

Missouri Ozarks

Membership Handbook

Welcome to the Missouri Ozarks Mensa (MOM) chapter of American Mensa, Ltd. This document provides information about American Mensa generally and our local chapter specifically. There are underlined links available in the paragraphs below. If you'd like to access these online, right click on the underlined title and click on the open hyperlink option on the drop-down menu. In some cases, you will need to have an American Mensa account with a username and password (easily obtained at the American Mensa website).

American Mensa National Office Information:

With more than 57,000 members, American Mensa is the largest national Mensa operating under the auspices of Mensa International, Ltd. There are currently more than 100,000 members worldwide, and an estimated six million Americans are eligible for Mensa membership.

Members of American Mensa range in age from 2 to 102. They include engineers, homemakers, teachers, actors, athletes, students and CEOs, and they share only one trait — high intelligence. To qualify for Mensa, they scored in the top two percent of the general population on an accepted standardized intelligence test.

AMERICAN MENSA is the official site of American Mensa with a variety of pages filled with information about American Mensa.

MENSA BENEFITS AND SERVICES lists many of the benefits and services offered to Mensa members. Not listed are the endless opportunities for friendship and belonging through the vast network of social activities at both the national and the local level. This web link is well worth a look.

MENSA EDUCATION AND RESEARCH FOUNDATION is the Mensa organization that gives awards to various deserving recipients and provides scholarships to students in higher education institutions. They also publish the Mensa Research Journal subscriptions can be ordered from this site.

MENSA FOR KIDS is a site with fun and educational games and activities for the kids and resources for parents and teachers. It also sponsors the Excellence in Reading Award to encourage the joy of reading in children.

MENSA INTERNATIONAL is the website of Mensa worldwide, which has information about Mensa as well as links to the 40 various National Mensa groups worldwide. Mensa has about 110,000 members in 100 countries.

MENSA LEADERSHIP has information about the leadership of Mensa, both at the national and local level, with local group and special interest group (SIG) resources, and upcoming leadership workshops.

MENSA MEMBER FORUMS is Mensa's Online Community where members from American Mensa and around the world share their insights and interests. Sign in to your MENSA account to access this site.

MENSA PRIMER is a site that has information, especially helpful to new Mensans, such as dues, gatherings, geography, local groups, and helping your group. There is also a useful page "To New Members."

MENSA WEEKLY BRAINWAVE is a news service, to which you can subscribe for weekly delivery to your email, contains articles on a broad variety of topics from a number of sources such as Mensa, Scientific American, National Geographic, Forbes, Huffington Post, Live Science, and Mensa material.

MENSA WORKS. In partnership with Boxwood Online Career Centers, Mensa Works is an exclusive benefit for online employment connections. It's a place to post resumes for free and to target choice jobs. For employers, it's a rich resource of highly motivated and educated workers.

THE MENSA STORE, licensed through Fox Imaging, is the official store of American Mensa products and is your source for Mensa-branded apparel and other products including Mensa Select games, books, pins and more.

SIGHT, which stands for the Service of Information, Guidance, and Hospitality to Travelers, allows members to enjoy the company and assistance of Mensans from around the country and in 40 countries around the globe.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs). This site has links to over 150 Mensa Special Interest Groups along with descriptions of each, listed alphabetically by name in one list and groups by category in another.

To help you with the myriad Mensan acronyms and jargon, here is a "cheat sheet":

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

ACE: Achieving Communications Excellence. This program recognizes excellence in American Mensa's newsletters and websites, 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.

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

AMC: The American Mensa Committee. This is our elected national governing body with representatives from all regions.

ASIE: Actions Still in Effect. Decisions rendered by the AMC or local Steering Committee 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.

Colloquium: A one-day educational symposium, sponsored by MERF, preceding the AG and open to the public. Colloquium participants come primed to discuss whatever topic is presented.

CultureQuest®: Facing questions that range from film to politics, from literature to geography, from music to history and farther afield, Mensan teams of up to five members gather in their neighborhoods on a single day across the U.S. and Canada and, for 90 minutes, compete for cash prizes and cultural literacy bragging rights. While CultureQuest® might be considered a trivia game or competition, its intent has always been to promote and test cultural literacy.

Jewels: The Local Group Jewels awards recognize and reward Local Groups' membership-related activities and for their active participation in all that Mensa has to offer.

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

LG: 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.

MWJ: The publication Mensa World Journal (previously the Mensa International Journal), the membership magazine for Mensa International.

MERF: Acronym for the Mensa Education & Research Foundation, the former name of the Mensa Foundation.

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.

NO: National Office. The administrative headquarters of American Mensa maintains membership records and qualifications; keeps track of local officer information; provides monthly funding, membership mailing labels and reports to Local Groups; and supports the AMC and the mission of the organization.

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.

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.

RG: Regional Gathering — what Local Groups call their annual, regional conventions, usually held over weekends throughout the year. Where LGs invite members of all other groups to an annual convention featuring food, games, talks, and entertainment and lasting several days. Some groups used it as a fundraiser.

RVC: Regional Vice-Chair — representative member of the AMC elected by the constituents of each region.

SIGs: Special Interest Groups, which can be local or national. These 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 information about local attractions, Mensa activities, and accommodations to Mensa members who plan to visit their cities.

YMs: Young Mensans. Mensans under the age of 18. American Mensa has members has young as 2.

Missouri Ozarks Mensa (MOM) Chapter Information:

(Including links to additional information on the MOM web site)

Missouri Ozarks Mensa (MOM) was founded for the fellowship and personal growth of its members, and to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and common interests. Missouri Ozarks Mensa (MOM) is a American Mensa with a current membership of 85. Our membership comes from South West Missouri. We serve an area that includes the counties of Barry, Cedar, Christian, Dade, Dallas, Douglas, Hickory, Howell, Lawrence, MacDonald, Newton, Oregon, Oregon, Ozark, Polk, Stone, Taney, Webster, Wright, and portions of Benton, Jasper, Laclede, and Texas Counties. We are part of American Mensa, Region 7 (Heartland Region), coordinated by a Regional Vice Chair. The Region 7 website has information about the Region and links to the other groups within Region 7.

We have a variety of activities for all types of personalities. You can find the monthly list of activities and events in the monthly Illuminate newsletter. Also, this information is available on MOM web site at the Activities Page link; the full monthly schedule at the Calendar Page; and the Upcoming Events tab of the MOM web site Home Page.

Missouri Ozarks Mensa is governed by a Steering Committee of elected volunteers that meets monthly, generally during the first week of each month at an area restaurant or member's home. Steering Committee Officer elections happen each March for the following fiscal year. There are also a number of volunteer positions held by members who want to be more involved with Missouri Ozarks Mensa. The MOM web site Steering Committee page has email links for these contacts or you may find the complete list of steering committee members and other volunteer positions on the last page of the monthly Illuminate.

Missouri Ozarks Mensa has a set of bylaws that define the purpose of the organization, to guide the actions of the Steering Committee and members including voting rights, the makeup and responsibilities of the Steering Committee, including the Ombudsman, election procedures, and member rights and responsibilities. If you'd like to review the bylaws and/or the ASIEs, they are available on the MOM website or you can contact any of the steering committee members to get a copy.

Why should you be a member of MOM?

Mensans find value in their Mensan membership in different ways often involving intellectual stimulation and/or intellectual validation. The first four values in the following list are from a 2016 survey by the National Office in order of most important.

1) **Publications:** Mensans counted the Mensa Bulletin and local newsletter (Illuminate for MOMs) as their most important benefits. You might also enjoy other Mensan publications such as these: Brain Waves, Mensa Research Journal, and Mensa World Journal.

2) Social activities with other members

   a. **Local Meetings and Events:** The survey separated these two highly important benefits, but here these will be treated as one: Mensans being with other Mensans. For many Mensans, the most important benefit is the connections with other intelligent people who share reasoned knowledge and opinions. Well-mannered, intellectual stimulation is available at just about every Mensan event allowing you to put your gray matter to work. Conversations traverse many topics and allow diverse opinions to be heard. You do not have to be an expert to participate. Just let go of any shyness and share your knowledge and opinions. Some like the social aspect of being with other Mensans such as these: local game nights, lunches, dinners, Regional Gatherings, and the Annual Gathering. Others enjoy intellectual events such as speaker meetings, discussion groups, Colloquiums, and CultureQuest®.

   b. **SIGs:** Mensans in over 150 SIGs share their interests with other Mensans. See a complete listing at https://www.us.mensa.org/connect/sigs/sig-listing. MOMs coordinate four SIGs: Asperger-M, Hell's Ms, M-Sportfans, and 2nd Amendment.

   c. **Online connections:** You can link up with other Mensans through our online community and through hundreds of online Mensa communities run by member volunteers around the world, including those on Facebook, LinkedIn and Yahoo!.

3) **Service:** Many Mensans participate in MERF to award scholarships to college students each year. Many Mensans serve their communities by service programs conducted by their local groups.

4) **Relationships:** Nearly a quarter of all Mensans are, or have been, in a relationship with another Mensan.

5) **Financial Benefits:** Save time and money on travel services, insurance, financial guidance, publications and more through American Mensa benefit and service programs — with new benefits being added regularly.

Mensa Membership Dues
Effective July 1, 2017

The Mensa membership year begins April 1 and ends March 31.

Membership Type	Price
Primary family member	$79
Additional family member	$53
Three-year membership	$215
Five-year membership	$350

Life Dues will be assigned based on birth date on file with the National Office. If there is no birth date on file, documentation in the form of a copy of a birth certificate, passport or driver's license is acceptable.

Current Age	Price	Current Age	Price
0-9	$1,604	55-59	$1,159
10-14	$1,581	60-64	$1,058
15-19	$1,561	65-69	$943
20-24	$1,537	70-74	$814
25-29	$1,507	75-79	$673
30-34	$1,473	80-84	$528
35-39	$1,430	85-89	$389
40-44	$1,380	90-94	$273
45-49	$1,319	95-99	$194
50-54	$1,246	100+	$153

Responsibilities of Various MOM Officers:

- **LocSec** is an elected officer. This chief executive officer of a Local Group may be titled as Local Secretary, President, or Chairman, whichever the group prefers; however, no Local Group may have, as separate officers, more than one of the three. He or she shall be the chief point of contact between AML and the Local Group. The Local Secretary shall notify AML (through the National Office) and the Regional Vice Chairman for the Local Group within two weeks of the results of elections and of changes in the officers of the Local Group.
- **Vice President** is a second-in-command elected officer who may be called Assistant LocSec, Deputy LocSec, Vice President, Executive Officer, etc. This position consists of performing the duties of the LocSec if the LocSec is unable or unavailable to fulfill his or her duties.
- **Treasurer** is an elected officer. This officer is responsible for all local Mensa accounting practices, including MOMs bookkeeping system to record the Local Group's income and expenses properly and accurately, understanding of and involvement in creating MOMs expense reimbursement policy, creating a uniform expense report form, aiding in MOMs annual budget creation, providing a quarterly financial review to the LocSec, providing a bi-annual Treasurer's Report to the *Illuminate* Editor for distribution to MOMs membership, conducting an annual financial review, reporting MOMs annual investment income the American Mensa's NO, and following record retention policies and archiving financial information.
- **Ombudsman** is an elected officer who a person who uses alternative dispute resolution (ADR) techniques to help resolve Mensa-related conflicts on an informal basis outside the chain of command and apart from any formal disciplinary procedure. A conflict might be a complaint from one or more members of improper, unfair, unjust, or abusive treatment by a person in a leadership position or a member of the National Office staff (or vice versa), or it may be a dispute between two or more members, unrelated to any office they may hold. Although policy generally is the province of those empowered to make it, a complaint that a policy is unfair or works an injustice on one or more members is also within the authority of the ombudsman.
- **Recording Secretary** is an elected officer. This officer writes the minutes for each monthly Steering Committee meeting and provides them to the *Illuminate* team for inclusion in the monthly newsletter.

- **Membership Officer** is appointed by, and serves at the pleasure of, the MOM Steering Committee. This volunteer monitors the National Office web site for any new members, qualified prospects offered membership, or other prospects for MOM membership to contact them with information about MOM. This list of new/potential members is included in the monthly MOM membership status. Also, the names and addresses of new members are provided to the *Illuminate* team to ensure they receive the monthly newsletter.
- ***Illuminate* Editor** is a volunteer position. Because the function of the Local Group newsletter is to provide the membership with a monthly calendar of events, to report local and national Mensa news, and to facilitate communication between and among the members and the Board of Directors, the newsletter is the lifeblood of the local group — the local group cannot function without it. Collectively, each of the local Mensa chapter's newsletters are the lifeblood of American Mensa.
- **Testing Proctor** is a volunteer position. Testing Proctors are those members who administer the supervised tests to qualify prospects for Mensa membership. Each month, many prospective Mensans are given proctored tests by one of these approved administrators who, quite often, are the first Mensa contact these prospects may make.

American Mensa Local Group Minimum Bylaws Standards

Missouri Ozarks Mensa's Bylaws must meet American Mensa National Office's minimum standards. These standards give each local chapter definition, uphold the integrity of Mensa International and American Mensa, and create uniformity across all local groups.

Below is a list of American Mensa Local Groups' Minimum Bylaws Standards.

1) **Local Group Definition:** This declarative statement names each local organization, attests that it is, in fact, a local group of American Mensa, and is subject to the Constitution of Mensa, the Bylaws of American Mensa, Ltd., and the resolutions adopted by the American Mensa Committee (Board).

2) **Membership:** Bylaws must state that membership to the local group is open to all members of American Mensa who are in good standing in the geographic area assigned to the local group by the American Mensa Committee, or as otherwise assigned by American Mensa, Ltd. This statement must also inform Mensans that Mensa members in good standing, including those who are not also members of the local group, are welcome to participate in the social activities of the local group at the discretion of the host or hostess. The National Ombudsman, his/her surrogate, and members of the American Mensa Committee shall be permitted to participate in the business affairs of the local group in the discharge of their official duties. In addition, this statement must indicate that the local group 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.
3) **Officers & Duties:** *The following is required:*
    a. A description of the governing body of the local group and of its composition, and a statement that the governing body conducts the business of the local group. No more than one-half of the voting positions on the governing body may be appointed positions; however, there may be as many non-voting appointed positions as desired. If any appointed positions have votes on the governing body, these must be specified in the bylaws.
    b. A statement that all local group officers, whether elected or appointed, must be current members in good standing of American Mensa, Ltd., and that all voting members of the governing body must also be members in good standing of the local group. A local group officer is defined as any person who is given a title with specific responsibilities.
    c. A listing of the elected officers of the group, of which there must be a minimum of three, with a defined order of succession or other means of immediately and automatically filling a vacancy in the position of Local Secretary. A replacement for an elected officer is an elected officer whose term of office ends with the next regular elections.
    d. A listing of the duties of elected and appointed positions, their terms of office including starting and ending dates, and how vacancies shall be filled. The term of office of appointed officers and committees may not exceed the term of office of the officer or governing body appointing them, except that those officers (such as mediators) or committees (such as regional gathering) whose functions extend past the end of the current term of office may remain in office, but are subject to removal by the succeeding officer or governing body which would otherwise appoint them.

i. The chief executive officer of a local group may be titled Local Secretary, President, or Chairman, whichever one or more the group prefers; however, no local group may have, as separate officers, more than one of the three. He or she shall be the chief point of contact between AML and the local group. The Local Secretary shall notify AML (through the National Office) and the Regional Vice Chairman for the local group within two weeks of the results of elections, and of changes in the officers of the local group.

ii. The duties of the Treasurer must include providing the Local Secretary (or designee, who must also be a voting member of the governing body) statements from banks and any other institutions where the group's money is deposited, at least quarterly. All accounts shall be separate accounts in the name of the group, and shall have more than one signatory so that funds can be accessed in the temporary absence of the treasurer. The Treasurer shall also maintain a listing of all equipment owned by the local group.

iii. The position of Past Local Secretary, if such an office exists, may only be filled by the immediate past Local Secretary, and is an elective position.

iv. The duties of one of the officers are to include taking and maintaining minutes of meetings of the governing body.

e. A statement that elected members of the governing body may be removed from office by means of a recall election, ballots for which must be either an insert to, or part of, the official publication, or ballots that are mailed separately to all members of the local group.

f. A provision stating that any voting officer may be removed from office for nonattendance at business meetings.

g. A statement that the local group shall select one or more ombudsmen to pursue local resolution of disputes and perform such other duties as may be required of all local group ombudsmen by American Mensa, and shall select one or more arbitrators to pursue resolution of disputes in other groups.

h. A statement of how appointed officers are appointed to office and how appointed officers may be removed from office.

i. A provision requiring annual financial reviews at approximately twelve-month intervals. This review shall be conducted by someone who was not involved in the issuing or collecting of money during the review period, and shall include viewing statements from banks and any other institutions where the group's money was held during the review period.

j. A statement that all officers, elected or appointed, shall turn over all files, equipment and materials pertaining to their offices to either their successor(s), to the current Local Secretary, or to another member of the governing body, no later than four weeks after leaving office.

k. A statement that the local group shall comply with federal financial reporting requirements.

l. A statement that the conflict of interest rules stated in the Bylaws of American Mensa for the Board shall also be applicable to the local group and the members of its governing body.

4) **Publication:** *The following is required:*

a. A statement that the local group shall have an official printed publication and that the governing body is its publisher.

b. A statement that, 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 governing body 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.

c. A statement requiring that a financial report be published in the official publication not less than twice each year (at approximate six-month intervals), and that the 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.

d. A statement that the National Ombudsman or the local mediator may submit matter 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.

5) **Meetings & Activities:** *The following is required, except as noted:*

a. A statement that the governing body is to hold regular meetings at least quarterly, and that notice of meetings of the governing body shall be sent to all members and the Regional Vice Chairman, usually by publishing in the official publication; also, that at least one social activity for the membership is to be held per quarter.

b. A statement that the Local Secretary may call special meetings of the governing body, or by the governing body, or by a written petition requiring signatures of no more than 10% of the membership of the local group, and that the agenda of the special meeting may include only that business for which the meeting is being called. The members of the local group and the Regional Vice Chairman shall be notified of the special meeting if practicable.

c. *(Recommended but not required)* A statement that all meetings of the governing body shall be held within the geographical limits of the local group as assigned by the Board.

d. *(Recommended but not required)* A statement that any one or more members of the governing body may participate in a meeting of the governing body by means of telephone, online conference, or similar communications equipment allowing all persons participating in the meeting to communicate with each other at the same time, and that participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at the meeting.

6) **Election Procedures:** *The following is required, except as noted: A clear and complete stipulation of election and appointment procedures and methods, including the following:*
   a. Each local group of American Mensa, Ltd. is required to hold an election of its governing body at least every two years. If two-year terms are used, the start of the term being in an even-numbered or odd-numbered year should be specified. When an election is held, ballots must be mailed to all members of the local group that are either an insert to, or part of, the official publication, or that are mailed separately. Electronic distribution of ballots is acceptable as a substitute for distribution by postal mail for those members who request electronic distribution, but cannot supplant distribution by postal mail for those members who want postal mail. There must be provisions that allow full participation by postal mail for all members at all steps including runoff elections. Tie-breaking by the flip of a coin or similar random process is allowed, a run-off in person is not.
   b. The method(s) and timeframe for nominating officers.
   c. A designation of responsibilities for the receipt and tallying of ballots, the date of the election, and the method of certifying the results.
   d. A statement that neither the election committee nor the nominating committee shall contain elected members of the governing body or candidates for elective office in the election.
   e. ** (Recommended but not required)* A statement that anonymity of voters shall be preserved.
   f. ** (Recommended but not required)* A statement either that write-in votes are allowed or that they are not allowed.

7) **Amendments to the Bylaws:** *The following is required:*
   a. A statement as to how amendments to the bylaws may be proposed.
   b. A statement that proposed amendments shall be submitted to, and approved for balloting by, the American Mensa Committee before balloting by the local group membership.
   c. A statement that, following such Board approval for balloting, proposed amendments shall be sent to all members of the local group either as an insert in, or as a part of, the official publication, or as a separate mailing.
   d. A statement that a ballot shall be mailed to each member of the local group as an insert in, or as part of, the official publication or as a separate mailing.

e. A statement that there must be a minimum of 90 days between the date of publication of the proposed amendments and the deadline for receipt of ballots.

f. A statement of the percentage of votes received that is required to pass a proposed amendment.

g. A statement that local group bylaws and bylaw amendments are not effective until they are both approved by the local group membership and given final approval by the American Mensa Committee after filing of revised bylaws with the Bylaws Committee. After filing of the amended bylaws with the Bylaws Committee after the membership has voted, the Bylaws Committee will notify the local group of the effective date of the bylaws as amended.

8) **Mensa Name & Logo:** *The following clause is **required verbatim**, with the blanks filled in with the name of the local group or corporation:*

> American Mensa, Ltd. (AML) has granted a royalty free, nonexclusive license to_____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_____. AML retains full ownership of the mark and logo and all statutory and common law rights in the mark and logo.

9) **Authorities**:

a. ***The following is required:*** A statement that 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

b. ***The following is recommended but not required:*** A statement naming a standard parliamentary authority.