

THE FRENCH BROAD MENSA NEWSLETTER

BROADCAST

Vol. 23, No. 5 May 2017

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Spring Issue



**NULLUM BENEFICIUM
EST IMPUNITUM**

From the Grand Poobah...

I graduated from high school in 1972, and started my college career that summer. The following January, I finally moved to Indiana University campus in Bloomington. Goal # 2, find a new girlfriend. She was everything you expect from an enthusiastic, serious student, and I was enchanted.



The relationship progressed, and I was invited to meet her parents the following Christmas. In Stockton, California. All I had to do was get there. Like every other child of the 60's, I was intoxicated by the Cali mystic, and wanted to see it myself. So I did.

Yes, this is another hitch-hiking story.

When I left, we had just had a snowstorm come through, and it left 14 inches across most of the central part of America. I was at the IN/IL Stateline when a new Grand Prix pulled over. It was a beautiful automobile, and when the guy said he was only going to Las Vegas (!) it was music to my ears. Then he informed me that he was Hawaiian and had never driven in snow, so I would have to drive. Yeah, I was stoked.

We kept going all night, finally stopping in Texas. We continued on the next day, and in the daylight, I got to take in Rt. 66, as I-40 wasn't complete. It was everything you expect it was in its waning heyday. When he diverted north, the gas-stealing Texans were the only other memorable chapter of the trip west.

So I did Christmas with her family.

Returning, I got "lucky" by getting a ride from Riverside to Oklahoma City in an unheated heap pulling a U-Haul with his Harley so he could go back to work on an oil rig, save his money, and return to SoCal until he ran out of money again. Repeat. The problem came when we threw a fan belt in the high desert of New Mexico. He didn't own a heavy coat, and (did I mention the two feet of snow?) so I had to decide to A) leave my stuff with him and get a new belt at the next truck stop or B) walk away at 10pm and let him fend for himself?

I paid for the fan belt, by the way.

It was a good trip, and I really felt like I had a little better taste of America. I have driven that way since, but the interstate really lacks the character of Rt. 66 and I feel privileged to have had that experience.

John Federspiel
Grand Poobah

Editorial Muttering

It's come to the point where I'm absolutely sick of the political idiocy at the state and national levels. Oh wait... I've been at the same point for years already. I've been waiting for a bit of rational analysis and sensible behavior, but all I see is immature tit-for-tat lashing out and ineffectual oneupmanship to the population's detriment.



“Our” politicians are fools. At state level, look at HB2. It's been called the answer to a problem that didn't exist. It's already cost the state millions of dollars and made us North Carolinians look like idiots. Get it together, people. Throw out bad laws, you knee-jerkers! My relatives up north think I'm insane for staying here. I wanted to live in a pretty place but it seems that the prettier a place is the crazier are its legislators.

Want to consider the national scene? The country is now in the hands of liars and obfuscators who don't care about the effect their decisions have on real people. Or if they do have a goal, it's only to make things worse for the population at large. What is their motivation? I don't get it. They're hurting their own children and grandchildren. Why can't these so-called “adults” act like real adults and do the right thing?

I've long said that my one word encapsulation about being human is this: embarrassed. Look around you. Look at the turmoil and grief we cause one another. Why? It seems that it's our nature. So sad.

I remember that little kid who said so many years ago about politics: “It's like us kids on the playground, but where are the grownups?”

Your Disillusioned Editor,
That Havelin Creature

Nullum beneficium est impunitum

Translation:

No good deed goes unpunished.

Spring (from Wikipedia)

Spring is one of the four conventional temperate seasons. There are various technical definitions of spring, but local usage of the term varies according to local climate, cultures and customs. When it is spring in the Northern Hemisphere, it will be autumn in the Southern Hemisphere and vice versa. At the spring equinox, days are approximately 12 hours long with day length increasing as the season progresses.

Spring and “springtime” refer to the season, and also to ideas of rebirth, rejuvenation, renewal, resurrection and regrowth. Subtropical and tropical areas have climates better described in terms of other seasons, e.g. dry or wet, monsoonal or cyclonic. Often, cultures have locally defined names for seasons which have little equivalence to the terms originating in Europe. Spring is the time when many plants begin to grow and flower.

Meteorologists generally define four seasons in many climatic areas: spring, summer, autumn (fall) and winter. These are demarcated by the values of their average temperatures on a monthly basis, with each season lasting three months. The three warmest months are by definition summer, the three coldest months are winter and the intervening gaps are spring and autumn. Spring, when defined in this manner, can start on different dates in different regions.

For the Northern Hemisphere, spring months are March, April and May, although differences exist from country to country. (Summer is June, July, August; autumn is September, October, November; winter is December, January, February.) For the Southern Hemisphere, seasons are switched, with spring in September, October and November.

Swedish meteorologists define the beginning of spring as the first occasion on which the average daytime temperature exceeds zero degrees Celsius for seven consecutive days, thus the date varies with latitude and elevation. In Australia and New Zealand, spring conventionally begins on 1 September and ends 30 November.

The beginning of spring is not always determined by fixed

calendar dates. The phenological or ecological definition of spring relates to biological indicators, such as the blossoming of a range of plant species, the activities of animals, and the special smell of soil that has reached the temperature for micro flora to flourish. These indicators, along with the beginning of spring, vary according to the local climate and according to the specific weather of a particular year. Most ecologists divide the year into six seasons that have no fixed dates. In addition to spring, ecological reckoning identifies an earlier separate prevernal (early or pre-spring) season between the hibernal (winter) and vernal (spring) seasons. This is a time when only the hardiest flowers like the crocus are in bloom, sometimes while there is still some snow cover on the ground.



‘Tis spring, ‘tis spring,
The bird is on the wing.
But isn’t that absurd?

I was taught the wing was on the bird.

-Anon

Member News

Will McGuffin reports that he’s doing better every day. He’s driving and even back doing some piano tunings. Let’s hear it for the healing power of the human body!

French Broad Mensa member Jeff Catanese is directing the production of the very funny comedy “The Nerd” by Larry Shue at the NC Stage company.

Michael Havelin will be reading from his mysteries and talking about writing on three different occasions:

- April 29, 3pm at Blue Ridge Books in Waynesville.
- June 10, 10am and 3pm at Burke County Library in Morganton.
- June 17, 3pm at City Lights Books in Sylva.

These events are free and open to the public.

RVC Column, May, 2017



The Mini-Minutes for the Spring Board Meeting, held in Hollywood, Florida, are online. March 31 is the end of the Mensa year, so the Board passed the budget and completed other business. Several important actions were taken. Single year dues were raised to \$79 beginning July 1. This was needed in order to balance the budget and provide services our members receive. Fees for Testing and Review of Prior Evidence were each raised to \$60. This will allow us to offer more frequent discounts for prospects. The AMC also passed motions adopting revised Minimum Standard Bylaws and Model Bylaws as proposed by the Bylaws Committee. If you have any further questions, feel free to contact me.

If you haven't attended any local, regional, or national gatherings, I challenge you to do so. You'll be amazed with the people that you will meet. You just might want to do it again! Our first RG of the year is always Carolinah RG in Greenville, SC. If you read this before May 1 there is still time to attend. This year's theme is "PAMinal House." It takes place May 5-7. Information is available at: <http://www.piedmont.us.mensa.org/rg2017.htm>.

This year's AG, Hooray for Hollywood, is almost upon us. Tours are listed online and programs are added as times and dates firm up. I hope we have a big contingent from our 20 local groups. The 2018 AG will be in Indianapolis. That's two AGs within one day's drive from most of our members.

We've ended the Mensa year, and I hope that everyone has renewed. If not, why don't you do it today? Several of our groups ended the year with an increase in membership. Every time I read a local group newsletter I am enthused about the variety of activities that some of our groups host. If your group isn't hosting the type of event that you would like to attend, contact a member of your Executive Committee and work on setting something up.

The American Mensa elections have begun. I encourage you to vote. You can help determine the future of Mensa. I also ask you to vote in the Mensa International election. As you may know, I will have the honor of continuing to serve as your RVC for another term. The best thing about the job is that it gives me the opportunity to meet so many people. After all, that's the best part of belonging to Mensa. In the past couple of years, while serving as your RVC I have met many great people who are dedicated to making their local group and American Mensa a better place. If you aren't active in your local group, I encourage you to attend a few events. I'm sure that you will enjoy the event as well as the people you meet.

If your local group participates in Mensa Cares, I hope that many of you will participate.

Have great Spring and I hope to see you in Greenville and Hollywood.

French Broad Mensa
May 2017 Events Calendar

NOTE: RSVPs are important for table planning. Please RSVP if you plan to attend an event. If you don't RSVP to the contact person, we may not be able to seat you. Preference goes to RSVPs.

Tues, May 2, 6pm - ExCom at Phil's BBQ, 701 NC Hwy 9 Black Mt. Contact - John Federspiel, 828-450-8463 or federspiel@bell-south.net

Fri, May 5, 11:30 - First Friday Lunch at Denny's in Black Mountain. From I-40, take Exit 64, turn onto Hwy 9 south, look left and park. We especially hope to see members living in the eastern area. No alcohol but the breakfast, lunch, dinner and senior meals are in the cheaper realm, taste great, and if you are an AARP member, show your card for a 10% discount. We are reserving two tables of eight each on this one. Thirteen members attended at Ay Caramba in March. Contact: Fae Armstrong at one4fae2@yahoo.com or phone 828 298 1707. (Reproduced exactly & in its entirety at Fae's request.)

Mon, May 8 - Trivia at Jack of the Wood, 95 Patton Ave., Asheville. 6:30pm for dinner, 7:30pm to play. Contact - Wayne Stanko, 828-253-8781 or wstanko@charter.net.

May 15, BROADCAST deadline.

Sat, May 20, 6:23pm - Games at Grace Lehto's Home, 25 Hopedale Circle, Asheville (Emma). Contact: Grace Lehto, 828-575-2877, grace@mychickensheet.com.

Thurs, May 25, 6:30pm - Sure Happy It's Thursday Dinner at Chai Pani, 22 Battery Park Ave, Asheville, NC 28801, (828) 254-4003. Contact: Will McGuffin, 828-296-7544 or wmcguffin@charter.net

Trivial Report

The Whoos took on 14 teams at *Quizzo at Jack of the Wood* in April. Some of the questions follow. The theme of the first round was six-letter words beginning with L or R.

1. What NFL team was created when the Cleveland Browns moved?
2. What is a line from the center of a circle to its edge?
3. What are the physical remains of saints?
4. What former NBA player became friends with Kim Jong Il?
5. What English doctor used carbolic acid as an antiseptic?
6. What job did J. Edgar Hoover, Pat Garrett, and Bat Masterson hold?
7. A soldier completing 61 days of training at Fort Benning earns what title?
8. What is the plural for the form between an egg and a pupa?
9. What do companies Kuka and Boston Dynamics produce?
10. What is a shallow body of water separated from a larger body of water?

At the end of round we were tied for 5th place, two points behind the leaders.

The theme for the second round was the 1870s.

1. What gun company produced the Peacemaker revolver?
2. What Mormon leader introduced polygamy?
3. Nineteen members of what secret Irish society were hanged in Pennsylvania?
4. What sugar substitute was created from coal tar?
5. Edith Wharton won a Pulitzer prize for what novel?
6. Wyatt Earp joined the gold rush in what South Dakota mountains?
7. What gun company produced the first typewriter?
8. What was the first U.S. national park?
9. Farmers formed what political party to get the government to print more money?
10. In 1873, the cities of Buda and Pest merged to form what capital of Hungary?

At the end of the round we were still in 5th place, still 2 points behind.

Part of the third round asked to name the five permanent members of

the United Nations Security Council. At the end of the round, we were in sixth place three points behind.

The final round theme was potpourri.

1. What future U.S. president got a \$10 reward for retrieving a set of false teeth from Illinois's Dixon river?
2. What nation has qualified for all 16 soccer World Cups?
3. The octopus and squid belong to what species?
4. What cigarette brand is named after a street in England?
5. At Hogwarts, how many years of training are required to become a wizard?
6. What 1960s cartoon featured Tetsuwan Atom?
7. What ad character was created to convince people that lead-based paints were safe?
8. The unborn child of what couple was entered into the 2014 Wimbledon tournament?

We faltered in this round and fell to 8th place, 8 points behind the winners.

Answers

Round 1: 1. Ravens, 2. Radius, 3. Relics, 4. Dennis Rodman, 5. Lister, 6. Lawman, 7. Ranger, 8. Larvae, 9. Robots, 10. Lagoon.

Round 2: 1. Colt, 2. Brigham Young, 3. Molly Maguires, 4. Saccharin, 5. The Age of Innocence, 6. Black Hills, 7. Remington, 8. Yellowstone, 9. Greenback, 10. Budapest.

Round 3: United States, Russia, England, France, China

Round 4: 1. Reagan, 2. Brazil, 3. Cephalopods, 4. Marlboro, 5. Seven, 6. Astro Boy, 7. Little Dutch Boy, 8. Chris Evert and John MacEnroe.

Minutes - French Broad Mensa ExCom.

Held at 6 pm, 4/4/17 at Phil's BBQ Pit,
701 NC Hwy 9, Black Mountain

Present - John Federspiel, Pat Benard, Bob Bouvier, Nel Ruffin,
Michael Havelin, Grace Lehto, Will McGuffin, Wayne Stanko

Financial Reports:

Financial Report for March 2017

Opening Balance:.....	\$3,697.06
Credits:.....	
Am. MENSA Contribution 3/17/2017	<u>\$110.50</u>
Total Credits:.....	\$110.50
Debits:	
Check 608-cleanup crew food	\$94.00
Check 609-testing room fee, mail supplies.....	<u>\$22.62</u>
Total Debits:.....	\$116.62
Closing Balance:	\$3,690.94

First Quarter Financial Report, 2017

Beginning Balance:.....	\$3,673.92
Credits:	
January 2017	\$113.20
February 2017	\$114.05
March 2017	<u>\$110.50</u>
Total Credits:.....	\$337.75
Debits:	
Check 604-Food (Treasurer handoff meeting).....	\$59.06
Check 605-Postage.....	\$49.00
Check 606-bulk mail deposit	\$50.00
Check 607-Mardi Gras food	\$46.05
Check 608-cleanup crew food	\$94.00
Check 609-testing room fee, mail supplies.....	<u>\$22.62</u>
Total Debits:.....	\$320.73
Ending Balance:	\$3,690.94

Events for May: (See *May 2017 Events Calendar* on Page 7)

Maggie H. has volunteered to head up the French Broad Mensa Facebook page. Nel and Maggie will communicate about this. Bob suggests we have Sat night house parties with various hosts. Bob will contact Lan Sluder to see if he wants to host a picnic in June. Grace will put out feelers re a book club.

Meeting adjourned 7:05 pm

Submitted by Pat Benard, Deputy Loc Sec

Dave Cahn
First Vice Chair



Members and local groups count. Or do we? Mensa has turned away from members and local groups and become a highly-centralized corporate behemoth. I want to turn Mensa back toward us.

The AMC should listen more, govern less, and cut costs instead of raising dues. This could also provide more funds and support for local groups. I favor more transparency and fewer executive sessions. AGs should be returned to local groups.

The national office performs numerous expensive activities that volunteers can do as well for free, discouraging member involvement and stifling creativity. National should instead use members' expertise; provide usable tools and reports to local officers; and help local groups enhance members' experience, thus increasing retention rates. The office should ask us what we need or want, not give us what they think we should have. The new "improved" website shows what can go wrong when we are ignored. The executive director should be evaluated on how well the office serves current members.

During six years as National Ombudsman, I listened carefully to members' concerns and helped resolve problems, often defusing disputes before positions became hardened. I will put these same skills to work for you as First Vice Chair. Understanding and truly considering differing viewpoints will help rid Mensa of the "us vs. them" mentality. After being a Mensa member for more than 40 years, serving with four different AMCs, I know how the AMC works--and how it sometimes doesn't.

An attorney admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court, I also am a Wharton economics graduate. I have served as a diplomat in Afghanistan and Mexico, treaty negotiator, Congressional staffer, General Counsel for the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, and chief editor for the Secretary of HUD. In these roles and as a journalist and businessman, I have traveled extensively throughout the world.

I will work with AMC to make sure that We ALL Count! Join the discussion of issues that affect Mensa's future at www.davecahn.com. or contact me directly at davecahn@yahoo.com or 301-627-5126.

If you agree that We Count, I would be honored if you would vote for me for First Vice Chair. Thank you.

Desiree Elliott
Transparency, accountability, and progress!

This is the theme and call to action for my campaign. We have an amazing organization with diverse and interesting members. However, the unfortunate truth is that we are underutilizing these assets to our detriment. We must reach out to all our members to make sure that any who wish to participate feel welcomed!

Why is member involvement important? Our surveys show that the more active and involved a member is, the more likely they are to feel positive about their Mensa experience and recommend Mensa to their friends. As a volunteer organization, we need those members to help us provide activities and events that will engage all of us in this special and exciting community.

Right now, Mensa suffers from a lot of ineffective angst because there has been a breakdown in the communication and trust between the local groups and the national levels of the organization. Transparency is essential to rebuilding that trust and moving us forward. While this AMC has moved towards better transparency, there is still work to be done in this area.

An essential component of transparency is effective communication. Right now, we have a lot of different Facebook groups, ePublications, the Mensa Wired, the Mensa Leader, elists, and more that are used to communicate with members and local group officers — officially and unofficially. However, essential information is still getting missed. We need a comprehensive review of our means of communication to make sure that any important information is actually heard by our members.

Accountability is missing from our efforts at transparency. While there has been a lot of discussion about metrics and our 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, we have not actually told anyone what our actual goals are! This is a problem. We spent extra money to have additional training in 2015 to help us put this plan together, and yet we failed to share existing goals with the membership at the Annual Business Meeting at the 2016 AG.

In order to embrace progress and move our organization forward — with the members we have and the members we hope to recruit — we need to establish a genuine collaboration within all levels of American Mensa. The AMC and the Local Group Officers need to support each other effectively.

As RVC9, I had vital experience learning where communication breakdowns happen and the real problems that face different local groups depending on size and circumstances. We do need to engage our younger members, but focusing almost exclusively on Gen Y misses the vital contributions that can and must be made by the Gen Xers and Boomers — the largest populations of our existing members.

I invite you to look over my campaign materials that are available on the AML Website and to check out my website at <http://www.desireeelliottsagray.name/>. I invite your comments and questions and will respond to them through my blog on the website.

Make sure you vote!

Lori Norris
Candidate for 1st Vice Chair

What does Mensa mean to me? It has frequently been said that we are a family. I consider my Mensan friends to be a family of my choice. I have spent holidays, vacations, and weekends with this family. I play with my Mensa family, and frequently I manage to win board games. And it has been my joy to serve you on the local, regional, and national levels.

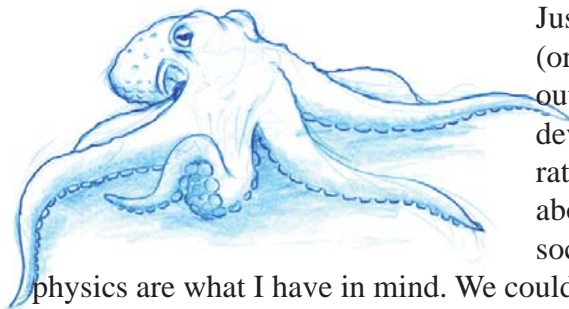
I am a member of RI Mensa. I met my husband, Ron, at an RG. I served in many local group offices, as Region 1 RVC (Regional Vice Chair) from 2007-2011, and I have been a proctor for 20-some years. I have been a local and regional scholarship judge. Our social life seems to revolve around Mensa – so many wonderful friends and I look forward to meeting more of you.

Currently, I serve as the nationally elected Secretary and I prepare detailed minutes to keep the members informed. I have worked with the AMC (American Mensa Committee, our board of directors) to involve members in our decision-making process. As Chair of the Bylaws Committee, I work with local groups to interpret and/or revise their local group bylaws. I have been available as a resource to any member.

I am seeking your vote for 1st Vice Chair. This is a unique position as the primary duty is to fill in for the Chair if necessary. The thrill of this position for me is that the 1st Vice Chair sets their own goals. Mine for the position are simple – communication with the members. I hope to help establish a higher level of communication so we can continue to find different ways to share ideas among our Local Groups, members, and other national Mensas.

LoriNorrisfor1stViceChair.wordpress.com

SecretaryLoriNorris@gmail.com



Just putting out a feeler (or two). Is there interest out there in a book club devoted to “thought” books rather than fiction? Books about everything from sociology to astronomy and

physics are what I have in mind. We could all take turns picking a book. Maybe meet once a month at some mutually agreed upon venue? If so, give me a call at 828-575-2877 or send me an email at gracelehto@yahoo.com. Suggestions and ideas welcome.

Mediocre-Okay Advice from Gabbie

Dear Gabbie,

I have voted all my life. I consider it my civic duty as a citizen. Is there any way I can take my most recent vote back?

Patriot

Dear Anon...

Sorry. No re-dos allowed. You did it and it's your fault. Suffer with humor.

Gabbie

Send your quandaries to Gabbie c/o the BROADCAST editor:



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BOILERPLATE: Deadline for articles, letters, comments, etc. is the 15th of the month preceding publication. Original (!) material is welcome. Editor reserves right to refuse publication or to edit submissions, as long as intent and meaning is retained. No personal attacks. Email submissions, with a subject line, to Editor at michael@michaelhavelin.com. Editor deletes suspected spam or emails without subject lines without reading. Opinions expressed are those of the author, not necessarily Mensa's or the Editor's.



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