

I want to start this column by saying thank you to the many people who have come together to show support to our members who were affected by Hurricane Harvey. In the days following the disaster, I had several conversations with both members and staff as to how we as an organization could offer support and resources to the affected members. The initial charge was led by Collin Ticer and Scott Snider in the national office. They created an online check-in system similar to Facebook's Safety Check. Emails went out to all members of Gulf Coast Mensa and South Texas Mensa who have an address on file with the office inviting them to check in with us and let us know that they are safe. As RVC, I am able to generate a report letting me know how many members in either chapter have checked in. Additionally, a badge will appear on the member's profile in the online directory, so friends are able to easily check on each other.

The second phase of our support came following further conversations with LaRae Bakerink, Chair of American Mensa, and Pam Donahoo, our Executive Director. I had received many messages from members around the country who wanted to know how they could help or make donations to members in need. The end result of this conversation was the creation of a new volunteer role, the Disaster Relief Coordinator. Carole Lane has been appointed to this position. She'll help organize our relief effort for those in need by mobilizing and promoting fundraising efforts, coordinating with SIGHT officers to provide temporary shelter, and facilitating the temporary housing of animals. Carole can be reached at disastercoordinator@us.mensa.org. If you are in need of assistance OR you would like to help other members affected by the hurricane, please reach out to her. While we were the guinea pigs for these new support systems, they have already been employed in response to Hurricane Irma as well.

October is once again National Testing Month. All testing sessions in the month will be \$30, which is half-price. This month will also kick off the Member Voucher Program. Several years ago, Mensa Germany began a program where all of their members were given one voucher each year to give to a friend that would allow for free testing. This led to Mensa Germany's membership numbers almost doubling. Following the great success in Germany, Chicago Area Mensa conducted a pilot program in their chapter. Based on the results of Chicago's pilot program, the American Mensa Committee approved for this program to be initiated on a national level. In its inaugural year, a voucher code will be sent to all members who have an email address on file. Depending on the return of this program, the AMC and Finance Committee may be reviewing whether we will be able to implement mailed vouchers as well. Keep an eye on your inboxes for more details on the program and your voucher code.

Looking part Testing Month, don't forget to put North Texas Mensa's annual Feast of Pleasures and Delights on your calendar! The Regional Gathering is always a great party held over Thanksgiving weekend. You can find information and register online at <http://www.northtexasmensa.org/rg-2017>.

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