

Mblem

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Election Time

Vote for the members of our Executive Committee: The ballot sheet is on Page 7. The mailing label on the back of that sheet is the proof of your membership. Check (or put X symbols in) the boxes next to the names of the people you vote for. You may write-in and vote for other people so long as they are valid members of MENC chapter of Mensa. You may write in the place provided or add boxes of your own. You may vote for at most seven (7) people. The ballot will be invalidated if more than seven are marked. Three-fold the sheet with the ballot inside and Nancy Lee, the Election Proctor's, name and address showing. Tape the open edge; apply first class postage; and send it by US Postal Mail stamped on or before **March 20**. For this month, we are sending copies to the second family member.

Event Calendar	in- sert
Calendar Details	in- sert
Sad News Gil Johansen	in- sert
Election Time	Here 1
Renewing Time	Here 1
St. Paddy's Local Gathering	Here 1
Important Announcement	2
From Southern China to North Carolina	2
February Issue	3
Contact list	4
BALLOT	5
Back cover, Mblem info	6

Renewing time

It is that time again!! Don't Forget to renew your Mensa membership!!

St. Patrick's Day Celebration LG News Shiangtai Tuan

Happy Saint Patrick's Day.

For many years, our own Joe Supple has celebrated St. Paddy's Day at his house with relatives, neighbors and good friends just like they do in the old country of Ireland. I think it is an honor that we MENCans are invited to his party along with his non-M. Although St. Paddy's day is March 17, he has chosen the closest Saturday, March 15 for the party. Though it is not necessary, I thought I will write down some legends about St. P no matter they are true or not.

St. Patrick, b. 387, d. March 17, 493 (or 461, from another account), was credited to have given a sermon at a hill top in Ireland. The sermon was so powerful it drove Druidism and snakes out of Ireland. (Personally, I am glad he did not come to America because I rather like Druids and snakes.) He was not born in Ireland as many college graduates believed. (This is not surprising. College graduates are notorious for not knowing history.) He was born in the Roman Britain, that is, the Roman occupied part of the British Isles. At age of sixteen, he was captured by the Irish Raiders and taken to Ireland as a slave. Six years later, in a dream, he was told

that his ship was ready. So, he escaped and walked 200 miles to a port. (I did not know you could go 200 miles in Ireland without falling into the water. But again, he may not be walking in a straight line, which is not possible there.) At the port he found a ride on a ship to go back to his family. There, he followed his family tradition of at least two generations and became a priest. Yes, he later answered his calling and took another ship back to Ireland to do his ministry. It could be the same ship. Who knows. Anything may happen in the legendary times. Two of his followers were actually many hundreds years old, Druid warriors who used to walk with the gods.

We don't know whether he died in AD 461 or AD 493 at 106 years old, However, We know he died on March 17. That's why it has been celebrated as St. Paddy's Day. Shamrock is one of the symbols in the celebration because he used to use the three leaves of shamrock to illustrate trinity -- how three could all exist as separate elements of the same entity. (Ahem, beware if you found a four-leaf clover.) Like Christians who tried to do their conversion in many lands, he used local custom into Christian rituals instead of banishing them. For instance, he used bonfire to celebrate Easter because it was used in Irish tradition to honor their gods. He also superimposed the sun, a powerful old Irish symbol, in the cross to form what is now known as the Celtic Cross. (Conti. To P. 2, St. Paddy)

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Vote*
- *Renew*
- *Vote*
- *Renew*

(Conti. From P.1, St. Paddy)

I can believe that. I have seen the same done by modern day missionaries. Many of the songs used in churches in China are traditional folk songs. He was also very patient. One of the legend said he used to carry walking canes made of ash wood. Each time he went preaching he would stick one of them in the ground. He would talk to the people so long that the wooden staff grew roots. Now, another legend: For some reason unknown to me, people who do not wear green on that day may risk to be pinched. So, be careful. Those who do wear green may get kissed. There is no way out.

Whether St. Paddy drove snakes out of Ireland or not, we will help Joe to celebrate the special occasion, a good tradition in the U. S. started in Boston in 1737. He is preparing to feed and quench the thirst of thousands but you are welcome to bring some snacks and drinks though not required. Enjoy the evening with friends, Mensans or not. There will not be a kitty. However, since he has a wonderful shepherd (or not) dog, don't forget your allergy pill if you need it. Come with family, significant others, friends.

Date: 2008. 3.15, the third Saturday.

Time: 7:30 PM till late.

Contact info, place and directions: See back of calendar page.

ANNOUNCEMENT: One or a Few Good M's Are Needed

Yes, a MENC member is needed to do a little chore. He or she may share the work with one or some others. This is what you would do if you are that lucky M:

Once a month, when an issue of Mblem is printed, about 500 copies of them will appear at your front porch in a little cardboard box. They are all folded in the middle and stapled just like the one in your hands. Same number of labels will arrive in a separate envelop. Your job is to put one label on each copy of the Mblem. You need to keep them in the same order as the way labels are ordered which is sorted by zip code. It took me one hour and twenty five minutes to do this issue. It may take you less time because you have better coordination. It may take

you longer. You may ask a friend to work with you but don't forget to keep the zip order. After you finished labeling, you put them into four boxes supplied by the post office.

The next step is to deliver the four boxes to the post office. This can be done by the same person or another volunteer. If it done by another person, he/she would pick up the four boxes, deliver to the post office about two miles from RDU airport, on the other side of the highway, US-70. You only have to leave the boxes with the clerk because Dan, our treasurer, has already set up an account with them for MENC.

From Southern China to North Carolina Ed Williams

Many North Carolina people don't know about the close connections between N.C. and a man who created one of the most influential families ever to exist in China (at least since the Han dynasty). I was reminded of this by a column which my friend, D. G. Martin, wrote for the Chatham Journal about 3 years ago. I grew up in Wilmington, and I remember having heard about Charlie Soong when I was a child. Charlie was born in 1863 on a farm on Hainan Island. At age 9, he was sent to Java to work for a relative. He was soon given up for adoption by another relative who had a shop in Boston. However, he didn't like working at the shop, so he stowed away on a U.S. Revenue Service cutter. He was discovered by the captain, Eric Gabrielson, who took a liking to him and took him along when he settled in Wilmington. Col. Roger Moore, a friend of Capt. Gabrielson, persuaded Charlie to be baptised as a Christian in a Methodist church in Wilmington.

Charlie wanted to get a formal education. Col. Moore was so impressed with his intelligence and eagerness that he contacted a wealthy friend, Julian S. Carr, to give him some help. Does that name sound familiar to some of you? How about Carrboro? Yes, that Carr, whose mill started Carrboro. Carr was also very impressed by young Charlie, and paid his tuition at a college he himself had founded - Trinity College (later Duke) and then at Vanderbilt University. Charlie graduated and became a Methodist minister.

He went back to China (Shanghai) as a missionary, but gradually moved into business, propelled by a Bible-printing operation, partly financed by Carr. His printing business drew the attention of Sun Yat-sen and his republican revolutionaries. Charlie printed most of their political literature and helped them in fund-raising and in other ways.

After his return to China in 1886, Charlie Soong married and had six children. In 1905, he returned to the US - to Wilmington - with several of his children, all of whom he wanted to get a western education. His daughters went to Wesleyan College in Macon GA. He went back to China, where events moved forward to the 1911 Revolution, which removed the last Qing (Manchu) emperor. One of Charlie's daughters, Ching-ling, married the leader of the revolution, Sun Yat-sen. Another daughter, Mei-ling, married Chiang Kai-shek, who became head of the Nationalist Government. The third daughter, Ai-ling, married H. H. Kung, finance minister of the Nationalist Government. One son, T.V. Soong, became prime minister of that government, and the other two sons held high positions in the world of finance. In 1914, Julian Carr visited his protégé, Charlie Soong, in China, and was given royal treatment.

More North Carolinians ought to know about the great influence NC and its second-best college (UNC-Chapel Hill, of course, being the best) had on the history of China. Probably no other single family had such monumental influence as the Soongs. I propose that a monument to Charlie Soong be placed in Carr Mill Mall in beautiful, downtown Carrboro.

February Issue of Mblem MEditor Column Shiangtai Tuan

The process of getting Mblem to your mail box can be roughly divided into the following easy steps.

First of all, there has to be material to be put into the pages. This should not be too hard. The last time I counted, there were five hundred and thirty four labels for members. If each member sent me one word, the five hundred and thirty four words would fill one page. If each member only sent me six words a month, I would have a lot more than enough to fill the pages.

Next is editing. I have the software called MSPublisher. MicroSoft is not my favorite company and MS software is not my first choice. However, it works and you can get it easily online or from any computer store. If you need to edit Mblem, MENC will buy you a copy. It is easy to use. The editor only has to copy the text from the original document from e-mail and then "paste" it into the template. It is really like the old fashioned cutting and pasting.

The proof reader has the hardest part of the work. Ed has to suffer through typo, guessing the original intended words, my grammatical mistakes (whenever I write anything myself)

...
After making corrections according to the proofreader's instructions, I put it into PDF form and my job is done.

The publishing people would send it to the printer by uploading it to the Office Depot custom printing website. Office Depot will send the whole box of printed Mblem, folded and stapled, to any address they specify. They then would put labels on and send it to the post office.

See, easy, right? The only hard part is the first step. Even the best tailor cannot make pants without material and even the best chef cannot make ratatouille without rats, oh, well, rations.

Nancy and Sharon did the publishing part for umpteen years and would have kept on doing this thankless job if not for some health related reasons. They resigned at the beginning of last year but kept on helping out under difficult conditions for many more months to the point they really couldn't continue. After 2007 November issue, I was waiting for some one to come forth to take up the slack but no one answered the many pleas from Mblem or from the e-mail list.

Some one said (even printed on Mensa T-shirts): "To organize Mensans is like to hoard cat." However, I found the secret commend that 98% of Mensans would obey almost with no hesitation. It is: "Stay", meaning stay and do nothing. After waiting for two months, from the beginning of November when I needed to start on the December issue to the beginning of January when I needed to start on the Febru-

ary issue, I realized that everybody is doing their "staying" away from volunteering. That was when I decided I had to do the publishing part too, at least for a few months. I followed the instruction given to us by the National Mensa Office to register myself as one of the Mensa representative to Office Depot to use their printing service. To do that I gave them my credit card number so they can charge to my card to be reimbursed later. They sent me a confirmation letter on January 3, 2008. I thought everything should be OK after that. However, a few unfortunate coincidences made the February issue late. This was what happened.

On Jan. 26, I tried to log into Office Depot's website but could not log in. Starting the next work day, Monday, Jan. 28, I spend most of my time being bounced back and forth among the few Office depot phone numbers. Typically, the automatic menu would direct me to some other automatic menu often end up by giving me another number to call – for the specific service I needed. When I got a human voice, it was usually the "other department" that handles my question. Several of the custom service personnel actually saw my name on their record (even could read my address to me) but told me they did not know why I could not log in. Finally one told me she could not help me because I had to contact the online-service department. However, the online dept personnel had me to call her boss. Finally, the next beginning of work day, Monday, Feb. 4, the "boss", Mr. Loper, sent me an e-mail giving me an ID and a password. Ha, I was so happy I logged on. I called Nancy and she coached me to enter the order. Well, just my luck. Office Depot changed their policy. They did not deliver any more. They wanted me to pick up at an Office Depot store near me. I thought that would be only a 20 minutes drive, easy in comparison to the five day's worth of phone calls. After I called the local store contact she called me back to tell me "there was a problem with your credit card and some one is to call you." No one called me. In the mean while, I did receive an e-mail message from Mr Loper telling me he was not with the office anymore. When I checked back, they told me my credit card had expiration date as Jan. 31 and it was February already. Well, I got a new card during the time when we made phone tags but they did not know that. They happily accept my explanation and took my new card's date. Two days later, when I called to check. They said the date was not right. The date I gave them was January 2010 but the date they wrote down was December 2008. As a result, they had to cancel my order and I had to start over again. This time, they said they would deliver but it would take full seven work days and it finally arrived on Feb. 19 in late afternoon.

On Feb. 19, at 10:50 PM, I put the box of printed, folded, and stapled Mblem on my right and all 30 sheets of labels on my left and started to work. It was only 12:25 AM, that is, only one hour and a half later when I finished labeling all 540 of them, including the time I had to staple about twenty of them they missed. The second day, It took me about an hour to sent them out at the post office, the one where we registered for bulk mailing.

Sad News – Gil Johansen

Ann Lewis

Many of you met Gil at Ed's parties, and other M functions as he has been a member of our group since 1981. I have no details as to what happened, but he passed away a few weeks ago..

Fayetteville Observer has a "condolence message" service on line, if anyone is interested in sending a message to his family.

Gil was almost a staple at meetings at my house, always arriving early to help with last minute clean-up and any chore he could find, including changing light bulbs, as he was so tall he could do it easily. He had sort of dropped out of sight the last few months but I was aware that he had some health problems. He will be missed, for sure, in this area.