SEPTEMBER 2021

Head-Line

The Newsletter of Mid-Michigan Mensa Number 569



HEAD-LINE NO. 569 SEPTEMBER 2021
MID-MICHIGAN MENSA

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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

As I write this, it's already back-to-school time for lots of kids. One of my grandchildren is already back at it, and by the time you all receive this, all five will be back in school. It's a brave new school year for all of them, since we're still tiptoeing gingerly through the Covid-laced tulips. A lot of us vaccinated folks are probably thinking about boosters right about now, and I've upgraded my mask supply to give me whatever protection is actually within my control.

I think a lot about "control" these days…how little any of us really has on a big-picture level, but how much we still have on our own little day-to-day lives. So my efforts tend to be along the Serenity prayer line…manage whatever I can and cope gracefully with what I truly can't. The "gracefully" part is a work-in-progress.

You all stay safe; stay healthy; be graceful.

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 September 2021

by Robert Henderson, Loc Sec

Thanks to COVID-19 and its never-ending variants, we now live in a new age in which many of our pre-pandemic assumptions no longer hold true. One of mine held that facts and logic could change minds by replacing ignorance with enlightenment. . . How wrong I was! Rather than accept evidence that contradicts their beliefs, most people will bend over backwards to discredit the evidence rather than change their beliefs. People have become so attached to their beliefs that contrary evidence is seen as a personal attack!

All I can remind them is "Science is true whether you believe in it or not."

Scientists have made great personal sacrifices to earn the knowledge that keeps us fed, clothed and healthy beyond the dreams of our ancestors. If you haven't had polio, smallpox, or many other infectious diseases that were once common, thank medical researchers and public health agencies such as the CDC and WHO, whose job it is to understand how to keep such deadly and debilitating diseases from either arising or recurring and make sure this knowledge is put to good use.

Here in Mid-Michigan Mensa, we have others who richly deserve our thanks for their monthly efforts to publish a group newsletter and activities calendar. Make their day by letting them know how much you appreciate the job they're doing! You too could be on the receiving end of such gratitude if you volunteer to be on the MMM Steering Committee, chair the Scholarship Committee, or chair the Gifted Youth Committee. If there are any activities that you would enjoy doing with your fellow Mensans, share your thoughts with me or any of the MMM officers listed inside the front cover. We can probably find room to share them on the group Activities Calendar for the coming month inside the back cover and on the MMM Website.

Our main group activity for years has been our Friday TGIF dinners. Now that most restaurants again offer indoor dining, we can get back to our old favorite haunts and try a few new places as well! You are invited to share in good food and great conversation such as we enjoyed at the State Room at the MSU Kellogg Center last August 20. If you have a favorite restaurant, let Ginny know and we'll make sure that it gets on the calendar!

PUZZLES

submitted by Bob Henderson

MATH PUZZLE

"Dots and Boxes" is thought of as a child's game, but the simple rules can lead to complex winning strategies. . . As a reminder, a rectangular grid of dots is drawn and the two players take turns marking either a horizontal or vertical line that connects two adjacent dots. Each time a player marks the fourth side of a box, he or she initials it and marks another line. The game ends when all the boxes are initialed, and the player who has initialed the most boxes is the winner. Got it? Good!

Here's the puzzle: let's say that you are the first player on a grid of 6 by 5 points. How can you play so as to guarantee that you will get to complete and initial the first box?

Bob's Word Trivia Quiz

How many of these word meanings can you guess correctly before looking them up?

1) What's the difference between the homonyms "taro" and "Tarot?"
2) What's the difference between the homonyms "torque" and "torc?"
3) What's the difference between the near-homonyms "corn" and "Quorn?"
4) What are the differences between the homonyms "brut," "brute," and "bruit?"
5) What is the difference between a cassowary and a casserole?
6) What is the difference between saffron and safflower?
7) What is the difference between (math) calculus and (dental) calculus?
8) What is the difference between a hart and a heart?
9) What is the difference between an anode and an anole?
10) What is the difference between a palimpsest and a Plimsoll line?

See answers on page 7.

SEPTEMBER 2021 MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

John Garrison, Membership Chair
108 Members

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAY

Saif Fatteh	**13**	**Neal Fross**	**16**
Thomas Allor	**17**	**Daniel Thompson**	**28**

SEPTEMBER MENSAVERSARIES

Kathryn Teshich	**3**	**Michael Rademacher**	**7**
Reece Kramer	**7**	**Mason Miller**	**9**
Kristen Shuler	**14**	**Brenton Wilburn**	**19**
David Brown	**19**	**Paul Kassal**	**19**
Brian McGrain	**23**	**John Larson**	**31**
William Deary	**33**	**Walter Syroid**	**35**
Linda Harrison	**36**	**Robert Henderson**	**41**

MEMBERS NEW OR LEAVING GROUP

NONE

POPS MALLOY
By Uncle John

One of the strangest and heartwarming stories of professional baseball is the story of Pops Malloy. Pops was the club house and equipment manager for the Boston Red Sox for over forty years. Many of today's innovations can be attributed to Pops. But many people don't know this. Ever wonder why an athlete will take an ice bath after a long and tiring game in 90 degree heat? Credit Pops. His innovation to relax tired aching muscles. Try it sometimes, it works. A hot tub or whirl pool soak can do the same thing for another set of muscles. Again credit Pops. He even tried different water temperatures. Now all the teams have both types of soaking apparatus in the locker rooms.

Why do players rub pine tar on their bat grips before they enter the batter's box? Another innovation contributed to Pops. He knew that batters needed a firm grip on the bat in order to hold it when swinging at a hundred mile per hour fastball. He tried various products before settling on pine tar. Now, everyone uses it.

Pops was the first clubhouse manager to use light weight cotton fabrics for the player's uniforms. Before then all uniforms were made from wool. Try playing a double header on a hot summer's day wearing wool. Cotton was the answer at the time. Pops used it first and now everyone uses it.

Now that you know all about what Pops contributed to baseball let me tell you more about the man himself. Pops loved the game. He would get to the games early so that he could warm up with the players. He enjoyed pitching batting practice. He liked to take batting practice too. He had his own uniform just like he was a player and member of the team. He was a member of the team but not on the roster. He always dreamed of playing in a real game.

After 40 some years of running the clubhouse and handling the equipment Pops had had enough. He notified management that at the end of the season he would be hanging up his spikes. He was going to his lake cottage and would spend the rest of his days fishing. Everyone was saddened to hear this so a special day was planned for Pops. He was asked to throw out the first pitch for the season's final game.

Pops stood with the rest of the players during the playing of the National Anthem. He proudly walked to the mound holding the game ball. When the catcher was set he threw the first pitch. It wasn't a hundred per mile fastball but it did have a little zip on it. When he was finished he stood on the mound waiting for the starting pitcher to take his place. No one came out of the dugout. The umpire looked at Pops and said "play ball". Pops did not know it but the BoSox management had penciled in his name as the starting pitcher. He wound up and threw the first pitch of the game. He missed the strike zone but the batter swung at it anyway.

He left the game with an ear to ear grin on his face. Pops had realized his life's dream. He got to play in a real ball game.

Editor's note: Our own John Garrison won the National Mensa Fiction award twice in the early part of this century. This is just another one of his fictional writings. Of course it's not true, but I hope you enjoyed a good read.

PONDER THIS IN SEPTEMBER
by John Garrison

The almighty dollar sign ($) rules many people's lives. Do any of us have enough money saved to comfortably spend the rest of our lives on this earth? Before you answer that question think of what we mean by enough. When social security was enacted during the 1930's people were assured that there would be adequate funds for their senior years. How many people today could live on only their monthly social security allotment?

But back to enough. I was watching a football game on TV the other day. The announcer mentioned that a certain player had signed a five year extension to his contract in the amount of 250 million dollars. The following day I heard of a baseball player who had also signed a five year extension for 125 mil. I got to thinking. How much is a player worth? What could a person do with 25 to 50 million a year? Does he get a weekly paycheck or does he get it all in one lump sum. Either way, what is he going to do with it?

Some celebrities and movie stars get millions for making a picture. What can they do with it all? How many cars and mansions can one person own? And what can they do with all of their playthings?

Ponder this. What would you do if you had millions in the bank and more coming every month? I only wish I had this problem.

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.

PUZZLE ANSWERS:

Math Puzzle Answer:

Mark your first line at the middle of the third line of five (the center of this line is also the geometric center of the board). Your following marks should be exactly opposite the center of the board from your opponent's marks. Follow this strategy just until your opponent is forced to mark the third side of a box, at which point you can complete that box and initial it! The symmetry of the board guarantees both that you will always have a safe move, and that your opponent will eventually run out of them. This strategy can't guarantee that you'll end the game with the most boxes, but at least it will give you a head start!

Word Trivia Answers:

1) Taro is a tropical root vegetable, Tarot is a deck of cards used in fortune-telling.
2) Torque is rotational force, a torc is a large metal ring worn as jewelry around the neck.
3) Corn is a common cereal crop, Quorn is a brand of vegan meat substitute.
4) Brut wine is very dry, a brute is an animal, and to bruit about is to spread widely (a report, rumor, etc.).
5) A cassowary is a flightless tropical bird, a casserole is a wide, deep dish or the food cooked and served in it.
6) Saffron is an expensive yellow spice, safflower is a thistle-like plant or the oil from its seeds.
7) Calculus is the mathematics of rates of change, but the same word also means mineralized dental plaque!
8) A hart is an adult stag (male deer), and the heart is an organ that pumps blood (but you knew that).
9) An anode is a negative battery terminal or positive load terminal, and an anole is a tropical American lizard.
10) A palimpsest is a written page that has been erased and written over,

and a Plimsoll line marks the intended waterline on a ship's hull.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT
By Barb Ford

Computers. Love them. Hate them. Can't live with them. Can't live without them. Want to live without them, but alas, I admit they are an undeniable part of my existence.

Last fall, my newer main laptop (HP Envy) showed signs of illness a few days after it was out of warranty. I had just made my last payment when the keys started falling off. This affliction could only be remedied by a costly repair that exceeded the value of the computer. I tried getting help from HP, but quickly discovered that it is impossible to speak with anyone at HP who speaks English as their first language and is physically based in the continental US. I can't go into great detail about my unfortunate experience with HP, but I do admit I burned through a bottle of Tums and maxed out the dosage of my anti-anxiety medication. Sheesh!

I used my ailing laptop for as long as I could, but had to cave and purchase a new one about six weeks ago. Please understand this is a task that for me might be worse than having all my teeth pulled out by a drunken monkey…. Yes, that stressful. This process was made so much easier by the Best Buy Geek Squad. Best Buy has an Advice and Guidance Department that connected me directly with an Agent named Hannah. She patiently searched the Best Buy website on line and over the phone to find a laptop that would best fit my specific needs. It was an excellent experience and I am confident with my purchase. I set it up in my home with the occasional assistance of the Geek Squad Total Tech Support over the phone and on line. I am still tweaking it, but this laptop is a keeper. In case you are wondering, it is a Dell Inspiron. I hope it serves me well for a long time. For all of my tech savvy friends and associates who think I am fussing over nothing, phooey on you. This was a big deal for me. I like computers now. Geek Squad is always ready to rescue me.

A new adventure for me yesterday: I had to learn how to download and use Zoom for a medical teleconference. Not bad. Only one Tums, and a tremendous sense of accomplishment. I am a bad ass this week.

SEPTEMBER 2021 CALENDAR

Fri. Sept. 3	**TGIF - Sultan's:** ** New Location ** 1381 E. Grand River Rd, East Lansing. Delicious Middle Eastern food with great service. Wear a mask whenever you are not seated.
Fri. Sept 10	**TGIF - City Limits Sports Bar:** 801 Cedar St, Mason. Good American food like pizza and hamburgers with great service. Wear a mask whenever you are not seated
Fri. Sept. 17	**TGIF - Soup Spoon Cafe:** 1419 E Michigan Ave, Lansing. Wide menu selection, including vegan choices, and, of course, soup. We have enjoyed eating there since MMM's Escape Room adventure. Wear a mask whenever you are not seated.
Fri. Sept. 24	**TGIF - Delhi Cafe:** 4625 Willoughby Rd, Holt, between Cedar St and Aurelius Rd. A Mensa favorite with good Greek and American food. We will have a private room with enough space for social distancing. Wear a mask whenever you are not seated.

Generally, if you need information, call 517-676-3369 or visit midmichigan.us.mensa.org 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