

From the RVC:

On December 6th I will be joining the other members of your national Board of Directors in San Diego for our winter meeting. At this meeting, the most significant item on the agenda is a dues increase for the coming year. This was on the agenda for our fall meeting in Texas, but because the Finance Committee had chosen to propose an outrageous 10% increase next year, with yet another increase the following year, a coalition of virtually all the Regional Vice-Chairs plus a few other directors defeated the motion at that time. Now we are confronted with a new proposal, this time for an increase to \$75 per year.

I would like to tell you that I will oppose this increase as well, but I cannot. There are several factors driving this decision, one of them being simple inflation, but the largest and most urgent was the decision of Mensa International Ltd (MIL) to increase yet again the amount American Mensa (and other national Mensas) must contribute every year to be a part of the world-wide organization. That decision virtually guaranteed a dues increase, since at the current rate we could not find another \$50,000 or so in the budget to send to MIL without seriously impairing our own operations. We must also begin to provide funds for upgrading our computer system at the National Office, which a recent outside audit found to be at serious risk of failure, due to outmoded software and obsolete equipment.

The good news is that, for the first time in a decade or so, our membership is on the increase. Following an extremely successful Mensa Testing Month in October, we now expect to report a year-over-year increase of nearly 1,000 members when our fiscal year ends on March 31, 2015. Barring any unforeseen developments, this should enable us to get through both 2015 and 2016 in the black, and if the growth continues, I hope we can avoid another increase for 2017 and 2018 as well.

In any case, please accept my best wishes for a joyful holiday season and a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year.

Roger Durham