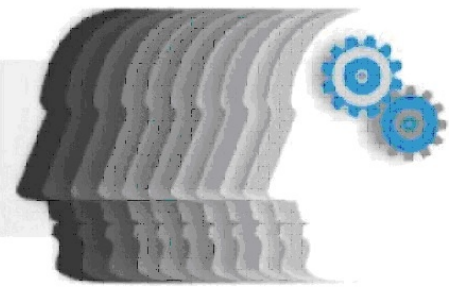


MIInd



Mensa India Magazine, May-June 2022



In this issue:

Dear Mensans,

The cover photo is of a wire-tailed swallow by – Rupesh Sangoi from Mensa Mumbai. The spotlight of this edition is the travelogue by Dipen Mehta of Mensa Mumbai. Check out the amazing photographs accompanying the article.

Take a look at an initiative, 'Unmukt' by Dhruv scholar Komal Yadav on page 11.

The role of Features Editor for the MWJ is vacant. For more details, go to page 22.

Science enthusiasts might be interested in participating in the European Mensa Science Camp, more details on page 19.

Send in your articles and contributions in plain text format and pictures in high resolution .jpg format to: editor@mensaindia.org

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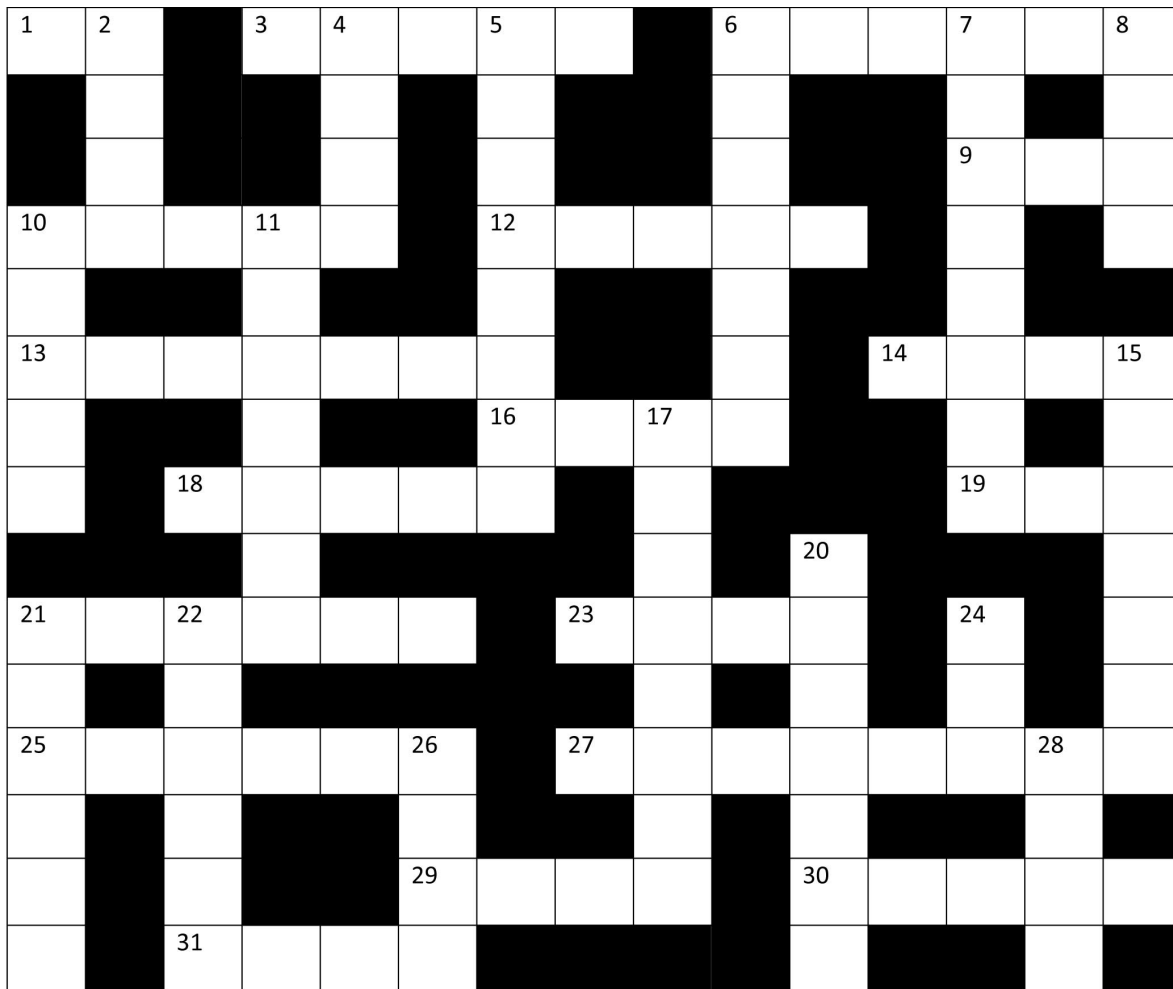
On the cover:
Wire-tailed swallow
— at Seawoods Flamingo Point, Navi Mumbai, By Rupesh Sangoi, Mensa Mumbai

Krishnan V. Iyer
Editor-in-chief, MInd

Disclaimer:
All contents in this magazine are opinions of the individual authors and contributors. Neither Mensa India, the society, its office bearers nor the editors are responsible for any content or views expressed.

Puzzles, Crossword & Quiz Corner

C



Puzzles, Crossword & Quiz Corner

Clues

ACROSS

- 1) A bachelor's degree in arts and sciences.
- 3) Hit hard
- 6) Wear away
- 9) The Pakistan intelligence agency
- 10) Affected with madness or insanity
- 12) Used to indicate duty
- 13) More than is desired
- 14) Speak rapidly and incessantly
- 16) Displeasing to the senses
- 18) To deceive or cheat
- 19) Memory whose contents can be accessed and read but cannot be changed
- 21) To confirm, to assure
- 23) The official literary language of Pakistan
- 25) Preserve a dead body
- 27) Someone guided more by ideals than by practical considerations
- 29) Nearer
- 30) Move with a whistling or hissing sound
- 31) An open-air market in an Arabian city

DOWN

- 2) Slightly open (used about a door)
- 4) Filled with fog
- 5) Giant
- 6) The state of being unable to breathe, which causes someone to die or to become unconscious
- 7) Pertaining to a bird
- 8) The title given to some Muslim rulers
- 10) A cylindrical container that holds liquid
- 11) The postal code
- 15) A small bomb (released from a cluster bomb)
- 17) Breed of dog
- 20) A supporter of Judaism
- 21) The organic group of Acetic acid
- 22) A story about supernatural beings or events
- 24) A measure of someone's weight in relation to height
- 26) A religious male living in a cloister and devoting himself to contemplation and prayer and work
- 28) To delay or suspend

Rashmi Garg
Mensa Delhi

Writings & Meanderings

The Hidden Jewel Of The Middle East – Oman

When people talk about coming to the Middle East for a holiday, the first (and probably) the only place that comes to mind is Dubai (not UAE, the country – but Dubai, the city I live in!). The images of tall skyscrapers, beautiful beaches, fancy restaurants, the world records it holds on various fronts, etc. There is a reason for this – it has got a great marketing team and the city has done wonders to promote itself on the global scene.

However, in this article, I would like to highlight a small country which is a hop, skip and a jump away from the UAE and offers a LOT more to the intrepid traveler – at a fraction of the cost (and a lot of activities actually free, something that is highly appealing in this day and age of uncertainty!). If you are the outdoorsy type, with a spirit of adventure, this jewel of a country will definitely please your palate.

Imagine a country with old architecture, forts, beautiful oases, turtle conservatories, beaches, traditional wooden boats, hikes and climbs, red sand desert, tall mountains and the world's second largest cave system walk!

Let us dive (pun intended) into the details of what makes this country special. A bit about the country – and getting there.

Oman is a country in the Middle East and is bordered at sea by Arabian Sea, the Gulf of Oman, and the Persian Gulf. On the land side its neighbours include UAE, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. It is strategically located with the Strait of Hormuz, a vital transit point for crude oil, at its tip. The government is technically a monarchy; but it is a very peaceful country with VERY warm and humble people. The country has a population of approx. 5 million of which about one third are foreigners

The country has one mainland and also an enclave which is separated from it with UAE being in between – the enclave being called Musandam (a bit more about this later).

Getting there is easy. The capital is Muscat and has an international airport. Also a lot of people prefer landing in Dubai as it has the most international connections and then driving from Dubai to Muscat. It is a 4-hour journey by road with visas offered at the border for a lot of nationalities.

Usually Muscat is the starting point for most people before heading out into the vast open spaces that the country provides.

Best time to go

Oman has typical Middle East weather – hot summers (May to September) and cooler winters (October to April). This does not mean that you should not visit it in summer. In fact three of Oman's highlights (turtles on the beach, verdant climate of Salalah and the cooler climes of Jebel Shams and Jebel Akhdar) are best during the months of June, July and August.

However, unless your agenda is specifically to see the above, the best time to visit is during the cooler months when the temperature is around 18-25C (temperatures may even drop to single digits during the peak of winter)

Writings & Meanderings

Accommodation and food

Muscat (and to an extent Salalah) offers top notch hotels for those who want to get pampered (e.g. Ritz-Carlton, Shangrila and Chedi) to budget B&Bs. Outside Muscat, Oman is all about camping, glamping, and exploring it in a rustic fashion. Keep your expectations of pampering back home if you really want to explore the country. The country is extremely safe and you can literally pitch your tent ANYWHERE without fear. In fact if you are in a bit of a spot, the locals will go out of the way to help you

The Omani traditional food, like a lot of its neighbouring countries, is influenced by Indian, Pakistani, Iranian and Arab dishes; and has a mix of spices, meat and rice with unleavened bread. Food is often consumed with Kahwa – (light coffee without milk and with a flavour of cardamom) a beverage that is served to guests.

Indian and Pakistani food is widely available – and they are a very good value-for-money

7 top places to go in Oman

Here I am going to divide this into different categories (geography and season) as they are totally different.

Muscat (winters, central region)

This city has its charm with a lot of whitewashed houses, the Grand Mosque, the opera house greenery, beaches, and the traditional souqs (bazaars) where you can go and buy a wide variety of things – rugs and spices being the most famous. You can also go diving and on a dolphin watch boat trip early in the morning. Some of the beach front properties here are stunning.

In fact some of the attractions I have mentioned below are day trips from Muscat – so you can use it as a base for exploration, if you are the creature comfort type!

Bimmah Sinkhole (all year, central region)

About 130 km from Muscat is this sinkhole, close to the sea and hence has brackish water. It is a big sinkhole with a diameter of about 60 m wide and has steps leading down to it – go down for a swim and if the weather is cool enough, there are shaded spots around for a picnic lunch

Wadi Shab and Wadi Tiwi (shoulder season, central region)

One of the best hikes you can go on. A lot of people camp at Tiwi Beach near it (pebbled beach) and start the Wadi Shab hike in the morning – a 45 min to 1.15 hour walk depending on fitness levels, along meandering streams and lush greenery - and between two mountains, you reach a spot where the stream narrows down to a spot where there is just enough space for your neck to pass through two jutting rocks. Go in and be rewarded by a deep grotto with a waterfall from top and sunlight streaming in at the right time. Pull yourself up the rope and jump off the ledge into the pool for a great experience. A must do!

Wadi Tiwi next door is better developed and you can actually drive in and jump into small pools along the way

Ras al Jinz (summer season, slightly south)

This turtle conservatory is a great eco-tour to see four kinds of turtles: the Green turtle, Olive Ridley turtle, the Loggerhead and the Hawksbill turtle. They come to lay eggs at night during no moon nights - early to mid-summer and then after a 50-70 day gestation period, you can

Writings & Meanderings

see hundreds of young hatchlings scurrying towards the sea. You can help the rangers save any stragglers who are taken in for a few weeks and then released into the wild
Interesting fact – these turtles migrate thousands of kilometers to SE Asia as babies and only come back to the SAME beach after 30 years to lay eggs – talk about a solid built in GPS!

Wahiba Sands (shoulder season, central region)

Those with a desire to enjoy the desert dunes and camp out under the stars, this area offers many camping hotels with all the frills for you to go in your 4x4 and just enjoy the ambiance and let all your needs taken care of. Go dune bashing, enjoy a sheesha or watch the Milky Way (May – October). The red sand dunes are breathtaking.

Salalah (June-August, far south)

Welcome to an optical illusion in more ways than one – be it lush greenery and 20C temperatures with mist and rain in the height of summer where the temperatures just outside the city are 40 degrees or above; to the anti-gravity hill where cars seem to roll backwards due to the layout of the topography; to a helicopter shot down and half buried on the shore to beaches and a twisting steep road in total mist that leads you to gorgeous viewpoints..... I can go on and on and on. This place is ONLY like this during the monsoons, for 3 months

Hoota Caves (all year, Central region)

Welcome to the world's second largest cave system – with a nice walking tour with guides inside and great lighting on the stalactites and stalagmites. I visited it more than 15 years ago for the first time when we had to abseil down into an opening and carry our own torches and food to see it – now it is well developed. A must do!

I have just given a few of my favourites that are all doable in a 4-5 day trip (except Salalah) but have not yet covered half of my must do places in this article

Nizwa fort, Jabrin/Jibrin fort, Wadi bani Khalid, Al Ayn UNESCO site with thousands of years old honeycomb tombs, Wadi Dam, Jebels Shams, Jebel Akhdar, the enclave of Musandam, Diving in Damaniyat islands.... the list goes on.

I have visited Oman more than 20 times and still feel that there are places I have not seen and places I don't mind going back to again

Alas I have many places to go to before I sleep!



Bimmah Sinkhole – a unique spot to swim in (L); A mother turtle heading back to sea after laying eggs – Ras al Jinz (R)

Writings & Meanderings



Camping off the beach along the coast (L); A typical *wadi* (river bed) scene (R)



The road less travelled – Jebel Adhdar (L); The honeycomb tombs on the way to Wadi Dam – a UNESCO world heritage site (R)



The walk to the grotto in Wadi Shab – with swims along the way (L)
A mosque with graves in the interiors of the country (R)

Writings & Meanderings



The verdant vistas of Salalah in summer - 20C and misty!



A section of Jibrin Castle – open to explore with artefacts all over



The interiors of Hoota caves – well lit and has interesting formations (L);
Khor Najd – Musandam Enclave – the fjords of the Middle East (R)

- Dipen Mehta
Mensa Mumbai

Writings & Meanderings

Harmony

Soft bells in the dark, like a mystic chime, take my heartbeats and make them rhyme, with the cosmic hum, pure, sublime, till I become one with eternal time.

Made of wool of many a kind in this rough rug, I suddenly find, a shahtoosh shawl, smooth and fine, glowing golden in the light divine.

The Truth I Am

My body, daughter of the earth, moves with the Earth. My mind is a whirling dervish, dancing a dance of ecstasy, faster and faster till an eddy forms and all escapes into nothingness, leaving me in a place beyond words, the body forgotten, the mind drained.

All is still and, in the calm, the universes silently expand in me, as All-That-Is becomes, all I can be.

Patterns

Learning to talk, learning to walk, the struggles of youth, then romance, followed by the mellowness of spiritual calm. First the dance of the body, then the prance of mind & heart and, finally, the warmth of the soul.

My Gods and demons churning away, past the problems, past the riches, till the nectar of immortality emerges. Sagar manthan, repeated in fractal patterns, again and again, on many canvases. The toil of life, the foil of love, and finally,.....finally, the magic elixir.

I tend the fields as the young grape starts in my vineyard, ripens, and then ends in my tavern, guided by the divine.

*- Kishore Ashtana
President - Mensa Project Dhruv
Former President - Mensa India*

Mensa - Project Dhruv

Social Initiative By A Dhruv Scholar



• Let's Talk About Periods. Period. •

"In a world where we can choose to be anything, I choose to be the change."

I, Komal Yadav, a graduate in B.Sc.(Hons.) Computer Science from University of Delhi always had this grit and zeal for social service and raising awareness on issues that concern all of us.

However, to be the change and a guiding star for others, you need to get the right opportunity at the right time and touchwood, it rang the doorbell for me at the very correct moment.

I remember, it was going to be the summer break and when all my peers at college were busy discussing their vacation plans and outdoor trips, I sat with one of my very good friends discussing the issues she was facing lately due to irregular period cycles. She was so much in turmoil that she relied on anything and everything that people, and some doctors suggested to her, just to feel "normal" like most other girls. Although we knew there were others like her, I didn't empathize much with them earlier. But now, I could see, feel and empathize with them.

The time we stepped out of the college premises and I sat in the metro, things took a turn and I felt the urge to do something. It gave me a craving to do something which can address the issue of good health and well-being. It took me some time to realise what I could do individually. I kept my faith in myself and my friend and we went ahead with this idea of raising awareness for all those who are still unheard. Surely, where there's a will, there's a way!

I remembered Paulo Coelho's words in the Alchemist, "And, when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it."

Just then I came across the international Millenium Fellowship by Millenium Campus Network under the aegis of United Nations Academic Impact. They work on the different SDGs and try to unite the youth for these social causes.

I was not going to miss this chance and applied for it straight away. Fortunately, I cleared all the rounds and was selected as one of the fellows from India.

Mensa - Project Dhruv

About the Project-

Project UnMukt is an initiative under the international Millenium Fellowship programme of the Millenium Campus Network. This project aims to encourage us to talk about menstruation and to end the stigma around it.

Menstruation is closely connected with the possibility of future motherhood. Though our society extolls motherhood, it looks down upon menstruation to the extent that the menstruating girl or woman is generally considered a pariah even now. She is made to feel ashamed and somehow 'less'. This mistreatment is because of lack of knowledge and often long-held superstitions.

This project was started to change things for those who go unheard, for those who hesitate to speak, for those who choose not to but instead suppress their emotions and who silently carry their 'burden'. We aim to make their voices heard, to make them have confidence in the way they are, happy with their own bodies and their minds. This is an initiative to talk about menstruation and end the stigma around it.

UnMukt literally means unleashed and we want this project to become a way to enlighten all and facilitate them to break their metaphorical and literal cages. We want to establish an extended support system to our friends having PCOD & PCOS, and others like them, feel heard and accepted. In this project, we aim to create a safe and inclusive place for everyone by overcoming religious and cultural taboos that have deeply embedded diffidence and embarrassment regarding the topic of periods in society in general.

Vision of the project:

The vision of UnMukt is two-fold. One is to create an inclusive environment for spreading menstrual health awareness. The second is to make environmentally friendly menstrual hygiene products easily accessible to those who need these the most across India.

Mission of the project:

- Partnering with schools, colleges, NGOs, government and private organizations to make girls and women aware about the basis of their menstrual cycle and the importance of menstrual hygiene.
- Striving to include the LGBTQIA+ community in the dialogue of menstrual health and better representation.
- Organizing menstrual products' (sanitary napkins/tampons/menstrual cups) drives to reach out to the underprivileged and impoverished menstruating girls and women.
- Making a safe space to educate the general masses regarding why menstruation occurs and removing the stigma around it.

Mensa - Project Dhruv

Recent Achievements of the Project-

Our work has gained recognition through a blog that was published on Ladderworks, a publishing platform of diverse picture books and online curriculum with the mission to empower over a million kids to become social entrepreneurs.

I was also invited as a Guest Speaker by Teen Chapter, an organization that provides a platform for Teen Entrepreneurs and Teenagers with the network, resources, and opportunities to advance their skills and accelerate their work and Break.The.Ice, an International Youth organization working toward discussing taboo topics and creating an enlightened youth community for the Global Entrepreneurship Conference, 2022.

Our work has also received a shoutout on the MCN Alumni pages where they present the work and contribution of their fellows. Furthermore, our project has a substantial social media presence directly impacting 250+ people.

Project UnMukt is active on social media platforms such as Instagram (un_mukt), Ouora (Project UnMukt) and Twitter(Project UnMukt) where we actively post to spread awareness about menstruation.

Your recognition of this very worthwhile project will help us effectively expand our reach and connect with like-minded people. Any supportive collaboration would be appreciated.

We have our social media presence on the following platforms:

Instagram:

<https://bit.ly/3L9Nc60>

Quora:

<https://bit.ly/3B4Yvrt>

Twitter:

<https://bit.ly/3GwSQLL>

For more details, you can connect with us on projectunmukt@gmail.com !

With a resolute belief in myself and in our team, I wish to become the change I want to see around me. However, I am convinced that "While we all may be individually strong, we are collectively even more powerful". Keeping this in mind, I am reaching out to you.

-

Komal Yadav
Scholar, Mensa Project Dhruv
Founder – President
Project UnMukt

Pages From Mensa World Journal

From The ExComm **From the Director of the Smaller National Mensas**

Mensa (and) Politics



As I'm writing this I'm already planning my trip to London this Spring to meet the rest of the ExComm members. This will be our first in-person meeting since we took office and it is so exciting, not just because of the opportunity to visit a new city, but the very opportunity to meet other Mensa members from another part of the world in person. This is what makes this society so stimulating and compelling.

What's more we will be meeting to discuss and decide upon various motions and topics, and if there is one thing that the pandemic taught us it's that video calls are great for when there is a great distance between people but nothing can substitute for the authentic human experience of meeting another in person.

One of the initiatives I am now doing in my capacity as DSNM is to gather small but frequent updates from the Full National Mensas under my portfolio. A pulse check like this can be far more effective than a large-scale project that may seem grand at first but hard to execute. And the same can be said about what is happening in National Mensas around the world.

If there is one thing I'm noticing from the reports, it is that National Mensas around the world are budding and thawing through the winter of the pandemic and finding new breath of life and vigour. Many National Mensas are already having in-person gatherings. Others are preparing for their National General Assemblies. Some during this down time were able to revamp their National Mensa website — a feat carried out purely by volunteers! Testing sessions are being carried out again and National Mensas around the world are poised for growth by meeting the repressed demand for Mensa Admission Tests.

But mind you it is not going to come to pass over night. For this to happen it's going to take all of us. Every single member must be clear what we are all here for: that deeply personal and deeply meaningful human experience that we can only find in Mensa.

For that to happen we must all take part in bringing our own portion to the table. Volunteer and support your boards or take part to lead one. Be the member you want to see in your National Mensa and you will find other like-minded individuals coming to the forefront.

This pandemic winter has taken enough from us - our time, volunteers and momentum. Every little bud that sprouts is every new volunteer that raises their hand through the snow. Every generation of old methods of doing things now thawing to new and fresh more efficient ideas on how to run the society. It turns out, time like energy is never lost, only found in a different season.

A dear Mensan friend of mine once taught me that in order to get, you must first give. Change always involves the gaining and giving up of something. And indeed this is always true with Mensa. You get what you put into the society. And if there is something I've always known to be true, what you get from what you put in, can never be bought by money for it is the

Pages From Mensa World Journal

priceless human experience that can truly be found in Mensa.

As I prepare for the trip to meet the rest of the ExComm, I'm looking forward to the spring we will all soon see in Mensa and helping our global membership see and respond the same.

Kee Aun TAN
Director of Smaller National Mensas

What's In The MJW This Month

- don't forget to enter into the Mensa International Photography and Poetry competitions!
- on p3, the Director of Smaller National Mensas (DSNM) is looking forward to his first face-to-face ExComm meeting to be held in London, while news of a new Mensa SIGHT initiative is on p4.
- former MIL Chairman, Willem Bouwens, outlines the functions of the Netherlands Mensa Foundation on p5, and on p6, we learn that dogs can recognise their owners by voice alone.
- Uwe Michael Neumann from Germany is our Mensa Profile this month (p7), and on p8, there are more details about our cover story, the European Mensa Science Camp (EMSC).
- the position of Features Editor for the MWJ is vacant. Details p8.
- do we really lose our filter as we age? Learn more on p9.
- John Blinke our Science editor is here with the latest Science news on P10, and Therese Moodie-Bloom continues to stump many of us with her original logic puzzles on p12.

Happy reading,
Kate
Kate Nacard, Editor

Read /download the full-colour MWJ at www.mensa.org

Kate Nacard, Editor

Pages From Mensa World Journal

Mensa Foundation in the Netherlands

The Mensa Foundation (www.mensafonds.nl) was established in 2013 by Mensa Netherlands with the aim of making the significance of giftedness in the society more visible. This is done by disseminating knowledge about high general intelligence, by supporting projects and research and by encouraging special achievements, for example, via the Award program. All work is done by volunteers. Mensa Foundation is completely dependent on sponsors and donations.

Three strategic spearheads

A full professor

From day one we strived to install a full professor of the highly gifted. There are a number of factors that have to come together to install a full professor. To find a university that supports the concept and it should fit in the faculty program, a dean who supports it and is willing to present the case to the Board of the university, to develop a program and a research assignment, and then we have to agree on an appointment procedure. Currently we are in the position that we have green lights on all aspects and we hope to install the full professor in the course of 2022. The intention is to seek interfaculty cooperation and to seek cooperation in an international university network. In our long term vision there would be an international network of scientists originated from Mensa Foundations in every country.

Awards

Another spearhead is to put high giftedness on the agenda of the national “movers and shakers” and businesses, to get publicity for this topic. The most visible is our yearly award program.

Three elements are of great importance for the awarding of individual Awards: making visible the significance of high general intelligence for society; supporting best practices to make the most of very high intelligence, and, contributing to a positive image of giftedness and social opportunities. In addition, the distinctive character of the contribution is taken into account for all candidates

The first award ceremony took place in 2013, just seven months after foundation. It has generated the necessary positive publicity for high intelligence in general and for the nominees and winners in particular. We can be satisfied but we want more; we are ambitious. More nominees and more attention for highly intelligent people. The proud winners and nominees of recent years have been ambassadors ever since and have given various presentations and lectures themselves. In this way too, more attention has been paid to the people for whom we make all these efforts, the multiplier effect.

Pages From Mensa World Journal

Grey Gold: qualitative attention for gifted elderly people.

We do not have a definition, but those who would gain most are the highly gifted people in nursing homes, those who are less mobile, and those not having intellectual peers in their close social environment. The gifted older person has been a strategic topic of the Mensa Foundation since 2014 under the name Grey Gold. We focus our attention on:

- the gifted people who will work on their own future in which they can live a dignified and intellectually challenging life,
- initiatives in care where older people are encouraged and challenged to keep using their intelligence, and
- stimulating scientific research of the elderly and the development of intelligence.

The role of the Mensa Foundation is to get this topic on the agenda of relevant organizations, by ourselves or in cooperation with other relevant (not-for-profit) organizations that advocate the interests of the (gifted) elderly.

Award ceremony live

The next award ceremony will be April 10 at 15:00 CET (UTC+1) and will be live-streamed from a professional studio. It will all be in Dutch and even if you do not understand Dutch you will sense the positive atmosphere; it is a party! The link to the on-line stream will be published on the Website of the Mensa Foundation on April 19. (The event will be recorded and will be made available on our website.) We are welcoming your support in ideas for cooperation, in feedback and in donations that enable us to do more and better. Newsletter: info@mensafonds.nl.

The aim for Mensa The Netherlands and the Mensa Foundation is to reinforce each other. Together we achieve what has been stated in the International Constitution since the beginning of Mensa's existence as an ambition for high intelligence: 'for the benefit of humanity'.

Willem Bouwens is a former Chairman of Mensa International and a present Board member of the Foundation.

SIGHT - a recent initiative

Andrea Schwelm (German National SIGHT coordinator and in charge of the Facebook SIGHT group) has developed an amazing new concept: the world's first 'Mashram'!

She decided to rent a traditional four-bedroom villa with a swimming pool in Malta's smaller sister island Gozo and turn it into an international Mensa meeting point. Everyone is welcome, as long as he or she is willing to mix with the other temporary residents of the house.

"If you only come for a cheap place to sleep and don't care about the others, you don't belong here" adds Andrea. She caters specifically for single travellers, but couples and friends are welcome as well - as long as there is enough space. When the house is full, there are enough AirBnB places or small hotels in the area to not leave anyone out in the cold.

Reprinted from the Mensa World Journal, May, 2022, issue 112, Editor Kate Nacard.

Pages From Mensa World Journal

Visitors pay a free contribution, i.e., they get to decide themselves how much they can pay. This is to finance the additional costs for the three extra bedrooms. Hopefully everyone is reasonable and their share stays in fair relation to their wallets. Thus people who earn more provide a great possibility for Mensans who are financially struggling.

Dreams Come True With Andrea And SIGHT :-)

During the first three months the 'Mashram' has attracted more than fourteen guests from five countries. Some have already confirmed their second stay, so the project will be continuing until the end of September 2022, maybe even longer. And Andrea hopes that other Ms across the globe might be inspired to create more 'Mashrams' in other countries.

Andrea has been a member with Mensa Germany since 2002. She has been an active SIGHT hostess since, and in 2016 was appointed the German National SIGHT coordinator. She has always enjoyed creating inspiring communities: in her hometown Essen she has arranged two amazing formats: "Chimney Talks", where she would suggest a topic she felt keen to discuss with eight-person groups diving into deep conversation. And "Open House", where she would open her house and garden two or three times a year for a huge picnic, often attracting more than 100 visitors who would bring food and drinks to share.

In 2011 she started commuting between Malta and her home country. After 10 years Malta became too crowded and noisy. Looking for a perfect spot she discovered the neighbouring island of Gozo, which has a true 'end-of-the-world' feel to it. You can only get there and back by boat or ferry from Malta, the main island.

As a true idealist Andrea works on making dreams come true: a 'Mashram' for meeting people from all over the world in a friendly holiday atmosphere! If the project is viable, i.e., if she does not suffer too much financial loss, the experiment might continue. If not, it was a wonderful attempt to realise a Mensa dream!

Facebook Group: Holidays in Malta (Gozo) with Mensans (693 members)
facebook.com
groups/2047032902121443
Email: andrea.schwelm.de@member.mensa.org

Mia Claes, Andrea Schwelm and TeeKay Kreissig

Pages From Mensa World Journal

European Mensa Science Camp

EMSC 2022 takes place from July 16 - 23 in the Czech Republic. Our international camp is based on team projects of the participants. They will work in groups on their own topics. Some projects are technically focussed - the participants can use 3D printers, computers, robots, programmable Arduinos, Raspberry Pi kits and other equipment.

Other projects are focused scientifically - participants have access to digital microscopes, pH measuring devices, digital thermometers, rangefinders, cameras, etc. Some participants can choose topics in the field of history, political science or arts.

All participants can join lectures on various subjects - technology, natural sciences, economics, history, geography, astronomy or chess. Our educational activities include excursions and a lecture at the Astronomical Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences.

We will spend a day in the historic centre of Prague. Participants can look forward to team competitions, solving ciphers, a knowledge quiz and other fun activities such as board games or swimming.

We look forward to seeing participants from all countries,

On behalf of the organisational team,
Tomas Blumenstein

More information at <https://bit.ly/EMSC22>

Tomas Blumenstein

Pages From Mensa World Journal

From The ExComm

Adapt. Enhance. Overcome.



In my last article, I told you about the plans I have to develop Mensa all over the world and how COVID was a big obstacle for this Argentinian to leave his country and perform his job. That is starting to become less of an issue, as restrictions loosen up in more and more countries and Argentina has more stable numbers on vaccines and new infections, so I won't address that topic today.

What I want to do right now... no, that is not correct. What I believe we NEED right now, is a call to action. Now that I have seen the innards of Mensa International, and how the cogs turn in every step of every process, I've found that we have a very small group of volunteers, with the same names appearing over and over again in every call, with almost no new members showing up. I'm 100% grateful for those volunteers and the work they have done and will continue to do, but I also believe that Mensa as a whole has become slow to react to the new needs of our membership, of our new national chapters, and of the new times we are living in. We are doing our best to adapt, improve and overcome, but we need new points of view, new ideas, and new ways to achieve better and faster results. And for that, we need to have more volunteers, with new names filling the new positions. For the sake of clarity, I'm not looking for a massive substitution, as I believe that anyone should work in Mensa all the time they want, as we always need more hands to support our ever-growing membership. What I believe we must achieve, is to enrich our knowledge base with new approaches, and I think that the best way to make that happen, is enlarging our volunteer list, perfecting our methods with new points of view, discarding what we know doesn't work and getting the best output possible.

During our recent ExComm meeting (our first in-person meeting!) we started taking steps towards that goal. It was obvious in the first second of our meeting that our different origins, cultural backgrounds, professions and approaches would bring new stuff to the table, and the way that happened was beautiful. We are already starting to change how we track our work, using IT tools very common in big companies (Jira, Trello, Power BI, etc.) but never used here. We are also working towards the goal of making Mensa International closer to our members, providing insights, making available proven and successful tactics and procedures from national chapters to solve common issues that we all have seen in our national groups.

And this is just the tip of the iceberg. We are talking about big changes that will make our work as volunteers more streamlined, more direct, and more visible for everyone. You voted for us, so you should have the possibility to see our work and measure it without delving into a sea of documents.

As I said before, my personal opinion is that we, as an association, have become slow to react, slow to change and slow to adapt. We can survive in this state as we always did, but I want more. I want bigger, better, faster. But I also believe that we have the needed permeability to change our ways. To learn and improve; to discard, and to enhance.

Pages From Mensa World Journal

I've seen this change starting at our ExComm meeting, and I would like you to see it too.

José Luis Martínez
International Director of Development.

What's In The MWJ This Month?

- José Luis Martínez, Mensa International's Director of Development hopes for members to adapt to and enhance our progress. Read his advice on p3.
- did you know you can make tiny diamonds without using explosives? P4 brings us the latest in this scientific research.
- world-acclaimed author, Mensan Antonella Gambotto Bourke, has written another book which will be released this month. Learn more about Antonella and her writings on p5.
- (cover story) American Mensan Mike Wacht is our Member Profile this month; he's put his photographic talents towards enhancing the lives of underprivileged Angolans. p7
- on p8, read about the Hubble telescope's find of a star that is the most distant single star ever detected in outer space - 28 billion light-years away from Earth!
- mine or ours? More recent research into the workings behind the brain's processes when making a choice - p9
- on p10, John Blinke brings us the latest in scientific news
- p11 - International Directory
- p12 - Therese's Teasers

Happy reading,
Kate
Kate Nacard, Editor

Read /download the full-colour MWJ at www.mensa.org

Kate Nacard, Editor

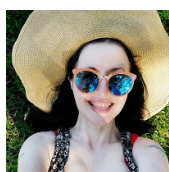
Pages From Mensa World Journal

Position Vacant

The role of Features Editor for the MWJ is vacant. The role constitutes contributing a monthly column of 500-600 words based on recent authoritative research into any aspect of intelligence. All references must be cited in the article submitted. All applicants must be members of good standing in their National Mensa.

Please send your application to mwjeditor@mensa.org

Mensan Author – Antonella Gambotto – Burke



“Woman as comestible. Woman as kingmaker. Woman as oblivion.”
Antonella Gambotto-Burke opens *Apple: Sex, Drugs, Motherhood and the Recovery of the Feminine* with a single question: why is our culture governed by the principle of separation?

Beginning with a devastating exploration of the 1960s, understood up until now as the era of female liberation, free love and the tribal sharing of drugs, Gambotto-Burke deconstructs the past two centuries and shows how we are, in fact, moving towards the age of the Nietzschean übermensch, one in which femininity will, if we do not change, be erased.

She skilfully draws together innumerable threads, from the shockingly personal to the broadest societal trends and cutting-edge scientific research, to construct a brilliant and startling thesis.

Anxiety, artificial wombs, brutality, the class system, depression, dieting, racism and other issues - including the first plausible theory for rubber fetishism and other “kinks” such as choking or breathplay – are explained within the context of the dominant cultural paradigm.

A devastating uppercut to a patriarchal ideology that has marred billions of lives, *Apple: Sex, Drugs, Motherhood and the Recovery of the Feminine* completely revises our understanding of addiction, art, crime, drug use, homosexuality, murder, pornography, sex, war, and, critically, the significance of birth, infancy and motherhood in relation to human existence.

Antonella is the author of *The Eclipse: A Memoir of Suicide* and *Mama: Love, Motherhood and Revolution*, among other books, and has contributed to a raft of international newspapers and magazines, including *The Sunday Times*, *The Telegraph*, *The Mail*, *Metro*, and others in England, where she now resides, and for various editions of *Arena*, *Elle*, *GQ*, *Harper’s Bazaar*, *Vogue* and so on. She also has a weekly literary column in the *The Weekend Australian*, and *The Mirror* (UK) recently included her in a select group of the world’s most inspiring women.

Pages From Mensa World Journal

Tatler described her as a novelist of “great sensitivity” and as having “a keen eye for satire, which she uses to great effect.” In *The Sunday Age*, novelist Matthew Condon wrote that reading her fiction is “like being unable to stop staring into the sun when you’ve been told that it damages your eyes,” and *Who* magazine described her as possessing “a major literary talent.”

Antonella is known for longform journalistic nonfiction, and her work was featured in *The Best Australian Profiles*. Her selection of interviewees is eclectic. She has interviewed cardiothoracic surgeons and film stars, authors and rock luminaries, artists and academics, fashion designers and royalty. Her subjects include Princess Haya bint Al Hussein, Bette Midler, Marilyn Manson, Sasha Grey, Nick Cave, Morrissey, Robert Smith of the Cure, Martin Amis, Neil Gaiman, Chuck Palahniuk and others.

Antonella first joined Mensa in 1987 while living in Cambridge, England. She returned from Australia to the UK (in 2017) with her teenage daughter and has a passion for clothes and music (she’s recently released her first album), but is passionate about, above all, writing. “I have a habit of turning my hobbies into work, which I do. Whilst I have written very silly pieces of journalism on occasion for fun, my great love is writing seriously,” she says.

The author of six internationally-acclaimed books, Antonella can be followed on:

<http://www.instagram.com/gambottoburke>

<http://www.facebook.com/gambottoburke>

<http://www.afmusiclondon.com>

Apple: *Sex, Drugs, Motherhood and the Recovery of the Feminine* can be pre-ordered through:

<https://www.bookdepository.com/APPLE-SEX-DRUGS-MOTHERHOOD-RECOVERY-ANTO-GAMBOTTO-BURKE/9781780667409>

Kate Nacard

Member Profile – Mike Wacht



American Mensan Mike Wacht has created a beautiful photo documentary of Angola, which is being used to raise funds for the Angolese people. His life story has many similarities to that of fellow African photographer, Uwe Neumann (of Mensa Germany), who was featured in the May, 2022 MWJ.

Mike, from Central Florida Mensa, was in both gifted and learning disabled classes in elementary school, because he tested as both highly intelligent and having severe ADD.

Born in 1962 in Atlanta, GA, Mike describes his childhood as a typical suburban upbringing. Dad was a finance professor at Georgia State University and Mom stayed home

Reprinted from the Mensa World Journal, June, 2022, issue 113, Editor Kate Nacard.

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to take care of their four children (Mike was second in birth order). Mike was a bit bullied growing up and retreated into the world of radio. He would practise talking like a radio DJ on old reel-to-reel tapes. The bullying stopped in high school (perhaps because Mike was now 6'2") and Mike got involved in audiovisual, science and speaking clubs, winning a regional extemporaneous speaking event. He honed his writing talents and got a job right out of high school as a summer reporter/photographer for the county newspaper.

Mike majored in journalism at prestigious Washington and Lee University, and was also very active in the college radio station, where he became known as the jack-of-all-trades who could do just about anything from producing programs to spinning records.

Ultimately, journalism wasn't a good career fit because Mike is an introvert who doesn't enjoy cold-calling people for interviews. He found a path in the field of communications, and became director of communications for the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church. Inside this job, Mike took a deep dive into photography.

In 2002, he was asked by a pastor to join a relationship-building trip to Angola, the West African nation that recently emerged from 40 years of war (17 years of war to achieve independence from Portugal, then another 23 years of civil war). The Methodist bishop wanted to cement the church connection he had with the Methodist Church of Eastern Angola.

January 2003 found Mike living with his fellow American visitors in Melange, and exploring displaced person camps, a local hospital (where Mike took photos of children dying of malaria and diarrhoea), schools, churches and the missionary complex.

The Methodist missionary complex included separate boys' and girls' schools, a hospital, a seminary, and several residences. At the centre was a large church. Many of these buildings had been severely damaged during the civil war. When Mike returned to Florida, he used his photos to create a documentary that he personally shows to churches and private groups to improve awareness of the situation in Angola and raise money for the Angolan Methodist mission. They also sponsored two Angolan youths to study at American universities. Mike left the Conference in 2005 but continues this work - showing his photo documentary wherever people are open to viewing it. The pandemic has put a crimp in Mike's travels, but he hopes this year to photograph the rugged beauty of Iceland.

Mike joined Mensa in 2013 and finds it a warm, welcoming place for a bright, artistic introvert. As is his style, Mike quietly helps out at Central Florida Mensa events, one of those unsung heroes who can be counted on to pick up any tasks that need to be done.

Susan Jensen



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