



mind

Mensa Newsletter
Of Central Indiana

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t h a n k s
g i v i n g

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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 98th 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, or Vonda Heverly, 250 Anniston Drive, Indianapolis, IN, 46227. 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 submitted no later than the Friday following the ExCom meeting (usually the third Friday of the month) for the following month's edition.

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Loosing My MIND

Vonda Heverly, Editor

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



I just returned from a wonderful fall break in Massachusetts. I packed in as much history as I could (my daughter might say too much!) and I enjoyed every minute of it.

We spent a few days in Salem learning about the witchcraft trials, toured Lizzie Borden's house in Fall River (it is now a bed-and-breakfast), and lastly explored the Minute Man National Historical Park which preserves the area where the American Revolution started. Our last tour

was that of Orchard House, where one of my favorite authors, Louisa May Alcott, grew up.

For any of you history buffs out there, I can't recommend this area enough. If we had a month we couldn't have seen it all. The fall foliage was spectacular as well.

Slainte!



I forgot to mention our visit to Plimoth Patuxet, and this artistic fundraiser, the MOOflower on display in the visitor's center!

LocSection

Jan Pfeil Doyle

CIM Election Results, *continued* – Central Indiana Mensa’s newly elected Executive Committee (ExCom) held its first meeting in mid-October. Except for LocSec, ExCom officers are elected at large and decide at their first meeting which offices they will take. You can see a list of the new and returning officers on the last page of *MIND*. Feel free to contact any of us with suggestions or questions!



Outreach Coordinator – At the aforementioned ExCom meeting, we named a new position called Outreach Coordinator. It will be part publicity, part reaching out to members (especially outside the Indianapolis area,) part volunteer recruiting, and maybe more. **Barb George** will be creating the role as she/we go along. Please contact Barb if you have ideas/suggestions or if you’d like to help.

Holiday Party – I hope some of you who don’t live so close to Indianapolis will be able to attend our annual holiday party on December 9th - we’d love to meet you. You could come for the party and stay over to do some shopping the next day. The event is a pitch-in dinner followed by our “Gimmee Grabbee” gift exchange (more details in the December *MIND*).

CIM RG Canceled – The ExCom discussed the pros and cons of holding our regional gathering (RG)* in January 2023 and decided that we will not host an RG next year. Cincinnati is having their RG in December if you need an “RG fix.”

** **Regional Gatherings (RGs)** are put on by many local groups over a weekend and can be attended by any Mensa member. They are generally held in hotels, so out of town visitors can stay on site. You will find speakers, games, fun, food, socializing in the hospitality room, and more.*

Cincinnati Regional Gathering – CAMRG22: Off the Rails!, Dec. 2-4 – More info at www.cincymensa.org/RG2022/.

Sad News – We received news that a former member of our group, David Appel, passed away in early October. Dave was an interesting fellow who rode his bike to our monthly meetings and loved talking about local restaurants, being prepared, running, and many other topics.

Don’t Forget – Scholarship applications are due Jan. 15th. More info at www.mensafoundation.org/what-we-do/scholarships/.

Puzzle Column

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

LINKING WORDS

In these puzzles, each answer is linked to the previous answer like a chain. The last 3 letters of a just-found answer become the first 3 letters of the next answer. Two sample clues with answers (S1 and S2) are included in the chain.

S1. Glucose molecules stored in the body (8 letters) = glyco**GEN**

S2. Gregor Mendel was a famous one = (10 letters) = **GENeticIST**

1. Panama's is world famous (7 letters)
2. A marsh (6 letters)
3. A popular frat party (6 letters)
4. Redistrict for politic gain (11 letters)
5. Go off-course (6 letters)
6. Part of a plane (7 letters)
7. A five or seven-line poem (8 letters)
8. Excelled in a sport (8 letters)
9. A porter (6 letters)
10. A rotating machine on a ship (7 letters)

See answers on page 17.



New Members

Michael Curmi	Indianapolis	IN	MoveIn
Luke Gerhardt	Fairland	IN	MoveIn
Christopher Gricar	Fishers	IN	MoveIn
Tristan Miles	Avon	IN	MoveIn
Brittany Rudisill	Bristow	IN	MoveIn
Kailai Zhou	Bloomington	IN	Joined

2022-2023 Book Group Reading List

Rich Gibson

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

November: *Woke Racism* by John McWhorter, 187 pages

December: *Helgoland* by Carlo Rovelli, 168 pages

January: *Romance of Reality* by Bobby Azarian, 280 pages

February: *Entangled Life* by Merlin Sheldrake, 225 pages

March: *The Psychology of Money* by Morgan Housel, 209 pages

April: *On Bullshit/Bullshit Jobs* by Henry G. Frankfurt/David Graeber, 68/140 pages

May: *Metaverse* by Matthew Ball, 292 pages

June: *Genetic Lottery* by Kathryn Paige Harden, 256 pages

July: *The Verge* by Patrick Wyman, 343 pages

August: *A Book Forged in Hell* by Steven Nadler, 300 pages

September: *The WEIRDEST People in the World* by Joseph Henrich, 275 pages*

October: *Bittersweet* by Susan Cain, 353 pages

November: *Power and Liberty* by Gordon S. Wood, 188 pages

*Book is much longer; we'll furnish a reading guide to get it down to a friendlier length.



Mensa Book Group Book Reviews

Rich Gibson

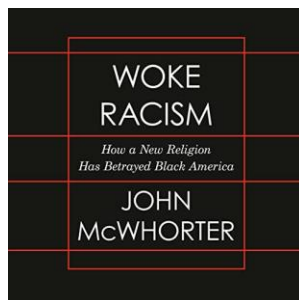
THIS MONTH: *Woke Racism—How a New Religion Has Betrayed Black America*, by John McWhorter

187 pages, published in 2021. To be discussed at the MBG meeting on Sunday, November 20th, at 2:00 PM.

See Calendar or Meetup for more information.

John McWhorter is a professor of linguistics at Columbia University and a columnist for the New York Times. A Black American, he has written extensively on linguistics, including Black English; and on race relations and racism. I am a white American with few Black friends or acquaintances, and thus little practical experience of race relations. While I'm aware of the large number of books on wokeness, racism and anti-racism, notably *How to Be an Anti-Racist* by Ibram Kendi or *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo.

Continued on next page



Continued from previous page

DiAngelo, I am bemused by the idea that being White makes me automatically a bad person.

Whether you agree with woke anti-racism or not, this book offers a different perspective. McWhorter's main idea is that wokeness is not the way to a just and equitable world, but a barrier. He asserts that wokeness has become a fundamentalist religion. As such, it is subject to several bad features: possessed of a dogma which is not subject to reasoned argument; illogicality; and inherent superstition. Further, it can be actively harmful in promoting a victimhood culture among Black people and advocating policies that disproportionately damage Black communities.

Wow! This book can generate a compelling discussion. Whether you want to participate, or watch quietly from a corner, you might want to attend the November Book Group and check it out. We'll meet in person and through Zoom on Sunday, November 20th, at 2:00 PM.

NEXT MONTH: *Helgoland*, by Carlo Rovelli

168 pages, published in 2020. To be discussed at the MBG meeting on Sunday, December 18th, at 2:00 PM. See Calendar or Meetup for more information.

The two competing hypotheses that wage war for the soul of physicists' minds these days are string theory and quantum loop gravity. The public faces of these two concepts are Brian Greene (strings) and Carlo Rovelli (loops). Personal preference: Brian Greene's writing style plods, and Rovelli's sings

This book has little to say about strings versus loops, but it's written by Rovelli, and it does sing. It's a story of one of the great scientific breakthroughs of the 20th century, Werner Heisenberg's development of quantum mechanics (QM). He developed it while vacationing on the island of Helgoland, a barren, windy rock projecting out of the wet, windy, blustery, cold North Sea.

The book begins with the problems that Heisenberg was grappling with—how to explain what was going on inside atoms, which was confusing the greatest minds. It takes us through his breakthrough, and carries us through its reception, acceptance, and elaboration throughout the scientific community. But the book carries on into the manifold implications of QM, because they are extremely strange: Quantum entanglement, which Einstein called “spooky action at a distance.” Light behaving like either a wave or a particle, based on the expectations of you, the observer. Sub-atomic particles appearing and disappearing in the vacuum of space. But wait, there's more. The Nobel laureate Richard Feynman famously observed that nobody understands quantum theory. Its implications for our understanding and living in the real world are huge and disquieting. I think everyone would be happy to forget the whole thing, except for the troubling detail that Heisenberg's approach works, every single time. (Of the several philosophical attempts to handle the confusing bits, one of the most popular is called “Shut up and do the math.”) Computers, satellite navigation, nuclear power, chemistry and chemical bonds, bird migration, the color of the sky; our understanding of these phenomena and the power of these tools are immeasurably enriched by the application of QM. Still, the issues remain and won't go away.

Rovelli tackles this head on and suggests that we really must dive into the rabbit hole that QM has opened up for us. Reality is more subtle than our perception of objects in space. He asserts that the fundamental basis of reality is not objects, but relations. As a guide into and through the rabbit hole, he is incomparable.

If you'd like to learn more about QM, here's a suggestion: read the book, then come to our book group meeting on December 18th and join the discussion. We may not come to clarity, but at least we can share our mutual confusion. Hope to see you then.

November 2022 Events

Indy Lunch Bunch – 1st Wednesday In Person; 3rd Wednesday on *Zoom*

11/2, 11:30am ET - Shapiro's, 808 S Meridian St. Indianapolis, IN 46225

11/16, 11:30am ET - Virtual *Online*

RSVPs not required but appreciated.

Contact: Karen Steilberger, steilkr@sbcglobal.net

Ham 'n' Eggs (Hamilton County Eggheads) – 1st Saturday

11/5, 10:00 a.m. - 12 noon ET Atrio, 11700 Illinois St. (Carmel, IN, located at IU Health North). Located just off the atrium on the first floor on the left as you enter the building from the north entrance. Breakfast served till 11 a.m., then lunch starts. Drop in any time for casual conversation, lively discussion, and good food and beverages.

RSVP: Alison Brown, 317-846-6798, SIGHT@indymensa.org

VIRTUAL *Sunday Social *– Some Sundays (check the calendar) from **7:00pm –8:30pm ET** Drop in any time for casual chat. Contact: Teresa, ag18tg@yahoo.com.

VIRTUAL and LIVE *Monthly Gathering* - 2nd Friday,

11/11, 7:00pm – 11:00pm ET

All Souls Unitarian Church, 5805 E. 56th Street, Indianapolis, IN 46226. See last page of MIND for map and directions. Members: \$7.00, Non-Members: \$10.00; Children 6- 18: \$5.00, under 6: free. Proof of vaccination or recent test required.

Our usual format of announcements at 7:45p.m., a short program, then conversation.

We will be upstairs in the Beattie Room. Please do not arrive before 7:00pm. As usual, announcements at 7:45pm and program to follow. Zoom starts at 7:30pm.

VIRTUAL *ExCom*– 3rd Tuesday of the month.

11/15 - 7:00pm. ET All active members are welcome to see your board in action. Contact: Teresa, ag18tg@yahoo.com

VIRTUAL and IN PERSON *Book Group*

11/20, 2:00pm ET

Woke Racism – John McWhorter (2021) 187 pages

Contact Rich Gibson hoot.gibson.tds@gmail.com or 770-548-5217 for more details, to RSVP, or for Zoom link.

Mensans Dining Out - 3rd Sunday

11/20, 6pm ET

Blind Owl Brewery – Outdoor seating

5014 E 62nd St, Indianapolis, IN 46220

For more information or to RSVP, contact Bob Zdanky at 317-912-3590.

November 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
		1	2 Indy Lunch Bunch
6 *Sunday Social*	7	8	9
13 *Sunday Social*	14	15 *ExCom*	16 *Indy Lunch Bunch*
20 Book Group; Dining Out	21	22	23
27 *Sunday Social*	28	29	30

Virtual Zoom Events

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3	4	5 Ham'n Eggs
10	11 Monthly Gathering	12
17	18	19
24	25	26

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

Jon's Journal – News for Region 4

I Want to Change, but Can't

Jon Gruebele, RVC4

I've often wondered about how we do things:

- Do we really need 21 people attending Board of Directors (AMC) meetings?
- What exactly do we want from our Regional Vice Chairs (RVCs), and do we really need 10 of them?
- Why do we force unincorporated Local Groups to create their own bylaws instead of just having a standard set with a few options?



And that's just the start of my list. After recently reviewing a Governance Task Force report from 2010, I discovered people have been asking these questions for a long time. A few of the juicier quotes were:

- "Dysfunctional organizations tend not only to resist dismantling a dead horse, but often put effort into avoiding admitting the horse is dead."
- "Previously demonstrated incompetence is no barrier to election to the AMC." [Ouch.]
- "... recognition of our superior intelligence comes with an entitlement to impose our 'right' opinions on all of those around us. Successful leadership in Mensa is achieved by those members who have, inherent or discovered, an ability to cut through those entitlement opinions and actually get some work done."

When I ask "big picture" questions, I often hear that others also think things should change, but it would be impossible to change them. Change management professionals would agree that change is hard but can be done. So why don't we?

Part of the answer lies in some members who feel the AMC is somehow nefariously trying to implement diabolical secret plans to thwart progress, local group success, and world peace. As far as I can tell, all our AMC members just want the best for our organization. Yet this underlying theme persists, sometimes derailing common sense initiatives.

Often, member-initiated change fares better. One example was the elimination of the Nominating Committee, a team that would seek out candidates for national office. Another was a bylaws proposal to remove the past and past-past Chair from the AMC. During the same election, an AMC-initiated proposal to completely update our bylaws failed. This may have also had to do with the size of the change, as it seems smaller updates fare better than big ones.

The moral is that if you see something that needs changing, you may have more success initiating that than if the AMC did it. You could present the proposal at an Annual Meeting or qualify it via petition. I'm not ducking responsibility. If you have a good idea, please bring it to me and I'll do what I can to make it happen.

Finally, in case you hadn't heard, our Region 4 member Timmy King resigned as Chair of American Mensa for personal reasons. Please join me in thanking him for his contributions and wishing him and his family all the best.

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

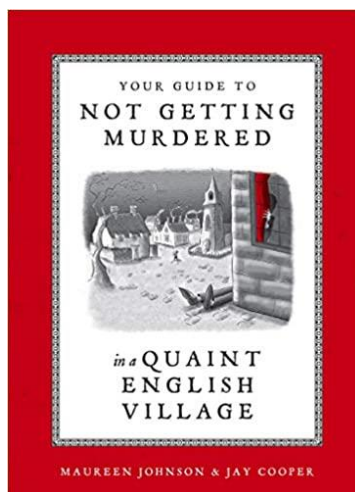
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/695847670490858>.

Books For the Holidays

Margy Lancet Fletcher

Whether or not we fully realize it, our major year-end gift-giving season is fast approaching. In this festive spirit, I hereby offer two potential stocking stuffers with a slightly macabre flavor, for those brave souls who are willing to stare death in the face and howl - with laughter!

1. ***Your Guide to Not Getting Murdered in a Quaint English Village***, by Maureen Johnson and Jay Cooper (Ten Speed press, 2021) is a delightfully droll sendup of such classic British mystery writers as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Dame Agatha Christie. After an introductory warning to the reader to avoid the aforementioned English village (“My advice; stick to urban areas. Do not go to the countryside. Dispose of this book, and continue on with your life.”), the authors provide the reader with all of the information that “may help you remain alive, if anything can,” categorized according to two possible venues: “the village proper and the manor just outside of it.” Both locations contain Buildings and Spaces, Residents, and Events, with Rooms and Architecture, Furnishings and Features, Frequent Guests, and Staff as characteristics peculiar to the manor. The following is a sample description:



THE VILLAGE CHURCH

A village has to have a church; those are the rules. For hundreds of years, the village church has been the center of village life and death, with emphasis on the last one. It is the biggest, grandest, highest building around. It has fonts to drown in, vaults to be sealed in, a bell tower to fall from, and an altar to be sacrificed on. The vicar will find your body if you venture here.

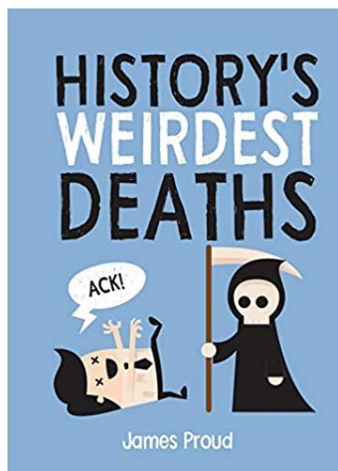
At the end of each section is a multiple-choice quiz to evaluate the reader's retention of the material presented - i.e., their ability to choose the option most likely to guarantee that the hapless visitor will survive until morning.

Continued on next page

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This book is available via Amazon.com. I would caution prospective gift purchasers that the print in the hardback book is miniscule, so you may want to order the Kindle version, also in stock at Amazon, for your visually impaired friends or loved ones.

2. ***History's Weirdest Deaths***, by James Proud (Portable Press, 2018), is a cheeky compilation of “some of the most peculiar and outrageous ways that people across the globe [and throughout human history] have met their untimely ends.” The following excerpt is just one bizarre example:



THE WIRE

MICHAEL ANDERSON GODWIN

Date of Death (D.O.D.) 5 March 1989

Godwin was serving time for murder in a South Carolina jail after narrowly escaping the electric chair on appeal. Six years into his sentence, a routine check found him dead in his cell, sitting naked on his metal toilet with a badly burned mouth. It transpired that while trying to fix a pair of earphones attached to his TV, the convict had bitten into a live wire and was killed in his own electric chair.

This book has a strong appeal to Mensans, who can thank their lucky stars that they are neither as tragically unlucky nor as incredibly idiotic as the book's subjects, each of whom would win a Darwin Award, hands down. Also inserted within the text are sidebars that detail little-known facts, unusual funeral customs, unusual methods of execution, and famous last words. This volume can also be purchased through Amazon, but only in hardback.

Both books are small enough in size to occupy an average Christmas stocking and will fit just as nicely wherever else they may be kept pre-celebration. They're whimsically illustrated and lighthearted in style - each a healthy dose of *grave* matter brimming with mirth. Ho, ho, ho!

May you have a joyous and safe Holiday Season.

North African and Persian Walls

Matt Brennan

Roman Limites in North Africa

A fertile zone stretches along the Mediterranean Sea Coast from the Nile River Valley in the east across north Africa to Morocco's Atlantic coast in the west. The fertile zone extends from 60 to 250 miles from the Mediterranean Sea southward to the edge of the Sahara Desert. To keep desert nomads and barbarous tribes away, limites were established more or less continuously along the edge of the desert from Libya through Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. They are conventional walls in some places. In others they consisted of military roads, forts with mounted patrols between them, moats, trenches, and permanent stone garrison forts housing reserves farther back.

The first defensive wall and fortress system in Africa, the **Fossatum Africae**, was probably begun by Roman Emperor Hadrian and is contemporaneous with Hadrian's Wall in Britannia. It ran for 470 miles southwestward from the Mediterranean coast in Tunisia to protect the verdant agricultural zone surrounding Carthage. Eastern Roman (or Byzantine) Emperor Justinian (r. 527 - 565 A.D.) had the Fossatum Africae rebuilt 390 years later, in 533 A.D., even as his brilliant general, Belisarius, reconquered the region from the Germanic Vandal Kingdom.

More forts, ditches, walls and military roads run 2500 miles from Morocco to Tunisia. Yet another limes, the 600-mile **Limes Tripolitanus**, was a frontier zone bordering the Sahara Desert and protecting western Libya and Tunisia. Construction of most of these walls was probably begun under Emperor Antonius Pius a few years after Hadrian's reign.

Great Wall of Grogan

At about the time that Emperor Justinian was rebuilding the Fossatum Africae at the western extreme of his empire, the Sassanian (Persian) Dynasty to his east erected a northern frontier wall that extended for at least 121 miles from the Caspian Sea to the Pishkamar Mountains. The Grogan Wall (or Red Snake) was originally attributed to Alexander the Great, but has subsequently been dated to the 5th or 6th Century A.D. The wall, built of kiln-fired brick, was 20-33 feet thick by about 65 feet tall. Its defenders were successful in blocking access to Persia by "uncivilized" peoples to the north, particularly Huns and Turks, for about 200 years. It was abandoned around 750 A.D.



This is a continuing series of articles by member Matt Brennan on walls. Look for more in upcoming issues. —Ed.

Central Indiana Mensa ExCom 9/20/2022

Ann Hake, CIM Secretary

The regular monthly meeting of the Central Indiana Mensa ExCom was held virtually via Zoom on Tuesday, September 20, 2022. LocSec Teresa Gregory called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Members present: Teresa Gregory, Ann Hake, Nan Harvey, Kurt Williams, Bob Zdanky, and Matthew Zwick. Guests: Jon Applegate (Region 4 Ombudsman), Jan Pfeil Doyle, Barb George, and Pat Milligan.

The committee reviewed the minutes of the August 2022 ExCom meeting. Kurt Williams moved that the minutes be accepted. Nan Harvey seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.

The committee reviewed the Treasurer's report for August 2022. Kurt Williams moved that the report be accepted. Ann Hake seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.

A membership report was compiled by Teresa Gregory based upon the information available as of 8/31/2022 from American Mensa: 459 members, 5 new, 0 move-ins, 2 rejoins, and 6 prospects. No candidates were tested in August.

Old Business

Outdoor Gathering (OG): Is scheduled for the weekend of May 19-21, 2023, at Versailles State Park. Reservations have been made and a deposit put down.

CIM ExCom elections took place September 9. Jan Pfeil Doyle was elected LocSec. Other ExCom members elected were Paula Ferguson, Barb George, Ann Hake, Karen Wilczewski, Kurt Williams, and Bob Zdanky. Their terms will begin October 1; the remaining ExCom positions and other offices will be filled at the next ExCom meeting on October 18, 2022.

Tamara Wardell has agreed to serve as chair of the CIM Scholarship committee. Essay submissions opened September 15, 2022, and will close January 15, 2023.

New Business

The ExCom members wish to express their appreciation to LocSec Teresa Gregory for her extraordinary efforts as LocSec during her term, especially during the pandemic. The ExCom also wishes to recognize Jan Pfeil Doyle's efforts and contributions during this period. Their work, innovation, and agility were instrumental in allowing CIM members to stay connected even when we were not able to gather in person. LocSec Teresa Gregory also expressed her appreciation to the ExCom members for their service and engagement for the past two years.

There being no other business, Matt Zwick moved that the meeting be adjourned. Nan Harvey seconded the motion. The motion was carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:34 pm.

Treasurer's Report

Matthew Zwick

Balance Sheet (as of 9/30/2022)

Bank Accounts	8/31/2022	9/30/2022
Checking – Regular	\$8,042.59	\$8,196.23
Checking – Scholarship	-	-
Checking – MG Cash	25.00	25.00
Checking – Events Checking	6,601.74	6,601.74
Total Assets	\$14,669.33	\$14,822.97

Other Assets		
USPS Stamps Value	\$379.50	\$379.50
Total Number of USPS Stamps	690	690

Profit & Loss Statement (8/31/2022 – 9/30/2022)

Income		
	401.1 – Monthly Gathering Inc.	112.00
	405.1 – National Support	392.70
	405.2 – New Member/Lapsed Member	2.00
	405.3 – National Testing Support	70.00
Total Income		\$576.70
Expense		
	501.1– MG Hospitality	20.02
	505.1 – MIND Printing	403.04
Total Expenses		\$423.06

Answers to Puzzle Column on page 6:

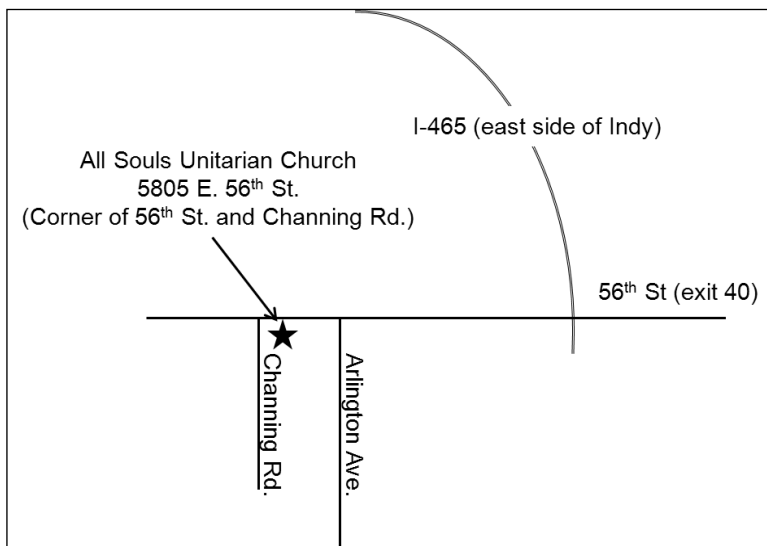
1. Panama's is world famous (7 letters) = **ISThMUS**
2. A marsh (6 letters) = **MUSKEG**
3. A popular frat party (6 letters) = **KEGGER**
4. Redistrict for politic gain (11 letters) = **GERrymanDER**
5. Go off-course (6 letters) = **DERAIL**
6. Part of a plane (7 letters) = **AILeRON**
7. A five or seven-line poem (8 letters) = **RONdeLET**
8. Excelled in a sport (8 letters) = **LETteRED**
9. A porter (6 letters) = **REDCAP**
10. A rotating machine on a ship (7 letters) = **CAPstan**

Mensa Monthly Gathering Location

All Souls Unitarian Church

5805 E. 56th St., Indianapolis

- From I-465 on the east side of Indianapolis, take the 56th 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, meeting in Beattie Room



Central Indiana Mensa
Teresa Gregory
6076 Dewey Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46219