

As I write this, I am preparing to attend the March meeting of the American Mensa Committee. This meeting will affect a great deal of the next year, as the March meeting is the time that we approve our annual budget. American Mensa's fiscal year runs April to March, the same as our membership year. As a member of the Finance & Audit Committee, I participated in the annual budget meeting held the last weekend of January. The committee reviewed the preliminary budget and made changes that we agreed would be beneficial to the organization. This version has been presented to the AMC for consideration at the March meeting and is available for all members to view online at <http://bit.ly/1pqviBv>.

The other preparations I have been making include kicking off the new year with a great deal of traveling. I am planning to visit Baton Rouge Mensa, Permian Basin Mensa and Central Oklahoma Mensa in the next three months leading up to the Annual Gathering in San Diego. I'm looking forward to meeting more members throughout the region, as well as renewing friendships with those I already know.

If you have not yet renewed your membership, this is the last local newsletter you will be receiving. If time just got away from you, renew now! If you are not planning to renew, I hope that in time you will reconsider. This organization has been such a joy throughout my entire life, and I truly believe that it can be a joy to any member who wants it to be. As a membership organization, American Mensa is nothing without the participation of its members.

I recently had a member tell me that an event I held was the first that had been hosted in their area in their several years of membership. When I asked them why they hadn't put an event on the local group's , they were surprised to learn that any member could host an event. Not only can any member host an event, our organization actually depends on it. Hosting an event is as simple as doing something you already want to do – and adding it to your local group calendar. If you aren't sure where to start, reach out to your LocSec or Membership Officer.

If you are ready to branch out a bit farther, consider attending Gulf Coast Mensa's Regional Gathering (SynRG) over Memorial Day weekend or the Annual Gathering, held June 29-July 3. You can find information about SynRG at <http://gcmensa.org/synrg> and the AG at <http://ag.us.mensa.org>. Both events are going to be a great time, and I hope to see a great many of y'all there.

As always, I ask that if you have any questions, concerns, or general comments, please let me know. I have created a simple online form where members can offer feedback on any topic, both by name or anonymously. You can find this form at <http://tinyurl.com/AML-R6-Feedback>. Of course, if you prefer, you can always contact me via email at rvc6@us.mensa.org, phone at 512-779-3945, or snail mail at 10518 Horseshoe Bend Dr, Houston, TX 77064.

Taz Criss