

SUNFLOWER SEEDS



Saturday 7th, 12:45pm – MONTHLY HANG WITH THE GANG PIG OUT

TWO OLIVES

2949 N ROCK RD (WEST OF 29th & ROCK) <http://www.twooliveswichita.com>

Saturday 14th, 2:00pm – GUEST SPEAKER/STATED MEETING

FAIRMOUNT COFFEE MEETING ROOM

3815 E 17TH ST (ACROSS FROM WSU)

Saturday 21st, 11:00am – CHILL OUT

WATERMARK BOOKS

4701 E DOUGLAS (CORNER OF DOUGLAS & OLIVER)

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

BARNES & NOBLES, EATING AREA

1920 N ROCK RD (BETWEEN 13TH & 21ST ST)

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Kansas Sunflower Mensa Newsletter



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Editor: R. Klaus Trenary, contact me at:
editor@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Officers for 2020:

LocSec: Larry Paarmann, 316-209-3752,
locsec@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Asst. LocSec: Bill Barnett, 316-214-3330,
asstlocsec@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Treasurer: Diane Powell, 316-617-8423,
treasurer@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Program Chair: Bill Barnett, 316-214-3330,
programchair@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Publications Chair: POSITION OPEN -
publications@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Editor, Seeds: R. Klaus Trenary, 316-648-6536,
editor@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Recruit & Test: Dan Gollub, 316-322-3087,
testing@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Associate Proctor: POSITION OPEN -

Mem. at Large: Ronnie Lee Ingle, 316- 631-3514,
memberatlarge@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Ombudsman: Mike Dickson, 316-651-4707,
ombudsman@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Region – 7 VC: Rich Olcott, 720-390-7889,
rolcott@mindspring.com

American Mensa Ltd.:

1-888-294-8035

Chapter's Official Web Sites:

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

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In February our Pig Out location was AVI Seabar & Chophouse, 135 N. Waco Ave., Wichita. It was a nice restaurant with excellent food. They have an excellent selection of wine & beer. I had blackened salmon on a grilled Caesar salad. It was very good. We had a good turnout with 15 in attendance.

The February Program Meeting was a presentation by Gary & Margaret Kraisinger, who are award-winning authors, having published three books and various articles on Texas cattle trails. They research, lecture, and write about the Texas cattle trail industry that lasted only about 50 years from 1846 to 1897. They have mapped all four South to North cattle trail systems. Their latest book addresses the famous Chisholm Trail. Their historical research has been recognized by the Oklahoma Historical Society, the National Parks Service, True West Magazine, the Wild West History Association (Six Shooter Award for 2016), the Kansas Cowboy Hall of Fame (2015 inductees), and the National Cowboy & Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City (Wrangler Award 2016). This was an excellent program and there were 16 in attendance.

The February field trip was to the B-29 “Doc” museum, in the hanger constructed just for “Doc.” It was enjoyed by those who attended, and it would be a blast for kids. Some went inside the airplane for an up-close and personal tour.

The Banter & Books group met, as usual, at Barnes & Noble for coffee and conversation. If you are interested and/or have suggestions for discussion topics, contact the group leader, David St. John.

At the time of this writing, the Blue Moon SIG lunch meeting at the Muse Café in the Wichita Art Museum hasn’t met yet. It will meet on Saturday, February 29th. This is always a popular meeting.

The March Pig Out will be at the Two Olives Restaurant & Bar at 2949 N. Rock Road, Wichita (actually appears to be just west of Rock on 29th Street North). We have been there before more than once, and it is always a popular spot. It has good food at reasonable prices, and a really big table for us to sit at.

The March Program meeting will be a presentation by Micaeh Tice of EagleFire Enrichment. From a recent Facebook post about Micaeh: “Micaeh is knowledgeable, authentic, and relatable! Her plans focus on reaching one smaller, easily attainable goal at a time in order to work towards the big goal for the future.” Her ideas are positive, motivational, and helpful for making lifestyle changes!

In place of the usual Field Trip, we will meet at Watermark Books for lunch and conversation. Just like the old “Food for Thought” meetings. That is, no field trip in March.

The fourth Saturday activity will be our usual Banter & Books meeting at Barnes & Noble for coffee and conversation. If you are interested and/or have suggestions for discussion topics, contact the group leader, David St. John.

One last thing. An open meeting on Political Correctness, Civility, and Freedom of Speech was held immediately after the January Program Meeting. It was a profitable time of discussion. We went over a draft of *Kansas Sunflower Mensa Statement on Civility and Freedom of Speech*. A copy of the statement is on our web site under articles. You still have opportunity to provide feedback or suggestions on this document before the Executive Committee votes on it: it is still a draft, and not yet official. Please email feedback to locsec@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org and mark the email with “Civility” in the subject line for easy identification.

This day in History:

In 2017, both Groundhog Day and the State of the Union address occurred on the same day. One involves an utterly meaningless ritual in which we look to an insignificant creature of little intelligence to foretell future events. The other involves a groundhog.

Jesus Christ walks into a hotel and throws the innkeeper three nails saying: Can you put me up for the night?



The question is: What makes some jokes funny to one person while being offensive to another?

Odd that even though in the past I was once a devout “Christian”, I still would have laughed my ass off.

When something is “not funny”, its your bad not mine. K



Heartland Mensa Region 7



Yesterday evening I judged the last of my assigned batch of essays in the MERF Scholarship competition. Thanks in part (I think) to the new electronic essay submission process, we seem to have had a much heavier load to work through than in previous years. Good for getting the Mensa name out

there, not so good for the volunteer judging crews. I'd like to salute those folks by name but there's not enough room in the column for that and besides, some prefer to stay in the background. So anonymous thanks, people – your work makes it possible for the winning students to continue toward the goals they write about so eloquently.

And what essays they were – some more polished than others, of course, but most laid out thoughtful plans for a better future for their authors and the people with whom they will come in contact. They confirm for me that the scholarship program fosters human intelligence for the benefit of humanity, which is Mensa's primary purpose.

Smooth segue into the next topic – National Volunteer Week, always the third week of April, runs from the 19th through the 25th this year. No coincidence, so does *Mensa Cares*, our very own service project coordinated by National's Community Service Committee but decided upon, arranged for and run at the local level. What's your Local Group doing this year? Cleaning up a park or highway? Sorting cans at a food bank or donated books at a library? Collecting supplies for the homeless? (Sorry, eating Girl Scout cookies doesn't count.) Write up a short paragraph about it and take a photo or two – we'd like to honor lots of Local Group projects at us.mensa.org/volunteer/community-service/.

One Mensa event that's usually in April slid to Sunday, May 3 this year -- CultureQuest®, our nationwide team trivia contest. I used to tell my students, "Any question's easy if you know the answer," but that's the challenge and why the team's the key. You need someone who knows history, someone who knows literature, someone who knows sports, someone who knows science, someone who knows nursery rhymes... If you're reading this before Tuesday March 31, get that group of polymaths together and register at us.mensa.org/attend/culturequest/. Entry fees go to support the MERF Scholarship Fund.

Spring is here, or it should be by the time you read this. Time for flowers and cavorting!
~~ Rich

Randy Hamilton Writes:

I noticed that in 2020 February has five Saturdays. This can only happen on leap years and only if February 1st falls on a Saturday. I like to eat so this means that our Mensa group will have lunch at the museum we dine at on the fifth Saturday of the month. Anyhow, I wondered how often February has five Saturdays?

After some work I found that it happens each 28 years in any given century. However, when we get to a century change, it will happen each 28 years ONLY IF the XX hundred-year leaps. e.g. 2000 or 2400. As we all know (except the retards on TV on 12/31/1999 and 12/31/2000) the century actually changes on Jan 01 of the years XX01.

When the XX00 does NOT leap, the interval between Five Saturday February's changes. Over 1600 Leap-Year) It took 28 years. 1592, 1620. Over 1700 it took 40 years. 1575, 1715. Over 1800 it took 40 years. 1772, 1812. Over 1900 it took 12 years. 1896, 1908. Over 2000 (a leap year) it took 28 years. 1992, 2020. Over 2100 it will take 40 years. 2076, 2116. Over 2200 it will take 40 years. 2172, 2212. Over 2300 it will take 12 years. 2296, 2308. Over 2400 (a leap year) It will take 28 years. 2392, 2420.

The pattern: Leap=28 then 40,40,12 then Leap=28 then 40,40,12. And so it repeats so long as we keep the current calendar.

History: 365 days per year as per several cultures, however, the Egyptians watched the star Sirius which moved one day ahead every four years. Ptolemy III in 238 BC decreed a leap day every four years. He was ignored. Gaius Julius Caesar burned the Library at Alexandria, but took an astronomer named Sosigenes home with him and then, on January 01, 45 BC inaugurated the Julian calendar, with a leap, giving 365.25 days average per year. Better, but by 1582 the accumulated error, since a year equals 365.2422 days, dictated a change to remove the leaps from the XX00 years except if the XX00 divides evenly by 400 e.g. 1600, 2000, 2400, etc.

Britain, showing infinite "genius", did not adopt the Gregorian calendar for 170 years at which time they jumped 11 days. Some people thought they had lost 11 days of their lives and/or the interest earned (or not earned) on their money.

Russia, get this, kept the old Julian calendar- until the October Revolution which took place in November 1917.

I remember reading about a "World Calendar" in gradeschool to make every January 01 the same day of the week forever. This idea never got off the ground despite the fact that the League of Nations established, in 1923, a Committee for Calendar Reform that received hundreds of proposals including the "World Calendar". This calendar was recommended, in 1954, by UNESCO to the United Nations General Assembly for consideration. The matter did receive much support, but it never got past "under consideration", where it still (presumably) resides today despite getting into my school-book in the 1960's. Yet another failure by the UN.

On censorship:

When I started as editor of the Seeds, what seems like ages ago, I solicited the advice of several respected peers and Mensans on how they felt the publication should be presented, it's goals and direction. Many were asked the same question, but one acquaintances opinion was quite memorable. His advice was as succinct as it was insightful, having explained that years of being involved in writing and publication had taught him to embrace a key tenet: Controversial concepts should be analyzed, an atmosphere of free speech must be promulgated, censorship must be fervently avoided and any subject or viewpoint is "fair game". To be carefully examined & scrutinized, with potentially shrouded underlying intents being gleaned.



One certainty is that words are used to modify perceptions and bring an end to ones means, they are therefore potentially very powerful & dangerous. Some words and concepts are meant solely to manipulate by their very nature and intent, so must be discarded for more logical, unbiased and objective descriptors. For instance, the terms "hate speech", "human trafficking", "racist" and "terrorist" would be perceived as utterly biased, loaded concepts intended to sway beliefs without allowing any sort of neutral, rational & critical outside evaluation. These will not be employed herein.

It seems apparent that when the discussion about any subject becomes taboo, or any group, belief or creed becomes insulated from public scrutiny, these groups position themselves outside of the usual rules and constraints of civility, law and accepted society. They will often embrace narcissism like a virtue and use it as a pretense to justify their own agendas.

These same ideologies are therefore elevated, made superior to all others, not to be held in any way accountable, and should never be trusted.

I have heard of an event that occurred while one belief system was held beyond reproach. Censorship was rampant, analysis or disagreement disappeared, and the system came to utterly dominate all that was said, printed, or even allowed to be thought. This machinery of total control eventually culminated in a regrettable event called the holocaust. Should the shoe be on the other foot now?

I find it unconscionable that any ideology or way of thought be beyond the transparency that allows public analysis and possible criticism. In a free society with free speech there is a price to be paid and a major flaw to overcome; That you can't "please all the people all the time". Someone will always be offended by viewpoints not exactly their own, an unavoidable consequence of openness. This undeniable and inescapable fact is unfortunately inherent to our Democratic system but is considered a reasonable and acceptable price to pay for the maintenance of our much-cherished way of life.

Let us use one of the cornerstones of a free America and World as a mighty bulwark against ignorance, censorship and the omnipresent threat of looming oppression. Family, Liberty, Free-Speech!

Klaus Trenary

02/27/2020



That which is grasped too tightly is often crushed by the misguided attempts of the one seeking to protect it. Censorship is like the steely clutches of death itself, once embraced there is no turning back.

The Age of Asparagus



By James Zongker (inspired by the fifth dimension)

When the food is in the garden

And katydids alight with song

Then peas will fill your platters

And herbs will feed your heart

This is the dawning of the age of Asparagus

Age of Asparagus

Asparagus

Hominy and okra salad

Zucchini and kale abounding

No more false foods or diets

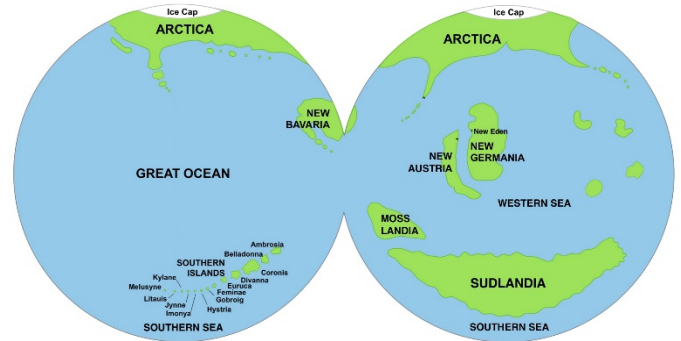
Golden living rows of carrots

Garlic olive oil sensation

And the tongues true liberation

Asparagus

Asparagus



2020.01.27

Bill Barnett

The Signal - Maarieda October 3, 0007

They were getting ready for the fall equinox festival when the news came. Ship 3, the Agriculture Ship, was drifting into the Arethusa System. There had only been spotty communication since the ship was damaged going through the accretion belt around a rogue planet. By the time the navigation system identified the rogue planet it was all the crew could do to start a course correction. Sand size particles damaged the ship's radiation shield and filled their shuttles full of pin size holes. The shuttles were beyond repair and had to be jettisoned to prevent damage to the ship. They just hoped there would be no more dust clouds to travel through with what was left of the radiation shield. After much study the design engineers on Earth discarded all the high-tech ideas for radiation shielding and went with the simple design that was laughed at in the beginning. They built a concrete shield in space from asteroid material. It covered the front and sides of the ship, being three meters thick in front and half a meter thick on the sides. Antennas and telescopes were attached to the outside and could be replaced by robots when necessary. The front of the shield became radioactive as it was essentially the target in a particle accelerator. The shield front became its own science experiment as the particles hitting it exceeded those of any particle accelerator on Earth. The front of the shield was expected to lose material on the trip.

Amie was planning everything. It was all a surprise. There was so much to do and so little time. Both shuttles had to be prepared. The wounded ship would be in a close parallel orbit to Maarieda in two Diannas (42-day months). They had to be there in space when Ship 3 arrived and transport as many supplies as possible. She called a meeting.

"James, you will take Alpha shuttle and take Sam and Michael with you." said Amie. "Do all the maintenance and repairs and test everything. You will be out in deep space beyond orbit. Everything must be precision planned and executed, just like a planet launch or landing in a disaster scenario.

Bob, you take Sally and Doug and Beta shuttle. Same thing with everything on Beta. You are now on overtime shuttle duty every day. The rest of us will take care of the colony and children until you get back. You can make three shuttle trips this year to recover supplies. Then the ship will be out of reach for a couple of years." All of the other women were pregnant or nursing babies and could not go on the trip.

This changed plans for everyone. The Southern Sea expedition was postponed. There was no more reason to conduct agriculture experiments. The Ship 3 crew would take over that. It was their mission. In the future they could devote more time to exploring the planet. They had only explored a tiny part of the new planet. Every trip they learned something new. If ship 2 arrived the Maariedians could start exploring the ocean depths and Dianna. Unlike the Moon orbiting Earth Dianna had an atmosphere and life. If it could support humans was another question. The conditions there were marginal for human life with half the atmosphere pressure of Maarieda.

Excitement filled the air as the Maariedians prepared for newcomers. It would be a challenge as the women were busy full time with the growing population and harvest. And everyone else would be gone. The agribots made all the difference in their prosperity. They were the new slaves in a new agricultural society. Food, cloth, medicine, and building materials would have consumed all of the human's time if they did not have the machine slaves. And they were perfect slaves with no rights to take away and the ability to work 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 360 days a year with no time off except for repairs. Maybe in the future it would not be so difficult to make a living from the ground when the planet was more developed, but as for now it was a time-consuming task.

Lisa, as governesses of the nursery, organized everything for the people not going. She simply assumed the position, and no one questioned her. She called a meeting.

"Linda, do an inventory of fresh food. We need to secure food for when they are gone. And there will be more people here." ordered Lisa.

Linda rolled her eyes at her younger sister and nodded in agreement. It did need to be done.

"Kristy, do an inventory of supplies for here. We will not be able to travel when they are gone." ordered Lisa again. "We need to collect supplies now."

Kristy looked at the others, sighed, and looked back at the youngest. Lisa found her kingdom. "It will be done." she agreed.

"Terri, do an inventory of the quarters for the newcomers. We need to get everything ready for them." ordered Lisa the third time.

"I thought Amie was doing that." sighed Terri with a skeptical look.

"She has a lot more to do. I talked to her about it." replied Lisa.

"Amie has a big list of things that need to be done." said Terri.

"And this is one." replied Lisa. No one asked what Lisa was going to be doing. They had learned better than that. She would be up to something.

The Briefing - Maarieda October 4, 0007

"We have a video chat coming in from ship 3. After being damaged they kept the few remaining antennas in the ship to preserve them. They have occasionally put them out to send a message and today we will have a full communication. Please take notes and save questions for the discussion time." announced Amie.

They were all in the big meeting room in the new shelter. After six years they were able to build a sizable main building with a room that could seat everyone and room for that many more. All were there except Lisa and Linda who were watching a monitor in the nursery.

The signal came on the monitor. "Welcome Captain Haluk and Ship 3. Happy to see you are almost here. Tell us about trip." said Amie.

"There are six of us on the ship. I am Haluk, Captain and a botanist. Helen is Lieutenant and agronomist. Our children are Vanessa, a physician, and Hans, an engineer. Our grandchildren are twins, Lilly and Andrew. We are all doing well except Helen. When she was performing a spacewalk to jettison the damaged shuttles, we went through a dust cloud. The result was micro cysts throughout her body and low-level heavy metal poisoning. Fortunately, we took turns doing the walk and were not both injured or we would not be here now."

"We are low on fuel and just happy be here. The surplus fuel stored on the shuttles was lost. There are two ways to get to land. You can pick up in orbit around the star or we can go for an old timey splash down in the ocean. If the shield was good that would work, but it is high risk now."

"We are coming to get you." replied Amie. "We will meet you in orbit. Do you have news of the other ships?"

"The Arc, Ship 4, landed on a planet near Llarimya with Adrian and Vanessa." said Haluk. "What was left of The Dream, the disbanded Interplanetary Settlement Program, pirated the Arc in a spectacular event."

Resupplied it with pirated fuel and supplies and created a major distraction so Adrian and Vanessa could escape. The Dream people were put in prison or worse, all of them. No one escaped. We are sending an interspace communicator to see if we can contact the dependents of the Arc or get any data on them. They are many generations away from us. The tool ship and the mining ship were salvaged for scrap. So, no one else is coming.”

“It seems Earth is putting together some kind of civilization from what was left. It seems to be very primitive. There were very few who survived. It was an almost extinction. After almost a thousand Earth years there are maybe 100,000 people there now. After we land, we will send an interspace communicator to see if we can get any data on them.” Haluk continues.

“Ship 2, the Exploration Ship, should be here in a year or two. Max is the Captain and engineer. Emma is the lieutenant and geographer. Oliver is an astrophysicist. Freja is an architect. Ottis, the son of Max and Emma is an engineer. Adele the daughter of Max and Emma is a biologist. Sofia a cartographer is the daughter of Oliver and Freja. Vidar is the teen son of Oliver and Freja. Heidi and Greta are the infant children of Ottis and Sofia. They do not seem to have any issues other than spending time dodging obstacles in space.” Haluk continued.

“We will have two shuttles there to meet you on star date 22,471.3. In our calendar that is January 17, 0008.” said Amie. “Is there anything you need other than transportation?”

“Vanessa is sick and needs care.” said Halk. “We do not know what to do with her. Everything we try seems to make her worse.”

“I will send medical supplies.” said Amie.

“Good. Looking forward to planet landing.” said Haluk. “It has been a long time. I am ready to get out of this tin can. I will send you more information tomorrow at the same time.”

The screen went blank.

“Now we have our goals.” said Amie. “There is a lot to do.”

Shuttle Preparation - Maarieda October 5, 0007

“Take everything out. Everything has to be cleaned thoroughly. Then we start testing every system.” said James. “Sam, start unloading any cargo, tools, anything in the cargo bay.

Michael, start in the crew area. Everything comes out. I will take the cockpit.” Alpha was getting a thorough cleaning. It had to be ready for a long trip. It had never been out of planet orbit before except attached to the ship.

“Wow look at this.” said Michael as he came out with long discarded food.

“Pretty gross.” said Sam. “Look at this. We forgot everything. It has been awhile since we were in the shuttle.” showing trash from the last exploration mission.

“Don’t report all the trash to Amie. She has enough to do now.” said James. It took all day to clean out the shuttle and scrub everything down. And that was just the start. All the systems and fuel supply will be there for tomorrow.

Beta was the same. There was dirt from the samples on the last exploration, as well as the usual array of trash. At a glance the shuttles had looked clean. Close inspection was another thing.

Lisa brought them lunch so they would not have to stop work. Usually they went get their own food.

“Thanks!” said Michael and gave his wife a hug. “This looks really good.”

“It is your favorite. You are working so hard. I will bring you dinner later. Amie said you all will be working late.”

“Looks that way.” said Sam. “There is a lot to do here.”

“I have to get back.” said Lisa to Michael. “Lori will wake up soon and be hungry.” and kissed him goodbye. Lori was their child.

“That is the sweetest person I know.” said Sam. Lisa was the commonsense person in the group. She was smart, but not a brainiac like the rest of them. And an empath that made everyone feel good. Whenever the others were thinking so far out that they made no sense she brought them back to ground. When everyone wanted to argue and fight, which was often tempting, she stopped the conflict. And when Mindy discovered the reason no one finished puberty, that the plants on Maarieda were keeping everyone young and healthy and also blocking puberty at least into late teens and that the cure was in the mushrooms, Lisa pirated the cure and was the first in her generation to become a mother. The others follow suit when they learned from her. For once she was the instigator in something.