

Mblem

IT'S ALWAYS SOMETHING

by David Skaar

Once again, I had tried to be ahead of the game, and actually have an article written in advance of the Mblem submission deadline. I had an idea, I had an outline, and I was all set. My family recently went to Myrtle Beach for an artsy-crafty convention my wife attends. This gives me the opportunity to hang out at the pool, or on the beach if it's not raining, and sit around and read books and drink beer while the kids take their afternoon naps. While there, I was inspired to write an article about all the factors that come together to create the beach experience. Geography and slope of the continental shelf, geology – for composition of sand and salinity, climate, rotation of the earth – for wave action, tidal forces of the sun and moon, divergent evolution of mollusks – for the pretty shells, response of human skin to UV radiation, and the boom and bust cycle of cheap t-shirt stores. It was to be a brilliant examination of how complexity engenders laziness, and the great merits of laziness in all aspects of life.

You will not be reading that piece at this time. Before I could write it, I changed the brake shoes on my wife's car (she trusts me, and she's insured), providing me with a story to tell, and new observations on the technology we depend on. My desire to change said brake shoes came primarily from my cheap nature, my vanity that I can do it at least as well as the average person working at Midas, and the foolish belief that it wouldn't be too difficult. I have replaced brake shoes before, and with the right tools and manual (which I have) it really isn't that difficult a job, manual, but one thing leads to another, as a wiser person than I once said.

As it turned out, this car has front disk, but rear drum brakes. I do not understand why cars have drum brakes. I do not understand why drum brakes preceded disk brakes. In fact, I do not understand HOW drum brakes could have preceded disk brakes, I shall explain. According to 5 minutes worth of research, I have learned the following things about drum vs. disk brakes. Disk brakes are much more effective in providing stopping power, and therefore, in performance cars, all four wheels have disk brakes. You frequently hear this stated as a virtue in cars. In cars where the balance between economy of construction and ability to not kill anyone is skewed towards the economical, only the

front wheels are disk brakes, as it is the front wheels which provide most of the stopping power for the car.

Now, I fail to understand how drum brakes are less expensive than disk brakes, which ties into why I fail to understand how the drum brake was invented first. Disk brakes are simple, and drum brakes are ridiculously complex. A disk brake has a flat revolving plate (the disk) that the wheel attaches directly to. The disk has a flat brake shoe on each side, and when you step on the brake pedal, a piston presses these shoes onto the disk, stopping it. Quite simple and effective. A drum brake has a hollow rotating cylinder, of greater diameter than height, not unlike a bass or snare drum (hence the name). Inside this drum which rotates, if you are lucky enough to see one open (dare to dream), you will see something that looks like an entry into the annual Rube Goldberg competition for college engineering students. The brake shoes are curved, and each is a bit less than a half circle. The shoes pivot from the bottom of the drum, and when the pedal is pressed, a piston and rubber gasket contraption at the top of the drum (the wheel cylinder) presses the shoes out and into the rotating drum. In opposition to the wheel cylinder are three springs to pull the shoes back together, but also a brace to maintain the proper distance from the drum when the brakes are not braking. There are pins and springs holding them flat to the back of the drum, and still one more spring, cable, and lever contraption that is the linkage to the parking brake handle. By observation, the function of each part of the drum brake can be deduced. As it turns out, most of the parts appear to each compensate for a problem created by a previous part, which is compensating for a previous problem. Without much fear of contradiction, I believe that I can hold drum brakes up as one of the finest ever examples of "a Mickey Mouse system".

Actually, this opposition of simplicity and complexity may explain why the drum came first and costs less. I suppose a disk brake could be considered high engineering – an economy of moving parts in a precision device made to exacting standards. On the other end of the spectrum, a drum brake (the aforementioned Rube Goldberg device) looks like an engineer was handed a box of the cheapest components someone could find and challenged to make a brake that would work enough of the time.

(Conti. to P. 2, always)

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Membership Directory Meditor Column

We print a directory once in a while. The National office send us a copy of the member information with PDQ information already truncated to the specification of individual privacy requirements. A member suggested that I put this notice on Mblem so you have time to contact the national office and update your privacy requirement.

(Conti. from P. 1, Always)

The parts may be cheap, and the end product may work, but the assembly must be an incredible pain. If I had that job at the factory, I can't imagine enjoying it, but I must depend on the person lucky enough to have that job being careful, competent, and not hung over early in the morning or watching the clock late in the afternoon.

Anyway, it is what it is, and I'd decided that I was going to deal with it. Between the pictures in the manual, and the correctly assembled brake on the opposite side of the car to guide me (important tip, NEVER disassemble both brakes at the same time), I was confident. I had the first brake disassembled without too much difficulty, and only a few skinned knuckles. I only made one error. In removing a shoe, I knocked a corner of the shoe into the rubber gasket of the wheel cylinder, and the aging rubber gave way and starting dripping brake fluid. Leaks are, of course, the kiss of death to a brake system. We've all read a book/seen a movie/seen a TV show in which brake lines are cut or punctured, so that they will lose pressure and fail on the mountain road. This is what I had just done to my wife's car.

Naturally, my first thought was, "This isn't so bad, I can just patch it up, and it'll work just fine." Then the realistic part of me had a good laugh at my expense. As it turns out, the manual described the relatively simple procedure for replacement of the wheel cylinder, and among all the Napa auto parts stores in Raleigh, there were exactly two wheel cylinders to be had for this car (yay, Napa). Why couldn't I have just replaced the broken one? Well, I am familiar enough with the fickle finger of fate to know that if I did that, the remaining one, which wasn't looking too healthy itself, would probably explode shortly after reassembly, far from home, when my wife was rushing a sick child to the emergency room, and the resulting phone call would undoubtedly disturb my nap.

Having procured and installed the needed cylinders (made in Italy, by the way), I could put the shoes back on. Except for having to stretch very strong

springs to clip into very small target holes in very awkward places, this was easy. Then I found the parts I'd left out, and had to take it all apart and try again. It was in this process that I came across another great example of the importance of little things (a common theme in my MBLEM writings). When I tried to put one brake drum back on, it would not fit. When I made it fit with a mallet, it would not turn. It seems the shoes were not positioned correctly, and were rubbing against the drum, despite my having done everything correctly according to the guide pictures. Having determined that the bigger hammer method of problem solving was not appropriate here, I tried to identify anything that was different between the original assembly and the current assembly. It so happens that when I got the new wheel cylinders, I also got a complete set of replacement springs (Why not? Springs wear out too). In this set were also new pins for holding the shoes flat against the back of the drum. When I compared the new to old pins, the new ones were almost 1/8" longer than the old, and were angling the brake shoes slightly. When I put the old pins back, everything fit perfectly. I take back what I said about drum brakes not being precisely made. They're still Mickey Mouse, but precision Mickey Mouse.

This problem solved, it was now necessary to bleed the brakes, as the sealed brake line had been opened, potentially allowing air in. Air in the brake lines is just about as bad as leaks in the brake lines. Brake fluid is a fluid because liquids do not compress (at least to any significant amount under the pressures in the brake lines). Gases, on the other hand, gladly compress, particularly if it will cause trouble. Therefore, air in the brake lines will compress when the pedal is pressed, stealing away much of the pressure you're desperately depending on to stop your car when the deer decides that it CAN make it across the interstate before you hit it.

Bleeding the brakes is a two-person job, with one person pressing the brake pedal, and the other person lying on the floor, contorting themselves to put their face up close and personal to the backside of the brake, that he might operate

a bleed valve to let the air out when the brake is pressed. Therefore, I needed my wife's help to get the job done. Guess which part she did. Did I mention that the wheels were still off, and the back of the car was supported by jacks that I suddenly had the greatest respect for? There's a very funny story (funny in retrospect) about my wife's participation in this process, but I can't tell it publicly until the statute of limitations runs out (give me a drink and ask me in private, and I might tell it).

Unfortunately, there was a new problem at this point. I had to detach and reattach brake hoses to those rear wheel cylinders, and now the connection between the hose and the cylinder was leaking on one wheel (kiss of death, part 2). As it turns out, this connection is another example of a low-tech, Mickey-Mouse type system, that works quite well (eventually). This fitting depends on two copper washers, which compress and deform to match the contours and irregularities of the junction between hose and cylinder. These washers can only really be clamped down once, and create a leak risk when re-used. While the wheel cylinders were remarkably easy to find, the little-bitty copper washers were a pain (but Napa came through for me again), and brake hoses could not be had at all (anyone could have ordered them and had them in 24 hours, but by this point, that wasn't going to work for me). As it turned out, the washers alone did the trick. I still had my doubts though, and the brake pedal did feel a bit funny, so I caved in and took the car to the pros for their opinion. After calling me very brave for taking on drum brakes, my work was pronounced fit (approval from professionals who could have pronounced the work unfit and profited thereby is high praise indeed), "and by the way, one of the engine mounts is failing, surely you've noticed that vibration, but don't worry, it will still be some time before it completely breaks and the engine falls out. Have a nice day."

And now, the quiz.

(See quiz on P. 3 Quiz, Always)

MENC Election Results

by Ed Williams, Election Proctor

Below is the final count for the election of members of the MENC ExComm. The final date for mailing ballots was April 8. We had eight candidates for the seven seats on the ExComm. I am sorry to say that only 38 ballots were received - about 10% (?) of our membership. The tabulation was:

Nina Ward 36	Ann Lewis 30
Evie Hornak 29	Kim Oliver 29
Suzie Bolotin 28	Dan Singer 28
Tom Zavist 28	Brian Stumpfig 23

There were three write-in votes, one each for Mike Potter, Gwen Potter and Kenneth Walsh.

It appears that our new ExComm will consist of Ward, Lewis, Hornak, Oliver, Bolotin, Singer and Zavist. Thanks to all the candidates. We need more people like you who are willing to serve our organization. The MENC By-laws specify that, at their first meeting following the election, the elected members of the ExComm shall elect from among themselves the Local Secretary, the Deputy Local Secretary and the Treasurer. We expect to be able to make this announcement next month.

(Conti. from P. 2 Quiz, Always)

1 – “It’s always something. If it’s not one thing, it’s another.” Was said by which character from Saturday Night Live (name the actress too)

2 – For what kind of mess are bobeches the preventative fix?

3 – Which literary character had to continually resort to unconventional modes of travel (elephant and sail powered ice sled to name two) because something always prevented his trains from reaching their destinations?

4 – What would Robert Zemeckis have us believe was the best source of 1.21 gigawatts in 1955?

5 – In 1947, who needed a sawn off broom handle for enough leverage to close an airplane door because he’d broken his ribs falling off a horse?

6 – During what event were the password “Mickey Mouse” and toy “cricket clickers” used for identification?

7 – Hooke’s law is used to describe the operation of what useful items?

8 – Whose exploits include: stopping an acid leak with candy bars, fixing a blown fuse with a gum wrapper, and disarming bombs with, at different times, a tennis racket, a hockey ticket, and low-fat milk?

(Answer on P. 6 Quiz, Always)

Interpretation and Labeling

At Large Column
by Shiangtai Tuan

People would like to interpret what you say or what you do. When I criticized somebody on the news one day, a friend said: “Oh, I am so sorry it hurt your feelings.” When I cut down a bush because it was in the way, a friend said: “Oh, I am so sorry you did not like its red flowers.” I know. They are friends. They tried to understand me, tried to help me, or tried to give an interpretation of my behavior so they could sympathize with me. Well, why people can’t simply take the face value and live with it. One may agree or disagree with my criticism. One may be neutral about it. The matter of fact is that there is nothing to do with feelings being hurt and even the thought of it has never occurred to me. I could turn around and “interpret” this friend’s statement or intentions. Oh, sweet childhood, he must have been brought up in a warm family where everyone considered everyone else feelings all the times. Or, poor soul, he might have grown up in an abusive, dysfunctional family where his feelings got hurt all the time. Or, he might be a very sensitive person. The only way to understand other people’s behavior is to consider their feelings. Well, no, I will not make such interpretations and leave the way it is. As for the plant, I actually like red flowers. I cut it down really because it was in the way, as simple as that. I did not even notice that the bush carried red flowers. My kind friend did not have to “interpret” and made an excuse for my strange behavior of cutting down a bush.

Again, I could say this friend liked red flowers, liked bushes, his “feeling got hurt” when plants were cut down ... etc. Again, I shall not make any “interpretations” and simply let it go.

I have been verbal about my “feeling” on interpretations I was once presented a book named “Against Interpretation” years ago as a birthday present. It is a little book by Susan Sontag, a collection of articles she wrote and published in various magazines. She called them “critic at large”. I have always liked the book and have named this column in its honor.

Similar to giving interpretations, people also like to label you for whatever you say.

In China, I would be labeled a liberal because I think people should have right to own firearms. For the same reason I am labeled conservative here in the United States. Since I don’t think abortion is sinful, I would be considered conservative in China but labeled a liberal in the US especially because I also support stem cell research.

Not being religious to the point of believing religion actually works against civilization, I would be considered conservative in China where it is more and more fashionable to become a Christian or even a Buddhist. In the US, oh, my God, nothing but a bleeding heart liberal may have such radical thoughts.

Thirty years ago those who supported private property in China were liberal while those who believed in Communism were conservative. Now the trend has reversed. Thirty years ago, communism was the fashionable thing to rave

about among the liberals in the US but it is also reversed.

Thirty years ago, young people were liberal while people over thirty were not only conservative but not to be trusted. Now, to my surprise, more young people in the US are conservatives while you find liberals mostly among the older ones, older than thirty, at least. Old hippies don’t die, they don’t even fade away.

Those who criticize Clinton were considered liberal eight years ago but the same people are labeled conservatives now while those who criticize Bush are now liberals. This I can understand because the word “liberal” to me refers to those who are looking for some change. Anyone criticizing the current powers that be may enjoy (or suffer) being labeled a liberal.

So, if it really makes you happy, label others or even yourself if you like. As for me, I have seen enough dogs barking at various trees. Go ahead; make my day; give me a label if you want to talk nonsense.

Spring Arts and Plants Studies

LG News
by Shiangtai Tuan

The Plants Study is actually to study how the fruit of some plants, namely, grape vines, ferment. I choose that name so people would not think we are simply M-alcoholics. Wine tasting has been a favorite activity in our group. I don't mean we have it every month. However, in the past 16 years since I have a member, all three times were well attended. The first wine tasting was in the early 90's. Alison, then a wine buyer in Well Spring and later in A Southern Seasons, came with a professional wine tasting set-up. She brought samples of several white and red wines of different vintage and charged us only the cost. She not only pointed out the characteristic of the wines but also compared the grapes, the soil, the fermenting conditions, and the weather conditions that affected the flavor. It was definitely a pleasant and educational experience I would never forget. She was a geologist, an opera connoisseur, and an interesting speaker. She spoke to us on both those subjects too. Unfortunately, she passed away in the 90's. Our more recent wine tastings are one in October 2003 and one last year. In 2003, the October LG was an outing to Chatham Hill Winery in Morrisville. The location was good, the wine was good. About ten to fifteen attended and some bought several bottles or even cases of wine. They do not grow grapes locally but import from California and other places. Then last year, Ellen and company organized a wine trip out West. No, not to California but to the West of NC, outside of the MENC covered area. I am sorry I had a conflict in schedule but I heard that many people from Greensboro as well as from Triangle went.

For this month, we are going to make a combination trip to an Art Festival with a visit to a vineyard in Mebane. "Art on the Vine" is sponsored and hosted by the Haw River Wine Trail and Alamance County Arts Council. It features local pottery, weavers, woodworkers and more. Events are to be held 10 AM to 6 PM on May 20 and 1 - 6 PM on May 21. We are setting our May LG to be 2 to 6 PM on May 20, the usual third Saturday. Let's gather at Iron Gate Winery at

2:00 PM; do a wine tasting there; and then go to the art show either together or individually.

Imagine yourself in the middle of a vast sloping meadow. Rolling hills surround you. There are green grape vines spreading out as far as you can see. Only a few trees stand above the vines here and there. The air is clear with a little fragrance of plants and greenery, nothing like the everyday city street dust and noise. That's what we hope to see. If you have seen the movie "Sideways", it might give you a hit. Experience it yourself is very much different though. Well, in "Sideways", they talk about the Pinot grapes. Unfortunately, Pinot is too fragile to grow in this climate (just as it is said in the movie too). We cannot find my favorite, Riesling, in North Carolina either. Well, as people say, you cannot win them all.

The Iron Gate winery is located a few miles north of Mebane on NC 119. This is good because it is in between Triangle area and Greensboro area. People from both regions can take advantage of it. Sorry it is a little far for the people from the coast but still within reach from Fayetteville area, I hope. At Iron Gate, they have a large piece of land for their vineyards, not like the Chatham Hill winery which imports their grapes. Like the California wine growers, Iron Gate vineyards use "European Grapes" as opposed to "American native grapes" such as Scuppernong or Muscadine used by New York State growers like Taylor. They have Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Merlot, Chambourcin, Cabernet Sauvignon, and some blends. They do make a dessert wine from a blend of American Native grapes but they buy those grapes from other growers. The wine tasting there is \$2.00 per person, a very good price already and they let you keep a nice glass with their sign IG engraved on it. They have picnic area, place for family to wander around, fields for you to run wild or just take some photos. You may check them out before you go, (919) 304-9463, or at their website, www.irongatevineyards.com.

I hope it makes a great outing. See y'all there at 2.
Date: 2006.5.20, the third Saturday.

Time: meeting at **2:00 PM**.

Contact info and directions: See back of calendar page.

British Royalty II

by Ed Williams

In the April 2005 Mblem, there appeared a little story of mine about British royalty. (BTW I don't collect any royalty on the story.) It was mostly about the three Stuart pretenders to the British throne. In the story, I said that - when and if Prince Charles becomes king - there might arise some question about whether he would really be King Charles III or King Charles IV, since many of Her Majesty's subjects (especially in Scotland, which controls a lot of oil) think

that there has already been a King Charles III (he was the one we in NC - especially in the Fayetteville area - think of as Bonnie Prince Charlie).

Eight months after my story, there appeared in the Raleigh N&O a story entitled "Prince denies rumor of name change". He dismissed a report claiming that he was considering becoming King George VII (his names are Charles Philip Arthur George, so he could use any one of them). The stories contained no comment on the question of Charles III vs. Charles IV. Thinking of the Stuart Pretenders brought to mind a marginally related fact. When I served at the US

Embassy in Madrid, I met a great many members of the Spanish nobility, including Cayetana, Duchess of Alba. One of her family names is "FitzJames Stuart". The "Fitz" indicates that she is probably a descendant of King James II through his illegitimate son, James FitzJames. She is also a British Duchess - Duchess of Berwick upon Tweed. A very bright and interesting lady! You may have noticed that the present Duchess has the same first name as her predecessor, the famous subject of Goya's painting, "La Maja Desnuda". She was very sensitive about that!

Congratulations LocSecond Column by Shiangtai Tuan

Congratulations to the newly elected Executive Committee members. I am looking forward to transferring power as soon as the new members decide who does what. Yes, transfer of power. Doesn't that sound great? Doesn't it make you think of the great Roman Empire, French revolution, the White House ... etc? Well, actually, it is just the opposite for us. In those cases mentioned, people were (are) thirsty for the position to become "the power that be." In MENC, we have to beg to get a few people come out to run for office. To me this is actually a very good sign. It indicates that MENC members have great sense of responsibility. They don't want to "mess things up" when they are put at the position. They don't want to commit time that they don't have if they have to work on one or two real jobs to earn a living. Don't worry. The seven of you will do just fine. Some of you have been on the board before. Some of you were on the ExComm last year. That provides continuation. For the new members, we all support you. I believe all the members who have been on ExComm before will eagerly help you and will not interfere with you. MENC is a friendly group. It is not where people fight for power but a place where people help one another to organize for having good time. At least this is that way I look at it.

People I have Known — Caspar Weinberger by Ed Williams

In early 1975, I had been the U.S. Consul General in Auckland, N.Z. for less than 3 months when I got a telegram from the Dept. of State telling me that I was going to have a distinguished visitor (my first, at that post). Caspar Weinberger's name was vaguely familiar to me as the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, and former Director of the Office of Management and Budget. I expected to see him arrive in a U.S.A.F. transport, accompanied by his staff. In fact, he arrived on a regular Pan Am passenger flight, accompanied only by his wife. He was visiting New Zealand and Australia because of their reputation as two of the most liberal countries in the world, and he wanted to learn about the efficiency of their expenditures on HEW, and how they affected all the other things the governments had to do. In the N.Z. Government at that time, the areas of health, education and welfare were separate ministries. I had arranged for two of the three Ministers to join me in greeting Weinberger at the airport, and the arrival went quite well. My official residence had a nice guest

suite, so the Weinbergers stayed with us.

That evening, my wife and I had a reception followed by what became our "standard big-wheel dinner" - 14 people at tables for 8 and 6. Weinberger made a good impression as a quiet man who did not seek to impose himself on anyone. In the following two or three days, I took him to meet the Mayor of Auckland and some political and business people in his areas of interest. I also showed him some of the more beautiful sights in the Auckland area. We had several conversations during those days. We talked about our service in Japan just after the War - very brief for him, since, though he was a captain on MacArthur's staff, he wanted to get discharged and get into law practice. I told him that I had visited the town of Weinberg, just north of Stuttgart, when I drove my Mercedes-Benz sports car out of the factory in 1960. I picked up a girl hitch-hiker, and she suggested that we stop in Weinberg for lunch. It turned out the town's restaurants were well known for their snail dishes. I ate a whole great platter of Weinbergschnecken! Great!! He said he had been there and had also eaten snails. I asked if his name came from there, but he said that his name came

HOOT HOOT HOOT

By Ed Williams
Even residents of Las Vegas may be surprised to learn that there are more Catholic churches than casinos there. Not surprisingly, some worshipers at masses and Sunday services customarily give casino chips rather than cash when the basket is passed. Since they get chips from

so many different casinos, the churches devised a method to collect the offerings. All the churches send their collected chips to a nearby Franciscan monastery for sorting. The chips are then taken to the casino of origin and cashed in, and the money is returned to each church. The Franciscan friars who perform this service are known as chip monks.

from western Bohemia, not Bayern

This was, of course, long before he became Secretary of Defense (in 1981), so there was no reason for us to talk about defense matters. Not long after his visit, he resigned from his cabinet post and spent several years in private industry before going back to Washington. As SecDef, he became known for building up US military strength and for being a strong advocate for "star wars", the space-based missile defense shield. He was Reagan's strong right hand in executing the policies that led to the downfall of the Soviet Union. As SecDef, he became involved in the Iran-Contra affair, though he was opposed to selling arms to Iran, and subsequently resigned. He was then indicted by the independent counsel, Laurence Walsh, predecessor of the present Fitzgerald, who couldn't get Weinberger for anything he had actually done, but cobbled up accusations of "lying". He was pardoned by Pres. Bush I. Cap Weinberger performed great services for this country, but in doing so he incurred the ferocious enmity of groups who hated what he and Reagan were doing. He died in late March at 88.

After our show, we stroke the set. In the process of cleaning up the stage, two people picked up some boards and were looking for some place to put them away. One said: "Let's lie them down here." Since he often corrected other people on the usage of "who" and "whom", the other thought it was the chance to remind him too, of the proper use of English.

"Let's lay them down. Here they lie still." he said.

"Boards don't lie."

"However, as the saying goes, old boards don't die. They only lie away."

"Board members maybe, but wooden boards still can't lie."

"Still!? But they can't tell the truth either."

Recording A Show

by Shiangtai Tuan

It is not new for you when I mention my theatrical adventures. Well, the one you just missed was *Patience*, a Gilbert and Sullivan show last month. I dare say you missed quite a treat. I can prove it to you if you come to see the DVD we made of it.

Talking about recording a show, you would think one can simply hire a professional to do the job. Well, it is not that easy. You must have seen the movies made from stage shows -- operas, musicals, plays ... etc. They look so gorgeous. However, there is a difference between making a gorgeous movie and recording a performance. The former is to please the customers and the later is to keep a record of the performance.

To make a pretty movie, the camera focuses on where the main action is. Say, when two people are talking to each other, the camera moves from one to the other. Showing one person at a time is good enough to tell the story for a movie. In a stage production, the "other person" who is listening at the time as well as all other people on stage contributes something. The "other person" may be reacting. Some one may show an angry face while still some others may show utter disgust. The director

may also have set the position of everyone on stage so as to create a balanced and aesthetic picture. The challenge is to capture all that on the film, so to speak. (Of course, it is to capture on tape, on DVD, on magnetic media ... now a days.) To shoot the scene with all people in the view would make everybody very small and the action distracted. Traditionally, even a "professional" camera man would take the easy way out. In the above scenario, he would simply make close up shots on the main characters the way to make a movie as described above. The final product would be pleasant enough for the viewers and his job will be commended. Well, what about the effort put in by the director and all other actors? In our show, there were ten principles and about thirty chorus members. All scenes with chorus on stage were carefully choreographed by the director with specific movements and position for each person. People would sing, dance, and move from place to place to form an integrated but changing stage picture that created drama. A recording made the way as described above would not show any of that. As a compromise, there can be an "archive" recording. It is made by setting a camera shooting the whole stage from the beginning to the end. In principle, watching this recording should be the same as watching

the show on stage. Not so and far from it. First of all, there is no TV screen as big as a stage to show it. On regular TV, everybody would be as little as flies or spiders crawling on the screen. It is a recording alright, of the effort made by the director. No wonder it is called a "choreographer's copy". Now, for the thirty or so chorus members, after two months worth of rehearsal, many shows later, all he/she can write home about is the choice of a recording showing only other people or a stage where it is hard to find anybody.

Do I have any solutions? Yes, I do. I have taken videos for some shows and asked my friends to do some for shows I was in. Our method is to show a part of the stage. Most of the time the part shown would be around the center of gravity of the action. It may show the principles and a few chorus members and main part of the "stage picture." Then we would pan the camera cross the people so everybody have the chance to show up clearly though not all the time. This way, the story line, the director's effort are recorded. Additionally, principles and chorus members all get their respective five minutes of glory, or more. I called this recoding the people friendly version. Unfortunately, most "professionals" consider this not "professional" enough but rather take it the traditional way.



MENC at UNC-TV, 2006 February 26

(Answers to P. 3 Quiz,
Always)

- 1 – Roseanne Roseannadanna, played by Gilda Radner
- 2 – They are intended to catch dripping candle wax.
- 3 – Phileas Fogg, *Around the World in 80 Days*
- 4 – A lightning bolt, *Back to the Future*
- 5 – Chuck Yeager, in the Bell X-1 that broke Mach 1
- 6 – D-Day
- 7 – Elastic materials, such as springs and rubber bands
- 8 - MacGyver



May 2006

**Find MENC at
<http://menc.us>**

TRIAD COORDINATOR'S CORNER

by Ellen Muratori

The dates of May's events will be easy to remember: 6, 16, 26.

Cinco de Mayo precedes the Saturday Night supper. Will the cafeteria surprise us with Mexican delights? Come and find out.

Bring Mom to a belated Mother's Day lunch on Tweaky Tuesday. Hey, she'll fit right in. It takes a smart parent to produce a smart kid. Well, usually. I'm lacking in common sense? Join the Einstein Club!

And then there's Games Night. What a great kick-off for the three day weekend. It's always an exuberant group that scoots out of the center at precisely 10pm. If it's a balmy night we just might set up a card table in the parking lot! (What/who's balmy???)

Enjoy!

Editorial Information

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Editor: Shiangtai Tuan

E-mail: editor@menc.us

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