

SUNFLOWER SEEDS



Next Pig-Out:

Saturday October 3rd, 12:45pm. Café Maurice, 9747 E 21st ST
Zoom meeting following at 4pm.

Guest Speaker (to be announced) and outdoor gathering:
Saturday, October 10th, 2:30pm. Bill Cather's retreat. No Zoom.

Kansas Sunflower Mensa Virtual Meetings:
Specific times are listed on page 3.

Join us at the on-line **Zoom Meeting:** (cut and paste the following address)
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/72081034487>
password=aWdKUSzbEVhNktjRzF0VEYxQTISQT09

Meeting ID: 720 8103 4487

Password: 8T0Jrt

Details regarding pig-outs or other events are on page 3.

September 2020, Volume – 48, Issue # 9
Kansas Sunflower Mensa Newsletter



Our Editor on the way to delivering your copy of the Mensa Seeds.

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Contributions may be submitted at any time, but for publication in the next issue, it must be received by the 20th of the preceding month. All contributions must be signed but may be published anonymously or under a pseudonym.

Paid advertising is accepted on a space-available basis at \$40 per full page, \$25 per 1/2 page, \$15 per 1/4 page. All ads must be renewed prior to each month published. Rates are double for non-members.

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The Editors have total discretion to reject or edit submissions and advertisements according to style, propriety, taste, and space requirements. Though the decisions of the Editors may on occasion seem capricious, they are always final.

All opinions expressed herein are solely that of the editor and/or contributor unless otherwise specified and in no way reflect the attitudes or opinions of other members of this chapter or of Mensa.

This publication is intended for mature, intelligent audiences and content herein may not be appropriate for some minors.

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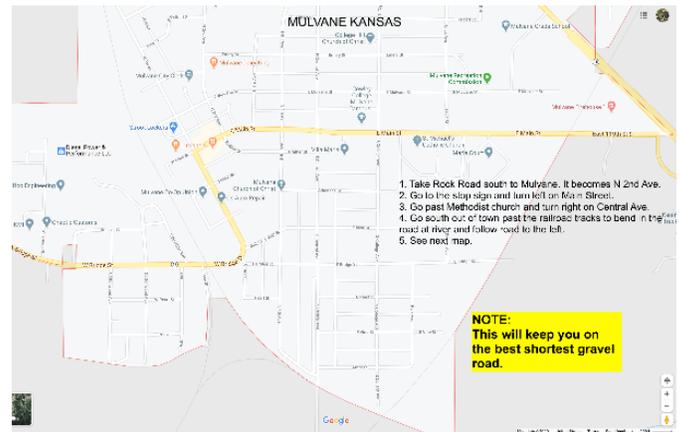
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/773587949355460/>

Pig Out details as follows:

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

Cafe Maurice

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.



Guest Speaker and Mensa Gathering:

Our host this month will be the lawyer and environmentalist Bill Cather, who is also active in the Sierra Club.

The gathering will be on his private land, located directly south of Mulvane, on the sandy shores of the Arkansas river.

Please bring your own folding chairs, drinks, and munchies. We will be getting together out of doors so plan accordingly. As I found out the hard way; do not forget bug spray such as off. The woods are beautiful, but also are resplendent with things that bite and sting.

There may also be a short nature hike involved for those who would like to see the flora and fauna of the Arkansas river bottoms. The last hike was 4 miles so be warned!

Address: 1199 Old Goat Ranch RD, Mulvane.

Gore township – 37.42836N x 97.23097W

During the production of this month's issue, the editor caught a "flu." Though the probability of being infected by an object handled by someone "sick" is slight, the editor will concede that it is greater than zero. In the interest of embracing the tenet of a preponderance of caution, there will be no mailed version of the September Sunflower Seeds. Normalcy will prevail next month! I hope that you all will understand.

Upcoming Zoom meetings scheduled.

Sep 26, 2020 01:00 PM
Oct 3, 2020 04:00 PM
Oct 17, 2020 01:00 PM
Oct 24, 2020 01:00 PM
Oct 31, 2020 01:00 PM

Be there or be square!



Heartland Mensa Region 7



It's Pumpkin Month again, never mind that they were harvested weeks ago nor that they're not really orange nor that we've been flooded with "pumpkin spice" whatevers since August. Maybe there'll be a Hallowe'en this year, maybe not – as I write, the Magic 8-Ball says the portents aren't clear.

Did you notice that on October 1, Mensa became 74 years old? American Mensa's Annual Gathering Committee and Gulf Coast Mensa (Houston) are hard at work planning a BIG 75th Anniversary party, to be held in conjunction with International Mensa's Board of Directors meeting. Watch for details.

For understandable reasons American Mensa's award announcements came out a little late this year. The good news is that the Heartland Region once again punched above our weight in awards:

- Denver Mensa's Beth Anne Demeter received a National Certificate of Appreciation
- North Dakota Mansa's Greg Kontz received an American Mensa Distinguished Service Award
- Denver Mensa's Martha McKeon was (again) named Abbie Salna Proctor of The Year
- South Dakota Mensa received an Owl Award for their outstanding member retention rate
- Ruby Jewel Awards (for Local Groups who worked hardest to support their members) went to High Mountain Mensa, Mid-America Mensa and North Dakota Mensa
- Sapphire Jewel Awards went to Denver Mensa and Kansas Sunflower Mensa
- Emerald Jewel Awards went to Nebraska/Western Iowa Mensa and Wyoming Mountain Mensa

Seven of our twelve Local Groups accounted for sixteen percent of the earned Jewel Awards and a quarter of the Rubies. Pretty good considering we're only ten percent of the country's Local Groups. Congratulations to all, especially to the folks who did the work.

If it's October of an even-numbered year, it's time to start thinking about Mensa's elections or at least who's going to be running. I will not be. I've entered my 8th decade and I'm finishing my second term as Region 7's RVC. I think that's enough and it's time for someone else to help transform American Mensa and our Heartland Region into the organizations they need to be in the pandemic and post-pandemic eras.

If you have leadership experience in Mensa or elsewhere, if you have a vision for what our future Mensa can look like, if you would like to help us get there, please visit us.mensa.org/lead/amc/elections/, check this year's rules and procedures, and start your campaign. I'll be delighted to be among the first to sign your candidacy petition.

~ Rich

LocSec Column

by Larry D. Paarmann

Kansas Sunflower 2020 Elections

Elected officers in our local group are: (1) Local Secretary (President), (2) Assistant Local Secretary (Vice President), (3) Local Treasurer, and (4) Member at Large. We are required by our Bylaws to elect these officers by the end of this year. First, a three-member nominating committee needs to be appointed by the Executive Committee. If you are willing to serve on the nominating committee, please let me know as soon as possible.

Please note that I will not be a candidate for LocSec, or any other office in this 2020 election. It has been my privilege to serve as LocSec for the past six years, and as Assistant LocSec before that. It is time to now pass the baton on to someone else.

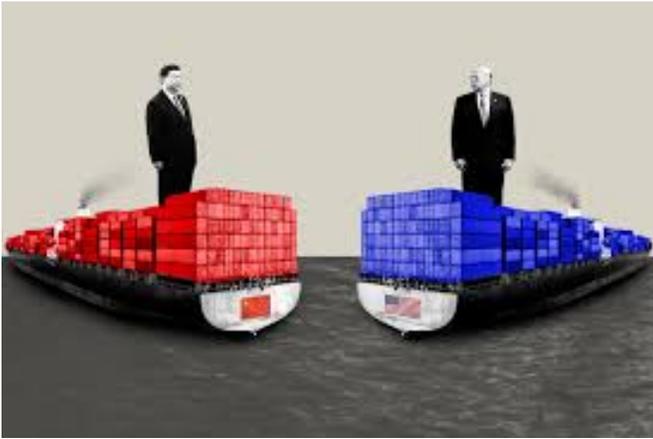
TRADE VS. TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

By: Igor Ponomaryov

Theory of Comparative Advantage, as it relates to international trade, is a straightforward extension of the known principle of labor specialization. It holds that trade between nations is generally beneficial, as it allows relocation of manufacturing to places where the best conditions exist for each specific type of production process.

Thus, it is hard to find people who object to free trade, at least in the USA. Absence of restrictions on trade is a part of what made America great in the 20th Century.

Another fundamental principle that seems to be carved in stone for most Americans (at least of conservative persuasion) is Free Enterprise. Very few in this country will question the right of a company to do what is best for it from the financial standpoint.



However, when those two principles are combined, and applied to trade with less industrial countries, an unexpected complication comes into play. Technology transfer, which is inevitable to some extent, happens on such a scale that entire industries can relocate from the more developed countries to the less developed.

It can be argued that technology transfer is acceptable if there is an adequate compensation paid for it. But is there? Even when you sell technology for a certain monetary consideration, you will likely get only what it is worth in the short term. The long-term value might not be captured in the price (See theory of Total Factor Productivity growth).

Many politicians downplay the importance of such transfers, arguing that newer, more advanced technology will be created at home to replace it, and thus to maintain a technological advantage and the high-skill jobs that come with it.

For example, consider an American company XYZ, which wants to reduce its costs, by buying parts from country CH. Wages in CH are low, and workers there usually do a good job. The problem that arises in the very beginning is that no company in CH knows how to build the parts they need. What can XYZ do? Maybe they can teach CH how to build those parts, then they can buy them at a low price? The CEO of XYZ has the authority to do so (Free Enterprise!!!).

There is a risk here, however. If XYZ teaches workers in CH how to build the parts, maybe CH will also sell those parts to their competitors. XYZ outsells its competitors now because their designs are better. But if enterprises in CH get those designs, they can compete with XYZ and take even more market share than XYZ has by improving the product based on the low cost of manufacturing. That is not what XYZ wanted, or is it?

XYZ's managers might have a different view of this matter. They are mostly concerned with a short (and medium) term effect of their decisions (Agency problem).

From their standpoint, it will take CH a long time to become a viable competitor in their business, and by then the current management will be somewhere else, at a different enterprise.

Today, managers in America (and Europe) are transferring technology en masse. They are giving the technology of their companies to nations with cheap labor and hoping it will pay off by them being able to buy cheaper parts and finished goods. However, in the long run they are losing market share to their competitors. For example, China might produce an entire product, and directly compete against the company that taught them how to do it. Do these American companies not care about the long-term effect on their business?

It seems they do not. In the long run this not only hurts them, but the American economy in general.

Should we modify the rules of trade to avoid this negative effect?

Notes to the Editor:



RICH VS. POOR BY: Gordon Bakken

There is considerable discussion about the large difference in wealth between the richest and poorest citizens in America today. The difference is great. There are many billionaires now, and a few worth more than \$100 billion. On the other hand, there are many with no job, thus no income, and truly little, if any wealth.

Is this a good situation? There will always be a difference between the rich and poor, but is this great a difference optimum? I say no.

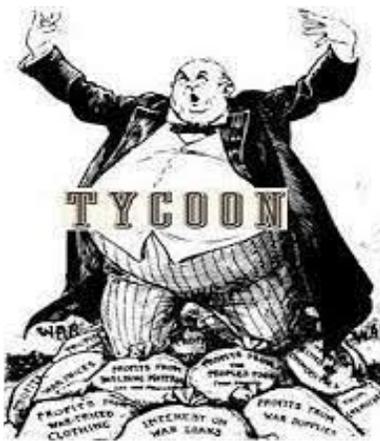
Some say that if the government took \$2 billion from each of America's 630 billionaires, they would hardly miss it. Then, if they took that money and spread it equally between Americas poorest 20%, they would be much better off.

(They would get about \$20,000 each.) It seems that the nation – on average – would be happier.

But there could be a problem if they over did it. The rich might say, "Why try? If I succeed, my money will be taken away from me. If I fail, I suffer." The poor might say, "Why work? If I just sit here the government will give me all the money I need." The net result could be that no one tries, and everyone becomes poor. It could be like the Communist who said, "We pretend to work, and they pretend to pay us."

Anyway, the wealth is already being redistributed to some extent. The top Federal tax rate is 37%. (It could be higher. It was 90% at one time.) Also, the poor receive some welfare. (Perhaps it could be more.)

Then there is always the question of fairness. If the rich earned their money honestly, is it moral to take it away from them? (I say that if it was not earned honestly, all of it should be taken away, and they should be put in prison.)



Thinking about morality, let us examine how some of America's rich got their money. Here are a few names that most of us will recognize: Bill Gates, Sam Walton, Mark Zuckerberg, and Jeff Bezos. How did they get their money? Well, Bill Gates built Microsoft, Sam Walton

built Wal-Mart, Mark Zuckerberg founded Facebook, and Jeff Bezos started Amazon. Does that make them criminals? Hardly.

In fact, most Americans, including the poorest, benefit from what they did. A few people were put out of business, but that was only because we thought these new guys served us better. Most of our lives improved because these rich guys came along.

The easiest way to get rich in America has always been to create something that will make people's lives better. Build it and sell it and keep a sliver of the selling price for yourself. The buyers are still better off. If they are not, they will not buy, and you will not make any money. That small sliver you keep need not be much, but when put together, all those small slivers can make a big pile. But we should not be too quick to try to get rid of the rich. Largely, they are the reason most of us enjoy the good life we do. (Also, when they die, most of the rich give a lot of their money to charity.)

One hundred years ago it was not much different. Only the names have changed. Henry Ford made cheap cars for the poor. Rockefeller made sure they had kerosene in their lamps, and gas for their cars.

Carnegie made steel for the bridges, and Vanderbilt made railroads that could haul freight. The country prospered. These four prospered more than most, and some people complained. But the entire country was better off for them being there (and those four gave a lot to charity).

The Communists said the rich were bad and got rid of them. But in the end, all they succeeded in doing was getting rid of the rich. The poor were not much better off. Let us not be so foolish. A society with no winners has only losers.

