



# mind

Mensa Newsletter  
Of Central Indiana



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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.

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## **MIND Staff**

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November 2020



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# Loosing My MIND

Vonda Heverly, Editor

loose (/looos/): v. 1. set free, release. 2. Relax



Our Editor, Vonda Heverly, was called away while MIND was in production. She will be back with us next month.

Most of MIND was ready to go when she turned it over to the “old” editor. (Mostly what was missing was the LocSec’s regular contributions.) With Jan Pfeil Doyle’s help, we got it done and on to you.

At this time of giving thanks, it seems appropriate to acknowledge the stellar job that Vonda does for us each month. Thank you, Vonda, from all of us in CIM.

Teresa Gregory  
Old Editor



## Old Dog/New Tricks

*Teresa Gregory, LocSec*

As I sometimes do, I went back and looked at the column I wrote for the November MIND last year. I talked about a recent trip to visit my son in Los Angeles. I talked about the fun we had at the October Monthly Gathering. We had a spooky story contest. Those in attendance wrote the stories, all stories were read aloud, and winners were chosen. I also reminded everyone of our upcoming Regional Gathering in January 2020 and the Outdoor Gathering in May 2020.



This year, the spookie stories we discussed at the October Zoom meeting were from the news. No one overate Halloween candy. There were no delicious treats from Vicki Adang.

I think our 2020 RG was one of the last in the country. The Outdoor Gathering was cancelled. At the September 2020 Executive Committee meeting, the board voted to cancel the January 2021 RG. This was heartbreaking. We have a small, intimate RG, but those who come love it, including the organizers. After 25 years in the same location, Jan Pfeil Doyle and I had found a beautiful new hotel. We couldn't believe our good fortune. I remember walking out of the place with her and saying, "If this is a dream, please let me sleep a little longer." We were in the final stages of planning so that we could announce it in March when everything shut down. We hung on as long as possible. We so desperately wanted this to happen in January, but reality stepped in and we had to let the dream go. Old habits die hard, though. A week or so ago, I was at the grocery and saw a great sale on something, checked the expiration date, and thought, "This is good until February so I could stock up for the RG." Hoping on 2022.

On a personal note, I have found a sort of inner contentment recently by not thinking about what I'm going to do when this is all "over." Instead of longing for something in the future, I'm focusing on the blessings and opportunities I have right now. I'm actively planning a few projects to work on this winter while staying home. I have been reading a lot about propagating roses from cuttings and have a few successes. I knit but I have never made a sweater. Part of my yarn order arrived today and I'm going to give that a try. I have started writing some memoirs for my children. Maybe it's time to dust off my mandoline after 40+ years. And I so look forward to spending time with all of you via Zoom or email or telephone or however we can connect.

This Thanksgiving, let's focus on what we have. I am forever thankful for my family and my friends, especially my Mensa friends, the "family" I chose.

Happy Thanksgiving!

## Puzzle Column

Written by Alan Stillson of Greater Los Angeles Mensa and reprinted with permission of the author (<http://stillsonworks.com>)

### Holiday Season “portmanteaus.”

A portmanteau is a word created by mashing two words together. The online dictionary states: “A word blending the sounds and combining the meanings of two others, for example *motel* (from ‘motor’ and ‘hotel’) or *brunch* (from ‘breakfast’ and ‘lunch’).”

An example of a holiday season portmanteau is *tofurkey*, a mash-up of *tofu* and *turkey*.

Try to find these concocted portmanteaus with the starting letter and letter count provided:

1. A description of a posh Christmas garment (N – 9 letters)
2. A reading of the Hanukkah story to Snoopy (M – 11 letters)
3. A longing to travel from 12/26 through 1/1 (K – 11 letters)
4. A refusal to eat during Mr. Costanza’s holiday celebration (F – 8 letters)
5. A reindeer that prefers a Robert Redford movie (S – 10 letters)
6. A grilled meat wrapped in a potato pancake (L – 8 letters)
7. A contribution of hot dogs to a late November potluck meal (F – 12 letters)
8. A Pasadena, CA December parade in West Lafayette, IN (P – 9 letters)
9. An expulsion of an annoying Christmas party kisser (D – 12 letters)
10. A prize of two tickets to Miami for winning a Hanukkah game (D – 6 letters)

See answers on page 16.



## **Thanksgiving Trivia**

### **When and where was the original feast?**

Although it's widely accepted that the very first Thanksgiving happened in Massachusetts in 1621, some people believe otherwise. Not only do they think the first feast occurred earlier, in 1598, but that it also took place in San Elizario, Texas, near El Paso. According to the story, to celebrate surviving their travel through the Chihuahuan Desert, Spaniard Juan de Onate and 500 members of his crew threw a huge feast of fish when they made it to Texas.

(Courtesy Country Living)

### **Black Friday is the busiest day of the year for plumbers.**

Thanks to all that food we gobble up on Thanksgiving and houseguests stressing out the plumbing system, Roto-Rooter reports that kitchen drains, garbage disposals, and yes, toilets, require more attention the day after Thanksgiving than any other day. Before you have to join the legions paying a hefty holiday bill, you may want to remind your kitchen clean-up crew to scrape the plates before washing.

(Courtesy Good Housekeeping)

### **A Thanksgiving mix-up inspired the first TV dinners.**

In 1953, a Swanson employee accidentally ordered a [colossal shipment of Thanksgiving turkeys](#) (260 tons, to be exact). To deal with the excess, salesman Gerry Thomas took inspiration from the prepared foods served on airplanes. He came up with the idea of filling 5,000 aluminum trays with the turkey – along with cornbread dressing, gravy, peas, and sweet potatoes to complete the offering. The 98-cents meals were a hit, especially with kids and increasingly busy households.

(Courtesy Good Housekeeping)

### **When the religious group that would later be known as the Pilgrims left England to practice their religion freely, where did they go?**

Leiden, Holland! Unlike the Puritans, the Pilgrims believed that they couldn't practice their religion within the English state church. This led to fines and sometimes imprisonment. To escape persecution, they fled to Leiden, Holland. But they had a hard time fitting in and finding jobs because they didn't want to assimilate into the local culture. They were also worried about their children being influenced by the culture they were living in. So they secured investors and made their journey to found a colony in New England.

(Courtesy conversationstartersworld.com)

# 2020-2021 Book Group Reading List

Rich Gibson

Book Group is currently meeting virtually via Zoom. It meets on Sunday afternoons at 2 p.m. once a month. Check the calendar for exact dates and contact information for Rich Gibson.

**Nov 15:** *Pleased to Meet Me: Genes, Germs, and the Curious Forces That Make Us Who We Are* by Bill Sullivan

**Dec 13:** *The Case Against Reality* by Donald Hoffman; Lectures available on-line

**Jan 17:** *Imbeciles: The Supreme Court, American Eugenics, and the Sterilization of Carrie Buck* by Adam Cohen

**Feb 21:** *When Books Went to War: The Stories That Helped Us Win World War II* by Molly Guptill Manning

**Mar 21:** *The World in a Grain* by Vince Beiser

**Apr 18:** *1177 B.C. the Year Civilization Collapsed* by Eric H. Cline

**May 16:** *Mortal Republic: How Rome Fell into Tyranny* by Edward J. Watts

**Jun 20** (possibly) *The Deficit Myth: Modern Monetary Theory and the Birth of the People's Economy* by Stephanie Kelton

**Jul 18:** *Deaths of Despair and the Future of Capitalism* by Angus Deaton and Anne Case



## New Members

David Burget	Crawfordsville	IN	MoveIn
Zhe Koh	Bloomington	IN	MoveIn
Anthony Lam	Indianapolis	IN	MoveIn



# November 2020 Events

**Please note that ALL regularly scheduled events are online.** During this time of social isolation, Central Indiana Mensa wants to reach out to our members. We are hosting online virtual events and we'd love to see you. We chose to use Zoom videoconferencing software because it is very user friendly and it's free. You may connect via computer, tablet, or smart phone. Zoom meeting links will be sent weekly on Monday to all current members of CIM who have an email address on file with the national office. The subject line will contain "CIM Meeting ReMINDer." If you do not get the email, and you would like to join a meeting, contact the organizer who is listed prior to the meeting.

If you need help with Zoom, please contact Teresa at [ag18tg@yahoo.com](mailto:ag18tg@yahoo.com). We are still learning. We appreciate your patience and support.

**VIRTUAL Ham'n Eggs (Hamilton County Eggheads)** –1<sup>st</sup> Saturday from **9:45 a.m. - 12 noon**. Drop in any time for casual conversation and lively discussion. Contact: Alison Brown, 317-846-6798, [SIGHT@indymensa.org](mailto:SIGHT@indymensa.org)

**VIRTUAL Indy Lunch Bunch** - 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday at **11:30a.m.**. Bring your own lunch! Contact: Karen Steilberger, [steilkr@sbcglobal.net](mailto:steilkr@sbcglobal.net).

**VIRTUAL Sunday Social** – Every Sunday from **7:00p.m. –8:30p.m.** Drop in any time for casual chat. Contact: Teresa, [ag18tg@yahoo.com](mailto:ag18tg@yahoo.com).

**VIRTUAL Monthly Gathering** - 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday, **7:30 p.m. – 10 p.m.** Our usual format of announcements at 7:45p.m., a short program, then conversation. Bring your own snacks and beverages.

Watch IndyMensa.org, MeetUp, and/or the Monday "CIM Meeting ReMINDer" for program information. - Contact: Teresa, [ag18tg@yahoo.com](mailto:ag18tg@yahoo.com)

**VIRTUAL ExCom**– 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month. **7:00 p.m.** All active members are welcome to see your board in action. Contact: Teresa, [ag18tg@yahoo.com](mailto:ag18tg@yahoo.com)

**VIRTUAL Book Group** – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday at **2:00p.m.**

*11/15 - Pleased to Meet Me: Genes, Germs, and the Curious Forces That Make Us Who We Are* by Bill Sullivan Aug. 2019 340 pages. Our books tend to be non-fiction and do not exceed about 300 pages in length. Contact Rich: [hoot.gibson.tds@gmail.com](mailto:hoot.gibson.tds@gmail.com) or 770-548-5217 for more details or to RSVP

Please send Calendar Items to [MIND.editor@yahoo.com](mailto:MIND.editor@yahoo.com)

# November 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
1 Sunday Social	2	3	4 Indy Lunch Bunch
8 Sunday Social	9	10	11
15 Sunday Social; Book Group	16	17 ExCom	18 Indy Lunch Bunch
22 Sunday Social	23	24	25 Hump Day
29 Sunday Social	30		

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5	6	7 Ham 'n Eggs
12	13 Monthly Gathering	14
19	20	21
26 <i>Happy Thanksgiving!</i>	27	28
29	30	31

## Jon's Journal – News for Region 4

### Board of Directors (AMC) Update – and Thank You!

*Jon Gruebele, RVC4*

On September 12<sup>th</sup>, we held our quarterly AMC meeting via videoconference. As has been the case recently, the meeting was live streamed for members to view. We also posted the four-hour [video recording](#) on-line.

As already reported, the AMC voted in July to remove Firehouse and Hospitality as “official” Facebook groups and to change their names. We established the Social Media Transition Task Force to recommend implementation details. During the September meeting, we approved the Task Force’s recommendation to transition these groups to Special Interest Groups (SIGs). I’d like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Region 4 members **Laura King** (Sangamon Valley), **Barbara Kryvko** (St. Louis), and **Susan Woodill** (Chicago) for their help in establishing the SIGs and ensuring a smooth transition. The switchover was made in late September. We recently announced another way to take a Mensa Admission test. We’re partnering with Prometric, a company that provides testing for many different organizations. At the AMC meeting, we set the price of testing using Prometric at \$99 and adjusted our budget accordingly.

This testing alternative won’t eliminate the need for our traditional Proctors. On the plus side, Prometric typically offers many more locations to test than we have been able to provide with Proctors. As an example, Mensa of Wisconsin has six Prometric sites across their territory. Also, Proctors typically test infrequently. With Prometric, prospective members can test whenever it fits their schedule. Many Local Groups shut down testing during COVID; Prometric is still testing with appropriate precautions.

On the other hand, testing with Proctors is cheaper – usually \$60. It’s also more personable. To help ensure food safety at an RG I co-chaired, I took a ServSafe Food Protection Manager course and tested to obtain my certification at one of Prometric’s competitors. They had a lot of security, made me take everything out of my pockets, patted me down, and then closely monitored the room to help prevent cheating. It wasn’t the friendliest experience. Proctors may be more effective at introducing Mensa to prospects and thus increase the probability they’ll join if accepted. We’ll therefore continue offering our traditional testing with Proctors for the foreseeable future.

In other actions, Rachel Kibler was appointed as Regional Coordinator for Region 9 (Far West) to replace Alton Hitchcock who had resigned as Regional Vice Chair (RVC). American Mensa is incorporated in New York, and laws there prevent the AMC from naming a direct replacement for an RVC. A Regional Coordinator has the same authority as an RVC, but they don’t have a vote on the AMC. Also, a motion to update our rules (ASIEs) about SIGs was defeated, and a motion to affirm our adherence to Mensa’s International Constitution was approved.

Feedback? Please contact me at [rvc4@us.mensa.org](mailto:rvc4@us.mensa.org) or via phone/text at +1 309 693 1359. Region 4’s Facebook group is:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/695847670490858>.



# Books On The Runway

Margy Lancet Fletcher

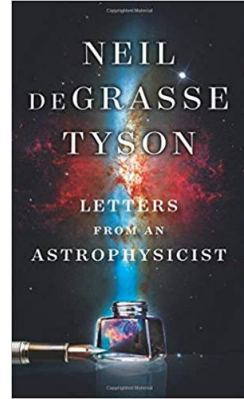
**Author:** Neil deGrasse Tyson

**Title:** *Letters from an Astrophysicist*

**Publisher:** W. W. Norton and Company

**Year:** 2019

**Book Description:** Sometime in the middle of the nineteenth century, when space exploration was scarcely even imagined, the poet Robert Browning's literary alter ego, the artist Andrea del Santo, declaimed: "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp, Or what's a heaven for?" Nearly a century and three quarters later, astrophysicist, educator, and media celebrity Neil deGrasse Tyson is embodying Browning's universe-expanding sentiment and actively encouraging everyone to follow suit. *Letters from an Astrophysicist*, compiled and published on the occasion of Dr. Tyson's and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's shared sixtieth birthday, is a tribute to the countless individuals from all professional and personal categories that comprise his audience.



This brief sampling of Dr. Tyson's correspondence is organized into categories derived from ancient Greek concepts, and defined by the author as follows: I. Ethos - The characteristic spirit of a culture, manifested in its beliefs and aspirations. II. Cosmos - The universe seen as a well-ordered whole. III. Pathos - A plaintive appeal to emotions that already reside within us. IV. Kairos - A propitious moment for decision or action.

Section I (Ethos) contains the author's response to a New York Times query as to how its readers would behave as U. S. President, reproduced in the excerpt below. Elsewhere in the book, Dr. Tyson provides his viewpoint on such issues (among many others) as the purpose of education, scientific accuracy in the motion picture industry, the existence of alien life forms, the economic and technical value of space exploration, the eternal conflict between science and religion, how intelligence is measured and its correlation with physiological traits (such as skin color), and the chemical and physical nature of life and death - plus his heart-rending eyewitness account of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, which occurred a mere four blocks from his home. Dr. Tyson concludes his book with a letter expressing gratitude for his father's exemplary parenthood, thanking the recently-deceased Cyril deGrasse Tyson for "bestowing upon me guiding principles for living my life to the fullest, and along the way, lessening the suffering of others." A mission statement for the ages.

**Has this book changed the way you think, your attitude toward life, or even your life itself? If so, how?**

Curiosity, optimism, and respect for divergent opinions - Neil deGrasse Tyson possesses these positive qualities that too many of our political leaders sadly lack,

without an ounce of the anger and self-pity that often handicaps socially marginalized members of cultural minorities. In fact, Tyson treats his African American status as merely an afterthought that is irrelevant to his scientific and academic achievements and aspirations.

I strongly urge readers prone to depression to ditch their Prozac in favor of a daily dose of Neil deGrasse Tyson. And regardless of the outcome of our upcoming national election, we can invoke the good doctor's catchphrase: Keep looking up!

**Who should definitely read this book? Why?** Absolutely everyone, as the book has messages for a wide variety of experts and students. As Christmas is fast approaching, may I suggest that this small volume would make an excellent stocking stuffer? You're welcome.

**How long might it take to read this book?** The brevity of this volume and its incandescent prose ensure a delightfully quick reading experience - not quite equal in pace to the speed of light, but no longer than a few hours in duration.

*Provide a short characteristic section, an awesome sentence, or an inspiring quote:*

### IF I WERE PRESIDENT

*During a particularly obstinate run of congressional cacophony, the "Sunday Review" section of the New York Times solicited responses from non-politicians to the phrase, "If I were President..." What follows is the unedited version of my published answer.*

Sunday, August 21, 2011  
*New York Times*

The question, "If I were President, I'd..." implies that if you swap out one leader, put in another, then all will be well with America - as though our leaders are the cause of all ailments.

That must be why we've created a tradition of rampant attacks on our politicians. Are they too conservative for you? Too liberal? Too religious? Too atheist? Too gay? Too anti-gay? Too rich? Too dumb? Too smart? Too ethnic? Too philanderous? Curious behavior, given that we elect 88% of Congress every two years.

A second tradition-in-progress is the expectation that everyone else in our culturally pluralistic land should hold exactly your own outlook, on all issues.

When you're scientifically literate, the world looks different to you. It's a particular way of questioning what you see and hear. When empowered by this state of mind, objective realities matter. These are the truths of the world that exist outside of whatever your belief system tells you.

One objective reality is that our government doesn't work, not because we have dysfunctional politicians, but because we have dysfunctional voters. As a scientist and educator, my goal, then, is not to become President and lead a dysfunctional electorate, but to enlighten the electorate so they might choose the right leaders in the first place.

Neil deGrasse Tyson  
New York City

# **Central Indiana Mensa ExCom 9/15/2020**

*Ann Hake, CIM Secretary*

The regular monthly meeting of the Central Indiana Mensa ExCom was held virtually via Zoom on Tuesday, September 15, 2020.

LocSec Teresa Gregory called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

Members present: Vicki Adang, Jan Pfeil Doyle, Teresa Gregory, Ann Hake, Pat Milligan, Kurt Williams, and Bob Zdanky.

Guest: Jon Applegate (Regional Ombudsman), Barbara George, Basil Vareldzis.

The committee reviewed the minutes of the August 2020 ExCom meeting. Kurt Williams moved that the minutes be accepted. Jan Pfeil Doyle seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.

The committee reviewed the Treasurer's report for August 2020. Ann Hake moved that the report be accepted. Vicki Adang seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.

A membership report was compiled by Teresa Gregory based upon the information available as of 8/31/2020 from American Mensa: 474 members, 0 new, 1 movein, 7 rejoin, and 8 prospects. No candidates were tested due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

## **Old Business**

Regional Gathering (RG) – due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and the likelihood that social distancing measures will still be needed in January 2021, it is felt at this time that an in-person RG would not be practical or safe at that time. By cancelling now, we can also be more courteous to the hotel that has been willing to hold rooms for this date, rather than waiting until closer to the time of the gathering. Jan Pfeil Doyle moved that the in-person 2021 RG be cancelled. Kurt Williams seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.

Outdoor Gathering (OG) – is still planned for the weekend of May 14-16, 2021. Reservations have been secured at Versailles State Park and a deposit has been made. This deposit is 50% refundable if we cancel more than 90 days before the event, and 25% refundable if we cancel 90 days or fewer before the event.

John Matthews CIM scholarship fund – LocSec Teresa Gregory was able to determine that an addition of \$175 to the fund would be sufficient to bring the balance over \$500, so this amount was sent in to the Mensa Foundation rather than the \$200 voted upon by the ExCom in August.

CIM ExCom election – the postmark deadline for voting in the biennial election was last Friday, Sept 11, 2020. The Election Committee intends to meet on

Friday, Sept 18, 2020 to count the votes. The newly elected members will take office at October's (next month's) ExCom meeting.

## New Business

LocSec Teresa Gregory thanked the ExCom members for their contributions during the past two years, especially during this challenging year.

There being no other business, Vicki Adang moved that the meeting be adjourned. Pat Milligan seconded the motion. The motion was carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.



Solutions to November puzzles:

1. A description of a posh Christmas garment (N – 9 letters) = Noelegant
2. A reading of the Hanukkah story to Snoopy (M – 11 letters) = Maccabeagle
3. A longing to travel from 12/26 through 1/1 (K – 11 letters) = Kwanzaalust
4. A refusal to eat during Mr. Costanza's holiday celebration (F – 8 letters) = Fastivus
5. A reindeer that prefers a Robert Redford movie (S – 10 letters) = Sundancer
6. A grilled meat wrapped in a potato pancake (L – 8 letters) = Latkebab
7. A contribution of hot dogs to a late November potluck meal (F – 12 letters) = Franksgiving
8. A Pasadena, CA December parade in West Lafayette, IN (P – 9 letters) = Purduedah
9. An expulsion of an annoying Christmas party kisser (D – 12 letters) = Dismissal toe
10. A prize of two tickets to Miami for winning a Hanukkah game (D – 6 letters) = Deidel (Dade/dreidel)





# Treasurer's Report

Kurt Williams, CIM Treasurer

Following is the financial statement through September 30, 2020:

## Assets

	09/30/20
Regular Checking	\$ 7,495.33
Scholarship Checking	\$ -
Events Checking	\$ 6,415.04
MG Cash	\$ 25.00
USPS Stamps	\$ 479.55
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 14,414.92</b>

## Revenue & Expenses

<i>REVENUE</i>	September 2020
National Support	\$ 402.90
Testing Support	\$ -
New Member/ Lapsed Member	\$ 7.00
RG Income	\$ -
Lapsed Member Contact Incentive	\$ 44.50
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 454.40</b>

### *EXPENSES*

RG Hospitality	\$ -
MIND Printing	\$ 309.96
MIND Hospitality	\$ -
Mensa Foundation (scholarship donation)	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 309.96</b>
Net revenue for the period (loss)	\$ 144.44

# Mensa Monthly Gathering Location

## All Souls Unitarian Church

### 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.
- Look for signs within the building.

