

SUNFLOWER SEEDS



December 2019, Volume – 47, Issue # 12

Kansas Sunflower Mensa Newsletter



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Sunflower Seeds is the Official Publication of the Wichita Kansas Sunflower Mensa #670, published twelve times a year. ISDN applied for. The subscription fee of \$5.00 is included in annual dues paid to Wichita Sunflower Mensa and American Mensa, Ltd.; other subscriptions are \$18.00 per year.

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LocSec Korner **By: Larry D. Paarmann**

As can be seen in previous issues of the SEEDS, there are interesting and challenging articles to read. Isn't that what Mensa is about, stimulating our thinking and the exchange of ideas? Articles can be original ideas of your own, a report of something you found interesting, a response to an earlier article in the SEEDS, etc. We could also have interviews, recipes, local sights to be seen, etc. Please consider submitting an article to the SEEDS Editor, Klaus.

We are also about various activities. In November our Pig Out location was Metro Bistro in Andover. This was the first time that I had been there, and I enjoyed it very much. It claims to be a Cuban/American/Italian restaurant. Now that's an interesting combination. There must be a story behind it. I had the Positano Linguine with chicken and shrimp. The dish is likely named after the village of Positano, Italy, a resort on the western coast a little south of Naples. It was very good. I would like to have more! See the picture of Positano Linguine. Metro Bistro has wine, with a selection of good beers, and a very interesting menu.

The November Program Meeting featured Ernestine Williams Krehbiel, who is a member of the Wichita Board of Education. She spoke on public education and gifted education. This was a good opportunity to learn more about our public schools.



The December Pig Out will be at The Kitchen restaurant located downtown Wichita at Union Station on Douglas, in the

historic Baggage Claim Building. See the picture. They say that the cuisine is "New American." I'm not quite sure what "New American" cuisine is, but the food is supposed to be very good (I've never been there.)

In place of our usual Program Meeting, we will, as is our tradition, have a Christmas Party instead. As last year, the party will be at Klaus Trenary's home, and it will start an hour earlier than our program meetings, at 1:00 PM. Food will be provided (Diane Powell will be taking

care of that), but feel free to bring something with you if you like.

Finally, there are quite a few activities that need people to volunteer to oversee. We have most everything covered, except for the ongoing need for a Proctor, and Recruitment and Testing Chair. But as you can see, some of us have multiple responsibilities. We would like to spread it around some. So, if you are so inclined to volunteer for a position, please let me know.

THE FAR SIDE

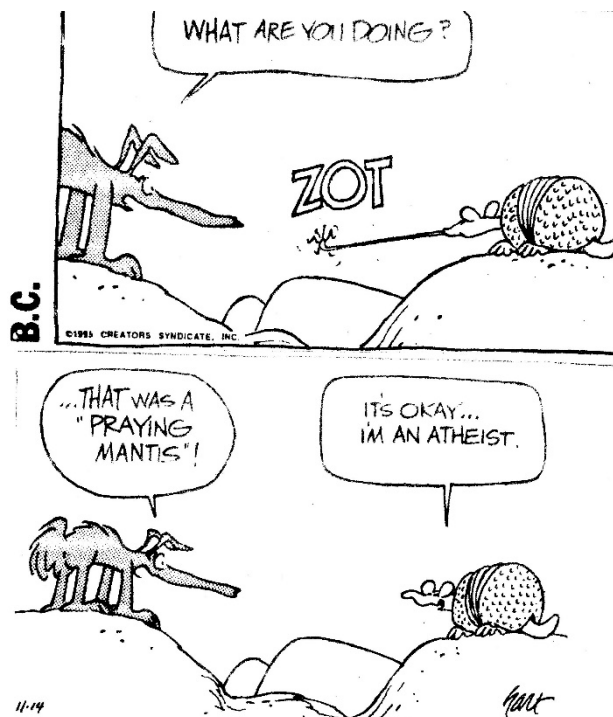


Suddenly the Mensa partygoers froze when Clarence shockingly uttered the "D" word.

This Month's Field Trip:

We are going to take a break for one month since this is such a busy time of year. For those of us

who need little excuse for a good conversation, the basement meeting area has been reserved for us.



December Group Activities:

**Saturday 7th, 12:45pm - MONTHLY PIG OUT
A CHANCE TO DINE WITH MENSA FRIENDS.**

THE KITCHEN RESTAURANT

725 E DOUGLAS

[HTTP://THEKITCHENWICHITA.COM](http://THEKITCHENWICHITA.COM)

Saturday 14th, 2:00pm – X-MAS PARTY

Come join fellow Mensans and consume mass quantities. Hosted by Klaus, Gail and cats.

4613 E NORWOOD CT

SOUTH OF K96 AND OLIVER ACROSS FROM PARK

Saturday 21st, meet up 11:00am – 12:00pm

FIELD TRIP, JOIN US FOR A FUN EXCURSION.

WATERMARK BOOKS, BASEMENT AREA

MEETS AT: 4701 E DOUGLAS

Saturday 28th, 7:00pm – BANTER AND BOOKS

GOOD CAMARADERIE AND DISCUSSIONS.

BARNES & NOBLES, EATING AREA

1920 N ROCK RD

The Important issue is not who was right, but what comments are acceptable. He thought it was acceptable to categorically condemn Germany, but totally unacceptable to say anything critical of the Jews. Some might think that made him a radical racist bigot. But the startling thing is that his kind of attitude is becoming more and more prevalent. It is generally labeled as, "Political Correctness." And as we know, it is propagated by the political left, and generally ridiculed by the conservatives.

Is this rejection of free speech really a good thing for our country? I think not. As we gradually stifle an individual's right to speak his mind, we gradually kill his mental abilities, and gradually kill the life of the country.

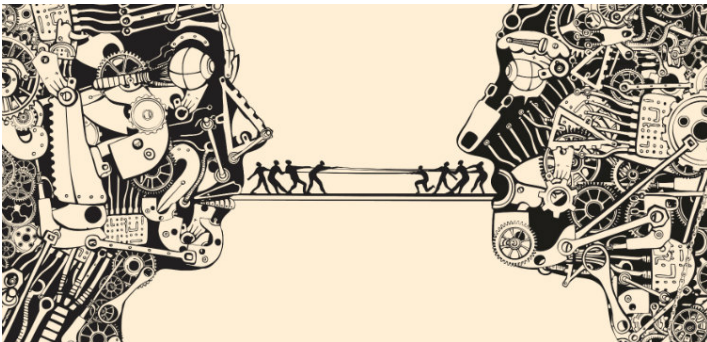
The Communist governments in the last century executed about 50 million people for making illegal comments. That did them a lot of harm. We were more tolerant. That tolerance did us little harm. Yet, the Communist approach is being pushed in this country. I think we would be better off if it wasn't.

Gordon Bakken



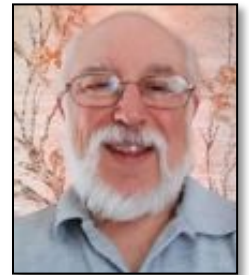
Heartland Mensa Region 7

Letters to the Editor: FREE SPEECH



I recently attended a MENSA Regional Gathering. In one discussion at lunch a man said that WWII was a good war because the Germans were evil and needed to be destroyed. I replied that I thought the Jews (Communists) were more responsible for the war, and that it was not good for the world that they had won. He said that made me an Anti-Semite, racial bigot, and he would not speak to me again.

My grandfather, a voracious reader, collected aphorisms that he passed along whenever the opportunity arose. One of his favorites paraphrased a quote I tracked back to Horace Mann – "Lost, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes, last seen rolling away through the sands of time. There is no reward, for they can never be returned." For some reason that image often comes to mind when I play computer solitaire.



Another of his favorites was, "The most important ingredient of a good meal is good company." Which brings me to December and, of course, Mensa. If you celebrate any holiday in this part of the year, it probably includes people sitting down to a special meal together. In my experience if some of those people are Mensans

the conversations will be particularly sparkling. Mensans tend to be interested in *everything*, so there's always lots to talk about besides politics.

We also tend to get, if not laugh at, jokes that go over the heads of other people.

You may be a stay-at-home Mensan, one of our members who hasn't come to any events. If so, you're missing a good part of what you joined Mensa for, the fun of being with congenial people at your intellectual level. C'mon, try us out.

And may you all find a festive table to share this season.

- Rich

Essay on Liberal Christianity



I never thought of myself as liberal but have been accused of being so. So, I will start from there. It seems a person does not have to move at all to go from being a moderate to a progressive liberal. That is the way we get labeled.

In the USA anyone can believe in any god they want or no god at all. That is a protected constitutional right. It protects us from absolute power. As it is said power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Combine church and state and the result is absolute power. It has been proven countless times in history. The separation of church and state keeps us safe.

One idea of being a Christian liberal is to strictly observe the doctrine of scripture only. The idea was part of the reformation, but not new there. It is pretty simple, if a person is a Jesus follower he just goes by the teachings of Jesus, does not add anything. Jesus used the Old Testament books of the Bible in His teachings. So it follows to use them as He did and not as others did or do today. The same follows with the New Testament books. To put it in Bible thumper terms: "If God said it that settles it. If God didn't say it that settles it." A strict reading of the texts excludes many of the religious

doctrines and arguments from the ages. A person can read between the lines and come up with all the ideas never said by Jesus as well as anything he can imagine. Most people are capable of doing this. I can do it even better than most people and have the card proving I can outdo 99.9% of the people. Which convinces me there is nothing there. As an example, here is a quote from the Bible: "Judas went and hanged himself. Go and do likewise." That is perfectly biblical and perfectly out of context. In the end all of this makes a person both a believer and an unbeliever and takes him to using some critical thinking.

Some of the things Jesus did not discuss are, abortion, capitalism, conservatism, gun rights, predestination, the majesty of the catholic church, the protestant work ethic, that God would make someone rich if they gave money, or racial superiority. He never told people they were once saved always saved. It might be noted He was not white, did not speak English, was not an American, and did not live in the twenty first century.

So, what are some of the things He taught?

He taught that people should pay taxes without complaining. He made quite an event of addressing the issue in what seemed like a magical manner. He said that it would be better for someone to have a stone tied around their neck and be thrown into the sea than lead a child astray. Quite the contrary to people who protect adults from responsibility when children are abused. He taught the sermon on the mount as a practical way to live. To actually practice it seems to be an offense to some people. He gave a sermon on the separation of sheep and goats. The idea is we are refuges when we go to the next world and will be treated there the way we treat refuges here. Refuges include, homeless, widows, orphans, immigrants, aliens, poor people, people in jail, and people who are sick.

The slick salesmanship of many religious groups today, are a contradiction to His teachings. Their fundraisers which promise prosperity to anyone who sends a lot of money are like the people who opposed Jesus, not Him. It is very old school to be the so-called liberal Christian. And very modern to rewrite it into what is all over the media today.

In conclusion you can believe anything you want, that is your right. You do not have to agree with me. I hope you study and use critical thinking and find what is good for you to believe and what is good for you to not believe.

By: Bill Barnett

10/24/2019

The Tale of Siren Rock



Photo courtesy of the Wilderness Hiker.

Siren Sal was as well loved by the men of the town as she was reviled by most of the women folk. Nobody knew her real name or where she was originally from. Rumor had it that in

her younger days she travelled the frontier from New Orleans to Denver and gained some renown as a saloon singer. Yes, she was still beautiful in her own way but showed only a shadow of the radiance she possessed before the many hard years took their toll.

It was 1893 in a small cattle trading center in Western Kansas called Scott City. Sal ran one of the local saloons and “managed” the soiled doves that inhabited the uppermost floor.

She was known for her quick wit, intellect and humor. She also had a penchant for anonymously donating sizable chunks of money around town for such projects as a new schoolhouse and even for a new church organ. Every Christmas all the children of the town received a shiny new silver dollar after church services, donated by a secret benefactor. It was well known that the preacher knew the source of the bounty, but that did nothing to allay his infernal condemnations of Sal. It was suspected, but not proved that he was actually one of her best customers and that he took sadistic glee in abusing her.

The preacher was named Eli Jenksburg. He was a small, squat, troll of a man, venting as much venomous rhetoric all week long as he did from his pulpit on Sundays. Descended from a long line of conservative German pastors in the old country, he had settled in town a few years before to ply his trade. He relished the power he exerted over so many of the weaker willed of the citizenry and he would have his way whatever the price.

The women of the city gradually began to despise Sal even more after the local “man of God” tried more than once to goad the citizens into running her out of town. He had an abiding hate for women in general after his wife left him for a gold field tramp long ago but saved his worst fury for the siren. He was an exceedingly cruel man, taking great joy in beating and humiliating his children, whom he blamed for his wife’s unexpected departure.

Having known many of the local influential males on very intimate terms including the sheriff and mayor, Sal had no problem in fighting off her advisories until the whole sordid affair was simply forgotten by most. For a time, things returned to normalcy in town.

After a protracted illness, Sal finally succumbed to the dread consumption. Despite her kindness and charity, the self-righteous of the town would have no part in allowing her to be buried in the town cemetery, continuing their harassment even after her death.

Having been loved by at least a segment of the community, it was deemed appropriate that she should at the very least have a splendid tombstone to mark the spot of her eventual eternal resting place. Enough money was procured to bring in a huge limestone monument, custom made and shipped all the way from St. Louis. It was rumored to be the most ornate and expensive in the entire county.

Some land was even donated by the farmer Mr. Steele. A beautiful spot on the side of a hill overlooking a wonderful spring fed lake North of town was to be her reward for the gracious kindness she had so lavished on her many friends. It was located within sight of the stone retreat he had built high on a bluff above his farmhouse. No mention survives as to what his wife thought of his plans.

Sal’s body was stored for months in the back of the local icehouse until the monument arrived, much to the chagrin of some of the more prudish town folk. There was even an ill-planned attempt to steal the body and simply dump it into Punished Woman creek to rot and be torn to shreds by scavengers or bury it in the nearby El Quartejejo Indian mound, a place considered cursed by the locals. Thankfully an alert shopkeeper noticed something afoot and the plan was soon thwarted.

Reading is Good for Your Health

Larry D. Paarmann

When the day finally came to pass, her body was accompanied by an entourage of men surrounding an elaborately decorated wagon to the spot that was prepared for her. She was laid in back, clad in the finest frilly bright velvet red dress that she had so often donned to formal functions. The procession consisted of over 100 men and three more wagons loaded with food and liquor. It was said that nary a man remained in town during the event that day. She was laid to rest with much revelry punctuated by drinking, yelling, cursing and rowdy ceremony. She most certainly would have wanted it that way.

This affair greatly infuriated the women of the town and the entire Christian Temperance League vowed to make things right. God was surely on their side, and this outrage would be savagely avenged.

Time passed, but the abiding hatred simply simmered, festered and grew. All this attention lavished on a “common whore” was more than the troll and his bevy of jealous nagging old crones could handle. A plan was hatched, the fire was stoked, the date was set, there would finally be action.

One cold, moonless winter night the preacher and a small number of his female flock sojourned to the monument armed with a wagonload of sledgehammers, crowbars and picks. They would make things right and get even with this vile woman who was loved more by their husbands than they were.

The sounds of hammering and pounding rang and echoed through the entire valley, interspersed with evil howls and praises to the Lord. Eventually their work was done. The towering, once magnificent monument to a lovely woman was reduced to nothing more than a large, sad, scarred boulder. No trace was left to identify who may lay beneath.

In time Sal was totally forgotten, and her grave became overgrown, little more than a roosting place for the local vultures. Untended and neglected it returned to the prairie from which it sprang.

If you know where to look, it remains to this day. Sadly, now it is just a monument to jealousy, mindless anger and evil. A poignant message and lesson to those who would venture to listen.

Klaus Trenary

11/10/2019

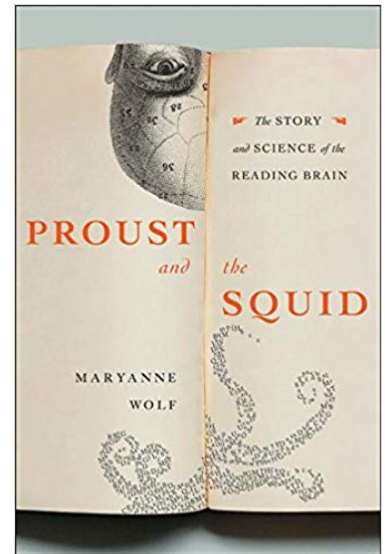
As an avid reader, I was pleased with a recent article in *Scientific American* online by Gary Stix, November 13, 2019, titled “Literacy Might Shield the Brain from Dementia,” called to our attention in the *MENSA Weekly Brainwave* of November 19, 2019.

His stress is on protecting those of us who are older from dementia, which is, of course, a good thing.

But the article gives evidence that reading, and writing helps keep the brain working in good condition, in general. It makes sense, doesn't it, if we use our brain in reading and writing that those practices will help us read and write better, and think better, assuming we are doing these activities in an intelligent way, actually thinking about them as we use them.

At the end of the article, Stix makes mention of a book with the title *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain*, by Maryanne Wolf (Harper Perennial, 2008). Stix writes: “The benefits of pushing forward become immediately obvious when contemplating what, exactly, is going on when a person processes words. In her book *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain*, cognitive scientist Maryanne Wolf writes that learning to read entails ‘an amazing panoply of phonological, semantic, syntactic, morphological, pragmatic, conceptual, social, affective, articulatory, and motor systems, and the ability of these systems to become integrated and synchronized into increasingly fluent comprehension.’ Forget brain games—just read a good book.” I agree! Stay healthy! Read a good book!

By the way, another way to exercise your brain is by being active in Mensa!



Maarieda - First Anniversary

2019.9.13

Bill Barnett

Maarieda, March 12, 0002. It was two weeks until the first landing day celebration on Maarieda. The party was planned for the whole day. It was to be an annual celebration.

They have a calendar now. It is a lunisolar calendar. The day was 24:32:01 Earth hours long. It made sense to keep the hour the same that they were used to living with. All of the clocks were programmed to Earth seconds, minutes, and hours. They had to do an app to translate them into the days of Maarieda. The week is seven days, part of a human rhythm that does not change. There were 42 days in a month, or Dianna cycle. And once or twice a year the month was 41 days. The year was just under 360 days, so most years had 360 days and some had 359 days. That gave them 8 or 9 months a year and new year's day was not on the first of a month. New year was based on the winter solstice. The year was very close to an Earth year which was one of the reasons this planet was chosen. Their star, zru137519, was now named Tigri. The children found the name in a story they read and were unanimous in insisting on the name, so the adults let them choose. Other names had been discussed and charted but now it was Tigri.



The months were January, February, March, April, May, June, September, October, and some years there was a November. There holidays would be Landing Day, Christmas, the solstices, and equinoxes. Roman emperors no longer had months named after them.

Amie gave birth to a son two weeks after her fiftieth birthday on February 12, 0002. On Earth she would probably have been in menopause, but not here. Everyone was young and healthy. Without the diseases and toxins from Earth they all felt like they were twenty years younger. James and Amie christened their son Jason and it was a big celebration. They had adopted a religion based on the direct teachings of the founder of Christianity but rejected many of the established traditions being disgusted with much of the history of

those traditions. While some were doubters and some not, they all agreed the new world needed some type of religion. It was so much part of being human. And they could not find any other they thought was suitable. They also were fond of Aristotle, but decided a commentary to update the science, etc. was needed. Jason was the first Maariedan and the hope that the colony would be successful.

No mammals could be found. There was still hope they were alive somewhere, but that did not help with the embryo transfer program. With everyone being healthy it was decided to do the embryo transfer program with a human. The human population was not at risk and the mammals were important to establishing a balanced ecology. Mindy volunteered. She had three children. More than she had expected. After six diannas on the planet she gave birth to four beagle puppies. It was an easy, quick pregnancy and an easy delivery. The drugs blocking an immune response to the foreign species did not seem to have much in the way of undesirable side effects. She never liked dogs before but was excited about her puppies. They were like children to her, an idea she had scored most of her life. They were easy to nurse and take care of. Her children were jealous of the time she gave to the little dogs. But soon they became fond of them too. The dogs would multiply rapidly and provide wombs for a hundred species. The new planet made for strange new adventures. Things they never imagined doing on Earth.

The gardens and orchards were producing and there were nuts, fruits, and grains like they have not seen since Earth. The kids loved the new food. It took time to adapt to the change, but now they disliked ship food as much as their parents. Farm shrimp was magically better than ship shrimp. They had some nuts, grains, and legumes for protein, and everyone liked that.

Maarieda, March 26, 0002, Landing Day

They had built a small arena was to celebrate the holiday. It was cut into a natural amphitheater with benches on one side around the center stage. There was a place for a bonfire at the back of the stage. There were plays, skits, and talks planned for all afternoon. At star set there was going to be a concert. The new environment gave birth to a new interest in music. The long-forgotten instruments they had ignored for years were now being played almost daily. The songs they only listened to as recordings were now being sung and new songs were being written. The music and even the language was morphing into a new sound and story for the new world.

“Time to start!” shouted Amie with glee. “everyone to the arena and take their places.” The youth

raced into the arena beating their more patient parents. Excitement filled the air. It seemed like everything was perfect. Amie is the Captain and an electrical engineer.

Lisa, the youngest, was up first. She was so eager and as the youngest no one was going to disappoint her. She started with her rondador and soon had them enchanted. After studying south American songs she had developed her own songs. "This is for the mountains on the horizon." she said. And then led them in a song she had been teaching to the other youth. "This is for peace." and she taught them another song. They were almost hypnotized. She had the best music and was first.

"I dare anyone to top that." exclaimed Amie. The stunned crowd burst into applause. "Bob, you are next."

"We are planning an expedition to Artica. There is a peninsula that is free of ice most of the year. The plants there are different. No one had been there, and it has no terraforming. It will be a major expedition and has to be planned for the northern summer." Bob, the meteorologist, went on to explain why it could be so interesting: "It may have the beginning of seed plants, something we thought was not here. There are no animals except us. At least that is what we think. If there is anything different it may be there. And the weather is phenomenal. The auroras are beyond anything I saw as a youth. It is like the Cretaceous Period on Earth."

There was polite applause. Everyone knew what Bob was working on. He just did not hit the emotions that Lisa did. "Thank you, Bob, that is exciting news, and a big opportunity for our colony." said Amie. "Mindy, you are up."

"Everything here is perfect, as far as health goes." said Mindy, the physician. "Too perfect in fact. All the stats are off the charts as far as health goes. No one gets sick. Everyone is staying young and the youth seem almost super- human. I hope that means all is good. I have nothing to treat except injuries. There is nothing to vaccinate people for here. I hope we do not discover something pathogenic. The water is safe to drink everywhere. I cannot find anything pathogenic, no parasites."

"The puppies I had are growing strong and do not need to be treated for parasites like back on Earth. That was stranger than anything I have ever imagined. I never liked dogs. And now I am attached and almost hate to use them in an experiment, but they will be treated well. The immune response drugs may have prevented me from having more humans. Time will tell. Any way the mammal program is now off to a good start. Some day we will find the mammals we released here."

"And more good news, Lisa will be training to be a physician. Three cheers for Lisa." "Hip hip hurray! Hip

hip hurray! Hip hip hurray!" shouted everyone. "Thank you, Mindy." said Amie. "James is next"

James, the Lieutenant and biologist, led them in Joan Jett songs. They were his favorite, but somehow had become classic instead of rebellious. The crowd was excited again.



"And for the biology report. It is more an agriculture report. We have three dozen species of trees growing well. There are five kinds of nuts and seven kinds of fruit. The garden is doing well. And we have grain crops growing. They did not survive the terraforming and have to be farmed annually. We are learning how to prepare the soil. I expect big changes in all the life here. It is like a laboratory for epigenetic. We learned we have to grow trees before grass. The grass cannot compete with the native ferns, but trees can. I expect the ferns to adapt to the forest. The shrimp farm continues to require work. It prospers and fails over and over. It is just the nature of farming shrimp. At least we have good plant protein now. We keep seeding the ocean with shrimp and fish and never see them. I think they survive but are lost in the vastness of the ocean."

Thank you, James." said Amie. "Now for Sally."

Sally led them in Abba songs, her favorite. Everyone enjoyed them. But the youth could not be related to "Fernando" It was beyond their comprehension. They had never imagined anything like that.

"We have all the bots back up and running." said Sally, the engineer. They continue to plant more trees and grass. The ocean bots are exploring for minerals but have found nothing. It may take years. I will have to send them way out to sea and hope they come back. We may lose some. There is at least one bot crawling the rock formations on the major islands and continents looking for minerals. It is just too big an area to look. We will have to travel to find the best areas to look."

"Thank you Sally." said Amie. "Give it up for Sally." And everyone gave polite applause. "Next is Sam." What is new in Geology here, Sam?"

“We are lost on a big round rock covered with ferns and a few other plants.” It is hard to find a rock here just to study. We need some magic. Charlie, my mentor could divine meteorites and rocks and about anything else someone might want. His father was in the CIA and always in danger. Charlie saw what was going to happen before his dad went and warned him, explaining exactly what would be there in fine detail. Soon, dad believed the warnings. In time the CIA tried to recruit Charlie for his E.S.P. powers, something they desperately wanted. They and Charlie did not get along, with opposite world views, and they departed ways quickly. If only I had his divining ability, but I don’t.” So, I am looking for minerals the old-fashioned way, or maybe it is really the new way. I think the really old guys were all like Charlie. We need to find essential minerals to mine. And a diviner.”

“Let’s do Aqua-man!” Sam, the geologist, shouted and pulled out his flute starting a poor imitation of Jethro Tull. In spite of his lack of music ability everyone joined in just for fun.



“Thank you, Sam.” exclaimed Amie, the captain and an electrical engineer. The computers continue to function well after all these years. Only one quantum communicator has failed, but there is no one to talk to out there. No one on Earth has been in communication since just after we left. The other two ships are too busy dodging black holes and quasars. They found themselves in a really difficult part of space. Something we did not know about before. We know they are alive because we get broken pieces of signals. But we don’t even know what time they are in. They could show up any day or in thousands of years.” After a pause, she said: “we really need to find copper or silver. And Gold. How are we going to wire anything?”

Everyone gave polite applause. “Now the kids have stories for us.” said Amie. One by one the kids tried to tell ghost stories. They read somewhere that is what you do around a campfire. But none of them had any idea of what a ghost story was. In spite of their being so smart some things completely evaded them, and ghost stories s one of them.

The campfire was lit and grew big. As the fire died down, they cuddled together in the cool air and finally went to bed. It was a good Landing Day.

Maarieda October 1, 0002

There were screams coming from out in the garden. It sounded like someone was being killed. The adults who were all working inside the shelter came running out. Lisa was laying on the ground unconscious. Kristy and Terri were pounding each other bloody with their fists.

“I’m number one.” screamed Kristy. “No, I’m number one.” screamed Terri. “I’m the oldest, that makes me number one.” screamed Kristy.

“I have the firstborn. That makes me number on.” screamed Terri.

There were more blood curdling yells as they fell on the ground biting and scratching each other. The other kids watched.

The adults were in shock seeing their precious children unconscious and tearing each other apart. Mindy and Sam picked up Lisa and took her into the shelter hoping she was still alive. It was all Amie, James, Bob, and Sally could do to pry the fighting teens apart. They dragged them into separate rooms of the shelter to restrain them until they could calm down.

After a few minutes Lisa was coming around. Michael, Linda, and Doug came to see Lisa. They were forbidden to go into the rooms with Kristy and Terri.

“What the hell are you doing?” demanded Sam. “Look at Lisa. What did you do to her?”



Propaganda Poster portraying the Ideal Aryan Woman