

As I write this column, I am sitting in the Midland, TX airport, waiting to board my storm-delayed flight. (For the record, the weather in Midland is lovely today, but back home in Houston? Not so much.) This is the end of another of my travels throughout Region 6. I was able to hit two groups in one trip this weekend, as I was the speaker at the Permian Basin Mensa monthly meeting on Saturday evening and then drove up to Lubbock, TX to have a lunch meeting with their members on Sunday.

I greatly enjoyed meeting with the members of both groups, and I believe that we had some valuable conversations about the successes and challenges that the groups have had, as well as opportunities for growth in each area. However, one thing stuck out to me from both of these groups. Several members brought up the fact that they were uncertain if the challenges they have faced are one-shot problems or things that other groups have dealt with.

The answer is that most of our local groups have faced similar problems, frequently dealing with recruitment, retention, and lack of volunteers. This occurs regardless of location or size of the group. While the scale of the challenge may be changed by these factors, the core issue is generally not. The fantastic thing about our members is that we not only have a great deal of brainpower, we also have some incredibly creative members who get excited to meet those challenges. Creative solutions are often just one email (or phone call) away.

As we all know, Mensa's position as a primarily social organization is in flux amidst the ever-changing offerings that can be found elsewhere. I truly believe that our members make all the difference in the world. Members are what make my Mensa experience so valuable to me.

As an individual member, you can absolutely make a difference in your local group, whether you are an officer or not. Host an event, get a structured monthly debate going, broadcast a Skype craft hour for members to attend remotely – the possibilities are endless. If you don't know where to start, reach out to your local officers or myself. If you hear about another local group doing something neat that you want to learn more about – reach out to that group's officers. (Pro Tip: you can find details on all of the groups in Region 6 on the national website at <http://bit.ly/1TcndgE>. You can find officer info for each group at <http://bit.ly/1sfQX0b>.) I'm always available to offer suggestions, but I'll be the first to tell you that I don't have all of the answers. I am happy to defer to others, as different perspectives often help us find the best solutions.

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