

The French Broad Mensa Newsletter

# BROADCAST

Vol. 26, No. 6, June 2020

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



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Cover Art:

### ***Earth a la mode***

Pen/ink/watercolor by Michael Havelin

[havelinmaking.com](http://havelinmaking.com)

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### ***Submissions to the Broadcast***

Deadline for articles, letters, comments, etc. is the 15th of each month preceding publication. Original material is welcomed. Maximum length is 250 words. Editor reserves the right to decline publication or to edit submissions, as long as intent and meaning are retained.

Please, no personal attacks!

## ***Events Calendar***

***June 2020***

**Events will be scheduled  
when it is safe to have them—  
None for June.**

We want everyone to stay healthy. We'll resume regular activities as soon as practical. Check the website for up-to-date information.

As circumstances require, the Executive Committee will continue to conduct business via email, telephone, telepathy, or Zoom.

Regular and special events are open to members in good standing. RSVPs are important for table planning. Please respond if you plan to attend an event. If you don't, we might not be able to seat you. And don't forget to look for the Big Yellow M Table on the table at Mensa events!



**New Members: French Broad Mensa welcomes you! Watch your mail for a coupon that you can trade for a \$5 contribution to your first meal with the group.**

***Stay Safe***

***Stay Healthy***

***Stay Connected***

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

## ***Well-Earned Praise***

Be sure to check out the Volunteers on page 8 of the April/May 2020 *Mensa Bulletin*:

<https://pubs.royle.com/publication/?m=28885&i=656754&p=8>

You'll find Wayne Stanko's picture and a short biography. We all know he richly deserves this recognition, and we thank you, Wayne, for all you've done for us and for FBM over many years.

Submitted by Will McGuffin

## ***Local Secretary's Message***



In this time of uncertainty about what's safe, what isn't, where to go, where to avoid, and when, let's keep trying to minimize unnecessary risks. After informally polling the active members who attend most events, it became clear to me that "Nobody ain't goin' nowhere" for awhile.

As public guidelines change, we will be as flexible as possible. If you think we should schedule something, please contact me, and we'll figure it out.

Meanwhile, who couldn't use a laugh? Not everything in this issue is funny, but I hope at least one item makes you smile, smirk, or laugh out loud. Stand Fast.

Sharron Armel, Local Secretary, [SharronArmel@gmail.com](mailto:SharronArmel@gmail.com)

## ***Regional Vice-Chairman's Message***

“These are the times that try men’s souls.”

Thomas Payne, of course, was talking about the sufferings of Washington’s troops during the bitter winter of 1776. But the words are as true today, in 2020, as we battle COVID-19. I’ve been really good, only leaving my home for essential trips, and I’m going stir-crazy. I’ve read 35 books since “stay at home” started in mid-March, and have started listening to the Great Courses that have sat on my shelf for several years. Thing is, I can’t see the light at the end of the tunnel yet. I fully expect to live in this “social distancing mode” for the foreseeable future – definitely all summer, possibly this Fall, too. So, I am REALLY up for a Mensa fix! My local group has cancelled all in-person meetings through June. Our Main monthly meetings are scheduled for Zoom or Google Meet; our ExComm meetings are electronic; and we’ve added a bi-weekly electronic meeting where we discuss philosophical questions that we select randomly.



By now you’ve heard that the Annual Gathering planned for St. Louis, MO has been cancelled, as well as many of the RGs that we are used to. Piedmont Area Mensa’s Pirate themed – Arrrg-rg has been postponed to 2021. Haven’t heard yet about Peachtreat 2020 in September. Charlotte Blue Ridge Mensa’s RG is still on for November (as of this writing.)

Here is an excellent article about the way COVID-19 is spread:

<https://www.erinbromage.com/post/the-risks-know-them-avoid-them>

There are a few more online options to stave off boredom:

Every night, the Metropolitan Opera is streaming a different opera at 7:30 pm EDT. It repeats until 6:30 PM the next day, free.

<https://www.metopera.org/user-information/nightly-met-opera-streams/>

Several zoos are live streaming the animals:

<https://parade.com/1015445/rachelweingarten/best-animal-live-cams/>

or choose one from

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/coronavirus-zoos-aquariums-live-stream-animals-isolation-quarantine/>

Some folks are turning to humor to get through this pandemic. Here are four posts from Next Door:

- 1) Sometimes my greatest accomplishment is simply keeping my mouth shut - Ask my husband!
- 2) My thoughts go out for all those poor married men who have spent months telling the wife "I'll do that when I have time."
- 3) Almost three and a half weeks of isolation without sugar. Walking three miles a day, no meat, dairy or flour. The change has been fantastic !! I feel great ! Zero alcohol !!! A healthy vegan diet, gluten free, caffeine free, sugar free and a two hour home workout each day! Lost fourteen pounds of fat and gained muscle mass!! (I have no idea whose status this is, but I'm really proud of them, so I decided to copy and paste!)
- 4) I was in a long line at 7:45 am today at the grocery store that opened at 8 for seniors only. A young man came from the parking lot and tried to cut in at the front of the line, but an old lady beat him back into the parking lot with her cane. He returned and tried to cut in again but an old man punched him in the gut, then kicked him to the ground and rolled him away. As he approached the line for the 3rd time he said, "If you don't let me unlock the door, you'll never get in there."

Nancy Campbell, 704-533-3351 or [RVC5mail@gmail.com](mailto:RVC5mail@gmail.com)

### ***Looking for Adventure?***

This brand-new SIG might interest you:

I wish I had a boyfriend, but I can't compete with all the young, attractive, well-put-together FMs, so I'm starting a new Mensa SIG instead: [WhimsicalM@outlook.com](mailto:WhimsicalM@outlook.com).

## **Mediocre-Okay Advice from Gabbie**

Gabbie hears your woes, and offers advice. Send your quandaries to Gabbie c/o the BROADCAST Editor.



*Dear Gabbie,*

*I really like the advice you been givin' 'cause partly, but not including er'ything, you one funny dude... or dudette (whatever)... but you so cool 'cause you funny as all get out, even 'bout serious stuff like taxes, and bail-outs, and the plague and er'ything. Wow!*

*In All Seriousity*

*Dear Ser,*

*You must have me confused with someone else, maybe someone you met at a party. Maybe a politician or a clown at the circus or something.*

*As for humor, what's so funny? You think COVID-19 is funny? You think the government is funny? That's funny, 'cause I think the same thing. This government is ridiculous. And this disease thing... that's just Evolution hard at work. And History is being made as a result. Why, it's the End of the Age of Mammals... except for infected bats. It's the end of the Anthropocene. And you are there (read: here) and helping at this notable moment in human history. Let's hear it for the bipedal apes!*

*Don't forget to vote, by mail if possible.*

*Gabbie, Seer for Our Age*

*P.S. (post scriptum): Y'know, some people call what I write Gabbage. Get off my back! Hey... I'm doing the best I can with what I got to work with.*



## **Gabbie Got Mail!**

“This is in response to your letter reply on page 6 in the March 2020 newsletter.

“The Blue Ridge Parkway is generally open to hikers and bicycles during winter (though probably not right now because of the virus). You have to be careful of hitting black ice at the higher elevations, and in tunnels.

“I do not bicycle, but I have met a number of people who ride the parkway from end to end every year during the time it is closed to cars. It would be just about the perfect place for a (strong) person to ride.”

Bill Smith of Cherokee

## **Member News**

**John Federspiel** says he and **Cindy** have moved. They were sorry they couldn't have a farewell get-together, but they finally sold their house in Edneyville and took off for Beaufort, SC. John says “So it's official, we are on coastal time. The mountain house is sold, we have a beach house under contract. We had lunch at Shem creek. and a walk on the beach at Breach Inlet. All is well.”

**Will McGuffin** is settling in at Deerfield.

**Bob Bouvier** says he and **Leslie** may be making a trip from Texaz to Asheville this June, or whenever travel conditions permit.

## **BORED?**

Check out this new link on the French Broad Mensa webpage:

<http://www.frenchbroad.us.mensa.org/bored.html>

## *The Fairy Godmother*



I went grocery shopping today dressed as a fairy godmother. A young boy asked me if I was the Tooth Fairy. I told him I was a fairy godmother and would gladly grant him three wishes but unfortunately, I had not plugged my wand in to get charged up!

Submitted by Grace Lehto

## **MERF Scholarship Program**

French Broad Mensa again participated in the Mensa Education and Research Foundation scholarship program. Application is based on an essay stating their goals and how they plan to achieve them. We received 56 applications this year. This is about twice last year.

The top three highest scoring essays were forwarded for regional consideration. There were other essays forwarded in special categories. A total of 14 were sent to the regional level. We are guaranteed at least one local scholarship worth \$600. The program software was totally changed this year. There were many bugs in the program.

Many thanks to our essay judges Janis Durr, Grace Lehto, and Will McGuffin for persevering through the problems.

Wayne Stanko,  
Scholarship Chairman

World Health Organization has announced that dogs cannot contract COVID19. Dogs previously held in quarantine can now be released. To be clear: WHO let the dogs out.

John Travolta was hospitalized for suspected coronavirus. But doctors soon realized that it was only a Saturday Night Fever, and he will be Stayin' Alive.

## **Funny Tidbits About Repairing Computers**

by Josie

I had to copy 9 files to a backup drive. When the copy started, a screen appeared that said

Moving 9 items (206 MB) – About 48035 days and 7 hours remaining.

That worked out to just over 131 years, so I decided not to wait.

Here's a funny classic computer video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fAO77skO4Jw>

Viruses have performed some horribly funny actions over the years→

There once was a virus called Flip that reversed all the words on the screen so that you had to read them upside down with a mirror.

There was a virus named Cascade that made the letters on your screen look like they were falling to the bottom of the screen. It would start with one or two letters falling, and then gradually more and more until all the text fell to the bottom of the screen.

There was a virus that made the icons run away from the mouse.

There was a keyboard virus that would substitute its own horrible, vulgar, profanity-laced text while you were typing.

There was a speaker virus that made it sound like your computer was failing by continuously beeping or making clicking sounds. There was another that continuously played *Yankee Doodle Dandy*.

Dozens of men infected their computers by clicking on a link that said “See Anna Kournikova naked,” but then there was the man that clicked on a link that said “Watch Ben Franklin Peeing” (I asked him to explain why.)

TWICE, in two different states, people brought their computers for repair after completely spraying the insides with WD-40. The second time I asked the customer, “Where's the duct tape?”

And the latest is Zoom bombing, which is when people unexpectedly add themselves or their materials into Zoom conferences. Sometimes it is evil, and sometimes it's almost funny, such as when Indiana Elections officials had their meeting interrupted by some x-rated antics.

(Note: 500,000 Zoom user names and passwords were for sales on the dark web crime forums around the beginning of April.)

Question: What do serfs use  
instead of petroleum jelly?

Answer: Vassaline

Will McGuffin



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### ***Remove Doubt***

By Pat Benard

## ***I Am Not a Jock***

Grace Lehto

As a matter of fact, about the only sport I enjoy is swimming. It's the one athletic endeavor I can think of where I cannot possibly fall down. And it is a cruel twist of fate indeed that I was named "Grace" at birth.

As a child, I had plenty of opportunity to at least attempt to develop some kind of athletic prowess. I did play with a neighborhood gang. There were twelve of us and I was the only girl so we played boy stuff. Cowboys and Indians, Pirates, Robin Hood and the regular stuff like football and baseball. One summer my brother Carl broke his leg and for a while there I didn't get picked last when we were choosing sides.

In addition, I grew up in a town with approximately eight hundred residents. In order to field the high school volleyball team, they had to let me play. That's how I managed to letter in softball, basketball, volleyball and track as well. We didn't really have a Physical Education program. In fact, our basketball court, nearly a mile away, was up over the town hall and was so short that the center circle slightly overlapped the free throw circles.

Now when I got to college, I discovered that I had to take Phys Ed for the first two years. OK, I thought, I can do this. I looked down the list of possible Phys Ed classes and stopped right away at archery. I could be like Maid Marion in Sherwood Forest! But alas, the way my arm bends, I kept thwanging my elbow with the bow string and it hurt. The instructor noticed and suggested that for my own safety I might want to try something else before I seriously injured myself.

Ok, I thought. I'll try tennis. I reported for class, was issued a racquet, which was pointless, because in three days of classes, I never once hit a ball. The racquet was as pristine as it had been when first issued. No dust or debris from a flying tennis ball had ever touched it. The instructor pulled me aside and suggested that perhaps tennis was not my game and I should try another class.

Al right. I went back to the list. Ah,...Fencing! Pirates, Yes. But after a couple of classes the instructor told me that he didn't really have a left handed foil and that it would be difficult to have me in the class because everyone else was right handed and perhaps I should try something else.

Well, they didn't have swimming, which I could have done. They did have track, gymnastics and wrestling. I knew from high school I wasn't any good at track and wrestling was just out of the question. It would have to be gymnastics. I didn't have much hope, but I reported for class. Balance beams, trampolines, ropes to climb, parallel bars. I was in over my head, but, oh well, you've just got to give it a go sometimes. A couple of days in, as I was clumsily getting off the trampoline, the instructor asked to speak with me.

As I followed her to the edge of the gym, I could feel tears drizzling down my face. Mrs. Milligan looked at me and asked me what was happening. I gave her the whole story of the other classes I'd already washed out of. I confessed to her that I am a certifiable Klutz and a total failure at Physical Education. "But I will try," I said. "Really I will."

Mrs. Milligan gave me a hug and said, "You can you fold towels, can't you?"

"Oh, yes," I said.

And a deal was struck. I would have to maintain good attendance, I would still have to get dressed in the gym uniform, but I would be assigned to the laundry area and fold towels. And that's how I completed my two years of required Phys Ed.

So there you have it. Proof positive that I am not a jock.

But tell you what. I can damn well fold towels with the best of 'em!

*So I ran out of toilet paper  
and had to use newspaper.  
Times are rough.*

*Josie*

*I had a breakthrough today and  
got in touch with my inner self.  
That's the last time I use cheap  
toilet paper.*

## ***Executive Committee Meeting Minutes***

### ***May 2020***

The ExComm members and advisors (Sharron Armel, Michael Havelin, Grace Lehto, Will McGuffin, and Wayne Stanko) conferred via email during May to talk over plans for the next few months. We agreed to continue meeting remotely until we agree it's safe to get together in person.

No events are scheduled for June, and plans for July and beyond are tentative. Please remember that you can check the schedule of events on the FBM website:

<http://www.frenchbroad.us.mensa.org/events.html>

As most of the active members of our group are categorized as "at risk" due to age and/or health, we will continue to exercise great caution.

Submitted by  
Grace Lehto  
Deputy Local Secretary

You may suggest topics for future agendas by emailing  
[SharronArmel@gmail.com](mailto:SharronArmel@gmail.com).

### ***Financial Report for April 2020***

Opening Balance at March 31, 2020..... \$4,314.54

Receipts:

    Am. MENSA Monthly Subsidy .....\$135.30

Total Receipts..... \$135.30

Disbursements:

    None

Total Disbursements ..... \$.00

Closing Balance at April 30, 2020 ..... \$4,449.84

Submitted by Wayne Stanko, Treasurer

## **French Broad Mensa Contacts**

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### **Region 5 Vice-Chairman**

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### **French Broad Mensa Elected Officers:**

#### **Executive Committee**

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#### **S.I.G.H.T.**

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#### **Membership Coordinator** ..... Position Open



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