

Written in late 1973 by Marvin Guss, Mensa member since August 1968, editor of M-Pulse (sic) from 1972 till 1978, and President/LocSec of D.A.M. (sic) 1973 through 1976.

Reworded in late 2012 by Pat Reising from original phrases, notes, and incomplete sentences.

## A Recent History of Dayton Area Mensa

Mensa is alive and well and growing on a sound basis in Dayton.

It was not always that way. Returning to the Dayton area in May 1970 after several months away, I found Mensa dead. I phoned the LocSec and found out there were no activities, no newsletter, no officer interest. October '69 was the last newsletter issued. I had only been an attendee member, so I shed a figurative tear, and was busy with other things. In September 1970, Walt Carl as new LocSec and Colleen Plevelich as new vice president issued a newsletter and picked Mensa up and breathed new life into it. They battled up hill to keep it going. I recall New Year's Eve, 1970, when only three or four people showed up at the Liederkrantz Hall gathering.

Then in May 1971, Walt left for graduate school at Miami University, and Colleen had it all heaped on her. She labored mightily and successfully with Al Trusty as newsletter editor. They got lots of flak from me and others because the newsletter was always late (damn near every newsletter since I joined in 1968 was late). When they completely missed getting one out in June 1971, and I had to make a long distance call to find out if/when/where the meeting was, steam came out my ears (I didn't know my turn was coming to be on the receiving end).

In November 1971, with Colleen worn down, Dick Strong arrived from Washington DC and Los Angeles with a Mensa membership and enthusiasm. He was elected LocSec and I was elected editor (much later the bylaws were changed to make the editor appointed like most local groups). Dick had many ideas and worked hard getting hosts, planning programs, and sending out and following up with phone calls on questionnaires, etc. I worked with Dick, and also taught myself to setup and write the newsletter. I wrote to National for a handbook on how to be editor (they had none) and for getting subsidy payments for the first time in Dayton to help cover costs for postage and printing. Dick found that some members could make Friday meetings, not Saturday. He tried two meetings in April of 1972 – Friday the 14th and Saturday the 29th – both poorly attended at 8 and 15 respectively. This, along with difficulty getting hosts, killed anymore two-meeting months. In Dick's survey, more than half the members said they were more interested in parties than programs, so meetings were set up to alternate in order to make most people happy.

Dick twisted my arm to run for LocSec after I said I would like to stay as editor because I had many plans to expand the newsletter (maybe even get it out early). I ran for LocSec and won. I kept alternating parties with programs, and attendance was building up well. As editor and then as LocSec, I encouraged SIGs; Mpulse announced the SIGs: consumer safety, bridge, gourmet and wine tasting, singles, Esperanto, and the game of Go. I received no feedback from those who requested these SIGs, so I called each one of them and found out either no one or only one to two people had called them. I recently

suggested specific SIGs to others. I'm your (mostly) Fearless Leader – not a babysitter. I will do all I can to help, but you must do something too. In the May 1973 M-pulse, I mentioned Friday TGIF meetings would be added. With the AG and potentially poor attendance in summer and the holiday season (actually, ours improved, but who could have predicted) we will put off until after the end of the year when we will go to one Friday and one Saturday meeting for a six month trial period. Attendance has increased to a consistent 30 to 40 members.

At \$15.00 renewal time, we dropped from 109 to 82 members; at the same time National went from roughly 18,000 to 13,000. Despite numerous move-outs from the area, we are back up to 99 – with more in the pipeline. We must be making some people happy ... or doing something right.