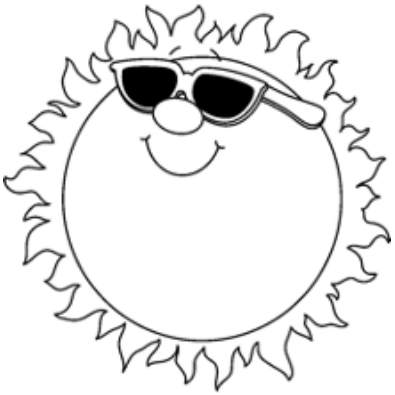
AUGUST 2020

Head-Line

The Newsletter of Mid-Michigan Mensa Number 556



HEAD-LINE NO. 556 AUGUST 2020
MID-MICHIGAN MENSA

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Email: RVC3@us.mensa.org

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'Like' Mid-Michigan Mensa on Facebook:
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

I think I'll use this space for a book shout-out. I've just finished *American Dirt,* by Jeanine Cummins. I knew only a few things about it when I started. 1). It was an Oprah book club selection. Okay, that's generally a good thing. I've enjoyed just about every book that carried her seal of approval. I didn't read them for that reason, but I've come to trust that her endorsement does mean it's worth a look. 2). There was a controversy over the fact that the book is about the migrant experience, but the author was never a migrant, nor of Hispanic/Latinx nationality herself. Hmm…where is it decreed that an author can only write about characters and plots from his or her own authentic experience? Fiction…by definition… is an invention or fabrication. 3). I read the jacket blurb and it sounded interesting. The main character owned a bookstore in Acapulco. They had me at bookstore.

My experience reading it: I was captivated within the first chapter. Riveted. Could not put the book down. Had to put the book down because the unrelenting intensity had to be processed before continuing. The book crawled into my mind and lived there while I brushed my teeth and went bike-riding and filled bird feeders. I am convinced that if I had read this book while still in high school, I would have dropped my French classes, and switched to Spanish, so I'd be ready at some vague time in the future to have a meaningful way to help in the social justice cause.

When I finished the book, I was relieved. I didn't want a cop-out happy ending, but I didn't want more tragedy either. Could the author pull off a satisfactory conclusion? The ending edged sort of toward the cop-out, but since we all know the sad state of migrant affairs these days, it was also an ending of open-ended uncertainty.

As for the controversy, I will let others argue about issues of cultural appropriation and such. I read a book first and foremost for the sheer pleasure of reading a well-told story. This was a well-told story. Are there valid points made by those who are critical? Of course. Does that mean it shouldn't be read? I'm feeling that my brain and my soul were enriched by reading it. I encourage my fellow Mensans to read it also, and then let's talk about it.

What about all of you? If you want to respond to anything you read in this issue, send it along to me at: sharonslp@ameritech.net

LOC SEC COLUMN

Bob's Two Bits for August 2020
by Robert Henderson

With so many Mensa activities on hold until the COVID-19 pandemic is over, now is a good time to re-imagine what future MMM group activities would be most rewarding. Any of them that don't transmit the virus could even be done now! Here are a couple of virus-free activities that we do already:

First, our monthly Head-Line Newsletter, whether in print or online. Our Editor, Distribution Manager and outside printer have figured out how to compose, print, and mail the print version without exposing anyone to unnecessary risk, as you can see if you received the July and August issues in the mail. Of course, the electronic version has posed little risk of virus transmission all along! If you want but don't already get the printed version, you will have to log on to the AML site at us.mensa.org and edit your newsletter preferences (AML only sends us your mailing label if you opt-in to receiving a printed newsletter). Only one thing is missing to make the Head-Line a truly worthwhile effort: YOU! Our intrepid Editor is in dire need of member submissions that other MMM's might find of interest. If you have a story, joke, puzzle, et al. to share, please email it to sharonslp@ameritech.net. She will be happy to publish it under your byline (or under an assumed name if you prefer!) at her editorial discretion.

Second, MMM recently participated in selecting the winners of the Mensa Research Foundation scholarships for deserving students who will be in college this fall. Our judges read through 47 short essays by hopeful applicants and scored them on how well they described their college goals and their plans to achieve them. Further judging at regional and national levels narrowed the field down to the most deserving winners, including two from the Mid-Michigan area who won $500 and $600 scholarships! This effort is a win-win for Mensa: promoting higher education is a worthwhile goal, and it is also good public relations that could even inspire more people to join!

Again, the only thing missing is YOU! We have lost our long-time Scholarship Chair, Marv Fouty, and need someone new to sign up and coordinate the judges for next year's scholarships. Last year the Assistant Chair stepped in under time pressure and named 12 judges, half of whom opted out. Let's make it easier for the new Scholarship Chair by volunteering to be judges or backups. The wrinkles have now been ironed out of the MRF online judging system, and last year's judges can tell you how well it worked once they got the hang of it. Let me be the first Mid-Michigan Mensa member to volunteer to judge the Mid-Michigan entries for 2021's MRF Scholarships!

Finally, several MMM members have enjoyed the annual Meet-in-the-Middle gatherings with South-East Michigan Mensa in previous years. Jean Becker of SEMM has worked hard to find a way to continue this tradition while minimizing

the Coronavirus threat to attendees. Rather than meet at a bar as we have in past years, we are invited to join SEMM for a Meet-in-the-Middle picnic at 6:00 PM on Wednesday, Aug. 26 at Brighton Recreation Area. See the related article in this issue and the Activities Calendar inside the rear cover for details.

RVC 3 AUGUST, 2020 Column

John Voymas

We have all been subjected to rules and regulations promulgated by our various states of residence in order to provide a safer environment during this COVID-19 crisis. How are you holding up? Are you able to continue working (either from home or back in the office) or are you on an extended (and unexpected) layoff or termination? Have you been able to connect with other members of Mensa through social media channels or tools like Zoom? What changes in local group events would you like to see continue once we can meet in larger groups again?

Almost all regional activities in Region 3 have been canceled. As of this writing, the only one that may still happen in our region is the Cincinnati Area Mensa Regional Gathering (RG) the first weekend of December. There will definitely be some changes in how hospitality, meals, and the games room are managed. With social distancing rules, there will probably be fewer seats for programs and presentations. Hopefully, by sometime in 2021, we can return to a more familiar gathering style, although I am sure that some things will be different.

There has been some concern and a great deal of discussion regarding the continued existence of Facebook groups American Mensa Firehouse and American Mensa Hospitality, as well as a Code of Conduct for American Mensa. In order to continue to provide a “stimulating intellectual and social environment for members”, a civil and respectful environment is necessary. The focus is on the HOW things are said (the behaviors) not on the WHAT is said (the intellectual discourse). It is the responsibility of

American Mensa and the AMC to ensure that such an environment exists. There are differing opinions among the membership as to what limits (if any) can/should be set.

American Mensa does not exist in a vacuum. We are part of a larger social environment. What was acceptable (or simply ignored) even ten years ago is no longer okay (if it even was then). Social constructs evolve. They always have. They always will. Mensa was formed just after World War 2. At that time, blacks and whites were forbidden to intermarry in many states, schools and restrooms were separated, and blacks had to sit in the rear of the bus. Gays, lesbians, bisexual, and transgender individuals were outcasts and generally did not make themselves known for their own safety. Joseph McCarthy destroyed the lives of many individuals during his hearings and purges in the 1950s. Do any of you want to go back to those days?

On May 19, American Mensa hosted a leadership workshop on ways to engage members during this time of COVID-19. A webinar is now available at https://www.us.mensa.org/lead/leadership-workshops/engaging-members-in-the-time-of-corona/. There are also a number of suggestions from various local groups on what they are doing to serve their members. Some of those suggestions are included on the webinar page. I highly recommend checking this out. Let's be creative and try new methods and techniques. Decide which ones should be continued after we feel more safe to be out and about. I have attended local group Zoom get-togethers, book clubs, virtual ExComm meetings, and beverage tastings (some of us were already doing that before the crisis hit). Members who have not been able to attend in person are now able to meet other members this way.

To reiterate what I said last month, in all things, please be kind. Looking forward to seeing many of you soon, either in the virtual world or in person.

Mid-Michigan Mensa Treasurer's Report		
Quarter Ending June 30, 2020		
STARTING BALANCE		**$5,736.17**
INCOME		**303.11**
AML National Subsidy Dec. 2019	$114.75	
AML National Subsidy Jan. 2020	92.80	
AML National Subsidy Feb. 2020	95.50	
Savings interest	0.06	
EXPENDITURES		**17.00**
Head-Line:		
Postage - July	17.00	
ACCOUNT BALANCES		
5/3 Checking		3,798.21
5/3 Savings		1,997.90
USPS Periodical Postage Account		226.17
ENDING BALANCE		**$6,022.28**

AUGUST 2020

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

John Garrison, Membership Chair

111 Members

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

1 Jennifer Feasal	**5 Brenton Wilburn**
13 Ian Smith	**14 William Deary**
29 Kenneth Bonifield	**30 Joseph Werner**

AUGUST MENSAVERSARIES

Jeffrey Buchhop	**3**
Gordon Macdonald	**11**
Matthew Carter	**16**
Leonard Peterson	**23**
Wendy Carnegie	**30**
Thomas Allor	**30**
Dardanella Becker	**39**

The following is a list of prospects for membership. Each person has contacted the National Office concerning joining Mensa. As of this writing none have taken the Mensa admission test. If you know any of them please contact them and urge them to contact our Testing Coordinator who happens to be me.

John Garrison
Midmimensa@aol.com

Kristen Adcox - Lansing
Nathaniel Baird - Stockbridge
Paul Han - East Lansing
Linda HE - East Lansing
Justin Holley - Owosso
John Montani - Dewitt
Christopher Stokdyk - Williamston
Anne Wandel - Muir

SEMM MEET IN THE MIDDLE

Wednesday August 26th at 6 pm

It's the end of summer. We cannot meet at our former venue, so we are trying something different! Also please note the different starting time since we are meeting outdoors, but it is entirely casual, so come when you can make it.

Please join us for the annual August Meet-in-the-Middle at:
Brighton Recreation Area
6360 Chilson Road
Howell, MI 48843
810.229.6566

A state Recreation Passport is required. Follow signs to the picnic area and look for the Mensa signs. We will try to be at the Maple picnic shelter, but in case some other group has that one, there are three other picnic shelters and we hope a Wednesday night will not be too popular. If you come early there are nice hiking and biking trails.

This is a totally bring-your-own picnic. Pack a picnic or BYO carryout. There is a selection of restaurants between Brighton and Howell in the section of Grand River Avenue immediately north of the Latson Road exit from I-96.

If you have some ice or bugspray or anything else you would like to share, bring it along and those who wish can do some careful sharing. Lawn chairs would also be nice so we can "socially distance" more easily.

Directions:
From I-96, take the Latson Road exit #140 and go south. In approximately 3 miles Latson road dead-ends into Chilson Road—turn left for about 2 miles.

Pretty and shorter but more somewhat complicated from Ann Arbor exit at Silver Lake Road off US-23. Slightly south off Whitmore Lake Road (the frontage road on the west) turn west on Winans Lake Road to Chilson Road. You can also take M-36 west to Chilson Road which would take you by some restaurants with carry-out.

More information? Contact Jean or Ed Becker at 810.229.2113 jeankbecker@att.net, or Ann Garvin 734.663.4075 agarvin224@aol.com or James Draper 810.624.1791 paradyme4@comcast.net.

PUZZLE: The Infected Checkerboard

An infection spreads among the squares of an *N*x*N* checkerboard in the following manner: If a square has two or more infected neighbors, then it becomes infected itself. (Neighbors are orthogonal only, so each square has at most four neighbors.)

For example, suppose that we begin with all *N* squares on a main diagonal infected. Then the infection will spread to neighboring diagonals and eventually to the whole board.

Is it possible to infect the whole board if you begin with fewer than *N* sick squares? If not, why not?

Email your answer to Bob Henderson at rlhenderson@peoplepc.com (or to ask for hints if you need them!)

MEET A FELLOW MENSAN
Meet Elizabeth Evangelista

Hi, this is Elizabeth Evangelista: I've been around forever, and I've been a Member of Mensa for a lo---ng time! I used to be a member of SEMM, but I moved to East Lansing in 1989, and I've been enjoying my good friends in MMM ever since! I joined Mensa because I wanted a social group, but when I got there I found the thing that I've always loved about Mensa, that I can say pretty much whatever I want, and I know I'll always be understood and accepted. That was a new thing for me. It was kind of like."We think a lot alike, and I understand" What a pleasure and a relief. I wish I'd found the group a lot earlier.

As for my history, I was married a long time ago, and I have a passel of kids, grandkids, and, now, great-grandkids from my marriage. Later, I was with Al Swartzell for many years, until he passed away last year. Jobs-wise, I'm retired from Community Mental Health, where I worked as a Social Worker for quite a while. Now, I'm living the good life, at least when there's no COvid-19.

What do I want to do when I grow up? Well, I've always loved to travel,and I had a bucket list a mile long. I've been to most of those places now. I love going to Europe, especially Italy and France. I had a great trip in January--- I went to Japan and Okinawa. I loved Kyoto and Tokyo and would love to go again. But there are still other places calling me, especially one of those Riverboat cruises on the Rhine. And how about a little jaunt to St.Petersburg, Novgorod and Moscow? They're waiting, too!

Love you all,and I'm hoping to see you soon at a TGIF.

EDITOR'S NOTE: I have one more *Meet a Mensan* article in reserve. If you want this feature to continue, please respond to some of these. Don't overthink it…one or two sentence responses are just right. Skip any Qs that you don't want to answer. I so enjoy publishing these…I hope you enjoy reading them.

Send your response to: sharonslp@ameritech.net

- **Your first job? Your best job? Your worst job? Your dream job?**
- **Pet peeve(s)? (No more than 3**
- **Night owl or early bird?**
- **Favorite season?**
- **Marriages/Divorces/Children**
- **Favorite travel experience**
- **What you like best about being a Mensan**
- **Earliest childhood memory:**
- **Something important you learned in HS**
- **Educational background**
- **Favorite travel experience**
- **Hobbies/interests**
- **Favorite food(s)**
- **At the top of your bucket list**

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

By Barb Ford

Well, summer of 2020 is turning out to be memorable in many ways. Oh, the tales that will be told of these times.

Meanwhile, we must eat. This month, I want to share a "recipe" that can be whatever you want to make of it, depending on your preference. It is vegetarian/vegan, but you can add meat, cheese or hard-boiled eggs.
This refreshing vinaigrette-based salad is best with cooked pasta or grain.

My favorite pasta for this salad is cavatappi, or corkscrews. You may prefer another. Sometimes I make it with cooked grains, like barley, farro, or even bulgur wheat.

Veggies vary by season, or whatever I have on hand. I like carrots, celery, shredded cabbage, peppers, cucumber, asparagus, corn, summer squash, chopped baby kale, cherry tomatoes, even cooked beans. The list is endless. One tip: if you like fresh onions on your salad, serve them on the side at the meal. They get a little overpowering when mixed and marinated with the whole salad.

When the grain or pasta is cooked and drained, (no need to cool it) add an equal amount of raw chopped fresh veggies and toss in a small amount of your favorite vinaigrette-based dressing. I make my own, but bottled Italian is particularly good, too. Stir it all together and refrigerate overnight. Give it a toss and adjust the seasonings to taste. Serve it as a side, or the main course.

This pasta/grain veggie salad is easy to make and keeps well in the fridge for 3-4 days. It also travels well.

“A salad should never be just a dish of greens. Every salad should sparkle with flavor, cleanse the palate, and beef up the appetite.”

Emeril Lagasse

PUN TYME

contributed by John Garrison

Under stress a good doctor does not lose his patients.

Two silkworms were having a race. Unfortunately they ended up in a tie.

AUGUST 2020 CALENDAR

Fri. Aug. 7	**TGIF -** CANCELLED
Fri. Aug. 14	**TGIF -** CANCELLED
Sun. Aug. 16	**MMM Annual Anniversary Party:** Rayner Park, 738 E Ash St, Mason, MI 48854. We'll meet at 6:00 PM at the picnic pavilion. Bring your own food and drinks, and wear a mask while not seated.
Fri. Aug. 21	**TGIF -** CANCELLED
Wed. Aug. 26	**Meet-in-the-Middle with SEMM:** We'll meet at 6:00 PM at the Brighton Recreation Area, 6360 Chilson Rd, Howell, MI 48843 (State Recreation Passport required). See related article for details.
Fri. Aug. 28	**TGIF -** CANCELLED

September 4 and 11: See the September Head-Line or the Web Calendar for updates.

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