

**Agenda
Regular Meeting of
Greater Los Angeles Area Mensa
Board of Directors**

**9 July 2011 – 11:00 a.m.
Pilgrim Towers
440 North Madison Avenue
Pasadena, California**

- I. Opening
 - A. Call to Order
 - B. Approval of Agenda

- II. New Business
 - A. Awards Committee Proposal (Awards Committee)
 - B. 2011 – 2012 FY Proposed Budget (Finance Committee)

- III. Special Orders
 - A. Ombudsman Report (K. SAGRAY)
 - B. Appointment of Vacant Board Positions
 - C. Appointment of Vacant Chairs/Coordinators

- IV. New Business Continued
 - C. 2016 AG (SAGRAY)
 - D. Special Events Committee (SAGRAY)
 - E. 50th Anniversary Committee (SAGRAY)

- V. Unfinished Business
 - A. Lapsed Member Mailing (SAGRAY)

- VI. Opening Continued
 - C. Approval of Previous Minutes – May and June 2011

- VII. Reports
 - A. Executive Officers
 - B. Area Reports
 - C. Members-at-Large
 - D. Standing Committees
 - E. Coordinators

- VIII. Closing
 - A. Good of the Order
 - B. Adjournment

LocSec's Report – Submitted by SAGRAY

There are several items to be noted this month:

1. LDW was completed on June 26, 2011. We are in the process of submitting the paperwork to Peggy Panke Smith and/or the National Office in order to obtain our reimbursement. The total budget for this event comes in much lower than our \$1,500.00. We spent \$139.94 on notebooks, handouts, and supplies. The hotel is sending us a refund for \$75 based on our original payment for the facility as they did not charge us taxes or service charges on the room rental fee itself. Final Budget numbers to be reported after contact with the National Office.
2. I received the resignation of Jennifer Venola Board member and Secretary on June 6, 2011. We are seeking her replacement as Secretary as soon as possible as well as any candidate seeking to be on the Board representing the Hi-Desert Area.
3. I recently updated all of our officers with the National Office so mailings as of August 2011 should be accurate.
4. GLAAM had two Culture Quest teams in the Top 20: Tumbling Tumbleweeds and Glamarama. This is more money for our Scholarship Fund. Congratulations to those two teams!
5. At the ABM in Portland, several reports were read, referred to or summarized regarding the state of Mensa. This is the 40th anniversary of MERF this year. Mensa had a “flat” growth last year and more effort is being made to reach out through social media and testing to increase numbers. The Election of the AMC that was marred by inaccurate results in two races, subsequently investigated and “audited”, has been cleared up and the new AMC took their positions as of July 1, 2011.

Materials Submitted by Brian Madsen: Calendar Editor, Webmaster, Data Officer, SIGs Officer and Roster:

I am unable to attend this board meeting, but will attend the one on August 6th.

Items of newsworthiness to note:

- 1) Recent laws enacted in California have prompted Amazon.com to terminate our account with them.
- 2) Our roster in the September issue of the newsletter will be based on data provided to me at the start of August, which means that if you don't like the way your contact information appears, now is the time to change it.
- 3) I need approved minutes from May and June's board meetings, and an agenda for July's.
- 4) GLAD, The Gay SIG Potluck has returned to our calendar, and Mid-City Dining has been removed. There is also a new Young Ms event every fourth Friday.

(New Business A)

GLAAM AWARDS PROPOSAL 2011

This proposal is organized for the Board's convenience into the following 11 sections:

PURPOSE
REASONS
TYPES OF AWARDS
SELECTION CRITERIA
AWARDS PRESENTATION
FINANCIAL IMPACT
COMMITTEE PROCEDURES
SUSTAINABILITY
WHAT'S ALREADY BEEN DONE
WHAT STILL NEEDS TO BE DONE
FORMAL MOTION

PURPOSE: To create an ongoing program whereby GLAAM members are more formally and permanently recognized among the entire membership for their current and past contributions of service to the Mensa organization at all levels.

REASONS:

- 1) **To recognize past volunteerism.** While it is true that many Mensa members volunteer simply out of recognition of the need for certain jobs to get done in order to keep the organization operating, and/or for the simple satisfaction of knowing that an important job has been well done, it is also true that many other members feel much more gratified when they know that we their fellow members recognize and appreciate their efforts, including (in some cases) after they're no longer with us. The Awards Committee therefore feels that we owe it to our past volunteers to create a lasting remembrance of their contributions, particularly for those who performed an exceptionally extensive amount of service, and who have helped to shape GLAAM and Mensa into what we know and enjoy today.
- 2) **To encourage future volunteerism.** Of course, positive reinforcement works best when it happens immediately, so the Awards Committee also feels that we should do more to recognize exceptional current service within the same time period in which that service has been performed. Knowing that widespread recognition and appreciation among our peer members can happen within a contemporary timeframe might spur some

of our members to step forward and volunteer who might not have done so otherwise.

TYPES OF AWARDS:

There are two main types of awards that we feel should be presented, Contemporary and Permanent.

Contemporary Awards – We feel that there should be three:

Mensan of the Year – Goes to the GLAAM member who contributed the most service to the Mensa organization during the preceding 1-year term of the GLAAM Board of Directors.

Rookie of the Year – Goes to the new GLAAM member who displays the most energy and enthusiasm in getting actively involved with the Mensa organization right away.

Certificate of Appreciation – May be awarded at any time on a discretionary basis by either the Awards Committee or the full Board. (For, no matter how much objectivity we may wish to introduce into the other award categories, we still would like to reserve the option to make a spontaneous award presentation based simply upon our own subjective judgment.) Is independent of whether or not the subject has been the recipient of any other award. Can apply either following completion of a specific project, or in recognition of a long period of service.

Permanent Awards – We currently envision only one award in this category:

Hall of Fame – A permanent listing of all those GLAAM members (living and deceased) who made exceptionally large lifetime contributions of service to the Mensa organization. To be displayed as a permanent feature on the GLAAM website, and also to be printed on an annual basis in the GLAAM newsletter.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

Again, for the Certificates of Appreciation, there are no selection criteria other than the aggregate subjective judgment of either the Awards Committee and/or the full Board of Directors.

For all other proposed awards, we feel that we should try to make the selection process as objective as we practically can. For, GLAAM's history is filled with situations where personal affections or political animosities had tremendous influence over Board operations. If such subjective sentiments were allowed to

pervade the GLAAM awards program, then it would be very easy for certain individuals to be recognized who really didn't do all that much, whereas certain other individuals might not receive the recognition which they truly deserve.

THEREFORE, pursuant to the suggestion of the original Awards Committee Chair, Jana Bickel, who imported the idea from successful use in Toastmasters, WE PROPOSE THAT we credit all our volunteers for their service according to a '**points schema**' which gives correspondingly greater weight to those positions which generally involve greater levels of work and/or responsibility.

However, even though we are aiming for maximum objectivity and fairness and consistency in our awards program, yet we must also acknowledge the reality that some people just don't do their jobs very well (or at all), whereas some other people go way above and beyond the standard expectations of their volunteer positions. When there exists clearly documented evidence of such exceptional performance, we agree that it is both acceptable and appropriate to make small adjustments to the base credit rate according to the incumbents' relative performance level.

The specific points schema proposed by the Committee appears in Appendix B.

In order to qualify for credit as a GLAAM volunteer, the subject must have performed the service while a member of GLAAM. However, the credited service may be to any level of Mensa, from Area to International, since volunteering service to Mensa outside the chapter level both improves the health of GLAAM and also reflects greater credit upon our chapter in the eyes of our peers elsewhere in the Mensa organization.

Candidates for Rookie of the Year must have belonged to Mensa for less than 24 months as of the end of the Board term for which award recipients are being selected.

Generally, in the interests of objectivity, the awards for Mensan of the Year and Rookie of the Year will go to those qualifying GLAAM members who accumulate the highest number of points according to the adopted schema as individually adjusted. However, we also allow that some unforeseen circumstance may make us want to override the results of the strict points calculation, so we are allowing that 'out' in our process. Thus, in order to maximize objectivity, but still allow an 'out', if the Committee ever feels that someone should receive an annual award other than the member who accumulated the most points that year, then both names shall be submitted to the full Board of Directors for final decision.

Enrollment in the Hall of Fame shall be strictly by point count. We envision 4 levels of recognition in this category, from Bronze through Silver and Gold to Platinum. Each level has its own point cutoff.

AWARDS PRESENTATION:

Best to present awards when the greatest number of people are present to see it happen, so we recommend making a big ceremonial awards presentation at each year's Regional Gathering (RG), preferably during an Annual Business Meeting or other 'plenary session' which hopefully will not get scheduled opposite any other program activity.

As long as the RG continues to happen in February, that should give the Awards Committee plenty of time each year to review the accomplishments of all our volunteers for the preceding May-April term, and to arrange for the preparation of any certificates or plaques or other physical awards.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The Awards Committee has investigated the nearly limitless options for physical awards. After consultation with Spidell Specialities, a partner who has very ably serviced our award needs in recent years, we have determined that the cost for the awards that is consistent with the Committee's current view is as follows:

A) Mensan of the Year and Rookie of the Year awards could be small trophies acquired for \$20-\$30 each. We anticipate awarding both every year, including this "first year" for the Board Year 2010 - 2011.

B) Hall of Fame recognition for the Platinum Level, recognizing years of service to the chapter, should be a substantial award. It took about 40 years for GLAAM to get even one recipient (Gowen) and it is likely that the ensuing 10 years will have netted us only one more. This is not likely to be a common award, but it does recognize significant service, and estimating \$100 for the cost of a physical award to present to a living and still-active GLAAM member allows for an extremely nice piece memorializing a volunteer's service.

C) Hall of Fame recognition for lower levels would be limited to something like lapel pins and/or star clusters of approximately \$3.50-\$5.00 per person.

With the above in consideration, the committee anticipates approximately \$500 for the first year to cover the necessary awards costs for presentation at the 50th Anniversary RG. Subsequent years are anticipated to cost no more than \$75 if no Platinum Hall of Fame recipient or \$175.00 if there is a Platinum Hall of Fame recipient in any one year.

COMMITTEE PROCEDURES:

For any readers interested in this level of detail, here is a brief sequential summary of the main activities which we envision the Awards Committee to be performing each year:

- 1) **Tabulating volunteer data** – Primary source of information is the GLAAM newsletter, supplemented as desired by Board Minutes or the national *Mensa Bulletin* or other official documents. Looking for Board offices occupied, Executive Officer elections, Committee/Coordinator positions held, SIGs managed, general parties or Open Houses hosted, national/international officer appointments, and basically anything else that we can find of any value to the Mensa organization at any level. Include notations as applicable for partial-year service or officially-acknowledged exceptional performance.
- 2) **Assigning point credits** – Using the adopted ‘points schema’ (to be updated when necessary for new positions as they get created), create spreadsheet or other table where each volunteer who performs the stated service for the entire May-April term of the Board (if no official documentation of exceptional performance) receives the full point value indicated in the schema. Prorate as applicable for partial-year service, but always round to whole numbers. When adjusting for documented exceptional performance, obtain consensus of entire Awards Committee, in order to mitigate the effects of personal favoritism, and refer any disputes up to the full Board of Directors for final decision.
- 3) **Selecting actual award recipients** – As previously noted, the Mensan of the Year and Rookie of the Year shall generally be those qualifying GLAAM members with the highest point credits for the preceding Board term. Any decision to override the strict point count should require consensus of the entire Awards Committee, or else a majority vote of the Board of Directors.
- 4) **Updating master database** – This is where we keep track of everybody’s credited point totals, year by year, so that we can view lifetime point totals to tell us who qualifies for the different levels of the Hall of Fame. The Awards Committee will update this database each year with the points calculated in Step 2 above, and determine from the lifetime totals whether anyone new should be added to the Hall of Fame, or whether anyone should be moved up to a higher level. Best for the master copy of this database to reside online for access by multiple Committee members, but with offline backups as appropriate. Notify the Editor and Webmaster of the updated Hall of Fame listing.
- 5) **Arranging for physical awards** – Select vendors, obtain price quotes, submit annual budgets for Board approval. Upon determination of award recipients (including new enrollees and/or advancing ‘graduates’ in the Hall of Fame), submit names to vendors for preparation of physical awards.
- 6) **Preparing biographies for Hall of Fame** – We envision that each name on the Web version of the Hall of Fame should link to a short biography of why that person is there. It should at least list the main offices held, including any notations as to exceptionally good performance, but can also be expanded as

desired to include photographs and/or the narrative recollections of other GLAAM members who knew the enrollee personally.

SUSTAINABILITY:

But, can we be sure that this program will continue to operate even after the people who initiated it have moved on to other challenges? And, if we cannot be sure, do we really want to vote in favor of starting the program? Both are important questions. We will answer them both here.

No, there is no guarantee that the program once begun will always continue without interruption, any more that we can guarantee that we will always have people willing to edit the newsletter or manage the RG or prepare our financial statements. All our chapter's operations are dependent upon volunteers to keep them running, and the awards program is no different. However, there are some things that we can do to *maximize our chances* of indefinite sustainability, and we hope that these will prove sufficient for favorable consideration of this proposal:

- **Spread the labor.** We don't want to become too dependent on any one person to do everything, for it would then be very difficult to find someone who would even be *able* to take over all the functions of the Committee all at once, let alone *willing*. Best therefore to make sure that we have several people on the team, with each team member being responsible for only 1-2 out of the 6 main functions listed above. It's a lot easier to find volunteers when the jobs are smaller.

- **Recruit 1-2 new Committee members each year.** Don't bother to try to recruit too many team members for long-term service all at once, because relying on a task that difficult could negatively impact sustainability. Best to set achievable goals, which in this case means bringing in a small-but-steady stream of new volunteers over time, thus allowing other Committee members to retire and move on to other challenges when they're ready. Recruitment happens best at the RG, when you have the most potential volunteers present. Make it a standard practice, directly after we give out the actual awards, but directly before we return control to whoever is serving as 'Toastmaster' of the overall 'plenary session', we make a pitch to everybody that we would like to have 1-2 new people join the team. Tout it to new members as a way of getting involved and getting to know the 'in-people' quickly. Tout it to older members as a way to share their historical knowledge, especially when it comes to editing the biography section. If we fail to pick up anybody at the RG, then we work with the Membership Outreach Committee to 'beat the bushes' as needed.

- **Progressive training.** As we bring in new recruits, don't overwhelm them by making them learn the entire process all at once. Give them small and easy jobs to start with, and expose them to other aspects of the operation over time (probably in the sequence listed above, though not necessarily)

only if they evince an intent to stay with the team, while their previous jobs get taken over by newer team members. Eventually, some people will stay with the Committee long enough to learn the entire operation, including the recruitment end, and these will be your prime candidates for future Committee Chairs.

Basically, when we make things more organized and systematic, we stand the best chance of making it routine and self-sustaining.

But, what if it still doesn't work? Should we really vote to start a program that we may not be able to maintain indefinitely? Well, as you might expect, the Awards Committee claims yes, and we offer two main reasons why:

- **Built-in permanent reminder.** Even if an interruption in Committee operations ever does occur, the very fact that the then-current Hall of Fame appears on the website will serve as a constant reminder to us that it wants periodic updating, so that will greatly improve our chances that *somebody* will step forward to take the job over without too much of a break. But, we have to have the affirmative vote of the Board before we can create that Hall of Fame page for a permanent reminder.
- **Some recognition is better than none.** Even if an interruption in Committee operations ever does occur, at least *some* of our current key volunteers will have received the recognition that we hope will encourage both them and others toward further volunteerism, and at least *some* of our past key volunteers will have their stories permanently enshrined in our Hall of Fame. The Awards Committee claims that this outcome is still significantly better than what we have now, and so again we strongly recommend an affirmative vote by the Board.

WHAT'S ALREADY BEEN DONE:

- We have drafted a set of Guidelines (presented in Appendix A) for the standing Awards Committee.
- We have a proposed points schema (presented in Appendix B), which has already been vetted extensively by several previous Awards Committee members, and which in particular reflects the suggestion from an earlier Awards Committee to allow for more specificity by switching from a 1-5 scale to 1-10.
- We have a Word document (presented in Appendix C) that lists out (according to the GLAAM newsletter) every job that anybody ever had, or SIG that anybody ever coordinated, or Open House that anybody ever hosted, from 1962 to 1999. Includes notations for partial-year service, as well as the Committee's recommendations for credit adjustments based on documentation in the GLAAM newsletter of exceptionally good or exceptionally poor performance.

- We have a separate document (presented in Appendix D) which rearranges this data to show alphabetically everybody who volunteered in any way during each Board year through April 1996, along with the functions which they performed (including notes as to partial-year service and/or exceptional performance), and the points credited from Appendix B by the previous Awards Committee for those functions. The detail for the 3 years of 5/1996-4/1999 has been lost to file conversion, but the total individual points for those years survive in Appendix E, and the detail can be reconstructed from Appendix C if it is ever necessary, which we do not anticipate.
- We have an Excel spreadsheet (presented in Appendix E) tabulating the total points credited by the previous Awards Committee to each individual for each year from 1962 to 1999, in descending order by individual total.
- We have used the distribution of these total point values to arrive at suggested point cutoffs for the different levels of the Hall of Fame: Bronze – 75; Silver – 150; Gold – 225; Platinum – 300

WHAT STILL NEEDS TO BE DONE:

- We still need to catch up our historical research from 1999 to 2011, a one-time job which can be divided among several volunteers if necessary.
- We need to apply the points schema to the functions performed from 1999-2011, and arrive at an updated listing of Hall of Fame enrollees.
- We need to look in particular at the points credited for the period of 5/1/2010-5/7/2011 in order to help us determine the current Mensan of the Year and Rookie of the Year.
- We need to decide what exactly we want to have in the way of physical awards (see discussion of Financial Impact above), and then to create those awards for the current Mensan of the Year and Rookie of the Year, as well as for all those Hall of Fame enrollees who are expected to be with us at the RG in February 2012.

FORMAL MOTION:

The following motion is formally offered by the Awards Committee, and therefore does not require a second:

- 1) To maintain an ongoing Awards Program within Greater Los Angeles Area Mensa (GLAAM), for the purpose of recognizing those GLAAM members who have gone ‘above and beyond’ in providing volunteer service to the Mensa organization at all levels;**
- 2) To establish the special Awards Committee as a standing committee to manage the program;**
- 3) To amend the Guidelines to include the provisions for the standing Awards Committee presented in Appendix A;**

- 4) To instruct the Awards Committee to produce nominations each year for Mensan of the Year and Rookie of the Year, based primarily on application of the 'points schema' presented in Appendix B to those volunteer functions performed during the preceding 1-year Board term, but with discretion on the part of either the Awards Committee or the full Board of Directors to override the strict point count by majority vote, and with candidates for Rookie of the Year needing to have belonged to Mensa for less than 24 months as of the end of the preceding Board term in order to qualify;
- 5) To accept as certified the historical record presented in Appendix C of functions from 1962 to 1999, along with the point credits previously calculated for those years by the special Awards Committee, and the point cutoffs suggested for the different levels of permanent recognition in our 'Hall of Fame', subject to modification of any element at any time by majority vote of the Board of Directors;
- 6) To instruct the Awards Committee to update the historical record and annual points table to include functions performed through May 7, 2011, to nominate a Mensan of the Year and a Rookie of the Year for the 2010-11 term, and to produce an updated list of 'Hall of Fame' enrollees, all in time to prepare physical awards for ceremonial presentation at the 50th-anniversary GLAAM Regional Gathering in February 2012;
- 7) To authorize the 'Hall of Fame' to be printed on an annual basis in the GLAAM newsletter, and to appear as a permanent page on the GLAAM website, to include links by name to biographical information on the different enrollees.
- 8) To appropriate \$500 to be spent on physical awards during the fiscal year of 2011-12, with approximately \$75-175 to be appropriated in each future year, subject to future modification by the Board of Directors.

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The Awards Committee sincerely thanks the Board for its consideration of this proposal, and stands ready to answer any questions or discuss any suggestions for improvement.

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APPENDICES

- A - proposed Guidelines
- B – proposed Points Schema
- C – listing by function of volunteer services performed from 1962-1999
- D – history by year of all volunteers, with points credited for each function performed
- E – spreadsheet of point credits by individual by year, with lifetime totals

(New Business B) **NOTE – Budget is Separate Excel Document**

New Business C – 2016 AG

LaRae Bakerink approached me as the GLAAM LocSec and the OC LocSec at the 2011 AG. She noted that San Diego was considering a bid for 2016 and thought that it might be possible to present the proposal more from a combined Consortium of Members than a single local group. To that end, she was asking us to consider if GLAAM would be willing to commit to participating in the bid and putting on of the 2016 AG to be located in Southern California.

New Business D – Special Events Committee

GLAAM has been enjoying a couple of years with more and more of our popular activities designed for participation by members from all areas of our chapter. These Special Events, originally limited to our RG have grown to now included the Hollywood Bowl, the Picnics in Griffith Park, and more recently the ongoing special cultural events largely organized by Madeline Walker. As the popularity of these events has been demonstrated and events expanded, I wished to propose a Committee that is basically tasked with helping to organize, plan, and coordinate these events. To that end, I propose the following:

MOTION I: To create a Special Events Committee. The charge of this committee is to help coordinate and plan Special Events that are targeted at the entire chapter membership and arranged for by the Board of Directors and/or individual members seeking to put together an event that takes advance planning due to ticket sales or space reservations.

MOTION II: To appoint MADELINE WALKER as Special Events Committee Chair.

New Business E – 50th Anniversary Committee

GLAAM celebrates 50 years of existence in 2012. We are proud to be the first American Mensa local group organized after the New York chapter was founded as “American Mensa” in 1960. In order to fully celebrate and recognize this milestone in a meaningful way, it seems appropriate to create a Committee that is charged with coming up with ways and methods to celebrate our 50 years of existence and present proposals to the GLAAM Board of Directors.

MOTION: To create a 50th Anniversary Committee. The charge of this committee is to come up with ways and methods to celebrate our 50 years of existence and present proposals to the GLAAM Board of Directors so that action may be taken to fully celebrate and mark this milestone of GLAAM.