MAY 2022

Head-Line

The Newsletter of Mid-Michigan Mensa Number 577



HEAD-LINE NO. 577 MAY 2022
MID-MICHIGAN MENSA

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EDITOR'S COLUMN:

FROM MY BRAIN TO YOURS

by Sharon Plavnick

Home sweet home! For sure it feels sweet. Comfortable like an old shoe. Where I belong. Don't get me wrong…I'm very grateful for the wherewithal to be able to escape a Michigan winter. I love that I can do it in a location (Venice, FL) that is so pleasant and comfortable. But truly, after two months or so, I'm itchy to go home. I want my own bed, my own TV setup, my own kitchen utensils, my own bathtub and shower head, my own backyard birds. My own real life (even the still somewhat surreal pandemic life). My own neighborhood and my friends in real time rather than zoom time.

I need to be away from winter for at least 3 months…preferably 4…in order to be able to get outside and walk and bike ride daily. But I don't want to be away from home for more than 2 months maximum. I can't see any way to mesh these contradictory needs. It's a work-in-progress, and definitely a first-world quandary.

By the way, note that this month's issue is 11 pages instead of 8. Thanks to our additional contributors this month, Gail Wolfe and Karen Petersmarck. Thanks to Doug McCall for taking extra time to help me reduce his crossword contribution to a manageable size for this issue. Thanks to Bob Henderson for a comprehensive book review, and a poem, in addition to his normal contributions. However, we were still short a page of content to get to 12 pages in the print version. Keep it coming, dear peeps. MMM values your words!

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 MAY 2022

by Robert Henderson, Loc Sec

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. . ." seems even more appropriate today than when Charles Dickens wrote it to begin "A Tale of Two Cities." On the one hand, we have amazingly affordable personal technology with powers unheard of just a few years ago, we can visit the far corners of the world in person within a few hours (or virtually in just a few minutes), and we have medicines to cure almost every disease that once killed our ancestors. On the other hand, war, poverty and pestilence are still with us, putting more people at risk than ever due to exponential population growth. It is my belief that awareness of and education about all the issues facing us as a species is the only way that we can successfully minimize those risks. An informed electorate can vote for the representatives that best address their concerns or educate those already in office, assuming that vested interests haven't already corrupted them with "campaign donations." As Winston Churchill is supposed to have quipped, "Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others."

This observation came to mind as I watched the "Rise of the Nazis" mini-series on PBS. Despite the horrific carnage of the Second World War, the mini-series has a hopeful message: history teaches us that autocrats trust their own "gut hunches" and surround themselves with lieutenants who echo that trust for their own advancement. The autocrats' firmly-held delusions rule out consideration of inconvenient facts that might prevent them from making such ruinous decisions as Hitler's to attack Russia. We can hope that Putin's decision to attack the Ukraine was similarly delusional and will prove just as ruinous for him.

You can rest assured that Mid-Michigan Mensa's Steering Committee is neither autocratic, nor has it been corrupted by special interest money! We are volunteers doing our best to serve the group's members, not megalomaniacs or politicians with flexible morals and expensive campaigns. For your part, you can help our Steering Committee to do a better job by sharing your thoughts about Mensa in general and MMM in particular in our monthly business meetings (listed in the Activities Calendar) or by just calling any of the group's officers listed inside the front cover of this magazine. We look forward to hearing from you!

BOOK REVIEW from Bob Henderson

"Once There Was a War" by John Steinbeck

In addition to writing some of the best American novels ever, John Steinbeck was a war correspondent for several American newspapers reporting from the Eastern Theater of Operations during the Second World War. In June and July of 1943, he dispatched short vignettes from an American troop ship on its way to England, an airfield hosting American bombers, a London neighborhood after the Blitz, Dover under sporadic artillery bombardment from across the Channel, a minesweeper base, and a coastal anti-aircraft battery before he was reassigned to North Africa. He vividly depicts American and British men and women with diverse backgrounds and personalities working together to aid in the war effort as only a great novelist could.

Steinbeck had a running battle with the military censors, who made sure that people and place names were removed so as to avoid tipping off enemy spies about current Allied troop movements. Like many other correspondents, he learned to self-censor his reports. Even when he collected them almost twenty years later, he was unable to remember many of the censored details. Steinbeck had a related explanation as to why the troops themselves had so much difficulty later in talking about their war experiences: their minds had protected them from reliving the trauma of war by purging it from their memories.

The vignettes in the second part of the book describe American troops in North Africa as they prepare for the invasion of Italy and go ashore under fire. Steinbeck is in the thick of the action here and writes with more urgency. He describes the untried young soldiers as worrying about one thing even more than Axis bullets: they feared that when they actually came under fire, they would panic and run the other way. Once they had launched the invasion and actually performed the work that they had trained so hard for, they felt a huge sense of relief: never again would they fear that particular unknown.

Some of these vignettes could best be described as comic relief. Everywhere they went, the American troops collected more souvenirs than they could possibly take home. One soldier was so sure that his folks would love an 80-pound bedroom mirror with an ornately decorated frame that he marched with it under fire until he found a bedroom to hang it in. He pounded a nail in the wall, hung his mirror on it, and stepped back. Of course, it was too heavy, the nail pulled out, and the mirror

shattered into a thousand pieces! The soldier consoled himself by deciding that it wouldn't have matched the decor back at home.

The final vignette describes a group of 40 American paratroopers sent to take a German radar station manned by 87 German officers and 250 Italian carabinieri. The Italians were only too happy to turn in their weapons to the Americans, but the Germans retreated to their fortified station on the highest point of the island. It took a lot of luck (and a good acting job by the young officer sent to demand their surrender) to convince them that they were surrounded by superior forces so that they could surrender with their honor still intact. Only after the Germans were safely locked in the local jail did they discover their mistake, but by then it was too late!

I would recommend this book to anyone who appreciates good writing, the kind that makes history come alive by vividly describing how ordinary people can accomplish extraordinary feats by working together to overcome a truly evil foe.

BOB'S WORD PUZZLE FOR MAY:

Make the longest word you can using only the given letters in each line bellow. Score one point for each letter used. Can you score over 100 points?

1) AADKRWW
2) AABCELN
3) HIOPRSW
4) ABCDEEL
5) EFGHIRT
6) AEEGLNR
7) ABELLOV
8) ACEILMR
9) ENORSUV
10) AENPTRR
11) INORSUU
12) AENRSTV
13) EFIRRTY
14) AIORSUV
15) AABCELP

See answers on page 8.

Mid-Michigan Mensa Treasurer's Report

Quarter Ending March 31, 2022

STARTING BALANCE	$7,435.32
INCOME	$287.81
AML National Subsidy Dec. 2021	95.35
AML National Subsidy Jan. 2022	95.35
AML National Subsidy Feb. 2022	97.05
Savings interest	0.06
EXPENDITURES	$164.70
Food for Winter Party	27.46
Gift card for Ellie G.	50.00
Head-Line:	
Postage - Jan.	$21.87
Postage - Feb.	21.87
Postage - Mar.	21.78
Postage - Apr.	21.72
ACCOUNT BALANCES	
5/3 Checking	$5,530.33
5/3 Savings	1,998.32
USPS Periodical Postage Account	29.78
ENDING BALANCE	$7,558.43

WHAT ARE YOU READING? WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?

From Gail Wolfe: It has been two months since Meat Loaf's death. As many of you know, I have been a fan of his, having been to 9 of his concerts and having hundreds of his songs in my phone. I'm now reading his autobiography, *To Hell and Back*, and listening to his music daily.

What celebrity loss has meant a lot to any of you?

MAY 2022 MEMBERSHIP MATTERS
Kathy Teshich, Membership Chair
100 members

MAY BIRTHDAYS

Linda Harrison	May 9
Robert Henderson	May 16
Graham Goble	May 19
Lloyd Conway	May 20
Michael Haven	May 20
Richard Shaffer	May 21
Eric Roath	May 23
Joan Forgrave	May 26

MAY MENSAVERSARIES

Jeffery Ford	1 yr
Kerry Haynor	3 yrs
Michael Haven	3 yrs
Igor Guro	29 yrs
Rona Landfield	33 yrs

Clever Crossword Clue Corner by Doug McCall

These clues seemed clever to me because they got me thinking in the wrong direction, yet their answers make sense in our conversational language. Most don't rely on obscure facts, they just require a little out-of- the-box thinking. Instead of just the length of the answer, you get all of the answers, but alphabetical. Match them up with the clues. This will give you the opportunity to enjoy the creativity of the crossword puzzle creators without spending all the time it takes to solve these puzzles.

If you get stuck, number the answers and use the decoder.

Clues:
1) Lamp, e.g.; light, only sometimes
2) Sub contractor?
3) Bond holding?
4) Half of a mammal?
5) S.O.S. alternative
6) It includes the study of roots
7) Some four legged toys, informally
8) Feline line
9) Crib sheet user
10) Class-conscious group?
11) Word with print or note
12) Places for hoops, maybe
13) Earth's volume?
14) Two digit sign
15) What a siren does
16) Grand Canyon traveler
17) Hound
18) Saw from behind?
19) Song one can’t perform?
20) Ones who see what your mean
21) Barn rooster
22) Agent pursuing a dealer
23) A or E, but not I, O, or U
24) Fiddlers followers
25) Key ending words

26) Modern navigation aids
27) Ain't like it oughta be?
28) Group that follows a start
29) Raise a paddle, perhaps
30) Frank's cousin
31) Targets for towers
32) Assists, e.g.
33) Couldn't stand anymore?
34) Revolution constant
35) Character building aid?
36) Norther frontiers?
37) Remote area known for its middle?
38) Guy found running through the alphabet?

Answers:
ARENT ENS POSSE ARITHMETIC FOOT PTA
ATLAS LIPREADERS REPOS AXIS MARTINI SAT
BABE MEOW SERIF BID MICE STAT
BRAT NAG STU BRILLO NARC TEMPTS COLORADORIVER NOTE THEBRAVE
DELI NOUN THREE DUET NOWHERE VEE EARS OWL WAS EMS POMS

Decoder:

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Q:  1,  2,  3,  4,  5,  6,  7,  8,  9, 10,
A: 23, 10, 17, 13,  8,  2, 26, 18,  5, 28,
Q: 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20
A: 15, 12,  3, 37, 34,  9, 20, 38, 11, 16
Q: 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30,
A: 25, 21, 22, 36, 35, 19,  1, 27,  6,  7,
Q: 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38.
A: 29, 32, 30,  4, 31, 14, 24, 33
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Answers to Word Puzzles:

1) AADKRWW - AWKWARD
2) AABCELN - BALANCE
3) HIOPRSW - WORSHIP
4) ABCDEEL - DEBACLE
5) EFGHIRT - FREIGHT
6) AEEGLNR - GENERAL
7) ABELLOV - LOVABLE
8) ACEILMR - MIRACLE
9) ENORSUV - NERVOUS
10) AENPTRR - PARTNER
11) INORSUU - RUINOUS
12) AENRSTV - SERVANT
13) EFIRRTY - TERRIFY
14) AIORSUV - VARIOUS
15) AABCELP - CAPABLE

The Mountain and the Squirrel

By Ralph Waldo Emerson
Contributed by Bob Henderson

The mountain and the squirrel
Had a quarrel,
And the former called the latter
"Little prig."
Bun replied,
"You are doubtless very big;
But all sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together
To make up a year
And a sphere.
And I think it no disgrace
To occupy my place.
If I'm not so large as you,
You are not so small as I,
And not half so spry:
I'll not deny you make
A very pretty squirrel track.
Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;
If I cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can you crack a nut."

A Time I Got in Trouble

Karen Petersmarck

It was the Fall of 1965. To escape life under the fluorescent lights of McDonel Hall Dormitory, Gerry Snyder and I were taking a stroll in Kensington Park.

After a while, we stopped to rest on the shore of a large pond. Nobody was in sight, so a little kissing ensued. THAT IS NOT WHEN I GOT IN TROUBLE.

After another while, we lay back in the soft grass and a little hugging ensued. THAT IS NOT WHEN I GOT IN TROUBLE. After another while, Gerry unexpectedly slipped his hand into my bright red Bermuda shorts. THAT IS NOT WHEN I GOT IN TROUBLE.

I felt a little embarrassed, but not threatened. He clearly was trying to do something nice for me. I didn't really appreciate his efforts, but I had read a book which said that men liked it if their partners enjoyed themselves. So I was trying to pretend that I was enjoying myself, not knowing exactly what that would sound like. But I was thinking, "When will this be over?"

All of a sudden, a loud, stern male voice called out "How old is the young lady?" THAT IS NOT WHEN I GOT IN TROUBLE. We both froze. Gerry retracted his fumbling fingers. We sat up to face the music. The source of the loud, stern voice was wearing a park ranger uniform. That was not good, but THAT WAS NOT WHEN I GOT IN TROUBLE.

WHEN I GOT IN TROUBLE was when I noticed that that particular park ranger had been playing pinochle at my family's kitchen table every week for years. He was my father's best friend. The trouble was not as bad as it might have been. He immediately pretended that he did not know who I was, and I immediately pretended right back that I did not know who he was. And that fiction was maintained until the day he died. God rest his blessed soul.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT
By Barb Ford

The month of May has long been celebrated by many cultures around the world. Our ancient Celtic ancestors paid homage to the earth and the spirits that awakened her in the spring. My own Green Man celebrates his birthday on the 23rd of May. At the beginning of May, the Celts celebrated Beltane, which means "bright fire." The Druids constructed great bonfires on the hills, and herds of cattle were driven between the fires. This was believed to provide protection and fertility to the herds in the coming year. Farmers also made a practice of leaping over the bonfires to ensure a plentiful harvest. Among the many other activities that centered around Beltane was always a great feast. Oat cakes, or bannocks were a traditional favorite food prepared for these feasts. I have my own version of oat cakes that are very different from those made by our ancestors. They are actually more like scones than the dense oat cakes in the traditional recipes. Somehow, I think the Celts of long ago would have enjoyed my oat cakes just as well. (Maybe even better!) I hope you do too

Lady Barbara's Oat Cakes

3¼ Cups all purpose flour (uncooked)	1¼ Cups oatmeal
1/3 Cup Splenda	1/3 Cup sugar
½ teaspoon salt	¾ teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon baking powder	2 sticks cold butter
1 Cup raisins (Craisins work, too)	1 Cup buttermilk

Combine all dry ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Cut in the butter until the dough looks crumbly. Stir in the raisins or other dried fruit. Add the buttermilk and **gently** stir to bring dough together. Do not over-work the dough. It will look like there is not enough liquid. Do not add more! Turn the dough out on a lightly floured surface, and press it together to form a square about 1½ inches thick. Cut the cakes into approximately 2 inch pieces. Press the corners in and place the cakes on lightly floured baking sheets about 2 inches apart. Brush the tops with a little buttermilk and sprinkle sugar over them. Bake at 375 degrees for 15-20 minutes. The cakes should be a light golden brown.

MAY 2022 CALENDAR

FRIDAY MAY 6: TGIF - OLGA'S KITCHEN

354 Frandor Ave. in the Frandor Mall, East Lansing. Soups, salads, and gyro sandwiches made with Olga's famous bread.

FRIDAY MAY 13: TGIF - MITCHELL'S FISH MARKET

2975 Preyde Blvd, Lansing, in the Eastwood Towne Center. Famous for seafood. We will have a private room in back.

FRIDAY MAY 20: TGIF - DELHI CAFE

4625 Willoughby Rd, Holt, between Cedar St and Aurelius Rd. A Mensa favorite with good Greek and American foods.

Steering Committee Meeting: to follow dinner.

FRIDAY MAY 27: TGIF - CANCUN MEXICAN GRILL

1754 Central Park Dr, Okemos, near Wal*Mart. Good Mexican food and great margaritas

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