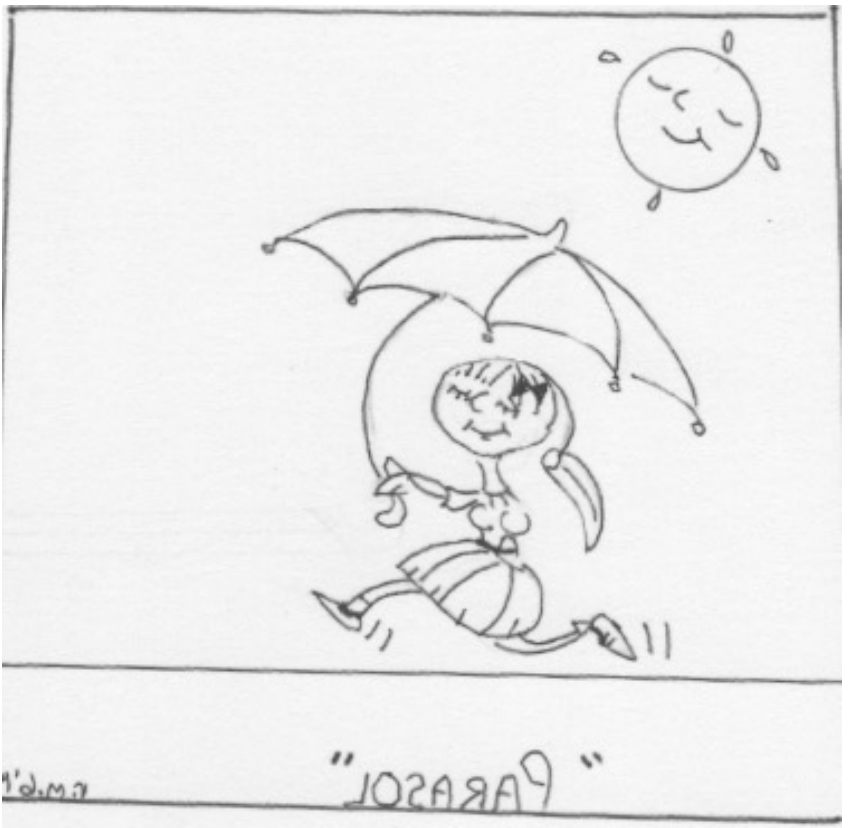
JULY 2019

Head-Line

The Newsletter of Mid-Michigan Mensa Number 543



HEAD-LINE NO. 543 JULY 2019
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

MMM is a small group. Our most effective ways to interact with each other are through this newsletter, and through our weekly TGs, where everyone is welcome to liven up the dinner table. We generally have between 8 and 16 people in attendance, give or take a few. We can make room for more. In case anyone is feeling unsure about attending a TG, let me be very clear about several things:

First, every single member is welcome. If that member wants to bring a spouse or significant other, other relatives, or a friend or two or three, you are all welcome. You are all welcome each and every week.

Second, if you are new to a TG, we will probably pepper you with questions about yourself. We don't mean to be nosy or intrusive; we just want to get to know you. REMINDER TO REGULARS: This could feel overwhelming to a new member or their guests. Ease in and let new people set their own comfortable pace.

Third, at any given TG, there are a number of non-members in attendance. (See point one above.) Sometimes, we have more non-members in attendance than members. We really want members to feel that bringing their family and friends is a comfortable thing to do. REMINDER TO NEW PEOPLE: if for any reason, you find yourself feeling that you are not welcome at the table, please bring it to the attention of a steering committee member as soon as possible. The steering committee doesn't exist to police anyone's interactions. But if anything occurs that makes a person decide to write us off and never come back, we need to know, so we can do better. Perhaps we can help, and perhaps we can't. But at the very least, we need to know.

REMINDER TO EVERYONE: We are all responsible for our own words. For those of us who have been attending TGs forever, it often feels like we are one big happily dysfunctional family. We are relaxed, and we cut each other a lot of slack. We just want everyone to stay mindful that new people are forming first impressions. I don't think anyone has to put on an act to make a good impression. But it never hurts to polish our company manners either.

Thoughts? Opinions? Contrarian views? Let's hear it. You can reach me at sharonslp@ameritech.net

RVC 3 JULY 2019 Column

John Voymas

The Annual Gathering (AG) in Phoenix will be kicking off the month of July. Yes, it will be a hot time in the desert but air conditioning will be provided. The last time the AG was held in Phoenix was in 2002. My wife and I had planned on going but we found the main hotel, the Scottsdale Fairmont Princess Resort, was already full months in advance of the AG. Having only rejoined Mensa about a year earlier, I did not know that attendees would overbook the hotel and then release their "extra" rooms a month or two before the event. So, my first AG was not until 2006 in Orlando at the World Gathering (WG). Live and learn.

The American Mensa elections have concluded and I would like to thank those who voted. It was a tough choice with two strong candidates for RVC. Thank you for supporting my candidacy to serve you all for two more years. There are topics that we are continuing to work on at the national level. Foremost among these are member safety and the hearings process. The proposed bylaws change to make it easier to ask for a regional hearing did not pass as it required a 2/3 positive vote and fell only a few percentage points short of that. I am curious as to whether the members of Region 3 feel that we need two different hearings processes (national and regional) or should there be only one? Please let me know your thoughts on this. Regardless, there is already discussion at the national level on how to improve the hearings process so that it is clear and consistent from hearing to hearing and fair to all. I will keep you informed as progress is made.

Columbus Area Mensa will be celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the moon landing at their Regional Gathering (RG) during the weekend of July 19 - 21. Checkout their Facebook event page at https://www.facebook.com/events/doubletree-by-hilton-columbus-worthington/columbus-area-mensa-rg-50th-anniversary-of-the-moon-landing/813423879031612/ or their local group website at http://www.columbus.us.mensa.org/. I hope to see many of you there!

It's not too early to plan for the Western Pennsylvania Mensa (WPAM) RG which is always held over Labor Day weekend and lasts from Friday through Monday. This year it will be at a different hotel — the Pittsburgh Marriott North. Register by July 8 for the best deal. More info can be found at http://wpamensa.com/regional-gathering/.

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RVC Column — Continued

Each RG is hosted by a local group and sometimes relies on volunteers from other local groups to make it a success. Volunteers are what keeps the cost of a gathering down. A lot of work by RG committees goes into the process and meetings often start several months before the actual event. Another aspect of Regional Gatherings is that there is a theme and there are a few things unique about that specific RG. For example, WPAM is noted for having a crafters' track with lots of engaging hands-on activities. Southeast Michigan Mensa (SEMM) is noted for its wine tasting, its beer tasting, and a full weekend Kids Track. What is your gathering noted for? What makes it special so that members put it on their calendar? I would appreciate responses from members of Region 3 as to which gatherings they attend and what makes it a "must attend". Please send that to JohnV.RVC3@gmail.com.

Until next month, enjoy your summer!

MINUTES OF JUNE 14 STEERING COMMITTEE

We did not have sufficient steering committee members in attendance. We will attempt to meet instead at the June 21 TG. Watch this spot next month for an update.



MMM SUMMER ANNIVERSARY PARTY

Our annual summer get-together will be held on Sunday, August 4th, at the home of Bob and Ginny Henderson, 3369 Harper Rd, Mason, MI. We will gather at 4:00 PM and eat at 5:00 PM. Meat dishes will be provided. Bring your favorite drinks and a veggie dish or dessert to share.

This is a perfect time for members who don't typically attend a Friday night TG dinner to introduce yourself in a very casual and relaxed setting. Ginny and Bob have plenty of room. Children are welcome.

Mid-Michigan Mensa Membership

John Garrison, Chairman
July 2019

118 Members

MENSA Birthdays

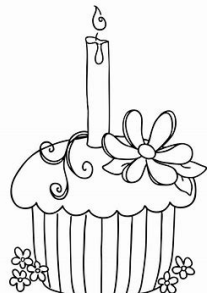
Happy Birthday to you

2	Andrew Celeski	7	David Murley
8	Kristen Koslosski	12	Gary Gordon
12	Rebecca Lawton	13	Charles Rose
17	David Salsbury	22	Brett Dreyfus

MENSAversaries

Congratulations on Your Years With Mensa

35 Years	John Hunt	32 Years	Dawn /Ramsay
29 Years	Eleanor Keating	18 Years	Daniel Thompson
3 Years	Pamela Benzing	2 Years	Squire Jaros
2 Years	Alan Sherwin	1 Year	Dennis Laakso



BOOK TALKS

by Sharon Plavnick

Several members of my extended in-law family are at various stages of ALS. This is the dreadful disease that afflicted both Lou Gehrig and Stephen Hawking.

Lisa Genova is a neuroscientist who writes compelling novels about dreadful neurological diseases. In her highly acclaimed first novel, *Still Life*, she dealt with Alzheimer's Disease, and she brings that same ability to her newest book, *Every Note Played*, in which one of her main character's is a man afflicted with ALS. The other main character is his ex-wife, who steps back into his life to be his care-giver. So this is really the story of a relationship gone wrong and how an agonizing diagnosis can bring people back together.

But the disease itself is also a main character that serves to direct the plot, just as anyone with a chronic debilitating condition finds that their disease takes over and directs so much of their life. Inevitably this is a very sad story. Man gets death sentence disease, but has to suffer agonizing physical and emotional losses before he dies. So there has to be some redeeming value to offset the depressive effect. Here is where Genova's writing talent shines through. She creates real people characters, lovable yet flawed people just like all of us, who are called upon to imperfectly navigate the minefield of devastating illness. These are characters who find the inner strength to perform selfless acts but who are naturally angry and resentful along the way. These are characters who cry and rage and laugh.

At the end of the book, I was not disappointed. Genova does not sugarcoat a thing about this awful disease. The story's strength is wrapped up in how the characters cope and learn and yes, grow, as the disease runs its course. Genova shows us that we can cope with whatever life throws at us with a reasonable degree of grace under pressure. I could not put this book down.

Readers, who has a good book to recommend? I'd love to publish your review…a few paragraphs, or just a few sentences will suffice. Send your submission to me at sharonslp@ameritech.net

A THEATER-GOER'S REVIEW OF HAMILTON

By Sharon Plavnick

I coughed up the semi-big bucks to see *Hamilton* at the Wharton Center recently. I have been passionately in love with musical theater ever since high school, when I used to usher at the Fisher Theater in Detroit. One Saturday a month, I would take the city bus downtown, dressed in my uniform of navy blue skirt, white blouse, and red grosgrain ribbon at the neck. Who wouldn't fall in love with the music of *Camelot*, *Fiddler on the Roof, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, The Sound of Music,* and many more?

So my hopes were high for this bombshell of a musical making Broadway history. I had some trepidations when I shelled out the most money I've ever spent on a theater performance. Would I like the music itself, which relies heavily (but not solely) on the "rap" genre? Would I be able to actually decipher the rapid-paced lyrics, which has become yet another problem of age-related hearing loss? Would the story ring true, or would it reflect some revisionist history according to Lin Manuel Miranda?

Now that I've found out for myself, here are my takeaways.

1. The music: a lot of people report that they love the soundtrack; they've memorized the lyrics; they listen to it over and over. I enjoyed the music, but nothing resonated so deeply that I want to listen over and over again. Two songs in particular did move me deeply. The song, *Burn*, where Hamilton's wife responds to the revelations of his infidelity made public to the world, was so powerfully performed that I was enthralled. The other song that has lingered in my mind was the last one; *Who Lives? Who Dies? Who Tells Your Story?* There's a meaningful message in this song.

2. Ability to decipher lyrics: Lynn and I both discovered a game-changer. We borrowed assistive listening devices from the service desk at Wharton. This allowed us to tone down the music so we could hear the words far more distinctly. The incredibly rapid pace of the singers was still a bit of an issue (the old grey matter just doesn't process quite as instantly as it used to), but I heard each and every word clearly. In fact, the use of this device makes it clear that I need to schedule a hearing evaluation, and investigate what might make TV viewing and loud restaurant-going more enjoyable.

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Theater Review — Continued

3. Fact vs fiction: The simple truth was I didn't know, but it made me want to know. A quick Google search reveals fierce debate going on about whether Miranda glamorized the real Alexander Hamilton for story-telling effect; whether he made him into a more sympathetic person than he really was; and whether Hamilton's politics were conservative or progressive in both the context of that time period, and in our time period now. Context is terribly important in figuring out how to interpret words and actions. In today's highly-charged political time, we all need a healthy dose of context and interpretation skills.

Bottom line: I'm very glad I saw this play. While the music itself did not stir my soul, the ideas presented have certainly stirred my mind. I would not be willing to pay the same price for tickets again, but if an opportunity to see this again at a more reasonable price presented itself, I think I would find it equally enjoyable.

Who else in MMM-Land has seen *Hamilton*? I'd love to publish your thoughts about it. A sentence, a paragraph, a page….send it to me at Sharonslp@ameritech.net.



Special Speaker

Is taking a DNA test worth the risk of learning health information that one may not want to know? Could one learn that a parent may not actually be a birth parent? Could you discover siblings and cousins that you never knew existed? Can DNA tests help create genealogical records?

Learn the answers to these and other DNA-Test related questions as our own Roy Saper shares his discoveries about how a DNA test can be used for much more than discovering one's ancestry. Roy will speak after the TGIF on Friday, July 26th, at the Grand Traverse Pie Company, at approximately 6:30 PM. Please join the group for (or after) dinner for a presentation and discussion that is sure to be fun and thought-provoking!

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

By Barb Ford

I have been craving good Tabouli lately. Also spelled Tabbouleh or Tabouleh, this Middle Eastern dish is divine. It is a cold salad, typically involving some combination of cooked bulgur wheat, parsley, mint, onion, tomatoes and cucumbers, dressed with lemon and olive oil. The spices used vary according to whatever recipe you like. My favorites are sumac, garlic, pepper, Zaatar and others. I recently used my blend of coriander, fennel and cumin seeds, toasted and ground. Well, YUM! It can be a wonderful side dish, or a meal. Last week, I could not find bulgur wheat, so I substituted organic pearled farro. Fantastic!

I am not furnishing a recipe, rather, I refer my readers to YouTube to watch the videos that come up on a search for Tabouli. I hope you find a way to make this wonderful dish that you will surely fall in love with.

Try serving it with Hummus and Pita

Try serving it with Hummus and Pita bread. A winning combination.
If you like this, try adding various cooked grains to cold chopped veggie salads. This seems to work best with vinaigrette-based dressing.
If you like this, try adding various cooked grains to cold chopped veggie salads. This seems to work best with vinaigrette-based dressings.

Who knows….you may just come up with a new family and potluck favorite? The sky and your imagination are the limit.

“Food has always meant more than feeding. Food is bonding, sacrament, joy. A quotidian public delight.”

Sallie Tisdale



JULY 2019 CALENDAR

Fri. July 5 **TGIF - Sultan's:** 4790 Hagadorn Rd in Hannah Plaza, East Lansing. Delicious Middle Eastern food with great service.

Fri. July 12 **TGIF - Boston Market:** 6435 S Cedar St, Holt, between Willoughby Rd and Aurelius Rd. Tasty ready-to-serve dishes.
Steering Committee Meeting: to follow dinner.

Fri. July 19 **TGIF - Soup Spoon Cafe:** 1419 E Michigan Ave, Lansing. Wide menu selection, including vegan choices. We MMM's have enjoyed eating there since our first Escape Room adventure.

Fri. July 26 **TGIF - Grand Traverse Pie Company:** 1403 E Grand River Ave, East Lansing. It's in the Brookfield Plaza at the corner of Grand River Ave and Hagadorn Rd. Service is cafeteria style, so bus your own dishes before you leave. Quiches, pot pies, pasties, sandwiches, wraps, soups, salads, and, of course, pie (best a-la-mode).
PLUS: SPECIAL SPEAKER AFTER DINNER; Roy Saper, see article in this issue for details.

Fri. Aug 2 **TGIF - Red Lobster:** 3130 East Saginaw St, Lansing, just north of the Frandor Shopping Center. Delicious seafood, especially lobster!

Sun. Aug. 4 **MMM Summer Anniversary Party:** At the home of Bob and Ginny Henderson, 3369 Harper Rd, Mason, MI. We typically gather at 4:00 PM and eat at 5:00 PM. Meat dishes will be provided. Bring your favorite drinks and a veggie dish or dessert to share.

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