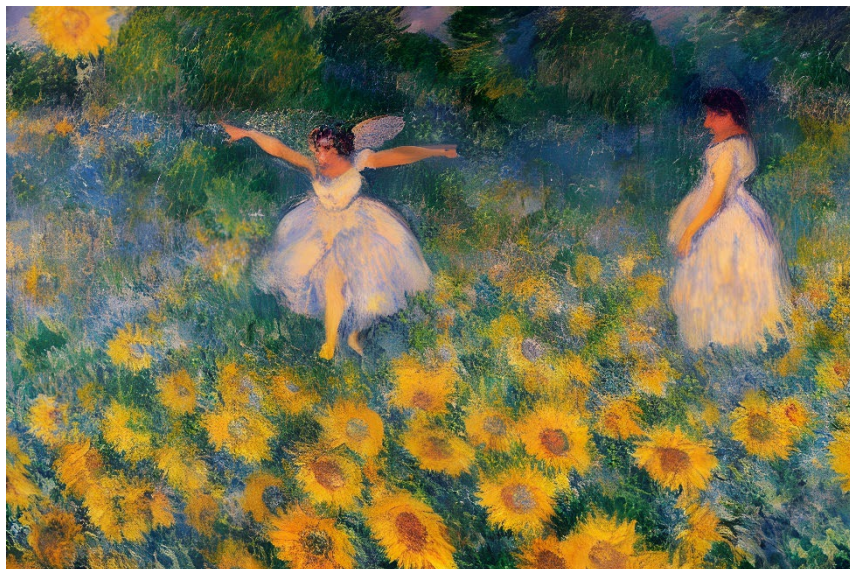


Augusta, KS 67010

POB-151

Seeds Editor

Kansas Mensa Sunflower Seeds



April-May 2023, Vol. - 51, Issue - 4

SATURDAY EVENTS

May 6th	Meet & Greet 12:45	First Mile Kitchen 2141 N Bradley Fair Pkwy #111 https://firstmilekitchen.com
May 13th	Group Meeting 2:00	Fairmount Coffee 3815 E 17 th ST N www.fairmountcoffee.com
May 20th	Group Field Trip 5:00	Get together at Gracie's House 238 W 63 rd ST N (316) 285-5008
May 27th	Group Gathering 7:00	Barnes & Noble 1920 N Rock RD www.barnesandnoble.com
June 3rd	Meet & Greet 12:45	Larkspur Bistro 904 E Douglas
July 1st	Meet & Greet 12:45	Newport Grill 1900 N Rock RD

Our Next Meet & Greet



FIRST MILE KITCHEN

Seasonal cooking from a live-fire hearth.

Innovative cocktail, coffee, and wine menu.

Field Trippin

We will once again be wined and dined by our wonderful hostess, Gracie! The party starts at 5PM. Light food and beverages will be served, but you are welcome to bring something to share. A bit hard to find but well worth the trip. Located North of 63rd ST S on a quiet, tree-lined drive. If you are between Broadway and Seneca, you are in the right neighborhood.

A couple of relaxing photos submitted by our future host, Gracie.



RVC Region-7 Column

Volunteering is hard! Planning events, pulling together a newsletter or asking others to help are all ways we need to build Mensa, and sometimes these tasks fall into “hard fun” and end up less than rewarding. At a higher level, volunteering in a leadership role is even harder! Whether at the local or national level, all of us leaders do the best we can, especially in the face of both praise and criticism.

There’s an article by *Forbes* that speaks to how non-profit leaders can maintain focus on what’s important as they motivate members, develop a leadership style of their own and navigate challenging waters. The article is a little older but also one my grad school republished, so was inclined to pay attention when I first saw it. I’ve simplified (and slightly adapted) the recommendations here and you can feel welcome to use as you see fit:

- Learn from Successful Role Models – Learn the role, find a mentor, ask good questions and never stop growing. And *<gasp!>*, considering writing stuff down occasionally for future leaders.
- Shadow More Experienced Volunteers – Building on the previous point, there are a lot of volunteers within Mensa who can help with all volunteer roles! Did you ever meet a Mensan who didn’t have eight opinions, all of which are right? Learn from this.
- Become the Expert – Don’t just volunteer with a local group. If you’re planning to commit, then immerse yourself! Read governing documents, become familiar with the mission, learn from other boards, etc.
- Let Mensa’s Values Show in your Personal Life – Mensa is a great group and I believe we all feel that way, else we wouldn’t pay our dues and take time to read articles like these. Be a steward of that! Even if you don’t have Mensa on your resume, show a positive

attitude toward what you commit to, especially if it’s volunteering in a public-facing leadership position.

- Focus on Strengths and Knowledge – Local groups do all sorts of things, and we should assign volunteers based on strengths to help the event, RG, budget, whatever end up its best!
- Empower your Volunteers – As leaders, we plan and set a strategy. Leaving key tasks to able volunteers is critical for not only their satisfaction but also so the creative process can take hold. Maybe there’s another volunteer task a leader hasn’t seen or assigned someone to? Maybe volunteers can find better ways to do things on their own?
- Listen to Feedback – Listening more than we talk is always a good mantra, but I make a point of trying to listen with an ear also to *why* a member might offer such feedback.

So, whether you’re a volunteer, leader or reluctant task-taker, it’s important to focus on the good of the organization. It’s hard work! But hopefully “rewarding fun” – at a minimum – in the end.

Beth Anne Demeter



**Movie Reviews of movies you probably never heard of,
by: Randy C Hamilton.**

I am a Mensan, Numberaholic, Car Nut, and a person addicted to movies. I have over 4000 titles in my house on VHS and DVD. Warning: I'm an incurable romantic.

Kissing a fool.

I really enjoyed this romantic comedy despite loads of swear words (R rated) and no nudity (bummer).

This 1998 movie is, starring and produced, by a guy from the show "Friends" David Schwimmer. The movie has a cool cast including Bonnie Hunt, Jason Lee, and Mili Avital.

Set in Chicago with David as a successful sportscaster and ladies' man. The plot revolves around him and his friend the writer, Jason. Jason has put together a book about his lost love that needs editing and Bonnie, who wants to print it, pairs him with Mili.

Jason has a broken heart, no interest in women, and introduces Mili to David. David publicly dumps all of his old girlfriends then begins to wonder if he has found the right girl FOR LIFE. He asks Jason to see if Mili is really faithful and the plot thickens.

Enjoyable entertainment, but the ending is, sadly, given away quite early. Stuff like that I can never understand. Don't they test movies? Don't they actually watch them before releasing them? I do not know. Almost ZERO movies have ZERO technical errors, or plot give aways, or continuity problems.

Somehow, I still enjoy movies and will tell you about more of my favorites from my collection.

**Response to "Woke Attack
Destroying Us", from last month's
Sunflower Seeds**

By Gracie Ulrich

The author of last month's opinion article, John Anderson, whom I do not know, predicated his views on a critical assumption: He stated:

"The West is now clearly running low on fuel (defined as the powerful ideas that fuel an ongoing sense of social purpose), and there seems to be nothing replacing it. For example: the rejection of virtually every tenet of Christianity has not led to its replacement by viable alternatives."

Well. From a viewpoint of critical thinking, this statement is woefully lacking in clear definitions of terms. The author claims, merely by pure assertion alone, that there is currently a "rejection of virtually every tenet of Christianity" and that these tenets have not been replaced by viable alternatives.

This presumptive statement is impossible to answer without defining the author's terms.

Therefore, I have looked up some ways of defining tenets of Christianity. One, the most obvious way of defining Christian beliefs is a belief, in one form or another, of Christ.

Another is to define Christian values. According to the Evangelical Alliance of Faith and Politics, eight fundamental values have been noteworthy, and in their opinion, ought to be distinctive of Christian faith today. According to this Alliance, they are:

- Grace—subversive, because it gives people more than they deserve
- Hope—a conviction of God's presence, no matter what
- Faith—the means to genuine depth in relationships

- Love—a way to love the unlovely
- Justice—for all, yet which is inherently biased towards the disadvantaged
- Joy—an essential social value, but impossible to legislate
- Service—gives meaning to life, and supersedes self-centeredness
- Peace—positive well-being; not merely the absence of strife

Another method is to define Christian tenets by the Fruit of the Spirit, presumably what you get when you lead a spiritual Christian life, according to my own definitions. Some points were covered previously:

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Longsuffering --also known as patience
- Gentleness-- kindness
- Goodness
- Faith—a sustaining belief that one matters
- Meekness—not vaunting oneself up above others
- Temperance—avoiding excess of any sort, self-control

For basic tenets concerning core beliefs, when I did an Internet search, I found only dogma. These are not social values. Furthermore, not all Christians agree on these dogmatic statements, including virgin birth, the Trinity, etc. Plenty of Christians entirely disagree, but they are called (labelled as) heretics by their brethren (and by their sisters in Christ).

So, aside from doctrine, on which Christians disagree, when it comes to basic Christian values, I would ask the author to explain in what way he (John Anderson) feels that our Western society is “rejecting virtually every tenet of Christianity”?

Does he mean definitions of marriage, fetal well-being vs. a mother’s well-being, or human sexuality? I see those nowhere as core values, when it comes to Christianity as a religion, creed, or system of values.

How about our welfare system, and the ever-increasing gap between the very rich and the very poor? Well, there might be more of a case for that, as a society. We should not be favoring one group above another, according to the Christian values we listed above, such as grace and meekness.

In some Western societies, for example in Australia, those generous and caring institutions continue to thrive, with universal health care, education, and a very good safety net for the poor and afflicted. In that sense, society has championed care for those in need, in spite of the sometimes-shrinking Christian church populations. I do hope that, in time, American Christians can see fit to vote for the grace to serve the poor as a society as well as choosing to serve others as individuals and as church and civic groups.

Personally, I’m most interested in how people treat one another directly, and also how well they respect themselves. I find that I’m pleased when people demonstrate kindness and caring to both friends and strangers. I can agree that courtesy is often lacking on social media, but in real life, I do see more instances of gentleness than of meanness, including even extreme rudeness such as road rage. Most people would rather be decent.

Even on the Internet, when I confront people with their nastiness, they tend to calm down in the future. I sometimes say to my friends or acquaintances that I know they really aren’t like that (referring to whatever unreasonably rude remark they’ve just made in print), that they need to fact-check, that they are making assumptions. They have toned down quite a lot

with inflammatory rhetoric when I've mentioned how we treat one another. At other times, I make extensive use of the "delete" button... and keep my comments to myself.

Take this article as an example. I found it intolerable that terms were left utterly undefined, all the while the author was asserting that we as a society aren't behaving in so-called Christian ways anymore. I didn't like what I was reading. But I had to mull it over for a bit before I could really clarify what it was about the article had so irritated me. It was impossible for me to discuss well until I was able to define terms.

I hope this sheds some light on the prior article's viewpoint, as well as clarifying what Christian values actually are.

We did have an article last month about defining some political systems, in which specifics were outlined regarding Nazism. Communism and Constitutional Democracy were mentioned also. Now we have some specifics regarding Christian tenets as well. I invite clarity on other thought systems for future Sunflower Seeds publications. Ideas might include politics, religion, or philosophy.



FoRGe North 2

North Dakota Mensa

August 11-13, 2023

NOTHING

By:anon

This will be a short article, and it really won't say anything. You don't believe me? Well, read on, and you will see that, as I said, this article will not say anything.

The first thing one must do if one is trying not to do something is to start. Starting may be a hard part, even the hardest thing, but it is hardly the only thing. The rest of the task is also important, as is the ending.

One must be careful, however, when writing such an article if that is your task. There is always the danger of saying something, and – worst of all – something of significance. That is unforgivable, and it essentially destroys the whole point of the effort. Hardly anything can make up for that error. It has ruined many otherwise promising careers. I will try not to fall into that trap.

If what I have said so far is without substance, or nearly so, I have stayed out of that trap. One thing that can be said about what I have written is that if I have said nothing, everything I have said is the golden truth. I am proud of that.

My time is limited. I am sure yours is also, so I will cut this short. I.e. I will end this article shortly. You be the judge. Did I accomplish my stated intent of saying nothing, or did I fail? If you think you could do better at wasting paper, give it a try. You can't say I didn't warn you. Why did you read this?

Paraphrased from a Reader's Digest

item from decades ago.

A Word of Thanks and of Caution:

Charlotte Thomas – Hugoton, Kansas

First, I apologize for not writing this thank you MUCH sooner.

Your article listing some of the banned books in schools (in a summer issue of the “Sunflower Seeds”) motivated me to begin collecting a copy of each in order that my grandchildren (or our children) will have them to read anytime they want. I first read Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn in 5th grade and learned a lot, but I certainly don’t believe it warped me!! Fiction is an amazing way to educate. I just finished “Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry” so I am learning more also. So far, all I have found are award winning books! Incredible!

I also picked up a copy of “Dumbing Down Our Kids” by Charles Sykes and read about a part of history I was quite ignorant of; I’m the child of parents who read a lot and even hired one of the ladies who were employed at the library whenever we needed a babysitter. They arrived at our house with a huge stack of children’s books and joined all three children (me and my siblings) on the couch and read book after book until my parents came home (one dear lady even lost her voice after reading so long). After almost 70 years, I still remember both of them and am grateful for their devotion. I didn’t have a TV to watch until I was about 11 years old, BUT I HAD BOOKS (I consider myself extremely blessed).

My father and my mother were patient and read a lot to me and my siblings ... however, my dad, at one point, told me he was so tired of repeating the children’s books we had, that he suggested one evening that he would read his newspaper to me. Thereafter, when he arrived home after work, he read article after article from the Wall Street Journal until it was time to go eat supper!

Anyway, your article and that list really was a gift to me and I sincerely appreciate it! I’m learning a lot. THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

ON BEING A SCAPEGOAT

Scapegoat is a word that is commonly used to mean, “a person who is blamed for a wrong that he did not do.” Where did that word come from?

The word actually comes from the Jewish Old Testament, Leviticus 16:7-34. In that passage the Israelites are instructed to take two goats and use them to get God’s forgiveness for the nation’s sins of the past year. They were instructed to choose one goat by lottery and kill and burn it as a sacrifice to the Lord.

The High priest was to lay his hands on the second goat. This transferred all the nation’s sins into him. That goat was then set free, and allowed to “escape” into the wilderness, supposedly carrying the sins of Israel with him. He was a “scapegoat”.

Today, this event is still an important Jewish holiday. It is known as Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. Fasting and rest are required, but no goats are sacrificed.

Below is the passage from Leviticus, somewhat condensed, which describes the original ceremony.

Leviticus 16 – King James Version

⁷ And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD ...⁸ And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat.

¹⁵ Then shall he kill the goat of the [Lord’s as a] sin offering, ..., ²¹ And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, ... and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

³⁴ And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year.

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