JANUARY 2022

Head-Line

The Newsletter of Mid-Michigan Mensa Number 573



HEAD-LINE NO. 573 JANUARY 2022
MID-MICHIGAN MENSA

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EDITOR'S COLUMN:

FROM MY BRAIN TO YOURS

by Sharon Plavnick

Happy new year, one and all. This is the traditional time to look ahead and set some goals. I have exactly three that I am focused on, but I will spare you all the pithy details. I'll just sum it up to say that they deal with staying healthy in all ways: physically, mentally, and emotionally. No easy task in today's tumultuous world.

As I write this, I am in my winter home in Venice, Florida. I am fortunate to be able to do this, and the daily freedom to go for walks and bike rides without being concerned about icy roads and trails is liberating.

What about each of you? Anyone have some goals or resolutions they care to share? Maybe making them public will help with accountability. Send them my way and I'll be glad to help.

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 January 2022

by Robert Henderson, Loc Sec

Happy New Year! I wish I had as much hope now for 2022 as I had for 2021 a year ago. Back then we had survived a year of COVID-19, developed safe and effective vaccines, elected a pro-vaccine president, and had high hopes that herd immunity was within reach. In the year since then we have seen those hopes disappear without a trace. How could we have been so wrong?

A look at recent hospital data shows clearly that the COVID pandemic is still with us, at least among the unvaccinated. For some reason, many among us still believe the misinformation disseminated on social media about vaccine safety, effectiveness, and even the motives of the public health experts urging us to mask up and get inoculated. Stories about harm from vaccines, mind-control plots, and even injectable microchips are invented or exaggerated and fed to a credulous public, who then share them so widely on social media that it becomes difficult to know who or what to believe. (cont on next page)

I'm not going to speculate as to whose purposes are being served by spreading those stories, but feel free to judge for yourself after I tell you about some tools that intelligent people can rely upon to meet their own personal hierarchy of needs. I will assume that long life and good health are ranked highly in your own hierarchy, if only because your other needs won't matter much to you if you are dead or in poor health.

First, it is a truism that we learn best from our own mistakes, which often leave mental or physical scars as reminders. Let me suggest that we can learn a lot more (while avoiding scars and other risks) by learning from the mistakes made by others! Rather than ask all of our friends to share their most embarrassing mistakes with us, we can just read books detailing many more such mistakes from the biography section of a nearby public library! Such hard-won knowledge is further distilled in other books describing pearls of wisdom that have been accumulated over the centuries, often at considerable risk to those who first found them. Even good fiction can help us to see inside the minds of others and increase our empathy towards them, an especially worthwhile goal when certain "others" are being painted as our enemies by divisive politicians.

Next, a familiarity with history gives intelligent people the context needed to raise red flags when someone makes a claim that contradicts knowledge gleaned from prior experience. For example, the history of science and medicine is full of researchers hoping to make others' lives better rather than use their new knowledge for personal gain. Scientists publish their results and invite others to duplicate them. Results that cannot be duplicated are not accepted by their fellow scientists, with the result that scientific knowledge is probably the most reliable kind that we have.

Finally, a knowledge of human nature warns us to be cautious in accepting self-serving claims from unscrupulous people who are willing to use their public platforms for self-serving ends. Politicians in particular are apt to view everything in the light of political self-interest despite the fact that we elected them to serve us, the public. The slow initial national response to COVID-19 had more to do with the voters' preferences in the hardest-hit states rather than with how best to stop the spread of the virus, as described by attendees at high-level national task force meetings. Based on COVID's current victims, that decision was as ill-advised as shooting oneself in the foot. Perhaps some mask and/or vaccine "skeptics" will think again when they witness first-hand the dire effects of unwise decisions based on such beliefs on their (cont)

like-thinking friends and family members. Otherwise, they may have to learn their lesson the hard way, with disease, disability or even death as their reward for exercising their right to believe in whatever "facts" they like.

PUZZLES

submitted by Bob Henderson

January Math Puzzle

Alice and Bob play table tennis, with Bob's probability of winning any given point being 30%. In each match, they play until one of them reaches a score of 21 points and is declared the winner. What (approximately) is the average number of points that they play per match?

Bob's Trivia Quiz

How many of these can you guess without checking the answers? See if you can get them all right!

1) Who invented dynamite?
2) Who founded the Church of Christ, Scientist?
3) What movie won the first Oscar for Best Picture?
4) Who wrote "The Leather-Stocking Tales" (5 novels featuring Natty Bumppo)?
5) Who wrote The Grand Canyon Suite?
6) Who wrote "Mary Poppins?"
7) What is a secret society of Chinese gangsters called?
8) Who did Diana Rigg play in "The Avengers?"
9) Who starred in "The Old Man and the Sea" and "Father of the Bride?"
10) Who was Morgan le Fay's brother in legend?

See answers on page 7

JANUARY 2022 MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Kathy Teshich, Membership Chair
111 members

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Michael Knowlton	Jan 13	Brinton Butler	Jan 23
Kathy Teshich	Jan 15	Maurya Johnston	Jan 25
Matthew McNaughton	Jan 16	Eleanor Keating	Jan 29
Roy Saper	Jan 18	Eric Horner	Jan 30
Clyde Creque	Jan 22		

JANUARY MENSAVERSARIES

David Blandford	1 yr	David Macak	13 yrs
Graham Goble	1 yr	Mark Weiss	14 yrs
Pooja Mudigonda	1 yr	Joseph Werner	20 yrs
Matthew Artuso	4 yrs	Thomas Korkoske	36 yrs
Zachary Brennan	4 yrs	Tom Pascalenos	42 yrs
Joy Rimpau	6 yrs	Kevin Smart	47 yrs
Dale Arnold	12 yrs		

RIP JOHN GARRISON

Those of us who knew John have watched in horror as the events of the last few months played out. John's unfortunate fall ultimately did lead to his death, on November 30. This is such a sadness for his family, and our hearts are heavy for them. It's a great loss to our Mensa group as well.

The Haunting of Henderson House - A True Story

by Bob Henderson

Some of my work experience helped when we recently started to hear spooky sounds all through the house. . .

It started with the first cold blasts of winter, a sound between a squeal and a moan that seemed to come from nowhere and everywhere. It would come and go at random times, never lasting long enough for us to follow it to its source. It would awaken us in the middle of the night and annoy us frequently during the day. It especially peeved me that I, an engineer with work experience in identifying the sources of unwanted noises, was finding it so difficult to pin this one down.

When my wife started joking about calling in an exorcist, I knew it was time to get serious about finding and fixing whatever was causing the infernal caterwauling. At first, I thought it might be coming from outside our house, but no matter which open window I listened from, there was no such noise out there. Whatever was making the sepulchral sound had to be somewhere inside the house with us, sharing our living space!

A breakthrough finally came when we noted that the mystery moaning often occurred just before the furnace started blowing warm air upstairs. Could the strange sound come from the furnace and be carried upstairs by our hot air ducts? My wife suggested that oiling the furnace fan might help, but the awful noise typically started and stopped just BEFORE the furnace fan started blowing.

I decided to set a trap for the pesky poltergeist responsible for our auditory torture. When I went downstairs to ride my stationary bicycle, I also kept my ear peeled for the peculiar sound. As soon as it began, I walked over to the furnace. The fan had not yet started blowing, but the humidifier drum was already turning in anticipation of the warm blast of air that would carry its moisture throughout the house. The familiar squeaky moan seemed to be coming from the humidifier! (cont on next page)

Hoping that a closer look might help, I pulled the cover off the humidifier and looked inside. One end of the drum supporting the damp sponge had pulled away from it and was touching the inside of the tray of water below. The squeaky stridulation finally stopped when I pushed the errant end away from that edge of the tray: mystery solved! However, the spooky sound returned a few hours later once the end of the drum had again slipped partway out of the damp sponge.

As it turned out, after the humidifier's last cleaning the ends of the drum had been reversed: instead of hot air blowing into the open end of the drum, it was blowing uselessly against the closed end (no wonder my wife had complained of low humidity in the house)! After they were swapped back, the drum ends stopped pulling apart, they both had clearance to the edge of the water pan, and the humidity in the house improved markedly. Getting rid of our annoying moan was just a happy side effect of reassembling the humidifier drum to perform its job properly!

FOR CROSSWORD FANS

MMM member Doug McCall thought some readers would be interested to read this. Thanks, Doug!

From LA Times Daily Crossword by Joe Eaney, Dec 1, 2021

Across
31. 34-Across has one of them (6 letters)

Discussion:
The clue for 34 across is: Historic ship (4 letters). The answer to 34 across is NINA.
For 31 across, I was looking for something nautical that the Niña had only one of, like MASTS (too short), or RUDDER (singular), or DINGYS (improper spelling). When I got to the end, I still had one letter missing (_ILDES) and still could not get it. When I got the answer the next day, I accepted it and acknowledged that I was looking in the wrong place, which is the whole point of a good crossword puzzle clue.
(answer on next page)

Answer: **TILDES**
The tilde is the squiggle above the N, which in Spanish is a directive to pronounce the N as NY, as in NINYA. NIÑA has one tilde. In crosswords we write NIÑA without the tilde, which just makes it more obscure.

PUZZLE ANSWERS:

Math Puzzle Answer:

Consider the expected results if Alice and Bob play 10 points of table tennis, or 20 points, or 30 points. Since Bob's probability of winning any given point is only 30%, Alice can expect to win 70% of the points, i.e. 7 out of 10 points, 14 out of 20 points, or 21 out of 30 points. Of course, Alice wins the match when she reaches 21 points, so we can expect Bob to average about 9 points per match and the total number of points to average about 30 per match.

Trivia Quiz Answers

1) Alfred Nobel invented dynamite.
2) Mary Baker Eddy founded Christian Science.
3) "Wings" won the first Oscar for Best Picture.
4) James Fenimore Cooper wrote "The Leather-Stocking Tales."
5) Ferde Grofé wrote The Grand Canyon Suite.
6) Pamela Travers wrote "Mary Poppins."
7) A "tong" is a secret society of Chinese gangsters.
8) Diana Rigg played Emma Peel in "The Avengers."
9) Spencer Tracy starred in "The Old Man and the Sea" and "Father of the Bride."
10) King Arthur was Morgan le Fay's brother.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT
By Barb Ford

CARAWAY RYE BREAD

Ingredients:
14 Ounces Warm Water
2 T Whole Caraway Seeds (Soaked for 30 minutes in the water)
1¼ t Instant Yeast
1½ t Sea Salt
2 T Bragg's Apple Cider Vinegar
1 T Extra Virgin Olive Oil
2½ Cups Bread Flour (All-Purpose is fine)
1 Cup Dark Rye Flour

Directions:
Heat large glass mixing bowl, and add the first 6 ingredients. Gently stir to combine. Add flour to the edge of the bowl. Stir with spoon handle. Scrape bowl to bring dough into a ball. Cover with plastic wrap. Proof in warm place (75 to 85 degrees) for 90 minutes. Stir to de-gas, scrape bowl, dust with flour, turn dough into greased 8.5"x4.5" or 9"x5" bread pan, cover with a tea towel. Proof for 30 minutes. Attach another bread pan on top with clips (Poor Man's Dutch Oven: see Steve's videos). Pre heat oven to 400 degrees. Bake 40 minutes with top on, then another 3-15 minutes with top off to crisp the crust. Remove bread from pan and cool on elevated wire rack. When the loaf is completely cooled, place it uncovered in the refrigerator for at least 3 hours. After that, it can be easily sliced into very thin slices. This amazing dense and hearty bread turns out well every time and is delicious. Try it toasted. With butter. Lots of butter.

"It's a smell that arises from something as basic as wheat, as resourceful as the human hand and as powerful as fire."

Molly O'Neill

TURBO NO KNEAD BREAD nokneadbreadcentral.com YouTube Channel: ArtisanBreadWithSteve

JANUARY 2022 CALENDAR

FRIDAY JAN 7: TGIF: CORAL GABLES

2838 E Grand River, East Lansing, just east of Hagadorn Road. One of the best restaurants in East Lansing and a favorite of Mid-Michigan Mensa. Serves Greek food, steaks, seafood, pasta, salads, sandwiches and pizza. Wear a mask whenever you are not seated.

FRIDAY JAN 14: TGIF: SOUP SPOON CAFE

1419 E Michigan Ave, Lansing. Wide menu selection, including vegan choices, and, of course, soup. Wear a mask whenever you are not seated.

FRIDAY JAN 21: TGIF: P. F. CHANG's CHINA BISTRO

In Eastwood Towne Center, 2425 Lake Lansing Rd, Lansing. Upscale Chinese restaurant featuring Asian-inspired dishes made fresh every day. Wear a mask whenever you are not seated.

FRIDAY JAN 28: TGIF: CANCUN MEXICAN GRILL

1754 Central Park Dr, Meridian Township. Good Mexican food and great margaritas. 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