MARCH 2024

Head-Line

The Newsletter of Mid-Michigan Mensa Number 599



HEAD-LINE NO. 599 MARCH 2024
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.

The Head-Line is the monthly publication of Mid-Michigan Mensa. Annual subscription rate is $5.00 for members and is paid through American Mensa, LTD. The annual non-member rate is $10.00 and is limited to current members of other Mensa groups. Office of Publication is 3369 Harper Rd; Mason MI 48854.

EDITOR'S COLUMN:

FROM MY BRAIN TO YOURS

by Sharon Plavnick

As I write this, I am halfway through my 3 month non-winter in Florida. It's certainly been an easy winter to get through so far, even though this morning brought a 2 inch or so snowfall. The 10-day forecast has us back up in the 40s next week, so this won't linger on the ground for very long. Lynn and I were reflecting on the Michigan winters of our childhood where snow was present usually by Thanksgiving, and was a fixture until mid to late March or so. As a winter-hater, I much prefer the current condition. But I'm certain this will wreak havoc on Michigan's fruit crops this year. And I'm equally certain that April will be cold and wet and dreary. March brings us the daylight saving switch again, and I am always glad for the extra hour of light in the evening. My dad was the best weather forecaster I've ever known. "Whether it's cold or whether it's hot, we're gonna have weather, whether or not."

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 March 2024

by Robert Henderson, Loc Sec

Happy Spring! Let's hope that it starts on schedule this month. . .

Ginny and I had a memorable Viking Ocean Cruise from Athens, across the Aegean Sea to the Greek islands of Crete and Rhodes, and from there up to Istanbul, Turkey. We had to skip the planned stops at the modern ports for the sites of ancient Ephesus and Troy (the one Homer wrote about in the Iliad) due to stormy weather, but at least that allowed us an extra day to tour the bustling metropolis of Istanbul.

This was our first time visiting Asia, and the culture shock was real. The sales people at the bazaars and rug shop were more aggressive than we Americans were used to, and we didn't have any haggling skills to bring to bear on their prices. At our age, we would rather downsize than invest in exotic new stuff anyway!

I learned to appreciate American flush toilets when Suleiman's Revenge struck during our mosque tour. The nearest restroom was outside the mosque, so I found my way back the way we had come, only to discover

that I didn't have the required fee in Turkish lira! Fortunately, the attendant took pity on me. I spent too long in there to continue with the tour group to the Spice Bazaar, but I remembered some near-by landmarks from the previous day's visit and eventually caught up to them there.

The flight back to Detroit was supposed to be 11 hours non-stop. However, when an older passenger complained of chest pains, it took us 5 more hours to dump fuel over the North Atlantic, fly back to Copenhagen, watch the Dutch EMT's escort him and his whole family off the plane, and refuel for the flight back to Detroit. Of course, there was no added meal service to accommodate the delay. . . Still, I have to applaud the Turkish Airlines crew, who kept us all calm by clearly explaining what was going on. To top it off, the four of us who had traveled as a family came down with Covid soon after we got home!

Even after all that, we're still planning to go on another ocean cruise in May, assuming that Ginny has recovered well from her shoulder surgery, now scheduled for Feb. 29th. We'll let you know how it goes.

Mitchell's Musings - RVC3 Column March 2024

Lora Mitchell, RVC3

Tonight for dance class, I wore a t-shirt with a bunch of purple spaceships, and "PER ASPERA AD ASTRA" blazoned across the front. (I wore space patterned leggings and a silver hip scarf too, but that's not relevant here. If you're not familiar with the phrase, it means roughly "through hardships to the stars" and is the motto of the fictional Starfleet, along with many real life organizations and groups. It's one of my favorite Latin phrases, mostly because there is so much to unpack with it.

On its face, it refers to the difficulties and tragedies of space exploration, including Apollo I, Challenger, and Columbia. It's very touching in the literal sense of the people who gave their lives so that we humans can explore the galaxy.

Bur wait! Sacrifice and difficulty can be part of all of our lives, and yet very few of us will ever leave orbit. It's been a saying going back two millennia, long before the technology to space flight ever existed. We all, however, have our own North Stars that we reach for. For some people, it's about having meaningful impact on other people and meaningful social movements. For others, it's about measuring their success in more tangible ways. It may be families, careers, or the achievement in the arts.

But down inside we all have things that bring meaning, and really aren't easy. And it is sometimes it is that very struggle to get there that makes us capable of achieving great things. By moving out of our comfort zones, we become stronger.

Those thoughts bring me hope that no matter what is happening, it is also an opportunity to grow more, and to dream of things bigger than ourselves. Mensa has brought me struggle at times, but I have gained so much, and I know it has given much to many of you. I hope no matter what you may be struggling with, it becomes a way for you to shine with the brightness of starlight.

Lora Mitchell, RVC3
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VIRTUAL ZOOM GENERAL DISCUSSION GROUP

From Ken Lawrence

We talk about whatever anybody wants to talk about. A list of suggested topics, as well as a chance to comment, is available on Facebook under M Saturday Discussion Group. Host Ken Lawrence can be reached at MVirtualDiscussionGroup@gmail.com for more information.

> Ken Lawrence is inviting you to a weekly Zoom meeting.
> Topic: Virtual Discussion Group open to all Mensans.
> Time: 2:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada) every Saturday
> To join the Zoom Meeting:
> https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86726108623?pwd=cUgyelF2K0ZLQzNWbVByZE9UMXpxdz09
> Meeting ID: 867 2610 8623 Passcode: 1234

Bob's Word Puzzle: Word Loops

What's special about 4-letter word pairs such as (same, mesa), (rely, lyre), and (eddy, dyed)? Each word in the pair has not just the same letters, but the same PAIRS of letters. The letter pairs are reversed in the second word of each pair, so the word pairs make a chain with a common letter pair joining them. Also, it doesn't matter which word comes first, so the words in each pair are linked by their other common letter pair as well! Can you think of other pairs of 4-letter words that can form a loop in this way?

It's not too hard to add a third word to make a loop of 3 words, each of which is linked by a common pair of letters to the other two. I found both (rein, into, tore) and (dyne, need, eddy) in about a minute, but you can take as long as you want to find more.

Of course, this property can be extended to longer and longer word chains. I found a few chains of up to 12 different words for which the last word links with the first to form a loop. Can you do better? Feel free to get help from your computer or the Internet!

Bob's Math Puzzle: Pi Day

March 14th is Pi Day (because Pi = 3.14, of course!) You can celebrate by using the following numbers to estimate the value of Pi.

Regular polygons with sides circumscribed (tangent) to a unit-radius circle have the following side lengths:

N =	4	6	8	10	12
Length =	2.0000	1.1547	0.8284	0.6498	0.5359

The same polygons inscribed inside the same circle (with their corners on its circumference) have lengths of 1.414, 1.000, 0.7654, 0.618, and 0.5176.

Hint: The sum of each polygon's side lengths approaches 2 * Pi (from opposite directions) as the number of polygon sides increases. Mathematicians used this method with polygons of up to several thousand sides before finding faster ways!

Trivia Quiz: Solar System Smarts

How well do you know Earth's planetary neighborhood? Answer these questions to find out!

1) Which planet is the least dense?
2) Which planet is the most dense?
3) Which planet has the highest surface temperature?

4) Which planets have Earth robots landed on?
5) On what other planet has a robot helicopter flown?
6) Which moons have Earth robots landed on?
7) Which planet has the thinnest atmosphere?
8) Which moon has the thickest atmosphere?
9) Can you name the two moons of Mars?
10) Which planets have NO moons?
11) Which planet has the most moons (at last count)?
12) How many nations have landed robots on the Moon?
13) How many humans have walked on the Moon?
14) Which is the smallest planet in the Solar System?
15) Which is the largest moon in the Solar System?

See answers on page 7

From the San Francisco Mensa group:



For more information
https://sf-authors.space/presentations/

Medical Realities from Star Trek

DR. PED BUNSONGSIKU

SUNDAY, MARCH 10 AT 2:30 pm PT

In the area of medicine Star Trek introduced several advanced technologies. Dr. Bunsongsikul will discuss medical predictions that are realities today

Register to get the Zoom link:

https://livepresentation.link/SignUp

MARCH 2024 MEMBERSHIP MATTERS
Kathy Teshich, Membership Chair
111 **members**

BIRTHDAYS

Jeffrey Buchhop	March 2
Roderick Baltzer	March 5
Eric Sanko	March 17
Steven Spitzley	March 18
Michael Bohde	March 24
Youn Woong Park	March 25
Frank Dolinar	March 26
Thomas Korkoske	March 26
Amy Moore	March 30

MENSAVERSARIES

Amy Moore	1 yr
September Peters	1 yr
David Long	1 yr
Larenzo Langone	2 yrs
Ian Smith	8 yrs
Jennifer Feasal	9 yrs
Kobe Hixon	11 yrs
Neal Forss	13 yrs
Kathleen Kohagen	14 yrs
Eric Laverty	15 yrs
John Paduch	18 yrs
Roberta McCall	24 yrs
Elizabeth Evangelista	49 yrs
Michael Knowlton	49 yrs

Answers To Puzzles

Math Puzzle Answer

The perimeter (sum of N side lengths) for the circumscribed polygons for the above values of N are 8.000, 6.928, 6.627, 6.498, and 6.431.

The perimeter (sum of N side lengths) for the inscribed polygons for the above values of N are 5.657, 6.000, 6.123, 6.180, and 6.212.

This gives lower and upper estimates for Pi of 3.1 and 3.2, and their average (3.16) is even closer to the correct value.

Word Puzzle Answer

Word Puzzle Answers

4 words: cash, shod, odor, orca
6 words: lose, seta, taro, roti, tiki, kilo
8 words: posh, shun, unto, topi, pity, tyro, roto, topo
10 words: shag, agog, ogre, repo, polo, lost, stun, undo, dojo, josh
12 words: bolo, logo, goth, thru, rush, shop, opal, also, solo, lose, seam, ambo

In case you're wondering how long these loops can get, my computer found some containing over 250 different linked words.

Trivia Answers:

1) Saturn, 2) Mercury, 3) Venus (869° F), 4) Mars and Venus, 5) Mars, 6) Our Moon and Saturn's moon Titan, 7) Mercury, 8) Titan, 9) Phobos and Deimos, 10) Mercury and Venus, 11) Jupiter (92 and counting!), 12) 4 (USA, USSR, China, India), 13) 12 (from the 6 successful Apollo missions), 14) Mercury, 15) Ganymede.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

By Barb Ford

Most of us gravitate toward foods that we grew up with. When I was a kid, my mother frequently purchased Kraft cheese spreads that came in small jars. We all loved them, and used the jars for juice glasses when the cheese spread was gone. One of my favorites was Pimento. Mom used to spread it on crackers celery sticks, or she made sandwiches with it. Yum.

When Gary and I moved to North Carolina, we discovered that "pimento cheese" is a Southern traditional favorite food. The first time I tried a pimento cheeseburger at a local restaurant, I thought I was in Heaven. Yes, it was THAT good! Well, from that moment on, I was hooked. I made it a point to try pimento cheese whenever I had the opportunity. Now, I have developed my own recipe. Even the discerning native North Carolina folks enjoy it. Try it on burgers, sandwiches, baked potatoes and as a spread on crackers or veggies.
Tomato pie goes turbo with a layer of this cheese spread. Again, Heaven.

BARB'S PIMENTO CHEESE SPREAD

Ingredients:
8 Ounces Cream Cheese (Softened)
1 C Real Mayonnaise
½ t Sea Salt
¼ 1 Cayenne Pepper
1 t Onion Powder
½ t Garlic Powder
½ lb. Sharp White Cheddar (Finely Shredded)
4 Ounce Jar Pimentos (Finely Chopped)

Directions: In a large bowl, use a wooden spoon to combine cream cheese and mayonnaise until smooth. Mix in dry spices. Add cheddar and pimentos and mix well. Chill in the fridge for two hours for the flavors to blend. Yield: 3 ½ Cups.

"One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well."

Virginia Woolf, 1929

MARCH 2024 MMM Activities Calendar

Fri. Mar. 1: TGIF - Mitchell's Fish Market
2975 Preyde Blvd, Lansing, in the Eastwood Towne Center. Justly famous for seafood.

Fri. Mar. 8: TGIF - Outback Steakhouse
617 N Canal Rd, Lansing. Australian-style steak, chicken, and shrimp on the barbie!

Fri. Mar. 15: TGIF - Coral Gables
2838 E Grand River, East Lansing, just east of Hagadorn Rd. An MMM favorite for years! Serves Greek foods, steaks, seafood, pasta, salads, sandwiches, pizza and more.

Fri. Mar. 22: TGIF - City Limits Sports Bar
801 Cedar St, Mason. Good American fare like pizza and hamburgers, plus great service.

Fri. Mar. 29: TGIF - Delhi Cafe
4625 Willoughby Rd, Holt, between Cedar St and Aurelius Rd. A Mensa favorite with good Greek and American food.

TGIFs are on Fridays. We meet at about **6 PM** and order soon after 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