

# *Sunflower Seeds*



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

**See new Zoom meeting schedule.**

**May 2021, Volume – 49, Issue # 5  
Kansas Sunflower Mensa Newsletter**

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## Chapter's Official Web Sites

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

[www.facebook.com/groups/773587949355460](https://www.facebook.com/groups/773587949355460)Sunflower 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](mailto:grandledge@hotmail.com)

## LocSec Corner - February 2021

Bill Barnett

The Covid restrictions are beginning to change. In person meetings will resume. Zoom meetings will have a changed schedule. See the new schedule. If you want to schedule a Zoom meeting contact me. We can even have 2 person Zoom meetings if people just want to talk.

**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.**

You are talented and can be a writer for Seeds. Send your articles, letters, comments, and pictures for Seeds.

- Bill

## Heartland Mensa Region Seven

Rich Olcott

‘Tis the month of May, given to us for frolicking on the greensward. This year the frolicking must respect social distancing, of course – takes some of the fun out of it but we’re still better than February. Face masks filter out pollen even better than germs, so there’s that.

I’ve been broadening my four-walls experience by going through my collection of Heinlein paperbacks. Case in point, *The Door Into Summer*, published in 1957, is a Rip Van Winkel story of a guy iced-down in 1970 and awakened to the wonders of 2000. Heinlein’s dates are a little off, but his invention list is pretty good. Add a mouse or trackball to his “Draftsman Dan” gadget and you’ve got an AutoCAD system; “Hired Girl,” his automatic housekeeper, sounds like a hyped-up Roomba. It goes on. But the publisher used cheap paper and cheaper glue – the books are falling apart as I read them.

In American Mensa, this year is a little different because our nationwide CultureQuest® trivia contest has been moved from its usual April time slot into May. Last year it was in October. The results should be announced at our Annual Gathering which will be in August instead of its traditional early July time slot. If you’re not confused yet, you’re not paying attention. To our Region’s slew of teams in the CQ melee, “May the odds be ever in your favor.”

However, our Mensa elections are proceeding on schedule. The polls opened on April 15 and ballots (electronic or paper) must be received by May 15. We’ve got multi-candidate races for one international office and four national offices, plus a referendum for a Bylaws change. Details are in your April *Bulletin*. Look them over, decide and act, because your vote counts.

The Region 7 section of [Mensa Connect](#) is getting more lively, at both the Regional and Local Group levels. I’ve even received several requests to Moderate (i.e., reject) certain posts because the requestor disagreed with the post and/or felt it reflected badly on Mensa.

However, our rule is, "*Disagree without being disagreeable.*" As I read the posts and conversations, I’ve been pleasantly impressed with the general tone. Participants have been respectful and avoided personal attacks, concentrating instead on expression of opinion and/or objective fact. That kind of conversation is what Mensa was founded for. Thanks, contributors, and keep up the good work.

Meanwhile, if you need me for anything I'll be out on the greensward, frolicking.

~~ Rich

## 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.

**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



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, June 5 - Pigout**

See The Pig-Out Column.

## **2nd Saturday June 12 at 2:00 pm**

The Program Meeting will be at Fairmont Coffee Company in their conference room. Jim Ward, former Kansas legislator, will speak on ‘Where The World Is In Politics Now’. 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.

## **3rd Saturday, June 19 at 11:00 am**

The outdoor seating at Panera, 3337 E Central Ave Suite 101, Wichita, KS. They are open and we are welcome to sit outside. If the weather does not permit sitting outside we will move inside. This will move to Watermark Books when they have indoor seating.

## **4th Saturday, June 26 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/72081034487pwd=aWdKUStzbEVhNktjRzF0VEYxQTISQT09>

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

## **Photography, Painting, and Videography**

Both photography, painting, and videography are art forms that stir our imaginations. They are quite different in application. While on a hike with friends we were in a beautiful wooded area with a waterfall. The trail was below a cliff line on the other side of the waterfall. It seemed like the perfect photo moment, except there were trees in the way. It took imagination to see the perfect image.

“Can you move that tree over a little?” makes perfect sense for a painter. Unless it is a small tree that can be photoshopped out easily it is impossible for the photographer or videographer. Even a



small tree removal might require the videographer to modify each frame in the video. The painter can move the trees at ease.

“Can you show the lights streaking across the scene?” is perfect sense for the videographer.

“Which lens and filter do I use?” could be the reply. “Anamorphic, blue streak, star filter, or old cinema lens. Do you want bokeh, streaks, bubbles, stars, flairs, or what?”

What makes good photography and what makes good video is totally different. Just like in painting at one time the goal was to make the perfect accurate picture. No sooner did the classic painters learn to make perfect



images in their paintings than they distorted the images to promote emotion and stir the imagination. Camera companies have lenses today that are many times sharper and less distorted than the lenses of the past. Sometimes the images from these cameras are awe inspiring, and sometimes they can seem clinically sterile and without the emotion that people crave. So, they invented anamorphic lenses that squeeze the image sideways while shooting and it is expanded while processing or being projected. That leaves flares add artifacts like above.

The cabin on the river is a chance encounter. It takes 100s of photos to get a keeper like this one. Yet a close inspection of the digital file or an enlargement would show a grainy rough ugly photo with poor color. Color correction and display in a smaller size makes it a desirable photo.

The river scene is another chance encounter that is a one in 100s photo. The unusual reflection of the sky on the water is a rare chance opportunity. Any other lighting would have given an ugly brown green river. The stillness of the water made a perfect mirror. It was shot with the camera



in automatic white balance which highly distorted the colors and the colors had to be corrected. As a landscape photo it is in sharp focus which requires a slower f-stop setting. A typical portrait in the same place would need an out of focus background to make the person pop. That would require a fast f-stop.

A video in either place requires different technique. There is motion blur and sometime the focus is off. There are streaks of light, bubbles of light, and strange artifacts as well as artificial color to add life and emotion. When we watch a movie we just see the action and ignore the lighting effects. Next time you are watching a movie for the second time watch for all the lighting artifacts. Pause the video and look closely at the image. There before you is the magic of the movie. The brain interprets this into real life as it always does in the real world. The artificial movie seems real and alive.

The scene below is taken at night in starlight. The camera settings are different. The beach sand must have some infrared showing to give it the bright color. For a photo it just takes a time exposure. For video the settings have to be very different. Video is often shot in the day and



converted to night. The shadows and colors are different at night. A higher resolution image would show stars and some graininess.

The video can be seen on the YouTube channel titled Night Hike Experiment.

The photo of Wichita, seen below, is at night. It is hand held with a time exposure. Cameras with stabilized sensors and stabilized lenses can do this. A video would use other techniques. An artist could make the Indian look bigger as if the picture came from the middle of the river.





It would take a boat and another lens to get a better point of view and that could ruin the mirror image on the water.

The secret to good pictures is imagination, with a willingness to experiment, and take lots of pictures. One benefit of modern cameras is the ability to take lots of pictures rapidly and rapidly discard most of them.

Cell phones can take good functional pictures, but modern pro cameras do so much better. And old film cameras have a special quality of their own.

The enemy of the excellent is the good, cell phone pictures.

The old trucks are so ugly they are beautiful. Remember when trucks looked like this? You grandfather knew them. They inspire ideas and memories. The wide angle lens adds drama with the prespective change.

What could someone do with a video? Use your imagination. A handled camera moving into the cars could almost make them alive. Or shoot them at night. A painter could paint them springing to life, complete with ghosts and all.

The difference between an artist photographer and a casual photographer is imagination. Just do it. Just try it. Fake it until you make it. All of life is like that.



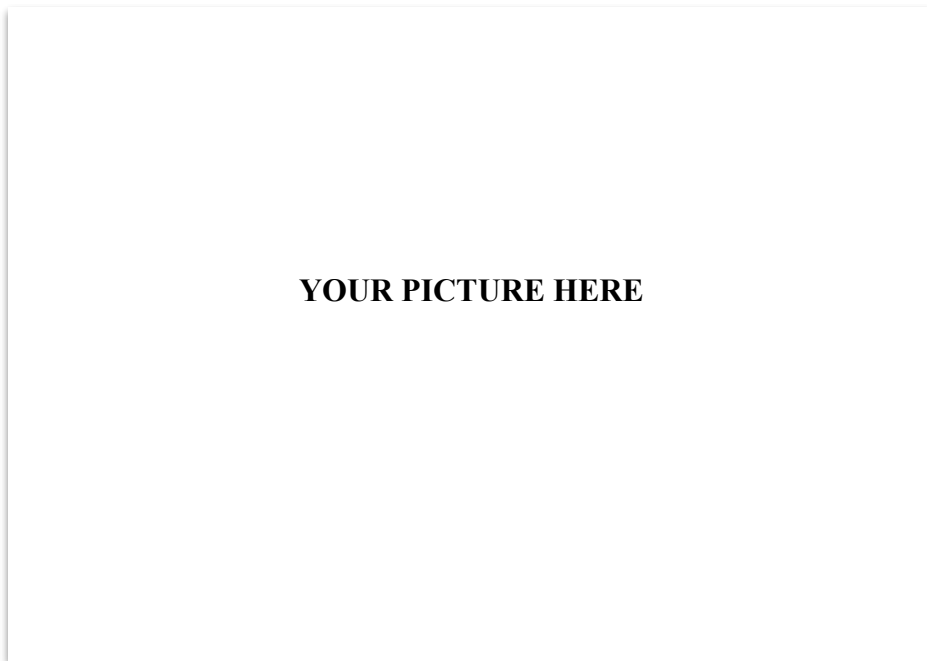
Can you imagine someone hopping out the door and inviting you to take a ride. Maybe a ghost with a ghost driver's license. What a ride that would be. Worthy of a poem. Submit your story and poems here.

The sun flares are made by the blades in the camera lens iris. The eye would just blur the brightness. It has a round iris. The camera lens has a polygonal iris with many sides. It works best at  $f/22$ .



A painter can paint whatever abstract image of the sun she can imagine. We don't really see the sun. It is just an overexposed area on the retina of the eye. The mind imagines flairs and the photo does a flare of its own.

The painter, the photographer, and the videographer are all artists using different mediums. How can the picture with the starburst from the sun come alive? Try one and let us publish it next month.



### **The Seeds Needs Your Pictures**

Send your pictures to the editor along with their stories and they will be published here.

*And your story here.*

*You are talented. If not write a story anyway.*

# 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 34, 0005**

James, Michael, and Linda made it to the far side of Renegade Isle.

“The same golden fern trees are on this side too,” said Linda. “It’s all the same.”

“They are saying goodbye to us,” remarked Michael.

“The wind is blowing them, Mr. Skeptical,” laughed James.

“No, look!” exclaimed Linda. “They are not in synch with the wind. And they are waving sideways, just like we do.”

“No way,” insisted James. “Uh, uh, uh, they are waving at us.” stuttered James.

“It is communicating with us,” stated Michael. “It watched us and learned how we communicate. It is an intelligent organism.”

“Something new when you don’t expect it,” replied James. “It is definitely on the agenda to come back here. Who would have ever thought there were sentient plants.”

“And don’t piss her off,” ordered Linda.

“Right,” replied James. “Don’t piss her off. Really, we’re pissing off a bunch of plants. We really need to study this, but the shuttle is picking us up on Oeste and there is no place for it to land here. Oh, and why is it a ‘she’?”

“I will tell her we’re coming back,” replied Linda and she made hand gestures to the fern trees. “I’m a girl and I know another girl.”

“Head for Oeste,” ordered James. “Before something else happens. And Linda, you can come here next time since she is your friend.”

Linda just beamed with contentment.

Maarieda, March 35, 0005

Sam, Doug, and Teri left Greenmerry Isle and were crossing the ocean for for Keerroney Isle. They would arrive in two weeks. The weather forecast looked good for travel.

“The sea never gets rough here,” said Sam. “The sea is too shallow for big waves. It’s mostly two to four meters deep.”

“Look, there are rocks and a reef farther out,” said Teri.

“We can go by them,” said Doug, as he headed the lead boat toward the rocks. The second boat was being towed behind the lead boat.

Farther out as they sailed past the rocks they heard a grinding noise from the bottom of the boat.

“We are hitting bottom,” said Sam.

Suddenly the boat stopped. They looked down and saw the ocean floor just centimeters below the waves.

“Low tide,” said Sam. “We have to wait for high tide and then find a deeper channel. Put down an anchor so we don’t keep scraping bottom.”

Doug and Teri put out the anchor. It looked silly as it was half way out of the water. And then they all went wading in the ocean.

“All I can see is water,” said Teri, knee deep in water. “There is no land in sight. We are in the middle of the ocean and standing up.”

“Weird,” replied Doug. “I always thought the ocean was clicks deep except near the shore.”

After splashing around they returned to the boat for dinner.

“The tide changes in four hours, after dark,” said Sam. “We need to head south and look for a channel.”

After the tide changed and they began to move they found a channel. Suddenly the boat was going faster. As the tide rose the boat went faster and then the channel entered a bigger channel and they went even faster.

“This will get us there in half the time,” said Sam. “No sleeping tonight and letting the boat drift. We take turns piloting the boat. We don’t need to hit a rock at this speed.”

### **Maarieda, March 36, 0005**

James, Michael, and Linda put the boats in the water and headed for Oeste Isle. Soon Renegade Isle was behind them, but they could see the bottom in the clear water.

“This is weird,” stated Michael. “First the current took up east, then south, and now north. Where is it going?”

“Yeah? Where are we going?” asked Linda. Are we going to be swept out to sea in a weird current?

“And lost at sea?” asked Michael.

“Good question,” replied James. “Inflate the small marker balls and put them in the drone. We can watch the current that way. We need to map the channels in the rocks and the currents.”

Michael and Linda inflated a hundred 10cm balls. They weighed 17 grams each and were bright orange colored and phosphorescent. Soon the drone was dropping the balls in the ocean.

“Look, you can see the channels in the rock bottom,” said James. “Put the balls in the bigger, deeper channels. Try to find a path that goes where the current is going our direction.”

Linda flew the drone dropping balls while Michael studied them and tracked their movement.

“These channels flow in every direction,” said Michael. I am looking for a big channel that heads east.”

“There is a big one 10 clicks northeast of us,” said Linda. “I will try to find a path to that.”

“There are back eddies everywhere,” replied Michael. “It is really mixed up.”

After studying the currents and channels they began guiding James as he steered the boat on a maze to the big channel. By dark they were in the big channel.

“We have to watch this 24/7 until we hit the island,” said James. “We take turns sleeping and watching.”

**Maarieda, March 37, 0005**

**Team One Amie, Lisa, and Kristie. Greenmerry Isle**

**Team Two James, Michael, and Linda. Renegade Isle and Oeste Isle**

**Team Three Sam, Doug, and Teri. Keerroney Isle**

Amie, Lisa, and Kristie found more cenotes on Greenmerry Isle.

“We found 2 more cenotes using the drone,” said Amie. “Kristie, take the ultralight and survey the quadrant of the island we are in and look for more cenotes and anything else you can find. Lisa, you and I will survey more of the fern forest.”

“Cool,” said Kristie. She was certified as a pilot, but had not soloed yet.”

“Fly a grid pattern over this quadrant,” ordered Amie.

“Yes ma'am,” gleamed Kristie and she was off to the ultralight.

In the evening when Kristie returned they downloaded the data from the ultralight plane.

“Look,” said Amie. “There are seven more big cenotes and at least eleven small ones.”

“The river flows into one of the cenotes,” remarked Lisa. “And it has a waterfall. Can we go there?”

“We will,” replied Amie. “But first we are going to the biggest one, ten clicks from here. We will go in the morning.”

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James, Michael, and Linda spent the day chasing around a maze of channels trying to get to the big channel where they could make better time.

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Sam, Doug, and Teri were racing along in a fast channel toward Keerroney Isle.

## Maarieda, March 38, 0005

Amie, Lisa, and Kristie loaded a cart with climbing and caving gear and headed to the cenote.

“Put an anchor here and there and there, we drop two ropes and a gear rope,” said Amie. I want two ways out of here.”

They rapped sixty meters into the hole and splashed into shallow water.

“Look,” said Kristie. “We are in a cave. It goes in that direction, and that direction, and six different directions.”

“We are in the ocean,” replied Lisa. “Smell the water. It is ocean water, exactly like the ocean.”

“There is a current,” replied Amie. “The water is moving, slow, but moving. Lower all the gear ropes. We are going to tie in before we explore the caves. There is likely to be anything down here.”

They fixed a 8mm gear rope and headed into the largest cave tunnel, which went north. The tunnel was almost level with 30cm of slow flowing ocean water. After a time they came to the end of the line.

“360 meters,” said Amie. “The end of all of the gear line. This just goes on and on and is pretty much the same. The air is good and there is a slight breeze. I think we can use distance line now.”

Kristie got out the first 1000M spool of distance line and they continued through the tunnel. As they neared 3300M they came to another cenote.

“The cenotes are connected,” said Amie. Tomorrow we bring the small cart and the drone. Look around here and that will be enough for today. Now I know what we are exploring. This is a system of cenotes and tunnels.”

“How did this form?” asked Lisa. “This is granite, not limestone, but it looks like something eroded the tunnel.”

“There are stalactites here, granite stalactites, how do they do that?” asked Kristie. “That is not what the book says.”

“A lot of things are not what the book says,” remarked Lisa. “Look at the crystals and the lichens, are they glowing?”

“Go back into the tunnel. and turn off your lights,” ordered Amie.



They did as she said and instead of the absolute dark of a cave the crystals and the lichens glowed. It was enough to follow the tunnel.”

“Wow!” exclaimed Amie. “When you least expect it, something new, something unbelievable, unless you saw it. Wow!”

“Our bright lights hid it.” said Lisa. “It was right here and we did not see it.”

“Head back,” ordered Amie. “We go back home, replan everything, and come back in a couple of days.”

They headed back home.

To be continued. The story is a work in progress.



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