DECEMBER 2020

Head-Line

The Newsletter of Mid-Michigan Mensa Number 560



HEAD-LINE NO. 560 DECEMBER 2020
MID-MICHIGAN MENSA

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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

2020 has been a year for the history books! We all know about the challenges this year has brought to our country and its occupants, and we've all faced our personal challenges as well. This feels like a good time to reflect on what's gone right this past year…let me think.

On a personal level, my biggest triumph was getting a handle on eating habits and activity level after the shutdown started. I have to admit that putting a halt to my weekly TG restaurant dinner (and usually dessert!) has helped. I'm down 18 pounds, mostly thanks to eliminating incessant nighttime snacking, plus spending one to two hours a day on a bike. (Actually a recumbent trike, if you want to get technical.)

On a national level, it's pretty obvious that there is a big divide between two large groups of people, and right now it feels like a wall that can't be breached. But within those groups are people…lots and lots of individual people… people like me; people like you; people who are your neighbors and your friends and your family. Maybe if we all put our minds to removing the wall between ourselves and just one person at a time, we could rediscover the values that we share in common, rather than focus on the differences that divide us. Maybe that's my pollyanna side escaping, but a girl can hope.

On New Year's Eve, I will raise a glass to a happier and healthier new year for the whole world. And especially for you. And you. And you too.

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 December 2020
by Robert Henderson, Loc Sec

Since Mid-Michigan Mensa is not having in-person activities for the duration of the current pandemic, our LocSec has very little to say this month. . . instead, let me put on my Webmaster's hat in this space to share a recent post (below) from the MMM Facebook page. You will find more of interest there if you haven't visited lately, due mainly to the efforts of Wendell Proudfoot, our Facebook guru.

Have you found more time lately to enjoy playing the many free games and puzzles that are available online? Can you recommend any of your favorites to your fellow MMMensans? I hope to include links to your best suggestions on a new Puzzles and Games page currently under construction at the MMM Website. . . Let me start the ball rolling by sharing the link to Arkadium's collection of crossword puzzles at https://www.arkadium.com/free-online-games/crosswords/. This page has a good selection of fairly easy to fiendishly difficult puzzles, including British-style cryptic crosswords. Letters are easy to fill in or delete from the grid - no eraser required! A gentle warning: if I don't get your suggestions at rlhenderson@peoplepc.com this month, the new Puzzles and Games page on our site at midmichigan.us.mensa.org/Games/Puzzles.html will be limited to just a few of my own rather esoteric favorites. Try them out, if only to see how much better this page could be if it included a few of your own favorites!

Best wishes, Bob

RVC 3 DECEMBER, 2020 Column

John Voymas

This is my "reverse" article. Usually, I end with upcoming events. This time, let's highlight them.

The next Regional Gathering (RG) in Region 3 will be hosted by Cincinnati Area Mensa on December 4 - 6. More details can be found at https://cincymensa.org/RG2020/. This will be a virtual RG. It will be as close to an in-person RG as can be. Only $10 if you register by December 1; $15 after that.

The next quarterly AMC (American Mensa Committee, our board of directors) will be on Saturday, December 12. The quarterly meeting usually runs for about five or six hours. This is where new and updated policies are discussed and decided upon. This meeting is open to all members but pre-registration is required. Look for an email announcement or additional information on the American Mensa calendar of events.

Speaking of the AMC, the election cycle is beginning. Nomination "papers" need to be completed by January 31, 2021. I encourage you to support all candidates by signing everyone's petition. This helps ensure that members have a choice amongst candidates. The elections page is at https://www.us.mensa.org/lead/amc/elections/.

As more local groups adapt to the virtual world, I am pleased to announce that my local group, Southeast Michigan Mensa (SEMM), is planning their first V-RG (Virtual Regional Gathering). This will take place on Saturday, February 20, 2021. There will be three Zoom "sessions": Hospitality, Games, and Speakers/Programs. Pre-registration will be required so that the Zoom links can be sent to you. This promises to be an exciting new way of celebrating with SEMM. More info will be available on the

American Mensa Calendar of Events soon at https://www.us.mensa.org/attend/calendar/.

Prospective member qualification has been expanded. In addition to Prior Evidence and Local Group Testing, we have implemented Private Testing. This is now available in person at Prometric testing sites. A prospective member will still need to go to the American Mensa "join" page but will now have a third option that provides them with the convenience of testing at a time that is more convenient. This type of approach is how I tested for my State of Michigan Real Estate license. The two testing options are found at the https://www.us.mensa.org/join/testing/ page.

December is a good month to begin thinking about personal goals for the upcoming year. A long "New Year Resolution List" is not required. Simply choose one or two goals that you would like to achieve by the end of June. Choose a goal time period (shorter or longer) that you are most comfortable with. It is better to have only a few goals that you are more likely to focus on than a huge list that is overwhelming. Having been laid off since the end of March, my primary goal is to get back in the saddle and be earning my keep. The horse may be a different breed as I have been doing some online training in Agile frameworks and in Data Analytics, but I am likely to be working in the I.T. arena once again.

Looking forward to seeing many of you online or in person in the upcoming months. I was able to spend a day with the Bluegrass Mensa group (Lexington, KY area) recently and had a fun time meeting members and participating in their games day. I was even able to add a social get-together with Dan Schneider, Loc Sec of Dayton Area Mensa, and with his brother, Drake, on the way home.

May your next year be better than the past year!

Mid-Michigan Mensa on Facebook

Thanks to member **Wendell Proudfoot** for making this happen. We now have 10 members in our private Facebook group, and we hope to see a lot more of you join in. Feel free to post questions or thoughts about pretty much anything on your mind, and to comment on those posts of interest to you. Because it's a private group, anything you post or comment on is seen only by other group members, so it's a relatively safe space. Or just lurk if you prefer. If nothing else, this provides a convenient way to update members between the arrival of your monthly Head-Lines.

Find the group by doing a search on Facebook for Mid-Michigan Mensa - MMM.

If you have any concerns, let Wendell know: wendellfp@gmail.com, or just PM him on Facebook.

PUZZLES

submitted by Bob Henderson

Puzzle #1: A lazy caterer has to cut a pizza into 7 slices rather than the usual 6 or 8 slices. If he cuts only along straight lines that cross the pizza from edge to edge, what is the smallest number of cuts he can make to accomplish this?

Puzzle #2: Place 4 checkers so that they are at the corners of a square (of any size and orientation) , then remove one of them and remember where it was. The 3 remaining checkers can be moved by jumping any one over another, landing an equal distance beyond it. How many jumps are needed to get any one of the other 3 checkers to land on the spot where the 4th checker had been?

See answers on page 12.

DECEMBER 2020 MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

John Garrison, Membership Chair
115 Members

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Wendy Carnegie	**5**
John Abbott	**6**
Brian McGrain	**6**
Walter Syroid JR	**8**
John Madigan	**21**
David Johnson	**25**
Ronald Burl	**30**
Alan Spirdione	**31**

DECEMBER MENSAVERSARIES

Robert Smith	**1**	**Gary Johncox**	**1**
Eric Horner	**1**	**Daniel Johnson**	**6**
Alan Spirdione	**7**	**William Tupy**	**7**
Peter Wood	**7**	**David Salsbury**	**10**
Kenneth Bonifield	**12**	**Richard Hobrla**	**16**
Clyde Crique	**16**	**Eric Sanko**	**20**
Timothy Howard	**20**	**Sharon Plavnick**	**27**

No members new to the group or moving out.

MEMBERSHIP INFO

We have not tested a prospective member in at least six months. If you know anyone who expresses an interest in qualifying for MENSA please have them contact us. Remember – There is strength in numbers.

PONDER THIS

by John Garrison

In our November issue, John primed the discussion pump with some intriguing questions:

> If you could build a time machine that actually worked, what era would you visit and which historical figure would you like to meet?
>
> If you had this time machine and could go back to any time during your life, when would it be and what major change would you make?
>
> If you could travel into the future what would you like to learn and how would this affect your current life?

Here are some responses:

From John Garrison:

If I could go back in time I would like to meet and discuss issues with Jesus Christ. His existence has been a world changer and had changed the course of history.

I say this because I remember the old parlor game sometimes called telephone or rumor mill. One person would start the game by whispering a message to another person and that person would whisper what they had heard to another and so on until every person in the room had been involved. The first person would say their message out loud and the last person would say what they had heard. The final person's message was never the same as the first. It was amazing how things change when discussed openly. Thus, Jesus. We should remember that the bible was written 400 years after Jesus died. There has never been any written words discovered from the time of Jesus's life. All we know about him was written four centuries after his death. Wouldn't it be interesting to discuss issues with him about his life and what he actually did while alive? Was everything written about him in the bible true or has history been altered by a parlor game? Interesting thoughts, Huh?

From Gail Wolfe:

I'd want to go back to the late 1950s and meet Elvis Presley.

I'd go back to the first year of my marriage. It was a great Honeymoon year. I wouldn't make any major changes. However, a minor change would be to leave college (if I was able to go back two more years) to go to my grandfather's funeral which I feel guilty about not doing.

I'd like to know my grandchildren as adults. This would affect my present conversations with them and the advice I would give to them.

From Sharon Plavnick:

Given all the constitutional hullabaloo of late, I'd like to go back to 1787 and have a good sit-down talk with Ben Franklin.

In my own life, I can clearly see several occasions when I should have made a different decision about something important. But I wouldn't go back and change anything even if I could; all those decisions have led to today, and I'm very satisfied with my major accomplishments. Plus, I would never do anything that would interfere with the presence of my children and grandchildren on this earth.

Occasionally I'd like to consult a crystal ball for help in making a big decision, but mostly I'm content to experience life as it comes. I might not like what I see in the future…then I have to live with that knowledge for the rest of my life. Nope…not opening that Pandora's box.

Anyone else? Send your thoughts to John at midmimensa@aol.com or to me at sharonslp@ameritech.net and I'll publish them under John's byline.

MEET A FELLOW MENSAN

Meet Todd Eldred

My first job was at 8 filling hoppers in the attic of our barn with feed for the cows that were being milked below. Dark, dusty, cobwebs...might have caused my love for horror. **My worst job** was third shift stocking shelves at Meijer when I went back to college in my 40's. Typical job, but it messed up my sleep schedule to this day. I had never taken a nap before this and now I can nap anytime. **My dream job** is creating welded sculpture and selling it on Etsy. Apparently the sculptures don't appeal to all tastes, though...

Pet peeves: People who get their information from their tribe rather than reading and experts. The incessant focus of the media on one subject at a time. The percent of the US budget that is spent on "defense" rather than solving domestic problems.

Night owl vs Early bird: Whenever I'm a night owl I'm no early bird. I'm an early bird with enough coffee. But pretty much sleep from 11:00 - 8:00 (semi-retirement is good).

Fall is my favorite season. Perfect temperatures, and when I crop-farmed for 25 years, that's when the money rolled in.

I met my wife when I was 10 and made plans to marry her.12 years later it was her idea. Married 40 years, three kids, three grand-kids. The family values education. Family degrees and classes from MSU, Michigan, Central, Eastern, Marygrove, LCC, JCC, Spring Arbor...

My favorite travel experiences are a month in Europe when I was 14, trips to Montreal and Satillo, Mexico for a family wedding. Serenaded by the neighborhood Mariachi Band!

Like best about Mensa: I like the Mensan publications and interaction on FaceBook.

One of my first memories is having the measles when I was three. We had just built a new house and I had to watch the house-warming party from outside through a back window.

Education: I went to grade school in a small, rural town. I went to HS at a private boarding school north of Detroit. I smoked three packs of a day by the time I graduated and so hung out in the smoking lounge a lot where I mixed with a broad cross section of the school (nicotine is loved by all nationalities and persuasions). My experience in this more cosmopolitan setting gave me a greater appreciation for all backgrounds.

I attended Michigan State for 2 1/2 years in the 70's, farmed for 25 years and then finished my degree, BS - Interdisciplinary Studies Human Resources in Society at MSU in my 40's. Then got a Teaching Certification at Spring Arbor University.

My hobbies are reading (fiction, history, philosophy, sociology, politics, how-to, news, opinion), listening to jazz, classical, rock fusion, heavy metal, hiphop, bluegrass). Also fishing for steelhead, welding sculpture, writing, posting puns on FaceBook, and enjoying sports with friends.

My favorite foods are coffee, iced tea, Diet Pepsi, popcorn, olives, and cheese on anything, in any form.

I think everybody's bucket list is full many times over in this pandemic (due to health risks both my wife and I have been in strict isolation since May). Now I would like to fish for fall steelhead with my friends on the Ausable River once more. In the future maybe see a heavyweight championship fight in Vegas.

EDITOR'S NOTE: 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. Please don't be shy. This is YOUR newsletter….please participate.

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

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.

Puzzle Answers:

#1: If he cuts 3 lines that form an equilateral triangle in the middle with an area of about 1/16 of the whole pizza, there will be 3 similar area slices from each corner of the triangle to the edge and 3 much larger slices from each side of the triangle to the edge for a total of 7 pieces. If the customer wants the usual wedge shapes of equal size, he'll need to be more specific the next time he orders!

#2: Without loss of generality, we can assign coordinates to the location of each checker with the distance between the grid lines equal to the side of the square. The 4 checkers can then be located at (horizontal, vertical) coordinates numbered (0, 0), (0, 1), (1, 0), and (1, 1). After you remove the 4th checker at (1, 1), note the even-odd parity of the coordinates of the remaining 3 checkers. Can any of them ever arrive at (1, 1) in any number of jumps? Since each jump has two equal "legs" (from its starting point to the jumped checker and from there to its landing point), every jump changes both the jumping checker's horizontal and vertical coordinates by an even number. This means that the checker that starts at (0, 0) will always land on even-numbered horizontal and vertical coordinates, the checker that starts at (0, 1) will always land on even-numbered horizontal coordinates, and the checker that starts at (1, 0) will always land on even -numbered vertical coordinates. The 4th checker had odd-numbered horizontal and vertical coordinates, meaning that the other 3 checkers can never land where it was, no matter how many jumps they make!

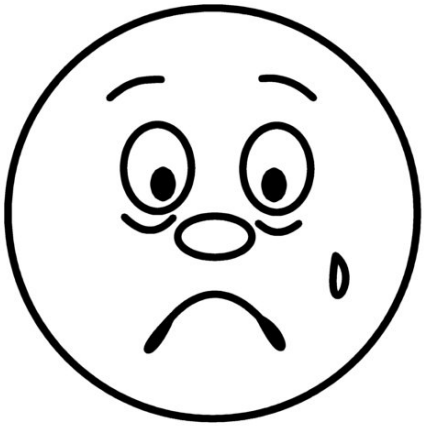
BONUS PUZZLE FROM BOB: Word Ladder Alchemy: change one letter at a time without rearranging.

Convert ORE to TIN in 4 to 7 steps.
Convert TIN to GEM in 3 to 4 steps.
Convert ZINC to GOLD in 5 to 7 steps.
Convert POOR to RICH in 5 to 8 steps.
Convert ROCK to GEMS in 4 to 8 steps.
Convert SWINE to PEARL in 5 to 9 steps.
Convert STONE to JEWEL in 9 to 18 steps.
Convert GLOOM to CHEER in 8 to 10 steps.
Convert PEWTER to SILVER in 5 to 7 steps.
Convert DEARTH to RICHES in 10 to 22 steps.

Stuck? Try looking on the MMM Puzzle Page!

DECEMBER 2020 CALENDAR

ALL MMM DINNERS HAVE BEEN CANCELLED TILL FURTHER NOTICE.



WISHING YOU ALL A SATISFYING AND SAFE HOLIDAY SEASON AND AN ESPECIALLY HAPPY NEW YEAR

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