

The French Broad Mensa Newsletter

# ***BROADCAST***

Vol. 28, No. 2, February 2022

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



## ***Breaking News!***

Natural biology is racing apace as Bob the Pineapple is reported by Grace Lehto to be "pregnant" with four young Bobette buds. Congratulations, Bob!

Follow this story as it develops with coverage from *BROADCAST's* crack news team.

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### ***Special Thanks to Contributors***

***Grace Lehto, Michael Havelin, Will McGuffin & Lizz Russell***  
without whom the BROADCAST would be a lot less fun!

### ***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.

**FBM Events Calendar**  
**February 2022**

**Friday, February 4, 11:30am: First Friday Lunch**

At Outback Steakhouse, 30 Tunnel Road in Asheville  
(just east of the tunnel)

If you plan to attend, contact Fae Armstrong  
[one4fae2@yahoo.com](mailto:one4fae2@yahoo.com) or 828-575-0121

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

at Early Girl Eatery on Hendersonville Road in South Asheville  
RSVP by February 4 to [SharronArmel@gmail.com](mailto:SharronArmel@gmail.com)

**Saturday, February 12, 1:00pm: Second Saturday Gathering**

for a combination event: Lunch at the Buxton Hall Barbecue (32 Banks Avenue in downtown Asheville) and then a visit next door to the Wehrloom Honey and Meadery (32 Banks Avenue, Suite 001). Buxton Hall offers whole-hog East Carolina BBQ, in-house bakery, Southern sides and cocktails on tap. Wehrloom is home to a mead taproom, honey tasting room, bee observatory, and gift shop.

RSVP by February 10 to [SharronArmel@gmail.com](mailto:SharronArmel@gmail.com)

**Thursday, February 24, 6:00pm: Thu.D!**

at Jettie Rae's Oyster House, 143 Charlotte Street in Asheville.  
Jettie Rae's brings "classic seafood dishes and coastal heritage" to Asheville. Outdoor seating in a covered area is available.

RSVP by February 22 to [SharronArmel@gmail.com](mailto:SharronArmel@gmail.com)

RSVPs are important for table planning, and many public eateries are still being cautious about capacity. Please respond if you plan to attend an event. If you don't, we might not be able to seat you.

All regular and special Mensa events are open to members in good standing. However...

**Until further notice, in-person events are  
open to fully-vaccinated members & guests only.**

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



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



Wishing you much success and happiness throughout the New Year,

***Nancy Campbell, RVC5***

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

## **Local Secretary's Message**



It isn't too early to renew your membership for the year ahead!

And what does French Broad Mensa do with the membership-based subsidy we receive from American Mensa? Please check out the financial report on page 18, showing how we did in the past three years, and a new 2022 budget as approved by your Executive Committee.

Happy February birthdays to:

***Dan Armstrong***

***Rachel Austin***

***Jack Bahm***

***Susan Read***

***Lan Sluder***

***Roger Vesely***

***Reuben Williams***

***Suzanne Zoss***

Happy Mensa Anniversaries to:

***Sharron Armel***

***Dan Armstrong***

***J. Robert Bost***

***Matthew James***

***Alison Lee***

***Craig Russell***

*Susan Chitwood Barton*  
*David Diehn*  
*Lyn Donley*

*Peter Shanahans*  
*Nicholas Tasios*  
*Robert Youngblood*

No members have joined or left our group since last month's report. French Broad Mensa now has a total of 128 members, 17 of whom are life members.

If your name is missing from any of the applicable "celebration" lists, please check your profile at [AmericanMensa.org](http://AmericanMensa.org), to make sure you're allowing display of your birthday, etc.

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



*Photo by Will McGuffin, taken in North Asheville*

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

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



*To All & Sundry*

*12-25-2021*

*Well, it's time to get serious, folks. It's time to take off the blinders and have a clear-eyed gander at our collective dire situation.*

*Here's some free timely advice on a variety of topics.*

*Need a little extra cash to pay the undertaker? Better sell those snowshoes and snow blowers while there are still potential buyers around. But you'd better hurry before they wise up to reality.*

*Say, when was the last time you heard the names New York City and Bangladesh used in the same sentence? Better brush up on your earth maps and geography so you can remember how things used to look when you star on that memory quiz television show.*

*Be sure your last will is up to date. Get rid of that dim obstinate nephew, the unfortunate survivors of the family's legendary COVID bout, and Aunt Bidi the canasta cheater. If there are next generations, bequeath them each a little something so they won't kill themselves in despair at being forgotten.*

*Did I mention the Thwaites Glacier yet? That's an interesting development of the moment. It's also known as the Doomsday Glacier. Everybody got your hip boots? Two to five years and the seas will rise a minimum of two feet worldwide. No need to turn*

Gabbie goes on...

*a faucet knob for a sip of water; just stick your cup out of the window and scoop it up. It'll be a bit salty, but how bad could that be? At least it'll be convenient.*

*Laugh as much as possible, but keep the noise down. Someone might notice you having a good time and come after you with a big net. Some folks take life far too seriously. Didja notice?*

*And don't give me a hard time; I'm trying to help here.*

*Gabbie*

*P.S. I used to breathlessly wait for your questions but I've given that up. There's either no one looking for sage guidance these days or the questions are so vapid that they don't deserve an answer. Keep your comments to yourselves.*

*P.P.S. You may wonder how I ever landed this primo unpaid job as common tater here at BROADCAST. Well, it happened like this: your beloved fully-committed LocSec and part-time Editor Sharron was desperate for some material (read: ANY material!), and when she cut through the bottom of the barrel, the only thing down there was me. I was in a sorry state, but I could read and write, having been overeducated for any useful work in society, so she asked me if I was hungry and tossed me a used pizza crust. I took the bait.*



*The Joy of Snow*  
by Josie



I was born during a blizzard. So was my brother. When my mother went into labor with my brother, that they had to take her to the hospital in a garbage truck because no other vehicles could get through the snow. (To this day, I tell my brother that my mother brought home trash.)

Most of my formative years were spent joyfully playing in snow and ice. I built snowmen and snowthings, went ice skating, went snowmobiling, built forts, had snowball fights, made snow cream, made snow angels, made igloos, went tobogganing (even if I had to use cardboard), used hanging icicles for target practice, and did massive amounts of shoveling.

As a child, I could earn real money with my shovel. The best walks to shovel as far as money was concerned were the ones in front of businesses.

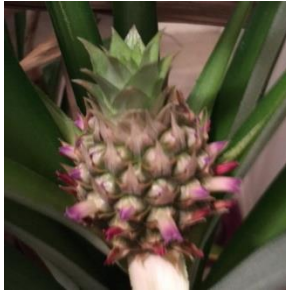
Since moving to North Carolina, I found out that many people here do not know the joy of snow.

Next time you see a great snowfall, layer your clothing, put on your boots, your gloves, your coat, your hat and get out there and play!!!!!!!!!!

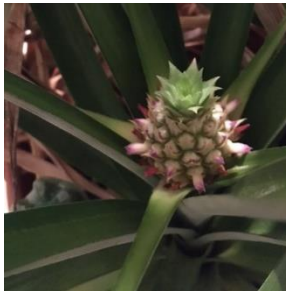


## ***Bob & the Bobettes***

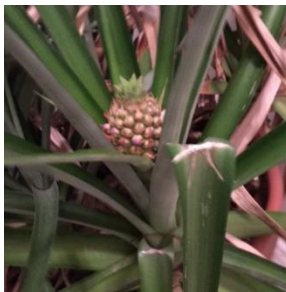
Congratulations, Bob!



And kudos to ***Grace Lehto*** for giving Bob the warm and loving home that allowed him to reproduce!



Four babies! And they need names! Send your suggestions to [GraceLehto@yahoo.com](mailto:GraceLehto@yahoo.com).



Check back next month to see how the Bobettes are progressing.

French Broad Mensa							
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## 2022 Calendar

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	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28	29	30	31	

## ***HAM Radio: Snowstorm***

*by Bea Reddy*

The big snowstorm that came through on January 16<sup>th</sup> was an eye-opener for me. Real life is the best teacher.

Since the storm's arrival was broadcast for over a week before it actually came, I was ready.

I took my bath before the storm, brewed a big pot of coffee and put it in a thermos, filled the tub with flushing water, filled the car with gas, got out my little emergency lanterns, and even charged my battery/generator.

And the early morning scenery was spectacular. Everything was quiet. I did not hear any sounds of civilization or traffic.

Then the power flickered a few times and the power went out.

I powered up my battery generator and had my first real world experience of emergency communications.

The State of North Carolina Emergency Communications asked for reports of problems like power outages, no internet, no TV, and other items impacted by the weather.

The National Weather Service asked for weather reports every hour.

They had forms for me to fill out, which made it easy.

It made me realize that I need one of those little weather stations so that I could give full reports that included barometric pressure and wind speed in addition to how many inches of snow, how much sleet, and the temperature.

After 8 hours, the power was still out, so I brought in logs and started a fire. All those big chunks of wood, and I forgot about kindling. Thank goodness for old newspapers.

After around 9 hours, I started thinking about prolonged outages. They could really happen for many reasons--an earthquake, weather, hackers, a solar flare. Most importantly, it could happen.

When the power finally came back on, I find myself rethinking survival strategies. You should, too.

What's your plan?

***bulC kooB***  
by ***Sharron Armel***

Suspended! If anyone's interested we'll try again.

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



*Photo by Will McGuffin, taken near Craggy Gardens*

## ***My Circuit Board Needs a Shave***

- by *Lizz Russell*

One day I was troubleshooting a circuit board that had some VERY strange problems. That dark day I discovered little hair-like structures on the circuit board and to my horror, I found out that a circuit board could grow hairs.

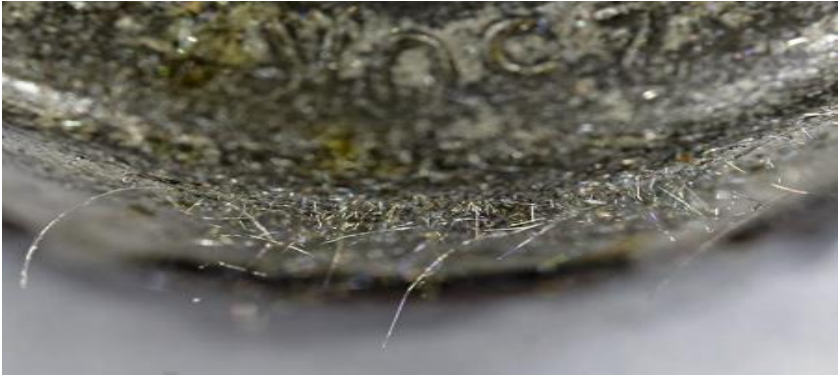


Photo Courtesy of Rocknrollsuicide, CC BY-SA 4.0

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>, via [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Did you know that tin, zinc, cadmium, and even lithium whiskers have been documented?

These growths come in several forms. The ones that look like a needle are called whiskers. The ones that look like trees are called dendrites.

Then I found out that dendrites speed up battery failure in lithium batteries and can even cause a fire.

**Scientists pinpoint cause of harmful dendrites and whiskers in lithium batteries**

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/10/191014111723.htm>

Who knew?

## ***Why does February have only 28 days?***

*by Sharron Armel*

It's a long story. The Roman calendar was changed several times, from 10 months (ignoring what we now call January and February because they had nothing to do with the harvest), to 12 months in 713 BCE. Emperor Numa Pompilius added January and February (with 28 days) to make the total days in the year odd (355). Even numbers were unlucky back then. By the time of Julius Caesar, the 355 day lunar calendar had fallen out of sync with the seasons, so he switched the empire to a sun-based calendar. The traditional 28-day February was retained, but all the other months were given 30 or 31 days. Still not perfect—an extra day had to be added every 4 years.

But the corrections went on. *Mental Floss* tells us that the Roman calendar months were so far out of sync with the seasons that the year 46 BCE had 445 days! And the Gregorian calendar in 1582 said we don't need a leap year at the end of each century. Just sometimes. So February has 29 days every "leap century," that is, if the year is evenly divisible by 400. All other century-ending years have a 28-day February. (Did you first learn about that in 2000? I did!)

Even now, the calendar we use isn't perfectly accurate, and may never be. Earth's axis wobbles; Jupiter's power crimps our style. Our generally-accepted year length now is 365 days, 6 hours, 9 minutes and 9 seconds, or about 365.26 days. Don't forget the "about."

So why DOES February have only 28 days? Augustus Caesar is rumored to have stolen days from February to add to August, his namesake.

Sources:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/speaking-of-science/wp/2017/02/24/think-you-know-how-many-days-are-in-a-year-think-again/>

<https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/55327/why-are-there-only-28-days-february>

[https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Century\\_leap\\_year](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Century_leap_year)



## ***Executive Committee Report***

The Executive Committee had to change their scheduled date because of the weather, and then change their scheduled location because of staffing issues at the pub. But we persevered, and met Wednesday, January 5 at The Madness in North Asheville. Officers and advisors present were Sharron Armel, Michael Havelin, Grace Lehto, Will McGuffin, and Wayne Stanko. Mark Crossley visited briefly.

The group approved the 2022 Annual Calendar of events, as emailed by Sharron on January 1, with locations to be determined as the year progresses.

The group reviewed the 2022 budget draft to be published in the February newsletter. The consensus was that we can afford to host a few more special events this year than budgeted. As the year progresses, the ExCom will organize these gatherings. Possibilities include an autumn train ride in Bryson City, and a spring or summer boat ride on Lake Lure.

“Mensa Cares,” an American Mensa project, will coincide with National Volunteer Week (April 18-24, 2022). French Broad Mensa will perform a community service, such as our traditional cleanup of the river park along Amboy Road.

The Ex.Com accepted, with regret, Mark Crossley’s resignation as one of our Testing Coordinators. We thank him for his efforts over the past few years. Because we’ve had no requests for in-person testing for several years, our Proctors-in-Training have not been able to be certified. Existing Proctors are considered active, as American Mensa has relaxed their recertification requirements during the pandemic. Until further notice, all requests for testing will be forwarded to Wayne Stanko (in his Testing Coordinator role), who will help the applicants access private online testing through Prometric, the local testing company authorized by American Mensa.

We discussed the changing conditions in our community regarding COVID. We will continue to plan in-person events, and the ExCom will consult via phone and email to adapt the schedule as required for the safety of our members.



Locations for February events were established:

Submitted by *Grace Lehto*, Deputy Local Secretary

**Treasurer's Report**

Closing Balance at November 30, 2021			\$ 5,630.63
Receipts:			
	Monthly subsidy from Am. Mensa	\$ 107.95	
Total Receipts			\$ 107.95
Disbursements:			
	Holiday Party	\$ 95.00	
Total Disbursements		\$ -	\$ 95.00
Closing Balance at December 31, 2021			\$ 5,643.58

Submitted by *Wayne Stanko*, Treasurer



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## French Broad Mensa Budget for 2022

	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Proposed	
<i>Income</i>					
Am Mensa Subsidy	\$ 1,428.25	\$ 1,490.80	\$ 1,376.35	\$ 1,400.00	A
Special events	<u>280.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	B
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 1,708.25</b>	<b>\$ 1,490.80</b>	<b>\$ 1,376.35</b>	<b>\$ 1,400.00</b>	
<i>Expense</i>					
Broadcast	\$ 263.28	\$ 50.00	\$ 132.07	\$ 300.00	C
Food	155.18	0.00	20.00	\$ 250.00	D
Member recognition	158.00	237.00	237.00	\$ 250.00	E
Testing	14.80	0.00	0.00	\$ -	F
Special events	1,271.02	0.00	682.24	\$ 1,000.00	G
Miscellaneous	31.90	<u>(0.40)</u>	<u>74.25</u>	<u>\$ 100.00</u>	H
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 1,894.18</b>	<b>\$ 286.60</b>	<b>\$ 1,145.56</b>	<b>\$ 1,900.00</b>	
<b>Net</b>	<b><u>\$ (185.93)</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 1,204.20</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 230.79</u></b>	<b><u>(\$500.00)</u></b>	
 <i>Ending bank balance</i>	 <b>\$ 4,208.59</b>	 <b>\$ 5,412.79</b>	 <b>\$ 5,643.58</b>	 <b>\$ 5,143.58</b>	

- A. American Mensa Subsidy: We receive a payment every month from the national office, based on our membership numbers.
- B. Special Events: Members who participate in special events may be asked to pay a portion of the cost.
- C. Broadcast: Postage, bulk mail permit, labels, etc. Total will increase in 2022 because we'll have a full year of printed newsletters, and postal rates may increase.
- D. Food: Meals for guest speakers, new members' discount, and group events.
- E. Member Recognition: Service awards for webmaster, editor, printer, party host, etc.
- F. Testing: Travel and food expense for proctors, testing supplies, etc.
- G. Special Events: Summer Picnic and Winter Holiday Party are planned; other event(s) may be added. *If the opportunity arises to send any ExCom members to a regional or other gathering, some of the cost can be covered by FBM; that will require a budget amendment.*
- H. Miscellaneous: Check printing, supplies, etc.

Approved by Executive Committee, January 2022

## ***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** (January 2021- December 2022)

#### **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:**

#### **Editor**

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

#### **Publisher**

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

#### **Webmaster**

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

#### **Testing Coordinator**

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

#### **Proctors**

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

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

#### **Scholarship Chair**

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

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

#### **Advisors**

Michael Havelin ..... [havelin@yahoo.com](mailto:havelin@yahoo.com)

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



# 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 MENSAS** ¶  
**1315 BROOKSIDE DRIVE** ¶  
**HURST, TX 76053** ¶

TIME VALUE MATERIAL