WEEM 47

ON THE SILVER SCREEN



Hosted by Chicago Area Mensa

October 26-29, 2023

WeemProgram2023.indd 1 10/23/2023 7:32:31 AM



"I'm ready for WeeM, Mr. DeMille..."

Notes from Heather Booton, HalloweeM Chair



And… ACTION! We are rolling out the red carpet for you at "HalloweeM 47 – WeeM on the Silver Screen." I'm really happy to welcome all the new people and see so many familiar faces returning this year. Whether it's your first time or the 41st, we're so glad that you're here at what is, in my completely unbiased opinion, the best RG that Mensa has to offer.

We couldn't run such a great RG without the WeeM TeaM. Every year I'm truly touched by the dedication and hard work they put into making this weekend fun for everyone. Go ahead, make their day, and let them know how much you appreciate them. You can recognize our WeeM TeaM by their light green badges and WeeM TeaM ribbons.

The sheriff is back in town! Our White Hat team can be recognized by their white hats. They are here to check badges, make sure alcohol is being consumed responsibly, and act as a friendly face in the unlikely event that you have any problems. Feel free to approach them if you need anything.

We couldn't run WeeM without the help of great volunteers. To all the production staff who set the stage and have already signed up for shifts—THANK YOU! If you haven't signed up yet, please consider helping—many hands make light work. You can find QR codes at registration, around the event, and in this program book that will let you directly access our volunteer signup sheet.

I'm really looking forward to a great weekend with friends both old and new. I hope you are too!

And what about us? We'll always have Paris.

Er, I mean WeeM.

WeemProgram2023.indd 2 10/23/2023 7:32:31 AM

Notes from the Logistics Chair

It's often been said that "many hands make light work", and WeeM is an amazing example of this. We have a dedicated team of volunteers that has spent months making WeeM a priority, just so you can enjoy these next 4 days! Case in point: all of this amazing programming was brought to you by our 2023 Programming Chair, Cynthia Clampitt, and it is a fascinating lineup that will surely have you hemming and hawing about which programs you will get to attend!

This program book contains information on all of our presentations and speakers, but will likely have some discrepancies regarding any last minute changes or substitutions. You will be able to find a current schedule of events printed near the registration desk each day. While the PAAG (Program At A Glance) is the most updated printed version of the programming schedule, the digital PAAG will always have the most current info. See page 4 for the QR code and Edress to see our digital PAAG, complete with hyperlinks taking you to detailed descriptions of the programs and speakers. This is possible thanks to the many hours of dedication by our talented webslinger, Barb Pohl!

New this year- we have a schedule of events printed up for our youngest shining stars! If you have a family member or guest with you who is under 18, they should be given a copy of the Youth PAAG at registration, but you can also find it with the regular PAAG or in the babysitting room.

We love hearing your comments- honest! I read each and every comment that is shared with me each year, all in an effort to improve experiences for next year. There will be a red box near registration labeled "PAAG Comments". Please grab a leftover printed PAAG (or scratch paper) and let us know what you enjoyed! Our speakers also appreciate this feedback, so please make sure to fill out a survey card located near the door to each speaker room and drop it in this comments box!

I encourage you to partake in all of the programs that pique your interest. Maybe you'll find a new passion, learn something life-changing, or just belly-laugh until it hurts. This year will be unique, no matter what, and we're so glad you came to our party!



Laceé Hudec

2023 WeeM Logistics Chair

WeemProgram2023.indd 3 10/23/2023 7:32:31 AM

Policies & Reminders

Before you enjoy the festivities, please review the policies and reminders that follow.

Name Badges: Your name badge is your ticket to all the joys and wonders of HalloweeM. Please wear it at all times. With a group as large and diverse as ours, the tags are the only way we have of knowing who belongs to the RG. Anyone without a name badge should be referred to registration or to an event host (designated by their green badges). Sorry, lost name badges cannot be replaced.

Smartphone, Tablet, and other E-Gear Users: Please be courteous by silencing your devices when at programs or events. If you don't know how to silence your device, please leave it in your room, lest you be mocked mercilessly. Free Wi-Fi is available in the hotel lobby. Scannable QR codes are posted near registration to allow you to easily download the program booklet and Program at a Glance (PAAG) in PDF form.

Program At A Glance (PAAG): The PAAG includes some updates to the program which were too late to make it into the program book. There may be signs posted at the programming rooms or near registration with information that is fresher still. We're confident you'll know what's up. Scan the code here, or go to: https://tinyurl.com/WeeM47PAAG Some events are age-restricted (usually 21+), and you may be asked to show proof of age. Finally, please note that a few events do not start and end on the same time boundaries as most.

Program Schedule: There are often intervals set between programs in the programming grid. Check the times listed carefully. The current daily PAAG is the most up-to-date source with respect to error corrections, room changes, speaker cancellations, etc.

WeemProgram2023.indd 4 10/23/2023 7:32:31 AM

About the Speakers: Please bear in mind that the speakers have donated their time and resources to be with us this weekend. Many of them are not Mensans and this is their first (and maybe only) exposure to the organization. Mensa's reputation depends on the actions and attitudes of each of us. If you enter or leave during a program, please do so quietly in deference to the speaker and other attendees. Show consideration, even if you disagree with a speaker. Unless a speaker requests otherwise, please hold questions and comments until the end of the presentation.

Alcohol and Youth: Illinois law, hotel rules, and Chicago Area Mensa policies are strict when it comes to underage drinking. The legal drinking age here is 21. Please do not be insulted if you are asked for proof of age. Anyone with a brightly colored "under 21" badge is not permitted to be in areas where alcohol is available. These areas are easy to spot in hospitality and in the program guide. Adherence to this rule has been stressed to all Hospitality gHosts. Even if you unwisely choose to allow your children to consume alcohol at home, you are NOT free to do the same at HalloweeM.

Dry-Erase Board: A dry-erase board will be available near the registration area for posting personal messages, program changes, and other announcements. Please re-cap the markers after use.

Decorations: Every year, we make a sizable investment of time and money in creating the right ambiance at HalloweeM. Please do not disturb or remove the decorations. Many of them are haunted. We cannot be held responsible for any paranormal activities if you remove the sacred monkey paw from its resting chamber.

Food and Beverages: HalloweeM food and beverages MUST remain in the Ravinia Ballroom. Food will NOT be permitted in the games room this year, but beverages are allowed. However, please DO NOT take food or beverages into the other speaker rooms. Water is available outside most of the speaker rooms, if you become parched. **And friends, please, clean up after yourselves! Just like life: strive to leave the table better than when you sat down. If you drop something, don't leave it there. If something spills, contact a WeeM-Teamer or hotel staff. Thank you.**

WeemProgram2023.indd 5 10/23/2023 7:32:32 AM

Policies & Reminders, cont'd.

Volunteers: HalloweeM is a big event. It takes a LOT of volunteers to make things run smoothly. Our volunteer staff (The WeeM TeaM) is always happy to accept new recruits. (Please sign up for Hospitality in advance. Mealtime shifts begin 30 min. prior to posted meal times to allow for implementation of sanitation protocols.) In exchange for your time (4 hours or more), you get a HalloweeM volunteer collector's pin, and a warm feeling deep inside. A volunteer grid will be posted near registration. Please scan this QR code (or go to https://tinyurl.com/WeeM47Volunteer) and sign up!

Of Special Note: Volunteer Drawing

Volunteers will get a raffle ticket for every 2 hours they help, and double the normal number of raffle tickets for any slot they signed up for online, before WeeM begins. Volunteers who sign-up for 'Best-Boy' slots will receive an extra ticket per hour of the slot, volunteers who sign up for Set-Building slots will receive triple tickets for the time of those slots and those who signup for Set-Striking slots will get double tickets for those slots. Volunteers who sign up for those very important slots will also be entered into a raffle of their own IN ADDITION TO the other raffles!

NEW THIS YEAR: HalloweeM is Modernizing! Starting this year we will no longer have an on-site sign up board. Volunteers will be able to sign up online from their phone, tablet, or computer DURING WeeM! To help with this we will be posting fliers with the volunteer link and a convenient QR-code around WeeM. Scanning the code or going to the Web-address will take you to our iVolunteer site where you can sign up for any shift at any time. Volunteers do not need to be present at the raffle drawings to receive major prizes, but minor prizes (< $21 value) will be awarded only to those who are on-site during the awards ceremony. So please, sign up. Just a few individuals can't do this alone it takes a whole cast!

A break from the crowds: There is a nature walk along the river just outside the south door of the hotel. It's a great place for a breather.

WeemProgram2023.indd 6 10/23/2023 7:32:32 AM

Hugs: Yes, maybe, no? Colored stickers signify your hugging preference. Pick up a sticker for your name badge at the registration desk and check the stickers that others wear. If a hug sticker isn't on someone's badge, or if there is any doubt, please ask before hugging. And please remember, even if the sticker is green, "NO" means "NO."

Harassment: HalloweeM will be a friendly and safe environment for our attendees. Unwelcome physical contact and other forms of harassment will not be tolerated. **Failure to comply with this policy may result in removal from the event without a refund, and police intervention, if warranted**. If you have concerns or need to report misconduct, find a member of the Peace Force, recognized by their white hats. If you need immediate and direct intervention for your personal safety, request assistance from security at the front desk.

Late Check-out: When you check in, please let the hotel desk staff know if you need a late check-out time at the end of the weekend. Based on their expected vacancy level, they will do all they can to accommodate as many as they can.

Smoking: By Illinois state law as well as hotel policy, smoking (including vaping and E-cigs) is permitted outside the hotel in designated areas only.

Pet Policy: In keeping with Chicago Area Mensa's pet policy, no non-human animals are allowed in any event space (hospitality or speaker/meeting rooms) unless they are service animals. Pets are still allowed in guest rooms.

Hotel kitchens and service corridors: Due to concerns from the hotel staff, **only** authorized volunteers will be allowed in the service corridors and hotel kitchens. If we are out of something and it needs to be replenished, please alert one of the hospitality volunteers or one of the event hosts who are wearing green badges. We reserve the right to revoke the badges of anyone who goes in these areas without permission.

Photo Booth Is Back! A photo booth will be available from 7:00 - 11:00 PM Saturday, in the front hall outside Pretentious Drinking. There will be props you can use to make your photo even more special. You will get a copy of your masterpiece, and electronic copies will be saved. You have been warned...

WeemProgram2023.indd 7 10/23/2023 7:32:32 AM

WeeM Lo

All Weekend

Young Children



For kids 8 and under, we will again have activities and plenty of opportunities for supervised play all weekend long in Maple. To help cover the cost of the babysitters, parents who did not pre-register their child for babysitting will be charged $20 per day per child ($50 for the whole weekend). The Kids' Room will be open Friday & Saturday from 4:00 until 11:00 PM, and Sunday from 9:00 AM to noon. We will close the room for an hour during all scheduled meals (including Saturday evening) and will take "field trips" to some of the WeeM Programs that are especially good for kids. Look for signs outside the Kids' Room for up-to-the-minute details.

Little ones are welcome in the Kids' Room if they are able to play with a group of older children. While there will be two responsible adults with the children at all times, this is a popular program that draws a lot of kids and features plenty of "ages 3 and up" toys. If your children are not potty trained, parents are responsible for diaper changes. Snacks will be provided in the Kids' Room at intervals throughout the weekend, but you must pick up your kids and visit Hospitality when the Kids' Room is closed for meal breaks or whenever you are hungry.

Games and T

Game Room: Ravinia A & B

The Game Rooms will open Thursday evening and remain open around the clock until Sunday afternoon, even if there is a tournament. (These times will be posted.) We have a wide assortment to choose from. Please do not leave your small children unattended in the game room.

WeemProgram2023.indd 8 10/23/2023 7:32:32 AM

ves Kids!

We will once again have a kids-only costume parade at 6:30 PM Friday before the adult parade. Bring your kids directly to the parade in costume. Kids do not need to be registered for babysitting to participate in the costume parade.

IMPORTANT: For the children's safety, a responsible adult must sign each child in and out of the kids' room *every time* the child leaves or rejoins the program. Parents must remain in the hotel at all times when their children are in the Kids' Room. If children prove to be uncontrollable or dangerous, their parents will be asked to remove them from the room and they will not be allowed to participate further.

All Weekend

Tweens and Teens (12-17)

Participants under 18 years of age who are old enough to be unsupervised must register with a responsible adult or have their parents sign a release form at registration and provide contact information where a responsible adult can be reached ***at the hotel*** throughout the weekend.



ournaments

Tournaments

Check in Hospitality near games entrance for Amazing Race sign-up and late-breaking tourneys. No sign-up required: 7 Wonders on Thursday at 7 p.m. and Logic Tournaments at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday. Please note: the Axe-Pong tournament has been cancelled until all of the needed prosthetics are obtained.

WeemProgram2023.indd 9 10/23/2023 7:32:33 AM

All Weekend

Massage Therapists

Chair Massages will be available in the vendor hall on Thursday (3 - 7), Friday (9 am - 1 pm and 3 - 7 pm), Saturday (9 am - 1 pm), and Sunday (9 am - noon). Cost is $20 for a 15 minute session. CASH ONLY! Sign-up in advance to reserve your spot.

Book Sale

Browse through donated book and non-book items, and take home some real treasures. We charge 50¢ per book or 3/$1, for paperbacks; $1 each for hardcovers or 3/$2.50; and $1.00/bag on Sunday. VHS and audio cassette tapes are $1, CDs are $2, and DVDs are $3. Books on tape or CD are $2. All proceeds are going to "SitStayRead." More info on this worthy non-profit can be found here: https://www.sitstayread.org/



Please Read!

This year we have three alcohol-related programs: Thursday's Whisky of the Silver Screen, Friday's Fictional Cocktails, and Saturday's Strange Brew. Space at each of these programs is limited, and we want to give all our attendees an equal opportunity to participate in these events. So, when you attend, your badge will be punched, and you will not be able to attend another unless there is still space available 5 minutes after the program has started. Please arrive early for your event, as they are expected to max out.

This new policy does NOT affect attendance at Pretentious Drinking, which, as always, is open to all WeeM attendees over the age of 21.

LIKE THE LAST FEW YEARS: Alcohol will **NOT** be available all night. Exact times will vary, but generally, alcohol will be unavailable between 2:00 AM and 10:00 AM.

WeemProgram2023.indd 10 10/23/2023 7:32:33 AM

Due to the timing for the program book preparation, any last-minute changes to the schedule will be reflected in the "Program At A Glance," available at the registration desk.

Thursday

Early Morning to Late Afternoon

Setting Up

Mostly in the the Hospitality Area

Welcome! We're so glad you came to our RG! And you're so early! We don't officially open our doors until 4:00 PM, but you are more than welcome to roll up your sleeves and help out. There are dozens of things to do, and your help will be greatly appreciated. If you choose not to help out, please leave the sandwiches and beverages for those who are working, and don't be offended if we ask you to please get out of the way!

5:30 – 6:45 PM

My Search for the Fountain of Youth Through Yoga

Lisa Slankard

Birch

Is a loss of strength, balance and flexibility in old age inevitable? Maybe not.



7:00 – 8:30 PM

Dinner

Hospitality

Catered by Pita Inn – Mediterranean foods including assorted appetizers, entrees & sides. (Some foods are GF, however, their kitchens are not GF certified).

Please, friends, make the effort to clean up after yourselves. Thank you!

8:00 – 10:30 PM

Seven Wonders Tournament

Glenn Sutton

Willow

Come and play Antoine Bauza's classic "7 Wonders." Players will be put into pods (size determined by the number of registrants) and the top player from each pod will advance to the next round. Each round is timed and capped at thirty minutes. If you have never played "7 Wonders" before, please come fifteen minutes early for a brief introduction on the gameplay.

WeemProgram2023.indd 11 10/23/2023 7:32:33 AM

9:00 – 10:45 PM

Scotch Whisky of the Silver Screen (21+ ONLY) *LIMIT 45*

Jennifer Morris

Michigan B

Come learn about and enjoy some of the Scotch whiskies you've seen in movies and television over the years. New and seasoned whisk(e)y drinkers welcomed! "I love scotch. Scotchy scotch scotch. Here it goes down, down into my belly." ~Ron Burgundy, Anchorman. **21+ / capacity limit 45**

9:00 PM – Late

Social-Deduction Games: Werewolves of WeeM

Stephen Rider

Elm

Are you a werewolf? If not, who is??? Come discover which of your friends is secretly harboring special dietary needs in this classic game of social deduction.

Friday

8:00 – 9:30 AM

Breakfast

Hospitality

Continental Breakfast – Bagels & Schmear, Hot (microwavable) & Cold Cereals (some GF), Fruit, Yogurt, Milk, Coffee, Juices

Please friends, make the effort to clean up after yourselves. Thank you!

9:00 - 10:15 AM

How Storytelling Improves Your Life

Debbie Hettler

Willow

Debbie Hettler performed with an Improv troupe and a storytelling group in DC from 2013- 15. During these activities she learned enough to be able to adapt techniques to bring those skills into everyday life to enhance work and family skills. This presentation will briefly highlight examples of those places where you can adapt these activities to improve your time with others.

The "Awe-full" Universe

Roger Breisch

Birch

When we take time to examine to extraordinary nature of the Universe, we cannot help but be filled with awe... and tremendous humility. We will examine aspects of the Universe that defy our intuition while defining our reality. We will explore capabilities of other species that make our capacities seem exceedingly limited. In the end, I hope to help participants appreciate the astonishing tapestries to which we are so often blind.

WeemProgram2023.indd 12 10/23/2023 7:32:33 AM

9:00 - 10:15 AM cont'd.

What's all this talk about Presidential Erections? ... Um, that's 'Elections' and other strange nooks and crannies of US history

EJ Boris

Michigan A

Just when you thought it might be safe to go back on social media, along comes another presidential election cycle. And if this one is shaping up as something strange, you should see some of the past ones. Oh, and some other odds and ends from US history.

9:00 - 11:00 AM

It's A Wonderful World Tournament

Glenn Sutton

Michigan B

Come play Frédéric Guérard's classic "It's A Wonderful World." Players will compete to build their own perfect world by drafting various projects that will generate the victor points needed to ensure that their world is truly perfect! Rounds will be timed at 40 mins. All players will be using the same nation configuration.

10:30 - 11:45 AM

Turning Point of the American Revolution: The History and Legacy of the Winter at Valley Forge

Robin Turpin & Laurie Turpin-Soderholm

Birch

This presentation will focus on why Valley Forge is considered by many to be the Winter that Won the War.

Meet Your National Board of Directors (AMC)

Jon Gruebele

Elm

Jon Gruebele, RVC4, will moderate a discussion with the AMC and Mensa Foundation trustees attending 'WeeM. We'll be happy to entertain your questions, comments, ideas, complaints, suggestions, challenges, and whatever else you'd like to address. The discussion is always interesting -- please join us!

How to Survive an Eye Exam

Debbie Hettler

Michigan A

Join Dr. Debbie Hettler on an ocular journey! Debbie is an eye doctor who is excited to explain why certain testing is done during an eye exam, what they mean, and how to best prepare for an eye exam. What questions should you ask, what should you bring, how should you prepare, and what should you expect during a good examination? What is it that the doctor is seeing when they shine all those annoying bright lights into your eyes? Why are they asking those questions? Why should you go through all of this?

WeemProgram2023.indd 13 10/23/2023 7:32:33 AM

10:30 - 11:45 AM cont'd.

Self-sufficient Ms: Carry-in & Seed Swap

Lacee Hudec

Ravinia CDF

Pickled, canned, frozen, or foraged... share some of the bounty that you have made with other self-sufficient Ms. If you have (labeled) seeds to share, please bring those as well.

Noon - 1:15 PM

Lunch Break

Hospitality

Selection of Chilis – Beef Chili (no beans), Chicken Chili, Baked Potato Bar with a Selection of Hot & Cold Toppings.

12:30 - 2:15 PM

Poker Tournament

Scott Bialas

Botanic

No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker. There will be prizes. Signup sheet will be posted near the game room. Fun for all ages.

THIS EVENT HAS BEEN MOVED TO SATURDAY: SAME TIME, SAME ROOM.

1:00 - 2:15

Don't Slow Me Down with that Calculator: Mental Math Methods

Cliff Petrak

Willow

Author Cliff Petrak will detail many of his 62 super-shortcut computational techniques and strategies that will prove to be faster than traditional methods or even a calculator. Many of these methods have long been in use in European and Asian texts. That explains why we now find our country as the 34th ranking country in the world in annual mental math competitions. Once learned, these methods will help bring our calculating methods into the 21st Century and, at the same time, will leave our calculator-dependent friends in the dust!

Travel to Extreme Latitudes: The Geographic North and South Poles

Kenneth Levine

Birch

Although tens of thousands of tourists visit Antarctica each year, very few have reached the Pole. Only 496 did so as of January 2003. Ken was number 491. About 20 months later Ken traveled to the North Pole. This lecture will describe his adventures and hardships and the explorers that preceded him. Learn what it was like to travel to the Poles as a tourist.

WeemProgram2023.indd 14 10/23/2023 7:32:33 AM

1:00 - 2:15 cont'd.

Starstruck - How I Magically Transformed Chicago into Hollywood for More Than Fifty Years

Michael Kutza

Michigan A

A fun conversation with the author of "Starstruck." A behind the scenes look at film festivals and the private lives of movie stars!

Yoga

Thomas Ryan

Michigan B

Come and flow with Misster (Jedi Master) Mensa '16, Tommy Ryan! Yoga is a great practice for physical, mental, and spiritual health. Physically, you will work with not only flexibility, but endurance, breath, and balance. The breath and meditation plus affirmations during class will benefit more than just your body. All ages and levels of experience welcome.

2:30 - 3:45 PM

Family History 101

Deb Johnston

Willow

Have you ever wondered if that story uncle Frank told you was true? Want to know if you are related to someone famous? Come learn about the process, resources, and techniques for learning about your own family history in the historical record. All ages welcome.

So You Want To Be A Criminal Investigator?

Cookie Bakke

Birch

Put on your criminal investigation hats and participate in a real case investigation. At one former M-presentation, it turned out to be a Mensan who came up with a case-breaking idea. Can it happen again? Q: When is a suicide not a suicide? A: When it's a homicide staged to look (to an untrained eye) like a suicide. Note: This is an adults only (read: graphic) session. Some photos may be disturbing. Recommended 18+.

GenY Ms Meet & Greet

Billie Lee

Elm

GenY Mensans are members of Mensa born between 1976 and 1996, but we always keep it 100. Meet and greet with us so we can spill the tea on adulting, cancel yet another archaic establishment, and keep the FOMO away. Be forewarned though that you may meet some rather odd personalities; we literally can't even.

WeemProgram2023.indd 15 10/23/2023 7:32:33 AM

2:30 - 3:45 PM cont'd.

Gandalf and Aslan on the Silver Screen

Crystal & David Downing

Michigan A

What would Tolkien and Lewis think about movies adapted from their works? Crystal, a specialist on film adaptation, and David, a specialist on Lewis and Tolkien, will seek to answer this question while showing clips from various adaptations over the past 40 years.

3:00 - 5:00 PM

Pub Trivia

Kenya Zarns

Botanic

Compete for bragging rights and meaningless trinkets in this pub style quiz! Teams of up to 5 people answer questions on a variety of topics in hopes of emerging victorious at the end! NOTE: this quiz is mostly harmless, but there may be some mature content. PLEASE arrive 10-15 minutes before start time to get registered (one smartphone per team required to play). This is pub trivia, so bring your beverage of choice with you. No children under 13, please.

4:00 - 5:15 PM

Traveling the World with Mensa

LaRae Bakerink

Willow

Do you like to travel and meet new friends? So do I. Mensa events take place throughout the year all around the world. I'll show you some of the places I've been as well as tell you about upcoming events around the globe that you are welcome to join as a member of Mensa.

The Garden of Doom

Mark Lyons

Birch

Certain plants look beautiful, but hold hidden dangers that should make you think twice about planting them. Mark Lyons, an experienced garden coach, will alert you to these botanical rogues and how to carefully cultivate them to mitigate their hazards if you decide to plant them.

Gen X Ms Meet & Greet

Tom Schnorrenberg

Elm

Oh my gosh, you guys! We should TOTALLY get together in a room here at WeeM. Wouldn't it be just rad to meet other Gen X Mensans? Yeah, bud. It'd be gnarly. Gen X focuses on individuals born between 1961 and 1981, but those Gen-X curious are welcome to join us. Tubular!

WeemProgram2023.indd 16 10/23/2023 7:32:33 AM

4:00 - 5:15 PM cont'd.

Preserving Your Legacy & Life Story
Dan Gelfond

Michigan A

Dan Gelfond, a former Steven Spielberg project interviewer, will discuss his experience recording the testimony of holocaust survivors and then starting his own business preserving life stories for seniors across the U.S. Dan will discuss the importance of leaving your story for future generations and the ways to do that. Video highlights from past interviews will be shown.

5:30 - 6:45 PM

The Eye of Argon
Ian Strock

Willow

In 1970, teenager Jim Theis wrote "The Eye of Argon." It was supposed to be a high fantasy quest adventure, but it was… it wasn't good. Fifteen years later, a copy of the story appeared at a convention, and it took on a life of its own. People would try to read it out loud without laughing at the typos, mistakes, and word infelicities. It developed a cult following. Share in the legend of "The Eye of Argon." Ian Randal Strock will discuss the history of the story, and how it came to be both awful and beloved. Then join the cult, as we try to read the story in the approved round-robin fashion.

The Great Dying: The Permian Extinction and the End of Life as We Know It
Mark Kaletka

Birch

250 million years ago, nearly all life on Earth disappeared in the worst of the five known major extinction events. The end of the Permian period saw 70% of land species and over 90% of ocean species go extinct from the fossil record in as little as 20,000 years. While exact processes are still being debated, it is well accepted that a sudden rise in carbon dioxide levels was the immediate cause. Scientists find that carbon dioxide levels today are rising at a higher rate than estimated during the Great Dying. Are we about to experience a sixth major extinction?

M-Available Meet and Greet
Melissa Hershcopf

Elm

Can you say 'I aM-Available' honestly? Then find your M-tastic match with M-Available! Whether what you seek is long-term or short-term, heterosexual or homosexual, monogamous or polyamorous, vanilla or kinky, loving or lustful, or whatever else, M-Available can help! M-Available's purpose is to help available adult Mensans find appropriate companions for one another. Come meet other Mensans who consider themselves available.

WeemProgram2023.indd 17 10/23/2023 7:32:33 AM

6:00 – 7:15 PM

Dinner

Hospitality

Beef Tortellini, Cheese Ravioli, Chicken Tenders (GF) accompanied by Sides.

Please note – Since the children's costume parade begins at 6:30, please allow families with children to eat first. Thank you.

As always, make the effort to clean up after yourselves. Please leave the space in better shape than how you found it. Thank you!

6:30 – 7:30 PM

Kids' Costume Parade/Contest

Michigan A/B

All children are invited to show off their costumes for prizes. Come see some little ones who are so cute, it's scary! Kids registered for babysitting are welcome to wear their costumes to the Kids' Room for the remainder of the evening.

7:30 – 9:00 PM

Adults' Costume Parade/Contest

Robert Stalzer, Emcee

Michigan A/B

It's one of the many things for which we are (justly) famous: costumes. Prizes will be awarded for Best Pun, Worst Pun, Best Traditional, Best Group, and whatever other categories strike the fancy of our judges, who are, as always, very open to bribes. If you will be entering the costume contest, be sure to get a numbered ticket. Please SPEAK LOUDLY, SLOWLY, AND CLEARLY when you get to the microphone. The judges and the audience would like very much to hear the description of your costume.

9:00 – 10:00 PM

HELL's Ms Meeting

Beth Weiss

Elm



Why do people wear black shirts with attack owls on them... and why do they have different sayings under those owls? What does it mean to be the Party SIG of American Mensa? What group is organizing a cruise to the Baltic in September 2024? Come hang out with the party people!

Mmm! Chocolate Tasting and Swap

Visalakshi Kunapuli

Ravinia CDF

This is the chocolate swap for the "Mmm! Chocolate" group. Bring your favorite chocolates to share, and sample chocolates that others have brought. Local specialties/unique and exotic flavors are welcome! Note: This is not meant to be a meal. Please be considerate so everyone has a chance to sample the chocolates. :-)

WeemProgram2023.indd 18 10/23/2023 7:32:33 AM

9:00 – 11:00 PM

Sing-Along/Karaoke with Mr. Mensa ‘16

Tommy Ryan

Birch

Do you like music? Performing it? Listening to it? Tommy has held many positions in Mensa, but his true passion is music. And his first ever volunteer gig for Mensa was to host a sing-along. Come sing, play an instrument, or just listen to a professional who was recently a featured soloist for the Burning Man “playa choir” take on the role of human jukebox and/or karaoke machine!

9:00 – Midnight

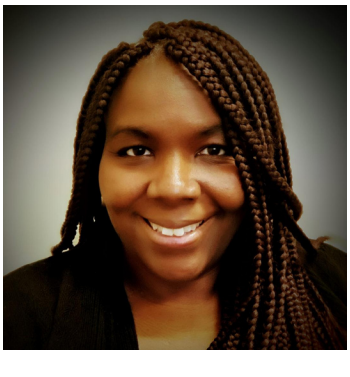
Fictional Cocktails year-1: Fantasy!

Nathaniel Arons

Willow

Join me for the first year of Fictional Cocktails, a 3-year series where we drink the drinks of fiction! During this year’s class we will discuss & taste a night’s worth of drinks both odd & delicious from the many worlds of Fantasy. Each drink discussed will be pulled directly from the text of a myth, legend, or fantasy novel. I will demonstrate the mixing of the drinks and we will discuss its origin as well how well the tastes of fantasy fluids translate to the real world. This event is limited to participants 21+ that enjoy drinking alcoholic beverages.

Friday Night Dance with DJ Kenya



River C

Swing by after the costume contest to let loose on the dance floor and have some fun! With a music mix of oldies and current hits, there’s something for everyone! Note: requests will be accepted but are not guaranteed.

10:30 PM – Late

Social-Deduction Games: Werewolves of WeeM

Stephen Rider

Elm

Are you a werewolf? If not, who is??? Come discover which of your friends is secretly harboring special dietary needs in this classic game of social deduction.

WeemProgram2023.indd 19 10/23/2023 7:32:34 AM

Yet another reminder:
Due to the timing for the program book preparation, any late changes to the schedule will be reflected in the "Program At A Glance."

Saturday

8:00 – 9:30 AM

Breakfast

Hospitality

Continental Breakfast Items plus Hot Breakfast … Scrambled Eggs, French Toast Sticks, Tater Rounds, Sausage & Bacon.

Please remember to clean up after yourself. Thank you!

9:00 – 10:15 AM

Drinking From the Firehose: Consuming the Best of the Best

Alan Baltis

Willow

Because we're not quite immortal yet (come ON, nanotech), we have a limited amount of time & attention to dedicate to consuming all the world's books, movies, television, games, puzzles, magazines, etc. As a discerning Mensan, how do we cope with this cornucopia of delights, this glut of options? How do we sift out the Good Stuff in a single year, much less over decades, or centuries? How do we integrate our personal taste with the universal Best Of lists? Alan Baltis has been dealing with it all his life, and will share some of the coping mechanisms he's developed. Join us & share yours!

Riding the Goodyear Blimp

Lynne Killgore & Dave Michel

Birch

In 2005 we were at a charity dinner and auction. A ride for two in the Goodyear Blimp came up. We bid and won it. What we found out was that we had won a reservation for a ride, based on weather and availability of the blimps. Almost 2 years later we got the call and on 9/15/07 we drove 55 miles to the the Goodyear Blimp hanger outside Akron, OH. Come hear our story.

9:30 – Noon

Logic Problem Tournament

Oriel Maximé

Michigan A

You know the type: 5 people, with 5 different types of cars and 5 different pets, live on the same street... See how you rate against your fellow Mensans on these six never-before-seen problems: three traditional and three less common. Best solver over the 90 minutes wins accolades and praise!

WeemProgram2023.indd 20 10/23/2023 7:32:34 AM

10:30 AM – 11:45 AM

Take Apart!
Beth Weiss

Willow

Have you ever wondered what is *inside* your small appliances? Join us as we use screwdrivers and pliers to take apart appliances that don't work anymore. (And feel free to see what you can assemble with the pieces.) Preference will be given to youth members.

Made in Chicago: Stories Behind 30 Great Hometown Bites
David Hammond

Birch

You've no doubt heard of deep dish pizza, the Chicago hot dog, and Italian beef. These and twenty-seven other Chicago original foods are covered in "Made in Chicago: Stories behind 30 Great Hometown Bites." Authors Monica Eng and David Hammond have dug into the stories behind these and lesser-known Chicago favorites like the jibarito, Big Baby, and the Mother-in-Law, and in this presentation, they will discuss a number of these foods and the sometimes unusual stories behind their creation. Looking at these foods reveals Chicago's immigrant past and some incredible street-level inventiveness.

Linguistics: The Basics
Jennifer Murtoff

Michigan A

What are the components of language? What's the difference between prescriptive and descriptive grammar? Why do spelling and pronunciation differ? Why all the fuss over the Oxford comma? (Disclaimer: The presenter is a fan of the Oxford comma.) This presentation intends to cover the basics of linguistics, the study of languages.

Noon – 1:15 PM

Lunch Break

Hospitality

Award-winning bratwurst (GF) from Ream's Market, Mac & Cheese accompanied by Sides.

As always, make the effort to clean up after yourselves. Please leave the space in better shape than how you found it.Thank you!

1:00 – 2:15 PM

HalloweeM Paint-a-Pumpkin-Palooza
John Bradford

Willow

We supply a collection of communal art and craft supplies. You paint and accessorize a mini-pumpkin (also provided) as your HalloweeM/Halloween decoration. Fun for all ages!

WeemProgram2023.indd 21 10/23/2023 7:32:34 AM

Sir Ernest Shackleton and the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration

Kenneth Levine

Birch

Ernest Shackleton, an Antarctic explorer, is mostly well known for his Endurance Expedition, 1914-1916, when his bravery and leadership resulted in the survival and safe return of all 28 men from his ship, overcoming unimaginable odds. This expedition is considered the greatest survival story of all time. The program covers Shackleton's biography, his four Antarctic expeditions, and interesting facts about other men on his expeditions. Slides will include actual period photos from these expeditions as well as Ken's personal photos taken at these locations.

ImprovThis: The Three Pillars of Improv

Steven Duberchin

Elm

LIMITED ATTENDANCE: Due to the intimate nature of this session, attendance will be limited to ~20 people. Do you see Improv live on stage or on TV and wonder "How do they make it all work?" The answer is surprisingly simple: it's the Three Pillars of Improv. In this session, Steve Duberchin from ImprovThis will facilitate a fun workshop where you'll be up and improvising side by side with seasoned improvisers. We'll be exploring the three Pillars of Improv by playing in "games" and "scenes." Prepare to have a lot of fun, think on your feet, and maybe even learn something new!

Lebanese Piano Music - Classical and Contemporary

Angela Salvaggione

Michigan A

Come explore and experience the music of Lebanon from the late 1800s to the present at this live lecture-recital. Enjoy the history and the wide range of musical styles you'll hear.

Eclipse 2024 - Experiencing a Total Solar Eclipse

Mike McInerney

Michigan B

Total solar eclipses, when the moon blocks the sun's light from reaching Earth, are a phenomenon not just to be viewed, but to be experienced. On April 8th, 2024 one will be traversing the east central U.S. (the last until 2045), and Southern Illinois and Indianapolis are in its path! The presentation will cover the geometry and history of eclipses, the fun of experiencing a total solar eclipse, and the safe viewing of eclipses.



WeemProgram2023.indd 22 10/23/2023 7:32:34 AM

2:30 – 3:45 PM

M-etaphysical Meet Up

Thomas Galanis

Willow

Are you interested in new age and metaphysical experiences? We invite you to gather with us as we take a closer look at all things paranormal, psychic, lightwork, and more — if it falls under the general topic, we can discuss it. Come to listen, share, and support the lively discussions we're sure to have. This meet-and-greet is inspired by the monthly meetings we've enjoyed in Region 1. Let's expand our reach as we aim to develop this group into a SIG. Tarot readings and other offerings will be offered after the session.

Holiday Safety for Home and on The Road

John Good

Birch



The holidays are a special time, due to the need for travel, with numerous residences being vacant and full of gifts for loved ones. Criminals such as pickpocketers and burglars are well aware of these facts. Mr. Good will use his years of training and knowledge in crime prevention as a former police officer to present timely and cost-efficient ideas to keep you, your loved ones, and your property safe and secure. recommended 21+.

Kids Lego Time

Megan Bratkovich

Elm

Do your kids like building with Lego bricks? Here's some time for them to do so with other kids.

Dundee Scottish Pipe Band

Lacee Hudec

Michigan A



In case you missed it last year, we've been asked to do again!! Come and see the great Highland bagpipes in all their glory in a mini performance and Q&A with members of the Dundee Scottish Pipe Band, along with some of our friends from the Chicago Highlanders Pipes and Drums. Both of these bands placed 1st in their respective grades this past season! Do you have questions about bagpipes or drums? Or maybe you're interested in seeing just what it takes to make this instrument sing- and not cry! YES- it has to be loud! Disposable earplugs will be available if you can't take it!.

WeemProgram2023.indd 23 10/23/2023 7:32:35 AM

4:00 – 5:15 PM

Strange Brew?!? Unique Wine Varietals from Lynfred Winery

Catrina Hays

Willow

We will be sampling 4 wines from Lynfred Winery which is right down the road from our WEEM hotel. Their winemakers are from Chile, and the winery imports grapes from around the world to create their unique varietals. Come with an open mind and a curious palate.

Improv Comedy Show: The BlueBs

Steve Duberchin

Michigan A

Join us as we present an improvised comedy about everything and anything. Maybe we'll do a long form montage or maybe we'll end up putting together a running order of short from "games." We just never know what we'll be doing until we get on stage. We'll use your suggestions to improvise scenes that will have you thinking, laughing, and maybe even groaning. This will be a unique performance, as these scenes have never been preformed before and most likely will never be preformed again. Crazy Shades Of Blue and Queen Bs are Improv Comedy troupes who perform often in and around Chicago.

Who Wants to be Neurotypical Anyway?

Claudia Pitts

Michigan B

Join us for a thought-provoking talk exploring the notion that neurological differences are a natural and valuable part of human diversity. In 'Who Wants to be Neurotypical Anyway?' we'll look at the neurobiological and psychological aspects of disorders such as ADHD and autism spectrum disorder, as well as delve into the drawbacks of a neurotypical-centric society. This talk will challenge your assumptions and encourage you to celebrate the diversity of human cognition as well as offer a fresh perspective on neurodiversity and how we can create a more inclusive and accepting world for all.

4:00 – 5:15 PM

Growing and Using Mushrooms

Mark Lyons

Birch

Like mushrooms? Ever thought about growing your own? Mark Lyons, an experienced mushroom grower and garden coach, will show you how to grow your very own mushroom harvest. He will also show you how to preserve your mushroom harvest, and how to make the most of these culinary treasures.

WeemProgram2023.indd 24 10/23/2023 7:32:35 AM

4:00 – 5:15 PM Cont'd.

Clandestine - Strategy Game Playtest
Jason Brooks

Elm

Compete with your rivals to ensure the survival of one of five unique Secret Societies. Maneuver your Leaders and Followers through overlapping public and private rondels. Enhance your actions or consolidate your power with occult Relics. Master asymmetrical strategies with potent Secrets unique to your Society. Ascend to new levels of power, and build the most Intrigue when the final level is reached! Note: Clandestine is currently a prototype with plans to publish soon. Only 10 spots available.

6:00 – 7:30 PM

Dinner Break

Like the last several years, there will be no dinner served tonight, though light snacks will be available. Ask a local for suggestions.

7:30 – 9:30 PM

The Epicurean Experience
Hieu Nguyen and John Bradford

Hospitality (Ravinia C/D/F)

We'll have an all-new variety of thematic, diverse, and sometimes bizarre foods and non-alcoholic drinks to explore. Take a nibble of things you've never seen and/or heard of before...or perhaps you are familiar with, but were reluctant to try. This event is ALCOHOL FREE, so anyone not wearing an "under 21" badge should visit before partaking of Pretentious Drinking. Please note: we aren't serving a meal, just samples and sips, so come for curiosity, not dinner.

8:30 – 10:00 PM

Pretentious Drinking **(21 and older)**
Alan Baltis

Botanic

Liqueurs. The fancy stuff. Polished, cosmopolitan, perhaps even a bit snooty. You'd like to know more but are too sensible to plunk down the price of an unknown beverage. Rejoice! As in years past, you can sample some truly amazing liqueurs—and your money's no good. Unlike years past, however, we will be making a few small changes for the sake of safety, chiefly related to cup handling. So come on by and sample our weird and wonderful distillates and decoctions from around the world. You can determine which you'd like to own, which should be left on the store shelf, and which you should give to your arch-nemesis as a "thoughtful" gift. Obviously, you must be of legal drinking age to join us, and valid proof of pretensiousness may be required. Snobby accents and extended pinkies remain optional.

PLEASE NOTE: The alcohol in Pretentious Drinking **MUST** remain in Michigan B. Please help us maintain our wonderful relationship with the hotel. Thank you.

WeemProgram2023.indd 25 10/23/2023 7:32:35 AM

9:00 – Late

Saturday Night Movie -“Beetlejuice”
Will B. Cummings

Birch

Bring your favorite Congressperson to this whimsical cinematic romp. If you like to multi-task, the honorable representative can dig into recent polling results while keeping you abreast of new advancements in medical enhancements. (Some graphic content; no vaping aloud; the preceding was totally made up.)

Social-Deduction Games: Friends of Lawrence (Werewolves of WeeM)
Stephen Rider

Elm

Are you a werewolf? If not, who is??? Come discover which of your friends is secretly harboring special dietary needs in this classic game of social deduction and cold-blooded murder. New players welcome.



Intoxicating Interests
Kim Bakke

Michigan A

Do you have a special interest? Do you like drinking alcohol? Have you ever thought of combining the two? Stop by Hospitality for a couple glasses of beer or wine and then join us to learn from those that would like to infodump about their area of interest for 3-5 minutes a pop, plus a couple questions from the audience. All topics welcome (just no bummers, please!). Stop on by! A sign up sheet for volunteers to share about their interests will be available on site. (This event is 21+ but please do NOT bring your beverages to this event.)

Saturday Night Dance
Ed Barta

Botanic

Music. Drinks. Old friends. New friends. Soon-to-be friends. What’s not to like?

A great end to a beautiful day, or a great beginning to a beautiful night!



WeemProgram2023.indd 26 10/23/2023 7:32:35 AM

Sunday

8:00 – 9:30 AM

Breakfast
Hospitality

Continental Breakfast Items plus Hot Breakfast … Scrambled Eggs, French Toast Sticks, Tater Rounds, Sausage & Bacon.

9:30 - 11:00 AM

Amazing Race - WeeM Style
Jill Sackett

Michigan B

Need some help in recovering from your Saturday night revelry? Join us for an Amazing Race for Mensans! Based on the popular TV show, teams of 2-4 competitors complete a variety of tasks, some cerebral, some lighthearted, on their way to the final "Pit Stop" and victors' bragging rights. Our version is designed for all ages and activity levels. Please sign up in advance to facilitate our planning. Not on a team? No problem; we'll get you on one. Don't miss out on one of the most entertaining events of the weekend!

10:00 – 11:00 AM

CAM ExComm Business Meeting
Willow

11:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Awards and Announcements
Hosted by Heather Booton & Beth Weiss

Hospitality (Ravinia C/D)

Find out who did and won what this weekend.

2:00 – 4:30 PM

Proctored Tests (Note: Cost discount 50%)
Willow/Birch

Not a member yet? Here's your chance to qualify.

3:15 PM – Later

Anyone with time to spare?
Just about everywhere

That's a wrap! Time to clean up! Please pitch in and give us a hand. If you volunteer, you ***may*** go home with some unused food or beverages, but you will ***definitely*** go home with our thanks, and a collectable volunteer pin.



WeemProgram2023.indd 27 10/23/2023 7:32:35 AM

Presenter Biographies

Nathaniel Arons

Fictional Cocktails year-1: Fantasy! (Fri.)

Former Herbal practitioner, nearly trained chef, prolific reader, and medic to Wisconsin's finest chefs, I have picked up many skills during my time traveling the country attending various colleges and picking up and the putting back down various careers. Please join me at WeeM for a discussion and demonstration of one of my most intoxicating areas of knowledge: Spirits wines bears and cocktails.

Kim Bakke

Intoxicating Interests (Sat.)

Kim Bakke has been attending Mensa events since she was 3 months old. She works as a chef instructor and enjoys cooking, gardening, and video games in her spare time.

Cookie Bakke

So You Want To Be A Criminal Investigator? (Fri.)

Licensed Private Investigator + Director of FightFraudAmerica = a pile of "cold case" unsolved homicides. Cookie is a P.I. with a lengthy history in the investigation of all levels of crime and fraud. Journalistic endeavors have taken her around the world, but her most heart-wrenching cases are here at home. She's been an expert guest on Dateline, Maury, TBS, and has served as a popular Enrichment Lecturer for numerous major cruise lines.

LaRae Bakerink

Traveling the World with Mensa (Fri.)

LaRae Bakerink is a Life Member of Mensa. She has served and continues to serve in many capacities and roles volunteering for Mensa, from the Local Group level to the International level. She is interested in life, travel, learning and the pursuit of more kitties on the internet.

Alan Baltis

Drinking From the Firehose: Consuming the Best of the Best & Pretentious Drinking (Sat.)

Alpha geek. Consultant, author, investor. Music lover, gamer, puzzle solver, movie buff, fan of stand-up comedy, live music, theater. Reader & collector of comic books, magazines, books, puzzles, games, CDs, LPs. Hiker & traveler, been to 48/50 state capitols with his wife, Colleen, & dozens of National Parks, museums, zoos, & oddities. Loves origami, mosaics, fractals, & trompe l'oeil. 40+-year, life member of Mensa. Email alanbaltis@gmail.com, often on Facebook. Visit relentlessgeekery.com

Scott Bialas

Poker Tournament (Fri.)

Scott has attended Weem for over a decade, but this is his first time running the poker tournament. He enjoys playing poker part-time, but is a full-time police officer, so no cheating!

WeemProgram2023.indd 28 10/23/2023 7:32:36 AM

EJ Boris

What's All This Talk About Presidential Erections? (Fri.)

Didn't we go to one of his talks a couple of years ago? Something about the Kings and Queens of England, wasn't it? Or was it the US Trivia and Trick Questions. Or the War of the Roses, or was it the one about English Titles? Or that astronomy one. Anyway, it was pretty good. Let's try this one.

John Bradford

HalloweeM Paint-a-Pumpkin-Palooza (Sat.)

John is a librarian, the co-author of a highly regarded reference book, and an occasional sketcher. He's also a member of several secret societies.

Megan Bratkovich

Kids Lego Time (Sat.), Parent/Kid Swim Time (Sat), Kids Halloween Craft (Sat),

Megan Bratkovich has been a member of Chicago Area Mensa since 2011, and is the parent of two young children (potential future Mensans?). She is also the Kids Programming Chair at WeeM this year.

Roger Breisch

The "Awe-full" Universe (Fri.)

Roger has lived an eclectic life. He earned several degrees and held many jobs. Clearly he is incapable of holding them! He has volunteered extensively since he could not lose those positions! Notably, spending 4,000 hours answering calls on national suicide hotlines. Roger speaks and writes extensively. He has given three TEDx talks and published 2 books, which have sold 10s of copies. He and Judi, his wife of 41 years, live in Batavia, Illinois. Judi has been nominated for sainthood. Kim Bakke has been attending Mensa events since she was 3 months old. She works as a chef instructor and enjoys cooking, gardening, and video games in her spare time.

Jason Brooks

Clandestine - Strategy Game Playtest (Sat.)

Jason Brooks (Brookspun Games) has designed and published tabletop games for the past few years with his first game - Legacies - successfully funding on Kickstarter and nearly sold out of its first print run. Clandestine (his next strategy game) heads to Kickstarter soon.

Crystal Downing

Gandalf and Aslan on the Silver Screen (Fri.)

Drs. Crystal and David Downing co-direct the Marion E Wade Center, the world's most comprehensive archive of materials related to CS Lewis, Tolkien, and Dorothy L. Sayers. Crystal's fourth book, Salvation from Cinema, is studied in universities across the nation, and her fifth book, on Sayers, was a Publishers Weekly "Pick of the Week." The author of ten books, David's recent work on Lewis was a NY Times Bestseller.

WeemProgram2023.indd 29 10/23/2023 7:32:36 AM

Steve Duberchin (The BlueBs)

ImprovThis: The Three Pillars of Improv, and Improv Comedy Show: The BlueBs (Sat.)

President, CEO of "ImprovThis," Steve earned his MBA from DePaul University and has worked at Fortune 50 & Ad Age 50 companies. He found his true passion when he took his first improv class at the Second City Training Center in 2002. ImprovThis focuses on training people in communication and leadership skills through the use of the "Three Pillars of Improv" and Steve instructs teams on how to communicate more effectively, grow their emotional intelligence, and create a positive corporate culture.

The Queen Bs and Crazy Shades of Blue are combining forces again this year to bring you the improv stylings of The BlueBs. together we have almost a century of combined improv performance experience and our players have been seen at almost every major improv venue in the Chicago area. If that's not enough to prove we're talented in our craft, at least it shows we're tenacious.

Monica Eng

Made in Chicago: Stories Behind 30 Great Hometown Bites (Sat.)

Monica Eng is a veteran journalist who has written about food, culture, environment and policy during her three decades at the Chicago Tribune, WBEZ and Axios Chicago. Her most recent book is Made In Chicago: Stories Behind 30 Great Hometown Bites.

Thomas Galanis

M-etaphysical Meet Up (Sat.)

Soulmates, lovers, and best friends, Tommy and Kelly Galanis's twin flames have been burning brightly for 25 years. Highly in tune with premonition, sensation, and higher power, they use their spirituality as a guide toward leading a successful, happy, and peaceful life. Their mission is to support and help others build confidence toward a positive and fruitful life. By day, Kelly is a higher education administrator and Tommy is a software developer and LocSec/Editor for CWM Mensa.

Dan Gelfond

Preserving Your Legacy & Life Story (Fri.)

Dan is a former interviewer for a Steven Spielberg project that interviewed Holocaust Survivors from 1994-1998. In 1998, Dan founded 'Keepsake Family Tree Video,' and in 2015, 'Personal History Interviews,' and has been conducting interviews across the U.S. since 1999. Dan and his wife started the charity 'North Shore Helpers' in 2015 to help homeless women and children in Chicago.

John Good

Holiday Safety for Home and on The Road (Sat.)

John Good retired in February 2020, completing a 41-year career with two Illinois Police Departments. Mr. Good served in a number of specialized units earning him department commendations and awards. Mr. Good holds a Master of Arts, as well as a Bachelor of Science Degree in Law Enforcement Administration from Western Illinois University. Mr. Good is founder and President of JG Good Corporation, located in Schaumburg, Illinois.

WeemProgram2023.indd 30 10/23/2023 7:32:36 AM

Jon Gruebele

Meet Your National Board of Directors (AMC) (Fri.)

Jon is serving his third term as American Mensa Regional Vice Chair 4. He's a former LocSec, longtime Proctor, and a Life Member. He has co-chaired Chicago Area Mensa's "A Gathering of Gamers" (AGOG) RG and chairs the American Mensa Strategic Planning Committee. His background is in international marketing, IT, and management. He is an expert in process and quality improvement.

David Hammond

Made in Chicago: Stories Behind 30 Great Hometown Bites (Sat.)

David Hammond wrote the Food Detective column for the Chicago Sun-Times and he's now Dining & Drinking Editor for Newcity/Chicago magazine.

Catrina Hays

Strange Brew?!? Unique Wine Varietals from Lynfred Winery (Sat.)

Catrina has been an amateur oenophile since 1995 when she started wine tasting in the unusual location of Sonoita, AZ during graduate school. She has been a member of Lynfred Winery since 2000 and has enjoyed the many new grape varietals this winery has introduced her to over the years.

Melissa Hershcopf

M-Available Meet and Greet (Fri.)

As a Mensa member for 20 years, I relish seeing connections be made. There was an opportunity for a Meet & Greet, so I acted upon the offer. I have been involved in Metropolitan Washington Mensa serving on the ExComm and on RG committees. I have also been involved in the last three AGs.

Debbie Hettler

How to Survive an Eye Exam & How Storytelling Improves Your Life (Sat.)

Dr. Hettler's practice experience includes optometric education, clinical practice in HMO's, the VA, and quality assurance activities. She has over 100 scientific presentations such as clinical techniques, ocular disease, public health issues, contact lenses, and managed care, and has authored articles concerning public health, primary care coordination and ocular disease topics. Dr. Hettler holds a B.S and O.D from Ohio State University College of Optometry and an MPH from University of Illinois. She has also worked in Washington DC with rotations through the IRS and as a Presidential Management Council Cohort member. She is currently an Optometrist for the VA.

Lacee Hudec

Dundee Scottish Pipe Band (Sat.)

Lacee is an avid gardener, baker, bagpiper/tenor drummer, and mom. Sometimes these things align to create some exciting ventures, and sometimes they pull her in opposite directions. In either case, life is never boring.

WeemProgram2023.indd 31 10/23/2023 7:32:36 AM

Deb Johnston

Family History 101 (Fri.)

Deb is an amateur family historian. She started her family history journey at age 8, learning about her ancestors who traveled to the colonies in 1683. She started tracing her family in historical records in 2020.

Mark Kaletka

The Great Dying: The Permian Extinction, etc. (Fri.)

Dr. Mark O. Kaletka earned a PhD degree in Nuclear Physics from Northwestern University and is retired from Fermilab, where he worked in computing and IT. Dr. Kaletka's current interests include geology and photography.

Lynne Killgore

Riding the Goodyear Blimp (Sat.)

Lynne is a worldwide traveler.

Visalakshi Kunapuli

Mmm! Chocolate Tasting and Swap (Fri.)

Mensan. Chocoholic.

Michael Kutza

Starstruck - Magically Transformed Chicago ... (Fri.)

Author Michael Kutza of "Starstruck" is an award-winning film-maker & graphic artist. Founded the annual Chicago International Film Festival when he was 22 years of age. He remained with the organization for 55 years.

Billie Lee

GenY Ms Meet & Greet (Fri.)

Billie is the National Coordinator for the GenYMs SIG. She currently resides in Ann Arbor, Michigan, with her M husband and toddler.

Kenneth Levine

Sir Ernest Shackleton (Sat.) & Travel to Extreme Latitudes: The North and South Poles (Fri.)

Ken first went to Antarctica in 2001 and subsequently developed a passion for the history of polar exploration. He has been to the Antarctic four times, south of the Antarctic Circle twice, and north of the Arctic Circle four times. He has examined polar artifacts and museum exhibits in England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Norway, Chile, Australia and New Zealand. He has an extensive library of books and videos of polar history. Ken loves to share his experiences and knowledge.

Mark Lyons

Growing and Using Mushrooms (Sat.) & The Garden of Doom (Fri.)

Mark Lyons, a.k.a. "The Garden Troubadour," is a master gardener, consultant and educator. He has been gardening since he was 10 years old, and his first success came when he grew a foot long, two-and-a-half-pound cucumber and was featured in the local paper. Today, Mark runs a successful business called Green Thumb at Your Service, dedicated to inspiring and coaching people on growing their own food.

WeemProgram2023.indd 32 10/23/2023 7:32:36 AM

Oriel Maximé

Logic Problem Tournament (Sat.)

Oriel Maximé is just your average STEM-y Mensa member. He's a published logic problem creator and amateur puzzle designer. He's run this WeeM Logic Problem Tournament for more than two decades now!

Mike McInerney

Eclipse 2024 - Experiencing a Total Solar Eclipse (Sat.)

Mike experienced his first total solar eclipse in 1979 while conducting research in Canada for his graduate studies. Since then, he has been promoting the experience.

Jennifer Morris

Scotch Whisky of the Silver Screen (Thur.)

Jenn has toured/tasted at more than 10 distilleries across 3 trips to Scotland (most recently Sept 2022). She's also enjoyed countless hours in whisky-focused bars learning from the Scottish locals. While her tastes center on the Speyside region and meander into the Highlands, she looks forward to visiting Orkney, Shetland, and the Hebrides on future visits.

Jennifer Murtoff

Linguistics: The Basics (Sat.)

Jennifer Murtoff has a master's degree in Hispanic linguistics from Ohio State University. A wanna-be polyglot from age three, she has used her language abilities for medical translation, reading Roman inscriptions, teaching chicken-keeping classes, having a multi-cultural jam session in Ravenna, getting directions from a Swiss postal bus driver, editing a romance novel, chatting with Brazilians on a cruise ship, and ordering pharmaceuticals in Russia, Italy, Montenegro, and Colombia.

Cliff Petrak

Don't Slow Me Down with that Calculator (Fri.)

Now retired after a 40 year high school math teaching career at Brother Rice H.S., Chicagoan Cliff Petrak received his B.S. in math from DePaul Univ. & his Masters from Chicago State Univ. He will teach us numerous shortcut calculation methods as found in his book, "Don't Slow Me Down with that Calculator." Cliff has presented at 152 venues in 17 states and Canada in hopes of bringing mental math into all our lives.

Claudia Pitts

Who Wants to be Neurotypical Anyway? (Sat.)

Claudia Pitts, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the College of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences at National Louis University where she is director of the Master's in Psychology program. She is also a licensed clinical psychologist with a small group practice. She works primarily with families and individuals dealing with transitions, chronic illness, divorce, grief, and loss. She received her master's and doctorate from Northern Illinois University.

WeemProgram2023.indd 33 10/23/2023 7:32:36 AM

Tommy Ryan

Sing-Along/Karaoke & Yoga (Fri.)

Misster Mensa AKA Jedi Master Mensa 2016 has been traveling the world for the last two-ish years, and he's happy to say that it's an amazing place to be. He thinks you're freaking awesome. And he's right. You have a unique and incredible person, and we all can't wait to meet you to find out more. Oh, the places you'll go! Extra credit for Star Wars, LOTR, and comic book references. Tommy Ryan is a registered yoga teacher with the yoga alliance, having completed his 200 hour training through the Drishti Beats yoga school.

Jill Sackett

Amazing Race - WeeM Style (Sun.)

Jill is an Amazing Race fan, avid gamer, and occasional event-planner celebrating her 10-year anniversary of planning these whimsical and cerebral challenges for her fellow Mensans, with devious input from former contestants. She is joined by a terrific team of fellow Amazing Race fans to help execute this annual event.

Angela Salvaggione

Lebanese Piano Music (Sat.)

Angela has been a professional musician for the past thirty-some years. Since the onset of the pandemic, she's been studying the works of many Lebanese composers and working closely with them to learn about the history and music of the country, from the time of Wadia Sabra to present day.

Tom Schnorrenberg

Gen X Ms Meet and Greet (Fri.)

Tom Schnorrenberg lives in Tewksbury, Massachusetts, and is the Assistant LocSec of Boston Mensa, your Misster Mensa Guru, and the Gen-X Ms SIG Coordinator. After the work laptop gets shut down, he enjoys online board gaming, fancies himself a semi-foodie, no doubt acquired during his childhood in Wheaton, Illinois. It is ALWAYS a treat to come back home.

Lisa Slankard

My Search/Fountain of Youth Through Yoga (Thur.)

Lisa Slankard is a long time member of Mensa and a certified senior citizen.

Robert Stalzer

Costume Parade Emcee (Fri.)

Robert is a long-term member of Chicago Area Mensa, a former HalloweeM chair, and a former LocSec. This is his 12th year hosting the children's and adult's costume parades. If he keeps accepting this invitation, they might just keep inviting him back.



WeemProgram2023.indd 34 10/23/2023 7:32:36 AM

Ian Strock

The Eye of Argon (Fri.)

Ian Randal Strock (www.IanRandalStrock.com) has been attending sf conventions since 1989, and frequently encountered "The Eye of Argon" before joining the performing troupe that brought the story new life. His company, Fantastic Books (www.FantasticBooks.biz), published the sequel anthology. When not celebrating bad fantasy fiction, he actually writes award-winning science fiction and non-fiction, and publishes good books by other authors. He's also the Secretary of American Mensa.

Glenn Sutton

7 Wonders Tournament (Thur.) It's a Wonderful World Tournament (Fri.)

Tournament director (TD) for numerous companies and games. I have run the annual WeeM "7 Wonders" Tournament for over a decade.

Robin Turpin

The History/Legacy of the Winter at Valley Forge (Fri.)

Robin Turpin received a Ph.D. in Psychology from Loyola University Chicago and advanced training as a Distinguished Fellow with the U.S. Department of Education. She spent 30 years conducting healthcare evaluation and outcomes research in academic and industry settings, co-authoring more than 100 books and journal articles on health economics and population health management. As a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Robin has lifelong interests in both history and genealogy.

Laurie Turpin-Soderholm

The History/Legacy of the Winter at Valley Forge (Fri.)

A global event professional with an undergraduate degree from Georgetown University and a graduate degree from Northwestern University, Laurie has a passion for history in many forms, from art history to historic preservation. Her interest in American Revolutionary history began with studying her own family's contributions to our nation's founding when she joined the Daughters of the American Revolution. She continues to study various aspects of the Revolution and the founding fathers.

Beth Weiss

HELL's M's Meeting (Fri.), Take Apart! (Sat.)

Beth Weiss likes to think she's a little bit of everything - including a little kid who likes to take things apart.

Kenya Zarns

Pub Trivia, Fri. Night Dance (Fri.)

Kenya is an experienced mobile DJ, with a side career that started promisingly many years ago before spiraling down to DJ'ing Mensa dances. She is eminently and definitively unqualified to host pub trivia, but the National Office let her run CultureQuest, so we said what the hell. Try to humor her; it makes her smile.

WeemProgram2023.indd 35 10/23/2023 7:32:36 AM

HalloweeM 47

is brought to you, with pleasure, by
Chicago Area Mensa's **WeeM TeaM**

WeeM Chair, Hotel Liaison ..... Heather Booton
Program Chair, Excursions Chair.....Cynthia Clampitt
Hospitality Chairs . Susan Woodill, Rhonda Peek
Hospitality Minion..... Lora Mitchell
Beverages & Program Book.....Dave Gudjonis
Beverages Co-Chair.....Ben Peek
Game Warden .....Ed Barta
Volunteer Coordinator.....Nat Arons
Vendor Coordinator..... Rae Goodman
Registrars .....Lynn Collier,Theo Sparks
Treasurer.....Allison Reeves
Tournaments Coordinator .....Deb Johnston
Book Sale..... Teresa Tucker & Robert Little
AV Chairs ..... Damian Christianson,
Peter Dudek, & Dave Schmidt
White Hats Coordinator, Decortions...Karen Gruebele
Photographer ..... John Muellner
Webmaster.....Barb Pohl
Trucking Coordinator..... Clyde Forrester
Awards Chair.....Teresa Tucker
Logo, Pins, ...Casey Carraher
Pretentious Drinking.....Alan Baltis
Excursions Chair.....Cynthia Clampitt
Logistics .....Laceé Hudec
Costume Contest MC .....Robert Stalzer
Room and Ride Matching ..... Kris Petzinger
Epicurean Experience.....Hieu Nguyen
& John Bradford
Kid's Programs..... Megan Bratkovich
Social Deduction Games.....Stephen Rider
CAM LocSec, Publicity Chair.....Beth Weiss

These are the people who will be wearing green badges. Please express any concerns, problems, or offers of thanks to them.

THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS!

Very Special Thanks to:

fellow Mensan **Janice Ferri Esser** for her generous donation to Pretentious Drinking. Here's to you, Janice!