



Sunflower
SEEDS



**HAPPY
NEW
YEAR**

**The monthly publication of
the Sunflower chapter of
American Mensa, Wichita, Kansas**

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January Meetings

Pig Out Saturday, January 7, 12:45 p.m. We will meet at the **Delano Barbeque Company** at 710 W. Douglas. Their phone is 260-4950, and their menu can be found on the web. This is definitely a meat place with things like barbequed chicken, beef and pulled pork. However there are items for vegies also.

Program Meeting Saturday, January 14, 2:00 p.m. downstairs, at **Watermark Books**, 4701 E. Douglas Ave, at Oliver St.

Bill has uncovered another good-looking woman to speak to us. If we are lucky, she will be as good as last month's speaker. Suzanna Matthews specializes in date coaching and match making and will speak on the *Secrets of Making a Fantastic First Impression*. This could serve you well in finding a job, making a date, or even getting along with your grandchildren. Suzanna has a diverse background with a BS from Bethel and an MS from WSU. In addition to her formal education she has studied at the Deepak Chopra Center and with the famous guru, Tony Robbins.



Board Meeting There will be a board meeting immediately after the Program Meeting on the 14th to appoint a Program Chair, Recruitment and Testing Chair and a Publications Officer. We may also discuss an idea which has been put forward for group advertising.

Food for Thought Saturday, January 21, 11:00 a.m., downstairs at **Watermark Books**, 4701 E. Douglas Ave, at Oliver Street. This is the same location as our program meeting. Come and bring a friend. Food is available.

Banter and Books Saturday, January 28, 7:00 p.m., **Barnes and Noble Bookstore** Café at 1920 N. Rock. After a month off, we are back. This is a congenial atmosphere, as always. We would like to see you in this new year, and hear what you have to say about whatever interests you.



CHRISTMAS PARTY 2016



Photography by Larry Paarmann

December Program Meeting.

Julie spoke well on how to increase your awareness in social situations, such as by reading body language. She had a number of exercises that were enlightening and fun.



Hi
Guys

Greg Kontz
Vice Chair
Heartland Region 7

We had a board meeting December 10 in New Orleans. Susan and I were delayed getting out of Dickinson, ND. The de-icer solution they use on the plane was only rated to -25 degrees – it was -26. We had to wait for it to warm up to -25.



Anyway, here are the board meeting outcomes:

- International Board nominations were approved.
- We had various presentations and reports given to us, and passed a motion to make a yearly calendar that shows due dates for future reports, requests, etc. All agenda items must state their relationship to the Strategic Plan.
- Local Group websites are now officially permitted.
- If passed again in our April meeting, dues will increase from \$70 to \$79 effective July 1, 2017. That increase matches the inflation from 2011 (date of last increase) till now.
- New rule. If you run for a national office, you must get 100 signatures either electronically or in writing. I intend to run again. You can access the petitions by going to the National website and: CONNECT > BOARD CONTACTS > ELECTIONS > 2017 BOARD ELECTIONS > SIGN CANDIDATE PETITIONS. There you can see who is running, and, if you are so inclined (and a Region 7 member), you can sign my petition. The link below will get you there quicker (you'll have to sign in).
us.mensa.org/petition?id=123
- Our next Board meeting is in Hollywood, Florida on April 1.

Later, Greg Kontz grik@fisherind.com 701-290-0743

SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

The committee in charge of choosing the winner of our essay-writing contest has made their selection. It was a very difficult task for the Cole



From left:: Bill Barnett, Larry Paarmann. Charles Heminway

Carland Scholarship essay contest graders to determine a winner, as all entries were excellent.

Contestants were given a variety of subjects to choose from. The winner is Charles Heminway for his essay on *Evaluating Fantasy Literature*.

Charles is a resident of Kingman, KS, and is a senior in the Insight School of Kansas.

As a consolation prize, the board has voted to offer free Mensa membership testing for all the essay contestants.

Charles' essay is below, slightly condensed.

Evaluating Fantasy Literature.

Among the most popular works in history are those of the genre “fantasy.” Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, Doyle’s *Conan the Barbarian*, Jordan’s *Wheel of Time* series. These and so many more have captured the hearts and minds of people worldwide in a manner previously only attributed to the likes of Aristotle and Confucius. Entire cults have been founded to worship the Aedra of the Elder Scrolls, or to discover real magical beasts. But what about this genre so appeals to people? Especially those of cultures who do not believe in the ideals of honor and chivalry so often expressed?

One answer lies in that which appeals about all fiction—the ability it lends us to get away from one’s woes, if only for a while. There is more emotional stress in the world than ever before. Social media, the difficulty of getting a job or accepted into a college, even dating and making friends have become more of a hassle than ever

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before in history. Our leaders scream at one another on national television, and in a world where men have walked on the moon, bigotry is so terrible that entire governments fund terrorists and Nazis. The need to relax is highest now even more than when people had to work themselves to the bones just to scrape by. And a method of relaxation that helps one forget it all? Invaluable to say the very least.

Then why are other forms of fiction not as successful as fantasy? We must explore a little further.

Often, the heroes are normal people. This is often characteristic of fantasy: the protagonist is a normal person who beats the odds and saves the day. I think this is, deep in our hearts, what appeals to us about fantasy. We all want to be something more, to be the hero. It reminds us that everyone has their own strengths and weaknesses. Instead of being ashamed of being smart instead of strong, or vice versa, fantasy reminds us all how amazing we already are. It teaches us how to be strong in the face of evil, and to stand up for what's right. A very strong sentiment—and one that strikes a chord. Did we not fight and die for what we believed in? Have we not reached to the stars, and found them? The human race has achieved so much, and there is still so much we need to—and can—accomplish. In its own subtle way, fantasy reminds us of this—and in doing so, becomes just as powerful as such great works as Jefferson's famous *Declaration of Independence* or Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

Stories have always inspired us. From novels to video games, poetry to plays, comic books to movies, authors have more methods than ever before to make a point. Among all these methods, those belonging to the genre of fantasy make a point most poignant.

These remind us of what it means to be a hero—and how anyone can be one. By telling tales of grandeur, authors such as Burroughs subtly allude to our real world achievements. In doing so, they inspire us to go out and make something of ourselves. To be the best person we can be. Most importantly, fantasy reminds us that anyone can do anything, and to stand up for what's right. That is why we love fantasy.

Charles Heminway
Scholarship winner



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Google “Wichita Mensa,” to find our web page, or go to:

<http://www.kansassunflower.us.mensa.org>

We also have a Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/773587949355460>

NAMING CONTEST

There is a contest to name Mensa's 2018 AG that will be held in Indianapolis. The end of the contest is Feb. 28, 2017. The winner will receive a free registration to the AG and an AG T-shirt.

Indian-no-place and *Going in Circles* come to mind but are not recommended.

Send your ideas to Teresa Gregory at ag18tg@yahoo.com by Feb. 28, 2017. If there are duplicates, the first one received wins.



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