



*Charlotte/Blue Ridge Chapter*

*of*

*American Mensa, Limited*

*Members Handbook*

# WELCOME

Welcome to the Charlotte/Blue Ridge Chapter of American Mensa! This small brochure is intended to welcome you and to give you some information about Group 5-280 (we are part of Region 5 of American Mensa, and 280 is our local group number).

Maybe you joined to enhance your resume, boost your ego, or glean a status symbol, and don't intend to do more than write an occasional Letter to the Editor of our local newsletter, the IdiOM — and renew your membership annually. That's OK. Many Mensans do just that.

But for those of you who crave social interaction with intelligent people, who need the exhilaration of heady conversation, quick repartee, erudite philosophizing, and a new supply of party jokes, C/BR Mensa offers a variety of opportunities for meeting kindred souls. We also offer friendships, an extended family feeling, business contacts, informative lectures, and a forum for testing out your pet theory for saving the world or for making a million bucks. It is rumored that some have found romance in Mensa, and several recent marriages tend to bear that out.

C/BR Mensa offers a constantly changing smorgasbord of activities. If none of the existing or recent offerings meet your needs, feel free to propose a new one yourself! Some current and recently past activities are restaurant meetings (two current ones are referred to as “Lunatic Fringe” and “Lurching toward Oblivion”), games nights, poker nights, pool tournaments, Sunday brunches, hikes, camping trips, lectures, museum tours, movie or theater outings, and on and on.

## **Leading Questions, and short answers.**

### **What is a Mensan?**

Mensa members represent a cross-section of society.

A Mensan can be in any profession, belong to any religion, and support any political party.

But they probably like to talk about it.

For more, see page . . . . . 5

### **Where is Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa?**

Mostly in and around Charlotte, NC. If your Zip code starts with 270, 280, 281, 282, 286, or 297, that's in Charlotte/Blue Ridge.

For more, see page . . . . . 6

### **Is there a local newsletter? How can we get it?**

The local newsletter is called the *IdioM*, and is available both on paper and electronically.

For more, see page . . . . . 7

### **What happens at the regular events?**

Did we mention that Mensans usually like to talk?

For more, see page . . . . . 8

### **Can I bring guests? Or visit other chapters?**

Yes to both.

We do ask you to *bring* your guests, not send them.

For more, see page . . . . . 8 - 9

### **Is there an ONLINE COMMUNITY?**

Yes, and there are links posted on [www.cbrmensa.org](http://www.cbrmensa.org).

For more, see page . . . . . 9

### **What is a SIG, and can I start my own?**

SIG stands for *S*pecial *I*nterest *G*roup. Topics can range from Aviation to Zoology, and yes, we encourage you to start your own.

For more, see page . . . . . 10

### **The chapter never does \_\_\_\_\_, can I start an event for that?**

In general, yes. We encourage the members to host events.

For more, see page . . . . . 11

**What is the ExComm, and how is it chosen?**

The **Executive Committee** handles chapter business. ExComm members are elected annually by the general chapter membership.

For more, see page . . . . .11

**Do I need to learn a lot of special terms or acronyms?**

Well... a few.

It helps to know that “LocSec” means much the same thing as “President”, and that “RG” is short for “Regional Gathering”. Most of the rest you can pick up as you go.

For more, see page . . . . .13

**Does Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa have it's own bylaws?**

As a local chapter of an international group, we need to follow their rules.

But yes, we also need local bylaws.

For more, see page . . . . .17

## **What is a Mensan?**

*Excerpted from Denver Mensa, who borrowed it from East Texas Mensa:*

Mensa Members come in all shapes and sizes, from all socioeconomic strata.

They feel differently about themselves and the world around them. They have carefully schooled themselves to fit or appear to fit in a normal world. They like to talk and listen. They value mental exchange over almost anything else in life. Their idea of an affair is to talk before, during, and after.

Mensans love words: the spoken word, the printed word, the origin of the word. They read everything from heavy scholarly texts to cereal boxes. They seek mental entertainment in making lists, planning projects, working games or writing rebuttals. Mensans re-add their restaurant checks. Mensans are endless students, always taking classes or studying independently.

The fact that “Mensa has no opinions” does not apply to individual Mensans. They have highly developed and carefully substantiated opinions on everything. Mensans have an abiding respect for another Mensan mind across the table. Agree or disagree, they respect the source of the information. Mensans seek knowledge everywhere and pursue it openly. They can concentrate very productively on anything as long as it suits their purpose or meets their immediate need.

Mensans tire of routine tasks. They are at their best in creative problem solving. Many members are skilled in several occupational capacities to a professional standard. When observed, Mensans are virtually indistinguishable from the general population. But watch a Mensan engage in his/her area of supreme expertise, and you will see a brilliance of application and accomplishment to be described only as astonishing. Mensans are engaged in multiple hobbies and crafts. They love art forms and are eager participants and spectators of varied artistic endeavors.

Mensans know all about religion, sex and politics, and will discourse on any aspect of a related topic. Mensans love second languages, second spouses and second houses. A Mensan will sit on the floor at the drop of a hat. Material trappings are not as important as mental exchange. Mensans waste no time getting acquainted as they seek immediate intellectual-emotional communication with other Mensans.

Mensans like to investigate the unseen: almost all are interested in some aspect of parapsychology. Mensans seek to understand mental function. They are leery of organizations and are not, as a rule, joiners. Mensans love taking tests. They are unusually tolerant of bad speakers, bad food, and bad service. Above all, Mensans feel the brotherhood and enjoy an uncommon camaraderie with other Mensans.

I've been looking for these people all my life.

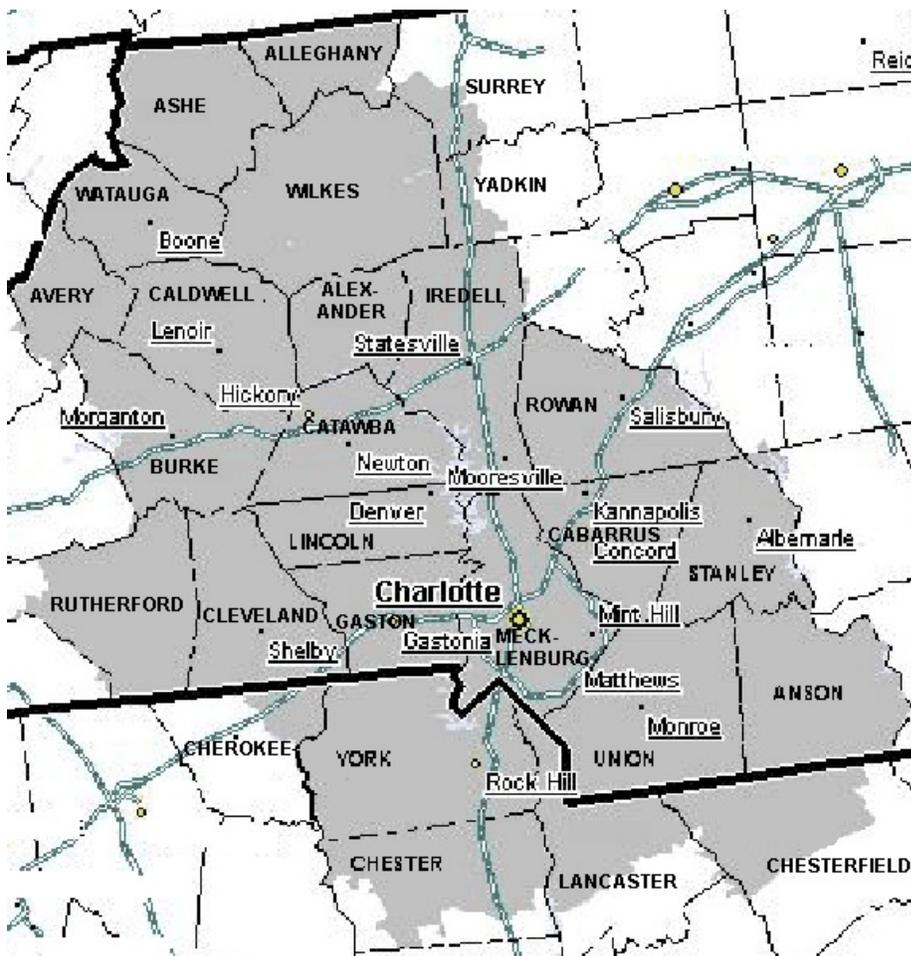
## Who are the Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensans?

C/BR Mensa began about forty years ago, and we still have a few of those “old-timers” among us. Nobody quite knows when, but it appears the Charlotte chapter of Mensa may have merged with a Blue Ridge (mountain) chapter of Mensa, forming the present group. Or maybe it is just a Carolina myth.

There are about 350 on our local rolls, about 50-60 of whom are active, some of whom might be called Mensaholics or “hard core.” While it may seem that one out of three Mensans is in the computer science field, it’s not really so. There are plenty of teachers, psychologists, college professors, instructors, salespersons, manufacturers, housewives, chemists, accountants, secretaries, engineers, students, and unemployed.

## What area is covered by Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa?

C/BR Mensa is made up of roughly the Piedmont area of North Carolina and the northern Piedmont area of South Carolina.



Local groups are determined by Zip Code areas.

There are four groups in North Carolina:

Mensa of Eastern North Carolina (05-275),

Triad Mensa (05-270),

French Broad Mensa (05-287) in the western part of the state,

Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa (05-280) — that’s us!

## **Is there a regular local newsletter?**

Yes, Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa publishes the **IdioM** every month, with each issue going out at the beginning of the cover month. One regular feature is a calendar of local events that were on the schedule in time for the Editors deadline. Another is an opinion and social commentary column by *the Curmudgeon* – a local but unidentified member. (Yes, the Editor and ExComm know who it is... we just aren't telling!) Recently we have also included travel commentary from the Editor, short articles about events of the previous couple of months, and a trivia column written by a Florida Mensan.

Contributions from the general membership are encouraged and welcome. Are you a poet, or an amateur photographer? Like to write puzzles? Did you attend an event that was really fun? Hit the keyboard and email something to [Editor@cbrmensa.org](mailto:Editor@cbrmensa.org), or look inside the front cover of each issue for the Editors postal address.

Contributions are also welcome for the website, and can be emailed to [Webmaster@cbrmensa.org](mailto:Webmaster@cbrmensa.org).

## **How will the monthly newsletter arrive?**

The newsletter is distributed both electronically and on paper.

Sending it electronically allows us to provide more articles for less money, so we do it that way whenever we can. The IdioM is uploaded every month, and an email is sent out giving a link to the copy on the national servers.

But we realize that method just isn't suitable for everyone. If you prefer the newsletter on paper, please let us know.

The easiest way is to update your member profile on the national website to show you want your local publications printed. Go to <https://www.us.mensa.org/> and sign in. Just under the “Welcome” message, click on the “Edit Profile” link.

In the “ePublications Information” section, select the button marked “I prefer to receive my local publications via regular mail.” Hit the “Save Changes” button just below that, and you're finished!

If you prefer the electronic version and are still getting hardcopy, please confirm a couple of things in your member profile. Make sure you have provided an email address, and that the checkbox immediately below it is filled in. If you don't tell them they can release your email address, they won't use it to send you the IdioM.

## **Are there regular monthly activities?**

Yes, and we are also open to having irregular events scheduled. Chapter activities fall into two general categories: business meetings and membership meetings.

Business meetings are just what they sound like – formal (well, at least less casual) meetings to discuss chapter issues and make decisions on how they need to be handled. National requires that we hold a business meeting at least once every quarter, local practice has been to hold an ExComm meeting every month, although we are currently experimenting with doing that a little less frequently. Any and all members are welcome to attend the ExComm meetings - express your opinion, make suggestions, let us know what you want more of and what just isn't keeping your interest. But the ExComm meetings are for members only, we ask you not to bring guests.

Membership meetings are primarily social activities. That can mean anything from visiting the local pub for trivia night, to getting together at someone's home for movies or games, to spending a day hiking in the nature preserve.

## **What happens at the typical regular event?**

Have we mentioned that most Mensans like to talk? :)

Our most regular events are the Lunatic Fringe on the first Friday evening of every month, and Lurching Toward Oblivion on the third Friday evening of every month. (The names are a matter of tradition – no one seems to remember how Fringe got its name.) Both events are casual, with no planned program or set agenda, but simply provide an opportunity for members to share a relaxing meal (or an evening cup of coffee) and discuss whatever topics come up. A larger group frequently means that there are several unrelated conversations going on at the same time, and it is quite common for those present to shift their attention from one conversation to another as subjects change. Topics can range through current politics, old advertising jingles, the housing market, events at regional gatherings, employment issues, genealogy, military history, or anything else you want to talk about.

These two events are always held in casual restaurants, where a group can pull tables together to allow more to join in. Just for variety the specific place changes every so often, but usually not more than a couple of times a year. Current locations are listed in the IdioM, and on the website.

## **May I bring a guest?**

Guests are welcome! Bring your husband, wife, or “significant other,” your kid home from college, best friend, date, prospective Mensan — anyone who might have a special interest in the event being given.

Guests need not apologize for not being the avid test takers that Mensans are; we recognize that creativity, achievement, niceness, and good humor are not restricted to the top two percent of IQ test scores.

Please, accompany your guest! It isn't fair to either your guest or other Mensans to "send" someone to a Mensa event. It takes a new Mensan several meetings to acclimate to the group, even though one always has the reassurance that one has "paid one's dues" and that one belongs in Mensa. Knowing that, after two or three encounters, that sea of new faces will sort itself out lends confidence to a Mensan that a guest lacks.

### **Can I go to events given by *other* local groups?**

Sure you can! A Mensan is a Mensan is a Mensan. Our members are welcome at other local groups' events and their members are welcome at ours. Cross-fertilization of ideas and people (whoops! Be careful there) is good for all groups. You are considered a member of only one group, and you may choose a group other than that of your local zip code if you wish. In addition, you may subscribe to newsletters of any other group and attend events anywhere in the country — or world!!

Mensans traveling to other parts of the world who would like to have an instant social life when they get there may get a copy of the appropriate newsletter for that area. It is possible that our local Editor may be able to dig up an exchange copy for you — ask! If you are planning to go abroad and want assistance with local information or accommodations, contact S.I.G.H.T. (Service of Information Guidance and Hospitality to Travelers.)

Many chapters in the United States post electronic copies of their newsletters on the national website. If you are traveling within the USA and would like similar information, log in there and look for Newsletters under Local Groups.

### **Is there an Online Community?**

We have a Facebook Group, at: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=51153131673>

This group is moderated, the owner needs to approve your request.

We also have an email chat list, and you can join at <http://www.lists.us.mensa.org/mailman/listinfo/cbr-talk>

You will need to respond to a confirmation message, but approval for the chat list is otherwise automatic.

Here's our secure page: <https://secure.us.mensa.org/cbr/>

If you are planning an event at your home and would prefer to have the directions on a secure page, this is where it will go. Send any relevant information and/or files to Webmaster@cbrmensa.org, and they can add the information.

Because directions and detailed contact information can also appear in the *IdioM*, the online archives are now on a secure server provided by national. Log on at <http://www.us.mensa.org/> and look for Newsletters under Local Groups.

## **What is a SIG?**

SIG stands for *Special Interest Group*. Topics can range from Aviation to Zoology, and yes, that includes political and religious topics.

It is frequently said that “Mensa has no opinions”, referring to the organization as a whole – but the *members* most certainly *do*. A SIG allows members with similar interests or opinions to meet and conduct related activities. Mensa is pretty open about allowing SIGs to form, but the SIG is not permitted to claim that it represents Mensa as a whole.

Because of that restriction, some SIGs start out as a Mensa group and then drop the connection to operate on their own.

## **Can I start my own SIG?**

Absolutely! You won't want to duplicate an existing SIG, but if you have a new idea it's actually encouraged.

The National Office has a SIGs coordinator who helps with the formation and registration of a national SIG. They can help you with questions of policy and procedure, and will check for hidden conflicts that might cause unpleasant surprises later.

For examples of the national SIGs, check out the list at <http://www.us.mensa.org/>, under GROUPS. You don't need to sign in to see the descriptions, but to get contact information you will. But a SIG can also be local. For example, a hiking group dedicated to the Mecklenburg County Nature Preserves would have little interest for Mensans living in Ohio. In that case, just send announcements to the Editor and Webmaster asking interested members to contact you.

## **How can I organize my own event?**

In most cases, organizing your own event is very simple. Once you figure out what you want to do, just send the details to the Calendar Coordinator. Check for their name in the *IdioM*.

Don't forget the basics: time, place, who to contact, how to reach them. If you decide to host the event in your home, consider including such details as what snacks will be available, what guests should bring, are there dogs or cats around, and your smoking policies. Let those with allergies know what to expect, it will help them decide if your event is suitable.

But *what to do* for an event? Start with something you already enjoy, and would do on your own if no one else were expected. Barring serious conflicts, it's only basic courtesy for you to be there yourself once you make the announcement. So plan something that *you* won't want to push aside.

High risk events such as skydiving or rock climbing are a bit more complicated because of insurance. If you are considering anything that might fall in that category, contact an ExComm member for more information.

## **What is the “ExComm”?**

“ExComm” is a contraction of “Executive Committee”. In its most basic form, this is the group that makes sure the routine operations of chapter business are being handled appropriately.

General duties of the ExComm include appointing major officers such as the Treasurer and Editor, overseeing the planning of large events such as an annual party, and recruiting members for important but temporary duties such as the Election Committee.

## **How are officers selected?**

Part of the ExComm is elected, others are appointed. The Bylaws have the details, but here's a summary.

In March of each year, the current ExComm announces a Nominating Committee. Any interested member can also nominate themselves. Seconds are required, and past practice has been that the members of the Nominating Committee are permitted (not required) to provide those seconds.

In April, they announce an Election Committee, which can be the same as the Nominating Committee.

In May, all eligible candidates are announced in the newsletter. If there are only four, they are declared elected. If there are more, we publish ballots, the general membership elects four, and the results are published in June.

The four elected take office on July 1, and select among themselves the new LocSec, the Deputy LocSec, and the Treasurer. Then they appoint a Program Chair, Recruitment and Testing Chair, and Publications Officer (who is usually the Editor).

## **Mensa Speak**

For some reason, Mensans thrive on abbreviations and acronyms. Here are a few definitions that should immediately increase your comprehension of all things Mensa:

**ABM:** Annual Business Meeting. Annual meeting, typically held during the Annual Gathering, where officers report on the state of Mensa and members can ask questions.

**AG:** Annual Gathering the official name of American Mensa's national convention.

**AMC:** The American Mensa Committee, American Mensa's board of directors.

**AML:** American Mensa, Ltd.

**Area Coordinator:** A volunteer who welcomes new members, receives calls and questions from members, and schedules events in a limited geographic area within the Local Group.

**ASIE:** Actions Still in Effect. Decisions rendered by the AMC or local ExComm that will affect future administrations and member issues. They are removed when they no longer relate to current policy or the policy as defined has passed.

**CAP:** Community Activities Program.

**CareerLink:** American Mensa's CareerLink is a Web site providing career resources to members.

**Carnelli:** A word game invented by Mensan Jan Carnell. As with Charades, the quicker-witted you are, the more fun Carnelli is. It's best in groups of four or more. The next time you're with a group of Ms that includes an "old hand" or two, get the old hand to explain the game and start up a round.

**CO:** Communications Officer on the AMC.

**Community:** The umbrella term for American Mensa's members-only online forums. Along with hundreds of active threads in the forums, the Community includes chat rooms; The 2% Journals, a collection of Mensan writing and artwork from around the country; and a File Vault that includes the Officers' Sharehouse and a central location for national committee files.

**Coordinator:** A loose term for a volunteer who does anything from acting as a telephone contact to organizing and hosting functions.

**EG:** Eternal Gathering. A phrase used to refer to Mensans who have passed away.

**Election Committee:** Provides general oversight for a Mensa election. Also see NomComm.

**ExComm:** Executive Committee. The governing body of a Local Group.

**DO:** Development Officer on the AMC.

**DSE:** Director of Science and Education on the AMC.

**Feghoot:** Named for fictional character Ferdinand Feghoot, this shaggy- dog type of joke has a pun as the punch line. For example, “Pardon me, Roy, is that the cat who chewed your new shoes?”

**Fishbowl:** A party or gathering activity in which anonymous questions are written and put into a fishbowl (or equivalent container). A moderator draws the questions one by one and solicits responses. In the most popular variation, the men write questions for the women, and vice versa.

**FSM:** For groups that publish and mail a newsletter, this is often the name of the distribution/preparation event jokingly known as “Fold, Staple, Mutilate” and more accurately as “Fold, Seal, Mail.”

**GC/GCC:** Gifted Children/Gifted Children Coordinator.

**GOTYA:** Group Of The Year Award. Begun in 1999 to recognize and reward Local Groups’ membership-related activities and their active participation in all that Mensa has to offer, this is a competitive program in which all Local Groups participate.

**Hospitality:** The hub of any Mensa gathering, the Hospitality room offers snacks, beverages, meals and the opportunity to sit down and chat with other attendees.

**IBD:** International Board of Directors.

**IdioM:** The monthly newsletter of Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa. Your first copy will normally be a printed version through the USPS, but we encourage you to sign up for the electronic version.

**IJ:** The publication International Journal.

**InsideAML:** This Web site centralizes all of American Mensa's resources for local, regional and national officers.

**Isolated M:** A newsletter for Mensans who may not be able to participate in Local Group activities due to location or preference.

**Joke-Off:** A popular event at AGs and RGs. Ms compete to tell the funniest clean and “not so clean” jokes. The contest may last for several hours.

**LDW:** Leadership Development Workshop (or Weekend). This gathering provides courses to improve the skills and knowledge of Local Group officers and any other Mensans.

**Local Group:** A geographically defined local chapter of American Mensa.

**LocSec:** (pronounced “loak-seck”) Local Secretary, president of a Local Group. Reflecting Mensa's British origins, the title is a holdover from the time when this officer was simply a secretary reporting to national Mensa. Although many Local Groups call their chief executives something else, to the national organization they're all LocSecs.

**LttE:** Letters to the Editor, usually referring to the Mensa Bulletin.

**M:** A Mensan of either sex. Plural is Ms (pronounced “emz,” not “miz”).

**MERF:** The Mensa Education & Research Foundation is a philanthropic, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization committed to the pursuit of excellence in the areas of intelligence. The mission and strategic focus are directed at scholarships, education and awards. Also referred to simply as the “Mensa Foundation”.

**MIL:** Mensa International Ltd. American Mensa Limited is a member of MIL.

**Mind Games®:** American Mensa's national games competition where Mensans select the top five new board and card games based on originality, game play, play value, aesthetics and clarity of instructions.

**Mommy Letter:** Referencing “stuff you wish your mommy had told you,” this document is sent to the registrants for many Mensa events. Mommy letters include pertinent facts about getting to the hotel, the hotel itself, meals, entertainment, special events, the weather, what to pack, security, pets... whatever the event planners feel it would be most beneficial for you to know in advance of your arrival.

**NO (National Office):** The administrative headquarters of American Mensa maintains membership records and qualifications; keeps track of local officer information; provides monthly funding, membership labels and reports to Local Groups; and supports the AMC and the mission of the organization. Contact the office at 817/607-0060.

**NomComm:** Nominating Committee. Pretty much every Mensa group, from local up to international, has a NomComm in place to help identify and officially nominate candidates for office. Some chapters, including Charlotte/Blue Ridge, combine the functions of the NomComm and Election Committee into a single group.

**Owl:** OK, you know what an owl is. Because the owl was sacred to Athena, Greek goddess of wisdom, it has become the unofficial mascot of Mensa. Over the years other unofficial mascots have included pelicans, unicorns, Opus the penguin, and doubtless other things but the owl is pretty solidly entrenched.

**Project Inkslinger®:** This community-service program supplies information on other, non-Mensa programs that need book donations and is expanding to include more general, book-related philanthropic projects.

**PRP:** Publications Recognition Program. This program recognizes excellence in American Mensa's newsletters and Web sites, with the overall goals of wider distribution and better communication among Mensans. The program allows Local Groups with any level of editorial experience, regardless of size or publication budget, to compete fairly and win awards.

**RG:** Regional Gathering — what Local Groups call their annual, regional conventions, usually held over weekends throughout the year.

**RVC:** Regional Vice-Chairman — a member of the AMC elected by the members in a region.

**SIGs:** Special Interest Groups, which can be local or national. There are groups of members who get together to enjoy and celebrate a specific interest or hobby - everything from chocolate to skiing.

**SIGHT:** Service of Information Guidance and Hospitality to Travelers. This network of volunteer hosts offers accommodations to Ms who want to visit their cities.

**Young Mensans:** Mensans under the age of 18. American Mensa has members as young as 3.

# **BYLAWS OF CHARLOTTE/BLUE RIDGE MENSA**

*EFFECTIVE September 12, 2012*

## **ARTICLE I. NAME AND PURPOSE**

1. The name of this organization shall be Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa.
2. Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa is a Local Group of American Mensa, Ltd., and is subject to the Constitution of Mensa, the Bylaws of American Mensa, Ltd., and the resolutions adopted by the American Mensa Committee. American Mensa, Ltd. is herein abbreviated as "AML" and the American Mensa Committee as "AMC".

## **ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP**

1. Membership of Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa shall be open to all members of AML in good standing in the geographic areas assigned to Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa by the AMC, or as otherwise assigned by AML.
2. Mensa members in good standing, including those who are not also members of Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa, are welcome to participate in the social activities of the local group at the discretion of the host or hostess. The National Ombudsman, his surrogate, and members of the AMC shall be permitted to participate in the business affairs of the local group in the discharge of their official duties.
3. Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa shall observe the preferences of members for data suppression and publication, as filed with AML, when publishing a local group roster or membership directory/register.

## **ARTICLE III. OFFICERS & DUTIES**

1. The governing body of Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa shall be an Executive Committee (ExComm), which conducts the business of the local group. The ExComm consists of the following voting members: four elected officer positions (Local Secretary, Deputy Local Secretary, Treasurer, and Member At Large), plus three appointed officer positions ( Program Chair, Recruitment and Testing Chair, and Publications Officer), plus the Outgoing Local Secretary if not already serving on the Executive Committee. The Outgoing Local Secretary shall be considered an elected member with full voting rights.
2. Four officers will be elected annually as described in Article V, and at the first meeting after taking office those four will elect from among themselves a Local Secretary, Deputy Local Secretary, and Treasurer. Members will then be appointed to serve as Program Chair, Recruitment and Testing Chair, and Publications Officer. The elected members are permitted but not required to take one of those offices.

Voting is per member rather than per office, a member holding more than one office still casts only one vote.

3. All local group officers, whether elected or appointed, must be current members in good standing of AML; an officer is defined as any person who is given a title with specific responsibilities. All voting members of the ExComm must also be current members in good standing of Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa. The conflict of interest rules stated in the Bylaws of American Mensa for the AMC shall also be applicable to the local group and the ExComm.
4. The Local Secretary (LocSec) shall be the chief executive officer of Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa and the liaison with other local groups. He or she shall preside at ExComm meetings and shall be the chief point of contact between AML and the local group. The LocSec shall endeavor to pass information to and from the local group in a timely fashion, and shall notify AML and the Regional Vice Chairman (RVC) for the local group of the results of any changes in the officers of the group during the term within two weeks of the change.
5. The Deputy Local Secretary (Deputy LocSec) shall assist the LocSec, be responsible for the taking of minutes at ExComm meetings, preside over meetings in the absence of the LocSec, and immediately and automatically succeed to the office of LocSec if that office becomes vacant.
6. The Treasurer shall be responsible for financial matters of Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa, including the finances of the newsletter, and shall submit to the ExComm a semi-annual financial report that shall also be published in the newsletter. The financial report shall contain schedules of income, expenses, and balances for all funds under the control of the local group, including Regional Gathering, scholarship, and other special funds. The Treasurer shall ensure that the local group complies with all federal financial reporting requirements. The Treasurer shall also maintain a listing of all equipment owned by the local group. The Treasurer shall, if necessary, assist the Editor in the preparation and submission of any postal forms that might be required. At least quarterly, the Treasurer shall submit to the LocSec or his or her designee, statements from banks and any other institutions where the group's money is deposited, or shall cause a statement to be sent directly to the LocSec or his or her designee (who must also be a voting member of the ExComm). All accounts must be separate accounts in the name of the local group, and shall have more than one signatory so that funds can be accessed in the temporary absence of the Treasurer.
7. The Member at Large shall perform such duties as are assigned by the ExComm.
8. The Program Chair shall be responsible for arranging for local group activities, and shall coordinate with and advise the officers and the Editor of these activities.

9. The Recruitment and Testing Chair shall be responsible for publicity, public relations, testing, and recruitment programs.
10. The ExComm shall publish a printed newsletter at least quarterly. If an electronic version of the newsletter is created, the local group shall observe the preferences of members regarding how their newsletters are to be delivered (electronically or printed), as filed with AML. The ExComm may, at its discretion, send printed copies of the newsletter in addition to the electronic version to members who would otherwise get only the electronic version. The Publications Officer shall be responsible for the newsletter, and shall, with the consent of the ExComm, appoint the Editor. The Publications Officer may also serve as the Editor.
11. The Editor shall edit the newsletter. The Editor shall, at a minimum, publish notices of meetings and programs, required ballots, results of ExComm meetings and elections, amendments to the bylaws and related discussions and ballots, the semi-annual financial reports, and shall prepare and publish Post Office forms if required. The outgoing Editor must turn over all files, materials, and equipment in good order to the incoming Editor no later than 15 days after the outgoing Editor leaves office.
12. The ExComm shall appoint one or more arbitrator(s) to pursue resolution of disputes in other groups, as well as one or more ombudsman or ombudsmen to pursue local resolution of disputes and perform such other duties as may be required of all local group ombudsmen by American Mensa. The same person may serve as both local ombudsman and arbitrator to outside groups. The National Ombudsman or the local ombudsman may submit material to the editor of the local group's official publication marked "for publication" that relates to his or her official duties, and that anything so marked shall be given the highest practicable priority for publication.
13. Appointed positions of the local group may include, but are not limited to, Area Coordinators for outlying groups of members and coordinators for other activities as deemed necessary.
14. The terms of office of elected officers shall be one year from July 1st to June 30th, or until installation of a properly qualified successor, except in the case of resignation, succession to higher office as provided in Article III, section 5, or removal from office as provided in Article III, sections 16 or 17.
15. The term of office for all appointed officers and positions expires at the end of the term of office of the current elected officers. Appointed officers, positions, and committees, including the position of committee chair, are appointed by the LocSec (or, in the case of the Editor, the Publications Officer) with the approval of the ExComm, and may be removed from office by majority vote of the ExComm unless otherwise stated herein.

16. Elected members of the ExComm may be removed from office for cause by unanimous vote of all other members of the ExComm or by recall election. A recall election may be called by a petition citing the reason for such action, signed by at least 10% of the membership of the local group as listed on the most recent membership roster provided by AML, and presented at a regular or special meeting of the ExComm. The balloting provisions of a regular election shall apply, except that a recall election must be held within 60 days of presentation of the petition, and the dates set forth in Article V shall be adjusted appropriately.
17. Any voting member of the ExComm may be removed from office for three consecutive unexcused absences at ExComm meetings, by a majority vote of the remaining members. A majority of the remaining members may excuse an absence.
18. The ExComm shall select a replacement for any ExComm member, other than the LocSec, who resigns, or is removed, or is recalled, or moves up to the position of LocSec in accordance with Article III, section 5, or creates a vacancy in any other way. A replacement for an elected officer is considered to be an elected officer whose term of office ends with the next regular election.
19. All elected and appointed officers shall turn over all files, equipment, and materials pertaining to their offices to either their successor(s), to the current LocSec, or to another member of the ExComm no later than four weeks after leaving office unless otherwise stated herein.
20. An annual financial review shall be conducted each year at approximately twelve-month intervals. The ExComm shall appoint someone to conduct the review who was not involved in the issuing or collecting of money during the period being reviewed. The review shall include viewing statements from banks and any other institutions where the group's money was held during the period being reviewed.

#### **ARTICLE IV. MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES**

1. Regular meetings or activities may be held at such times as may be appropriate; however, a regularly scheduled meeting of the ExComm and a membership activity must be held at least once a quarter. Notice of meetings and activities shall be published in the newsletter or otherwise sent to each member and the RVC. A simple majority of all voting members of the ExComm constitutes a quorum to transact business.
2. Special ExComm meetings may be called at any time by the LocSec or by a majority of the ExComm, and shall be called upon receipt by any member of the ExComm of a petition made in writing signed by at least 10% of the membership of the local group as listed on the most recent membership roster provided by AML. The date, time, place, and purpose of the special meeting shall be announced in the newsletter (or by direct mail to

each member and the RVC) if practicable, and shall be reported in the newsletter afterward. No business other than that indicated in the notice calling the meeting may be acted on.

3. Any one or more members of the ExComm may participate in a meeting of the ExComm by means of telephone, on-line conference, or similar communications equipment allowing all persons participating in the meeting to communicate with each other at the same time; participation by such means constitutes presence in person at the meeting.
4. All meetings of the ExComm shall be held within the geographical limits of the local group as assigned by the AMC.

## **ARTICLE V. ELECTIONS**

1. No later than the submissions deadline for the March issue of the newsletter each year, the ExComm shall appoint a Nominating Committee consisting of three members which shall, no later than the deadline for the May issue of the newsletter, nominate one or more candidates for each elected seat on the ExComm. The members of the Nominating Committee shall be listed in the March issue of the newsletter. The membership of the local group shall be notified of all valid nominations in the May issue of the newsletter or by mail posted no later than May 1<sup>st</sup>.
2. No later than the submissions deadline for the April issue of the newsletter, the ExComm shall appoint an Election Committee of three members who shall be responsible for conducting the election, receiving and counting the ballots, and certifying the results. The term of the Election Committee expires on July 31<sup>st</sup>. The Election Committee shall determine, and cause to be published in the newsletter, any needed ballot and those election rules and regulations not covered by these bylaws. In so doing, the Election Committee shall strive to maintain the anonymity of voters. If a voter does not follow the rules for submitting ballots in such a way as to compromise confidentiality, but the ballot is otherwise acceptable, the ballot shall be accepted and the voter should be deemed to have waived confidentiality.
3. No member of the Nominating Committee or Election Committee may be a voting member of the ExComm or a candidate in the upcoming election. The Nominating and Election Committees may comprise the same members.
4. No later than March 31, any member of Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa may submit a nomination to the Nominating Committee. Members may nominate themselves, and all nominations submitted by members must be seconded by at least one other member. Both the nominee and seconding member must be current members in good standing of Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa.
5. In the event there is a candidate for each elected ExComm position and only one candidate is identified for each elected ExComm position, those candidates shall be declared elected without balloting. Results of such an election shall be published in the

May issue of the newsletter.

6. Ballots shall contain the names of all nominated candidates, whether nominated by the Nominating Committee or by the membership. Ballots shall be printed in the May issue of the newsletter, including in the electronic version of the newsletter if such is available, or mailed by post or electronically to all members of the local group, but in any case posted no later than May 1st. Ballots must be returned to the Election Committee chair and received no later than May 31st to be valid. Ballots received after that date shall not be counted. Ballots may be returned by mail, electronically if such option is available, or in person, but all members must be allowed to participate by postal mail at all stages of the election process if they so choose. The Election Committee shall meet in public no later than June 7th to count the ballots. Those four members ranking highest in the count shall be considered elected. Votes that are tied shall be determined by the Election Committee chair by a flip of a coin. The Election Committee chair shall certify the results of the election to the LocSec and shall have the election results published in the next possible issue of the newsletter.
7. Any challenges to the election must be made in writing to the Election Committee chair and received by July 15th. Any such challenges must be ruled on by July 31st. Any actions by the ExComm while a challenge is pending are not affected by the outcome of any such challenge.
8. The outgoing LocSec shall notify AML and the RVC for the local group of the results of the election within two weeks of the election.

#### **ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to these bylaws may be proposed by the ExComm or by a written petition signed by twenty (20) members of the local group and received by any member of the ExComm. Such proposals shall be submitted first to the AMC for its approval to ballot. After approval to ballot has been received, the proposed amendment(s) shall be published in the next issue of the newsletter. A mail ballot shall appear in the issue of the newsletter that follows publication of the proposal and shall be sent to every member of the local group. The balloting deadline shall be no less than 90 days following the first publication of the proposed amendment(s) in the newsletter. To become effective, an amendment to these bylaws shall require an affirmative vote of a majority of those casting valid ballots, as well as final approval of the AMC and filing of revised bylaws with the Bylaws Committee. The Bylaws Committee will tell the local group the effective date of the bylaws as amended.

#### **ARTICLE VII. MENSA LOGO & NAME**

American Mensa, Ltd. (AML) has granted a royalty free, non-exclusive license to Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa for the use of the mark "Mensa" and a logo, consisting of a

globe over a stylized "M" within a border, in connection with the non-commercial uses of Charlotte/Blue Ridge Mensa. AML retains full ownership of the mark and logo and all statutory and common law rights in the mark and logo.

#### **ARTICLE VIII. AUTHORITIES**

1. The Minimum Standard Bylaws for Local Groups of AML are implicitly included in these bylaws. The minimum requirements are enforceable even if they are not explicitly contained in these bylaws. If there is a conflict between these bylaws and the Minimum Standards, the Minimum Standards take precedence.
2. The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, latest edition, shall govern the local group in all cases to which they are applicable and not inconsistent with these bylaws.