

# *Sunflower Seeds*



**We now have in person meetings again.**

**New Zoom meeting schedule is a work in progress. When do you want to meet? Let us know. Some people have commented. More input is needed.**

**June 2021, Volume – 49, Issue # 6  
Kansas Sunflower Mensa Newsletter**

## Officers for 2021

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For questions concerning Seeds contact the Acting Editor through the American Mensa website or through the Facebook page. Contact other officers through the American Mensa website.

## Chapter's Official Web Sites

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

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/773587949355460Sunflower%20Seeds>

## Submissions Guidelines

The Sunflower Seeds is published monthly. Quarterly there will be a larger newsletter with more articles. Submission deadline is the first of the month. Members in good standing may submit articles, puzzles, photography, etc. to the editor for publication. To submit an article for the newsletter send it to [grandledge@hotmail.com](mailto:grandledge@hotmail.com)

Articles should be submitted as a WORD document or Mac Pages document. The font should be Times New Roman 12 pt.

# The Pig-Out Column

Recommendations from the Head Pig, Mike Dickson:

Check with Mike (316-651-4707) if you have suggestions or questions concerning the Pig-Outs.

**July 3, 2021, 12:45pm**

YaYa's Euro Bistro, 8115 E. 21st St. North, Wichita 316-634-1000

**August 7, 2021, 12:45pm**

Il Vincino Wood Oven Pizza (and other cuisine) 4817 E. Douglas Ave., Wichita 316-612-7085

**September 4, 2021, 12:45pm**

P. F. Chang's, 1401 Waterfront Pkwy, Wichita 316-634-2211



Pig-Outs are the perfect place to invite friends.

# Meeting Schedule

Starting June, the group will have in person meetings. The schedule will be the same monthly until further notice.

## 1st Saturday, July 3 - Pigout

See The Pig-Out Column.

## 2nd Saturday July 10 at 2:00 pm



The Program Meeting will be at Fairmont Coffee Company in their conference room. Cathryn Hay of the Irlen Clinic will speak on Irlen Syndrome which is a perceptual problem that can affect achievement, learning, and performance for struggling readers. Their cafe is open and all are encouraged to buy lunch or a drink. Fairmont Coffee Company is a non profit and it would be good to give them a \$20 donation if people want to chip in.



Irlen Clinic of Wichita/Counseling Resources

March 8 · 🌐



When I hear people minimize traumatic brain injury, I cringe. Here's why. Irlen spectral filters combat some of this damage.



AMENCLINICS.COM

### Common Problems in Mild, Moderate, and Severe TBI | Amen Clinics

Depending on the severity of a brain injury, a person may have a few symptoms—or many—...

**3rd Saturday, July 17 at 11:00 am**

The outdoor seating at Prost, 2721 E Central Ave #101, Wichita, KS 67214. If the weather does not permit sitting outside we will move inside. This is part of the Revolutsia shopping center. There is a coffee shop and other shops as well as the German restaurant.

**4th Saturday, July 24 at 7:00 pm**

Barnes and Noble Cafe at 7:00 pm.

**5th Saturday, July 31st, 12:45 pm**

The Muse Cafe at the Wichita Art Museum. We have a reservation for 8. If there are more than 8 they will have a second table.

**New Zoom Meeting Schedule To Be Announced**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/72081034487?pwd=aWdKUSStzbEVhNktjRzF0VEYxQTISQT09>

Probably one weekday evening a week. Let the editor know your preference.

## LocSec Corner

Bill Barnett

The Zoom meeting schedule is still being adjusted. There need to be at least two people who plan to meet at a time. There is no limit to meetings. Some people have replied. More input is needed.

**The group is looking for an editor. I enjoy it, but I am wearing too many hats. Contact me if you are interested.**

**The group has one proctor and is looking for another. It would be better to have three. Contact Dan Gollub if you are interested.**

Send your pictures to the editor along with their stories and they will be published here. You are talented and can be a writer for Seeds. Send your articles, letters, comments, and pictures for Seeds.

## Heartland Mensa Region Seven

Beth Anne Demeter

With July 1<sup>st</sup> comes the passing of the torch to a new Regional Vice Chair. And I can say I'm incredibly excited to take on the role! Of course, I'm also flattered that you would have the confidence in me to grant me the position. And that said, what am I going to do for you? I originally listed a few things in my campaign statement, but I'll start here with the Region, what an RVC does and my plans.

Within Mensa, we have a hierarchy that's derived from our beginnings as a British organization. Chief among these is the term LocSec, for Local Secretary, but you already knew this. The LocSecs and their teams run our local groups, offering members cool events, lesson plans, leadership, gatherings and more. The LocSecs report up to a Regional Vice Chair – or RVC – and there are 10 across the US. Here in the Heartland Region, or Region 7, we cross 8 states and include 12 local groups and approximately 2,300 members. Per the national site, our Region “has the sparsest population spread across the largest land area”. But that's not to say we don't do great things! For instance, we've held at least 2 annual gatherings, Mind Games and several local Regional Gatherings. We've also been a lead supporter of the Mensa Foundation's Scholarship program, as essay contest judges and as Culture Quest participants.

When it comes to the job and duties of the RVC, the Bylaws of American Mensa say “the duties of the Regional Vice Chairmen shall be to act as liaison between Local Groups in their respective regions and the American Mensa Committee, and to carry out in their respective regions the policies and programs formulated by the American Mensa Committee.” What that means is I will be working hard to solicit your feedback, host regular calls with LocSecs and other leaders, monitor social media sources to stay ahead of issues and lead a team of members to help me represent the Region at national board meetings held quarterly.

Of course, there's a lot more than can be summed up in a short, monthly column. However, I'd like to delve into that more in future columns, with local leaders on monthly calls and even by posting on the Region's Facebook page. But if you have thoughts or recommendations now, I'd love to hear them! You're always welcome to reach out to me via email at [bethane.demeter@gmail.com](mailto:bethane.demeter@gmail.com). Thanks, all!

From Pete Levy of Kansas Sunflower Mensa

Dear Ms. Ulrich:

I am a life member residing in Augusta, KS.

Just a few days ago I learned that a good friend (who had drifted out of recent touch) and former Sunflower member passed away in the summer of 2019. The lady's name was Mary Kay Mattson, mostly of Wichita, and she passed away at age 69 in Albuquerque on June 5th, 2019. She held office in Sunflower as Membership Officer and Member At Large. Mary Kay passed away in diminished circumstances and in passing was paid precious little honor or respect. That's no way to treat a lady, and I'm doing what I can for my friend of over thirty years to right this.

In Memoriam to My Friend  
Mary Kay Mattson  
Former Sunflower M  
December 28th, 1949 - June 5th, 2019

# Irlen Syndrome

Cathryn A. Hay, PhD, NBCC Board Certified,  
Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor, Irlen Diagnostician

Once named Scotopic Sensitivity Syndrome, and now called Irlen Syndrome, after the name of the developer, Helen Irlen, the syndrome names a visual perceptual disorder that causes difficulty in learning to read, and it appears to be caused by an inability to use the full spectrum of light. People trying to read find that distortions appear on the page, especially white pages with black print. These people are unable to improve with either remediation or maturation and give up aspirations that require reading for any lengthy period of time.

People with Irlen Syndrome face difficulty everywhere—school, home, and in the community. Since Helen found that reading for some people becomes easier and faster when “reading by the colors,” she developed a system of acetate overlays in specific hues and saturations that helped her learning-disabled college students to perform much better. The overlays didn’t help everyone, so she developed a method of screening that detected which readers were likely to benefit, and this was in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s. From the end of a federal grant, she took the information to develop a series of lenses which span the visible light spectrum and began to use them to benefit readers even more than the overlays.

Much oversimplified here, the Irlen Method is now an international enterprise based in Long Beach, where a specialized laboratory began to tint lenses, both non-Rx and prescription lenses, to a color determined by a more expensive screening procedure. Lenses for clients who benefitted from the diagnostic session were tinted to remove specific wavelengths from the light that caused distortions on the page. Much more information can be found at the [www.irlen.com](http://www.irlen.com) international website, along with self-tests for a variety of conditions, including migraines, attention deficit disorder, and some forms of autism. Research is also available there to support the findings.

Ms. Irlen’s first book, *READING BY THE COLORS*, was published in the 1990’s, followed by revised editions and a new book called *THE IRLLEN REVOLUTION*, which details the many conditions which respond partially or completely to Irlen spectral filters. Her latest book on sports concussions details how the filters can help brains concussed in accidents and sports recover. She and Dr. Amen work together on this.

I became a screener in 1990, after seeing the video of Morley Safer interviewing Ms. Irlen on 60 Minutes and identifying myself as one of the afflicted. Although I had been a Sputnik kid and a college graduate, the doctoral program pressured me to the limits of my reading ability. When I saw on television the distortion I often saw in the books I was to read for comps, I immediately signed up for a screening with the only clinic close to me in Lawrence, KS. With the assigned

overlays, I was able to finish my comps, and when I had my spectral filters, I was able to complete the doctoral program. I had thought I was too old to go back to school.

I became a screener, and I followed the protocol which I had been taught, learning to trust the method which had been carefully fashioned. A couple of years later, the Kansas diagnostic position became open, and I went to Long Beach to learn from Ms. Irlen and her staff. I became a diagnostician, one who does both screening and the diagnostic portion, in 1994, and have been doing it ever since.

The method has been shown to help an even greater number of people beyond third and fourth graders to include others in their families, others working hard for SAT and ACT results, then law school initiates, middle-agers retraining for new jobs or for promotion, and people my age fearing the loss of driving privileges. I envisioned a chance to have insurance agents refer to me those with two or more car accidents in a year, optometrists referring to me those clients who did not profit significantly from their efforts, and geriatricians referring to me those clients who were trying to maintain driving skills to a later age. Never happened. Although the City Council has permitted proclamations asking for public support, very few clients come from the Kansas area.

Nevertheless, I have five-drawer files filled with folders of clients who have improved with the use of filters. They know how to answer those who ask if they bought their colored glasses from Dillard's! It helps that the climate in most urban areas show a wide variety of colored lenses from many providers chosen for cosmetics, but learners in rural areas often don't know, don't believe, won't come for the screening which tells if they can be helped.

A surprising revelation to filter wearers is that they see colors in a new way, more vivid, more true to pictures in books. An older butterfly collector once remarked that the specimens he collected with his glasses on more closely resembled the book illustrations of the same species. Looking through the correct filters, a reader sees clear, non-moving print on a white page with black letters, and understands without rereading to get the meaning. Some people are able to cut back on prescription medication, or can use medications for severe conditions in the bloodstream, while getting benefits from the glasses (or contacts) on their faces.

Someone once criticized me for not "selling" people on the lenses, and my reply was that I educate, not sell. Since the lenses don't help everyone, the person is told at the end of the screening whether or not they can be helped, and thus expenditures in addition to the screening are avoided.

I welcome opportunities to speak at local events and to mail or email information about the process. Cathryn A. Hay, PhD, NCC, LCPC #118 at 151 Whittier, Wichita, KS, or at [chayphd@gmail.com](mailto:chayphd@gmail.com) for a description and costs.



# Rules for Students

Submitted by George Hiss

These rules were put forth by Charles Sykes in his book "Dumbing Down America". They have floated through the Internet being attributed to Bill Gates. Most often they appear with 11 rules leaving off three that the original author had written.

Rule No. 1: Life is not fair. Get used to it. The average teen-ager uses the phrase "It's not fair" 8.6 times a day. You got it from your parents, who said it so often you decided they must be the most idealistic generation ever. When they started hearing it from their own kids, they realized Rule No. 1.

Rule No. 2: The real world won't care as much about your self-esteem as much as your school does. It'll expect you to accomplish something before you feel good about yourself. This may come as a shock. Usually, when inflated self-esteem meets reality, kids complain that it's not fair. (See Rule No. 1)

Rule No. 3: Sorry, you won't make \$40,000 a year right out of high school. And you won't be a vice president or have a car phone either. You may even have to wear a uniform that doesn't have a Gap label.

Rule No. 4: If you think your teacher is tough, wait 'til you get a boss. He doesn't have tenure, so he tends to be a bit edgier. When you screw up, he's not going to ask you how you feel about it.

Rule No. 5: Flipping burgers is not beneath your dignity. Your grandparents had a different word for burger flipping. They called it opportunity. They weren't embarrassed making minimum wage either. They would have been embarrassed to sit around talking about Kurt Cobain all weekend.

Rule No. 6: It's not your parents' fault. If you screw up, you are responsible. This is the flip side of "It's my life," and "You're not the boss of me," and other eloquent proclamations of your generation. When you turn 18, it's on your dime. Don't whine about it, or you'll sound like a baby boomer.

Rule No. 7: Before you were born your parents weren't as boring as they are now. They got that way paying your bills, cleaning up your room and listening to you tell them how idealistic you are. And by the way, before you save the rain forest from the blood-sucking parasites of your parents' generation, try delousing the closet in your bedroom.

Rule No. 8: Your school may have done away with winners and losers. Life hasn't. In some schools, they'll give you as many times as you want to get the right answer. Failing grades have been abolished and class valedictorians scrapped, lest anyone's feelings be hurt. Effort is as

important as results. This, of course, bears not the slightest resemblance to anything in real life. (See Rule No. 1, Rule No. 2 and Rule No. 4.)

Rule No. 9: Life is not divided into semesters, and you don't get summers off. Not even Easter break. They expect you to show up every day. For eight hours. And you don't get a new life every 10 weeks. It just goes on and on. While we're at it, very few jobs are interested in fostering your self-expression or helping you find yourself. Fewer still lead to self-realization. (See Rule No. 1 and Rule No. 2.)

Rule No. 10: Television is not real life. Your life is not a sitcom. Your problems will not all be solved in 30 minutes, minus time for commercials. In real life, people actually have to leave the coffee shop to go to jobs. Your friends will not be as perky or pliable as Jennifer Aniston.

Rule No. 11: Be nice to nerds. You may end up working for them. We all could.

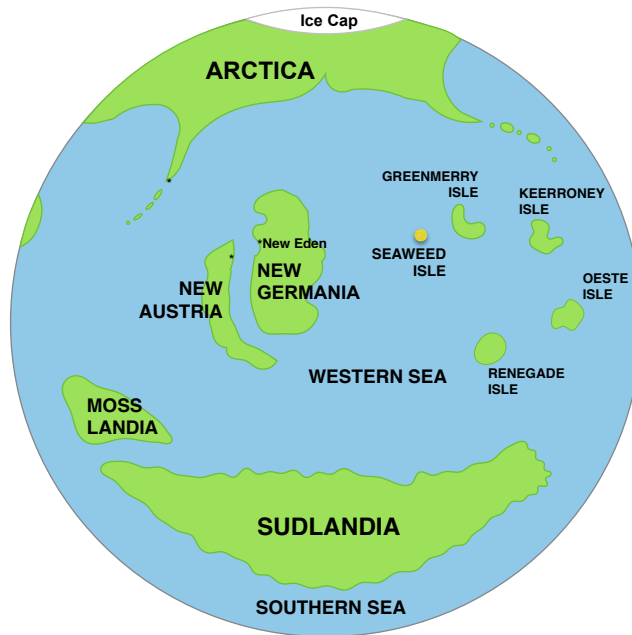
Rule No. 12: Smoking does not make you look cool. It makes you look moronic. Next time you're out cruising, watch an 11-year-old with a butt in his mouth. That's what you look like to anyone over 20. Ditto for "expressing yourself" with purple hair and/or pierced body parts.

Rule No. 13: You are not immortal. (See Rule No. 12.) If you are under the impression that living fast, dying young and leaving a beautiful corpse is romantic, you obviously haven't seen one of your peers at room temperature lately.

Rule No. 14: Enjoy this while you can. Sure parents are a pain, school's a bother, and life is depressing. But someday you'll realize how wonderful it was to be a kid. Maybe you should start now. You're welcome.

# Expedition To The Islands, Lost At Sea, part 2

Bill Barnett



**MAARIEDA WESTERN HEMISPHERE**

Continuation of the story of Maarieda - an excerpt from chapter 5

## **Maarieda, March 39, 0005**

Team One: Amie, Lisa, and Kristi were back at base camp studying their notes from the trip to the cenotes.

“I can’t find anything about granite caves with stalactites,” stated Lisa. “I am looking at all the indices and there is nothing. Granite caves in the geology reports are different. There are no granite stalactites or even stalagmites in granite. There can be limestone formations in granite caves and sandstone caves but not this.”

“This is actual granite!” Amie exclaimed. “Under the microscope it is the exact same granite as the cave wall, even in its finest detail.”

“The crystals will not glow here,” Kristi stated. “This is perplexing, they won’t glow, not even under UV light or any kind of light. It’s like they died. The lichens don’t glow either. They show no signs of phosphorescence here, not even any chemical elements of phosphorescence.”

“How could they be alive in the first place?” Lisa queried. “Can rock be alive? Is this something else different about this place?”

“Good question,” Amie stated. “We will look for signs of life in the rocks when we go back tomorrow. I wouldn’t have even given the idea a thought before we landed here. We will see.”

They spent the rest of the day doing a preliminary study of what they found and planning a trip back to the cenotes in two days.

### **Maarieda, March 41, 0005**

Team One: Amie, Lisa, and Kristi headed back to Cenote 2 on Greenmerry Isle.

“This time we have more scientific gear,” Amie stated. “We can measure the light coming from the rocks. And everything else from the electromagnetic spectrum. First we go to the cave where the rocks glowed in the dark.”

“How can a rock be alive?” Kristi asked. “And how can it form the features we saw?”

“What is the scientific definition of life?” asked Lisa.

“That is a very debated question,” Amie answered. “Life seems to be the opposite of entropy. Everything is going from order to disorder, that is entropy. Life is going from randomness to order. People like to debate the life force. It needs further scientific explanation.”

“The rocks went from randomness to order,” Kristi replied. “It looked like there was even a system of wires under the electron microscope, like nerves or something. They were not routed like electrical wires. They were a network.”

“We will see,” Amie answered. “I am curious about the caves and cenotes. And the rock forms you saw.”

When they arrived Amie ordered them to set the ropes like the last time. They rapped into the cenote and headed into the cave tunnel where they saw the glowing rocks.

“We are in Cenote Cave Tunnel 1a2,” Amie spoke as she recorded what they were seeing. “Turn the lights off,” she ordered.

The walls of the cave shimmered with light.

“There is a pattern,” Lisa remarked.

“Record it,” Amie ordered.

“The recorder says it is singing with words and music,” Kristi replied. “It doesn’t have any translation.”

“There may be no translation,” Amie replied. “How could a rock think and talk like a human. That’s crazy. A rock can’t think.”

“Then what is it doing?” asked Lisa.

“I have no idea,” Amie answered. “We will let the translator work on it when we get back to the camp.”

They traveled below ground through another tunnel cave to see the next cenote.

“This is Cenote 3,” Amie declared “We traveled Cenote Cave Tunnel 2a3.”

“I got that on the map,” Kristi responded. “There is a network of these tunnels. They have a pattern.”

“Did someone make these tunnels?” asked Lisa.

“We have no indication that anyone else was here before,” replied Amie.

“Did you see these the first visit?” asked Lisa.

“We didn’t get to explore that much the first time. We just started the terraformation,” Amie answered. “Can we get out here?”

“That wall of the cenote looks climbable,” answered Kristi. “I think we can get some pro in it too.”

“Let’s get out here,” Amie ordered. “We can hike past another cenote, pick up the gear where we went in and go back to camp tonight. We need to analyze what we have seen.”

“It will take forever to chart the underground system here,” Kristi stated.

“I doubt we can chart all of it or even more than a small part. But we can start. Back to camp,” ordered Amie.

They headed back to base camp.

## Maarieda, March 42, 0005

Team One: Amie, Lisa, and Kristi were back at base camp studying the data from the cenotes and tunnels.

What are you getting from the light show on the recorder?" Amie asked.

"I downloaded the data to the quantum computer back home," Kristi answered. "It shows there are words, music, and some kind of intelligent order to it all, but it can't translate anything. The neuro simulator is reporting the same. I am going to let it just run to see if it can learn the language. It can usually learn just about anything in about a week."

"How are the samples?" Amie asked.

"They are dead," Lisa replied. "And the samples from the other day seem to be decaying. The neuro wires in them are disintegrating. Otherwise they haven't changed. They are turning into ordinary rocks."

"I put the map into the computer and it immediately showed a network with suggested tunnels to complete the network," Amie stated. "If the network holds true, each cenote is connected to 4 to 6 other cenotes by tunnels and the system connects to the sea. There is one big waterfall going into a cenote and several small water flows into others. The ocean current flows under the ground across the island."

"And that happened by chance?" asked Kristi. "Just chance?"

"Either someone came here and made the tunnels, or it is alive, or we are seeing negative entropy," declared Lisa.

"Negative entropy is just too magical to believe," declared Kristi.

"There is a lot to learn," responded Amie. "Tomorrow we will send the drone to map the tunnels and cenotes. We can stay here and study the samples a few days."

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Team Three: Sam, Doug, and Teri left Greenmerry Isle and finally made it to open ocean on their trip to Keerroney Isle. The ocean was still shallow, and there were obstacles to avoid.

"Finally we can travel all night," Sam declared. "It has been a rough trip. I think we will sleep better now."

"We sleep fine," responded Teri. "You are the one who couldn't sleep," Teri responded to Sam.

“Nothing stops you kids!” exclaimed Sam. “We will be there in a couple weeks, almost a week behind schedule. At least we know what the ocean does here.”

They sailed on toward Keerroney Isle.

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Team Two: James, Michael, and Linda landed on Oeste Isle. There was grass growing just past the beach. Just inside the grass area were two ancient agribots that had only recently quit. Next to them was an empty tool bin for agribot parts.

“These agribots seem to have been very successful at terraforming this island,” James remarked. “Let’s see how far the grass goes. Fly the drone!” he ordered.

Michael flew the drone. After an hour he said: “There is grass as far as I can see. And an agribot signal in the distance.”

“There were 3 agribots here,” James stated. “And one is still going? Wow! Have it meet us,” he ordered.

“One agribot on the way,” Michael replied.

“I hope there weren’t any golden ferns here,” gasped Linda.

“I doubt it,” James replied. “The soil is different on Renegade Isle. The whole island seemed different and that is why it is called Renegade. We camp here and explore tomorrow.”

“I bet if there were any golden ferns they would have stopped the agribots,” Michael stated.

### **Maarieda, April 1, 0005**

Team Two: Linda and Michael were up early flying the drone.

“I hope they didn’t hurt any golden ferns,” Linda said with a worry in her voice.

“I doubt it,” Michael said as he flew the drone.

By mid day the drone reached the edge of the grass.

“Just regular moss and a few small ferns,” Michael stated. “Not even any fern trees here. I will follow the grass line to the other side of the island.”

James just watched the kids and then studied the map and satellite data.

By evening the drone reached the other end of the grass on the side of the island.

“No golden ferns!” Michael exclaimed.

“Thank goodness!” Linda exclaimed.

“The drone is on auto return,” Michael stated.

“Tomorrow we get back into the boat and head to the other side of the island,” James ordered. “We know what is here. Have the agribot meet us there. And take these two dead agribots. We can fix them. Next time we bring some of the deer here.”

They all slept under the stars in a perfect night.

### **Maarieda, April 2, 0005**

Team Two: James, Linda, and Michael headed north along the shore of Oeste Isle to travel to the other side. The current carried them and they were making fast time.

“Stay close,” ordered James. “We don’t want to get swept out to sea when we round the corner of the island. Linda, put the drone up and studied the currents.”

By afternoon Linda had a report on the currents. “The currents just circle the northern half of the island and meet a current from the south half of the island. Just don’t go all the way to the far east end.”

“We will land on the northern point of the island before the coast heads south,” ordered James.

They landed the boat and slept on the beach when it was dark.

### **Maarieda, April 3, 0005**

Team One: Kristi was flying the drone through tunnels and in and out of cenotes. They took turns flying the drone and studying samples.

“The data from the travel is filling out the map that was suggested by the computer. This is faster than crawling through all the tunnels. Some are small, only a meter across.” Amie stated.

“The drone is stuck,” Kristi gasped. “It emergency landed in a small tunnel and won’t move. It barely has a signal.”



“We will go get it tomorrow,” ordered Amie. “It will take three days to get there.”

“There is something weird about that place!” exclaimed Lisa. “The data from there does not work.”

“We will be careful when we get there,” ordered Amie.

They packed for the trip.

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Team Two: James, Linda, and Michael were up early and continued north along the shore of Oeste Isle. By afternoon they made the north point and landed.

“I never thought I would be so happy to see more moss!” Michael exclaimed.

“I’m happy the golden ferns are okay and we didn’t hurt any,” Linda sighed.

The agribot arrived just after dark pulling 2 trailers with grass seed and an almost empty trailer with repair parts.

“We will fix the agribot in the morning,” ordered James. “Time to sleep.”

The weather was perfect and they slept under the stars again.

#### **Maarieda, April 4, 0005**

Team Two: James, Linda, and Michael awoke on the north point of Oeste Isle. They repaired the ancient agribots and set them off to planting more grass.

“We explore here,” ordered James.

They planned to spend the rest of the time exploring the northern point of Oeste Isle.

#### **Maarieda, April 6, 0005**

Team One: Amie, Lisa, and Kristi were heading to Cenote 23 on Greenmerry Isle. They had to rescue the drone. It was stuck in a narrow cenote cave tunnel. When they got to the cenote it was surrounded by fern trees with golden mushrooms. There was a circle of different soil 100 meters wide around the cenote opening covered with golden fern trees. The fern trees completely blocked the opening from being seen from above. As they approached the golden fern trees the trees opened a path for them to enter the circle.

“They are inviting us in!” exclaimed Lisa.

“Keep your eyes open!” Amie ordered, thinking about all the sci-fi movies and books she had seen. It felt like a trap, but she was afraid to discourage the kids. This time she brought a weapon and had it hidden.

“The trees are alive!” exclaimed Kristi. “They are inviting us.”

“Be careful!” Amie ordered and then she gasped wondering what kind of monster would come out of the shadows.

The kids were not afraid.

They all walked to the edge of the cenote with the cart following them. The cenote was 12 meters in diameter and 50 meters deep. There was a path going down around the edge of the cenote. Around the edge of the cenote were 7 crystals the size of a large human, each a different color, and each emitting a pulsing glow of light.

“This is a special place,” Lisa whispered with a reverent awe as she started down the spiral path.

“Shhhhh,” whispered Kristi as she followed.

Amie just followed, ready to go for her weapon.

At the bottom there was a table size blue crystal with a spring of clear blue water flowing from it.

“This is some kind of weird alter,” Amie thought, keeping quiet, and becoming more alarmed.

“The drone is in that tunnel,” whispered Lisa. “Cenote Tunnel 23g27.”

They all recorded everything they saw. The sunlight did not make it into the pit they were in. The crystals in the wall glimmered with colorful light patterns that rotated around the room.

“Wait here,” Lisa whispered as she began to crawl into the 1 meter tall tunnel.

Amie thought: “*Either this place is holy or the devil himself lives here.*” But she did not make a sound.

Lisa crawled 300 meters to the drone. The crystals in the tunnel wall and the drone’s light were signaling each other.

“There you are,” Lisa whispered to the drone. “Time to go home.” And she picked it up and crawled back out of the tunnel.

“Whew!” exclaimed Amie with relief as she saw the girl come out of the tunnel with the drone.

Amie put the drone down and it flew back into the tunnel. It ignored the controls while still sending video and audio.

“Damn!” cursed Amie.

The walls flashed an angry red.

“Shhhh,” Lisa whispered. “Don’t say that.”

Amie was beside herself, but said nothing.

Lisa crawled back into the tunnel and retrieved the drone.

When the girl came out Amie whispered: “Take the rotor blades off.”

The girls removed the blades. As they silently climbed the stairs to leave the cenote the drone came alive with the rotors spinning, but going nowhere. Once they were out of the golden circle they began to talk.

“Ahhhh!” Amie exclaimed. “The drone needs to be reprogramed.”

“They are friends,” Lisa retorted.

Amie shook her head in disbelief and said: “Maybe there is a message in the drone, or at least some useful data.”

They headed back to base camp and would continue to study the area for the rest of the trip.

### **Maarieda, April 9, 0005**

Team Three: Sam, Doug, and Teri were only 50 clicks northwest of the northern shore of Keerroney Isle. They had planned to land on the northern shore. It was smooth sailing. They could see the ocean bottom, but there were no places to avoid. The ocean was consistently 2 to 5 meters deep. Suddenly the current changed to a strong northward current. Looking down they could no longer see the bottom.

“How deep is the water,” Sam demanded.

“100 meters deep!” Doug exclaimed. “The sonar shows an ocean floor cliff we just passed.”

“How fast is the current?” Sam demanded.

“20 knots and increasing,” Doug responded.

“Head south toward the island,” Sam ordered.

Doug aimed the boat south. Teri was watching the progress from the drone.

“We aren’t going to make it,” Teri gasped.

“We have to make it,” Sam demanded.

In a half hour the island was in sight. Heading full speed south they missed the northeast corner of the island by 100 meters. The current swept them northward faster and faster. They could not get the boat to the back side of the island. The current continued carrying them north.

“Now what?” Sam demanded, with anger.

“We could hit one of the Arctica islands. The current is going that way,” Teri replied.

“NO!” Sam demanded.

The kids laughed. “You can say no all you want, and it won’t change anything,” The kids replied with a gleam in their eyes. “That is what you always told us.”

Sam was angry, but he laughed after he calmed down. “Okay, then an Arctica island,” he said. “A middle one, or a big one. Anything is better than half a globe of open ocean with no land.”

Teri declared: “There is a big one due north. We are going there. If you miss that one there are others.”

“Yes, ma’am,” Sam replied with a mock salute. “We’re following your orders now?” he asked sarcastically.

“Doug, fly the drone, and put markers in the ocean,” Teri ordered. “We need to see where we are going and where the current is going.”

“Aye, aye, ma’am,” Doug chuckled.

“Hey, I’m in charge here,” Sam demanded.

The kids just laughed. “You got us lost,” Teri stated. “It’s half a world to any other land. That’s many months in a boat.”

“Okay, take us to the Arctica island,” Sam replied with resignation.

“We’ll call it Lost Isle, since we are lost,” Teri declared. “I will tell the others where we are going.

They headed north across hundreds of kilometers of open ocean.

### **Maarieda, April 12, 0005**

Team One: Amie, Lisa, and Kristi were heading to Cenote 17 on Greenmerry Isle. It was the cenote with the big waterfall. They came to a river that collected water from the middle of the island. One fourth of the watershed of the island flowed into river.

“Follow the river,” Amie ordered. “When we get to the cenote we will camp for the night.” At this point it was a small stream collecting water from many creeks. Then she thought: “*What is going to be here to trap us? Another magical plant? or ad demon? or some kind of science fiction god?*” She kept her weapon hidden.

“I bet this one is alive too!” Kristi exclaimed.

“Me too!” Lisa exclaimed. “Maybe this is the artery of the planet and Cenote 23 is the heart.”

Amie shook her head and kept her calm. At sunset they made camp.

### **Maarieda, April 13, 0005**

Team One: Amie, Lisa, and Kristi were up early continuing to Cenote 17 on Greenmerry Isle. The river was growing bigger as they traveled. By late afternoon they reached a river delta that spread through a red fern forest. The river broke into seven streams that flowed into the cenote on all sides.

“We will camp here tonight,” Amie ordered. “Fly the drone and see what you can see. I hope it comes back.”

Kristi flew the drone and circled the cenote. The she flew the drone into the cenote.

“Don’t fly far,” Amie ordered. “I don’t want to loose the drone. Don’t go into the tunnels.”

“I’m not going far,” replied Kristi. “The best way down is the northeast side. There is water everywhere. The river flows through tunnel G. Tunnel B, on the northeast side is almost empty of water. The other tunnels have water flowing into the cenote.”

“Bring the drone out,” Amie ordered. “We go into Tunnel B tomorrow. Let’s find a dry space on the northeast side to camp.”

### **Maarieda, April 14, 0005**

Team One: Amie, Lisa, and Kristi were up early to explore Cenote 17 on Greenmerry Isle. They fixed ropes in the forest and made their way to the edge of the cenote. It was 200 meters across and 70 meters deep. The main waterfall raged on the other side of the cenote. There were small waterfalls on 3 sides. The river raged into 2 tunnels, F and G, with most of it going into G. The mist almost reached the team. There was a cloud circling over the waterfall and it was raining from the cloud. A small piece of dry ground was below them. Even the dry ground was damp.

Amie looked at the scene before them in dread, sighed, and ordered: “Kristi, you go first. I will follow. Lisa, follow me. STAY ON ROPE!”

Kristi rapped into the cenote with excitement on her face. Amie followed in dread thinking: “What have I gotten us into,” and still propelled on by her desire for science.

Lisa followed excited as ever.

There were large red crystals, the size of church alters at each tunnel. In the middle was a house size orange crystal. The walls of the cenote were glowing in a pattern. Tunnel B, next to them was 6 meters tall.

“They’re talking to us!” Kristi exclaimed.

“Singing!” Lisa exclaimed.

Amie thought: “*Are we trespassing in hell or some demonic god’s holy place?*” while trying to keep a scientific mind.

Amie ordered: “Fix ropes for the tunnel. We stay on rope until we are out of here.”

The girls fixed ropes while Amie continued to study the place they were in. It almost seemed like there was a figure of something alive above them, but she could not recognize it and soon it disappeared. They did not need lights. The colors appeared eerie to Amie.

“Stay together,” Amie ordered as they begun to travel the tunnel. It was a slight uphill walk.

The tunnel was lined with clear orange crystals 1/2 meter to 1 meter in size. They stopped to study them.

“They are corundum,” Kristi stated. “Perfect Padparadscha crystals, orange sapphires. They were rare on Earth.”

“They are singing,” Lisa replied.

Amie watched in apprehension. They continued walking through the tunnel. After 500 meters the tunnel ended at an underground cenote with flat ground all around the pit below them. Inside the pit was churning water 40 meters below them. The walls of the pit contained glowing clear red corundum crystals. The water glowed red below them. The air was cool and the humidity was 100%.

“*We are in hell!*” thought Amie silently.

Then a figure appeared in the mist above the pit. It was unrecognizable, but seemed alive and seemed to be telling them something that they could not understand. It looked like an apocalyptic dream from an ancient prophet. The three stood there spellbound.

“It is a hologram!” Amie shouted.

“Shhhh, we know,” whispered Lisa.

The figure was there for an hour and then suddenly disappeared. They recorded it the whole time.

“We are out of here!” Amie ordered, in a whisper. “Don’t fly the drone. Stay together.”

In silent reverence they left the cave system.

Once outside Amie gasped and sat down to rest. “We just saw the hell goddess, now what?” she said.

“Angel, a messenger,” Lisa, the only semi normal one of the Maariedans, corrected her. “She is a messenger from the planet, you Earth people don’t understand anything.”

Amie had nothing else to say and thought to herself: “*We have created more than we ever imagined when we came here. Earth was destroyed long ago and its civilization with it. The rock is still there and maybe some people. What have they done.*”

“Back to base camp tomorrow,” Amie ordered.

## Maarieda, April 16, 0005

Team Three: Sam, Doug, and Teri landed on the south shore of Lost Isle. They had planned for a semitropical island and were now on a cold temperate island. The island was part of a chain of islands off the second Arctica peninsula.

“Thank God for land!” exclaimed Sam as he set foot on the beach.

“You are getting religious now,” Teri remarked.

“Anything to be on land again,” Sam replied.

A small flock of noisy shore birds joined them on the beach, complaining about their presence.

“Let’s see what we can find here,” Sam said respectfully.

The birds followed them as they moved inland.

“We need to get away from these birds,” Sam declared.

The birds followed them a click before returning to the beach.

“They have nests,” Teri declared. “You were disturbing their nests.”

“More mutated birds?” Doug asked. “What were they?”

“Something that escaped and moved here after their planted colony died out,” Doug replied. “Set up camp and we will make a plan tomorrow to study this place. Man, it’s cold here.”

“I’m fine,” Teri replied.

“Me too,” Doug said.

They began setting up camp. It was an hour until dark. Sam collected fire wood from dead fern trees that had drifted up on the shore. Soon the tents were set up and Sam had a fire going.

“Man, this is cold. We didn’t plan for this,” Sam shivered.

“We always plan for everything!” the kids laughed. “That’s what you always said.”

“I did,” stuttered Sam. “You got me,” he laughed. “I never imagined this.”

“Imagine everything and plan for it,” the kids chimed in. “You always said that too.”



“I said that too,” Sam admitted.

The kids went for more firewood as Sam was warming himself by the fire. Soon the auroras were lighting the sky and the kids went to bed. Sam slept by the fire.

### **Maarieda, April 17, 0005**

Team One: Amie, Lisa, and Kristi were back back at base camp from Waterfall Cenote.

“Put it on the map, Waterfall Cenote, it has a name, the others just have numbers so far,” Kristie ordered.

“They all need names,” Lisa replied.

“Good, when you finish naming them put the data in the computer,” ordered Amie.

“It is good that they have names,” Lisa replied.

“It is good that we are back,” stated Amie. “I have never seen anything like that.”

“Everything here is like that,” stated Lisa. “It’s not a spaceship, not a manmade spaceship. All planets are spaceships, but different and alive.”

“And it thinks, and is sentient?” Amie scoffed.

“Of course,” Lisa replied.

They all went about recording what they learned. Kristi put the data from the caves into the quantum computer and set it to run for days. “We need a rosetta stone for their language,” she said.

“I don’t think there is one,” Amie replied. No one was here before.”

“There has to be something,” Kristi stated.

“Let’s call her Padparadscha, The Messenger,” Lisa stated. “And her house is Padparadscha Cenote.”

The kids went to work and Amie took a nap.

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Team Three: Sam, Doug, and Teri woke up on the south shore of Lost Isle. Sam barely slept, he was gathering firewood all night. The island had no terraforming and was just moss with a small fern tree forest.

“You are going to run out of firewood,” Doug said to Sam.

“There is a heater and sleeping bag, when we can find it,” Sam replied. “Set up everything and collect firewood. Tomorrow we explore. I’m glad we could land somewhere.”

“It’s just moss and a few ferns, like everywhere,” Teri said. “Nothing new, except a few more mushrooms.”

They built a debris shelter and collected a huge pile of firewood. They set the agribot to planting an orchard. They had a few seedlings and many bags of seeds. There would be nothing tropical growing here.

### **Maarieda, April 18, 0005**

Team Three: Sam, Doug, and Teri started the exploration of Lost Island.

“Let’s go on foot. Bring the cart. We aren’t doing more in the ocean today. We are shipwrecked enough as it is,” Sam ordered.

They headed west along the shore. It was smooth travel except for a few creeks.

“The same moss as everywhere, nothing but more moss,” stated Teri. “It goes on forever. I bet there was more to see on Keerroney Isle.”

“We were going to Keerroney, but we are here. What can we find here. Got to be something,” Doug replied.

After a few clicks they came to a small riverbed. The river was lined with shiny black marble with white veins in it. The ground was covered with round black marble stones. And beside them were black with white stripes mushrooms.

“Something new!” Sam exclaimed cheerfully to create a better mood. “Test it,” he ordered.

“Toxic,” stated Doug as he was reading the scanner. “But not poisonous like Earth mushrooms. It is something else. I will bring a sackful to test at home.”

“Let’s go up the river,” Sam ordered.

They traveled inland along the river and saw a black fern tree forest and more black mushrooms.

“How do the black ferns test?” asked Sam.

“Toxic, but they neutralize the mushrooms,” Doug stated.

“Bring samples,” ordered Sam. “Time to head back.”

It was early. The kids just looked at each other and followed orders.

When they could get away from Sam Teri whispered to Doug: “He’s really freaked out.”

Doug replied: “And he didn’t get any sleep. Just don’t upset him until he gets better.”

Sam went to bed early.

### **Maarieda, April 19, 0005**

Team Three: Sam, Doug, and Teri woke up early on Lost Island.

“I got a little better sleep,” said Sam unconvincingly. “We need to expand the debris shelter.”

Sam built a big fire. After breakfast he added more wood to the fire and they all went to collect more materials for the debris shelter. When they got back the shelter was on fire.

“Oh, God, no!” shouted Sam. “I am going to freeze.”

“Don’t worry,” Teri comforted him. “Stay here by the fire and we will build you a new shelter.”

“I’m freezing,” Sam cried.

“You are hot,” replied Teri. “You have a fever. Are you sick? Is that what being sick is like. How did you get sick here?” she asked.

“I don’t know, maybe something from the past,” replied Sam.

The kids went off talking to each other and wondering what being sick was. Earth people had that back on Earth. They had never seen someone sick before. Soon they were back with more shelter materials. Doug began building the shelter and Teri hugged Sam to keep him warm.

In the evening the teens hugged Sam to keep him warm in the half built shelter by the fire. They kept the fire going all night and Sam finally slept well.

### **Maarieda, April 20, 0005**

Team Three: Sam, Doug, and Teri woke up early. They kids always did that no matter what. Sam finally had some good sleep.

The kids took turns building the shelter and taking care of Sam. By evening they had the shelter built.

“Don’t leave the shelter fire unattended,” ordered Teri.

Sam felt strange with the role reversal. It was as if he was the child and they were the adults. They spent the time letting Sam recover.

### **Maarieda, April 24, 0005**

Team One: Amie, Lisa, and Kristi were back from Waterfall Cenote on Greenmerry Isle. They were studying the samples and data they got from the trip to waterfall Cenote and Padparadscha Cenote.

“The quantum computer can’t translate anything the crystals or caves or messenger had to say, Kristi said. “We need to go find the rosetta stone.”

“Not now. We did enough for this trip. Study what you have and try to organize the data,” ordered Amie.

“Yes, we will,” the girls chimed and went about organizing what they found.

Amie was tired and ready to go home. Nothing slowed down the kids.

“The rosetta stone could be anywhere on this planet, if it even exists at all,” Amie stated.

“We will find it,” Lisa stated with confidence. “Maybe it is on Dianna. Where ever it is we will find it.”

### **Maarieda, April 34, 0005**

Team One: Amie, Lisa, and Kristi took the shuttle to pick up the others and head home. They went to Lost Isle to pick up Sam, Doug, and Teri.

### **Maarieda, April 33, 0005**

Amie flew the shuttle to Oeste Isle to pick up James, Michael, and Linda. They all met and the group decided that communicating with the planet was a top priority. Linda and Michael would

go to Renegade Isle to learn from the ferns as it seemed low risk. Amie decided to delay a trip to Greenmerry Isle to learn from the crystals because she thought it was a high risk trip. The others wanted to explore the crystals more, but Amie ordered a delay for a trip there until they had more information.

#### **Maarieda, April 34, 0005**

Amie flew the shuttle to Renegade Isle. Linda and Michael were going to stay for three months to learn to communicate with the golden ferns. It was decided that understanding the sentient fern trees was essential to understanding the planet they lived on.

#### **Maarieda, April 35, 0005**

Amie, James, Sam, Kristie, Doug, Teri, and Lisa got into the shuttle to head home. Amie would return for Linda and Michael in 2 months.

#### **Maarieda, April 36, 0005**

Linda began to use sign language to talk to the plants and was beginning to talk to the ferns. They learned her spoken language and talked back with their leaves. She found out that the golden mushrooms are nerve centers and have a collective intelligence comparable with the collective intelligence of the humans on the planet. The plants see with their golden mushrooms, but not like the eyes of animals. It was decided not to cut golden mushrooms anymore as that was offensive to the fern trees. The golden mushrooms communicated with the rest of the planet and seemed to be its central nervous system. Linda explained Earth and they said it must have been alive like their planet and died.

After three months of learning to communicate with the golden fern trees Linda asked them about the crystals and hologram on Greenmerry Isle. They told her that the six rosetta stones were on each of the six corners of Maarieda.

Linda called back to New Eden and said: "We can communicate with the Golden Ferns. Their name is Ferigaurie. They know the crystals. They are another intelligent life and are all over the planet, but only on the surface a few places. There are 6 rosetta stones, one on each of the 6 corners of Maarieda. Two of those corners are the poles. They don't know where the others are. Ferigaurie doesn't know Dianna, she only sees her in the sky. The crystals know Dianna and talk to her. We are ready to go home."

#### **Maarieda, July 36, 0005**

Amie flew the shuttle to Renegade Isle to pick up Linda and Michael. Then they headed home.

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