

The French Broad Mensa Newsletter

# ***BROADCAST***

Vol. 26, No. 7, July 2020

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



***Have a Safe &  
Happy***

**S O C I A L L Y**

**D I S T A N T**

***Independence Day!***



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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  
July 2020*

**In-person events will be  
scheduled as soon as it's safe  
to do so. None for July.**

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/>

## What Does Social Distancing Look Like to You?



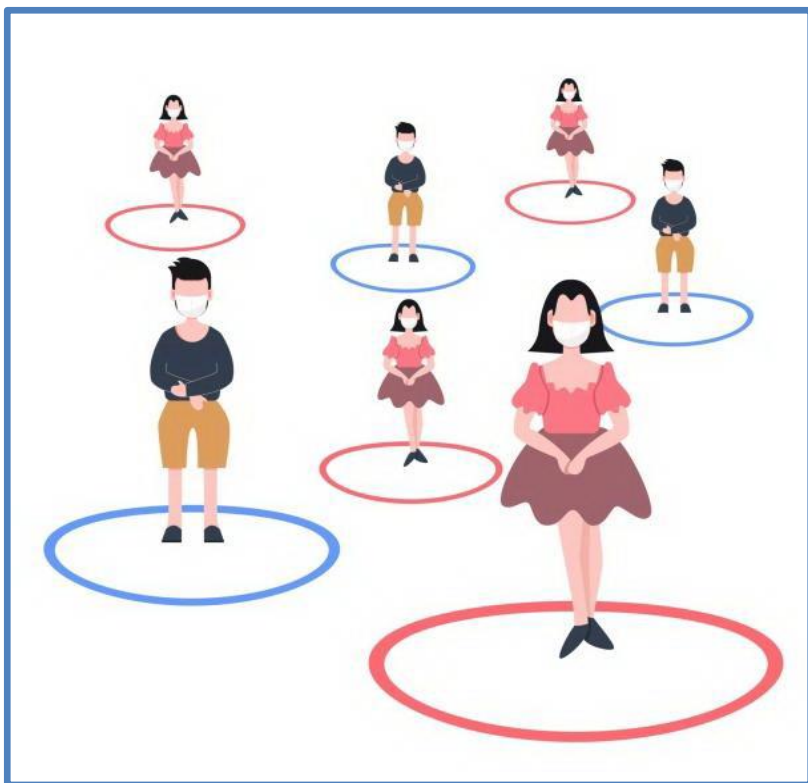
In Roswell, it might look like this.  
Submitted by Lan Sluder



Submitted by Johanna Dokter



In Germany, everyone participates!  
Submitted by Johanna Dokter



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

Open? Closed? In transition? Masks? Stay home? Go? So many decisions to make. Again, the safer course for FBM is to skip any in-person events until further notice. American Mensa has offered some suggestions for “virtual events,” so keep checking the group’s website to see what might be happening. Stand Fast.

Sharron Armel, Local Secretary,  
SharronArmel@gmail.com



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



In any normal year, I would be making last minute preparations to attend the AG, but instead here I sit bleary-eyed at my computer almost in mourning, because I will miss seeing all my friends at the Kansas City AG, which has been postponed to 2024. I'll miss Peachtreat 2020 too, because it won't be happening this year. As of today, Charlotte Blue Ridge Mensa is still planning to hold their annual RG in November. Keep your fingers crossed.

Speaking of AGs – next year will be a **World Gathering**, here in the USA. It will be held in Houston, Texas from August 24 to 29. The last time the USA hosted the World Gathering was 15 years ago in Orlando Florida, and it was great. World Gatherings are held in August to take advantage of the European holiday period. Start saving now! You don't want to miss this!

Local groups are continuing to meet electronically, by Zoom or Go-to-Meeting or Skype or Google Team, etc. My local group has three or four of these “virtual” meetings – our ExComm meeting; our monthly Speaker meeting; a book club meeting; and a biweekly chat group which pulls a question (submitted earlier) at random and discusses it for a while, then takes up another question. Folks, this pandemic is going to be around a while. Please start pestering your local leaders to set something up so that there will be at least virtual events on your calendar. This is a great way to involve people who live miles away from your group's population center, and shut-ins. If you can host a meeting, be a hero – VOLUNTEER!

Other regions report electronic trivia games, game nights, Meet-Ups, and other functions. To see how some Region 1 groups are engaging members, here is a report by Ian Randal Strock, their RVC:

<https://www.us.mensa.org/featured-content/getting-together-during-quarantine-a-virtual-view-from-region-1/>.

*A few things I've learned from isolation, borrowed from somewhere on the Internet*

- \* I was so bored I called Jake from State Farm just to talk to someone. He asked me what I was wearing...
- \* 2019: Stay away from negative people.  
2020: Stay away from positive people.
- \* The world has turned upside down. Old folks are sneaking out of the house, and their kids are yelling at them to stay indoors!
- \* Day 7 at home and the dog is looking at me like, "See? This is why I chew the furniture!"
- \* I never thought the comment "I wouldn't touch him/her with a 6 foot pole" would become a national policy, but here we are!
- \* Me: Alexa what's the weather this weekend?  
Alexa: It doesn't matter – you're not going anywhere.
- \* I swear my fridge just said "What the hell do you want now?"
- \* Quarantine has turned us into dogs. We roam the house all day looking for food. We are told "no" if we get too close to strangers. And we get really excited about car rides.

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

**I stepped on the scale this morning and it said: Please use Social Distancing – one person at a time!**

**They said gloves and a mask were enough to go to the grocery store. They lied! Everyone else had clothes on!**

## ***New SIG (Special Interest Group)***

Let's talk about racism in today's world and how it affects us here in Mensa.

We often hear people say that they aren't racist because they don't use the N word or discriminate in obvious ways. But racism takes many forms, such as bias, micro-aggression, and simply looking the other way. When we cross the street to avoid a black man, fail to call out a racist joke, or pass on a job application because the name doesn't sound white enough, these are all forms of micro-aggression.

It isn't enough for us to pat ourselves on the back for not being racist. If we truly believe in equality, we need to actively take a stand for inclusivity. We need to show our peers we are not ok with the mistreatment of others. We can make a concerted effort to make the world within our circles look like the real world around us; all colors, races, shapes and sizes.

Mensa is often thought of as a white organization. For many people of color it feels like a hostile one. They feel like we don't want to hear from them, that we are ok with people putting them down. Our 'not taking a stance' is actually taking a stance in favor of oppression. Homogeneity breeds homogeneity, so when they see our boards, our committees and groups filled with people that look the same, they understand that they are not being invited.

When members are allowed to continue to use inflammatory language against people of color in forums both in person and online, it feels like we don't want them here. Many leave or change their online personas so as not to be attacked. If they stay, they endure jokes, insults, and condescending treatment.

And then- George Floyd. The horror of watching an immobilized man agonizingly murdered on tv was shocking. People of all races jumped up and said- enough is enough!

Like many other groups, some within Mensa stepped back and said, 'how can I be a part of the solution and not part of the problem? How can I show that I am not only not a racist but an anti-racist? I will no longer stay quiet; I will actively work to ensure others are treated equally.' And with that, MEDIC SIG was born.



MEDIC stands for **Mensans for Equality, Diversity, Inclusiveness, and Change**, and the mission of this new SIG is to take deliberate action and offer tangible solutions to improve the experience of marginalized people within Mensa. We believe that we must hold ourselves and our leadership accountable for addressing racism and discrimination in American Mensa. It is not enough to fight institutionalized inequality; we must institutionalize equity and inclusivity. We believe it will take organizational, systemic change within Mensa and we are capturing actions and making recommendations towards these goals.

To this end, within the SIG we have formed committees focused on changing the way we communicate, in person and online. Promoting activities and behaviors that minimize hate, racism, sexism, ignorance, prejudice, bigotry, and other traits that discourage collegiality. Implementing behavioral standards and diversity at all levels of the organization is important. We are asking you to join us in making Mensa a home for all high IQ people; a place we all feel safe, seen and heard.

Submitted by Tom Schnorrenberg, Boston Mensa

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### ***Remembering Pete Tolleson***

Pete Tolleson, who passed away May 1, 2020 at the age of 89 in Durham, NC was one of the first members of Mensa whom I met after I joined in 1981. When we were part of Piedmont Area Mensa, meetings were held for a while at his Unitarian church in Greenville, SC. He later moved to Asheville and became a member of FBM. He was a man of great talent including woodcarving and silversmithing. In his capacity as a Unitarian pastor, he officiated at the funeral of Carl Sandburg at the church of St. John in the Wilderness in Flat Rock, NC. He also presided over the marriages of some of my friends and relatives, and ran the print shop at Warren Wilson College for many years. The link to his full obituary is <https://www.lorisfuneralhome.com/obituaries/George-Tolleson-2/>.

Submitted by Will McGuffin

PS: Pete was as fond of puns as I am!

## **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 just lost my girlfriend to COVID-19. Y'see, we've been hearing so much 'bout this "social distancing" stuff and she decided that it would be a great idea if we did some of that, and sort of "opened up" our relationship (which was getting pretty cooled off anyway, if y'know wadda mean). Was she infected, do you think? Do I need to get tested for anything?*

*RNA vs DNA*

*Dear RNA,*

*You're a mess, ain't chu? You have no idea of what's really going on. You ought'a lay off the drugs for a couple of days and take a clear view of your various situations. You're in trouble.*

*First of all, there's a world-wide pandemic on just now. You must'a heard about it, right? The world has turned inside-out. Last time you went to the bank the tellers were wearing masks. That's for sure different. In the good old days, it was the robbers who had masks.*

*The way the government is trying to stop the spread of the virus is to isolate us all now with social distancing. The theory is that if we stay away from one another and never meet in groups of more than ten, the virus won't spread and kill more people. Of course,*

Gabbie continues...

*social distancing also keeps people from massing to burn down the government, and politicians like social distancing for that unique quality. No mistaking that.*

*Secondly, your girlfriend is sick of you but she's insecure about being without someone, so she doesn't want to cut it off cold turkey. But now she's got an out: COVID-19 and the government's no-proximity edicts. "Open the relationship," my foot. You better get out to the bars and start hunting for another main squeeze. Oops, sorry, bars aren't open again yet. The pandemic, remember?*

*Otherwise, have a nice day. The sky is blue, the foliage is all green again, and the price of gas is down (as if we're going anywhere, that is).*

*Your faithful yet disillusioned pessimistic optimist,  
Gabbie*

**I would never have believed that 2 months of uncut hair could weigh 20 pounds. But that's what the scale says!**

**If you get the Coronavirus twice, does that make it Dos Equis?**

## What the Dickens is THAT?

Can you guess what each of these old, obsolete, or just plain odd items is? Check the FBM website for answers:



Grace Lehto #1



Pat Benard



Will McGuffin #1



Grace Lehto #2



Lan Sluder #1

*What the dickens?*



Sharron Armel



Grace Lehto #3



Will McGuffin #2



Lizz Russell #1



Grace Lehto #4



Lizz Russell #2



Grace Lehto #5



Grace Lehto #6



Lizz Russell #3



Lan Sluder #2

Answers will be posted by July 1 on the FBM website:  
[www.frenchbroad.us.mensa.org](http://www.frenchbroad.us.mensa.org)



**Executive Committee Report**  
**June 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.

We plan to let members know, again, that no in-person meetings will be scheduled until further notice. We informed the membership via email or snail-mail, and invited everyone to check the FBM website occasionally for new information: <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 <a href="mailto:SharronArmel@gmail.com">SharronArmel@gmail.com</a> .
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**Financial Report for May 2020**

Opening Balance at April, 2020.....	\$4,449.84
Receipts:	
Am. MENSA Monthly Subsidy .....	\$114.75
Total Receipts.....	\$114.75
Disbursements:	
None	
Total Disbursements .....	\$0.00
Closing Balance at May 31, 2020 .....	\$4,564.59

Submitted by Wayne Stanko, Treasurer



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## **French Broad Mensa Contacts**

**National Office**...817-607-0090...AmericanMensa@mensa.org

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

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

#### **Executive Committee**

#### **Local Secretary**

Sharron Armel..... 828-280-6234 ... sharronarmel@gmail.com

#### **Deputy Local Secretary**

Grace Lehto..... 828-575-2877 ... gracelehto@yahoo.com

#### **Treasurer**

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#### **Member-at-Large**

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Carmen Jessup ..... ciej@aol.com

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#### **Testing Coordinator**

Mark Crossley ..... 704-798-3247 ... mcrossley@qualman.com

#### **Ombudsman**

Will McGuffin ..... 828-274-5050 ... wmcguffin@gmail.com

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

Lizz Russell ..... lizz@dnet.net

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



# BROADCAST

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