



# mind

Mensa Newsletter  
Of Central Indiana



**“A car turned into my Dad's driveway in Niles, Michigan  
backed out, and I captured this delightful photo.”  
Dr. Alan Schmidt**

### ***Publishing Statement***

Central Indiana Mensa, a Local Group of American Mensa, Ltd., publishes *MIND* monthly. Mensa is a not-for-profit organization open to all persons scoring in the 98<sup>th</sup> percentile on a standardized intelligence test. Mensa neither endorses nor opposes the opinions published in *MIND*, which are those of the individual contributors.

### ***Contribution Guidelines***

*MIND* contributions may be sent to [mind.editor@yahoo.com](mailto:mind.editor@yahoo.com), or Teresa Gregory, 6076 Dewey Avenue, Indianapolis, IN, 46219. Contributions may be edited for length or to remove offensive material, and may not include personal attacks. No anonymous contributions will be published, but the Editor will withhold the author's name from the public on request. Contributions should be in hand no later than the first Friday of the month for the following month's edition.

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*MIND* is published monthly by Central Indiana Mensa.

Subscriptions are \$12 annually for those not members of CIM.

Postmaster: address changes to *MIND*, c/o American Mensa, Ltd, 1229 Corporate Drive West, Arlington, TX 76006-6103. Include membership number.



**Website:** [centralindiana.us.mensa.org](http://centralindiana.us.mensa.org)  
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Volume 51, Issue Number 2  
February 2015



# mind

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**Check out all the information about the  
CIM 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party, March 7, 2015.  
Look for the yellow highlights.**

# Old Dog/New Tricks

*Teresa Gregory, Editor*

## **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party, March 7, 2015 -**

This is going to be a nice sit-down dinner at The Clarion Hotel and Conference Center where we just had our Regional Gathering in January. We're going to have fun. Think family reunion. We'd love to see some of the "old timers" who haven't been as active in recent years. There are a lot of people I'd like to meet. There will be a program, and maybe some surprises. Indianapolis Mensa started in 1964, so feel free to come in your best 60s outfit, or wear something from the year you joined. Not interested in dragging out those bell bottoms? Then just come as you are. We're all family here.



Do you have any memorabilia from the past that you'd like to show us? Photos we haven't seen? Stories to share? Bring it along.

Because this is a sit-down dinner, you must get your reservation, your menu choice, and your money in by February 28. The cost is \$15 per person. The hotel is also offering rooms for \$72 (plus tax, of course) to anyone who wants to stay overnight. Be sure to mention that you are coming for the Mensa party. They'll take good care of you.

**Membership Renewal** – It's that time of year again when the Life Members sit back and watch us year-to-year types scrambling to get our renewals in on time. You can renew online. It's especially important because this is an election year for national officers.

**Elections** - Alison Brown begins a series of articles this month about some of the issues and concerns that are being debated this year. Check out her analysis before you make your election decisions. [Page 19]

**Starting the New Year** – The weeks of Christmas and New Year in my family were like none other. My kids had the flu which they determined they were exposed to at my grandson's Christmas pageant. I was at work on Christmas Eve when I saw that I had a message from my sister. Thinking it was a holiday greeting, I was surprised to hear that her husband had died the night before. He has been sick, but no one wants a death around a holiday. I talked to her the day after Christmas, and near the end of our conversation, we got disconnected. Her daughter called me back to tell me that my sister had fallen and they were waiting for the EMTs. She had surgery the next morning for a badly broken leg, just below the hip. I spent Sunday with her at the hospital so that her adult children could be at the mortuary for their dad. Monday, I watched the funeral on Skype with her from her hospital room. (She is home now recovering.)

New Year's Eve morning, I called to make a dentist appointment because I had a tooth that was a little angry. I was told to come right in. I left the office with an appointment for the day after New Year when I had an emergency root canal.

Between then and now, I had an uneventful birthday which was the nicest way I could think of celebrating it this year. I'd like to keep things calm for a while. We'll see how long that lasts!

## LocSection

Jan Pfeil Doyle

**New Meeting Place** – We are looking for a new place to hold our monthly meetings in Indianapolis. Our requirements are seating for around 40 people, a place to set out snacks and drinks, being allowed to bring in our own snacks and drinks (including beer and wine), fairly convenient to an interstate, adequate parking, being allowed to stay until 11 pm or midnight (rental would be from 6:30 or 7 until 11 pm or midnight on the 2nd Friday of each month), a reasonable rental fee, and perhaps a second room or area that we could spread out into. Possibilities include (but aren't limited to-be creative) apartment or condo club houses, churches, meeting halls, hotels. If you know of a place that meets most of these criteria, please let me or another member of the ExCom know. **Petra Ritchie** has been graciously hostessing us for over 6 years (!!!!!), first at her condo clubhouse and more recently at All Souls Unitarian Church. Thank you so much, **Petra!!** It's a big responsibility and commitment to be at every monthly meeting and to stay until the end of each meeting to make sure the venue is left as it should be. Please thank Petra next time you see her. She has offered to host us for a reasonable time until we find a new place.



**CIM RG** – By the time you read this, Central Indiana Mensa's Regional Gathering will have come and gone for another year. As I write this, it hasn't happened yet, but I already know many thanks are due to **Teresa Gregory** and her crew(s) for pulling off another wonderful event. I hope you were able to attend. For those of you who weren't, I'll write a more-detailed note next month.

**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on March 7<sup>th</sup>** – I hope many of you from all around our group will join us to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Central Indiana Mensa / Indianapolis Mensa. Please see more information elsewhere in MIND.

**CultureQuest®** – If you're interested in participating in Mensa's nation-wide cultural literacy/trivia competition, please let me know. The competition will be on April 26<sup>th</sup> this year. We already have one team formed, but would love to have more entries. Applications are due March 31<sup>st</sup>, so if you want to be on a team, be sure to renew on time. More info at [www.us.mensa.org/attend/culturequest/](http://www.us.mensa.org/attend/culturequest/)

**Nominations Due for MERF Awards** – The Mensa Education & Research Foundation is seeking nominations for several awards: the Mensa Distinguished Teacher Award, the Copper Black Award for Creative Achievement, and the Intellectual Benefit to Society Award. Applications are due March 1, 2015. More information may be found at [www.us.mensa.org/recognize/foundationawards](http://www.us.mensa.org/recognize/foundationawards)

CENTRAL INDIANA MENSA PRESENTS

# **50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**



**SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2015**

6:00PM- – SOCIAL HOUR

7:00PM----- – DINNER

PARTY UNTIL MIDNIGHT

## **CLARION AT THE WATERFRONT**

2930 WATERFRONT PARKWAY WEST

INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46214

(317) 299-8400

(OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS AVAILABLE)

## **PLATED DINNER WITH CASH BAR**

CHOICE OF ROAST BEEF, SPAGHETTI WITH  
MARINARA, OVEN FRIED CHICKEN

## **COST - \$15 PER PERSON**

RESERVATIONS, MENU SELECTION, AND PAYMENT  
MUST BE IN BY  
FEBRUARY 28.

SEND RESERVATIONS AND PAYMENT TO:

TERESA GREGORY

6076 DEWEY AVENUE

INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46219

## Sidebars from *Lonely Planet*:

### The Llangollen Ladies

*Teresa Fisher*

In 2000 I was in Great Britain and wanted to see a little of Wales, but I didn't want to do any extensive touring there. What might I want to see in the part of Wales that wasn't far from England? Luckily I found a sidebar in *The Lonely Planet Guidebook* presenting one of those stories that make me say, "Why haven't I heard about this before?" I would visit Llangollen, Wales, home of the Llangollen Ladies.

Llangollen (pronounced Thlangothlin) has been described as a typical Welsh village, despite its proximity to England. Every year it hosts an international music festival called Eisteddfod, and just outside the town a few miles are the remains of Valle Crucis Abbey, at which you can pay a very modest sum to wander around. The draw for me, though, was the home and the story of the Misses Sarah Ponsonby and Eleanor Butler.

In 1768 in Ireland Sarah Ponsonby, 13, met Lady Eleanor Butler, 29. They became close friends, and ten years later found themselves with unpleasant prospects for the future. Sarah, a 23-year-old orphan, had a middle-aged guardian who hoped to make her his wife. Eleanor's family knew that her chances of marriage at 39 were very slim, so they planned to put her in a nunnery. With the help of Sarah's housemaid, Mary, they eloped to Wales. (The word "elope" had a somewhat different meaning back then.) They lived an idyllic life together in the countryside near Llangollen for more than fifty years, supported by government stipends, financial gifts from friends, and the portions of their inheritances that their disapproving families allowed them to have.

Known locally as "the ladies," they eventually became a sort of tourist attraction, particularly for literary lights of the day such as Sir Walter Scott, Lord Byron, Percy Shelley, and William Wordsworth. Their Britain-wide fame came from the fact that in the 1700s it was unheard of for women to live independently, without men, and certainly not in a state of what the ladies called, "romantic friendship."

The ladies lived in a house whose walls they covered in dark oak carving, turning it into a fascinating Gothic/Tudor monstrosity. Even when they were having numerous guests per day, visitors bearing gifts of carved wood were always welcome. Their large property, which they named Plas Newydd, was a paradise of gardens, fruit trees, and placid animals. They claimed to have dedicated their lives to "friendship, celibacy, and the knitting of stockings." They had expensive tastes and kept several servants, including the loyal Mary who lived with them the rest of her life. The ladies were not good with their money and were often in financial trouble, and they would sometimes attempt to pay bankers with items they had knitted or embroidered.

The utterly devoted ladies were inseparable, slept in the same bed, and referred to each other as "my beloved." Quite understandably, some of their visitors were lesbians hoping to find kindred spirits, or a place to stay, but Sarah and Eleanor were incensed at any suggestion that they were lesbians. (Perhaps Mary, described as uncouth and formidable and whose Irish nickname had been Molly the Bruiser, wasn't quite as incensed.)

Eleanor died in 1829 at age 90, and Sarah followed her beloved in 1832. Their house is now a museum, and is one of the main attractions in Llangollen.

## In Case You Missed Him

Last March we were introduced to Cletus by Alison Brown:

*Cletus is in my care, visiting from Central Florida Mensa. He is one of four colorful traveling owls that have been created by the members of the CFM local group at an annual pottery-painting outing. Each year at the Sun 'n' Games RG, the owls sit on the tables at hospitality or registration and they are adopted to go off on adventures.*



After a year of travel with Alison and other members of Central Indiana Mensa, he has gone back home to Florida. This proves he is truly a Mensan because why would he want to spend another frigid winter in Indiana when he had a sunnier option?

Cletus spent the last months on his “Farwell Tour” visiting some of his favorite people and places one more time.



←-One friend Cletus will miss is his table buddy from Lunch Bunch. Listening to all the conversations at that table this past year...ah, the stories they could tell.

Cletus at his last visit at Ham 'n' Eggs ---> in the Soho Cafe in Carmel. Here he is surrounded by his admirers, Larry, Jud, Bob, Ellie, Margy and Alison.



←-Instead of meeting the Elf on the Shelf, he hung out with the Elf off the Wagon (Alison & Teresa Fisher) at CIM's Holiday Party.



## More Cletus...



←-At last a photo of Siegmund (in red;-), who has made so many images of Cletus on his travels. Cletus has his travel duds (a cardboard box and bubble wrap) and some provisions for the road and he will soon be on the wing to Orlando to meet up with his cohorts in CFM.

**Good-Bye, Cletus! It was nice to meet you.**



## Letter to the Editor

*[Ed. Note: In the spirit of Valentine's Day, I am publishing this letter. It was very legibly hand written. I have typed it as I received it.]*

Dear Editor,

If you could insert this letter in the MIND, I would appreciate it.

SWCMM, Writer, seeks SWCFM, 25-35, Object: Love, Marriage, Children, Family Life and Lots of Intelligent Conversation. If interested call; (317) 796-4902. John C. Walker

Would appreciate it if you could publish it before Valentines Day. Enclosed is an SASE for the convenience of your reply.

Yours Truly,

John C. Walker



# Welcome New and Returning Members!

## December

New	Madison Yeary	Indianapolis	IN
New	Jeremiah L Freeman	Spencer	IN
New	Michael J Spalding	Indianapolis	IN
New	Matthew G Stillwagon	Muncie	IN
New	Lisa Hull	Lizton	IN
New	Lehua M Aplaca	Bloomington	IN
New	Aaron M Black	Indianapolis	IN
Renewing	Daniel Clark	Bloomington	IN
Renewing	Devin R King	Bloomington	IN
Renewing	Daniel D Schutte	Evansville	IN
Renewing	Zachary R McFarlen	Indianapolis	IN
Renewing	R Michael Dugdale	Carmel	IN
Renewing	David William Gholson	West Paducah	KY

## January

Move In	Meghann C Warner	Pittsboro	IN
New	Dustin L Haldeman	Carlisle	IN
Reinstating	Jonathan R Hedges	Noblesville	IN
Reinstating	R Brentson Smith	Indianapolis	IN
Reinstating	Gene Harold McNay II	Columbus	IN
Reinstating	Beth Ann Waltz	Fountaintown	IN



## Do You Have Smart Friends Who Are Also Cheap?

They could qualify for Mensa with the scores from intelligence tests they may have already taken, then you could see their names as new members.

From Feb.1 through March 31, American Mensa invites them to submit their scores and we will review them for free. Submit the application, qualifying test scores and include the code **FPEFM2015** to redeem this offer. Find out more at [us.mensa.org/join/testscores](http://us.mensa.org/join/testscores).

## February 2015 Events

**Bridge Club** – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of every month, 2 p.m., Contact:

Bob Van Buskirk, 317-359-6907 or [rvanbuskirk@netdirect.net](mailto:rvanbuskirk@netdirect.net). Location will change each month.

**Indy Lunch Bunch** – 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday at 12:00 noon, Double Eagle Café, 650 N. Meridian (at the Scottish Rite Cathedral), Indianapolis. Contact: Karen Steilberger, [steilkr@sbcglobal.net](mailto:steilkr@sbcglobal.net)

**Ham ‘n’ Eggs (Hamilton County Eggheads)** 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon. Soho Café & Gallery, 620 South Range Line Road, Carmel, IN. Drop in any time for casual conversation, lively discussion, and good food and beverages. Contact: Alison Brown, 317-846-6798, [SIGHT@indymensa.org](mailto:SIGHT@indymensa.org).

**Muncie Area Group Meeting** – 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday at 2:00 p.m.

The MTCup, 1610 W. University Ave. in Muncie. For those familiar with the Ball State area, it’s in the Village.

Contact: Jason Smith, [munciemensa@gmail.com](mailto:munciemensa@gmail.com)

**Monthly Gathering** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday at 7:00 p.m., All Souls Unitarian Church, 5805 E. 56<sup>th</sup> St. See last page of MIND for map and directions. Members: \$5.00, Non-Members: \$7.00; Children 6-12: \$3.00, under 6: free.

February 15 Speaker: Greg McCauley, Executive Director and cofounder of the Link Observatory and Space Science Center in Martinsville, Indiana, will present: “The Next Generation of Mega Telescopes.” Find out how these amazing instruments will help us see farther into the universe than ever before, all from the comfort and safety of *terra firma*.

**Book Group** – 2 p.m., Sunday, February 15. We will discuss *In Our Hands* by Charles Murray. We will be meeting at Rich and Jackie Gibson's house on the NE side of Indianapolis. Please contact Rich at [hoot.gibson.tds@gmail.com](mailto:hoot.gibson.tds@gmail.com) or 317-735-2895 for more details or to RSVP.

Here is a list of the upcoming books being read by those in the book group.

- March 22nd - *The Social Conquest* by Edward O Wilson
- April (date TBD) - *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End* by Atul Gawande
- May (tentatively the 31st) - *GODLESS -- Living a Valuable Life Beyond Beliefs (Memoirs of a Thoughtful Traveler)* by Jeff Rasley. Jeff is a local author and Sciencetech member.
- June (date TBD) - *On Immunity: An Inoculation* by Eula Biss

(Events are continued on the other side of the calendar.)

## February 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
1 Bridge Club	2	3	4 Indy Lunch Bunch
8	9	10	11
15 Book Group; Mensans Dining Out	16	17 MINDbending/ ExCom Paducah Area Group Meeting	18 Indy Lunch Bunch
22	23	24	25
1 March Bridge Club	2	3	4 Indy Lunch Bunch
8	9	10	11

**Social Media – Remember to sign up for Central Indiana  
Mensa’s Facebook and Meet Up groups:**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/67015884487/>  
<http://www.meetup.com/Central-Indiana-Mensa/>

## February 2015 (cont.)

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5	6 MIND deadline	7 Ham 'n' Eggs; Muncie Mtg.; Calendar Deadline
12	13 Monthly Gathering	14
19	20	21 Mensa Test
26	27 Cinder	28 Deadline for Party Reservations
5	6 MIND deadline	7 50 <sup>th</sup> Party! Ham 'n' Eggs; Muncie Mtg.; Calendar Deadline
12	13 Monthly Gathering	14

If you lose your MIND (oh, my!) or want additional information, check [www.indymensa.org](http://www.indymensa.org) or join our Meetup group, <http://www.meetup.com/central-indiana-mensa> Meetup is free to join and you will get reminders of upcoming events. It's a great way to stay in the loop.

## February 2015 Events (cont.)

**Mensans Dining Out** – 6 p.m., Sunday, February 15. Sapporo Japanese Steak House and Sushi, 6342 East 82nd Street, Indianapolis, IN 46250. Note: the address is misleading. You can't see Sapporo from 82nd Street. It is further back in a shopping center. Look for the green sign that says “Sam Ash” on top.)

**Paducah Area Group Meeting** – 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month, 7:00 p.m. Anyone in the area is welcome to join fellow Mensans for dinner. For location and more information on this group, contact Charles Rawlings, [rawlings@siu.edu](mailto:rawlings@siu.edu)

**MINDBending/ExCom** – 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month. MINDBending is the preparation of next month's MIND for mailing. Come help with sealing, labeling, and stamping the MINDs. February 17, 5:30 p.m. Contact: Jan Pfeil Doyle, 431-3500. Pizza and soft drinks provided. MINDBending is held at the offices of Midwest Internet, 5348 Tacoma Ave., which is 1 block east and 1 block north of 52<sup>nd</sup> Keystone Ave. on the northeast side of Indianapolis.

Keystone	54 <sup>th</sup> St	★	Tacoma Ave
	Armour Ave		
	52 <sup>nd</sup> St		
	N. St. and		

A **Big Thank You** to all the January MINDBenders and thanks to Midwest Internet for hosting the event.

**Mensa Test** - Saturday, February 21., Wayne Library, 198 South Girls School Road, Indianapolis, Indiana. Registration 10 a.m., Test 11 a.m., Contact: Steve Merchant at [editor32@outlook.com](mailto:editor32@outlook.com) or 317-431- 8645

**Cinder** – 4<sup>th</sup> Friday at 7 p.m. 721 E. 55<sup>th</sup> St., Indianapolis. A SIG for the Gen X and Gen Y crowd. Contact Ethan Blocher-Smith at [MensaCinder@gmail.com](mailto:MensaCinder@gmail.com).

For last minute changes to events check the Central Indiana Mensa group on Meetup.com. <http://www.meetup.com/central-indiana-mensa>

March MIND calendar items due 2/7/15 to: [biltmore@topdogcom.com](mailto:biltmore@topdogcom.com).

# What is a Genius?

Ellen Voie, RVC 4

The Daily Telegraph© published an article titled, “Why do geniuses lack common sense?” by Helena Kealey. The author cites a number of examples of some intelligent folks who cannot find their car in a parking lot, or who get lost easily.

A quick search on the Internet gave me a list of websites explaining why geniuses are weird, eccentric, socially awkward and lack common sense. Some of these explanations sounded almost believable, so I am using this month’s column to share these observations with you.



According to a Merriam-Webster dictionary, a genius is “a very smart or talented person; a person who has a level of talent or intelligence that is rare or remarkable.”

Are all Mensans considered to be geniuses (or geni)? According to the dictionary, we are, since our intelligence is rare - two percent of the population - and is definitely “remarkable!”

An educator’s website defines genius as someone with an IQ score of 160 or higher. They don’t identify which IQ test.

Dr. Michael Woodley of the Free University of Brussels claims people identified as geniuses are “incapable of managing normal day to day affairs” because they are “literally not hardwired to be able to learn those kind of tasks.” He does reason geniuses are beneficial to society as a whole, because they are generating ideas that advance humanity.

Regarding the “Nuttty Professor” image; it could be due to the ability to focus on some specific thing while ignoring minor details such as street signs. Kealey states a genius is someone whose brain is so busy working on higher level challenges that they don’t deal with the “minutia of daily life.”

We’ve all done some really stupid things that support this theory. If you’ve attended the Mensa Annual Gathering and had the good fortune to hear Dr. Abbie Salny talk about “Stupid Things Mensans Have Done,” you’ll be able to relate some to your peers. What about the socially awkward label? The posters on the “Experts123” website - you can decide for yourself if it’s credible or not - claims people who are “precise” or “meticulous” can be over analytical or more rigid in their thought process, which gives the impression of being eccentric.

A more plausible explanation given is that geniuses didn’t learn social skills as children because they were more focused on reading and absorbing information and spent less time interacting with classmates. Many of us can relate to that description of our childhoods. I’ve also heard the theory that we learned quickly and soon became bored with our slower peers, so our relationships suffered.

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While I won't try to associate intelligence with being weird, I do agree with one poster on the site that claims eccentric geniuses will "latch on to one topic and exclude everything else." I have to agree with this observation. Just go to a Mensa gathering and try to follow the conversation and you'll see this for yourself.

At a recent RG the speaker was giving an excellent presentation on TED Talks. He showed a short clip of a TED Talk about how to tie your shoelaces so they won't slip apart. Of course the topic of conversation turned to tying shoes and the TED Talk presentation was hijacked for nearly twenty minutes before the speaker managed to get the group back on track.

So, maybe we are a bit socially awkward because we have a higher level focus on something else tucked in our brain. Don't call us all weird, but if you can't find your keys – again - or get lost walking home, you're in good company. Welcome to Mensa!



## **Old Books 2**

***Robert Adair,***

What can we learn from old books?  
That truth is always true.  
Continuity with the past.  
That people have faced  
loneliness, sorrow and broken dreams.  
They have lost loved ones,  
faced tragedy, wars, famines, floods  
with courage and determination,  
the common lot of the human condition.  
So must we pick up the broken pieces  
and move on, as have others in the past,  
finding comfort in kindred spirits,  
friends in print who speak to us across the ages.  
That heroes, at great cost, have faced fearful odds  
to defend their homes, their families, their country.  
That courage is not found on the battlefield alone.  
That this is a debt we can never repay.  
That books are windows on the world,  
enlarging our vision, expanding our knowledge,  
giving us insights, inspiring us, encouraging us,  
helping us to know what it means  
to be truly, deeply human.



## Oh, The Weather Outside Is Frightful

(Some suggested reading by Mensans)

Members of the Mensa book group suggested possible future titles. Check these out!

- *Turing's Cathedral: The Origins of the Digital Universe* by George Dyson
- *The Lives of a Cell: Notes of a Biology Watcher* by Lewis Thomas
- *Change is Good... You Go First: 21 Ways to Inspire Change* by Mac Anderson (this is a short book; it was suggested to read it along with *Fish! A Proven Way to Boost Morale and Improve Results* by Stephen C. Lundin and Harry Paul)
- *Fringe-ology: How I Tried to Explain Away the Unexplainable-And Couldn't* by Steve Volk
- *Practical Wine Talk* by Charles Thomas (it was suggested that we hold this discussion at one of the Thomas Winery's tasting rooms and invite Charles Thomas to attend)
- *The Evolution of Faith* by Philip Gulley (Philip is a local author who might be persuaded to attend our discussion)
- *Junkyard Planet: Travels in the Billion-Dollar Trash Trade* by Adam Minter
- *The Demon Under the Microscope: From Battlefield Hospitals to Nazi Labs, One Doctor's Heroic Search for the World's First Miracle Drug* by Thomas Hager
- *The Moor's Account: A Novel* by Laila Lalami (Description: In this stunning work of historical fiction, Laila Lalami brings us the imagined memoirs of the first black explorer of America—a Moroccan slave whose testimony was left out of the official record. He travels from Florida to Mexico City.)
- *The Map That Changed the World: William Smith and the Birth of Modern Geology* by Simon Winchester



## Books On the Runway

Margy Lancet Fletcher

**Title:** *The Greatest Generation*

**Author:** Tom Brokaw

**Year:** 1998

**Book Description:** This collection of biographical sketches, compiled by award-winning television journalist Tom Brokaw, is the author's personal tribute to a special group of American citizens who endured a worldwide

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economic crisis during their childhoods, dedicated themselves to winning a global war as young adults, and helped restore the economic and spiritual vitality of their nation as they matured. This vivid tapestry of personal recollections is comprised of a variety of hues and patterns: men and women, soldiers and civilians, famous and ordinary people, descendants of Europeans, Africans, Native Americans, Latin Americans, and Asians. The common thread contained therein is the shared experience of a devastating Depression followed by a major worldwide conflict, and the resultant survival skills that enabled these courageous individuals to contribute significantly to their country's postwar prosperity.

**Has this book changed the way you think, your attitude toward life, or even your life itself? If so, how?** A few years before his passing in 2013, in an interview conducted by his stepson, my father cited *The Greatest Generation* as his overall favorite book. For this reason, and given the fact that my father was an exemplary member of this generation – a U.S. Army captain who defused German bombs during World War II, and an electrical engineer afterward – I felt that this book deserved my attention. I found the personal accounts from my father's contemporaries riveting, and was gratified to vicariously witness a facet of his personal history that, like many of his fellow veterans, he was loath to discuss during his lifetime.

**Who should definitely read this book? Why?** Readers interested in sociology, psychology, and/or American history – and anyone closely related to a member of Brokaw's *Greatest Generation* – will appreciate his "labor of love."

**How long might it take to read this book?** At the most, three days. The writing style is straightforward and personal but not overly simplistic, and is thus easily and enjoyably absorbed.

**Provide a short characteristic section, an awesome sentence, or an inspiring quote:**  
"...It may be historically premature to judge the greatness of a whole generation, but indisputably, there are common traits that cannot be denied. It is a generation that, by and large, made no demands of homage from those who followed and prospered economically, politically, and culturally because of its sacrifices. It is a generation of towering achievement and modest demeanor, a legacy of their formative years when they were participants in and witness to sacrifices of the highest order. They know how many of the best of their generation didn't make it to their early twenties, how many brilliant scientists, teachers, spiritual and business leaders, politicians and artists were lost in the ravages of the greatest war the world has seen... Millions of men and women were involved in this tumultuous journey through adversity and achievement, despair and triumph. Certainly there were those who failed to measure up, but taken as a whole this generation did have a 'rendezvous with destiny' that went well beyond the outsized expectations of President Roosevelt when he first issued that call to duty in 1936."

**Additional Remarks:** As this volume was published sixteen years ago, the reports of these individuals' current statuses are assuredly outdated, and death has long since unraveled the majority of their personal tapestries. Nevertheless, the lessons that the book imparts regarding resourcefulness, dedication to values, and personal responsibility are timeless.

## **AML Election Issues: Fiscal**

*Alison Brown*

American Mensa Ltd. (AML) elections are being held this spring. There are more candidates vying for national office than I can ever remember. Three are running for Chair, five (!) for Second Vice Chair, three for Secretary and two for Treasurer. Our Central Indiana Mensa (CIM) members are called upon to either confirm the course the AML is on, or vote to change, hopefully improve it.

The plethora of petition candidates arose from discontent on the part of active and interested fellow Mensans who communicate across local group boundaries via Facebook, in Yahoo Groups and in the AML on-line community: <http://community.us.mensa.org/forums> (which, along with face to face interaction, is the source of my information).

A primary issue is the steady increase of annual dues, well beyond the inflation rate. The current ExComm, Board and AMC has approved this series of increases, but has, until now, rejected the proposal by the current treasurer, Nick Sanford – running for Chairman – to institute automatic annual dues increases going forth.

There should be serious discussion about Mensa annual dues, how they compare to dues in similar organizations, how the money is spent and if members think that the 20-employee National Office (NO) is spending it wisely and in their interest. Are we getting “value for money”? We need to consider whether the ever higher dues are costing us members, either those who, after qualifying, do not join in the first place or those who do not renew, and, especially, members in the younger demographic. The active membership of AML is ageing, although there are very energetic Mensa Gen X/Y/Millennials out there. A median age that mirrors that of the US population as a whole would insure the viability of our club in decades to come.

All the candidates for ExComm and AMC should be stating their positions on the financial issues of membership dues and how they are spent in their candidate statements. If you, fellow member, think there are open questions, it would be appropriate to press for further information, to gauge their thinking, so that a well-considered vote for one or the other candidate may be cast. Merely saying, “I am in favor of membership growth.” is not sufficient. We should know what strategies the ExComm candidates favor to achieve that growth and how they view dues increases and fiscal responsibility in that light.

The recently contested CIM elections had less than 10% participation. It would seem that the 90+% who did not vote are content with the way our local group is being run. Indeed, I, who participated in the election, am also happy with our local group, but I voted anyway, because the composition of the ExCom does affect the fine points of which direction our group takes. If 90% of the national membership is content with annual dues increases accompanied by negative to slow membership growth, then their silence will indicate consent. The incumbents will prevail – doing the usual musical chairs at the top, rather than impelling fiscal change.

... to be continued in the next issue of MIND.

# **Central Indiana Mensa ExCom Minutes 11/18/14**

The regular monthly meeting of the Central Indiana Mensa ExCom was held at Midwest Internet on Tuesday, November 18, 2014.

LocSec Jan Pfeil Doyle called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. Members present were: Jan Pfeil Doyle, Jon Applegate, Diane O'Brien, Karen Steilberger, Karen Wilczewski, Bob Zdanky, and Karen Zwick. Absent: Ethan Blocher-Smith, Ann Hake. Guests: Leo Doyle, Teresa Gregory, Jud Horning, Petra Ritchie.

The committee reviewed the minutes of the October ExCom meeting. Karen Zwick moved that the minutes be accepted as presented, Karen Wilczewski seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.

Karen Zwick presented the Treasurer's report, and pointed out that the revenue reported was lower this month because of the transition in the ExCom monthly meeting week. She will plan to create a separate publicity account in her system to break out expenses for such items as the Evansville postcard printing from the hospitality category. Bob Zdanky made a motion to accept the report as presented, Jon Applegate seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.

The membership report shows 5 new, 6 reinstating, 5 renewing, and 6 offers of membership; and 24 prospects. Bob Zdanky will call the new members to invite them to the holiday party.

## **Old Business**

Buzz Fund event: The postcards were prepared for mailing during MIND-Bending before the meeting. The committee discussed how soon a follow-up should be sent, and what kind of follow-up there should be that would minimize expenses.

Holiday party: ExCom meeting members and guests volunteered to bring the meat, bread, beverages, and table settings for the holiday pitch-in on December 12. Petra Ritchie will bring her sweaters and other decorations.

2015 Regional Gathering: Teresa Gregory and Karen Zwick told the ExCom about some of the programs and speakers that are on the schedule or being planned for the RG. Jan Pfeil Doyle added that possibly there will be a brewery tour or presentation.

## **New Business**

Policy: Jan Pfeil Doyle led a discussion based on a member inquiry about the policy for event attendance by non-members.

There being no other business, Karen Wilczewski made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Diane O'Brien seconded the motion. The motion was carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Steilberger

# Treasurer's Report

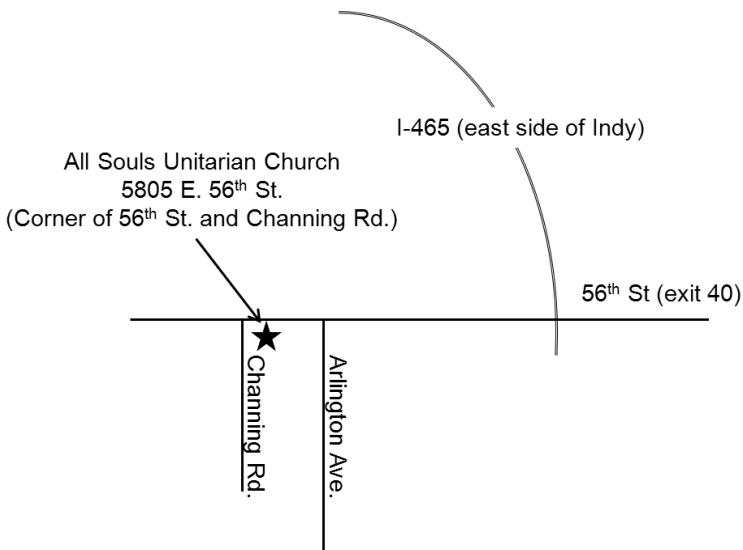
Karen Zwick, Treasurer

## Balance Sheet (as of 12/15/2014)

Bank Accounts	12/15/2014	11/17/2014
Checking – Regular	\$15,128.11	\$14,138.05
Checking – Scholarship	513.53	362.53
Checking – Youth Mbrship	849.00	849.00
Checking – Buzz Fund	801.00	540.00
Vanguard Account	\$3,740.09	3,740.09
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$21,031.73</b>	<b>\$19,629.67</b>

## Profit & Loss Statement (11/18/2014– 12/15/2014)

Income		
	401.1 – Monthly gathering income (11/20/14 - \$118; 12/12/14 - \$25)	143.00
	401.2 – RG income from registrations	1,265.00
	402 – National Mensa Inc	686.68
	403 – Donations to scholarship fund	16.00
	406 – Donations for Buzz Fund in exchange for shirts	261.00
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>2,371.68</b>
Expense		
	501.1 – Monthly Gathering Hospitality	23.66
	505 – Food for ExCom/MIND	63.18
	505.1 – MIND Printing	289.48
	505.2 – MIND Postage	294.00
	507 – Promotional Expenses (printing of postcard sent to all members to save date of 50 Year Anniversary party)	157.30
	510.2 – New Member Mailings (postage)	42.00
	520 – Miscellaneous Expenses (purchase of brick in memory of Jean Rodgers; two other \$50 donations to MERF cover total \$200 cost of brick)	100.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$969.62</b>



## **Mensa Monthly Gathering Location**

### **All Souls Unitarian Church, The Beattie Room, 5805 E. 56<sup>th</sup> St., Indianapolis**

- From I-465 on the east side of Indianapolis, take the 56<sup>th</sup> St exit west (exit 40).
- Turn left on Channing Rd (1.2 miles from the I-465 exit).
- The church parking lot is on your left.
- Go to the Beattie Room.



## Region 4 RVC

Ellen Voie [RVC4@us.mensa.org](mailto:RVC4@us.mensa.org),

### Central Indiana Mensa Executive Committee (ExCom)

Local Secretary	Jan Pfeil Doyle, <a href="mailto:jan@mw.net">jan@mw.net</a> , (317) 431-3500 PO Box 20158, Indianapolis, 46220
Parliamentarian	Ethan Blocher-Smith, <a href="mailto:MensaCinder@gmail.com">MensaCinder@gmail.com</a> , (260) 413-0093
Secretary	Karen Steilberger, <a href="mailto:steilkr@sbcglobal.net">steilkr@sbcglobal.net</a>
Sargent-at-Arms	Jon Applegate, <a href="mailto:jkapplegate@bluemarble.net">jkapplegate@bluemarble.net</a> , (517) 896-5022 (812) 825-2080 (answering machine)
Ass't Gifted Children	Diane O'Brien, <a href="mailto:robrien25@comcast.net">robrien25@comcast.net</a> , (317) 753-4371
Program Chair	Ann Hake, <a href="mailto:amhake@yahoo.com">amhake@yahoo.com</a>
Vice-LocSec & Membership	Bob Zdanky, <a href="mailto:zdanky@gmail.com">zdanky@gmail.com</a> , (317) 219-3773  Karen Zwick, <a href="mailto:kzwick@1stclass.com">kzwick@1stclass.com</a> , (317) 626-3789 1634 Mace Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46229
Treasurer	
Calendar Editor	Karen Wilczewski, <a href="mailto:biltmore@topdogcom.com">biltmore@topdogcom.com</a> , (317) 849-9022

### Area Coordinators

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### Other Volunteers

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Ass't Gifted Children	Laurel Richardson, <a href="mailto:Lhabitat@aol.com">Lhabitat@aol.com</a> , (317) 244-0000
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