ANNUAL GATHERING HANDBOOK OF AMERICAN MENSA, LTD.

Revised October 1993

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PREFACE:

In preparing this handbook it is assumed you have attended previous Annual Gatherings, and worked at and/or attended Regional Gatherings. Although this handbook is written for Annual Gatherings, much of the information will be helpful to committees of Regional Gatherings.

There are few rules for conducting/hosting Mensa gatherings; you may want to follow all the suggestions offered here, you may have other ideas that can be incorporated in future AG Handbooks. The information presented here is the cumulative information gleaned from numerous past gatherings. It is hoped that by pooling the resources of many members, including several past AG Chairs, we have provided a thorough and detailed handbook for conducting an AG. We have attempted to provide as much information as possible to make this the definitive text.

Good luck in your new and exciting adventure.

THIS AG HANDBOOK PREPARED BY THE 1991-92 COMMITTEE

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COMMITTEE PLANNING

YOUR BID:

You will need to submit your AG bid to the Site Selection Committee approximately two years prior to the Gathering. Calls for AG bids are announced periodically in the Bulletin and memos from national, listing due dates. Traditionally, the AMC 1st Vice Chairman heads this committee. Do not go overboard in preparing a bid. Only those forms approved by the Site Selection Committee will be accepted, but you may include brochures of the hotel(s) you are considering.

* See Appendix A for Guidelines for AG Site Selection.
* See Appendix B for Information Needed For AG Bid Comparison.
* See Appendix C for a copy of the Annual Gathering Host Agreement.
* See Appendix D for Gathering Approval Request.

THE BUDGET:

A preliminary budget must be prepared, based on the AG plans and reports of previous AGs, and submitted with your bid to the Site Selection Committee. It is recommended that you prepare up to three budgets based on various attendance figures (1000, 1200, 1500 attendees). Be sure to incorporate any "free" registrations in your budget figures. This, to a large extent, will determine the registration fees to be charged. Once your group has been selected to host the AG, a more detailed budget can be developed. The host group should expect to make a reasonable, modest profit, but keep in mind that economic conditions can cause a deficit. Be aware of this when planning your budget. Remember that any profits realized are split with American Mensa, Ltd. (The first $4,000, of any profit will go to the host group, with the remainder (if any) going to AML. Any losses are also split with AML. Should the AMC be required to assume control of the AG, the host group is entitled to only $3,000 of any profit realized.)

* See Appendix E for a Sample AG Budget.

THE AG CHAIRMAN:

The name of the person who will chair the AG is required information on the bid forms. Appointing the AG Chairman is usually completed by the local group executive committee/board prior to submitting your bid, but some groups delay the official appointment until after the group is confirmed as host. Knowing the name of the person responsible for Chairing the event might make a difference in whether your group is awarded the AG. If you do delay appointing an AG Chairman until you have been confirmed as host, you will still need a Bid Committee Chairman.

The success of the Annual Gathering is ultimately the responsibility of the local executive committee and the AMC, and the AG Chairman should make frequent reports to the ExComm and AMC informing them of all activities and finances. Reporting assignments and the degree of autonomy to be given to the AG Chairman and AG Committee should be determined by the Excomm up front to avoid any potential conflicts later.

ASSISTANT/CO-CHAIRMAN:
Some groups may consider naming a Co-Chairman, but it may be difficult dividing responsibility. It may be more advantageous to have an Assistant Chairman rather than Co-Chairs. The appointment of a strong person as Assistant is extremely desirable. The Vice/Assistant Chairman serves as a "safety valve", confidante and equal, working directly with the Chairman, providing a back-up should it be necessary to replace the Chairman.

If Co-Chairs are appointed, compatibility is critical. While they do not have to agree on all aspects of the event, there is no room for animosity between Co-Chairs.

AG COMMITTEE:
The AG Chairman has the responsibility of choosing the various sub-committee chairmen. Assignments should be grouped so that as few persons as possible (approximately 5-10), will be reporting directly to the AG Chairman.

It is inevitable that some local members will be overworked or feel imposed upon. Care should be taken to avoid this where possible, and a public recognition of a job well done will usually help. Some AGs have appointed an ombudsman to help smooth ruffled feathers, but most have been able to resolve any problems that come up without resorting to this extreme.

* See Appendix F for an example of an organizational chart.

AG THEME:
Some AGs have had their program built around a theme. A theme could have certain advertising and publicity value, but if carried to extremes, this might be restrictive. Some of those attending might not be interested in the subject selected. If you decide to use a theme, be sure it is broad reaching enough to give you flexibility in your programs/activities.

AMC ASSISTANCE
The responsibility for a successful AG depends primarily on the host group, AG Committee, and the AMC. The AMC needs to be assured that the site chosen is adequate, and that planning is sound. The AMC will appoint a Gathering Coordinator to advise and assist the AG Committee in arranging the hotel facilities, progress reporting, and make certain that all is on schedule. Generally, expenses for the site visitation of the Gathering Coordinator are paid from the AMC Budget, but the host group is responsible for any expenses above and beyond the Gathering Coordinator budget.

The AG Committee should work with the AMC liaison and the national office in scheduling any meetings required by the AMC and AML. This will always include the Annual Business Meeting of AML, and may include workshops for local group officers, an AMC rap session, and various leadership programs.

HOTEL SELECTION/COORDINATION

HOTEL SELECTION:

Choosing the host hotel is not an easy task. You must consider numerous criteria before signing a contract. The ideal situation is to have your hotel selection made and in writing (in the form of a proposal or proposed contract), before submitting your bid. A Mensa gathering is desirable business for a hotel. You will be in a stronger bargaining position if the hotel believes that a favorable agreement will help secure the gathering and assure them of the contract.

In smaller cities this may not always be the case. If there are only one or two hotels that are capable of hosting a gathering this size, you may find it difficult to negotiate a contract to your liking. In such a situation, you may want to consider listing all hotels in your bid, and, if awarded the AG, have a professional negotiator, Gathering Coordinator, or AMC member with experience in convention planning, assist you in negotiating the contract.

List all hotels that would be suitable sites, visit them all, get their proposals, and don't hesitate to negotiate! Keep in mind that a proposal is only a starting point to the negotiating process.

NEGOTIATING THE HOTEL CONTRACT:

To help you understand the negotiating process, there are a couple of terms you should become familiar with:

* Rack Rate - The published price of a hotel room. The amount someone would pay for a room if they just walked in.

* Comp Units - A free (complimentary) room awarded for a certain number of rooms sold.

Hotels make their money primarily from the sleeping rooms sold, meals purchased, and additional business that a convention generates. Use this information to your advantage. Stress the number of rooms you expect to fill. (This number increases as the event progresses, with a maximum number of approximately 500 rooms required for the peak nights of Friday and Saturday.) Agree up front on the number of room-nights required for a Comp unit. Each hotel has a different approach to comps, but the average number is one comp for every 50 rooms sold. Try to negotiate a comp rate of one per 40 on a cumulative basis rather than per night.

Comp units can be used for a variety of purposes: to "pay" for your Hospitality Suites (if not negotiated free), to award free rooms to your key committee members, and to provide accommodations for out-of-town speakers, or VIPs if enough comp rooms are expected.

The number of meals you expect to sell will usually provide you with a negotiating point. By setting a realistic meal number you will usually receive all your meeting room space comp. Check the capacity of the dining rooms and the provisions for overflow attendance. But beware: NEVER guarantee or commit to a specific number of meals. If you are unable to sell this number, you will still be obligated to pay the full amount. Leave meal counts flexible, and update them regularly with the hotel as your counts change.

Have a clear understanding of what the hotel will provide, including:

* Number of sleeping rooms to be blocked (held for Mensa), and how long
* Room rates (try to obtain the same rate for Single/Double/Triple/Quad)
* Meal prices (subject to a cost of living adjustment)
* Meeting rooms
* Hospitality space
* Comp rooms for your committee
* Equipment (tables, chairs, A/V equipment, bulletin boards, etc.)
* Services

From a cost standpoint, it is extremely beneficial to be able to provide all your own food and drink in your hospitality suites. While not every hotel will negotiate this issue, most will be willing to compromise to a point. If you have more than one hotel capable of hosting the event, providing your own hospitality fare may be the deciding factor the determines which hotel receives the contract. You will be able to provide significantly more food and drink at a much lower cost by purchasing food outside the hotel and staffing the suites with volunteers.

This is an important point in providing attendees with what they have come to expect from an Annual Gathering. If you are unable to reach an agreement on this issue, make sure your contract includes the costs and any limitations the hotel will impose. Also, make sure the contract allows you to supply your own provisions if the hotel falls short or is unable to provide the necessary fare. If you have been negotiating for a ballroom hospitality suite, changing to a bedroom/parlor style may help you get around the hotel policies (ballrooms are sometimes controlled by catering, while suites are handled by the sales department).

Get everything in writing! Staff turnover in hotels is brisk. The person you negotiate with now, will probably not be the person who handles your account when the event occurs.

PROVISIONS FOR HANDICAPPED GUESTS:

You are certain to have a number of handicapped guests, so make sure there are wheelchair ramps and elevators that serve all activity areas. Some hotels have sleeping rooms with wide doors for guests in wheelchairs. It may also be beneficial to note if the hotel has non-smoking rooms available. Make sure you inform your registrants of this information.

PARKING:
The hotel liaison should check the availability of parking (costs, location, etc.) for guests of the hotel, and for local members attending the AG, and make this information available in the registration packet. They should also arrange parking provisions for any recreational vehicles, and, if possible, one day free parking for speakers and entertainers.

ALTERNATE SITES:
As hotel costs escalate, especially in larger cities, AG host groups may consider college campuses or conference centers instead of standard hotels. While such accommodations have met with limited success in the past, this may be an acceptable alternative for groups in smaller cities wishing to host an AG.

It is a good practice to have an alternate hotel lined up in case your initial hotel fails to live up to the terms of the contract, cancels the contract, or mother nature intervenes. In addition, it is a good idea to have a second hotel selected to house any registrants if/when the host hotel fills. Listing a less expensive hotel nearby is good PR as well.

You will need to have a provisional contract with this second hotel, listing the rates and number of sleeping rooms blocked. Make sure that this contract can be cancelled without penalty if no rooms are booked by your AG attendees.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS:
Those attending the AG must make their own hotel reservations. It is not the responsibility of the AG Committee to make room reservations for the members. You are strongly advised against attempting to do so. Any discount coupons or special hotel rate information should be provided in your advertisements and on the publicity fliers. Some guests may wish to stay a few extra days or arrive a few days early to see the sights and visit the city. For this reason, the Hotel Liaison should ensure that early arrivals and late departures receive the same favorable rates as those charged during the days of the event.

ADVANCE REGISTRATION/REGISTRATION PACKETS

REGISTRAR-ADVANCE WORK:
It is vital that registrations be handled carefully and methodically. The person you choose as Registrar should be computer literate, detail oriented, and have vast amounts of time to process mountains of paperwork.

As registrations are received, each should be checked for clarity and a running record kept by the Registrar. Checks should be sent to the Treasurer immediately, and registration forms distributed to the AG Chairman. (Some groups find it beneficial to divide the reports in numerical, zip code, and alphabetic order. It eases the process of researching registrant's requests.) The printout should show a registration number, name, address, meals ordered, other payments, total amount paid, and any amount still owed, for each registrant.

It is critical that the Registrar have ready access (i.e. at home) to a PC and printer, and have the ability to generate lists, labels, and letters off of the registration data base. Labels will be needed for acknowledgments and for registration packages. Final AG registration printouts can be posted on a bulletin board near the registration desk during the AG.

* See Appendix G for Registrar Qualifications and Duties.

COMPLIMENTARY REGISTRATIONS:
It is customary and proper to offer the top four International Officers of Mensa complimentary registrations as a show of respect for the offices. While not all of the officers will attend, it is the gesture that counts. These should be offered with personal invitations from the AG Committee, and the costs figured into the AG budget. A listing of all officers is printed in each issue of the Mensa Bulletin. Usually, the 1st Vice-Chairman of the AMC has the responsibility to invite these officers.

It should not be overlooked that giving a certain number of AG registrations away as gifts, door prizes, and promotional publicity is well worth the cost. Provided you do not go overboard on free registrations, the goodwill and additional registrations you will receive are a prime source of publicity. You should decide up front how many, and where, these complimentary registrations will be given away. Make sure you figure their costs into your initial budget.

* Also see "Mensa Advertising" under PUBLICITY.

REGISTRATION ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:
Acknowledgments MUST be mailed out as registrations are received! This is very important. Members need to know you have received their payments, and are anxious to obtain more information about the AG. Early confirmations can be a simple postcard, but acknowledgment packages should follow as soon as possible.

Acknowledgement packages should contain the following information:

* Hotel directions from all points, including a map
* Transportation options from the airport, including costs and times
* Clothing suggestions
* Special events not mentioned in your advertisements
* Information on parking options
* Meal packages
* Receipt for payment received
* Information on any boutique items you may be offering
* Information on any tours offered

A good rule of thumb is to send an acknowledgment post card as soon as a registration is received, with the full package being sent 4-6 months prior to the AG.

As soon as you have full registration packages available, the postcard can be eliminated. A well-planned and executed acknowledgment campaign can be the best word of mouth advertising you receive.

Registration packets should be numbered, so registration volunteers can easily check off the packets as they are distributed. Have these at the Registration desk so that your guests can register without delay. Have a sign-in sheet at the desk so a record can be kept of the arrivals (this information will be helpful to future AG Committees), or you may want to consider an alternative: Have a labeled card in each envelope that can be removed and filed as a record of arrivals.

REGISTRATION PACKETS:

Have an envelope prepared in advance for each person registered with a label affixed for easy identification. The label should clearly indicate any monies still owed.

This envelope should contain the following:

* Name tag
* Name tag holder
* AG program(s)
* Meal tickets (if purchased)
* Tickets and information on any tours purchased
* Late breaking news
* Notepaper and pen/pencil

Rather than have all the information in the registration envelopes, you may want to have an Information Desk where guests can obtain maps, restaurant lists, points of interest, sign-up sheets for tours, etc. The more innovative guests will even design their own sign-up sheets for various and sundry excursions.

NAME TAGS:
Mensans like to collect name tags, so make yours as attractive as possible (budget allowing). The usual size is 3 1/2 by 2 1/4 inches, but plastic holders are available for larger ones. Identify national officers, your committee members, host group members, guests, LocSecs, Editors, etc., by using different colors, ribbons, or some other means of identification. Registrants will usually let you know when they register what they would like included on their name tags. Have their names and cities in large, readable type.

SOUVENIRS:
Some gatherings have had souvenirs included in the registration packets, mostly advertising materials furnished by local merchants. Since many registrants are uninterested in these, you may want to have separate goodie bags for only those who want them. You should, however, offer a pen or pencil, and note paper with your registration envelopes.

TREASURER

Before an AG campaign can begin in earnest you must first determine if the local group has the funds necessary to start the process. You should have approximately $1,000 as seed money to open an AG bank account and get the ball rolling. If your local treasury is low on funds, seed money can be obtained from AML (American Mensa, Ltd). The LocSec, with the approval of the local ExComm, should submit a request to AML for this seed money. (Note: Any money obtained from AML is considered a loan, and must be paid back to AML in full before any reconciliation of the accounts.) Your LocSec should make the request to the AMC Chairman, with copies to the Treasurer and Executive Director. Funds should be available as soon as approval is granted.

All monies received from registrants should be sent to the Treasurer and deposited promptly in a separate, interest-bearing checking account. (Co-mingling of funds is strictly taboo!) Most of the money received will not be needed until the final settlement with the hotel after the AG, but there are many incidentals which will need to be paid prior to the event (publicity, printing, down payments on entertainment, etc.). In the meantime, funds can be invested and earn interest.

PUBLICITY

LOCAL MEMBER ATTENDANCE:
AG Chairmen are frequently disappointed at the perceived apathy displayed by local members who are unfamiliar with national gatherings. This can be countered by a campaign to enlist workers, especially for hospitality and registration assignments, perhaps offering a discount for those who work. Allow ample space in your newsletter, and time at monthly meetings, to promote attendance by all your local members. Free dinner meetings before the AG, and "Thank You" parties afterwards for your committee and volunteers are encouraged.

MENSA ADVERTISING:
Before advertising the AG, be sure to contact the Mensa Name and Logo Committee to obtain permission to use the Mensa logo. Since the Mensa logo is registered, you must use it as it was designed; it can not be altered.

The January/February issue of the Mensa Bulletin is a suitable time for your first AG advertisement, but you may want to consider running an article promoting the event a month or two sooner (Bulletin articles are published at no charge, but any registration forms and ads are charged at the going rate). Lead-time for the Bulletin publication is two months, so have your articles submitted well in advance. It is recommended that you quote room and meal prices in your publicity, and list any special speakers, tours, or activities to help generate interest.

You may also want to consider a half-page paid ad in the January/February issue, small notices and news stories in March and April, and the half-page paid ad again in May.

The editors of the Bulletin are more than happy to assist you in promoting the AG. A well-written article, photos, or announcements are always welcome. Be sure you complete all forms necessary to have the AG listed in the Mensa Bulletin gatherings section well in advance (usually the Bulletin will begin publicizing the AG approximately one year prior to the event). Listings in the Gatherings section is a free service, and you should take full advantage of it. Contact the National SIGs Coordinator or your RVC to obtain the necessary forms needed to get listed in the Gatherings section. You may also want to consider placing a small paid announcement in the International Journal as well.

You should have a supply of fliers prepared to hand out at any events you or your committee may attend, and to mail out to interested parties. The fliers should list the registration fee, address of Registrar, deadlines/cut-offs, meal costs, and the dates of the event. To get publicity in local group publications, send a supply of camera-ready, black and white fliers to the national office to be distributed to local group editors and LocSecs. It is a good practice to include ads in several different sizes (full page, 1/2 page, 1/4 page, etc.), as every group has different newsletter sizes and styles. Since a majority of attendees will probably come from within the chosen site's region, separate mail-outs to editors within your region can often be beneficial. Prepare your flier and Bulletin ad with great care. Obtain outside help if necessary. A well-prepared advertisement/flier creates a good first impression.

Another inexpensive advertisement tool is the postage "meter stamp" (also called a "slug"). For a small fee, the national office will have a meter stamp made from artwork you provide. This stamp will be placed on every piece of mail being sent from the national office, which could number in the thousands before the AG. A lot of publicity for a minuscule amount.

A sometimes overlooked opportunity for publicity is "free" registrations. You may want to consider setting aside a small number of registrations as giveaways. These you can offer to select RGs, events, people, etc., to be either auctioned off or given as prizes. There is no better advertisement than word of mouth. If you give one registration as a gift, that person is more likely to bring a paying guest.

* See Appendix H for sample Mensa Bulletin advertising rates.
* See Appendix I for Revised Gathering Approval Policy and Listing in the Bulletin.
* See Appendix J for Bulletin Listing Form.
* Also see "Complimentary Registrations" under ADVANCE REGISTRATIONS/REGISTRATION PACKETS.

LOCAL PUBLICITY:

Your Publicity Chairman should work closely with AML's public relations officer. A list of all local media should be obtained from your local Convention Bureau or Chamber of Commerce, and a press release issued to all those listed, 30-60 days prior to the AG, with a reminder 7-10 days in advance. Commitments should be obtained for radio and TV interviews, and for printed media news stories. Again, work closely with Mensa's national publicity consultant when scheduling interviews. Have escorts who are knowledgeable in the workings of Mensa available to accompany any reporters at all times.

AIRPORT WELCOMING SIGNS:

Most major cities now have welcoming signs located near the airport. Contact your local Convention and Visitors Bureau to obtain information on how to get the AG and Mensa posted on one of these signs. It makes a great first impression on your out of state guests, and adds that special touch of hospitality to your event.

PROGRAMS/SPEAKERS

THE PROGRAM SEMINARS:
Since attendees have been arriving earlier each year, all day Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and the morning of Sunday are the times you should set aside for the speaker programs, various workshops, seminars, and SIG meetings. Consider the capacities of the various rooms and be sure to have enough seating space scheduled to accommodate the anticipated attendance; you could have as many as 6-8 meeting rooms operating simultaneously. Experienced Mensa speakers say that 30-40 minutes is the right length for a lecture, some other groups recommend 1-1 1/4 hour. Whichever time period you decide on, make sure you allow enough time for questions and answers, and time to vacate the room and set up any A/V equipment for the next speaker. A 15 minute break is recommended between sessions to allow time for attendees to get a drink and reach their next seminar.

SPEAKERS:
Some committees have selected outstanding, versatile speakers, and let them name their own topics. Others have selected the topics they think would appeal to those attending, and then found speakers to present those topics. Perhaps a compromise is best.

It is suggested that you go outside the Mensa membership to find qualified speakers. Many may be willing to pay their own expenses for the opportunity to give a presentation to Mensa. If you decide to use Mensa members as presenters, keep in mind that knowing a topic does not necessarily mean they can conduct a good seminar. Some local universities are a good source for obtaining a speakers list, but remember that a good classroom instructor may not always be an interesting speaker for an AG.

Some presenters may request compensation for conducting a seminar. Here you may run into some difficulties if you decide to reimburse one speaker and not another. Be careful of egos and know when to draw the line on speaker payments. Few speakers will require payment, but it is a nice gesture to provide each with a free registration and perhaps one meal ticket of their choice. Some may also require additional financial reward in the form of a free room night, travel expenses, etc. Some past AGs had different guidelines for Mensans as opposed to non-Mensan speakers. How you decide to handle this should be decided up front. Be sure to figure any expected speaker expenses into your initial budget.

* See Appendix K for a sampling of topics and programs presented at previous AGs.
* See Appendix L for an example of a Memorandum to Speakers.

MAJOR SPEAKERS:
A "name" speaker obtained through an agency may cost you thousands. If you approach one directly, the opportunity of speaking to a Mensa gathering may have a special appeal to them. The Friday and Saturday dinners will be the best times for your most important speakers, but make sure the subject matter has broad appeal. Some past AGs scheduled light-hearted speakers for these time slots, feeling that the attendees have had enough serious talk during the daytime speaker program, and that this is a time to unwind.

MATCHING ROOMS TO SPEAKERS:
Obviously, your most popular speakers in any time period should have the largest rooms. Determining which speaker or topic will draw the largest attendance is difficult at best. You can never predict with any kind of accuracy the interests of Mensans. The matching of speakers to rooms is a judgement call of your Program Committee.

AVOIDING SPEAKER CONFLICTS:
Some of those attending will be most interested in topics dealing with Mensa, others with business subjects, and still others will want to go to meetings on metaphysical subjects. Try to schedule your programs so that you have a good balance of topics at any one time slot. An easy method of accomplishing this is to utilize the "track" approach. This is where you define categories of topics such as The Arts, Provocative, Sciences, History, etc., and have one speaker for each track/category during any one time slot. Whether or not you choose to publish the tracks in your program, this planning method will help your speaker committee achieve a well diversified program. It is advisable to spread your most popular programs over the entire weekend rather than load up on one particular day. Variety and a balanced schedule will keep members' interest at a peak.

ROOM MONITORS:
It is helpful to have a local member act as monitor at each of the seminars to expedite the seating, introduce the speakers, prevent interruptions during the talk, operate a tape recorder if the session is being taped, select the questioners, and keep an eye on the time. Most meetings will require theater style seating, a table or podium for the speaker, a microphone if the room is large, a chalkboard, dry erase board or flip chart, and various other A/V equipment as may be required by your presenter. Make sure any smoking and non-smoking policies are clearly stated and posted in a prominent place. (It is recommended that all programs, seminars, and meetings be non-smoking.)

MEAL FUNCTIONS

MEALS:
Most AGs have a Friday night dinner, Saturday luncheon, Saturday banquet, and Sunday brunch/luncheon. The hotel will have standard convention meals and prices for your inspection, but try to make the meals more palatable than the usual menu common to convention fare. It is a good practice to offer two or three choices of meals; this may make record keeping more complicated, but most of your guests will appreciate having options (be sure at least one of your options is a vegetarian meal). If there are local specialties, make a feature of them.

Some hotels have an "unpublished" banquet menu with less costly meals. Ask to see this menu up front. You can save a considerable amount by selecting meals from this list. If your hotel does not offer this, try coming up with a meal plan of your own and ask the hotel to price it.

The hotel will expect you to guarantee (confirm) the number of meals to be served at least 48-72 hours in advance of each meal. Most hotels allow for an additional amount (called "overage"), usually 5-10% above the number you specify, for late meal sales. Under no circumstances should you guarantee meal counts in the contract. There is a good chance you will get burned if you do.

Typically the Saturday banquet is more formal. While not recommended, buffet meals can be served IF there is a substantial savings. If you do choose a buffet, be sure to have enough serving lines to prevent lengthy delays and bottlenecks at the food aisles.

MEAL TICKETS:
Your printed meal tickets should clearly show:

* The meal (include date and whether lunch or dinner)
* The selection (beef, chicken, etc.)
* The price (if sold separately)
* A serial number

Some committees find it better to have the tickets collected at the door as the attendees enter, rather than by the waiters and waitresses at the table. If you decide to use this approach, you will need to have a two-part ticket; one part collected at the door, the other collected by the server. It is advisable to print the tickets for each meal a different color for easy identification. Make sure you have someone do a "body count" at each meal to verify the hotel's meal figures. Once printed, meal tickets should be handled by the Treasurer. Tickets lost by registrants should not be replaced - these are cash items.

TABLE DECORATIONS:
Simple decor at each table adds greatly to the meals. Most hotels have color coordinated place settings and center pieces which can be used. If you decide to have arrangements, be sure they do not obscure the vision of the people sitting at the table. Meals are a time for gathering, conversation, and relaxation, and while decorations are always a nice touch, you do not want them interfering with views of the stage or podium.

MUSIC:
While soft background music is enjoyable during the evening meals, it has become somewhat impractical due to the number of attendees. Instead, try using a small combo to set the mood only during the final Sunday luncheon/brunch.

If a Friday and/or Saturday evening dance is planned, employ a versatile DJ, band, or orchestra that can play music for all dancing tastes. Have them alternate to keep the interest level high.

CASH BAR AND COCKTAILS:
Before contracting with the hotel to set up a cash bar prior to, during, and/or after dinner on Friday and Saturday evenings, have a clear understanding of the costs. Some hotels charge a fee if a minimum level is not achieved, others charge a set rate for a cashier and bartender. The set rate is the preferred method. Mensans tend to be light drinkers on average, and will likely prefer the free beer and wine offered in your Hospitality Suite over cash beverages. For this reason you may have difficulty meeting any minimums set by the hotel.

While cocktail hours have been standard practice, over-indulgence by a few can be annoying to your other guests. Have a published policy concerning guests' behavior and make it known. For those who MUST drink, there are always bars in the hotel.

DINING ROOM SEATING:
Round tables for 8 to 10 are customary, and most hotels prefer this. You may want to consider having some tables set for 8, to accommodate larger members who may need extra elbow room, and others set for 10. Tables should be as close together as traffic will allow. It is recommended that you have separate areas for smokers and non-smokers. Some past AG's have found success using a three tiered approach; smokers on one side of the room, non-smokers on the opposite side of the room, and those tolerant of smoke seated in the middle. Whichever approach you decide to take, make sure the tables are clearly marked. Some members will attempt to switch the signs to obtain a "better" table. Watch for this. Remember to provide ample seating for registrants who have not purchased meals so that they may enjoy any planned entertainment.

DINING ROOM FORMALITIES:
In the past, AG's had a dais for seating VIP's during the scheduled meal functions. It provided a means of recognition to those members who had contributed to Mensa's success. When the average attendance of AG's was still relatively small this was a workable set-up. As the attendance has increased, this formality has become impractical. We recommend using a dais, lectern, podium, etc., only if you plan on having a guest speaker. Local and national Mensa officials do not need to be, and in some cases do not wish to be, set apart from the rest of the attendees. It has become somewhat of a tradition that you do reserve a table or two for the past Chairmen of AG's, as a token gesture of appreciation for what has gone before.

INTRODUCTIONS:
A word of warning: Introductions should be brief and kept to a minimum. Acknowledgement by applause can be either by the "Cleveland" method (a single clap per person introduced), by introducing groups of three or four at a time, or by withholding applause until the end of the introductions (which is seldom successful). You will find that the audience will tend to seek its own selection of applause regardless of the "approved" method. It is tradition to introduce AMC officers and other Mensa dignitaries. If the AG Chairman or MC is not sure of some of the names, have the AMC Chairman, or other knowledgeable person, check the registration list and point out all VIPs.

Select your Toastmaster or Master of Ceremonies carefully. If you do not have someone in your local group you feel comfortable assigning this responsibility to, seek assistance from another group, or from the AMC.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

GAME ROOMS:
Many guests will spend most of their time playing the various games available to them. Set aside ample space for their activities (preferably, a smoking and non-smoking room). If sleeping rooms are being used as game rooms, have the beds removed if possible, and small, draped tables set up with extra chairs available. Games can be obtained from many local members; some attendees will bring their own. It is a good idea to assign a committee member the responsibility of procuring the games and seeing that they return to their rightful owners after the AG.

VIDEO ROOMS:
While not all AGs have provided this option, some have set aside a room dedicated to showing various video movies at selected times during the day and evening. If you decide to do this, appoint a committee member the responsibility of procuring the video tapes, player and monitors, and returning them to their owners after the AG. Provide attendees with a schedule of the movies/videos to be shown.

BLOOD DRIVE:
It is becoming tradition to hold a blood drive during the AG. Appoint a committee member to contact the local blood bank, assist in arranging on-site processing, and publicity. An ideal time to conduct this worthwhile service is Friday when most of the attendees will have arrived. You may want to ask the assistance of the national Blood Drive SIG (if there is one), to help obtain volunteers and donors. This is a relatively simple activity which benefits the community and gives many of our members a sense of community spirit. Don't forget to schedule a room if you plan to hold a blood drive.

MERF AUCTION:
Many AGs have held very successful, entertaining auctions to benefit MERF (the Mensa Education and Research Foundation), as part of their programs. Assign a committee member the responsibility of soliciting donations for the auction. Since MERF is a tax-deductible charity, many members and businesses will donate items. Items can be obtained from local shops, book stores, software companies, etc. With the right person as auctioneer, this can make for a very entertaining evening's event, not to mention the bargains to be had. Contact the MERF Chairman (listed in the Mensa Bulletin) for ideas, assistance, and details on conducting a MERF auction. Be careful not to overload your program schedule with too much fund-raising, some members resent this.

YOUNG Ms/CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES:
There may be a number of younger members attending the AG. Programs and activities should be scheduled to cater to their needs. Try to arrange various activities that will interest them specifically, but may also be of interest to all age groups. Some past ideas have been live animal displays, finger painting, story telling, and marble tournaments. Many members wish to combine the AG with a family vacation, and by having a program scheduled for the little ones you will greatly improve the chance of them attending as a family. It should be noted that these programs are not intended to substitute as babysitting rooms, and parents should be encouraged to accompany their children at all times.

PROCTORED EXAM:
One of the biggest publicity boosts your local group can have is to conduct a proctored exam during the AG. Advertise this activity in your local newspaper, and try to get it announced on select radio stations. Reserve a room large enough to seat your expected attendance, and have ample proctors lined up to conduct the testing session. You may find qualified proctors among the AG attendees who would be willing to assist in the testing. A program such as this not only increases interest in Mensa from the local population, but can generate funds for your local group treasury.

ENTERTAINMENT

COSTUME PARTIES:
Many Regional Gatherings have found that Costume/Masquerade/Fantasy parties are extremely popular. Although this has not been a custom at AGs, it is something you may want to consider.

ENTERTAINMENT:
During the evening meals you may choose to have entertainment in lieu of a guest speaker. Comedians, musicians, magicians, talent shows, hypnotists, casinos and bands have all been well received.

* Also see "Music" under MEAL FUNCTIONS.

REGISTRATION DESK/INFORMATION AREA

REGISTRATION DESK:
Registration is your guests' first contact with the AG and host group; a smooth registration procedure makes a good first impression that will endure throughout the AG. It is advisable to have a computer on hand at the registration desk to process walk-ins, print labels and up-to-date registration lists, and provide easy access to information. Have a few local members present to welcome incoming guests. Make sure you have ample money (bills and change) in order to handle on-site registrations, meal orders, tour purchases, and boutique sales. Some past AG Committees have felt that only local members should staff the Registration desk to reduce the number responsible for handling money, but if a responsible person is put in charge, your local members will be grateful for any relief help from other volunteers. Local laws and local group preference may dictate whether to have the registration desk staff bonded.

Have this area manned as long as possible; it is discouraging to arrive and find that registration is closed. Someone should be at the desk to collect balances due on registrations, to sell meal tickets, and to handle walk-in registrations. During busy periods it is best to have the desk fully staffed. Having an express line for prepaid registrants can expedite the process, and makes a great first impression.

Do not have welcoming hosts at the hotel registration desk; in many cases hotel registration is a private matter. AG registration should be well separated from the hotel registration desk. However, it is important that the hotel staff at the registration desk know where the AG registration desk is located to direct our guests as they arrive. If at all possible, have signs pointing the way to registration.

Remember: First impressions are important!

* See Appendix M for Registration Chairman Duties.

PRE-REGISTRATION LIST:
Besides posting a list of actual registrants on the bulletin board, a printed list of pre-registrants would give the guests a notice of friends who would be attending. This could be kept at the Registration desk or Information Area.

DAILY GAZETTE:
Some past AG's provided a morning news-sheet listing late news and events, changes in room assignments, etc. Much of the copy can be prepared in advance. This is a good idea, but not essential to a successful AG.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY:
Emergencies may arise; have available at the registration desk the names of doctors, dentists, and hospitals in the immediate area. See what facilities and information the hotel has available.

INFORMATION AREAS:
It is advisable to provide an Information Desk(s) at a central location. Many groups will want to distribute samples of their local newsletters, registration forms for their Regional Gatherings, and assorted other items. Plan to have at least two long tables to provide adequate space for these. Have available lists of nearby restaurants (and if possible, their menus), local points of interest, and sign-up sheets for tours and dining-out groups. Bulletin boards should be placed nearby for announcements and printouts of the AG registration list. Many hotels will provide bulletin boards at no cost, and inexpensive ones can be made fairly easily.

MESSAGE CENTER:
Another convenience is a message center, a board divided alphabetically with message cards, pencils, and thumb tacks. Guests will use this to locate roommates, arrange meetings, announce meal tickets for sale, leave messages for other registrants, etc. This area would ideally be located in or near the information area. (We recommend that you avoid locating your message center at the registration desk, as this would interfere with the the flow of incoming registrants.)

CHECK-OUT CRUNCH:
Most hotels have a check-out time around 11:00am - Noon. Suggest that guests check out of the hotel before luncheon/brunch on Sunday, and have their luggage stored to avoid the post-luncheon checkout crowd. Some hotels will extend checkout to 1:00pm or later if asked. Some hotels have speed checkout on TV or rapid checkout. You may want to include extended checkout in the hotel contract.

HOSPITALITY

HOSPITALITY:

This is one of the most important, and for some THE most important, aspect of an Annual Gathering. Regular AG attendees go there to meet their friends from other groups, first-timers are there to make friends, and everyone needs a break from the more serious meetings and talks, and to partake of the refreshments in the hospitality suites. Providing a suitable atmosphere for hospitality is essential for a successful AG.

Some past AGs have found success using 4-6 hospitality suites at a time, while others have offered one large, all-encompassing room, such as a ballroom, as the hospitality suite. If you decide on multiple suites, try to have them all on the same floor to facilitate the flow of your guests as they seek out other members. If you choose the one room method, it is recommended that you group chairs, tables, sofas, etc., in conversation nooks as "dividing lines" for intimacy, and clearly designate smoking and non-smoking areas.

There is merit in both approaches, but the trend seems to be leaning towards the one room approach. What you decide to use depends largely on the hotel accommodations. Some cities/states have unusual liquor laws, and some hotels cannot provide one large room and still comply with the law.

While the main purpose of Hospitality Suites is to provide a central meeting place and relaxation area, many members view Hospitality as an alternate restaurant. While it is customary to provide food, snacks, drinks, etc., it should not be the responsibility of the AG to "feed" each attendee for the entire event. This is an unreasonable expectation. This is a delicate area and should be addressed carefully. Most importantly, inform your registrants up front what they can expect from your hospitality provisions.

Decide up-front the direction you wish to take concerning Hospitality. Too much food, while making a great impression, can be very costly. Too little provisions, and you may have some unhappy registrants. Try to find a happy medium that allows you to offer ample fare in the suites, without undercutting the meal functions and your budget.

HOSPITALITY FACILITIES:

Both smoking and non-smoking suites are required. At a typical gathering there are now more non-smokers than smokers (about 3 to 1). Use this figure when calculating the number of suites, dining arrangements, etc.

Experience has shown that hospitality areas with ample comfortable seating are the most successful, and that large meeting rooms where most guests are made to stand are the poorest. If possible, your budget should allow for wine, soft drinks, beer, coffee, tea, and snacks. Your agreement with the hotel should specify that you are allowed to furnish these items yourselves.

Living room/bedroom/bath suites are good; you may start out with three or four suites opening on Wednesday, with the remainder opening as the demand increases (make sure you have arranged with the hotel for this additional space prior to the event). In a small suite, a feeling of intimacy is created that would not be possible in larger areas, but keep in mind that your guests want to mingle, and a large room offers more opportunity to meet people quickly. A little crowding is permissible.

A word of warning: Avoid perishable food if possible. Also, be sure to have the hotel turn off the pay TV, long distance telephone service, and local calls (if there is a fee), limiting it to room-to-room, in all your suites.

You will need a large supply of ice for your cold drinks - more than you can obtain from the hotel ice machines. Some hotels can provide this service at a reasonable price, or you may arrange with an outside company to supply the ice. If you get ice from the hotel, they will provide an appropriate container; if you go with an outside company, you can fill the hospitality bath tubs with ice to chill drinks and for use in glasses.

You may want to limit the times refreshments are served, and replenish the food at intervals rather than bringing it all out at once. Consider cutting off or limiting the snacks at mealtimes. Some guests may opt for hospitality fare in lieu of meal tickets. While hospitality food is not intended to be a substitute for meals, some guests will spend most of their time in the room. Try to avoid locking the suites during meal times; some guests may not be able to afford the price of a meal ticket and will want a place to go during the meal.

You may want to consider providing a different theme/atmosphere in each hospitality suite. Informal sing-alongs with guitar or piano are also popular.

HOSPITALITY VOLUNTEERS:

In addition to the Hospitality Chairman, you may want to appoint a Supply Chairman (or Volunteer Coordinator) to help keep the rooms supplied. Provide a centrally located room (this will need to be at least suite size), to store the supplies until needed. Ideally, it would be beneficial to have the supply room available a day early so the hospitality staff can begin bringing in the food, beverages, etc.

Several local hosts/hostesses will be needed per suite to serve the refreshments and welcome the guests. This is one of those assignments where you will need a great many volunteers. Nearby groups are often willing to take over the hosting of some suites, and the Committee of the AG following yours will want to assist to get some experience. You should advertise early for your volunteers and compile a list to post on the wall of each suite. Contact each RVC and ask them to have a "regional" time, when members from their region can act as host. This also gives the RVCs a time to let all the members know where and when they can definitely meet and talk with their RVC. There are also times when a PA system could be of benefit in Hospitality for emergencies, requesting volunteers, making announcements, etc.

Many past AGs have rewarded volunteers with a form of "funny money" which could be redeemed for gifts or services at the end of the event. Not only does this concept aid in obtaining needed personnel, but it makes an entertaining game out of working the hospitality suites.

Cleanup in the hospitality areas should be continuous: ashtrays emptied, glasses picked up, and tables wiped. You will want to close down occasionally for a thorough cleanup by the hotel staff. The hours to close down the suites should be arranged beforehand with the hotel staff and written into the contract to prevent any misunderstandings. Plan a rotation for this clean-up, if using multiple suites, during non-peak hours, such as 4:00 to 5:00 am, if possible.

BREAKFASTS:
Hotel dining rooms and coffee shops are usually crowded on Saturday and Sunday mornings, not to mention expensive. It is a nice gesture to have complimentary continental breakfast in the hospitality suites for the attendees. This can consist of coffee, tea, juice, rolls, doughnuts, and/or fresh breads.

AMC REQUIREMENTS

ANNUAL MEETING OF AML:
Traditionally, the Annual Business Meeting of American Mensa, Ltd. is held the Sunday morning of the AG. It is open to all Mensa members, but closed to guests and non-members. You will be expected to provide a large room, a table large enough to seat 3-4 AMC members, a lectern and microphone, and a few additional microphones placed at strategic points throughout the room for use by the audience. Since recording policies have a tendency to change, it is recommended that you discuss the actual requirements with the AMC prior to making any arrangements.

TAPING THE SESSIONS:
You may be required to have the Annual Business Meeting taped for the national office. Whether or not you need to do this will be specified in the AG contract with AML. If you do, there are companies in every city that make a business of taping speeches and selling the tapes. Ask your hotel to recommend a reliable company to provide this service. Most large hotels have an A/V company affiliated with them located in the hotel. While these are usually higher in cost, the convenience offered by their ready availability usually outweighs this factor.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEETING:
In even numbered years (1992, 1994, 1996, etc.), space must be made available for the National Nominating Committee to hold its bi-annual meeting. Normally, a room similar in size to a small speaker room is sufficient. This meeting is required so that the members of the Nominating Committee can discuss the details of the candidate selection process, and to have an opportunity to talk with any candidates in attendance at the AG. It is recommended that you contact the Chairperson of the NomCom as soon as they are appointed to schedule meeting space on the program.

PRINTED PROGRAM

You may elect to have elaborate souvenir programs, but these can be expensive and inconvenient to carry. Consider a less expensive paper covered booklet that can be slipped into a purse or pocket (approximately 3 1/2 by 7 inches), containing only the more pertinent information, with abbreviated descriptions and time schedules of the events on the program. Some past AGs have opted for two programs, one an elaborate book, and one a single page, tri-fold, mini program to fit in a pocket. If you decide on the two program approach, the large one can contain detailed information on the speakers and programs that would not fit in the smaller one. You may also want to consider selling advertising space in the program to city businesses, RGs and SIGs, to help cover the cost of printing. This can work to your advantage if the cost of placing an ad is not expensive.

Some instructions you may want to include in your printed program:

* Illegal drugs will not be allowed.
* The hotel policy regarding whether or not food and drinks may be taken from the Hospitality Suites.
* Name tags must be worn at all activities.
* Minors will not be served alcoholic beverages.
* Your smoking policy for meeting rooms and banquet facilities.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

There are a number of areas of responsibility which do not clearly fall under one particular category. Committee volunteers should be assigned to coordinate these functions.

OFFICIAL AG AIRLINE:
In order to provide the most services to the members it is recommended that you select an official airline for the gathering. Contact a number of major carriers (they all have group sales departments), and discuss the various discounts available. Some airlines will donate free tickets for a certain number of passengers booked, or for the MERF auction. Choose the airline which offers the greatest savings to the members, has the most flights to your host city, and has the widest range. (If your city is a hub for an airline, that company would probably be the best choice.) An inexpensive travel rate can be a great inducement to attend the AG.

TRANSPORTATION:
Find out if the hotel provides transportation to/from the airport, or if a limo service is available. Supply this information with the initial registration packets sent prior to the event. While the majority of guests should obtain transportation on their own, it is a nice gesture to arrange transportation for VIP's, out-of-town guest speakers, and, if possible, the AMC members. Meeting these individuals at the airport is a good practice. Also, providing transportation back to the airport is a most welcome gesture if your group can arrange it.

Some guests will be staying past the close of the AG, and while not a responsibility of the AG Committee, it is goodwill to arrange transportation for them to the airport, provided they are few in number and you have enough local members to handle the situation.

OUTSIDE TOURS:
Many past AGs have conducted very well received tours and excursions to various points of interest in their host city. While this activity is a good chance to show off the unique aspects of the area, this type of activity usually carries additional charges, and can cause conflicts with the AG program if not scheduled carefully. It is recommended that you offer at least a sight-seeing tour of your city, but try to keep outside events to a minimum. Off-premise events tend to break up the continuity of the gathering, and most guests will not want to leave the hotel during the AG. For this reason, most tours should be scheduled for either before the AG, after the AG, or during off-hours when there are no activities.

* See Appendix N for a sample AG program agenda.

WORKSHOPS:
While not a requirement, if scheduled, Mensa workshops for local group officers should be given equal time as other programs. There are often many topics to be covered and many people wanting to attend. These workshops can be scheduled as an informal talk with question and answer periods following the main presentation. The AMC will designate a Coordinator/Liaison who will assist the AG Committee in lining up the workshop speakers.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs):
Special Interest Groups often hold their annual meetings in connection with an AG. By inviting them, and providing a meeting room for their use, you may increase your attendance as the various SIGs will be publishing their meetings in their respective newsletters. It is a good practice to appoint a committee member as liaison to the national SIGs officer to determine the requirements of the various SIGs. If scheduled in time, the SIG meetings should also be included in your program.

PHOTOGRAPHS:
The Mensa Bulletin and other publications love photographs, and these should be taken by an experienced photographer with a guide assigned to suggest suitable shots: contest winners, M's from distant regions, AG Chairmen, VIPs, and any well-known members or guests. Candid head and shoulder shots of 2 or 3 people at a time are best. Enlargements that can be cropped to 3 X 3 inches are the most usable.

BOUTIQUE:
The AG Committee should decide up front whether or not to have a boutique, and how extensive it should be. If you sell souvenir T-Shirts, you will need more Large, X-L, and XX-L sizes than usual (adult "small" and children's sizes are poor sellers). Many AGs have begun selling golf-style shirts in addition to T-shirts. Also, consider obtaining some standard boutique items from AML headquarters on consignment. Recent books by Mensans are also popular.

LOCAL OFFICIALS:
If possible, have your state governor, city mayor, or other local community leader give a brief welcome at one of the earlier planned meals. Some may be willing to present a key to the city to the AG or AML Chairman, others may only provide a letter of acknowledgment for publication in your AG Program Book. In either case, this is a good PR activity.

* Also see "Registration Packets" under ADVANCE REGISTRATION/REGISTRATION PACKETS.

SETTLING UP YOUR ACCOUNTS

The final accounting of the AG is, arguably, the most agreeable activity of the event for the Chairman and Treasurer. You will have many opportunities during the course of the planning and actual event to write checks and settle accounts with various parties. Here are some hints to hopefully make this task a bit easier.

* Don't forget to pay Committee members who have outstanding expenses.

* Most entertainers and guest speakers will provide you with details on how, and when, they wish to be paid. Make sure you have their payments ready when requested.

* Normally, the hotel will require full payment within 30 days from the closing of the event. If possible, delay payment to the hotel until the absolute last day, to receive full interest on your bank account.

* After the hotel bill has been settled, pay any outstanding registration refunds, or late cancellations (if money is available, and your AG policy permits).

* Close out the bank account only after all outstanding checks have been cleared, and you do not anticipate any further activity on the account. Once this has been completed, you can close the books on the AG, and divide the remaining funds (if any) between the local group and AML according to the agreed splits.

* Lastly, prepare a final accounting report for presentation to the AMC.

Appendix A:

GUIDELINES FOR AG SITE SELECTION

The site selected for an Annual Gathering should be one that promises to provide the best possible gathering for a large number of members. This should be judged by three major criteria:

1. The ability, stability, and experience of the host group(s), as indicated by previous regional gatherings, group strength, and available leadership.

2. The hotel facilities available, adequate barrier-free space for sleeping rooms, meeting rooms and banquets, with favorable contracts and reasonable prices.

3. The accessability to a large number of members, by air or by car, including those in the host group(s). (According to ASIE 90-092C, American Mensa will be geographically divided as follows: Regions 1, 2 and 5 in one section; Regions 3, 4, 6 and 7 in a second section; Regions 8 and 9 in a third, with no block ordinarily hosting two successive AGs.)

To be considered, each bid must include 1) the endorsement of the RVC, 2) the standard AG Host Agreement Contract, 3) all pertinent information requested, and 4) the proposed AG hotel contract.

Some weight should be given to local points of interest, since the AG is often combined with the family vacation.

The Site Selection Committee will study and evaluate the bids, then make its recommendations to the AMC for final selection.

Darlene Criss
First Vice Chairman
Site Selection Chairman

Appendix B:

INFORMATION NEEDED FOR AG BID COMPARISON

In order to make a fair comparison, the Site Selection Committee needs certain information. Please furnish the AG bid information below. Additional special events and local attractions may be listed on the back of this sheet.

Local Group:_____ RVC endorsement:_____

Local members (last 3/31 total):_____

Other Mensans within 400 miles:_____ Latest net worth:_____

RGs held (years):_____ Previous AG bids?_____

Proposed dates:_____ Registration fees (early/late):_____

Hotel selected:_____ Barrier-free?_____

Total # sleeping rooms:_____ Rooms blocked:_____ # Barrier-free:_____

Room rates (s/d/t/q):_____ Contract submitted?_____

Backup hotel(s):_____ # Rooms:_____

Meals (# and cost):_____ Dining room capacity:_____

Meeting rooms (# Barrier-free rooms blocked):_____ Free?_____

Hospitality space (size, access):_____

Suites or meeting rooms?_____ Serve own food/drink?_____

Proposed programs/events:_____

Distance to airport:_____ Taxi/limo/bus fare:_____

AG Chairman (brief background):_____

Other key chairmen:_____

Budget - Fixed expenses:_____ Variable/person:_____

Estimated attendance:_____ Break-even point:_____

Special attractions:_____

Appendix C:

ANNUAL GATHERING HOST(S) CONTRACT

This Contract is entered into by and between American Mensa, Ltd. ("AML") and("Host Group(s)") a local group or groups of AML which has been designated by the American Mensa Committee ("AMC") to serve as the host for the Annual Gathering ("AG") of American Mensa. The parties acknowledge their awareness of, and agreement with, the following conditions, responsibilities, and requirements. Particular attention should be paid to paragraph 5.

1. In consideration of AMC's awarding the Host Group(s) the right to host the AG, the Host Group(s) promises to perform its obligations under this contract and to produce the AG in conformity with established custom and substantially as set forth in its bid and/or supplementary communications. Further, the Host Group(s) agrees to comply with the Minimum Standards as outlined on the attached. Signing of this contract will serve as acknowledgement that the Host Group(s) fully understands the provisions and will abide by them.

2. The Host Group(s) attests generally to the accuracy of its bid to host the AG, and specifically to the availability and price of accommodations at the designated hotel, provisions for early arrivals and late departures, alternative accommodations, meal prices, and main program features set forth in its bid and/or supplementary communications.

3. The Host Group(s) may elect to manage the AG through a semi-autonomous AG Committee. If that is done, the Host Group(s) may delegate to the AG Committee such authority as deemed appropriate, but the Host Group(s) shall not delegate its responsibility. The Host Group(s) remain responsible for the performance of its duties under this contract.

4. Prior to signing any contract regarding facilities, meal functions, or tape recording, the Host Group(s) shall forward a clear and complete copy of the Hotel contract to the National Office. Within twenty-one days after receipt by the National Office, the AMC (or its designate) shall review the hotel contract for errors, omissions, and potential problems and shall advise the Host Group(s) of its findings.

5. Although the AG is a joint venture between the AMC and the Host Group(s) for the benefit of all the members of American Mensa, the AMC ultimately bears the responsibility for the production of an AG. Therefore, the AMC must be kept informed of the progress of preparations for the AG. This may be done through an AMC member who is a member of the Host Group(s), through the Host Group(s) RVC, or through a designated AMC Liaison. If the AG preparations are proceeding according to plan, the AMC will not need to take an active part except as provided in paragraph 6 below. However, whenever matters arise that may seriously affect an AG, the Host Group(s) must promptly notify the AMC and must consult with the AMC prior to making any material changes to the accepted plan.

By way of illustration, but no of limitation, some of the matters that could "seriously affect an AG" are the following:

Any contract problems, substantial cost escalation, major program changes, need to change facilities, need to limit attendance (either overall or at specific events), serious discord within the Host Group(s) or its AG Committee, changes in the management of the Host Group(s) AG Committee, advance registrations falling short of projections, and/or a substantial projected net loss.

In the event that it appears to the AMC that the Host Group(s) is, or may be unable to perform its obligations hereunder, then the AMC shall notify the Host Group(s) of the AMC's concerns and shall give the Host Group(s) a reasonable amount of time to take corrective action. In the event the Host Group(s) is unable or unwilling to take such corrective action as may be necessary, then the AMC shall have the right and obligation to assume the management of the AG or to revoke its award to the Host Group(s), and to designate another local group(s) as the host of the AG.

6. AMC officers, appointees, and/or staff members shall be responsible for scheduling and conducting the Leadership Seminars, Gifted Children Program, and other similar events. The AMC Liaison or the Executive Director shall advise the Host Group(s) which officer or staff member will conduct each workshop or event. The Host Group(s) shall arrange for suitable space and shall provide public address facilities for each workshop or event, and shall provide suitable space for meetings of the national Nominating Committee during election periods.

7. The Host Group(s) shall reserve Sunday morning of the AG weekend for the Annual Business Meeting of American Mensa. The Host Group(s) shall arrange for suitable space and shall provide public address and tape recording facilities for the meeting. (See Minimum Standards.)

8. In conjunction with one meal, the Host Group(s) shall provide for an awards ceremony which does not conflict with a major speaker or other entertainment. (See Minimum Standards.)

9. AML will, upon request after this contract becomes effective, lend to the Host Group(s) the amount of money agreed upon as seed money when its bid was accepted. This loan is to be repaid no later than one year after the date of the original loan.

10. The Host Group(s) AG Committee shall include both a Registrar and a Treasurer, and each of those individuals shall be bonded in a sum sufficient to cover the total amount of money for which they will be accountable. This bonding should be a minimum of $100,000. The Registrar shall acknowledge within two weeks all monies received and all requests for information or refunds.

11. The Host Group(s) shall regularly furnish the AMC a brief written report of the number of registrations received, the amounts received for registration, meals, and other fees, and any amounts due but not yet received. The report shall be furnished in accordance with the provisions set forth in the attached Minimum Standards. In addition, the Host Group(s) shall furnish the AMC no later than eight weeks prior to the AG, its final budget and its tentative program, including dates, times, and room assignments for all scheduled events.

12. All AG monies shall be kept separate from local group funds. One interest-bearing account should be set up for the AG receipts and payments of all legitimate AG expenses, with copies of all transactions available to the AMC. If the account set up and used by the Host Group(s) to receive and pay out AG monies is not interest-bearing, a second, interest-bearing account shall be set up to hold such monies until they are needed to pay expenses. Each AG account shall have at least one more person authorized to sign than is required to issue checks or otherwise authorize withdrawals. The Chairman of the AMC shall be an authorized signer on all AG accounts. Copies of all statements, deposit receipts, and checks or withdrawal receipts for the AG account(s) shall be provided to the AMC upon request.

13. Within thirty days after the close of the AG, the Host Group(s) (or its AMC liaison) shall prepare and furnish to the AMC an interim account of all monies received and disbursed in conjunction with the AG. Within ninety days after the close of the AG, the Host Group(s) shall prepare and furnish to the AMC a complete and accurate account of all monies received and disbursed in conjunction with the AG. In the event all financial transactions have not been concluded by the end of the ninety day period, the Host Group(s) (or its AMC liaison), shall include in its account reasonable estimates of all uncertain amounts and shall prepare and furnish such additional accounting(s) as appropriate to the circumstances. The AMC shall have the right and obligation to audit said accounts. Any monies payable to AML or the American Mensa Education and Research Foundation ("MERF") shall be disbursed to AML or MERF within one hundred twenty days after the close of the AG. If the accounts are not furnished in a timely manner, AML may withhold the Host Group(s) local subsidy as repayment. If monies due AML or MERF are not paid in a timely manner, AML may offset the Host Group(s) local group(s) subsidy against the monies due.

14. The first $4,000 of surplus will go to the Host Group(s) with the remainder going to American Mensa, Ltd. The American Mensa Committee will consider a contribution to MERF from this surplus, if any.

If the AMC, for any reasonable cause, must officially assume management of the AG to correct any potential problems, the Host Group(s) shall be entitled to retain only $3,000 of any net profit realized. Remaining monies, if any, shall go to AML.

15. This contract shall be binding upon AML, the Host Group(s) and their successors.

16. This contract becomes effective when signed and dated by the Local Secretary(s) of the Host Group(s) and by the Chairman of American Mensa, Ltd.

_____ By:_____
Date Name: Local Secretary

Local Group(s) Name:_____

_____ By:_____
Date Name: Chairman
American Mensa, Ltd.

ANNUAL GATHERING MINIMUM STANDARDS

(Refer to the AG Guidelines Handbook for more complete details.)

1. AG Hospitality suites shall provide sufficient soft drinks (diet and regular), beer, wine, coffee, tea, and food from the start of the AG until its conclusion. All provisions shall be available in every Hospitality suite.

(Hospitality shall be open early enough (7:00am) so that those who need to be up and around for required work have a place to go for a quick breakfast snack and drinks. Toast, bagels cream cheese, etc., and drinks, including milk, should be a bare minimum.)

2. At least two Hospitality suites (one smoking, one non-smoking) shall remain open 24 hours a day for the duration of the AG. These do not necessarily have to be the same suites each day. Light snacks shall be provided in these suites during the early morning hours. At least one suite shall remain open during scheduled meal functions, but only light snacks and beverages are required at these times.

3. Mensa must be able to provide its own food and drink in the Hospitality suites. The hotel contract wording must define this provision clearly. (Some states have restrictions on alcoholic beverages, but those should be the only exception to this standard, and only with the approval of the AGC, AMC or other AG Liaison.)

4. AMC Chairman and Treasurer are to be official signatories on the AG Hotel Contract, in addition to the AG Chairperson(s).

5. At least one meeting room shall be reserved for the SIG Coordinator for the entire event to schedule national SIG functions.

6. At least two meeting rooms shall be reserved for two days, to be announced, for Leadership Training Seminars. These seminars will be coordinated by an AMC member, the Host Group(s) need only provide the room and publicity in the printed programs.

7. If the Host Group(s) is providing Mensa testing during the AG, tests will need to be ordered well in advance of the event by the head Proctor, and the request should clearly identify that the tests being ordered are for the AG. If they are to be sent to a nearby Proctor or Testing Coordinator, that should also be clearly identified. Testing sessions during an AG usually brings far more candidates than the local group(s) is capable of handling, so sufficient seating, and/or more than one testing session may be needed. Directions to the testing rooms should be clearly marked at the hotel entrance, and the rooms should be away from any noisy activities. Refreshments or drinks should be available nearby for the break.

8. AG programs should be tentatively scheduled, and that information communicated to the registrants and members (possibly through Interloc or registration acknowledgements) as early as possible so that attendees may plan their travel agendas. (Issues such as Newsletter Awards, etc., are very important to those nominated for awards and they will want to be there. Public relations efforts may also be tied to programing so the National Office must be kept informed of the AG schedule at all times.)

9. Complimentary AG registrations shall be made available to the AMC for inviting International Officers and other Mensa dignitaries to the AG. These invitations shall be handled by the First Vice Chairman of the AMC.

10. A time shall be provided for introductions of the AMC and appointees, the International Board and appointees, and any other special guests in attendance.

11. Transportation to/from the airport should be provided any Mensa dignitaries, it possible and not already provided by the hotel.

12. Any meal function planned should be of sufficient quantity so that members receive value for their money. The menus and prices should be negotiated by the AG Chairman and AGC.

13. One major planned meal function, usually Saturday lunch, must be reserved for the presentations of the National Newsletter Awards. Other awards, such as CultureQuest, might be gathered here as well, or added as a short segment during one of the evening meals.

14. Quarterly reports to the AMC shall be presented to the AMC up to six months before the AG through the designated liaison.

15. Monthly reports shall be presented to the AMC from six months out to the closing of the AG books.

16. AG books shall be closed within 90 days from the end of the event, with an audited financial report presented to the AMC.

Appendix D

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ANNUAL GATHERINGS COORDINATOR
(Not necessarily in order of importance.)

1. To offer guidance and assistance to a local group(s) in the preparation for bidding on an AG, the management of an AG, and the execution of an AG.

2. To assist the Host Group(s) in the negotiations of an acceptable hotel contract, if requested.

3. To act as interim AG Chairman in the event of a dispute between the Host Group(s) actions, and the AMC requirements, only if deemed necessary by the AMC and/or the Executive Committee of the AMC.

4. To provide quarterly reports to the AMC on all aspects of the AG (registrations, finances, meals, disputes, programs, etc.) up to six months before the event. These reports to be coordinated with the AG region RVC.

5. To provide monthly reports to the AMC on all aspects of the AG from six months before the AG up to the event.

6. To act as arbitrator in the event of internal problems within the AG Committee, and keep the AMC informed as to outcomes. This to be coordinated with the AG region RVC.

7. To ensure that the Host Group(s) complies with any and all requirements of the AMC, and any and all provisions as outlined in the AG Host Group(s) Contract.

8. To assist the Host Group(s), when requested, in any areas deemed appropriate by the AMC.

Appendix E

RELATIONSHIP OF THE AGC AND AMC

1. The AGC shall be appointed by the AMC for a period of time to end with the closing of the Annual Gathering books for which they were appointed.

2. The AGC shall be someone chosen by the Host Group(s) from a selection of 2-3 offered by the AMC. This is to allow the AMC the option of appointing someone near the AG site, and also someone the Host Group(s) feel comfortable and able to work with. (In this manner, it is possible, and probably advisable, to install more than one AGC at a time. Each assisting a different AG Committee.)

3. Being AMC appointed, the AGC is first responsible to the AMC, second to the Host Group(s).

4. Funds for the AGC shall be provided through a budget line of $1,500, for the purposes of hotel selection and negotiation. Any and all expenditures to be approved the the AMC ExComm. Any funds requested in excess of the alloted amount shall be the sole responsibility of the Host Group(s) and the AGC.

5. The AMC as a body, or the Executive Committee or the AMC when necessary, shall have the right and obligation to assume management control of an Annual Gathering in the event that the AG Committee or Host Group(s) are unable or unwilling to remedy any potential problems. The AMC shall do this through the AGC or anyone so designated by the AMC.

Appendix F

GATHERING APPROVAL REQUEST

To: Regional Vice-Chairman

Subject: Planned Gathering

Our group _____ # _____ would like your approval of our tentative plans to hold a _____ Gathering on the dates of _____ , in the city of _____.

This gathering's name would be _____.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Local Secretary)

Printed name: _____ Telephone # _____

Address: _____

_____

Please indicate your approval with your signature below. Thank you.

Approved: _____ Date: _____
(Regional Vice-Chairman)

RVC: Please send signed copies to:

1. Local Group LocSec

2. E. Bunny Warsh
   2751 Reche Canyon Road, #93
   Colton, CA 92324

3. LeAnne Spivey
   Membership Officer
   1424 King George Drive
   Alabaster, AL 35007

Appendix G

GATHERING APPROVAL POLICY
AND LISTING IN THE BULLETIN
(Revised))

1. Obtain the approval of the Regional Vice Chairman.

2. RVC should send copy of signed approval form to Membership Officer - LeAnne Spivey, and E. Bunny Warsh.

3. With RVC Gathering confirmation, the Local Group should fill out BULLETIN Listing Form and send it to the RVC for approval. After the RVC signs the BULLETIN Listing Form, the RVC will send it directly to:

E. Bunny Warsh
2751 Reche Canyon Road, #93
Colton, California 92324

The BULLETIN Listing Form should reach Ms. Warsh AT LEAST (60) DAYS PRIOR TO THE MONTH OF THE FIRST ISSUE OF PUBLICATION IN THE BULLETIN.

4. A courtesy copy of any changes should be sent to the RVC.

GATHERING APPROVAL FORMS AND BULLETIN LISTING FORMS

CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE NATIONAL OFFICE:

AMERICAN MENSA, LTD., 2626 E. 14TH ST., BROOKLYN, NY 11235-3992

Appendix H

BULLETIN LISTING FORM

PLEASE SEND THIS FORM (COMPLETED) TO YOUR RVC FOR APPROVAL

This Listing Form must be signed by your Regional Vice Chairman, who then will send copies to the National SIGs Coordinator and Bulletin Gatherings page editor. They must reach them **AT LEAST SIXTY (60) DAYS PRIOR TO THE COVER DATE OF THE ISSUE IN WHICH THIS LISTING WILL BE PUBLISHED.** Your full listing may not be published when received if issue of publication is more than five months prior to month of your RG, due to space considerations. A short listing may be substituted instead. Priority for full listings is given to RGs whose dates are nearest the date of issue, regardless of when their information is received.

DATES OF RG:_____ NAME OF RG:_____

CITY AND STATE IN WHICH RG WILL BE HELD:_____

LOCAL GROUP NAME:_____

INFORMATION (250 characters, maximum):_____ See other side _____

REGISTRATION FEE(s)/CUT-OFF DATE(s):_____

MEAL PACKAGE (# OF MEALS):_____

HOTEL NAME & PHONE #:_____

SINGLE RM: $_____ DOUBLE RM: $_____ TRIPLE RM: $_____ QUAD RM: $_____

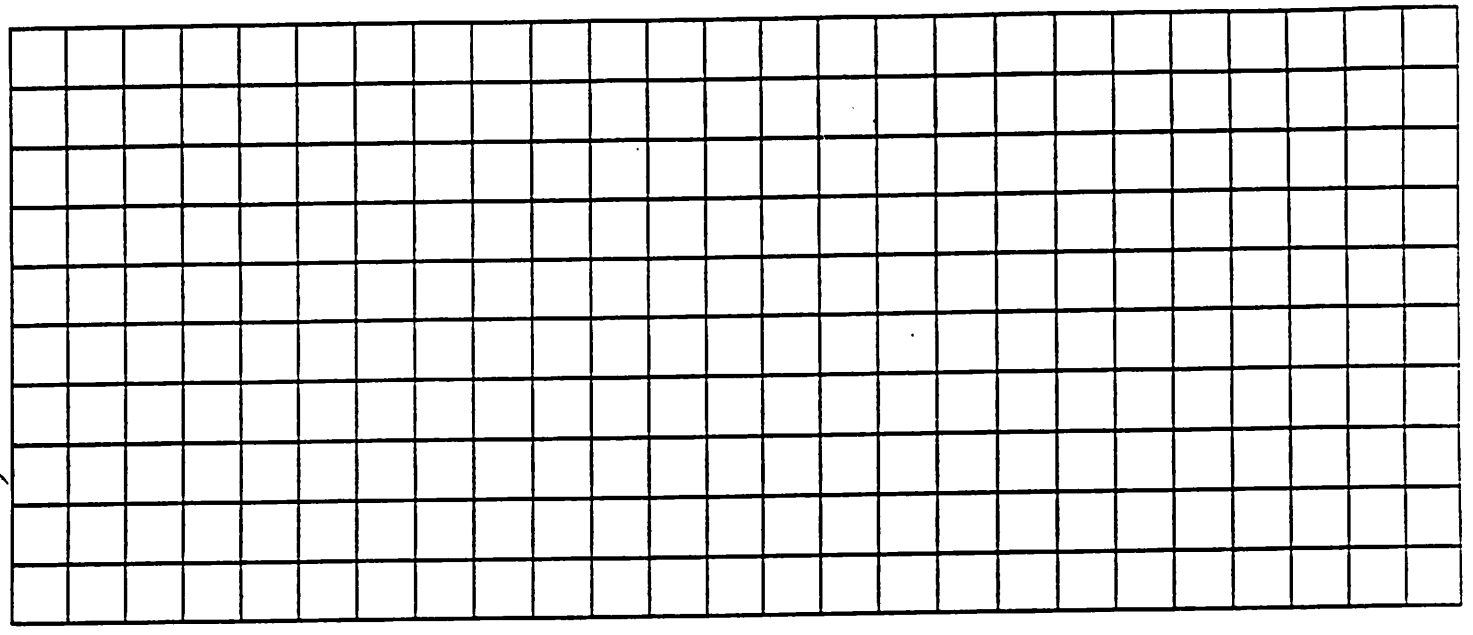
	YES	NO
SEPARATE SMOKING ACCOMMODATIONS? (S)	_____	_____
HANDICAPPED ACCESS? (H)	_____	_____
REFUND POLICY? (If yes, cut-off date?)	_____	_____
BLOOD DRIVE? (BD)	_____	_____
SINGLE DAY RATES AVAILABLE? (DT)	_____	_____
SCHOLARSHIP AUCTION? (SA) LOCAL:_____ MERF:_____	_____	_____

CONTACT (NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE):_____

_____

APPROVED BY RVC:_____ DATE:_____

RG INFORMATION
SPACES & PUNCTUATION COUNT AS CHARACTERS



Appendix I:

MENSA RELATED PROGRAMS:

Local Secretaries Workshops
Editors Workshops
SIG Workshop
Gatherings Workshop
AMC Rap Session
Annual Business Meeting of AML
Publicity and Public Relations
National Office Personnel & Procedures
Gifted Children Workshops
Proctor Workshops

SUGGESTED SUBJECTS FOR SPEAKERS:

Hypnosis
Sex
UFOs
Home computers
Astrology
Numismatics
Religious beliefs
Atheism
Creative writing
Retirement/aging
Calligraphy
Theater
Puzzles
Colloquia
Flying
Collecting
Wine making
Interpersonal relations
Death & dying
Entrepreneurship
Self employment
Executive placement
Changing jobs
Psychology
Morals and ethics
Art in Mensa
Genealogy
Music
Photography
Making movies
Humor
Gliding/hand gliding
Psychic science
Interior decorating
Handwriting analysis
Philately
Parapsychology
Gourmet cooking
Ethnic cooking
Travel talk & slides
Astronomy
Space travel
Misuse of English
Crime & the courts
Travel
Electronics
Meditation
Spelunking
Investments
Books/reading
Woodworking

Appendix J:

MEMORANDUM TO ALL SPEAKERS
(An Example)

We will have 50 or more meetings, conferences, seminars, and lectures, and we would like to make each as enjoyable as possible for both the speakers and the audience. With this in mind, we have established these ground rules:

* We will have short time periods for the meetings so that those attending can enjoy more of them.

* We suggest that each speaker allow 5 minutes for seating, 30 minutes for speaking, 20 minutes for questions, and 5 minutes to empty the room. We know the span of attention of most audiences is 30 to 40 minutes, so you may want to cut your talk and allow more time for discussion afterwards.

* A local member will be assigned to assist you: make the introduction, prevent interruptions while you are speaking, preside during the question period. This will save you the embarrassment of cutting off long winded questioners and those just wanting attention.

* No smoking will be allowed in the program rooms. There will be a 10-15 minute break between speaker sessions to allow smokers time for a cigarette.

* All seating, unless you request otherwise, will be theater style: rows of chairs plus a table and lectern for the speaker and the local member. Larger rooms will be equipped with microphones.

* Please advise the Program Chairman if any other equipment will be needed: slide projectors and screens, blackboards, easels, pads and pencils, etc.

* We will poll as many members as possible in several local groups beforehand to estimate attendance at each meeting; this will help us determine the size of room needed for each.

* Our budget does not allow for honorariums for speakers at these events, but as a token of our appreciation you will receive a luncheon ticket and your registration fee will be waived.

* A number of speakers will appear on the program twice, giving talks on different subjects; others may be asked to repeat their talks if a great many people are interested in their topics.

Please let us have your acceptance as soon as possible, and we suggest you send us your registration form and make your reservation with the hotel at once.

Yours Truely,

Appendix K:

REGISTRATION CHAIRMAN DUTIES - SHORT FORM:

1. Recruit helpers and train them on computer ahead of time.
2. Buy all supplies needed (name tags, etc.).
3. Create registration forms, meal tickets (coordinate with Artwork Chairman and Core Committee).
4. Record ALL registrations on computer, file and keep all registration forms (bring to AG with you, in case of disputes).
5. Record all meals and forward forms information to Meals Chairman.
6. Notify Blood Drive Chairman of all names willing to donate.
7. Contact Artwork/Printer Chairman to get programs WELL AHEAD of time.
8. Acknowledge all registrations promptly. Send receipt, meals forms, hotel reservation cards, and tour info to all pre-registrants.
9. Stuff registration packets ahead of time and attach name tags on outside.
10. Furnish a list of all attendants, when needed (and at close of AG).
11. Turn in a written report to the AG Chairman within 60 days of the close of the AG.
12. Perform such other duties as the AG Chairman and you agree fall under your jurisdiction.

Appendix L:

SAMPLE AGENDA:

Following is a typical AG schedule:

Wednesday:
* Early arrivals check in
* Some hospitality suites open
* Registration desk opens
* Game and video rooms open
* Dining-out groups form

Thursday:
* Programs begin
* Entertainment in the evening
* Registration desk open all day
* All hospitality suites and game rooms in operation
* Dining-out groups for lunch and dinner form

Friday:
* Programs in full swing
* Sight-seeing tours planned
* Dinner at the hotel with a guest speaker and/or main entertainment
* Hospitality open all night

Saturday:
* Programs continue
* AMC meeting scheduled
* Sight-seeing tours continue
* Luncheon at hotel with presentation of newsletter awards
* Main dinner with special guest and/or entertainment
* Dance planned
* Hospitality suites open all night

Sunday:
* Annual Business meeting of AML scheduled
* Reduced program schedule until noon
* Luncheon/brunch with final farewells
* Late announcements
* Departures
* AG ends around 1pm

Appendix M:

REGISTRAR QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES

QUALIFICATIONS:

A. Be organized.
B. Be friendly.
   1. This is the first contact most people will have with your gathering; he/she must represent your group well.
C. Know their limitations.
   1. Be able to delegate some of the workload.
      a. The registration packets and forms necessary at registration can easily be given to someone else to handle.
D. Know your stress level.
   1. Next to the Chairman, this is probably the second most stressful position on the committee.

DUTIES:

A. Determine how much you'll handle yourself and how much you'll delegate. Don't overload yourself!
B. Receive actual registrations and/or meals.
   1. Check registration form against money received.
      a. Use name and addresses on the FORM (not from the check).
   2. Forward money to Treasurer immediately.
   3. Acknowledge receipt of money within 7-10 days.
      a. If a formal acknowledgement isn't ready, send a postcard.
      b. The formal acknowledgement should include:
         1. Amount of money received.
         2. Who has paid, and what was paid for.
         3. Meal, hotel, and transportation information.
         4. Program information, if known.
         5. Misc. information (T-Shirts, Blood Drive, Book Swap, Art Show, Contests, Dances, etc.)
C. Handle cancellations.
   1. Give a written notice to the Treasurer in case of cancellation and ask him/her to refund the money immediately.
D. Receive inquires.
   1. If inquiry concerns registration, answer it promptly and politely.
      a. Keep your personal opinions to yourself, particularly if they're negative.
      b. Try to "sell" the other person, not alienate them.
   2. If inquiry concerns something other than registration, turn it over to the Chairman to handle as soon as you can.
E. Work out the hours registration will be open during the gathering.
   1. Make registration hours convenient for attendees, even if they aren't what you particularly want to work.
      a. Get helpers to cover the hours you can't be there.

F. Recruit helpers.
   1. Determine how much help you will need BEFORE as well as during the actual event.
   2. If you're using a computer, teach others what they need to know.
   3. Have someone as a back-up, that knows as much as you do about it - you could get sick or have an emergency arise!

G. Get supplies and equipment.
   1. Computer.
      a. If you have access to one, use it.
      b. If at all possible, take it to the gathering site (hotel) ahead of time and be sure it works OK there.
   2. You'll need to buy supplies for badges.
      a. If you use card-stock that goes inside a plastic holder, be sure the card-stock and the holder are the same size.
      b. If you buy in quantity, you'll get better prices.
   3. It's a good idea to bring such items as scissors, tape, felt-tip markers, tacks, etc., to the registration area with you.

Appendix N:

SAMPLE AG BUDGET

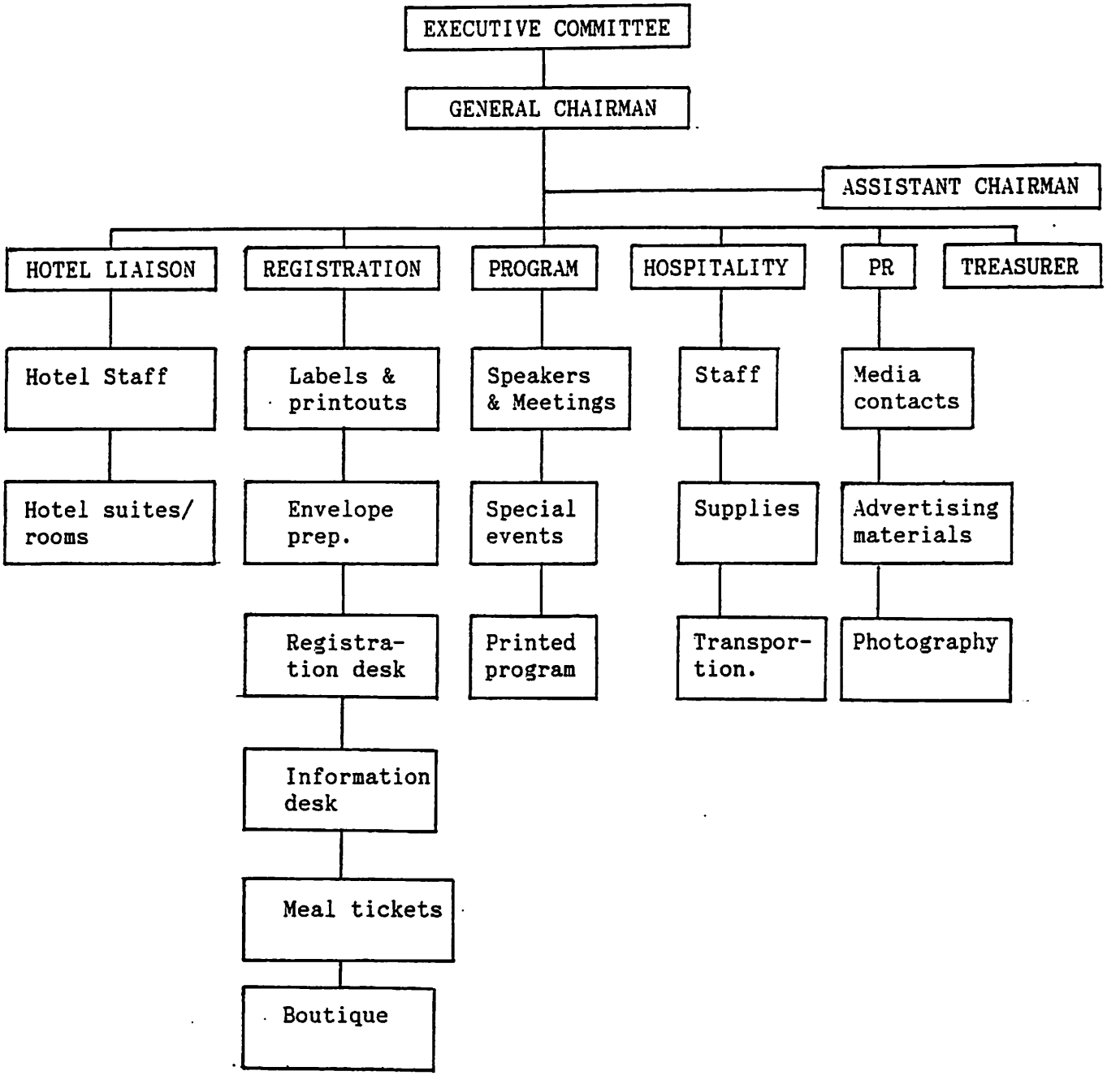
KANSAS CITY (1991)

INCOME:		
	Registration Deposits	$ 71,621.39
	Donations (Local Group)	2,453.26
	Interest Income	809.88
	Misc. Deposits	4,834.17
	Other	1,130.00
	TOTAL INCOME:	$ 80,848.70
EXPENSES:		
	Bad Debt (Returned Checks)	$ 737.50
	Bank Charges	956.05
	Committee Expenses	966.14
	Refundable Deposits	1,260.00
	Donated Gifts	1,704.00
	Entertainment	6,313.00
	Hospitality	25,475.98
	Hotel Expense	15,422.65
	MERF	3,411.05
	Misc. Expenses	1,219.93
	Photography	418.27
	Prizes	454.24
	Program Book	2,284.61
	Publicity	1,061.82
	Refunds	4,247.87
	Registration Expenses	2,634.76
	Souvenir Shirts	2,475.00
	Speakers	2,908.62
	Stationary	553.21
	T-Shirts	937.23
	Telephone	226.56
	Tours	4,733.50
	Transportation	46.71
	Cash	400.00
	TOTAL EXPENSES:	$ 80,848.70
	PROFIT/LOSS:	$ - 0 -

Many local groups experience a profit from hosting an AG. Kansas City's AG budget is shown as an example of a break-even budget.

Appendix O:

SAMPLE AG COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Send all advertising and payments to:
MENSA BULLETIN Advertising
AMERICAN MENSA, LTD.
2626 East 14th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11235-3992

SAMPLE

Kent B. Van Cleave
Editor, MENSA BULLETIN
POB 7278
Phoenix, AZ 85011

MSA BULLETIN - DISPLAY ADVERTISING INFORMATION

TERMS: Net, no cash discount, no agency discount

GENERAL: All advertising is subject to the publisher's approval and is accepted on a space-available basis. Frequency discounts are earned on consecutive insertions and only if payment is made at least quarterly, in advance. Frequency rates are listed below.

SIZE & FORMAT	WIDTH X HEIGHT	PAGE COLUMN FORMAT	% OF FULL PAGE	COST PER INSERTION 1X	3X	5X	10X
FULL Page	7-1/4 x 10	UNIVERSAL	100%	$1,000	$ 975	$ 960	$ 910
FULL Page (back cover)	7-1/4 x 7	UNIVERSAL	72	1,000	975	960	910
2/3 Page (vertical)	4-3/4 x 10	3-COLUMN	66	750	728	713	675
2/3 Page (horizontal)	7-1/4 x 6-1/4	3-COLUMN	67	750	728	713	675
1/2 Page (vertical)	3-1/2 x 10	2-COLUMN	44	570	547	536	507
1/2 Page (horizontal)	7-1/4 x 4-7/8	UNIVERSAL	49	570	547	536	507
1/3 Page (vertical)	2-1/4 x 10	3-COLUMN	32	400	380	372	348
1/3 Page (square)	4-3/4 x 4-7/8	3-COLUMN	33	400	380	372	348
1/3 Page (horizontal)	7-1/4 x 3-1/8	3-COLUMN	33	400	380	372	348
1/4 Page (vertical)	2-1/4 x 7-1/2	3-COLUMN	22	320	301	294	275
1/4 Page (rectangular)	3-1/2 x 4-7/8	2-COLUMN	22	320	301	294	275
Page (horizontal)	7-1/4 x 2-5/16	UNIVERSAL	22	320	301	294	275
Page (vertical)	2-1/4 x 4-7/8	3-COLUMN	16	240	226	221	204
1/6 Page (horizontal)	4-3/4 x 2-5/16	3-COLUMN	17	240	226	221	204
1/8 Page (rectangular)	3-1/2 x 2-5/16	2-COLUMN	11	190	177	173	160
1/12 Page (square)	2-1/4 x 2-5/16	3-COLUMN	8	130	121	117	108

ISSUE DATE: 1st of the month

CLOSING DATE: Camera-ready copy, 1st of second month preceding month of issue (i.e. March 1 for May issue, April 1 for June issue, mid-May for July/August double issue, etc.).

SPOT COLORS: Please contact the Bulletin Editor (address above) in advance about 4-color and inside spot color rates (now being developed). Spot color is currently available (inside and back covers only) on a limited basis. Color wil be Editor's choice, but may be negotiable. Please be sure to reserve space in advance.

SPECIFICATIONS: Camera-ready copy must be submitted with all elements (including line illustrations) in place, mounted on illustration board and flapped for protection. Size must be actual or marked for size alteration that will result in the size corresponding to space reserved. Copy must be clean and without smears or other defects that will require correction prior to printing.

Contents of a photographic nature must be submitted in the form of a either a glossy, continuous-tone print or an actual-size negative with contact print for position; screened in-place prints are not recommended.

Special positions may be requested, however they are subject to availability and, if accepted, will incur a 10% surcharge (except for the back cover page as a whole, since a price for that has been established).

CULATION: Based on 50,000 circulation.

DISPO-10/91

Appendix Q:

PREPARING FOR AN ANNUAL GATHERING: A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST

30 months before: Decide to bid for the AG. Name General Chairman. Inspect all possible sites, compare facilities, negotiate terms, make selection and obtain written agreement. Prepare bid for submission. Make up a rough budget. Submit bid to AMC.

24 months before: Bid is approved by Site Selection Committee, confirmed by AMC. Appoint chairmen for key committees.

24 to 12 months before: (Plans can progress leisurely during this period). Prepare a general plan. Select your principal speakers and book them. Decide on registration fees. Design your Bulletin ad and your flyers. Complete your Organizational Chart. Write job descriptions.

12 months before: Start holding meetings with your key personnel. Drum up enthusiasm in your local group. Book your orchestra(s). Maintain contact with the hotel. Plan your special events.

As soon as the current AG is over, have announcements made at all RGs and at MGs of neighboring groups. Enlist help from neighboring groups if it will be needed.

10 months before: Agree on final meal prices with hotel, complete Bulletin ad and flyers. Order Bulletin ad for January/February issue (deadline about November 1), place small ad in the International Journal.

8 months before: Send camera-ready copy for ads in local group publications to national office for distribution to all editors; include small display ads for fillers.

6 months before: Begin enlisting speakers and discussion leaders in earnest, sending them forms for requirements, vitas, etc. Run a poll on subject/speaker preferences to aid in room assignments. Contract with company to record all meetings on tape. Ask AMC for its requirements and agree on a schedule of Mensa-related events.

4 months before: Have computer programmed and have it turn out monthly printouts. Begin mailing out acknowledgement and information packets. Have meal tickets and name badges printed. Recruit local members for hospitality, registration, information, transportation, assignments. Order name tag cases.

3 months before: Prepare a media list, mail out first press release, start obtaining radio and TV commitments. Touch base with your speakers.

2 months before:	Match local group volunteers with jobs, make up a time and job schedule. Plan dais seating, introductions, decorations.
1 month before:	Design printed program, send to printer. Issue final press release. Start stuffing registration envelopes, goodie bags. Order hospitality supplies. Plan AG Gazette.
1 week before:	Set up registration, information, bulletin boards. Schedule staff luncheon. Have meeting with hotel staff. Print pre-registration list. Check everything.
AG Day:	Keep cool! Lay in a supply of aspirin. Greet your guests. Remember, AGs are fun!

Appendix R:

ESTIMATING PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS:

General Chairman and other chairmen					7
Other main assignments: Computer operator, hospitality heads, hospitality supply chairman, transportation chairman, special events chairman, photographer, copywriter, printing chairman, music chairman, security, etc.					20
Hospitality:	Wednesday	4 @ 12 hours	Saturday	12 @ 18 hours	
	Thursday	6 @ 15 hours	Sunday	12 @ 9 hours	
	Friday	12 @ 18 hours	TOTAL:	678 man-hours	60
Registration:	Thursday	3 @ 12 hours	Saturday	6 @ 15 hours	
	Friday	6 @ 15 hours	TOTAL:	216 man-hours	20
Information:	Thursday	2 @ 12 hours	Saturday	4 @ 15 hours	
	Friday	4 @ 15 hours	Sunday	2 @ 6 hours	
			TOTAL:	156 man-hours	15
Transportation:	Thursday	2 @ 6 hours	Saturday	None	
	Friday	6 @ 12 hours	Sunday	12 @ 4 hours	
			TOTAL:	132 man-hours	12
Backup force, odd jobs (10%)					13

TOTAL: 157

ANNUAL GATHERING STATUS REPORT

Date:_____

KEY APPOINTMENTS: General Chairman:_____

Registrar:_____ (Bonded?_____) Treasurer:_____ (Bonded?_____)

Hospitality:_____ Hotel Liaison:_____

Publicity:_____ Programs:_____

Other:_____

Any changes made since last report:_____

REGISTRATIONS: Received to date:_____ Acknowledged:_____

Funds deposited:_____ Deposits made how often?_____

Interest-bearing easy access account?_____

PROGRAMS: Speakers/programs planned:*_____ Locked in:*_____

Special events planned:*_____ Plans completed:_____

meeting rooms blocked:_____

Tours planned:_____ Plans completed:_____

Game rooms:_____ Contests:_____

Local officer training workshops:_____

HOTELS: Main hotel:_____ Rooms reserved:_____

Overflow hotel:_____ Rooms reserved:_____

University rooms?_____ Rooms reserved:_____

MEALS: # Meals & cost:_____

Meals reserved to date:_____

HOSPITALITY: Space(s) allocated:_____ Smoking:_____ Non-Smoking:_____

Complimentary breakfasts?_____ Other:_____

Other groups helping?*_____

89-RLC-3 * Submit additional information if required.

Appendix T:

GUIDELINES FOR MENSA GATHERINGS

Mensa Gatherings, Annual, Regional, Mini-gatherings, and Colloquia, are Mensa's most important activities, and have increased in number to over sixty per year. Considerable information and experience have accumulated, and will be given here for the benefit of future gathering committees. While the format for Annual Gatherings is well established, Regional Gatherings vary widely in character and program, and committees are free to exercise their own creativity and discretion.

Most gatherings, if carefully planned, are successful. Attendance varies from less than a hundred for small groups, to many hundreds for those large groups with a history of successful gatherings. Profits are often used for local scholarships awards. With over sixty gatherings a year, we may be reaching the saturation point, and groups should consider alternate years or holding joint regionals with nearby groups. To insure that gatherings are separated in time and distance, dates must be cleared with RVCs and the Membership Officer. Hosting a successful RG is a prerequisite to hosting an Annual Gathering.

The Annual Gathering:

The program and timetable for AGs is now well established, and late June or early July are the usual dates. Members begin arriving early in the week, registration usually opens on Wednesday or early Thursday, and the Gathering is under way. The number of meals offered is decided by the AG Committee, with speakers at most meals; complimentary breakfasts in Hospitality are standard. For the benefit of local group officials, workshops are held on all aspects of Mensa: newsletters, administration, proctoring, gatherings, finances, scholarships, etc. Other meetings are offered on subjects of interest to Mensans, and AGs have been known to have had as many as 80 different programs. Hospitality is extremely important; members need a place to meet their friends and enjoy refreshments. A Friday evening dinner and informal dance is often held, and a more formal banquet and ball is scheduled for Saturday night. The Annual Meeting of American Mensa, Ltd., is held on Sunday morning, with brunch and farewell speeches as the final event. AGs have grown from a few hundred attendees to nearly 2,000.

Regional Gatherings:

Most RGs tend to be miniature AGs, running from late Thursday or Friday noon to Sunday noon. A three-meal package is standard, with complimentary breakfasts, and a well stocked hospitality area. Talks, meetings, and contests make up the program, and a dance is almost always held on Saturday night. This report will deal primarily with RGs.

Colloquia:

These are gatherings dealing with more serious topics, and have been held biennially since 1982, sponsored by MERF, the Mensa Education and Research Foundation. A complete report on Colloquim III, held in Louisville in November 1986, is available for future Colloquia Committees, and information on Colloquia I and II are available for the host groups.

Mini-Gatherings, and Others:

Many groups have started with low budget camp-outs or mini-gatherings, sometimes following with full scale Regionals. Whether a program is followed, or the gathering is unstructured, is decided by the members in charge.

Advance Planning:

Eighteen to twenty-four months should be allowed for planning an Annual Gathering, six months to a year for a Regional. A Gathering Committee should consist of a small group of knowledgeable members: The General Chairman, the Registrar, the Treasurer, the Program, Publicity, and Hospitality Chairman. All other assignments can be supervised by these members. Only one person should be authorized to deal with the hotel.

The Dates:

Many Mensa groups have grandfather rights to certain dates which now must be renewed each year or released. Any new gathering should select a date that will not conflict with other gatherings within driving distance. Dates must be approved by the RVC and cleared with the Membership Officer before an announcement can be carried in the Mensa Bulletin. RG dates should not conflict with AG dates unless geographically well separated.

The Site:

In selecting the hotel, your negotiating position is best before your gathering is actually announced. Convention business is profitable, hotels and motels are competitive, and all prices are subject to negotiation. Consider all available sites, pointing out that Mensa is a prestige society, and Mensans are excellent guests. A downtown location is fine, but not mandatory. You should obtain rooms at well below the rack rates, and with singles and doubles preferably at the same price. Meeting and hospitality rooms should be free, also one sleeping room for every 40 to 50 rooms sold by the hotel. Meals should be negotiated in the same manner, arriving at attractive menus at reasonable prices. Include permission to serve your own food and drinks in the Hospitality areas/suites in contract. Finally, get this all in writing, drafting the agreement yourself if necessary.

Hotel Facilities: Here is a check list:

1. Can the Banquet Room seat the anticipated number of guests?
2. Will the meeting rooms together accommodate the total attendance?
3. Is the registration space adequate and well located?
4. Will the hospitality space handle, without crowding, your total attendance?
5. Can you serve your own wine, soft drinks, and food in the Hospitality area/suites?
6. Are the meeting rooms and guest rooms all in one part of the hotel, for convenience and so not to disturb other guests?
7. Will the room reservations be made directly with the hotel, and receive Mensa rates? (Be sure the hotel will offer the same rates to those arriving early or remaining after the gathering.) Most hotels will furnish reservation cards if needed...
8. Does the hotel understand that only one person (or at the most two) will be authorized to sign for charges to the master account, and that no bills will be paid without the authorized signature? Individuals should be billed separately.
9. Do you have a written agreement with the hotel for everything?

Budget:

As early as possible, draw up a tentative budget, and revise it as your costs and estimates become more accurate. Obtain financial reports from other gatherings as guidelines. Besides normal administrative expenses, the budget should include music, hospitality, breakfasts, and buffets, if scheduled.

Registrar:

The duties of the Registrar are these: 1) Receive and record all registrations, 2) Turn over money to the Treasurer, 3) Mail out confirmation letters, 4) Prepare registration envelopes, 5) Prepare a list of pre-registrants, and 6) Supervise the Registration Desk during the gathering. The record-keeping is much easier if a computer is used. Software should be available from other gathering registrars.

Treasurer:

The Treasurer should deposit all funds promptly in interest bearing accounts, make all payments authorized by the Chairman, and prepare a financial report. Since receipts of thousands of dollars are involved, the selection of the Treasurer is of prime importance, and bonding should be mandatory. Both the Chairman and the Treasurer should be authorized to sign checks in the gathering account.

Publicity:

As soon as the dates and site are approved, this information should appear, via the Membership Officer, in the Mensa Bulletin. When registration, meals, and room costs are set, the original announcement can be up-dated. Announcements can be up to 300 characters and 5 insertions. Have an artist member prepare a flyer with registration and hotel reservation forms. A form 6" wide will fit most publications, and should be distributed to other groups approximately 60 days before the gathering. Advertising space in the Mensa Bulletin may be considered for major gatherings.

Local Media:

Press releases should be sent to local newspapers and radio/TV stations, and visiting dignitaries should be booked for interviews. One advantage of gatherings is that they provide publicity that will attract new members. Phone-in talk shows are excellent.

Program:

While some gatherings are planned around a theme, most prefer speakers and meetings on a variety of subjects. Mensans expect programs to be entertaining and informative, and programs on psychology, sociology, and matters of topical interest are popular. Since many guests are local group officers, conferences on local administrative matters are often scheduled. Speakers can be selected from local authorities, from college and university faculties, and from the guests themselves; AMC members are usually interesting speakers. Set time limit for each talk; 30 to 40 minutes, followed by a question period, is ideal, after 40 minutes the audience is likely to become restless; luncheon and brunch speakers generally talk 20 to 30 minutes. Speakers are usually given their registration and luncheon in lieu of an honorarium.

Other Events:

Time for shopping and sightseeing should be provided; museums are especially popular. Mensans are avid games players, and a well-stocked Games Room is a necessity. Contests are always enjoyed, and Ice-Breakers are common on Friday to acquaint the guests with each other.

Meal Functions:

Mensans enjoy good food, and the menu should be negotiated with the hotel chef. Friday arrivals are uncertain, and guests usually sign up to dine at nearby restaurants; some gatherings offer a light buffet in the hospitality area, so the guests will be present for the evening program. The usual 3-meal package includes Luncheon and Banquet on Saturday, and a Sunday Brunch. The Saturday Luncheon is an ideal time for a key speaker, and the Sunday Brunch is the time for awards, entertainment, and farewells. Saturday evening is a party time, a cocktail party with a cash bar, a banquet, and a dance, often a costume ball. Complimentary breakfasts on Saturday and Sunday mornings are now standard, with juice, coffee, and rolls. The preferred dining room seating is at round tables seating eight, with separate tables for smokers and non-smokers. Head tables are optional, although less popular recently. Be sure to provide a podium and microphone.

It is best to have all meals on the premises, and buffet meals are acceptable and are sometimes less costly. Formal dinners are sit-down affairs. If possible, have the tables cleared before the program begins, and have extra chairs available for those registrants who have not bought meal tickets. Round off your ticket prices, but be sure to allow for tax and tips.

Hospitality:

Nothing is more important to a gathering than a comfortable and well-stocked hospitality area. Adjoining rooms (for smokers and non-smokers) are customary, or a large room divided by a buffet and with smoke-eaters in the smoking section. Soft drinks, beer, and good quality wine are furnished, plus cheeses, vegetables, dips, and local specialties. Groups try to excel in the variety and quality of their hospitality fare.

Name Tags:

Since members collect these, make yours distinctive, and print the names in large, easy-to-read letters. Insert these in plastic cases (3 1/2 by 2 1/4 is standard), stapled or taped so the card cannot fall out. Provide ribbons for committee members and VIPs, and ribbons or stars for local group officers. Some groups use 2 1/4" name-buttons instead of name tags.

Printed Program:

Prepare and distribute a program with a list of events and all other information needed by the guests, including directions to meeting rooms. One that fits easily into a pocket or purse is the most practical.

Local Group Support:

A successful gathering requires participation by all your active members; they not only increase the attendance, but are needed for various assignments. Make a special effort to register the members of your local group.

Registration Desk:

This is the first personal contact the guest has with the host group, and the importance of a well-planned, prompt, and courteous registration cannot be over emphasized. Recommendations: 1) a convenient and visible registration desk, staffed from noon to 10:00pm on Friday, and until 6:00pm on Saturday, 2) registration envelopes prepared in advance, containing name tags, meal tickets, programs, original registration materials, and noting any money still due, 3) have extra members around to welcome the guests, 4) have each arrival sign a sign-up sheet, 5) after registration is closed, leave word where the Registrar can be found, and 6) have extra meal tickets available, and money to make change.

Security:

Gatherings are for Mensa members, and their personal guests; uninvited guests should not be admitted, except to a meeting open to the public. Discourage free loading; no one should be admitted to a meeting unless wearing a name tag. Meeting rooms and hospitality area should not be used for sleeping.

Odds and Ends:

1. Have a bulletin board and message center near the Registration Desk.
2. Provide an Information Desk near Registration for handouts, sign-up sheets, and to display various newsletters.
3. In case of emergencies, know where to reach a doctor and a dentist.
4. Be able to prepare sign, when needed.
5. Remember to have prizes for contest winners.
6. Make provisions for transportation for air travelers, and for private planes.
7. Have a photographer take candid shots for possible use in the Bulletin and local publications.

Summary:

While these guidelines should cover the major aspects of a gathering, experience at gatherings held by other groups is also valuable. Every gathering should have its own distinctive character, with its own special attractions, designed to draw larger groups in succeeding years. Gatherings have many advantages; their publicity brings in new members, the profits can be used for scholarships, and they instill a spirit of pride and cooperation in the group. Many lasting friendships have been made at Mensa gatherings.

Darlene Criss
Chairman, Site Selection Committee 1991
7/87

Appendix U:

ANNUAL GATHERINGS AND COLLOQUIA (1975 - 1995)

	Annual Gatherings		Colloquia	
1975	San Antonio, TX	(500)		
1976	Valley Forge, PA	(600)		
1977	San Diego, CA	(785)		
1978	Cleveland, OH	(850)		
1979	Kansas City, MO	(698)		
1980	San Francisco, CA	(1,036)		
1981	Louisville, KY	(1,102)		
1982	Trenton, NJ	(719)	Boston, MA	(280)
1983	Phoenix, AZ	(850)		
1984	Washington, DC	(1,368)	Phoenix, AZ	(83)
1985	Milwaukee, WI	(700+)		
1986	New York, NY	(~1,800)	Louisville, KY	(226)
1987	Dallas, TX	(1,322)		
1988	Montreal, CN	(1,684)	Austin, TX	(225)
1989	Atlanta, GA	(1,281)		
1990	Orange County, CA	(1,400)		
1991	Kansas City, MO	(958)	Milwaukee, WI	(112)
1992	San Francisco, CA			
1993	Orlando, FL		Philadelphia	(100)
1994	Cambridge, MA			
1995	St. Louis, MO			

More information on attendance, AG Chairmen, Host Cities, hotels and Colloquia, can be found in the book, "A History of Mensa," published 1990, American Mensa, Ltd.

Appendix V:

SPECIAL EVENTS:

All gatherings have meals, speakers, programs, and hospitality, but it is often the special events that lend charm and excitement to an AG. Here are a few suggestions that have worked in the past.

* A 10 kilometer run: Charge for entry and a T-shirt.
* Jokesters: Expect obscenities, schedule late in the evening.
* Fishbowl Forum: Draw a topic and talk for 3 minutes.
* Stair Stare: FM judges rate each passing MM, announce rating.
* Ice Cream Break: Do this mid-afternoon on Saturday.
* Isolated M Reunion: Subscribers get together for a reunion.
* String game: Strings are wound around chairs and ladders, contestants untangle them and wind on popsicle sticks.
* Sing-alongs: Have these in hospitality suites evenings, or in odd corners during the day, led by guitarists or pianists.
* Computer Games: Standard games or quizzes of your own design.
* Treasure Hunt: Devise a list of unusual items to locate throughout the hotel. Give prizes for most found.
* Huggy Beast: 6-8 innocent-appearing Ms surround an unsuspecting victim, screaming "Huggy Beast". Silly, but fun.
* Fortune tellers: Clairvoyants in corridor or hospitality area.
* Origami: Paper folding, airplane contests.
* Square Dancing: Possible Thursday night event. Fun to watch.

Appendix W:

IDEAS FROM PAST AGs

Advance T-Shirts:
A limited number of T-shirts advertising the AG were made up and sold at RGs and other events preceding the AG. Because only a limited number of shirts were available, they sold well. Those who bought and wore them gave the AG advance publicity. (Milwaukee, Kansas City)

Discount Coupons for Hotel Restaurants:
Each attendee got a dollars-off coupon in the registration packet. The coupons were only good for meals in the hotel's restaurants, building business for the restaurants and giving attendees a pleasant sense of getting a deal on non-AG meals. (Washington D.C.)

Food Machines in Hospitality:
Several kinds of fruit juice in bubbler dispensers, a variety of sodas (root beer, orange drink, etc., in addition to the normal clear, cola, diet and caffeine-free) from soda fountains, a soft-serve ice cream machine with sundae fixings nearby, and a commercial popcorn machine. Some offered a selection of the above, others added items, such as a hot-dog cart. (Milwaukee, Atlanta, Anaheim)

Incentives for Volunteers:
AG officials handed out playing cards to those who helped out. Cards could be combined in various "hands" and exchanged for scrip that was redeemable at an auction at the end of the weekend. (Anaheim)

Shuttle Service to Overflow Hotel:
A school bus ran almost continuously, around the clock, from the main hotel to the overflow hotel. Drivers were accommodating; large groups of attendees were able to "hijack" the bus to nearby restaurants. (Milwaukee)

Hospitality Staffed by Other Groups:
A number of groups were contacted in advance and asked to staff Hospitality for two-hour shifts. Several groups brought their own local specialties to add to Hospitality fare. The regular Hospitality staff got a little break from their duties. (Washington, D.C., Atlanta)

Silk-Screened Directional Signs:
The AG committee got pieces of foam-core or heavy poster weight paper, silk-screened with the AG logo at the left-hand side of the board and a blank space on the right. They used the sign blanks to write in program names, and to identify AG services such as Registration. The signs were eye-catching and professional looking. (Dallas, Kansas City)

On-Site Book Sale:
The manager of a bookstore brought best-sellers and books that would appeal to Mensans and set up a small bookstore in a break-out room at the AG. Mensans enjoyed browsing; the store donated a percentage of sales to the local scholarship fund. (Atlanta)

Armadillo Races:
Will never replace the Kentucky Derby, but Ms enjoyed holding and stroking the live armadillos. (Dallas)

Chili Cook-Off:
Teams could draw ingredients of their choice and cook the chili at one of a dozen or so stations set up by the hotel in a ballroom. There was a formal judging, but it took a back seat to the fun the Ms had in creating big pots of chili and eating it later. (Anaheim)

Game-Show Tryouts:
"Jeopardy" and other TV game shows held auditions at the AG. A number of Ms earned the chance to appear on these shows. (Anaheim)

Thought-Provoking Program Track:
In addition to regular programs, a special program committee created a track on ethical issues, designed to stimulate discussion rather than to inform. These sessions were twice as long as normal programs to allow time for audience participation. A moderator was assigned to each room to keep discussion moving. (Atlanta)

Picnic Lunch:
One optional lunch was a family picnic featuring hot dogs and hamburgers, whimsical place mats with large ants (colored with Crayons by volunteers), and silly games. (Milwaukee)

Show-Stopper Pastries:
One night a large cake was served in Hospitality. On Saturday night, the dance was interrupted and guests were invited out into the pre-function area for a special treat. Half a dozen hotel waiters carried in a table-sized tray. The centerpiece on the tray was a large edible replica of a local landmark. Surrounding it were hundreds of miniature pastries---eclairs, napoleons, petit fours, etc. The AG chair made very brief remarks thanking everyone for attending. (Montreal)

Pies in the Face:
Attendees were allowed to choose which of several well-known Ms they would like to see receive a pie in the face. Guests "voted" for the pie recipient by stuffing money into a pie-shaped container with individual compartments for each candidate. The winner was announced after the Saturday banquet and an auction was held to determine who would be allowed to deliver the pie. Proceeds from the voting and the auction went to MERF. (Dallas)

Post-Prandial Entertainment:
Rather than after-dinner speakers, the AG presented entertainers: an award-winning marching band after one lunch, a pair of stand-up comedians after Friday dinner, and a hypnotist after the Saturday banquet. Guests enjoyed the light touch. (Kansas City)

Fond Farewells:
A special parting touch sends guests home happy. One AG put out left-over Hospitality supplies and walk-away snacks on Sunday, inviting guests to load up for the road. Another AG brought out trays of eclairs and strawberry tarts as one last treat on Sunday afternoon. (Washington, D.C., Milwaukee)

Souvenirs:
A number of AGs have handed out free souvenirs to guests: Tie-tack pins, coffee mugs, splits of wine with the AG logo on the label, bottles of barbecue sauce, and lapel pins. (Louisville, Washington, D.C., Kansas City)

Variety Show:
A special audience participation program that went over very well was a Talent/Variety Show where the performers are the AG attendees. Each "act" would showcase a unique talent or ability (such as juggling, singing, comedy, acting, magic, etc.), and a specially selected panel of judges voted on the winners. Prizes were awarded to each participant. (Kansas City)

Appendix X:

IBD/IGC MEETING REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendees

International Board of Directors (IBD) and International General Council (IGC).

The IBD, the senior body, meets for a longer period. The IGC is comprised of CEOs of all national Mensas and the International Chairman. There will usually be about 20-30 delegates and officers at an IGC meeting, and about 16-24 at the IBD sessions.

2. Sessions

The IBD/IGC meetings extend over a five-day period. Friday through Tuesday. The IGC meets on the first two days, Friday and Saturday; Sunday morning is reserved for a special host activity; and IBD meets Sunday afternoon and evening and on Monday and Tuesday. Most participants arrive the day before the opening session. The IBD will need hotel rooms for five or six nights, while the IGC-only delegates probably need only three nights, as their meetings will conclude Saturday afternoon and many will leave the next day.

3. Special Arrangements

On Friday evening, after the first IGC meeting, there is usually an icebreaker (get-acquainted gathering). The Host Country Talk can also take place at this time. This is an informal presentation about the host country by a member or members of the local group - facts and figures about population, government, education, etc., and/or "unofficial" information and points of view. These activities serve as opportunities for the host group members, delegates and visitors to meet each other.

A planned tour of the host city (or other activity) on Sunday morning gives the delegates a half-day break. This tour should be open to all Mensans at a separate charge.

4. Hotel

Favorable rates can likely be negotiated as IBD/IGC meetings are usually held in the off-season. Singles and doubles in a clean and well-maintained (not luxury) hotel are needed, on a "bed and breakfast" basis. Hotel must be at least minimally accessible to the handicapped.

5. Meeting Room

One meeting room for the entire period. Seating should be in round-table style, for 25-30 persons. There should be additional chairs on the periphery for guests and observers.

Meeting rooms may be available gratis, based on the number of meals and sleeping rooms booked.

Provide coffee-tea breaks at 10:30 and 3:30 during meeting days. These should not be lavish; simple refreshments are sufficient.

6. Meals The following meals should be planned:

Dinners: on the second IGC meeting day (Saturday), usually attended by IBD, IGC and visitors, and optional for members of the host group; on the IBDs first meeting day (Sunday), usually attended by IBD and local group members (a few IGC members may stay over).

Lunches: on Friday and Saturday for all attending the IGC meeting, perhaps 25 persons; on Monday and Tuesday for IBD members only. Lunches should be inexpensive, possibly buffet style.

7. Publicity

The major reason for hosting a meeting is to get local publicity for the host group. Reporters could attend the Friday Icebreaker for informal talks; meet with all delegates and the host Mensa committee during the Saturday lunch break; and attend the Saturday dinner, especially if there will be a celebrity guest speaker. This speaker could be a politician, writer, critic, academic, actor, intellectual - a famous person to attract the media.

Publicity within Mensa is also important: Advance publicity to other nationals (via their newsletters, etc.) can attract many Mensan visitors to your gathering. Appoint one of your members to write an account of the meeting immediately afterward for submission to the International Journal. Ask a member photographer to take black-and-white photos for use in your magazine and in the IJ. (Color doesn't reproduce well.)

8. Registration Fee

Set the amount to cover planning expenses such as postage, printing, telephone, and expenses during the weekend - such as the Icebreaker and the Saturday evening dinner. Thus, visitors' registrations should cover the Icebreaker, dinner and planning expenses. Host group members can pay separately for the Icebreaker and/or dinner if they wish to attend.

9. Expenses

The host group must confirm anticipated costs with the international office before making any firm commitments. The IBD pays all its own expenses. Generally, this includes expenses of IBD delegates and officers. When the hotel is agreed upon and bookings made, the International office pays in advance, so the host group needs to make no financial outlay. The IGC-only members will register and pay their own expenses directly to the host group and to the hotel.

10. Host Group Meeting

It is wise for the group to schedule their Annual General Meeting (or a Special Meeting) while the IBD/IGC are in session. This creates an opportunity for the delegates to join the host group afterward for a brief talk be their chairman, a question-and-answer period, and the like. What is important is that local members have the chance to meet the IBD/IGC delegates and get a sense of Mensa as, indeed, an international organization.

11. Other Activities

If the host group wants to attract Mensans who are neither delegates nor local members, it is important to plan other activities at the same time as the meetings. The easiest way is to have a lounge/sitting room at the hotel open throughout the weekend as a hospitality center with local members as hosts: visitors can converse or play chess or card games, etc. Offer simple refreshments - soft drinks, coffee, biscuits, crisps, etc. (allow for the cost in your registration fee). Other possibilities include city tours, group visits to museums, and the like. Be sure to feature these opportunities in your advance publicity.

12. Miscellaneous

Other useful information: Advise the cost of airport transfers, bus schedules, time from airport to the hotel. Provide a list of nearby restaurants (and prices) for unscheduled meals. Delegates will greatly appreciate an extra service - being picked up at the airport on arrival and taken back at departure.

Conclusion

The international office offers experienced assistance. A bid is evaluated on quality and cost of hotel and meals, good plans for publicity, and prospects of maximum growth for Mensa.

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