

The French Broad Mensa Newsletter

# BROADCAST

Vol. 27, No. 6, June 2021

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

Lyrics by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN II  
Music by RICHARD RODGERS

THE WAR THAT REDEFINED  
THE MIDDLE EAST



March went out like a

side and a

May was full

n't keep'em quick e-nough fer some and a

Bm7 E7/B Am7

***In this issue***

June 2021 Events..... 3  
Regional Vice-Chairman’s Message ..... 4  
Local Secretary’s Message..... 6  
Mediocre-Okay Advice from Gabbie..... 8  
Ham Radio—The Adventure, Part 1 ..... 10  
Smart Aleck..... 11  
On Shaky Ground..... 12  
Help Wanted! ..... 13  
Executive Committee Report ..... 14  
Treasurer’s Report..... 14  
Contacts ..... 15

***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, except against the Editor (if you so choose). The Editor would be so very glad to hear from you that she will tolerate (but not necessarily publish) nearly anything!

**Events Calendar**  
**June 2021**

**Monday, June 7, 11:30am: Executive Committee Meeting**

At Grace Lehto's home, 25 Hopedale Lane in Asheville

Reservations required by June 1; contact [SharronArmel@gmail.com](mailto:SharronArmel@gmail.com)

**Thursday, June 24: Thu.D!** at 6:30 at Fresh Wood-Fired Pizza, 342 Depot St in Asheville's River Arts District

Reservations required by June 20 to [SharronArmel@gmail.com](mailto:SharronArmel@gmail.com)

**August:**

Combination Picnic,

FBM Anniversary

Celebration,

& Holiday Party

IN-PERSON!

Date & details will follow.



All regular and special Mensa 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 event.

***Stay Safe***

***Stay Healthy***

***Stay Connected***

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

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



I spent some time this week reading newsletters from other regions, and I am astonished at how many local groups are already holding in-person events. My local group, Charlotte Blue Ridge Mensa, has been holding testing sessions for months now, but of course the number of people attending a testing session is usually quite limited, so we were able to stay socially-distanced, wear masks, etc. We are already discussing holding our annual picnic this

summer, and the CDC has announced an end to many restrictions.

With the new relaxation of “gathering” restrictions, I am eagerly planning to attend the World Gathering in Houston, TX August 24-29, 2021. Register at <https://ag.us.mensa.org/> I'll also be in Duluth, GA (near Atlanta) for Peachtreat 45:

<http://ga.us.mensa.org/generalinfo.html> Finally, Charlotte Blue Ridge Mensa will hold their annual RG November 12-14, 2021. Register at <https://cbrmensa.org/rg/>

So many important things happened at the last quarterly AMC meeting. The Board was in a “Yes” mood, because all motions passed (except the one proposing to hold all Regional Meet and Greets simultaneously.) Something of importance to ALL groups is that new Minimum Standard Bylaws and new Model Bylaws were approved. As you know, the Minimum Standard Bylaws, by mandate, apply to all groups whether they are specified in the local Bylaws or not. All ExComms should check the new Minimum Standard Bylaws NOW to see if they are in compliance. The AMC also adopted Event Safety Standards, which is a Code of Conduct for national events such as Mind Games and the Annual Gathering. We also updated the definition of “acts inimical” to include harassment and retaliation. We updated the Hearings process for both regional and national Hearings. We approved a Job Description for the Advocate to help people involved in Hearings. We clarified how RVC funds may be spent, and

approved guidelines on how to replace an RVC who has resigned or is incapacitated.

We specified the cost of testing (Home Tests \$9.99, “Private Testing” at Prometrics \$99, and local testing \$60.)

The AMC also reviewed the results of the recent survey of the membership and local group leaders, and there were several important points. Our “Net Promoter Score” has dropped from 23 in 2017 to 7. Ouch! Scores were particularly low among Millennials, Gen-X, parents, and African-American members. Members who stated reasons for leaving Mensa said that dues were too high for what they get, and that local group activities were unappealing. We have some work to do!

Got a suggestion or a gripe? I am always open to your ideas and comments. You can reach me at [rvc5mail@gmail.com](mailto:rvc5mail@gmail.com) or 704-533-3351 (afternoons and evenings.)

*Nancy Campbell, RVC5*



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

Each month the pandemic threat seems smaller. With vaccinations and continued health precautions, it's starting to feel safe to take a deep breath! Are you ready to attend in-person events? What would YOU like to see French Broad Mensa do?

With many thanks to fellow members David Diehn and Wayne Stanko, we were able to resume mailing the printed version of the *BROADCAST* last month.



Welcome to members who have joined, returned, or moved into our area in May:

***Josephine Smithyman***

***James Womack***

Farewell and best wishes to ***Robyn Tapley***, who has moved out of our group.

As of May 2021, French Broad Mensa has 122 members, making us the 95<sup>th</sup> largest of the 124 groups in the USA.

And Happy June Birthdays to:

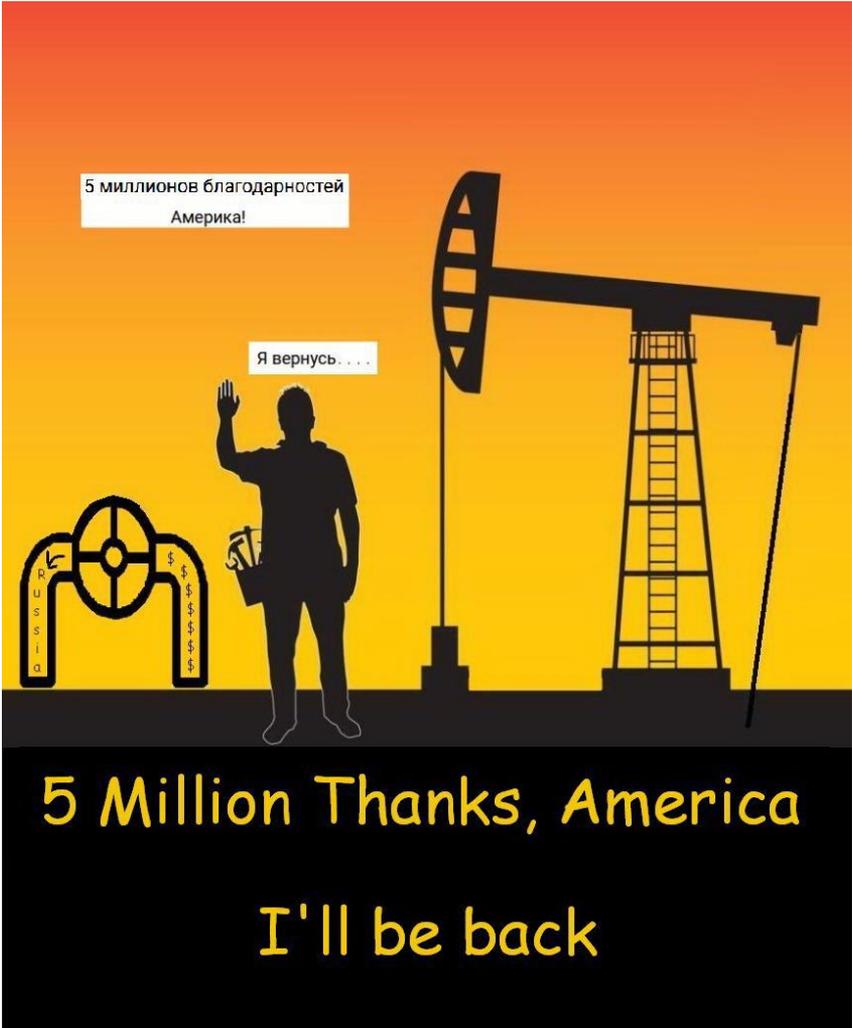
***Mark Gamble***

***Deborah Welt***

***Michael Havelin***

***Sharron Armel***, Local Secretary

[SharronArmel@gmail.com](mailto:SharronArmel@gmail.com)



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

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



*Dearest Gabbie,*

*I'm so happy I can hardly stand it. I've been thanking the lord as hard as I can for COVID-19 and it's wearing me out. Don't you think COVID has taught us oh so much about humility and loving our government and our leaders. I've even stopped worrying about the aliens invading us from Mars. If they don't mind our visiting them with our toy helicopters, why should I worry? I'm glad God gave us the vaccine, but I'm not gonna get the jab anyway. God'll protect me, doncha think?*

*Happy COVID lover*

*Dear C-Lover,*

*What's wrong with you? Don't you realize that COVID is trying to kill us all off? Mother Nature is trying yet again to level the playing field (as they say) by reducing the population pressure on our fragile globe. And you and me and everyone you know or ever knew or will know are the pressure I'm referring to. There are too many of us! Too many humans; too many babies!*

*I doubt you'll agree with me, but babies aren't cute! They're demanding and murderous little beasts, sucking and drooling (and*

*Gabbie goes on...*

*you know what else, too) all the time, shrieking and defecating until they're old enough to run loose and do real damage with bulldozers and nuclear physics.*

*Luckily, the smarter people (pointy-headed Mensans, for example) find other ways to occupy themselves than indiscriminately procreating all the time. Why don't those Densans find other hobbies? How about knitting, or checkers, or drowning themselves in all the sewage we produce? They obviously don't understand the problem.*

*And as for politicians with their four, five, and seven child families... well... they should immediately be disqualified from holding responsible offices and declared threats to humanity, too. They don't get it. They simply don't understand the problem either.*

*Look, I'm happy that you're happy, but I think you're nuts. Get your meds checked right away, and if possible, get stronger drugs. Bribe your doctor. That should work.*

*I love you too, but not very much,*

*Gabbie*



## ***Ham Radio: The Adventure, Part 1***

*by Bea Ready*

In an effort to become a licensed Ham Radio operator, I registered for my FCC Registration Number (FRN), watched the Ham Radio Technician videos on youtube.com, read the book, took the practice tests at AA9PW.com, and have been going to the local ham radio club meetings.

Last month, I took the ham radio technician test. I passed! Now I have a call sign. Upon passing, I watched the celebratory video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3G5IXn0K7A>. :) )

To my delight, one of the members of the ham radio club gave me a Baofang UV-5R portable radio with an extra battery and long rubber ducky antenna so I could get my feet wet.

I took the radio home and charged it up.

When I turned the radio on, the display came up with my name on it. So nice! It made me feel welcome and part of the club.

It was then that I realized that I am a total neophyte. Did I have to say my call sign first? Could I monitor traffic without announcing that I was doing so? What if I was on the wrong channel?

Undaunted, I watched a bunch of videos to learn about the UV-5R.

I started monitoring ham radio traffic—Listen before I leap and all that.

Of course, Murphy's law kicked in (I live less than 50 miles from Murphy, so the effect is stronger). There was dead silence on the radio. Once in a while the transmission light would come on, but nobody spoke.

Next, I took the radio for a ride into town. Success! There was an announcement about the next ham radio club meeting. Ta da!

At that ham radio club meeting, the club members told me an antenna would be necessary to use the radio at home because I live in one of those dreaded dead zones.

On June 26, over 35,000 radio amateurs in the U.S. and Canada will be taking part in the annual Amateur Radio Relay League (ARRL) Field Day (<https://www.arrl.org/field-day>). Our club is getting together for this event to operate from our remote location right here in WNC. It should be an exciting learning experience!



## ***On Shaky Ground***

by *Lizzz Russell*

Our nation's infrastructure is on shaky ground because of a lack of computer security and a lack of preparation for probable events such as EMPs/big solar flares.

Computers, smart phones, and the Internet of Things (items such as buildings, televisions and cameras) are so vulnerable that many hackers now pick and choose their targets on the basis of maximum profits, control, and satiation of their desires. The Federal Government, local governments, schools, hospitals, charities, police departments and big companies are the current preferred targets.

Plus North Korea is funding nukes with money they stole from us and others.

Recent targets of hackers include the Colonial Pipeline, much of Belgium's Internet services, the New Zealand Stock Exchange, two water purification systems in Pennsylvania, many school districts (even caused school closures), universities, the Houston Rockets, and many, many, many others.

In addition to ransom, extortion now often follows. According to the New York Times, 26 government agencies were ransomed since the beginning of 2021. In 16 of those cases, the cybercriminals threatened to release data if the ransom was not paid. Some sensitive data was actually leaked, such as sensitive information stolen from the Washington D.C. police department.

In the past few months, new processor side-channel attacks have been found, 19 petabytes of data were found exposed across over 29,000 unprotected data bases, over 380,000 easy-to-hack IP cameras were found, forged covid vaccines cards and fake vaccines are for sale on the dark web, a new fragmentation aggregation attack that can be used on almost every wi-fi device was just found (even WPA3 is compromised), and a new method to attack the TOR network was also found.

The bottom line is simple-- If hackers kill your electricity, poison your water, stop the flow of gas, steal your money, disable your electronic door lock, or monitor your children in your home with your camera, what are you going to do? What is your survival plan?

**HELP WANTED!**

Can you provide some cover art for future *BROADCASTS*? Something beautiful, something funny, something thought-provoking? It's YOUR newsletter, and it can be better with your input.

Questions or comments to [SharronArmel@gmail.com](mailto:SharronArmel@gmail.com)



**Clark**  
COMMUNICATIONS

- OFFSET PRINTING
- DIGITAL PRINTING
- STRATEGIC MARKETING
  - SOCIAL MEDIA
- SIGNAGE & DISPLAYS
- MAILING SOLUTIONS

**828/254.1432**

**[www.oneclearchoice.com](http://www.oneclearchoice.com)**

## ***Executive Committee Report***

The ExComm members and advisors (*Sharron Armel, Michael Havelin, Grace Lehto, Will McGuffin, and Wayne Stanko*) met at Green Sage West on May 4, grateful for the chance to meet in person.

Distribution of the printed BROADCAST resumed with the May issue, without problems.

We made further plans for the August picnic, which will be a combined celebration of safer gatherings, the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of French Broad Mensa, and an early (or late, depending on your point of view) holiday extravaganza!

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> .
--

## ***Treasurer's Report***

Opening Balance at March 31, 2021		\$ 5,476.69
Receipts:		
Am. MENSA Monthly Subsidy	\$ 131.20	
Total Receipts		\$ 131.20
Disbursements:		
Bulk Mail Deposit	\$ 50.00	
Total Disbursements		\$ 50.00
Closing Balance at April 30, 2021		\$ 5,557.89

Submitted by ***Wayne Stanko***, Treasurer

## ***French Broad Mensa Contacts***

**National Office...** 817-607-0090... [AmericanMensa@mensa.org](mailto:AmericanMensa@mensa.org)

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

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

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

#### **Executive Committee**

##### **Local Secretary**

Sharron Armel ..... 828-280-6234... [sharronarmel@gmail.com](mailto:sharronarmel@gmail.com)

##### **Deputy Local Secretary**

Grace Lehto ..... [gracelehto@yahoo.com](mailto:gracelehto@yahoo.com)

##### **Treasurer**

Wayne Stanko..... 828-253-8781 ... [wstanko@charter.net](mailto:wstanko@charter.net)

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

Johanna Dokter ..... [johannadillo@gmail.com](mailto:johannadillo@gmail.com)

### **French Broad Mensa Appointed Officers:**

#### **Proctors**

Karen Youket..... 828-645-4569 ... [kyouket@charter.net](mailto:kyouket@charter.net)

Carmen Jessup ..... [ciej@aol.com](mailto:ciej@aol.com)

#### **Editor**

Sharron Armel ..... 828-280-6234... [sharronarmel@gmail.com](mailto:sharronarmel@gmail.com)

#### **Webmaster**

Lizz Russell ..... [lizz@dnet.net](mailto:lizz@dnet.net)

#### **Testing Coordinator**

Mark Crossley ..... 704-798-3247 ... [mcrossley@qualman.com](mailto:mcrossley@qualman.com)

#### **Ombudsman**

Will McGuffin ..... 828-274-5050... [wmcguffin@gmail.com](mailto:wmcguffin@gmail.com)

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

Lizz Russell ..... [lizz@dnet.net](mailto:lizz@dnet.net)

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



# **BROADCAST**

Periodical Postage  
**PAID**  
Asheville, NC 28810

BROADCAST (USPS 0013-506) is published monthly for \$8 per Year by French Broad Mensa.

Periodical postage paid at Asheville, NC 28810. BROADCAST is The official newsletter of French Broad Mensa Group 287 in Region 5 of American Mensa.

**POSTMASTER: ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**  
**AMERICAN MENSA**  
**1229 CORPORATE DRIVE WEST**  
**ARLINGTON, TX 76006-6103**

**TIME VALUE MATERIAL**