

Conversation is their thing

Mensa offers intelligentsia social outlet

By LYNN ORR

Remember the freckle-faced kid who never studied and aced all the tests in school?

More than likely, she would qualify for Mensa membership by virtue of a high IQ.

Recall, as well, the nervous bookworm who threw up in the lavatory before the test but still managed to pull an A?

She, too, probably scores in the top two per cent of the nation's intelligentsia, the sole qualification for membership in the international organization.

Diversity in personalities, occupations, lifestyles and interests marks the southeast Michigan Mensa chapter. Most of those 500 members would probably agree that high IQ is the sole trait shared by the membership.

Farmington Hills resident Gabe Werba is a public relations executive whose career has hopedoched most aspects of communications.

Nancy Morris' educational career is marked by nine years in the Garden City School District.

Northville resident Phelp Hines drives a school bus and free-lances as an artist. West Bloomfield resident Ken Haller also does free-lance work.

Mike Dear of Madison Heights is a dispatcher for a trucking company. Liz Quezada of Southfield is a commissioner of the Parent-Youth Guidance Commission.

The age span of the group alone is 28-58. The personalities range from barely communicative to ebullient. Salaries cover a wide range, as well.

Why do these admittedly antithetical persons join an organization?

"90 I can talk to someone without being afraid that I sound too smart," says one member. A Southfield automotive engineer, very few of his friends or co-workers know he belongs to Mensa.

"People tend to think you're too smart, and they get defensive," says another member.

But Charlotte Jernyn, local secretary who functions as a chairperson, believes closet Mensans are on the way out.

"Mensa is really a social club for people, with the difference that if I feel like discussing ballet, someone will let me finish the sentence," she explains.

Anti-intellectualism is losing ground, most members say, which is why members feel less trepidation about



GABE WERBA



KEN HALLER

revealing their Mensa links.

But they recoil at a charge of elitism. High IQ cuts across racial, sexual, religious and ethnic lines, they say.

"Mensa is a place for making good friends," Ms. Morris says. "It's the kind of group I can relax with," Monahan explains.

"These people can make the weather interesting," he quips.

Most members like to talk. "Meetings can last until 3 a.m., covering anything and everything," says Werba, who organized the group 13 years ago and is first vice-chairman of the American Mensa Committee.

The beauty of Mensa, most members agree, is an absence of boredom. Obviously, the 500 members represent only a fraction of southeast Michigan residents who could qualify for the group. Boredom in the outside world or strong curiosity may be a key to Mensa membership.

The opportunity to meet a smart member of the opposite sex is another motivation some members cite.

Membership is a "fumbling" experience for many, Werba maintains: "You get challenged here from every angle."

A recent business meeting featured Detroit attorney Herb Schroeder discussing the new criminal sexual mis-

conduct code. Schroeder faced a difficult task in nailing down the topic as members free-wheeled throughout the conversation.

One member quoted John Mills to defend a position, while Carolyn Mannino of Troy and Ted Tuttle of Southfield enjoyed a brief but biting exchange.

"We do that all the time," Ms. Morris explained. "We don't have to be afraid of what we say—we can and do say anything."

Audience comments elicited moans or cheers, depending on the prevailing sympathy of the crowd. Members can find themselves with the majority or minority throughout the evening.

Swim team wins title

Charles Tighe, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Tighe, of 2185 Green Hills, Farmington, helped the Kenyon College swim team win its 25th straight Ohio Athletic Conference swimming and diving championship, recently.

He finished fourth in the 200 yard individual medley. He has been a member of four championship Kenyon teams. A political science major, Tighe is also campus vocalist.

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OBITUARIES

PHILIP HECK

Philip Heck, 61, of 2822 Parkhill, Farmington, died Jan. 16 in Botzford General Hospital after a long illness. Services were Jan. 19 in the Thayer-Rock Funeral Home with the Rev. Charles Fox of St. John Lutheran Church officiating. Burial was in Glen Eden Cemetery.

Mr. Heck was retired from Heck Industries, a tool and die company. Surviving are his wife Ethel; son Philip H. Heck; brother Jacob; sisters Mrs. Katherine Ehling, Mrs. Lena Silt, and Mrs. Theresa Schirmer; and granddaughter Melissa.

ROSALIE M. THEIS

Rosalie Theis, 76, of 3918 Pineland Pk., Gladwin, died Jan. 18 in Midland. Services were Jan. 21 in Thayer-Rock Funeral Home with Pastor V. Frederick Halboth, Jr., officiating. Burial was in North Farmington Cemetery.

A former Farmington resident, Mrs. Theis was retired from Chrysler Corporation. Surviving are her husband George; sister Antoinette Layland of Farmington Hills; and brothers John Cox of Farmington Hills and Howard Cox of Walled Lake.

MATIE E. SPIES

Matie Spies, 87, of 21254 Rensselaer, Farmington Hills, died Feb. 24 after a lengthy illness. Services were Feb. 28 in Thayer-Rock Funeral Home. Offici-

ating was the Rev. J. Kenneth Hoffmaster. Burial was in Oakland Hills Cemetery.

A 63-year resident of the community, Mrs. Spies was a housewife and member of the WVF Auxiliary, Farmington Hills Brotherhood Post 2269 and the Edgewood Rebecca Lodge in Farmington Hills.

Surviving are her son Clinton Spies of Farmington Hills; three grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; and five great-great-grandchildren.

ESTHER G. PYORALA

Esther Pyorala, 71, of 30173 Thirteen Mile, Farmington Hills, died Feb. 26 in Southfield. Services were Feb. 28 in Thayer-Rock Funeral Home. Officiating was the Rev. Carl H. Schultz. Burial was in Oakland Hills Cemetery.

Mrs. Pyorala was a five-year resident of the community and a housewife. Surviving are her husband Emil; daughters Mrs. Gladys McKenzie of Oxnard, Calif., and Mrs. Kathleen Wolfe of Birmingham; sisters Mrs. Marie Nordstrom, Mrs. Jennie Aho, and Mrs. Inez Toyra; brothers Wallace, Arthur, and Alfred Jarvi; grandchild Ann; and great-grandchildren John and Amy.

DR. HENRI L. GRATTON

Dr. Henri Gratton, 91, of 37221 Eisenhower Ct., Farmington Hills, died Feb. 27 in Oakhill Nursing Home. Services were March 2 in Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Farmington with Fr. Kean Cronin officiating. A scripture

service was held at the Thayer-Rock Funeral Home. Burial was in Mt. Olivet Cemetery.

Dr. Gratton lived in the community for 10 years and was a physician. Surviving are daughter Mrs. Helen Anderson of Farmington; 11 grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

JOSEPH HATFIELD

Joseph Hatfield, 88, of 38309 Drake-shire, Farmington, died Feb. 27 after a lengthy illness. Services were March 2 in Thayer-Rock Funeral Home with the Rev. J. Kenneth Hoffmaster officiating. Burial was in Oakwood Cemetery.

Mr. Hatfield was retired as a steelworker with the Wheeling Steel Co. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge and Moose Shrine.

Surviving are sons Joseph P. and John A. of Farmington; five grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

ASA KAHLR

Asa Kahrl, 78, of 32929 Glenview, Farmington, died March 1 after a lengthy illness. Services were March 4 in Thayer-Rock Funeral Home with the Rev. J. Kenneth Hoffmaster officiating. Burial was in Oakland Hills Cemetery.

Mr. Kahrl was an engineer with Ford Motor Co. A 54-year resident of the community, he was born in Livonia.

Surviving are his wife Margaret; children Donna of Farmington and William and Robert; brother George; sister Mrs. Louella Drows; 11 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

ELIZABETH M. WHITE

Elizabeth White, 76, of Farmington, died March 5 in Oakhill Nursing Home. Thayer-Rock Funeral Home handled arrangements for cremation in Evergreen Cemetery in Detroit.

Surviving are husband Clarence; son Austin Kelsch; grandchildren David, Laurel, Gary, Stephen and Tom; and great-grandchild Leslie Ann.

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CITY OF FARMINGTON SALE OF CITY EQUIPMENT

The City of Farmington will accept bids until 11:00 A.M. MARCH 16, 1978 for the following equipment which may be seen at the Farmington Public Services Building, 3270 West Nine Mile Road, Farmington, Michigan:

| ITEM NO. | TYPE OF EQUIPMENT |
|----------|--|
| 1 | 1957 Mits & Merrill Brush Chipper |
| 2 | 1968 Dodge 4 Ton Pickup |
| 3 | 1963 Rotary Grass Mower (Devere) |
| 4 | 1964 Rotary Grass Mower (Devere) |
| 5 | 1961 Electro-Magic Motor Steam Cleaner |
| 6 | Mueller Climastat Unit Heater |
| 7 | 1961 Ford Backhoe Attachment |
| 8 | 500 Gal. Outside Gasoline Storage Tank With 10 Ft. Stand |
| 9 | 3" Novo Water Pump |
| 10 | Fairbanks-Morse Electric Motors (3) |
| 11 | Keene Power Operated Device for Flammable Liquids - 4 Key Position |

Cash or a Certified Check to the City of Farmington in the amount of 5 percent of your total bid must accompany your bid. Mark envelopes BID - CITY EQUIPMENT to the attention of the Farmington City Clerk, 2300 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan 48024. Security Funds will be returned to any unsuccessful bidder.

NEDRA VIANE, City Clerk

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