

This winter has been exceptionally cold, but I'm already looking forward to spring and the many events that are on the horizon. Responses to our national membership survey consistently let us know that the members who are most satisfied with their membership are those who participate in their local groups, and there is no better way to get involved than to start attending local events or even put one of your own on your local group's calendar.

Along with the cold that I'm more than ready to say goodbye to, this is also the season of membership renewals. The membership year closes on March 31. If you have not yet renewed, I hope you will head over to <http://us.mensa.org/renew> after reading this column. (If you prefer to pay over the phone rather than online, call the National Office at 817-607-0060 ext. 199.) This organization thrives because of its diverse membership. Our members are the source of constant inspiration to me. The creativity displayed by our members in their events always gives me new ideas and perspective on what we can offer as an organization.

American Mensa's largest event of the year is the Annual Gathering. The Annual Gathering plays host to over 1,500 members every year. This year's AG will be held at Marriott Place in Indianapolis. While July 4 is still several months away, February 28 is the deadline for registering at the lowest price. Make your plans now and lock in the lowest rate.

Whether you have already registered or plan to do so shortly, don't forget to consider adding the gala dinner and keynote speaker to your registration. This year's keynote speaker is Astronaut David Wolf, MD. A veteran of seven spacewalks and one-time Mir resident, Dr. Wolf has logged more than 4,040 hours in space. Meet the astronaut, medical doctor, and Indy native who has worn many hats and helmets during his Walter Mitty-like career.

If you'd like to spend some time at a Gathering a bit sooner, don't forget to put SynRG on your calendars. Gulf Coast Mensa's Regional Gathering is the largest in Region 6. This year's registration is running well ahead of average, so we expect this Memorial Day weekend to be an even better party than years past. You can get updates on the programming and register online at <http://gcmensa.org/synrg/synrg-2018>.

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.

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