

Welcome to your new member year! We are very excited about the fact that we are starting off the year with more significantly more renewing members than we have in recent memory. Over the last 18 years, we have averaged about 44,000 members to start the year. This year, our membership count on April 1 was 46,658. That's a retention rate of 17%, which is the best ever in the last 18 years. At the time that I write this (mid-April), we have already had over 1,000 lapsed members rejoin us. If you have not yet renewed your membership, this is the last local newsletter you will be receiving. I hope you will consider renewing and helping us to make this organization fantastic.

Once you've renewed, why not spend a weekend enjoying the company of your fellow Mensans? Gulf Coast Mensa's annual SynRG will be held over Memorial Day weekend. This RG had around 150 people in attendance last year, and it's a fantastic time. This year's space theme has allowed the committee to build a fantastic lineup of speakers. You can get more information and register online at <http://bit.ly/1qP3mrG>.

I do want to take a moment to thank South Texas Mensa as a whole, and Andrea Metcalf and Bob Bevard in particular, for being absolutely wonderful hosts to the American Mensa Committee during the quarterly meeting held in March. The AMC was able to mingle with local members in a Hospitality suite and attended a fantastic speaker meeting that featured two Sea World Animal Ambassadors. Everyone in attendance enjoyed meeting the animals who came along, and the speakers were extremely knowledgeable. They were quite capable of answering all of the questions our curious members through at them. Weekend like this are such a benefit, allowing members and the AMC to mingle and talk about things Mensan and not. If you and your local group are interested in hosting the AMC for one of the quarterly meetings, please get in touch with me.

As for the meeting itself, the mini-minutes and video recording are available for viewing by all members on the national website at <http://bit.ly/1pqviBv>. I encourage all members to take the time to review these items. This is a membership organization, and in order to best serve you, all the members of the AMC need your feedback to help us make decisions for our future.

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](mailto:rvc6@us.mensa.org), phone at 512-779-3945, or snail mail at 10518 Horseshoe Bend Dr, Houston, TX 77064.

Taz Criss