Bay Mensa. Postage for special projects such as mass mailings should be described in the expense report, and receipts included.

7. Telephone expenses: TBM will reimburse appointed and elected officers for telephone long distance. The expense report must include the date, phone number, and the person called. Include the reason for the call if possible. A photocopy of the phone bill is desirable.
8. Travel expenses: No travel expenses for mileage, gasoline, meals, or lodging will be reimbursed unless specifically approved by the ExComm.

*This policy was ratified by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on October 17, 1993 and is policy 93-02.*

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### **TAMPA BAY MENSA POLICY ON SOUNDING ADVERTISING RATES (2002-01)**

The rates for advertising in Sounding are as follows:

1. \$60 per-month for a full-page ad
2. \$30 per-month for a half-page ad
3. \$15 per-month for a quarter-page or “business card” ad

*This policy was ratified by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on July 15, 2002 and is policy 2002-01.*

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### **TAMPA BAY MENSA POLICY ON SOUNDING SUBSCRIPTION RATES (2002-02)**

The annual subscription rate for Tampa Bay Sounding, for recipients who are not members of Tampa Bay Mensa is \$12. Members who are “preferenced-in” to Tampa Bay Mensa are considered members of Tampa Bay Mensa, and do not pay a subscription fee.

*This policy was ratified by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on July 15, 2002 and is policy 2002-02.*

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### **TAMPA BAY MENSA POLICY ON REIMBURSING OFFICIAL EVENT HOSTS (2004-01)**

Tampa Bay Mensa will fund official events, sponsored by Tampa Bay Mensa, hosted in private homes, at a rate of \$4 per person, with a \$20 minimum.

*This policy was ratified by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on June 19, 2004 and is policy 2004-01.*

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## **TAMPA BAY MENSA POLICY ON SUBSIDIZING UNOFFICIAL EVENTS (2004-02)**

Tampa Bay Mensa will subsidize privately-hosted events that are listed on the Calendar of Events and held in a non-commercial establishment, and where the host incurs expenses, at a rate of \$2 per attendee.

*This policy was ratified by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on December 18, 2004 and is policy 2004-02.*

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## **TAMPA BAY MENSA POLICY ON EMAIL LISTS (2006-01)**

This policy designates status and rules governing the official email lists of Tampa Bay Mensa.

1. The tbm-ex list is open only to ExComm members and appointed committee chairs.
2. The tbm-gm list is open only to verified members of Mensa.
3. The tbm-discussion list will be open to all, at moderators' discretion.
4. The tbm-giftedchildren list will be limited to child members, children of members, and others at discretion of the coordinator and according to National Policy, and moderated by coordinator or by appointee of the coordinator. This becomes part of the coordinator's job description.

*This policy was ratified by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on August 26, 2006 and is policy 2006-01.*

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## **TAMPA BAY MENSA POLICY ON CHOOSING RG HOTELS (2007-01)**

The Tampa Bay Mensa ExComm is the agent that decides which hotel will be used for Regional Gatherings.

*This policy was ratified by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on August 25, 2007 and is policy 2007-01.*

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## **TAMPA BAY MENSA POLICY ON REIMBURSING TRAVEL (2008-01)**

The person who delivers issues of Tampa Bay Sounding to the Post Office, may be reimbursed mileage at up to the published government rate for non-profit organizations.

*This policy was ratified by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on December 14, 2008 and is policy 2008-01.*

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## **TAMPA BAY MENSA POLICY ON ASSISTANT OFFICERS (2009-01)**

In addition to the existing officers positions in Tampa Bay Mensa, one or more of each of the following positions are created, so that these persons can help the officers perform their duties, and so that there will be trained, experienced, candidates to possibly fill future vacancies:

1. Assistant Treasurer
2. Assistant Programs Officer
3. Assistant Circulation Officer
4. Assistant Webmaster
5. Assistant Testing Coordinator
6. Assistant Membership Officer
7. Assistant Editor
8. Assistant Publicity Officer
9. Assistant Calendar Editor

*This policy was ratified by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on October 17, 2009 and is policy 2009-01. The positions of "Web Spinner" and "Assistant Web Spinner" were changed to "Webmaster" and "Assistant Webmaster" at the June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010 ExComm Meeting.*

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## **TAMPA BAY MENSA POLICY ON SPEAKER ADVERTISING (2011-01)**

Speakers, or those who give a demonstration, at an RG or other official event may submit a half-page ad that will be run free-of-charge in a single issue of *Sounding*. The scheduling of the ad is not defined, but the Editor will work to ensure these ads do not cause any issue of *Sounding* to exceed the USPS advertising limit.

*This policy was ratified by the Executive Committee of Tampa Bay Mensa at its regularly scheduled meeting on October 8, 2011 and is policy 2011-01.*

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# **Bylaws of American Mensa, LTD.**

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*rev. 6/8/2009*

## **ARTICLE I**

The name of the society is American Mensa, Ltd., a Not-For-Profit Corporation incorporated under the laws of the State of New York on February 10, 1971. The society is commonly known as Mensa.

## **ARTICLE II**

The society shall maintain its principal office in one of the 48 contiguous states.

## **ARTICLE III**

- (1) The governing body of the society and the Board of Directors of American Mensa Ltd. shall be the American Mensa Committee, as defined in this Article.
- (2) The voting membership of the American Mensa Committee shall include:
  - (a) The elective officers.
  - (b) The two most recent Chairmen of the Society.
  - (c) Such other officers as are specifically appointed by the American Mensa Committee to their respective positions and specifically granted the right to vote. The number of such officers shall not be greater than one-third the number of officers included in Sections (2)(a) and (2)(b) above.
- (3) The elective officers of the society shall be as follows: Chairman, First Vice-Chairman, Second Vice-Chairman, the Regional Vice-Chairmen, Secretary and Treasurer.
- (4) There shall be no fewer than five and no more than ten Regional Vice-Chairmen. The Regions represented by the Regional Vice-Chairmen shall be defined in terms of postal ZIP codes and shall be established by the American Mensa Committee after it has considered the membership distribution, membership growth trends, local group preferences, and administrative feasibility.

- (5) The appointive members of the American Mensa Committee shall include the following: Membership Officer, Communications Officer, Director of Science and Education, Development Officer and such other officers as shall be required for the orderly administration of the business of the society.
- (6) Elective officers and appointive officers of American Mensa, Ltd., and elective officers and appointive officers of the American Mensa Committee, and candidates for such offices, and the National Ombudsman must remain members in good standing of American Mensa, Ltd., as defined in Article III, Section (F) of the Constitution of Mensa. Failure to maintain this status shall constitute resignation from office or withdrawal from candidacy.
- (7) Elective officers and appointive officers of American Mensa, Ltd. must reside in the United States of America or its territories, and Regional Vice-Chairmen must reside in the Regions they represent; failure to maintain such residence shall constitute resignation from office.
- (8) The American Mensa Committee may also appoint individuals to non-voting membership on the Committee.
- (9) The following additional appointments may be made:
  - (a) The American Mensa Committee may appoint individuals to perform specified functions without membership on the Committee. Such appointments may be made for a definite or indefinite term, but will in any case expire with the end of the term of office of the elective officers in office at the time of appointment except as provided otherwise in these bylaws.
  - (b) Subject to the advice and consent of the American Mensa Committee, individual officers may appoint and remove subordinate officers and delegate to such subordinate officers one or more of the functions for which the appointing officer is responsible to the Committee; such delegation, however will not negate the appointing officer's responsibilities to the Committee.
- (10) (a) Elective officers and appointive officers may be removed by resolution of the American Mensa Committee for any of the following reasons:
  - (i) Mental or physical disability.

(ii) Failure to attend three consecutive regular meetings at the American Mensa Committee without presenting an excuse satisfactory to the Committee.

(iii) Malfeasance, misfeasance or nonfeasance in office.

(b) The resolution of the American Mensa Committee that an officer is to be replaced must fulfill the following requirements:

(i) It must be specific and state the reasons for the same.

(ii) It must be set out in the agenda.

(iii) It requires the concurrence of an absolute majority of the full voting membership of the Committee.

(c) The following procedure is to be followed:

(i) The officer concerned must be given an opportunity for a fair and impartial hearing as directed by the American Mensa Committee.

(ii) The Committee must provide an opportunity for the circulation to the full membership of the Committee of the concerned officer's views and for the officer's personal appearance before the Committee.

(11) In the event of the resignation, removal, advancement, or death of an elective officer, or in the event of an office not being filled by election, the remaining members of the American Mensa Committee shall elect a successor to fill the office for the remainder of the term of office, provided:

(a) In the case of vacancy in the office of Chairman or First Vice-Chairman, the officer(s) next in line shall move up and the successor shall serve in the office of Second Vice-Chairman.

(b) In the case of a vacancy in the office of Regional Vice-Chairman the successor shall have permanent residence in the Region to be represented.

#### **ARTICLE IV**

(1) The duties of the Chairman shall be to administer the business of the society in accord with the provisions of the Constitution of International Mensa, to act as Chief Executive Officer to the Society, to preside at meetings of the American Mensa Committee, and to act as National Representative on the International Board of Directors.

- (2) The duties of the First Vice-Chairman shall be to assist in the discharge of the Chairman's duties and to act as substitute during the Chairman's absence or inability to serve.
- (3) The duties of the Second Vice-Chairman shall be to assist in the discharge of the Chairman's duties and to act as substitute during the First Vice-Chairman's absence or inability to serve.
- (4) The duties of the Secretary shall be to act as secretary at meetings of the American Mensa Committee, and to cause records of its proceedings to be made and kept.
- (5) The duties of the Treasurer shall be to act as Financial Officer of the Society, to be responsible for the financial records, and to provide for an annual audit of the books and records of the society. The annual report shall be published in the September issue of the journal following presentation of the annual report to the membership at the Annual Business Meeting.
- (6) The duties of the Regional Vice-Chairmen shall be to act as liaison between local groups in their respective Regions and the American Mensa Committee, and to carry out in their respective Regions the policies and programs formulated by the American Mensa Committee.
- (7) The duties of the Membership Officer shall be to deal generally with membership questions including, but not limited to, services and the scheduling of gatherings.
- (8) The duties of the Communications Officer, Director of Science and Education and Development Officer shall be those implied by their respective titles, as well as any other duties which may be assigned to them by the American Mensa Committee.
- (9) The duties of such other officers as shall be appointed shall be set forth at the time of such appointment.

## **ARTICLE V**

- (1) The elective officers other than the Regional Vice-Chairmen shall be elected by a majority of the votes received during the election period which shall begin on April 15 and end on May 31 of every odd-numbered year. Votes shall be cast by any means legally permissible and in accordance with the election rules adopted by the Mensa Election Committee. Only members in good standing as of the first day of the first month of the voting period shall be eligible to vote. Each eligible

member, as defined in these bylaws, shall be entitled to cast one vote for each officer. If there are more than two candidates for any office, a preferential voting system shall be used. Ties shall be broken by coin toss or another objective method.

- (2) The Regional Vice-Chairmen shall be elected in a manner and for periods of time similar to the national elective officers, except that:
  - (a) Candidates must be residents of the Region in question.
  - (b) Each member furnishing a signature for nomination by petition must be a member of a local group, as defined by AML geographic assignment or member preference, in the Region in question.
  - (c) Only members of local groups, as defined by AML geographic assignment or member preference, in the Region in question may vote in an election for the Regional Vice-Chairman for that Region.
- (3) In order to be elected to an office whose duties include financial responsibilities, a candidate must be bondable in a sum sufficient to protect the society, as determined by the American Mensa Committee. Upon being elected, the officer shall be bonded at the expense of the society.
- (4) The terms of office of officers of American Mensa Ltd. shall be as follows, except in case of resignation, death or removal from office under the provisions of Art. III Section (10):
  - (a) In the case of elective officers, a period of two years, beginning on the July 1 following their election and ending on the June 30 two years later. However, if the successor to an elective officer has not been certified before the July 1 following the election, such officer shall remain in office until a successor is certified.
  - (b) In the case of appointive officers:
    - (i) If appointed for a definite term, the expiration of that term.
    - (ii) If not so appointed, the expiration of the term of office of the appointing officer(s).

## **ARTICLE VI**

- (1) No later than the August 1st preceding each election, the American Mensa Committee shall appoint a Nominating Committee consisting of at least seven members, none of whom shall be members of the

American Mensa Committee. Members of the Nominating Committee shall be chosen so as to represent a broad spectrum of the membership, with regard to both geography and general trends of views.

- (2) No later than the AMC meeting following each Annual Gathering, the American Mensa Committee shall appoint an Election Committee consisting of three to seven members, none of whom shall be a member of the American Mensa Committee or the Nominating Committee. The Election Committee shall be chosen from among members disinterested in the outcome of the election, and selected for their ability to assist in the conduct of elections. The Election Committee shall be responsible for the conduct of the election, including but not limited to the establishment, updating and publication of a detailed Code of Election Procedures, the preparation of ballots and written material, the distribution of ballots, and the selection of the independent agency to record and count the returned ballots, and the publication of election results. The Code of Election Procedures shall specify that the deadline for Election Committee receipt of nominations by petition is February 1st preceding the election. The Code of Election Procedures shall not be changed or amended between submission for publication as stated herein and the day following the official announcement of the ballot election results. Each newly appointed Election Committee must affirmatively adopt a Code of Election Procedures for each election. No later than the deadline for the January issue of the journal preceding each election, the Election Committee shall submit the Code of Election Procedures to the journal for publication therein, or shall submit the Code to another national publication for publication therein, or shall send the same by mail to the membership. If the Code is submitted to the journal, it shall be published in the next available issue.
- (3) No later than the October 1st preceding each election, the Nominating Committee shall nominate one or more candidates for each of the elective offices of American Mensa Ltd., of whom the nominee(s) for the position of Chairman shall (unless no individuals with the requisite qualifications are willing to run for that office) be member(s) of the American Mensa Committee then in office, or have served at least one year on a prior American Mensa Committee. The Nominating Committee shall submit a list of the nominated candidates to the American Mensa Committee and to the Election Committee. No later than the deadline for the December journal preceding each election, the Nominating Committee shall submit the list of nominated

candidates to the journal for publication therein, or shall send the same by mail to the membership. If the list is submitted to the journal, it shall be published in the next available issue.

- (4) No later than the December 1st preceding each election, the Election Committee shall publish in the journal a notice to the effect that nominations by petition for the elective offices shall be directed to the Election Committee at an address to be given in the notice, accompanied by the signatures of at least 50 members in good standing as of that December 1st, in a format prescribed by the Election Committee, and by a signed acceptance of nomination by the candidates, said petitions to reach the Election Committee not later than the February 1st preceding the election.
- (5) The Election Committee shall publish the names of the nominees by petition in a similar manner immediately upon the close of the nominating period.
- (6) Between February 1st and February 10th of election years, the Election Committee shall review the nominations. In order to be validly nominated, candidates must have renewed their membership by the last business day of January for the year in which the election falls. For offices for which there is only one valid nomination, the Election Committee shall declare the nominee elected. All other valid nominations shall be placed on the ballot.
- (7) The ballot shall contain the names of those nominated by the Nominating Committee as well as those nominated by petition, the order in which the names of candidates for each office shall appear on the ballot being determined by lot. Candidates shall be designated on the ballot to indicate whether they have been nominated by the Nominating Committee, by petition, or both. If two or more candidates decide to run jointly, the ballot shall so indicate. A person's name may not appear in more than one race on the same ballot.
- (8) With each ballot there shall be included:
  - (a) The necessary voting instruction.
  - (b) A brief biography of each candidate in a format approved by the Election Committee.
  - (c) The answers by each candidate to any question which may be propounded to all candidates, or to all candidates for a particular office, by the American Mensa Committee, the number of words permitted to be determined by the American Mensa Committee.

(d) A campaign statement, the maximum length of which shall be specified by the Election Committee. Candidates running jointly may pool their allocations. Materials submitted to the Election Committee by candidates for publication in conformance with Election Committee regulations shall be published without editing.

(g) No member of the Nominating or Election Committee shall be eligible for any national or regional office at the election concerned.

## **ARTICLE VII**

(1) There shall be at least three regular meetings of the American Mensa Committee each calendar year. Special meetings may be called by the Chairman or a majority of the elective officers on ten days' notice to all members of the Committee.

(2) The American Mensa Committee shall act in accordance with the following policy:

(a) No action may be authorized or taken, nor may any previous authorization or action be adopted, confirmed, or ratified, nor may any resolution be adopted, by the American Mensa Committee unless the same be authorized, adopted confirmed or ratified, as the case may be, by a majority of those present and voting, and provided that such vote includes the concurring affirmative votes of at least one-third ( $1/3$ ) of the full voting membership of the American Mensa Committee.

(b) Whenever a question arises which requires action by the American Mensa Committee, or of any sub-committee thereof, which should not await a regular or special meeting, the members of the body may vote by written ballot distributed by mail or other means, by telephone, or by other electronic means, provided that all members of the respective committee have consented to having such a vote conducted by such stated means. The action shall be announced at the next meeting of the American Mensa Committee and shall be reported in the minutes of that meeting. The resolution shall be filed with the proceedings of the American Mensa Committee.

(c) Any one or more members of the American Mensa Committee may participate in a meeting of the Committee, by means of telephone or on-line conference, or similar communications equipment allowing all persons participating in the meeting to communicate with each other at the same time. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at the meeting.

(3) (a) The American Mensa Committee may by resolution designate from among its members an Executive Committee and other standing committees. Each such committee shall consist of three or more members of the American Mensa Committee and, notwithstanding the provisions of Article VII (2)(a), shall have the authority of the American Mensa Committee to the extent provided in the resolution.

(b) The American Mensa Committee may by resolution create such special committees as may be deemed desirable. Special committees shall have only the powers specifically delegated to them.

(c) The committees in foregoing paragraphs (a) and (b) shall have no authority as to the following matters:

(i) The submission to members of any action requiring members' approval.

(ii) The filling of vacancies on the American Mensa Committee or on any committee.

(iii) The amendment or repeal of the bylaws or the adoption of new bylaws.

(iv) The amendment or repeal of any resolution of the American Mensa Committee which by its terms shall not be so amendable or repealable.

(4) No officer of Mensa shall receive any salary or compensation in carrying out the officer's duties, except reimbursement of actual expenses incurred.

(5) American Mensa Limited shall not enter into a business relationship with any individual, firm, partnership, or corporation where there exists a real or potential conflict of interest or where any member of the American Mensa Committee or any member of the immediate family of same, or any employee(s) of Mensa or the immediate family of such employee(s), shall receive any commissions, fees, financial benefits, or other benefits of pecuniary value; unless the following conditions are met:

(a) Full disclosure in the Minutes recording the authorization of such business relationship, of the circumstances and the nature of such conflict(s) or financial benefit(s), and the identification of the individual(s) involved.

(b) Bona fide arms-length dealing, in which a clear benefit to Mensa is apparent.

- (c) The recorded abstention(s) from voting of the individual(s) concerned.
- (6) The American Mensa Committee shall arrange for the regular publication of a journal. The cost of a subscription to the journal may be included in each member's annual dues.

### **ARTICLE VIII**

- (1) There shall be a National Ombudsman for American Mensa.
- (2) The National Ombudsman shall be elected by a majority of American Mensa, Ltd.'s local group Ombudsmen voting from among their number in accordance with election rules adopted by the Election Committee, with each local group having one vote to be cast by its ombudsman. In those local groups with multiple ombudsmen, that local group's ombudsmen will determine among themselves how they will cast this vote. If there are more than two candidates for National Ombudsman, a preferential voting system shall be used. The Ombudsman for American Mensa in office as of the passage of this amended Article shall be deemed the National Ombudsman until such time as an election among the local group Ombudsmen can be held for the position of National Ombudsman, but in no event later than two years from passage of this amendment.
- (3) The terms of reference of the National Ombudsman shall be as follows:
- (a) The National Ombudsman shall not be a member of the American Mensa Committee, but shall be accorded every courtesy and privilege thereof. The National Ombudsman shall receive copies of Agendas, of Minutes, and of everything else circulated to members of the Committee simultaneously with the members of the Committee.
- (b) The services of the National Ombudsman are available, subject to the conditions stated in the By-Laws, to the American Mensa Committee, to its individual members, to any Regional or Special-Interest Groups, and to their individual members, to Local Groups and their individual members, to members of American Mensa generally, and to Mensa employees.
- (c) The National Ombudsman of American Mensa is to cooperate with the International Ombudsman, to accept matters received from the International Ombudsman which relate to American Mensa and

any of the entities set out in (b) above, and to refer to the International Ombudsman such matters received which relate to the international rather than the national scene.

(d) The National Ombudsman has the right to the documents or other written materials concerning any matter received for review and decision. Every member, employee, and entity of Mensa shall cooperate with the National Ombudsman by furnishing information or documents. The documents furnished may be originals or copies; in the case of copies, the person responsible for furnishing the same must certify that the copies are full, true and complete copies and that, unless expressly stated, nothing has been omitted, altered or added.

(e) Parties are encouraged to seek the National Ombudsman's advice on matters which have not yet led to dispute, but which are potential sources of serious conflict, and in any event to submit matters to the National Ombudsman at as early a stage as possible, so that the opportunities for the parties to modify their position(s) are as great as possible.

(f) The National Ombudsman may choose any manner of communication with the parties, committees or groups, and specify whether such communication shall be confidential, for internal circulation only, or public.

(g) The National Ombudsman may submit a report for "publication" to any national publication and/or the newsletter, journal or other publication of any group(s) affected. The editor of any such publication shall deem a communication from the National Ombudsman that is marked "for publication" to be a matter of the highest practicable priority, and shall publish such material no later than the subsequent respective issue to be published or the next subsequent issue. No edits to such a report shall be made without the express permission of the National Ombudsman.

(h) The National Ombudsman may express opinions, settle disputes, render substantial justice, and promote the general welfare of American Mensa. The National Ombudsman may act as an arbitrator, or arrange for another person to act as an arbitrator either at the National Ombudsman's discretion or at the request of one or more of the parties; if all parties have agreed upon arbitration, or accept the National Ombudsman's offer to arbitrate, the arbitral decision shall be binding upon them.

- (4) The National Ombudsman shall render an annual report which shall be submitted to the American Mensa Committee and to the International Ombudsman for their respective information, and to the national journal for publication.
- (5) The National Ombudsman shall remain in office for six years, or until resignation, death, or removal from office, whichever is earliest. Removal from office shall follow generally the procedure set out in Article III Section (10) of these bylaws, except that the vote to remove the National Ombudsman shall require a two-thirds majority of the full voting membership of the American Mensa Committee at each of two separate regular meetings of the Committee. The replacement of a National Ombudsman who resigns, dies, or is removed from office shall be conducted in accordance with the election rules adopted by the Election Committee, as outlined in Section (2) of this Article.

## **ARTICLE IX**

- (1) Membership in the society shall be open to all persons found qualified in accord with the eligibility requirements set forth in the International Constitution.
- (2) Every member shall be obligated to:
  - (a) Pay annual dues in such amount as may be fixed by the American Mensa Committee. Members shall be given due notice that a change in dues is being considered, either through publication in the journal or publication in the Agendas of two consecutive American Mensa Committee meetings. At least 60 days shall pass between first publication and any vote.
  - (b) Permit his/her name and address to be published in membership lists.
- (3) Every member shall have the same rights and privileges accorded every other member, without qualification or limitation, unless sanctioned under sections (5) or (6) of this Article.
- (4) The American Mensa Committee shall have the authority to:
  - (a) Exempt a member from payment of all or part of dues for good cause shown.
  - (b) Declare a membership to have lapsed for failure of the member to pay dues.

(5) A member may be suspended from specific activities, offices, positions or functions, for a specified time, or suspended from membership for a specified time, or expelled from membership, for acts inimical to the society. No member shall be suspended or expelled from American Mensa, Ltd. except following a fair and impartial hearing by the Hearings Committee at which hearing the member shall have the right to present his/her case. A decision by the Hearings Committee to suspend or expel a member from American Mensa, Ltd., shall require the concurrence of the American Mensa Committee.

(a) The Hearings Committee shall be composed of the three most recent Past Chairmen, provided that each is a dues-paid member of American Mensa, Ltd., and not involved in the matter(s) in controversy. In the event that one or more of the three most recent Past Chairmen be unavailable -- or incapacitated, in the judgment of the remainder of the Hearings Committee, following a challenge by any of the parties involved -- vacancies, using the same criteria, shall be filled, in order, from the three most recent First Vice-Chairmen who are not currently serving on the American Mensa Committee; and following them, from the three most recent Second Vice-Chairmen not currently serving on the American Mensa Committee; and following them, from the three most recent Secretaries not serving on the American Mensa Committee. The Hearings Committee shall be chaired by the least recent Past Chairman serving on it, or, if none is available, the least recent First Vice-Chairman, or, if none is available, the least recent Second Vice-Chairman, or, if none is available, the least recent Secretary.

(b) Within 30 days following a complaint to its chairperson, the Hearings Committee shall notify all parties concerned and the AMC that a complaint has been made and the specifics of that complaint.

(c) Within 60 days from receipt of the initial complaint, the Hearings Committee shall decide if the alleged acts inimical to the society warrant having a hearing, and establish the date and time of the hearing if so warranted. There shall be a minimum of 30 days and a maximum of 120 days between the receipt of the notification for a hearing and the date of the hearing.

(d) Summary reports of Hearing Committee actions shall be available to the membership.

(6) A member whose recurring conduct has been demonstrably harmful to a local group or to individual members, to the extent that it may be considered inimical to the society may also be suspended from office in that group, or barred from its functions, or suspended from the group itself by the American Mensa Committee upon recommendation of a Regional Hearings Committee. Such recommendations shall be made only after the member has been given a fair and impartial hearing.

(a) If good-faith efforts to end the harmful conduct have failed, officers and/or members of the local group may request their Regional Vice-Chairman to convene a Regional Hearings Committee to consider charges against the member. The request shall be in writing, shall describe fully the conduct deemed harmful, and shall be signed by officers and/or members of the local group numbering no less than 150% of the number of elective officers of the local group.

(b) If the Regional Vice-Chairman decides that a hearing should be held, he or she shall appoint a Regional Hearings Committee composed of three members, each from a different group, exclusive of the accused member's group. Within five days of selecting the committee, the Regional Vice-Chairman shall notify the accused member of the impending hearing, the names of the committee members, the charges, and his or her right to be heard and to present witnesses. Copies of this notification shall be sent to the Local Secretary of the accused member's group, the Chairman of the American Mensa Committee, and the National Ombudsman.

(c) The hearing shall commence between 21 and 30 days after notification to the accused member. Unless extended for good cause by the Regional Vice-Chairman, the hearing shall be completed within 45 days from its commencement. The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with rules and procedures promulgated by the American Mensa Committee.

(d) A member's violation of sanctions imposed by the American Mensa Committee following a regional hearing shall constitute an act inimical to Mensa for which further sanctions may be imposed by the national Hearings Committee.

- (e) The accused member or the complainant may file a written protest with the National Ombudsman if either feels that the hearing was conducted unfairly or with prejudice. The National Ombudsman shall investigate the protest and report to the American Mensa Committee.
- (7) If national or regional charges have been filed against a member in accordance with section (5) or (6) of this Article, and the member resigns or does not renew membership before the hearings process is completed, the body having jurisdiction at that point in time may complete the hearings process if it feels such action is appropriate, according the accused the same due process as if the resignation or non-renewal had not occurred. If the body chooses not to continue the hearings process upon the accused's resignation or failure to renew, and the accused rejoins, the accused shall face the same charges and hearings.

## **ARTICLE X**

- (1) An application to form a Local Group shall be referred to the appropriate Regional Vice-Chairman for investigation and recommendation.
- (2) On recommendation of the appropriate Regional Vice-Chairman, the American Mensa Committee may grant permission for the formation of a Local Group, which is then subject to the following:
- (a) Each Local Group must designate a Local Secretary who shall report to the appropriate Regional Vice-Chairman.
- (b) Each Local Group shall adopt and maintain bylaws, which meet the minimum standards set by the American Mensa Committee. Such bylaws, and any amendments thereto, shall be effective when approved by both the American Mensa Committee and the membership of the Local Group.
- (c) Local Groups may levy local dues in reasonable amounts to finance Local Group activities, provided that:
- (i) the membership of the Local Group shall first have approved the levying of such dues in a referendum.
- (ii) a procedure for exempting members from payment of local dues for a good cause shown is also included in the local bylaws.

(iii) failure to pay local dues shall not exclude members from participating in local elections or from local business meetings.

(iv) the foregoing is without prejudice to the continued authority of Local Groups to finance their activities in other ways, including voluntary contributions or subscriptions to local publications.

(3) It is at the discretion of the appropriate Regional Vice-Chairman to appoint an Acting Local Secretary for any geographical area, to coordinate the activities of members. The appointment of such an Acting Local Secretary shall continue until an approved Local Group designates its Local Secretary.

## **ARTICLE XI**

(1) Any group of members may apply to the American Mensa Committee for recognition as a Special- Interest Group for the pursuit of any common interest provided:

(a) Neither the title of such a group, nor the name of the board or other body which directs the activities of such a group, nor the initials or other abbreviations by which the group or its board are to be known may contain language which may cause it to be confused with American Mensa, Ltd. or with the American Mensa Committee, with Local Groups, and with other pre-existing activities.

(b) Such group shall not speak for or on behalf of the society, nor in any manner give the impression that it is an official arm of the society.

(c) Such group shall furnish to the American Mensa Committee such reports and information, including copies of its correspondence and minutes of its meetings, as the Committee may reasonably require.

(2) The American Mensa Committee may grant recognition of Special-Interest Groups, subject to the preceding and any additional requirements or limitations it deems necessary.

## **ARTICLE XII**

(1) These bylaws shall not be amended except on the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the ballots cast.

(2) Amendments may be proposed in any of the following ways:

(a) By submission to the American Mensa Committee of the proposed amendment by 250 members of the society subscribing their names thereto.

- (b) By a vote of a majority of the members participating in the annual business meeting at an Annual Gathering.
- (c) By two-thirds of the members at regularly scheduled business meeting(s) of one or more Local Groups attended by a combined total of at least 150 members; provided the Local Secretaries of the group(s) concerned notify the American Mensa Committee of the dates, of the number of members present and voting, and of the number approving. At least one month's notice of the inclusion of the proposed amendment(s) on the Agenda of the business meeting(s) of the group(s) concerned shall be given all members thereof by direct mailing, through the journal or by means of the publications of the Local Group(s) concerned if such publications are sent to all members of such group(s).
- (d) By a vote of two-thirds majority of the American Mensa Committee following inclusion of the proposed amendment(s) in the written agenda circulated prior to the meeting.
- (3) On receipt of proposals for amendment to the bylaws which conform to Section 2 of this Article, the American Mensa Committee shall submit the proposals to a referendum of the membership.
- (4) Referenda shall be classified as "ordinary" or "special." "Ordinary" referenda shall be held concurrently with elections during election years, and shall be held during the same period as that specified for elections in these bylaws in non-election years. "Special" referenda shall be held during a time frame other than that in which "ordinary" referenda are held. The eligibility requirement(s) in these bylaws regarding voting for national officers also apply to voting on referenda. The publication schedule for referenda shall be as follows, counting the first day of the month of publication as the official date of publication:
- (a) At least 105 days before the start of the voting period, each referendum item shall be published, along with a solicitation for statements in favor of and opposed to each proposed referendum item.
- (b) At least 60 days after the publication referred in section (a), each referendum item shall be re-published, along with statements in favor and opposed.
- (c) At least 30 days after the publication referred to in section (b), each referendum item shall be re-published, along with a ballot.
- (5) Tallying of the ballots shall be handled in the same manner as for regular elections.

### **ARTICLE XIII**

- (1) An Annual Gathering of the Society shall be held between June 1st and August 31st of every year in a place to be picked by the American Mensa Committee, for the purpose of reporting to the members the state of the society and the activities of the society's committees during the previous year.
- (2) At least one month prior to the Annual Gathering, the membership shall receive reports of the officers by a special mailing or by inclusion in the journal.

### **ARTICLE XIV**

To the extent permitted by law the society shall act in accord with the provisions of the International Constitution.

*Adopted November 1964 Includes Amendments adopted 1964, 1965, 1966, 1970, 1971, 1974, 1975, 1979, 1981, 1983, 1985, 1986, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2006, and 2009.*

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