

Sunflower Seeds



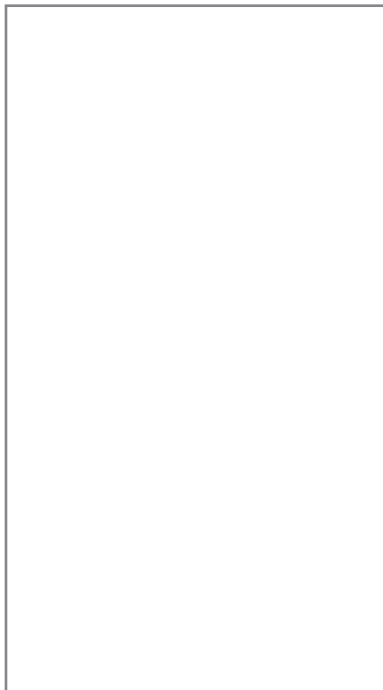
Kansas Sunflower Mensa Virtual Meetings

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March 2021, Volume – 49, Issue # 3
Kansas Sunflower Mensa Newsletter

Kansas Sunflower Mensa
1915 N Country Walk Lane
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Chapter's Official Web Sites

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

www.facebook.com/groups/773587949355460Sunflower Seeds

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

LocSec Corner - February 2021

Bill Barnett

Spring is here and I suspect we all have cabin fever and are looking forward to getting out. I know I have cabin fever and I get out some. Hopefully in a few weeks the Covid restrictions will be lifted. The group will return to meeting in person when the Covid restrictions are gone. I really miss the in person meetings. At some time we might return to the outdoor meetings at Bill Cather's place or in a park in Wichita.

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.

We are all potential writers for Seeds. Send your articles, letters, comments. and pictures for Seeds.

- Bill

Heartland Mensa Region Seven

Rich Olcott

March, a time of renewal, when the world wakes up from its Winter sleep. As I write this my window shows me a snowscape but I'm looking forward to crocuses and tulips and that vivid yellow-green of newly-opened tree leaves. Better times lie ahead, y'all.

Here's some more good news. American Mensa's 2020 CultureQuest® nationwide team trivia contest ran online and about 6 months later than usual, but it did happen and our Heartland Region did well. Two of our teams placed in the Top 20:

- *Questionable Behavior* from Denver Mensa, captained by Tara Lange, placed #8

- *Heart of America* from Mid-America Mensa, captained by Paul Hough, placed #13

Congratulations, folks, you make me proud.

By no coincidence, registration for the 2021 competition will be open by the time you read this. Only Mensans would willingly sign up to spend a May Sunday afternoon working a 200-question trivia contest to benefit the Foundation's Scholarship Fund, but we do and we think it's fun. If you and a few Mensan friends would like to be part of the experience, go to us.mensa.org/attend/culturequest/ for more details. Registration closes at the end of March.

That Scholarship program only works with the active support of hundreds of Mensan judges who spent part of their February reading and scoring thousands of essays. Thanks, to you judges and to you Scholarship Chairs who rode herd. You're part of why I'm so proud to be a member of American Mensa.

Unless you're a lifer or midway into a multi-year membership, March is also a time of renewal for your Mensa membership. This hasn't been a normal year for Mensans or anyone else. We've not been able to support our normal menu of face-to-face and food-to-face get-togethers, but you've still been receiving your *Bulletin* (with Bill Etienne's mind-melting puzzle pages) and your local newsletter (please thank your Editor) and to keep your brain cells ticking there's been a florescence of online Mensan activities - from conversations to presentations - on Mensa Connect and other platforms. Check us.mensa.org/attend/calendar/ for a partial list of live and online programs. Stay with us for the expedition beyond the mess.

Better times lie ahead, y'all.

~ Rich

Covid Jail Question

Do you have a bucket list for when we get out of Covid jail? What is the first thing you want to do when there are no restrictions? I have mine. Send it to the editor for publication if you want.

The Pig-Out Column

Recommendations from the Head Pig, Mike Dickson:

Check with Mike (316-651-4707) to see if people are planning to go. Some people are isolating until the virus is gone or they are vaccinated. Changes will be published in upcoming Seeds.

April 3, 2021, 12:45pm

George's French Bistro. 4618 E. Central, Wichita. 316-831-1325

May 1, 2021, 12:45pm

Bella Luna Café, 2132 N. Rock Rd., Wichita 316-634-0008

June 5, 2021, 12:45pm

N & J's Café & Bakery, 5600 E. Lincoln St., Wichita 316-681-3975

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

October 2, 2021, 12:45pm

LongHorn Steakhouse, 440 S. Towne East Mall Dr., Wichita 316-618-8681

November 6, 2021, 12:45pm

Café Bel Ami, 229 E. William St., Wichita 316-267-3433

December 4, 2021, 12:45pm

Cheddars Scratch Kitchen, 11711 E. 13th St. N., Wichita 316-688-0401

December 11, 2021

Christmas Party location to be determined later

The Education Column

Margarita Barnett

Education part II, continued from February 2021

We can't talk about education in our country when we are sweeping under the rug important facts put and pushed the educational system in an unpredictable, and sudden situation. (Remote learning, online, virtual, hybrid schedule) For some unknown reason there are a lot of people who do not understand and care about what is going on in the world.

With the Pandemic of March 2020, the population in the world learned a new way of living, especially in the industrialized and metropolitan cities, where people live in constant rush without time to meditate, or have a quality and meaningful lifestyle to be able to communicate with their family and friends. For some communities it was more drastic than others. The fact is, that the people had to adapt to stay at home, spend endless hours, with their loved ones, days and months with their children, spouses, pets, and not being able to go to work, to school, to the gym, to the church, to the golf club, the pub, to the nail and beauty parlor/ shop, to the restaurants, to meet with friends, to the grocery store (people had to order their supplies and pick them up), people have to wear a face mask. Parents are not used to spending 24/7 with their children, nor their spouses. They lose their "cool", patience flew away from their household.

As a result, domestic violence, divorces, suicide and physical abuse increased in the homes of a lot of people. Rebellious citizens came with the idea that the Pandemic was a way for the government to control the people in the world. To this situation we can call it "catastrophe".

Adults, the wise, the intelligent, the ones with common sense understood that this pandemic situation and measures that the government was taking, was a way to control the spread of the virus, however, the teenagers and children didn't grasp the whole concept of

the situation. It never was addressed to them properly. In Norway the Prime Minister Ms. Solberg had a press conference with her country's children without adults present. She wanted them to listen to her and answer the questions that the children had. She responded to their questions and told them that it was ok to feel scared, but with the help of all the people in the country the virus can be gone. This lady took the time to spend time with the children and answer questions. In this country (USA) we did not have that type of luxury. No one tried to explain properly what, why and how we combat the virus, what causes it, and why we end up in this situation.

Countries in Europe were firm with their decisions to close everything in order to control the spread of the virus. It was Italy who did not take the virus seriously until hundreds of citizens started dying everyday, and they couldn't control the situation.

It was very notorious that the countries where they had a female leader had a smaller number of people dying or sick from the virus. such:

New Zealand, Jacinda Arden, 4 cases.

Taiwan, Tsai ing-wen 6 cases.

Iceland, Katrin Jakobsdottir 8 cases.

Finland, Sanna Marin 49 cases.

Norway, Erna Solber 98 cases.

Denmark, Mette Frederiksen 260 cases.

Germany, Angela Merkel 2,673 cases.

Data collected by the European Center for Disease Control (ECDC) on April 12, 2020

According to an article from the "Medical Economics org" says that on April 20, 2020 only in the USA had 35,793 deceased people, and Infected 749,203.

It is remarkable the difference in how the virus was handled since the beginning. * The Leaders of the European countries took it as something serious, and deadly. Taiwan's president took the fastest

response since the very first sign of the illness. She presented 124 measures to control the spread of the virus without the lockdowns and isolations.

Another thing in the favor of these countries is that they have responsible leaders who are seeking the wellbeing of their constituents.

Sanna Marin in Finland, the youngest head of the state, used a different way to approach and inform the people of Denmark. Marin is the millennial that took to social media to motivate her followers as influencers and agents to battle the pandemic. She knew that not everybody will be reading the newspapers, so she tried to reach the country in different ways spreading the “fact-based” information. Without doubt the people in these countries followed their leaders’ measures in the pursuit of good health for everybody. These countries of course were fast in working to bring the students back to their classroom following the hygiene measures. However and in contrast here in the USA as the public was daily misled and misinformed. We had a leader that contradicted and humiliated the director of the CDC every time he had a recommendation for the sake of the population. This leader blamed a country overseas for the spreading of the virus, he demoralized and demonized the journalist when they asked him questions about how he was controlling the virus. He promoted everything opposite of the CDC. He stopped authorizing subsidies to WHO to save money and because it was against his beliefs.

In the midst of the pandemic he encouraged public rallies and riots in order to demonstrate who was in control without any measure of health control causing a big surge of the spread of the virus and deaths in the Summer and Fall of 2020. In the meantime district schools across America were organizing how to receive the students in a safe way where everybody had access to attend school and continue learning. In the first months there were lots of kids and teachers who got severely sick, some lost their lives, even though they were taking all kinds of health measures. Covering their faces, washing hands, 6 ft. distance, no touching anything that others touch was not enough for all these people.

District schools came with the option of teaching students online, for some it was easy, other district schools had to learn how to do it. Some cable companies donated WiFi services to the underprivileged students so they can have access to the internet and study. This process has made the students more responsible, and takes ownership of their work. During the last eight months of the school year, teachers have embraced the challenge as champions. Doing whatever it takes to prepare lesson plans for the students who attend school, or the ones who are at home, sending and preparing worksheets, packets instead of their books, guidelines for every single activity, and for every student.

The amount of time that the teachers invest in this new system. Every morning after greeting the students, teachers make an evaluation of the students, asking questions about themselves, how do they feel, what do they do when they are not studying, do they play outside, do they communicate with their classmates, friends, relatives. Are sick people in their family? Are they being in contact with them? Once the list was answered it is to review the last lesson and continue with learning. Just think in the ancient times when Plato, Socrates, Aristoteles, and many more teachers/philosophers taught to their students, some lived in far remote places and only once a week or a month were able get together with their teacher, it was up to the student to go home and learn his lessons. That is called self motivation, responsibility, desire for learning. In our society parents want their children to excel in their grades without them helping and orienting their children. They want schools to do everything that they as parents are not doing with their children. Regardless of the cruel, merciless criticism that our society has against the education, the district schools, the teachers, that they are not performing nor doing a good job in this time of pandemic, I can assure you that for a lot of students the online education works, the hybrid schedule works, in person education works.

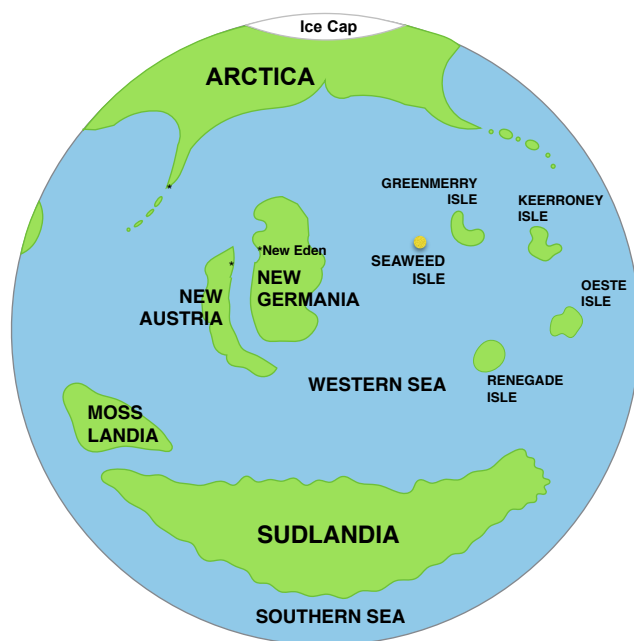
It is better to do something that just wast our time criticizing what others are doing. If the citizens of any society don't help to solve a social problem , especially in the midst of a pandemic, it is better to

help and support those who are risking their lives day by day, hour by hour in doing something to solve a problem. Criticizing, making negative and misinformed comments is not going to help the society. You can help if you protect your own life, the life of your loved ones, so the pandemic stops spreading, and life goes back to what we knew as ‘normal’.

Expedition To The Islands, Lost At Sea

Bill Barnett

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



MAARIEDA WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Maarieda, March 27, 0005

It is spring and time for another exploration trip. This year the Maariedans are going to the Western Sea Isles.

Captain Amie called everyone into the big meeting room and said: “This spring we are exploring the Western Sea Islands. They are in the eastern part of the Western Sea. Beyond them there is nothing but open ocean for more than half way around the planet. There are four main islands and hundreds of tiny islands. Two have tropical climates and two have a semi tropical climate. They are not volcanic, but were formed by an uplift of the ocean bed and are surrounded by shallow seas. They are mostly flat and only rise a hundred meters above sea level. They present a new climate to explore and study. We will fly to Renegade Isle, leave a team there, and then fly to Greenmerry Isle. After exploring those islands team one will stay on Greenmerry Isle, the other two teams will take boats to the other two islands, and they will explore the sea in between. The ocean current will take them to the other two islands. After a month the shuttle will pick up teams two and three on Keerroney Isle and Oeste Isle. The tides will be important for their travels because many small islands disappear and reappear with the tides. It is important to watch the tides and stay on course to prevent being stranded on a shallow sea bed.”

“Lieutenant James, Sam, Michael, Linda, Kristie, Doug, Teri, Lisa, and I will be going. Team One will be myself, Lisa, and Kristie. We will stay on Greenmerry Isle with the shuttle. Team Two will be James, Michael, and Linda. They will explore Renegade Isle, then sail to Oeste Isle exploring the sea in between, and explore Oeste Isle. Team Three will be Sam, Doug, and Teri. They will sail to Keerroney Isle from Greenmerry Isle exploring the sea in between the islands, and then explore Keerroney Isle. I will pick up everyone with the shuttle on April 35th.” We leave in the morning. Any questions?”

“Will we take the ultralight?” asked Michael.

“Yes, it will stay on Greenmerry Island,” replied Amie.

“We have so little time and there is so much to explore,” said Linda.
“How can we explore everything?”

“There is a notebook for each of you. It has a priority of what to look for, what samples to take, and what to document with photos and video,” said Amie. “From the other trips we learned how to prioritize studies. If you see anything unusual document that too. This trip is a basic survey of what is there. In the future we will take more specialized trips.”

“Unusual is everything we see,” commented Kristie. “Except the moss.”

“Do the best you can,” replied Amie, “and use your best judgement.”

“We are lost in new information, there is so much,” relied Teri. “What makes this planet tick? What is the driving force here? It is so different than the Earth that we learned about in history and biology. Was Earth ever like this?”

“Those are the good questions,” replied James. “There is no simple answer. We just learn a little bit at a time.”

“It is like there is a different god here,” replied Doug. “The whole system of everything here is different from the spaceship and different from what we learned about Earth. What makes life work on this planet?”

“I don’t think there is a different god here.” continued Doug. “That defies the idea of God, as we know it. But, you are right, this place is different, very different. Maybe Earth was different before people destroyed it.”

“Maarieda is alive,” stated Lisa. “The Earth you described was dead, like all the empty rocks we looked at while traveling through space. Some planets were alive and most were dead empty lifeless rocks. There was even one that looked like it had been alive and died, like Earth.”

“Its a living being,” stated Michael the sceptic. “I don’t trust metaphysical stuff, but this planet must be alive or nothing else here makes sense.”

“I am glad you are all thinking,” said Amie. “See you first thing in the morning.”

The planning was all done and becoming routine. They learned that after last year.

Maarieda, March 28, 0005

As they crossed the sea there was nothing but water in sight. Looking down they could see the blue atmosphere with white swirling clouds below. Above was the blackness of space. And on the curved horizon was Dianna, their blue and green moon with white at the polar regions. It looked much brighter without the thick atmosphere in between them. They has seen this before, but it was always awe inspiring.

“When can we explore Dianna?” asked Terri.

“You always ask that,” replied Amie.

“Its the most awesome place,” said Lisa. “I can’t wait.”

“The islands are the most awesome place,” replied Amie.

“Someday, someday.” said Terri.

The shuttle hovered over Renegade Isle, a flat sand island with an endless dark red beach. After the beach was an endless plain of moss and ferns. And beyond that was a fern forest. The island was not like New Germania and it was not like the Southern Islands. The seeds that had been scattered there had done nothing. There was no sign of terraforming. There was no peak on the island. The high spot was an

ancient dune overgrown with ferns in the middle of the island. The satellite photos and photos from the shuttle showed a consistent landscape. It never froze here.

“There is the rock outcropping,” said Amie as they looked out the window hovering just a little inland from the beach. “Land there,” ordered Amie.

James landed the shuttle and the kids exploded out the door running across the rock.

“Another paradise!” exclaimed Lisa. “But this is different. There is no snow. And no mountains. There is nothing to climb here. Just a giant beach.”

“And one rock!” exclaimed Teri.

“You live in a paradise,” said Sam. “This is tropical. We can plant tropical plants here.”

“Avocados, mangos, and oranges forever here,” replied Doug.

“That’s about it,” replied Michael.

“We will build a permeant shelter here on the rock,” said Amie. “Not on shifting sands. Each team explore close to the shuttle today and come back for dinner. The agribots can start building the shelter tomorrow morning.”

James, Michael, and Linda headed to the beach. After crossing a large tidal area they waded into the water.

“We are one hundred meters from the shore and only waist deep!” exclaimed Linda.

“The whole area is like this,” replied James. “It goes on for hundreds of kilometers. Plate tectonics raised the seabed here and we are on risen seabed. It may be a hundred clicks to deep water.”

“The sand is dark red?” questioned Linda. “What makes it red?”

“Granite,” replied James. “There is no limestone here, just granite. Just like the rock outcropping we landed on.”

“Seaweed and algae,” remarked Michael. “Is this seaweed from Earth?” asked Michael.

“Looks like it,” replied James. “Get a sample.”

Suddenly next to them there was a splash and an animal surfaced, looking like a brightly colored large green lizard. The face of it was brightly colored like a collard desert lizard and the two meter long body and tail were bright green. It just looked at them floating on the water.

“That’s a sea iguana?” questioned Linda. “We read about those. Did you put sea iguanas here?”

“No,” replied James. “They were put on the south coast of New Australia and disappeared. They must have floated here on driftwood.”

“The sea iguanas in the book were black and smaller,” replied Michael.

“They mutated like everything else here,” replied James.

Michael wadded over to the iguana and picked it up. It had no fear.

“Should we take it back?” asked Michael.

“Bring it with you,” replied James

At that the iguana jumped out of Michael’s arms and swam away. Everyone laughed. They were not taking that iguana with them.

Sam, Doug, and Teri headed inland. Soon they were in the middle of a four meter tall fern forest.

“Blaze a trail.” ordered Sam. “Mark the fern trees with your knife so we can find the trail out of here.”

“They all look the same,” said Teri.

“They do,” replied Sam. “That’s why we need to blaze a trail and mark them.”

After walking two clicks they found a bird nest.

“Did you leave birds here?” asked Doug.

“No, they must have blown in on the wind or floated in on seaweed,” replied Sam.

“Gold spotted mushroom!” exclaimed Doug as he cut one from the side of a fern tree. I wonder what these do?”

“That will be good for the lab when we get back,” replied Sam. “Look the side of the fern tree trunk is the same color. Bring a piece of the fern too.”

They stopped to eat lunch in the shade of the fern trees. The breeze ruffled through the ferns with an eerie musical sound.

“It seems like a dinosaur is about to come out of the ferns,” laughed Teri.

“Yeah, a dinosaur,” replied Doug.

After a full round of dinosaur jokes they started to head back.

“Where are the blaze marks?” asked Teri. “I don’t see any.”

They all looked and there were no marks on the ferns. The ferns had healed completely. The fern that had been cut for the mushroom had a new mushroom bud that was growing back.

“They erased the path!” exclaimed Sam. “Look for the footprints we made. We left deep footprints.”

“They are gone!” exclaimed Doug. “The ground healed itself.”

“What do we do?” asked Teri. “We are lost.”

“What do you do when you are lost?” asked Sam.

“Make a plan. We landed on the west coast and went east, so we need to head west. We have a compass. We travel west. That way.” replied Teri pointing west.

They traveled west through the fern forest where every fern looked the same. After an hour they came to the short ferns near the beach.

“Look, the shuttle is over there,” said Doug pointing south to the shuttle a couple clicks away.

As they hiked back to the shuttle they saw a large raft of fern tree driftwood washed up on the beach.

To be continued.

Covid Jail Bucket List

Bill Barnett

1. Visit 3 Lutheran churches. Forty years ago I trained for the ministry and no one wanted to hear anything I had to say. Three years ago I got a call, actually an email, asking me to preach, so I did. Now, three years later I am still there. They love hearing me preach. I have never been to a Lutheran church except to preach. The one thing different in that church, the lay leader graduated in the top 2% of her accounting class and has a MS in accounting.
2. Go to New York City. I have been there before, but it was not special then. Visit the B&H Photo shop, a synagog, and the museums. Being active making YouTube videos for 'The Wilderness Hiker' I found there is not much of a local camera shop and they know very little about videography. I always want to learn. In the past it did not seem important. Events have made it important. Museums are always interesting.
3. Hike the Ridgeline Trail in the Pecos Wilderness, New Mexico. The trip was cancelled because of travel restrictions. It is a 70 to 100 mile hike along a ridge in the mountain wilderness at 12,500 feet elevation. And always looking for hiking partners.
4. Through hike the Ozark Trail. The trip was cancelled because of travel restrictions. It is a 260 mile hike through mountain wilderness at low elevation. And always looking for hiking partners. The trail has an interesting, but sad history for why it is not much longer.
5. Visit the Capital building in Washington D.C. And visit state capitals too.
6. Visit the African American Museum in Wichita, KS.
7. Visit a holocaust museum.
8. Hike the north country of Sweden. Never been to Europe.
9. Climb the Pico de Orizaba in Mexico. A long time wish.

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

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