The Official Publication of North Texas Mensa

# M-AURA August 2020

**General Meeting**

**Saturday the 15th**

***Jonathan Bethune: Artificial and Human intelligence.***

Group #750 **CONTENTS** Issue #577 DLXXVIII


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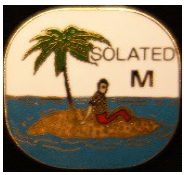
## ON THE COVERS:

***Front*** *Top:* Oliver shows off a crane he built. *Bottom:* Prishaa and company showing off origami creations, and also some paper airplanes (flying origami?)

***Back*** *Top:* June poker triumvirate: 1st - Kim Speed 2nd - Anne Whiteman, 3rd - (and apparently thrilled about it) Paul Whiteman, *Bottom:* It is not puzzling that you can make new friends at the AG. The secret passphrase is "I think this one goes over there", and the next thing you know you are part of the team.

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**Isolated M SIG monthly newsletter serves as a communication forum for Mensa members around the world -- currently 80 countries.**
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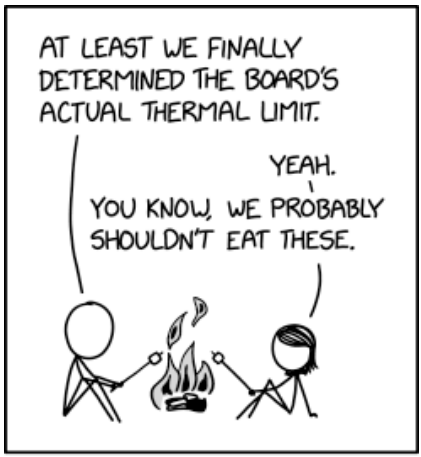
## FROM THE NTM PRESIDENT

CATHY ALLSHOUSE

Having recently returned from the Annual Gathering in Fort Worth, I remain so very impressed with the quality and depth of the programmatic offerings coming from American Mensa. Plus, it was huge fun to socialize with friends and to catch up with those friends I don't often see. I learned so much. If you don't already do so, I strongly encourage you to become more involved with North Texas Mensa special interest groups. Check out the calendar -- there are many of them. If there's a new event you'd like to see happen, please let me know. I also urge you to attend the NTM regional gathering over the weekend after Thanksgiving. There will be terrific speakers, games, tastings and so much fun. You can get involved with that committee to help organize the speakers and various events--please contact Karen Brack. There are several regional gatherings around the country as well; you can find these listings on the American Mensa website. Mensa membership, imo, truly provides a huge "bang for the buck". Be sure to join us on Sat., August 15th for a very timely presentation from our very own NTM member, Jonathan Bethune, about the current status of the AI industry and its use in our world. Jonathan designs software to advance that industry, so this is sure to be cutting edge information.

Wishing each and every one of you plenty of air conditioning during the end of the hot Texas Summer.




ENGINEERING TIP: KEEP STICKS AND MARSHMALLOWS AROUND TO MAKE FAILURES LOOK INTENTIONAL.

***xkcd.com***

## REGION 6 VICE CHAIR — LAURA HATTON

This was my favorite AG EVER!
Okay, okay...maybe I say that every year. And it's still true. Every Annual Gathering reminds me why I love this crazy, brilliant, quirky organization. I come home exhausted, inspired, and with about 47 pages of notes, 200 new ideas, and a renewed appreciation for the volunteers and American Mensa staff who somehow make an event this large look effortless.
Spoiler alert: it isn't.
Thank you to every volunteer and staff member who spent countless hours planning, organizing, solving problems, answering questions, moving furniture, finding microphones, putting out fires (hopefully only figuratively), and making this year's AG such a tremendous success. We see you, we appreciate you, and you made Fort Worth an unforgettable experience.
Speaking of unforgettable...
Congratulations to one of Region 6's very own, Taz Criss of Gulf Coast Mensa, who received the Margo Award in recognition of her lifetime of service to Mensa. If you've ever had the pleasure of meeting Taz, you already know she's the kind of person who quietly makes everything around her better. The award is incredibly well deserved.
Congratulations, Taz!
One of my personal highlights was our Region 6 Meet & Greet. More than 50 members joined us, and I left that room energized. The conversation was full of enthusiasm, creativity, laughter, and enough ideas to keep us busy for quite a while.
In fact, one of those ideas is already gaining momentum. Keith and the Gulf Coast Mensa crew are exploring plans for an M Cruise sailing out of Galveston. I can't promise trivia contests on the Lido Deck...yet...but stay tuned! We'll share details as they come together.
What excites me even more than any single idea is seeing members realize that they don't have to wait for someone else to make Mensa better. Some of the best things we do start with one member

saying, "Hey...what if we...?"
Speaking of ideas becoming reality...
As many of you know, I've volunteered to chair the Trust, Culture & Safety Pillar as part of American Mensa's new Strategic Plan. Our goal is to strengthen trust throughout the organization, foster a culture where every member feels welcomed, respected, included, and safe to participate, encourage kindness and intellectual curiosity, and ensure our policies are applied fairly, consistently, and transparently.
That's a big job.
And it's not one a committee can accomplish alone.
I want to hear from you- especially if you're a new member or you've joined within the last year. Fresh eyes often see things the rest of us miss. What made you feel welcome? What made you hesitate? What would encourage you to become more involved? If you've been around a little longer, I'd love to hear from you, too. What's working? What isn't? What can Mensa do to improve our culture and strengthen the sense of belonging for everyone?
The best organizations never stop listening, never stop learning, and never stop improving. I believe that's exactly where we're headed, and I'm excited to help us get there.
Until next month...enjoy a few photos from AG and meet the newest member of the Hatton household, Miss Mabel, whom we somehow managed to adopt while we were in Fort Worth. We came home with more than just memories!

## GIFTED YOUTH CORNER

*by Bill Rock*

Origami in June was a lot of fun. A big Thank You goes to Prishaa and her family for hosting the event. I learned how to make connected cranes, and also how to make an omega star. Prishaa's sample star looked amazing; my instantiation was a little more...abstract. But it was the best omega star I had ever made, that is a fact.

For this month we are bringing back a popular event from the past. Disassembly Day is a chance to dig into electronics or small appliances to see how they work, or at least how they're made, and perhaps get a better idea of the world we live in. I have a stash of a couple we can work on, or you are welcome to bring your own. Looking ahead, I am firming up a special event for October, and if I can get it organized, another favorite for September. It does not mean that I am not still interested in any ideas you have for events. Together we can have a lot of fun, and perhaps a little learning, too.

# AUGUST 2026

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | **01**<br>9:30 am Mensa Testing<br>1 pm VDG |
| **02**<br>12:30 pm GY book club<br> | **03**<br>1 pm VDG<br>7 pm Munch Bunch | **04**<br>7 pm Beer Garden | **05**<br>1 pm VDG | **06**<br>1 pm Lunch Group<br>7 pm HOTDAM | **07**<br>1 pm VDG<br>1 pm East Dallas Lunch Bunch | **08**<br>1 pm VDG<br>7 pm Singles Chat 'n Chew |
| **09**<br>2 pm Bright Ladies SIG<br>2 pm GY disassembling<br>9 pm *M-Aura*<br>Calendar Deadline | **10**<br>1 pm VDG<br>7 pm Munch Bunch<br>9 pm *M-Aura*<br>All-Copy | **11**<br>7 pm Beer Garden | **12**<br>1 pm VDG<br>3 pm R&I<br>SIG Mall walk | **13**<br>1 pm Lunch Group<br>7 pm HOTDAM<br>7:30 pm NTM Board Meeting | **14**<br>1 pm VDG<br>1 pm East Dallas Lunch Bunch<br>7 pm Texas Hold 'Em<br> | **15**<br>1 pm VDG<br>**2 pm General Meeting**<br>4 pm Small Group Mtg |
| **16** | **17**<br>1 pm VDG<br>7 pm Munch Bunch | **18**<br>7 pm Beer Garden | **19**<br>1 pm VDG | **20**<br>1 pm Lunch Group<br>7 pm HOTDAM | **21**<br>1 pm VDG<br>1 pm East Dallas Lunch Bunch | **22**<br>1 pm VDG<br>6:30 pm Games SIG<br> |
| **23**<br>1:30 pm Eclectic Book Club<br>2:30 pm Theodore Talk<br> | **24**<br>1 pm VDG<br>7 pm Munch Bunch | **25**<br>7 pm Beer Garden | **26**<br>1 pm VDG | **27**<br>1 pm Lunch Group<br>7 pm HOTDAM | **28**<br>1 pm VDG<br>1 pm East Dallas Lunch Bunch | **29**<br>1 pm VDG |
| **30** | **31**<br>1 pm VDG<br>7 pm Munch Bunch | | | | | |

# ~August 2026~

**FOR CALENDAR UPDATES, PLEASE VISIT**
**HTTP://WWW.NORTHTEXASMENSA.ORG**

## ~WEEKLY EVENTS~

### MONDAYS

**7:00 PM - 8:15 PM Munch Bunch - Addison**
Location: **BJ's Restaurant,** 4901 Belt Line Rd., Addison 75254
BJ's is an upscale brewpub with an extensive menu. On the north side of Belt Line just a couple of blocks west of the Tollway. Ask at the desk for the Mensa table.
Contact: **Roger Durham** (214.349.4521)

### TUESDAYS

**7:00 PM - 9:00 PM Beer Garden – Dallas**
Location: **District 9 Draught Haus**, 718 N. Buckner Blvd., Dallas
This is a neighborhood pub in the shopping center, corner of Buckner & Northcliff, which is the first stoplight south of NW Hwy. on Buckner. They have a good beer selection, wines and ciders on tap, and a tasty, but somewhat limited, menu. Ask for the Mensa table.
Contact: **Roger Durham** (214.349.4521)

### THURSDAYS

**1:00 PM Plano Lunch Group**
Location: **King Buffet**: 521 Central Parkway, Plano, TX 75074
Yelp loves King Buffet Plano's wide selection which ranges from pizza to made-to-order hibachi favorites. Look for Ty. https://www.yelp.com/biz/king-buffet-plano-3
Contact: **Ty O'Neil**: (214.394.7364 cell)

**6:45 PM HOTDAM**
Hang out Together with Denton Area Mensans
Location: **Sidewalk Cafe**, 2900 Wind River Lane, Denton, TX 76210
Meet us for games, revelry, and more. See YOU 'round!
PLEASE CALL OR TEXT CONTACTS FOR MORE INFO
Contact: **Deb Ramsey** (940.391.9657) or **Christie Miller**, (940.765.0429)

### FRIDAYS

**1:00 - 2:30 PM East Dallas Lunch Bunch**
Location: **Fish City Grill**: 7170 Skillman Street,
Dallas 75231 Fish City Grill is a neighborhood seafood restaurant that delivers the best quality and fresh ingredients.
Contact: **Roger Durham** (214.349.4521)

**MONDAY / WEDNESDAY / FRIDAY / SATURDAY**
**1:00 PM M Virtual Discussion Group (VDG) SIG** *(from mid MI Mensa)* Location: **Zoom Meeting**: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86726108623?pwd=cUgyelF2K0ZLQzNWbVByZE9UMXpxdz09 Meeting ID: 867 2610 8623 Passcode: 1234 It turns out that some Mensans enjoy talking to others about a wide variety of subjects. Other Mensans simply enjoy hearing other points of view. The problem is getting enough of us together. We can do that through Zoom
Contact: **Ken Lawrence** MVirtualDiscussionGroup@gmail.com

# August Events

## 01 SATURDAY

**09:30—11:45 AM Mensa Admissions Testing**
Location: **Dallas Public Library – Timberglen Branch Classroom** 18505 Midway Rd, Dallas, 75287
Know someone who may qualify for Mensa? Please refer all interested testers (or anyone with questions!) to Rebecca Raymond at NTMTesting@northtexasmensa.org to obtain the pre-registration link and all other required details for this session.
Contact: **Rebecca Raymond**: (ntmtesting@northtexasmensa.org)

## 02 SUNDAY

**12:30PM CST - NTM Gifted Youth Book Club**
(First Sunday of each month)
Location: **Zoom Meeting**
At this meeting, we will be discussing **A Whale of the Wild** by Rosanne Parry
Meeting Link: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87284610508?pwd=WnZWQ2JhbmlEamJzcmc1TkRBcFZjZz09
Contact: **Bill Rock**: (972.415.5302, william.m.rock@gmail.com)

## 06 – THURSDAY

**7:30PM - Board Meeting** (First Thursday of the month)
Location: **Zoom Meeting**: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81692083286?

pwd=UWFmMlVvRUpiazBZNldHcmxwSGpvZz09, or **Zoom Phone**: +1 346 248 7799 (in lieu of video call), Meeting ID: 816 9208 3286, Passcode: 448903
All members of NTM are welcome to attend and to address the board. The board conducts the organization business decisions. Members are welcome to bring items to the board's attention if they wish.
Contact: **Cathy Allshouse, President**: (president@northtexasmensa.org)

*Special location for August*

## 08 SATURDAY

**7:00PM – 9:00PM – Singles Chat and Chew**
(Second Saturday of each month)
Location: **Two Rows Breweries & Grill**: 711 N. Central Expressway, Allen, TX 75013. Come join other singles for dinner and have great conversations.
Contact: **Laura Stuart**: (214.641.2520)

## 09 SUNDAY

**2:00PM – 4:00PM Bright Ladies Gathering** (Second Sunday of each month)
Location: **la Madeleine French Bakery & Café**: 15125 Montfort Dr., Dallas (one block east of the Tollway, on Montfort) Look for us (and the Bright Ladies logo) as you come in.
Contact: **Call Kathy McWhorter for directions or more details**: (214.215.5809)

**I void warranties**

**2:00 PM Gifted Youth Disassembly Day**
Location: The Rock Pile, 701 Victorian Dr, Allen 75002
-- Let's look inside some electronics and see what makes them tick (or buzz, or flash, or whatever). I have some electronics we can take apart and see if we can figure out how things work, or you can bring your own.
Contact: **Bill Rock**: (972.415.5302, william.m.rock@gmail.com)

**9:00PM – M-Aura Calendar Deadline** (The 9th of each month)
Contact: **Editor, Bill Rock**: (william.m.rock@gmail.com or 972.415.5302)

## 10 MONDAY

**9:00PM – M-Aura All Copy Deadline** (The 10th of each month)
Contact: **Editor, Bill Rock**: (william.m.rock@gmail.com or 972.415.5302)

## 12 WEDNESDAY

**3:00 PM – Retired and Inspired SIG Mall Walking in the air conditioning**
Location: **NorthPark Center** 8687 N Central Expy, Dallas, TX 75225 (Central Expwy and NW Hwy)
Let's meet at the fountain just at the first floor entrance to the Dillard's store. We can walk and talk and if desired stay for a coffee at Starbucks.
Contact: **Cathy Allshouse** callshouse1@aol.com

## 14 FRIDAY

**7:00 PM– NTM Scholarship Foundation Friday Texas Hold-em**
Location: **Storm Ricamore's Home:**
1426 Dumont Drive, Richardson, TX 75080
The next Texas Hold 'Em will be at the home of Storm Ricamore on Friday, August 14, 2026. Join us for a pleasant evening of cards, bluffing and fun. No big winners or losers, just bragging rights for your $10 contribution to the kitty, and a $5 re-buy if you wish – all of which goes to the Scholarship Foundation. Plenty of snacks and drinks, and those new to the game are welcome to join in. As always, the party starts at 7 PM, and the game commences at 7:30 PM.
RSVP: **Please RSVP as soon as possible to Storm if you plan to attend.**
Contact: **Storm Ricamore** 972-235-5837 or storm@stormsmall.com.

**15 SATURDAY**

**2:00 PM – July General Meeting: Artificial Intelligence Impact on Human Intelligence**

Location: **Discovery Village North Dallas**, 5455 La Sierra Drive, Dallas, or **Zoom Video**: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81692083286?pwd=UWFmMlVvRUpiazBZNldHcmxwSGpvZz09

NTM's own Jonathan Bethune will be presenting on the following topic: **Artificial intelligence is advancing at an extraordinary pace, but what does that mean for human intelligence?** This talk explores the current state of AI and large language models, how they are reshaping work and society, and why preserving human understanding may become one of the defining challenges of the coming decade. Drawing on his experiences building an AI governance startup, we'll discuss the emerging concept of "cognitive infrastructure"—the systems organizations will need to ensure AI amplifies human capability rather than gradually replacing it. The session is intended for a general audience and will conclude with discussion and Q&A.

Contact: **Cathy Allshouse, President**: (president@northtexasmensa.org)

**4:00PM – 6:00PM - Small MENSA Meeting Canton / Wills Point** (Third Saturday of each month)

Location: **We meet in each other's homes on a rotating basis**

We will send out a reminder about a week before each meeting giving this month's location and subject matter to be discussed. Purely a discussion group; no games, no food fests, no partying. Enjoy the exchange of thoughts and ideas without contention!

Contact: **Gerard Brohman**: gbrohman@live.com

**22 SATURDAY**

**6:30PM – Games SIG**

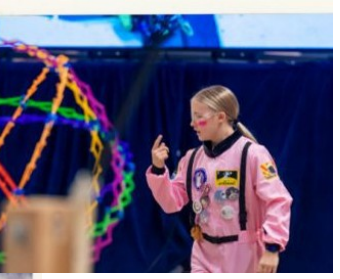
Location: **Bill Rock's Home**
**"The Rock Pile"**: 701 Victorian Dr, Allen, 75002
We have some classic board games and some new ones, and I'm happy to try anything you care to bring over. Snacks and soft drinks will be available.
Contacts: **Bill Rock**: 972.396.8160, william.m.rock@gmail.com

**23 SUNDAY**

**1:30PM – 3:00PM - Eclectic Book Club** (Fourth Sunday of the Month)
Location: **Half Price Books Mothership**: 5803 E NW Hwy, Dallas, TX 75231
This month EBC is reading *Go Tell It on the Mountain* by James Baldwin. Eclectic Book Club picks are generally available in hardback, paperback or for e-readers. They should also be available at your local library.
Contacts: **Larry Strickler**: (lstrickler1@verizon.net or 972.495.8076) or **Bill Rock**: (972.415.5302 or william.m.rock@gmail.com)

**2:30 PM Theodore Talk:** The August Theodore Talk is **"Wild Boar to Baconfest: Pigs in History and Culture".** Pigs were the first food animals to be domesticated, so they have a history with humans that goes back more than 12,000 years. Antiquity is only one of the reasons, however, that pork is the most commonly eaten meat in the world. Celebrated at fairs and looked to for medical research, pigs offer culinary delight and potential promise but also create some challenges. So the topic of pigs is as far-ranging as the pigs themselves.
**Cynthia Clampitt** is a writer, speaker, and food historian. She has been writing and talking about food history for more than twenty-five years.

Register for this presentation at https://tinyurl.com/ytp7cuua.



## REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEERS- BEST ROBOTICS

*by Bill Rock*

BEST robotics is getting ready to kick off its 34rd season next month with the game "**Byte to Bite**". BEST is an all-volunteer STEM nonprofit, and we need you to help make it run. If you are interested in getting involved in helping show students the fun side of engineering, please let me know. We have opportunities for team mentors (remote or in person) mid-September to mid-November, for on-line judging early November, and for judges at game day (Nov 14th at PTAA North Dallas). Kickoff is 19 Sep at Sunnyvale HS. Training is provided. If you are interested, contact me: bill.rock@bestinc.org Thanks.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!** The following NTMers add another candle to the cake in August:
James Hatchell, Julie Blettner, Zero Ehxe, Bart Crowder, Richard Smoot, Brandon Guyton, Robert Alexander, Don Michel, Brian Olson, eduardo moreno, Elaine Erback, Anita Morehead, Pamela Carroll, Richard Kempf, John Jebavy, Frank Schultz, Ryan Sas, Rebecca Raymond, Carla "scrabble adjacent" Cree, Michael Giordano, Nansi Stretcher, Pamela Rogers, Gregory Smith, Marvin Livesay, Paul "lock n ring" Whiteman, Benny Vaughn, Lloyd Timmons, Jerry "full house" Law, Leslie Walker, Douglas Mehling, Natalie Minchillo, Donald Ledbetter, Tuck Goh, Sophia Novak, Patrick Travers, Lisa Potter, Shannon Barnhill, Jim Kerlin, Lawrence Bines, Joshua James, Colleen Skinner

## NORTH TEXAS MENSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Proceedings for June 4, 2026**

**In lieu of proceedings, the following synopsis is provided:**

"During the June 4th board meeting, no formal minutes were taken, but here is a synopsis of actions taken:

Financial statements were presented. There was a quorum and a motion was made, seconded and approved to hold an NTM regional gathering during the long Thanksgiving weekend in November 2026 at the Holiday Inn Express hotel in Dallas, TX. Karen Brack will again serve as chair. We very much appreciate how well she serves in this capacity.

There was discussion of future events happening during the remainder of 2026. Details have been finalized for the special event for the younger adult Mensans' social event to be held on July 30. A targeted email will be sent out only to those aged 21-35. There will be general meetings in July, August and September at our usual location on the 3rd Saturdays of the month. July's meeting will be the recurring "Best book I've read this year" interactive discussion. There were volunteers for the August and September meetings. The October general meeting will be the Fall New Member's party with a Halloween theme to be held on Oct. 17 at a venue TBD that will accommodate more attendees and food service."

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

The following are new or rejoining members of North Texas Mensa. Please join us in welcoming them to our group.

**New Mensans**: Arya Baride, Katherine Cao, James Harlow, Madison Johnson, Phillip Monson, Stephanie Riley, Nisarg Shah, Ian Voicu-Comendant, Cas Wilkerson, Luke Zulick

**Moving to NTM:** Donald Chandler, Colton Dieringer

**Rejoining Mensa and NTM:** No one in June

**We welcome you <u>all</u>,** and look forward to seeing you at future functions!

Howdy!

## NTM Board Members for 2026: *Blue italics = new*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **President**<br>Cathy Allshouse | president@northtexasmensa.org<br>713.398.7963 | 10702 Stone Canyon Dr.,<br>#128, Dallas, TX 75230 |
| **Vice President**<br>Esther Bellah | esthermbellah@gmail.com | |
| **Treasurer**<br>Paul Whiteman | paulw@ieee.org<br>469.569.3129 | 4424 Ringgold Ln<br>Plano 75093 |
| **Secretary**<br>Gunny Hartman | 214.477.5047<br>Gunny@Gunny93.com | 139 Westminster Ave<br>Murphy, 75094 |

### 2026 NTM Board Members At Large:

| | |
|---|---|
| Aaron Adair | mensanthespian@gmail.com<br>580.380.7000 |
| Philip Tocci | pdntpdnt@gmail.com<br>978.882.1803 |
| Chuck Weis | charlesdweis@gmail.com<br>469.271.4928 |

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**Region 6 RVC:** Laura Smith, rvc6@us.mensa.org
**Region 6 Ombudsperson:** Randy Brack, mrbrack46@gmail.com, 972.495.2659

## ~NTM Appointed Positions ~

**Membership Chair**
Ken Roberts krobs@yahoo.com
214.240.3823

**Gifted Youth Coordinator**
Bill Rock 972.396.8160
william.m.rock@gmail.com

**Proctor/Testing Coordinator**
Rebecca Raymond,
ntmtesting@northtexasmensa.org

**NTM Ombudsman**
Roger Durham
durhamrog@gmail.com
214.349.4521

**Calendar Chair**—Open

**Webmaster**
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**Communications**
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colleneg@gmail.com
469-503-3636

***Area Coordinators***

**Denton/Collin Co, & Texoma Area**
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**RG Chair**
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**Publicity Coordinator**—Open

**Webmaster:**
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972.213.2715

**Volunteers Coordinator**—Open

**M-Aura Editor**
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469-503-3636

**Marketing Chair** –Open

**S.I.G.H.T. Coordinator**
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214.477.5047

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**Gatherings Committee:** Kevin Buchanan kevinbob@flash.net, 214.826.7725
Randy Brack, mrbrack46@gmail.com, 972.495.2659 , Karen Brack, 214.477.1151
kwbrack18@gmail.com

**Nominating Committee:** Open
**Election Committee**: Open

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