SUNFLOWER SEEDS



Events at a glance:

Saturday 4th, 12:45pm - MONTHLY HANG WITH THE GANG PIG OUT

CAFÉ MAURICE 9747 E 21st ST N #121 (NEAR 21ST & WEBB) HTTP://MAURICECAFE.COM

Saturday 11th, 2:00pm - GUEST SPEAKER/MEETING

FAIRMOUNT COFFEE MEETING ROOM 3815 E 17TH ST (ACROSS FROM WSU)

Saturday 18th, meet up 11:30am - FIELD TRIP

B-29 DOC HANGER TOUR, 1788 S AIRPORT RD GROUP MEETS AT: 4701 E DOUGLAS (CORNER OF DOUGLAS & OLIVER)

Saturday 25th, 7:00pm - BANTER AND BOOKS

BARNES & NOBLES, EATING AREA 1920 N ROCK RD (BETWEEN 13TH & 21ST ST)

January 2020, Volume – 48, Issue # 1 Kansas Sunflower Mensa Newsletter



I almost think this image is apropos for the mood of much of the chapter. We will endeavor to persevere.

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

LocSec Korner By: Larry D. Paarmann

In December our Pig Out location was The Kitchen, 725 E. Douglas Ave., Wichita. It is interesting that the location of The Kitchen is at the old Union Station on Douglas, in fact, it is in what was the Baggage Claim Building. Easy to get to and with plenty of parking, it is a good location. The food was good, my only complaint being that we had the lunch menu only. The dinner menu looked to have better items on it.

The December Program Meeting was really our annual Christmas Party. It was hosted by Gail & Klaus Trenary at their home. I guess an easy way to have a good turnout is to have food, for the party was very well attended. I heard there were 19 in attendance, but I didn't count.

The January Pig Out will be at Café Maurice on 21st St. in Wichita. I have been there before, but it has been a long time. It is a restaurant that specializes in Mediterranean cuisine. Their prices are reasonable, and the food is excellent.

The January Program Meeting will be a presentation on the Highlights of the 2019 Phoenix AG, by yours truly. In the limited time available, we will look at only a few of the presentations at the AG. Perhaps this will whet your appetite for the 2020 Kansas City AG.

Political Correctness, Civility, and Freedom of Speech



There will be an open ExCom Meeting on January 11th, immediately after the conclusion of the Program Meeting, on the topic of political

correctness, civility, and freedom of speech. By "open" meeting, I mean that all Mensa members are welcome and encouraged to attend. If and when we vote on something, then only ExCom members will be allowed to vote, but during discussion everyone is encouraged to participate. Items for potential voting include tentative minutes from earlier ExCom Meetings, and perhaps an attempt at a KSM Statement on conduct in our meetings.

This Month's Field Trip:

Wichita was transformed from a simple cow-town into an industrial giant in aircraft manufacturing. Come with us and view one of only two airworthy B-29's in the World. We will tour the new hanger constructed just for "Doc" and have a chance to inspect the airplane and even enter the cockpit. Admission is \$10 plus \$5 more if you want to access the cockpit.

Located next to the airport @ 1788 S Airport RD, (316) 260-4312. http://www.b29doc.com



This Month's Pig-Out:



We are located at 21st and
Webb Road in the heart of
northeast Wichita, where we
invite guests to celebrate life

and share traditional Mediterranean cuisine. Executive Chef Ghassan Srour excellently crafts a melting pot of Lebanese and Mediterranean inspired cuisine mixed with a French attitude. Flavorful herbs and spices combine textures to appease broad-based palates.



Letters to the Editor:

Right Thinking Sunflower Mensans Unite!

It is time that we join together to insure the purity of our esteemed organization.

Clearly, as Mensa members we are <u>certified</u> to be more logical and intellectually able than our fellow human beings. To protect our organization and ourselves from wrong thinking individuals, we must band together to eliminate those in our very ranks who have fallen into illogical ideas. Some of us have proven they can unite to remove an individual with unsound ideas on emigration and race.

Unfortunately, such individual was subsequently allowed to viciously attack our minds by publishing his views in our newsletter. We were forced to read and consider the implications and non-rational nature of his views. Our perfect logic should never be subjected to such unwarranted attacks by the illogical.

What if we allowed members to spout any fallacious idea they had about politics? Next some member might come up with, may I say it, some insane, illogical idea about religion which did not align with our perfect knowledge thereof!

We got into Mensa because we knew "rock" did not belong with "flower", "vegetable" and "tree". Now we must ban together to force out anyone who believes "rock" could somehow belong.

Please do not talk to or read the writings of anyone who would so attack your perfect reason. Be on high alert at all Mensa meetings to detect any brethren who has logic not as perfect as yourown.

Get together with others in Mensa who share your enlightenment to force that flawed member to either embrace your brilliance or be removed from the organization.

Once we have removed all members with specious ideas, we can again enjoy our perfect organization as we each sit alone in our solitary rooms.

John Prechtel



Heartland Mensa Region 7



Happy New Year, and (I've been waiting a long time to use this one) may your vision of the next annum be 2020.

January's the time to celebrate one of Mensa's most important projects – the Mensa Scholarship program. It's

administered by the Mensa Education & Research Foundation (check out their refurbished website at https://www.mensafoundation.org/ — they're a separately-funded 501(c)(3)-qualified charity so your donations are tax-deductible). Last year MERF awarded scholarships totaling more than \$140,000 to 188 students. Twenty-one of those scholarships went to people living in our Heartland Region. We hope to do even better this year, donations and endowment income permitting.

So why January? That's when competition essays are due. It's also when our Local Group scholarship judging panels sift through those essays to identify the area's best. The stars are forwarded to the Regional panels, who choose the best of the best to go on to the National panel.

A hearty "Thank you" to all our volunteer judges and to our Scholarship Chairs who assemble the judging panels and manage the process:

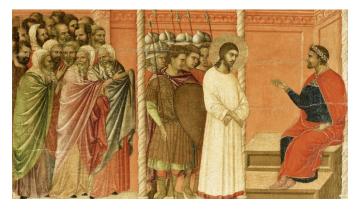
- Larry Brandt for Central Iowa Mensa
- Michael Hamerly and Louis Whitehead for South Dakota Mensa
- Maggie Kohls and Jim Stiles for North Dakota Mensa
- Rhonda Johnston for Mid-America Mensa
- Andrea Miller for Missouri Ozarks Mensa
- Sherri Levers for Nebraska/Western Iowa Mensa
- Tim Winkleman for Boulder/Front Range Mensa and Denver Mensa
- Sandy Halby for Plains and Peaks Mensa
- Donna Scott for High Mountain Mensa
- Terry Yentzer for Wyoming Mountain Mensa

A special recognition to Tim Winkelman. He started this term doing double duty, attending to two Local Groups. But he was willing to do even more for Mensa. When I asked him to take on the Regional chairmanship, he said "Yes." Tim is a long-time supporter of the program, going back at least to 2004 (that's when my records stop). Tim, your devoted work has helped hundreds of students.

My current book is Leo Damrosch's *The Club – Johnson, Boswell, and the Friends Who Shaped an Age*. Samuel Johnson, whose monumental dictionary defined the English language; David Garrick, virtually the inventor of the modern theater; Adam Smith, father of Economics; historian Edward Gibbons, Britain's leading portraitist Joshua Reynolds, Parliamentary orator Edmund Burke and other luminaries met at the Turk's Head Tavern every Monday evening in the mid-to-late 1700s for an ongoing battle of wits and words. Sure, there was small talk, but Tory and Whig alike met to relish and polish each other's ideas. I'm sure our Founders had something like that tavern table in mind when they invented Mensa.

~~ Rich

HOW TO GET TO HEAVEN – JESUS



Many believe that Jesus gave us instructions as to how to gain entrance into heaven (rather than hell) when we die. What did He say?

At one time, at a younger age, I did a study of the gospels to determine for myself what He actually said on that question. To my surprise, He did not give one clear-cut answer, but rather described many methods to get there. They did not seem to tie together, or even harmonize. I was confused, and still am.

This is the list I came up with; the formulas I found that Jesus gave for how to enter heaven and escape hell.

- 1. Nothing (Matthew 9:2)
- 2. Hear and believe Jesus' words. (John 5:24)
- 3. Do good works. (John 5:28, 29)
- 4. Forgive others (Matthew 6:14)
- 5. Handle money well. (Matthew 25:14-30)
- 6. Be poor. (Luke 6:20)
- 7. Love Jesus (Luke 7:47)
- 8. Be baptized. (Mark 16:16)
- 9. Do what God wants. (Matthew 7:21)
- 10. Help those in need. (Matthew 25:34-40)
- 11. Have disciples forgive your sins. (John 20:23)
- 12. Keep the (old testament) commandments. (Matthew 19:17)
- 13. Be poor is spirit. (Matthew 5:3)
- 14. Be persecuted. (Matthew 5:10)
- 15. Be like a child. (Luke 18:17)
- 16. Leave your family. (Luke 18:29, 30)
- 17. Be born again. (John 3:3)
- 18. Repent. (Luke 13:5)

Strangely, none of these methods of gaining heaven have anything to do with his death. In fact, never is it recorded that, either before or after his death, He said His death paid for sins. That is strange, since many churches believe that that is the very essence of the way to salvation.

Gordon Bakken

Chapter news:

Long-time member Randy Hamilton of Camden Kansas is in the hospital at Saint Francis for heart surgery. Our thoughts and best wishes for a speedy recovery go out to him and his family. He might appreciate a visitor.

Why I Joined ISPE

Bill Barnett



Mensa is excellent for fellowship. It is a place to be accepted. The conversation here is like no other. As someone who does not fit in with most groups, I know Mensa is a good place to be. In most settings, I do not fit in—unless they are high-IQ groups or high-achievement groups. Grady Towers explained it well in his

essay, "The Outsiders," which can be found in the World Dream Bank.

ISPE provides more people to communicate with on an intellectual level. They do not have meetings but have an outstanding journal, *Telicom*. It is an excellent place for its members to both publish and read articles, stories, autobiographies, art, poetry, photography, music, and puzzles. ISPE also provides its own private online platform for meeting other ISPE members online in addition to a closed Facebook group.

Writing is one of my weaknesses, but I have successfully published several quality works in *Telicom*. Want to be strong? Exercise your weakness. Works physically and mentally.

In short, ISPE expands what Mensa provides—a place to meet and talk to intellectuals. I encourage you to apply (www.thethousand.com).

Why haven't you joined ISPE?

Although Mensa is a 98th-percentile high-IQ organization, and ISPE requires achievement at or above the 99.9th percentile, you would be surprised by how many Mensans could qualify for admission to ISPE. To apply, either:

- 1) provide documentary evidence of past or present membership in any other widely recognized 99.9% IQ organization with similarly rigorous admission standards; or
- 2) provide written evidence of having achieved a score of 99.9% or equivalent on any of our accepted tests of intelligence

(go to our website to see which tests we will accept); or 3) take our culture-neutral, at-home, self-administered test.

Visit us at www.<u>thethousand.com</u> or contact our admissions officer at admissions@thousanders.com. *The Thousand* and *Thousanders* are registered trademarks of the International Society for Philosophical Enquiry.

Maarieda - First Anniversary - Continued 2019.9.13 Bill Barnett

"She tried to stop Kristi and Terri from fighting." said Michael in a diminished tone. "They told her to get out of the way and she kept getting in between them, telling them to stop fighting. They both punched her out so they could get on with the fight."

"And why didn't you do anything?" demanded Sam.

"What were we going to do?" pleaded Michael.

"God damm it!" screamed Sam. "Stop the fight!" They had never heard Sam curse. Sam was crying and holding Lisa's hands as Mindy was treating her wounds. Then he looked at them. If looks could kill, they would all have been dead.

The teens lowered their heads and backed away. "Can we help?" said Linda half afraid to say anything.

"Get the medical kit for stitches and clean towels. And Ice. Now!" said Mindy.

Like a rocket they were off to the supply room and back with the supplies. Lisa had come to and was sitting up. Her shirt was covered with blood from a broken nose and cuts around her eyes. Her eyes were swelling shut. The teens watched from a distance without saying anything more as Lisa was being stitched up. She would be fine in a couple weeks. Sam and Mindy began to worry about their other daughters as the crisis with Lisa seemed to subside.



Amie and James had Terri in another room. They had to restrain her for twenty minutes before she was calm enough to let go.

"What was that all about?" asked Amie in a firm, but empathetic manner. At least that is what she was trying to do. It was more anger and fear inside her. "What do you mean 'I am First?' First of what and why are you trying to kill your sister?"

Terri waited and said nothing. After what seemed like forever she said: "First with Doug.

Someone has to be first and I am first." and with arrogance: "I have the firstborn."

"And just what does that mean?" demanded Amie.

"Doug is with me and Kristy. There are only two boys here. We don't have a boy for each of us. Why didn't you have more boys?" said Terri in a rebellious tone.

Now Amie was even madder and had to restrain herself. "We were happy to have six children. To have a viable colony there could only be six children on the ship and they had to be either three boys and three girls or two boys and four girls. We were happy to have the children we have. And had no intent of terminating any pregnancies we did not have to for all the reasons. You should be happy to be here. You already know this. You have no right to question us on this."

Terri stared into space, somewhere between rebellion and coming to her senses. She did not know what to say. She was starting to feel her cuts and bruises and dripping with blood.

Trying to compose herself Sally asked: "What do you mean 'I have the firstborn?"

After staring into space for as long as she could Terri said: "I am pregnant."

"Look at your pants. You are bleeding. Doesn't look like you are pregnant." said Amie.

Terri looked down and gasped. "But, but, but ..."

"And what is this garbage with being first? No one is first, except me when I have to be, like now. I am the Captain. And there will be no fighting in my crew." said Amie sounding like the Admiral in charge of everything. "Tell me what you mean."

"Someone gets to be the first wife?" whined Terri sheepishly.

"NO!" said Amie. "There will be none of that here. And it's not time for you to be having children yet. You are fifteen and need to grow. And not for that reason. At nineteen your body will be full grown, if you can grow up by then and stop acting like a three-year old. Just like I treat everyone here like equals you will treat everyone her like an equal. Do you hear that?"

"Yes ma'am." replied Terri. She had never seen Amie like this before.

James treated her wounds and she went and changed her clothes. She was grounded to her room.

Bob and Sally had Kristy in another room. Kristy was bleeding and began to feel her wounds as Sally was bandaging them. There was a long silence before anyone would talk.

"What is this about?" asked Bob. "Why are you fighting?"

"Doug is MY boyfriend." said Kristy. It seemed like they forgot they felt almost like siblings.

"And why are you fighting, and why are you saying, 'I am first?"" demanded Bob. "I am the oldest. That makes me first. It doesn't matter if she gets pregnant first." replied Kristy.

"And what is first? No one is first." said Bob.

"I am Doug's first girlfriend. And the oldest. That makes me in charge. If we have to share him I get to be number one. Why can't we have our own boyfriends? Why didn't you have more boys?" said Kristy.

Exasperated, Bob said: "We have been over all of this before. You know the answers. If you were a leader you would not act like this. And who do you think you are questioning your parents? Would you like your children questioning you like that?"

Shocked Kristy replied: "No." There was nothing else to say. Not only were these teens extraordinarily healthy, they seemed to have extraordinary hormones and desire to reproduce.

After stitching Kristy up and bandaging her wounds Sally said: "You are seventeen. You could have children and be ok, but you will be stronger at nineteen, and hopefully stop acting like an infant by then. How are you going to manage children if you act like this?"



That left Kristy thinking. She could do a physics problem in a nanosecond but was stumped by this. "I don't know." First time anyone ever heard her say that. She was grounded to her room until the wounds were healed. Bob was hoping that would be enough time for her to come to her senses. They all healed fast when there were cuts, just like babies heal fast.

After the wounds were bandaged Amie called a meeting with the four children who were not grounded. "You all know why we are here. This is a better place than the world your parents left. Earth was poisoned, and Earth civilization collapsed, it is gone. You have lots of challenges here to overcome, but it is a better world. One of those challenges is getting along with each other no matter what. Lisa is the only one innocent of any of this. You all should have stopped the fight. And protected Lisa. And Doug, you should not have provoked this."

"But, aaah, um, I didn't, um ..." stammered Doug who was always well spoken. "No buts." ordered Lisa. "And NO fighting." After a forever of silence she dismissed them.

It was two weeks later, and the teens were healed. The parents were in wonder how fast they healed. Even Lisa healed fast as badly as she looked on fight day. This new Eden they were in transformed humans. The teens were all working and studying and playing together like old times. It was good to see.

Bob was alone working on an agribot and the herd of teens approached him. Sometimes he was the philosopher and mentor. They never knew what to make of him. He was always the believer and unbeliever and thought provoker that left them wondering even more. But they kept coming back to question him.

"If God is real why did He put us where where we have to share?" asked Linda. "If you are on a new planet doesn't that mean you are chosen?" replied Bob. He turned the question back at them.

"Why did he make such a conflict and cause so many problems?" asked Kristi. "Why wouldn't He test your character?" said Bob. They had no answer. "Why didn't He make us three boys and three girls? asked Linda. "Who wants to be the boy?" said Bob. No one replied.

"Did God make this or is it just chance?" asked Michael, the doubter. "Why do you think it is God? Maybe it is bad luck." After a pause: "Or maybe good luck." laughed Michael. If looks could kill the girls would have killed him on the spot.

"Do you think it is bad luck you are the few surviving humans?" replied Bob. "Do you think it is dumb luck that brought you half-way across the galaxy to a new Eden?"

Frustrated the teens wandered off to their activities to visit the subject another day.



How Do You Distinguish between Religious Fervor and Mental Illness?



It's not meant as insult to believers; the two states of mind can share many similar characteristics

• By Nathaniel P. Morris on December 22, 2016

George Fox, whose visions inspired him to found the Quaker religion in the 1600s, was accused of being a madman. Credit: Detail of an engraving by S. Allen, published in 1838, of a painting by S. Chinn, provenance unknown. Wikimedia

Last year, a <u>news column</u> circulated the web, announcing the American Psychological Association had decided to classify strong religious beliefs as mental illness. According to the article, a five-year study by the APA concluded that devout belief in a deity could hinder "one's ability to make conscientious decisions about common sense matters." Refusals by Jehovah's Witnesses to accept life-saving treatments, such as blood transfusions, were given as an example.

Of course, this turned out to be a fake news story. But it still drew <u>legitimate media coverage</u> and <u>outrage</u> from readers. Fact-checking websites like <u>Snopes</u> had to point out the column was satirical. To many, this was a ridiculous stunt. But for me, a physician specializing in mental health, the satire hits home in many ways. My colleagues and I often care for patients suffering from hallucinations, prophesying, and claiming to speak with God, among other symptoms—in mental health care, it's sometimes very difficult to tell apart religious belief from mental illness.

Part of this is because the classification of mental illness often relies on subjective criteria. We can't diagnose many mental health conditions with brain scans or blood tests. Our conclusions frequently stem from the behaviors we see before us.

Take an example of a man who walks into an emergency department, mumbling incoherently. He says he's hearing voices in his head but insists there's nothing wrong with him. He hasn't used any drugs or alcohol. If he were to be evaluated by mental health professionals, there's a good chance he might be

diagnosed with a psychotic disorder like schizophrenia. But what if that same man were deeply religious? What if his incomprehensible language was speaking in tongues? If he could hear Jesus speaking to him? He might also insist nothing were wrong with him. After all, he's practicing his faith.

It's not just the ambiguities of mental health diagnoses that create this problem—the vague nature of how we define religion further complicates matters. For example, the Church of Scientology argued with the Internal Revenue Service for years to be classified as a charitable religious organization and to qualify for tax-exempt status. The Church eventually won this battle in 1993, a major step towards becoming a mainstream American religion. According to Going Clear: Scientology, Hollywood, and the Prison of Belief, a book by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Lawrence Wright, Scientologists believe in alien spirits inhabiting human bodies. Many believe they have special powers, like telekinesis and telepathy.

This puts mental health professionals in a tricky, cultural bind. Before 1993, should mental health professionals have treated patients expressing these beliefs as psychotic? After 1993, as faithful adherents? These distinctions carry profound medical and legal implications. In his book *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*, journalist Jon Krakauer chronicled the case of *Utah v. Lafferty*, which addressed the 1984 killings of a woman and a child by two Mormon fundamentalists, Ron and Dan Lafferty. Over the last several decades, the question of Ron Lafferty's mental health has played a key role in the case, as both sides have battled over his competency to stand trial.



The defense has argued that Ron is mentally ill and therefore should not be put to death. In interviews, Ron has claimed to be a prophet, endorsed hearing the voice of Christ, and expressed fears about "an evil homosexual spirit trying to invade his body

through his anus." Psychiatric experts have testified that Ron appeared to suffer from a psychotic illness, such as schizoaffective disorder. The prosecution has sought to uphold his competency to stand trial, relating his bizarre ideas to religious practices worldwide.

In the <u>words</u> of Dr. Noel Gardner, a psychiatrist who testified for the prosecution, "the majority of people in our country believe in God. Most people in our country say they pray to God. It's a common experience. And while the labels that Mr. Lafferty uses are certainly unusual, the thought forms themselves are really very common...to all of us."

A <u>local news column</u> from 2013 summed up the complexities of this ongoing case—"Where is the line between faith and delusion? Between malice and mental illness?" These are tough questions. The practices of Scientology and Mormon fundamentalism are far from the only examples of this oft-blurred line between religion and mental health care. Virtually every religion has unusual beliefs and rituals, from consuming the flesh and blood of Christ in Catholicism to fasting as a way of atoning for sins in Judaism.

Some have gone so far as to argue religion may actually be a form of mental illness. In 2006, biologist Richard Dawkins published his book *The God Delusion*, in which he characterizes belief in God as delusional. Dawkins cites the <u>definition of a delusion</u> as "a persistent false belief held in the face of strong contradictory evidence, especially as a symptom of a psychiatric disorder." Dawkins' book has been wildly controversial, prompting <u>academic rebuttals</u>, <u>hate mail</u>, and even <u>threats to jail his publishers</u>. Still, as of 2014, *The God Delusion* has sold <u>over 3 million copies</u> worldwide.

As a mental health provider, I don't believe it's my job to cast judgment on patients' religious beliefs. It's my job to use medical evidence to evaluate and treat mental illness so as to alleviate suffering among my patients. Today, we have some objective medical tests to diagnose mental illness, as in neurosyphilis or B12 deficiency. But we need more to help guide us through the difficult circumstances in which mental health care and religion collide.

In time though, perhaps we will. I have faith.



Intelligent jungle dwelling orangutans can make and play musical instruments.



As wind instruments go, folded vegetation seems a little on the primitive side. Orangutans have been found to blow

through leaves to modulate the sound of their alarm calls, making them the only animal apart from humans known to use tools to manipulate sound.

The orang-utan's music, if you can call it that, is actually an alarm call known as a "kiss squeak". "When you're walking the forest and you meet an orang-utan that not habituated to humans, they'll start giving kiss squeaks and breaking branches," says Madeleine Hardus, a primatologist at the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands, who documented the practice among wild apes in Indonesian Borneo.

She contends that <u>orang-utans</u> use leaves to make kiss squeaks to deceive predators, such as leopards, snakes and tigers, as to their actual size – a deeper call indicating a larger animal. Orang-utans also produce kiss squeaks with their lips alone or with their hands. To determine if the leaves make a difference, Hardus's team recorded a total of 813 calls produced by nine apes, and then measured the pitch of the different kinds of kiss squeaks made by each animal.

Across all nine orang-utans, the unaided kiss squeaks came out with the highest pitch, followed by calls produced when the apes put their hands over their mouths. But leaves lowered the highpitched calls the most, Hardus' team found. What's more, the orang-utans that were unaccustomed to Hardus' team produced leaf calls at far higher rates than apes that were used to humans. "It looks like orang-utans try to deceive the predator when using the kiss squeaks on leaves, because orang-utans only use it when they're highly distressed," she

says. That explanation implies that <u>orang-utans can</u> <u>guess at what others know and don't know</u> – a cognitive ability known as theory of mind.

"An orang-utan would have to understand how their calls are being perceived by other animals, a clear example of theory of mind," says Robert Shumaker, an orang-utan expert at the Great Ape Trust of Iowa, in Des Moines. "If, in fact, this is what they're doing, deception is a perfectly plausible possibility." "It's a particularly interesting form of tool use, to me, because it gets away from a lot of the typical examples of foraging," Shumaker adds. "It's really, really nice to see an example that has absolutely nothing to do with food."

Journal reference: <u>Proceedings of the Royal Society</u> <u>B</u> (DOI: 10.1098/rspb.2009.1027)

A couple of pictures from the 2019 X-mas Sunflower Mensa party.

The food was a lot better suited to the group this year, and a total of 19 members were in attendance. Although a bit crowded, everyone found a group or quite corner to talk and solve the World's problems.



