DECEMBER 2018

Head-Line

The Newsletter of Mid-Michigan Mensa Number 536



HEAD-LINE NO. 536 DECEMBER 2018
MID-MICHIGAN MENSA

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Mid-Michigan Mensa Facebook Group

Head-Line and Calendar items are due by the 15th of the month prior to publication. Camera ready contributions are appreciated, but not necessary. Calendar entries may be emailed, telephoned, or snail-mailed to the Calendar/TGIF Coord. Permission is granted to reprint material from the Head-Line in any Mensa publication, with appropriate credit, unless the material is copyrighted.

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EDITOR'S COLUMN:
FROM MY BRAIN TO YOURS

by Sharon Plavnick

Last month I wrote about my new birdwatching passion. I mentioned how certain interests in my life have stuck around and become such an integral part of who I am that I don't know what I'd do if I couldn't practice those interests anymore.

That got me thinking about how people find the resilience to re-frame their lives when they do lose important abilities and skills. For example, many of you know my significant other, Lynn Towns. Lynn has had a passion for airplanes since he bought his first plane when he was 22. He flew continuously until a stroke a few years ago made it impossible for him to get in and out of his plane. He very reluctantly parted with his beloved Piper Cub about 2 years ago.

I asked him how he coped with this loss. Here's what he said:

> *I've channeled my efforts into being the editor of the Michigan Chapter of the Antique Airplane Association newsletter. I've also developed an interest in flying remote control airplanes, although it is not nearly as satisfying.*

We all risk losing our ability to follow our passions for various reasons. Illness is certainly a big one, and can take many forms. Accidents can leave us without required body parts. Aging takes its toll. Financial setbacks can make it impossible to support a cherished interest.

Dear readers, what have you lost and how have you dealt with it? If you would be willing to be interviewed for a future column, please email me at sharonslp@ameritech.net and let me know. This is a topic that I am certain resonates with everyone sooner or later. Your stories would be interesting and instructive.

RVC 3 DECEMBER, 2018 Column

John Voymas

As we close out the old year, I wish you all well over the holidays. I hope that 2018 went well for you and that 2019 exceeds your expectations.

MensaConnect continues to roll out among local groups and SIGs. It can be a good way to communicate upcoming local group activities in a very timely fashion. However, that only works if people set themselves up to receive emails or check the MensaConnect site regularly. I not only receive emails but I have the MemberCentric app on my smartphone, so that I can check up on my communities on-the-go. It is not a replacement for Facebook or group websites, but rather another way for members to keep in touch.

We are now in the nominations period for the next AMC term. I encourage you to sign the nominations for multiple candidates for each office as that ensures that members will have a choice among candidates. I am sure that whoever is elected this spring will do a good job on the AMC.

Upcoming events:
As I write this, I have just approved DAMnations 31, the Dayton Area Mensa RG. It will be the last weekend of March, from Friday the 29th thru Sunday the 31st. I hope to see many of you there!
Two weeks after that is Mind Games 2019, hosted by East Central Ohio Mensa (ECOM) and takes place in Wadsworth, Ohio. If you would like to volunteer, please contact the chairpersons at mgchair@mindgames.us.mensa.org.
Following Mind Games, Southeast Michigan Mensa (SEMM) will host SEMMantics XL, their fortieth RG, during the weekend of April 26 thru 28.

Registration for the AG hotel is now available. There were some difficulties on November 1, as Marriott had acquired the Sheraton brands and chose November 1 as the Go Live! date for the reservation systems merger. Alas, there were "technical difficulties" with the merger of the reservation systems and several groups, including American Mensa, could not register for the block of hotel rooms as planned until a couple of days later. Note that January 4, 2019 is the cutoff for the lowest AG registration rate.
Until next time, good afternoon, good evening, and good night!

Mid-Michigan Mensa Membership

John Garrison, Chairman

DECEMBER 2018

124 MEMBERS

MENSA Birthdays

Happy Birthday to you

5 Wendy Carnegie
6 John Abbot
30 Ronald Burl
6 Brian McGrain
18 Matthew Larsen
31 Alan Spirdione

MENSAversaries

Congratulations on your years with Mensa

25 Years Sharon Plavnick
18 Years Tim Howard
14 Years Richard Hobria
10 Years Kenneth Bonifield
5 Years Peter Wood
5 Years Alan Spiridone
20 Years Richard Daniel
18 Years Eric Sanko
14 Years Clyde Creque
8 Years David Salsbury
5 Years William Tupy

Renewing Members

Welcome — We're so glad you rejoined us

Rosearie Kelly — Lansing
Ian Smith — Lansing

Mid-Michigan Mensa Steering Committee Minutes

Meeting of November 9, 2018

The November 2018 MMM Steering Committee meeting was called to order at 6:40 PM following our TGIF dinner at Cancun in Okemos. LocSec Wendy Carnegie, Scribe Bob Henderson and member Aaron Rabushka attended.

The first order of business was to finalize plans for the 2018 MMM Holiday Party so that they could be published in both the MMM Web page and the December Head-Line events calendars. It was moved, seconded and approved to authorize a Treasury expenditure of up to $17.00 per person for at most 30 MMM members and their invited guests for a catered holiday dinner at Martin Luther Chapel in East Lansing. Members planning to attend should send their RSVP to Calendar Coordinator Ginny Brunke Henderson at gbrunkh@peoplepc.com by December 3 to ensure that the caterer prepares enough food for all attendees.

Wendy reported that she still hopes to set up a table at a local mall in December in order to distribute flyers describing American Mensa Ltd. and Mid-Michigan Mensa to interested passers-by. If the mall charges us a tabling fee to promote Mensa, it will be paid from the MMM Treasury.

In order to maintain membership MMM will need more trained Proctors to conduct Mensa admissions tests. There are currently several other open MMM officer and appointee positions for which we will need candidates by next March. In the meantime, Wendy agreed to check the MMM bylaws to determine how many of these positions must be filled in order for American Mensa Limited to continue to approve our charter and whether MMM bylaws could be amended to specify fewer essential staff positions. Wendy accepted the nomination of Elizabeth Evangelista to fill the remainder of the expiring terms for both Vice LocSec and committee member Pat Thuemmel, who has resigned due to health issues.

New business: Wendy offered to host the MMM chili cook-off later in January (rather than on New Year's Eve as in prior years) due to declining attendance in recent years.

There being no further MMM business to discuss, it was moved, seconded and approved that we adjourn the November 2018 MMM Steering Committee meeting at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Henderson, Scribe

DECEMBER THOUGHT QUESTION

by Sharon Plavnick

A genie escapes from a bottle and gives you three wishes. One can be for yourself; one for someone you love; and one for a stranger. (None can be for unlimited wishes!) Go!

Send your thoughts to me by email: sharonslp@ameritech.net
I'll publish as many responses as I can. I reserve the right to edit for grammar and spelling, and if needed, for brevity.

THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'

Health problems seem to be attacking our leadership here in MMM Land, and we reluctantly accept Pat Thuemmel's resignation from the Steering Committee. Last month's minutes announced that Aaron Rabushka was appointed to the Steering Committee. We also thank Elizabeth Evangelista for being willing to fill in for Pat as Vice Loc Sec until the next election.

HOLIDAY PARTY

Some of our places are undergoing changes too. Our annual holiday party has been held at Elizabeth Evangelista's lovely home for many years, and we thank her for her Herculean hospitality. But we will not continue to tax her capabilities; therefore we are holding the party at the Martin Luther Chapel, just north of East Lansing City Hall on Abbott Road. Plan to arrive at 4 PM and enjoy a catered (NOT potluck!) holiday dinner at 5 PM. Rather than a dish to pass, bring a nicely wrapped gag gift for our traditional MMM White Elephant gift exchange, to follow dinner.

This will be a catered meal, and the cost will be absorbed in full by our treasury. It is necessary to RSVP so we have an accurate head count to give to the caterer. Please let Ginny Brunke (gbrunkh@peoplepc.com) know by December 3rd if you plan to attend.

T'WAS THE DAY

By Uncle John

Little Johnny Snuggled up to his pal Roscoe and tried to fall asleep. He knew that tomorrow was Christmas and he wanted to dream about all the presents that Santa was going to bring him. He had written a wish list letter to Santa and had dropped it into the mailbox a couple of weeks ago. He hadn't put a stamp on the envelope because he knew that the US Government wouldn't want to make a profit off of little kids by selling stamps to them which were going to be used for letters to Santa. He just knew that Santa would get his letter and would bring him everything on his wish list. All he had to do now was wait for the morning and all of his wishes would be granted.

He knew that he was going to get a new bicycle. He also knew that Santa would bring him the action figures he wanted. Captain America, Super Bird, the entire set of Hawkman figurines and the authentic Gordie Howe skating machine would soon be his. All he had to do was be patient as he lay in his bed snuggling Roscoe and wait for dawn to break.

Johnny turned to Roscoe and told him that they were both going to be very happy in a few hours. Of course Roscoe did not respond. He just laid there and flashed his never ending smile. Most Teddy Bears couldn't talk but Johnny held lengthy conversations with Roscoe Bear all the time. He knew that Roscoe could hear him. That's why the bear was continually smiling.

Johnny dozed off and slept fitfully. He awoke every few minutes to look at the clock to see if it was morning yet. He never knew that time seemed to stand still when a person was in great anticipation. But he knew that it would be worth the wait because Santa was going to reward him in the morning.

Johnny awoke, rolled over and again glanced at the clock. He must have been sleeping because the clock read 7:30 AM. He gathered Roscoe up in his arms and quietly went down the stairs. He expected to see a brightly lit Christmas tree, many decorations and lots of presents. All he saw was an empty living room. No tree, no decorations and no presents. He wondered why Santa hadn't brought him anything. He slowly went back upstairs and into his parent's room. With tears in his eyes he woke his mother and father. He sobbed to them that Santa hadn't visited them last night. His mother held him close and kissed his tears away. She then told him the facts of life when she said, "Boychick, of course Santa didn't come last night. We are Jewish."

Johnny stood up and wiped away the last remaining tear. He adjusted his yarmulke and trudged back to his bed. As he cuddled Roscoe he whispered into his little friend's ear. "Let's go to sleep Buddy. We can both dream about Chanukah. It starts next week."

BOOK TALKS

by Sharon Plavnick

Many Mensans love to read, and I'm one of them. Once upon a time I wrote a blog called TomeStones. I'm republishing a few reviews to prime the pump. I sure would like to publish reviews from some of you out in MMMember Land. Send your submissions to sharonslp@ameritech.net.

Digging To America will not disappoint Anne Tyler fans. This is a novel about families, about the need to belong, about the need for a clear identity in a world where unique cultures are both revered and suspicious. It is a story that gives insights into the Iranian culture, and Americans certainly need all the insights they can open themselves up to. How does one retain a foreign identity, when assimilation is the expectation? Two couples....one Iranian-American, and one traditional American....adopt Korean children at the same moment in time. Their lives remain entwined from that point on, and two of the grandparents are drawn toward each other as well. There is much bittersweetness in the blossoming relationship, and the bitter and the sweet are rarely in balance. Tyler is particularly gifted at being able to create completely real, ordinary people fumbling their way through their lives. This was excellent reading.

In contrast, Isabel Allende's *Zorro* disappointed me a bit. She retells the legend in her usual engaging manner, creating new parts of the story to fill in the blanks. Zorro gets parents and a childhood, which explains how he came to be the dashing masked crusader of justice. Along the way, Allende creates new characters, or adds embellishments to the old ones. She throws in a lot of digs at the treatment of the Indians...well-deserved, but a little heavy-handed at times. My biggest criticism in this book was her gimmick of using a first-person narrator for one page at the beginning of the book, and then switching to third-person for so long that it was an intrusion when the narrator eventually re-appeared. This happened throughout the story, and when the narrator's identity was revealed at the end, it was anti-climatic. The ending itself felt contrived and unrealistic to me. I enjoyed the reading in spite of what I feel are flaws. I'm just not used to thinking anything Allende writes is flawed.

Mr. Emerson's Wife, by Amy Belding Brown, was a joy of book. This is historical fiction at its best, as Brown fleshes out the woman who was married to Ralph Waldo Emerson and creates a credible scenario of how their lives together worked. I simply loved reading this.

Food for Thought

Barb Ford

It seems as if we are always looking for an interesting new dish to fix for that wonderful parade of holiday visitors that come into our homes this time of year. I like to have something quick and easy to prepare that keeps for days and is effortless to transport to a friend's home for a spur of the moment invitation. As impossible as this might sound; I think I might have stumbled on a solution. This season, I have created a recipe for a tasty cheese spread. It is a mildly spicy alternative to the traditional cheese ball and everyone is sure to enjoy this new treat. My pimiento cheese recipe was so well received I twisted that concept a bit and came up with this one. Hopefully, it will become a go-to recipe that you can make year round. Make extra, because it will disappear quickly! I hope you enjoy it, and Happy Holidays!

BARB'S HOLIDAY CHEESE SPREAD

Ingredients:

8 Ounces cream cheese, softened

¼ t Onion powder

½ C Real mayonnaise

½ C Bottled picante sauce, medium or hot

3 ½ C Grated extra sharp white cheddar cheese

2 T Grated Parmesan cheese

Directions:

In a medium sized bowl, combine the cream cheese, onion powder and mayo. Stir until smooth. Add the picante sauce. Fold in the grated cheddar and parmesan cheeses until the mixture is uniform.
Chill for a few hours before serving.

DECEMBER 2018 Calendar

Fri., Dec. 7 **TGIF - Delhi Cafe:** 4625 Willoughby Rd, Holt, between Cedar St and Aurelius Rd. Good Greek and American food.

Sat., Dec. 8 **ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY:** At Martin Luther Chapel, just north of East Lansing City Hall on Abbott Road. Plan to arrive at 4 PM and enjoy a catered (NOT potluck!) holiday dinner at 5 PM. Rather than a dish to pass, bring a nicely wrapped gag gift for our traditional MMM White Elephant gift exchange, to follow dinner.

Fri., Dec. 14 **TGIF - Tony M's:** 3420 Creyts Road, Lansing. Family-owned Italian restaurant featuring pizza, pasta, burgers and salads.
Steering Committee Meeting: to follow dinner.

Fri. Dec. 21 **TGIF - Harrison Roadhouse:** 720 E. Michigan Ave, East Lansing. Good selection of pub-grub, other food, and beers.

Fri. Dec. 28 **TGIF - Outback Steak House:** 4880 Marsh Road, across from Meridian Mall in Okemos. Australian-themed restaurant featuring great steaks, chicken, seafood, and their famous Bloomin' Onions.

Fri. Jan. 4 **TGIF - Boston Market:** 6435 S Cedar St, Holt, between Willoughby Rd and Aurelius Rd. Tasty ready-to-serve dishes.

Fri. Jan 11 **TGIF - Lucky's Steakhouse:** 3554 Okemos Rd, Okemos, formerly Gilbert & Blake's. Famous for their seafood, steaks, and prime rib with all the trimmings.

TGIFs are on Fridays. We meet at about 5:30 PM and order about 5:30 PM but you're welcome at any time. Come and get acquainted. All members and friends are welcome at the events above. Any member may schedule an event. Please remember: **Who**, **What**, **Where**, **When**, and **Why**. The deadline to schedule an event is the **15th of the month before the event**. Contact Ginny Brunke Henderson, Calendar Coord. at: gbrunkh@peoplepc.com or 517-676-3369
Calendar event information can also be found on the Mid-Michigan Mensa website at http://midmichigan.us.mensa.org/calendar.html