Neva-Mind

Northern Nevada Mensa
Volume 35, Issue 8, August 2011

It's time to decide!

Will this be <u>your last</u> paper edition?



"This was a cool art exhibit, with about 25 cow statues located randomly among the Knez Mihailova (the busiest pedestrian street in Belgrade.) Each cow is uniquely painted by a different artist." Julie Kriss

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UNR PROCTOR

The more complex the mind,
the greater the need for the simplicity of play.

Kirk, "Shore Leave," stardate 3025.8

Cover Credits *Julie Kriss*



My eastern European adventure began in Romania with four weeks of intense study, comprehensive research and exposure to a remarkable, awe-inspiring country of rich culture and distinct personality. Romania has everything — from travel in horse-drawn wagons to gothic castles and the largest parliamentary building in the world. When purchasing my airline tickets, I decided against a round-trip ticket to Romania. Instead, I chose to give myself 14 days to get from the center of Romania to the coast of Croatia — with no real plan or itinerary. That spontaneous decision led to an extraordinary adventure! My first stop was Belgrade, Serbia — brimming with insightful art and a conflicted consciousness of the past. The next step of my journey was to Bosnia-Herzegovina, where I fell in love with Sarajevo — a city that is healing from painful memories by rebuilding a bustling, vibrant metropolis. I finally made it to Croatia — a paradise within itself. Achingly beautiful coastline, so pristine that you fear it's all a dream. Sandy beaches, fresh fish, extraordinary sunsets... pure bliss, and the perfect way to end my journey. Each country I visited had something brilliant to offer, and my life was enriched with each experience I had. What adventure waits around the corner? Africa, Brazil, Moscow? I'll keep you posted...

A Note From the Editor

by Anna Wright

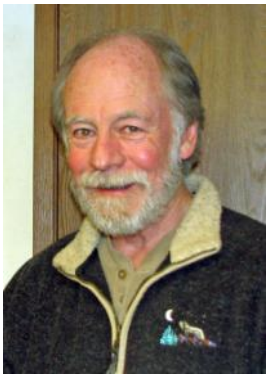


Meet Julie Kriss — university student, future educator, world traveler, and Mensan. We are fortunate to offer you both her photographs and her reflections from her recent Balkans trip in this issue. And, she will be our guest speaker at September's meeting. Join us then. Come hear more! (Julie's adventure begins on page 18.)

For all of you puzzle and game fans we are also featuring two offerings from our Puzzle Master, Travis McCord. His first is research on a hot new PC game and the other is a trivia challenge for gamers. (You can find these beginning on page 10.)

IT'S TIME TO DECIDE! Do you want your future editions of the *Neva-Mind* in print or by email? In our next issue, like most of American Mensa, we will be defaulting to electronic delivery. If you have not made your "edit profile" selection to "I prefer local mail," you may not receive a paper copy next month. Log in and let us know your wishes. Here's your URL: http://www.us.mensa.org/ Like anything else, there are additional options. (Please help us give you exactly what you want. Check out page 24. You have choices!)

From the LocSec *by Bob McAllister*



A Successful Landslide

A couple of years ago, our Northern Nevada chapter received a couple of recognition awards for some essays. A comment was made that it had been some years since we had been able to lay any claim to having been noticed.

The next year we, Chapter 8-893, received another acknowledgment — a notable chapter that had garnered some notice.

That would seem to have been our due. Our quota.

But, no!

Recognition is dispensed in the form of awards of recognition at Mensa AGs. During 2011's AG in Portland, we, Northern Nevada Mensa, 8-893, received a bit more recognition. It's not clear whether some sort of record may have been set and, yet, what happened was very impressive.

8-893 received national recognition to the tune of six separate instances! Six!

1. The Owl Award for Outstanding Newsletter [competition is nationwide]
2. Best Overall Entertainment [competition is nationwide]
3. Outstanding Newsletter (Small Group)
4. Best Continuing Item: Mensa For Kids! (and Kids at Heart) by Maurice Pollack and Anna Wright [competition is nationwide]
5. Best Puzzle: "It just Doesn't Belong" crossword by Anna [competition is nationwide]
6. Best Ice-breaker Activity: "Team Trivia" by Anna [competition is regional] Award is both a $50 gift certificate to Anna for Fox Imaging merchandise (formerly Mensa Boutique) and $1000 for Northern Nevada Mensa to be used to create a workshop/training session(s).

That last one was, in effect, bequeathed by the National Office for the purpose of creating a Leadership Development Workshop because they apparently feel that we have something to offer for the future.

Our newsletter and editorship received an impressive amount of national recognition.

It possibly could be said, "Not bad for a small (because we are small) chapter." After all, we're not like the big, thousands-strong New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco. We're only just under a couple of hundred. But, wait!

One of those awards is called the "Owl."

That's nationally the best; the most prestigious newsletter award nationwide! Our *Neva-Mind* got that!

We may lay claim to this, but only in sort of a vicarious sense. Our saying, "We won all of this." is sort of like saying of a favorite sports team that "We won," that "We got this," but really our Editor, Anna Wright is the to be one recognized.

893 is indebted to the dynamic Wright family. When being congratulated, regarding the plethora of awards for our newsletter, Editor, Anna Wright, deflected accolades, saying that she was merely a functionary who implemented the contributions of our membership. Anna was quick to give credit to others, for example, saying that our local Maury Pollack deserved some of it too (Congratulations, Maury, by the way — another unsung contributor.)



Please know, people, this deflecting of accolades is not a complete picture. Maury deserves individual credit for his contributions and, still, one need only to look at our newsletter (especially on line) to know that something special has been happening.

So I'd like to say "thank you, Anna" you have done good work and deserve credit. ■

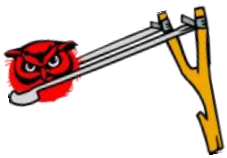
You can find a list of all of the PRP awards on this web page. http://www.us.mensa.org/recognize/groupawards/prp/prp-2010-present/prp-2011/

Notes from Your ExComm July 16, 2011

- Present were Bob McAllister, LocSec; Annemarie McTaggart, 1st Vice-Secretary; and Gerald Lockhart, 2nd Vice-Secretary.
- There were no new/old business items that required a vote.

⇒ New Event: A target-shooting day is scheduled for Tuesday, September 13 at Carson City's free municipal firing range. Details, including a rendezvous spot will be announced in the September *Neva-Mind*. Info: Bob McAllister, LocSec@northernnevada.us.mensa.org.

- Bob McAllister suggested that the group consider paying the testing fees for deserving or hardship cases, up to two per testing session. He said, "This would pay possible dividends in the long run in the sense that if we have more members, we would receive more National Office dispensation."
- Bob also suggested that the first NNM scholarship be named, "The Wright Thing."
- Meeting adjourned.



God gives every bird his worm, but he does not throw it into the nest. (Swedish)



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NORTHERN NEVADA MENSA RG 2011

http://northernnevada.us.mensa.org



A bird does not change its feathers because the weather is bad. (Nigerian)



August

5	**David Kaul**	Sparks
11	**Andrew Hickman**	Gardnerville
13	**Jill Doremus**	Carson City
13	**Dr. Keith Scott-Mumby**	Reno



Birthstone: Jade, Peridot

Flower: Gladiolus

Astrological Signs:

Leo: July 23 - August 22,

Virgo: August 23 - September 22



Elizabeth Morse, Reno
Willkommen, Bienvenidos, Chaire, Irashaimasu, Dobro pozhalovat', Bienvenue



No need to teach an eagle to fly. (Greek)



Catch a Falling Star!

by Bill Kositzky

Bill Kositzky will host a Perseid meteor-watching campout at Pyramid Lake Tamaracks beach starting Satruday, August 13 about mid-afternoon and ending Sunday, August 14 at 11 a.m. Bring whatever you like to eat and drink for as long as you would like to stay. Bring something comfortable like a towel or beach chair to sit on. The water will be excellent for swimming. Kites, Frisbees, and flotation toys are nice.

Your host will provide a campfire for roasting hot dogs and marshmallows. After dark we will see some shooting stars from the annual Perseid meteor shower. Permits for use of the beach should be purchased before arrival. The fee is $7 per vehicle for day use (good till sundown) and $10 per vehicle for camping overnight (good all day and till 11 a.m. the next morning.)

Permits may be purchased at the Pyramid Lake store (Pyramid Lake Highway about 2 miles before you get to the lake) and at the Terrible Herbst gas station on Pyramid Lake Highway and La Posada Road which is 6.3 miles north of McCarren Blvd.



Directions to Tamaracks Beach at Pyramid Lake.

- Drive North from Reno on Pyramid Lake Highway (445). It is about a 30-mile drive.
- As you approach the lake, you will come to a stop sign and see a sign pointing to Sutcliff to your left and Nixon to your right.
- Take the right turn toward Nixon.
- About a mile down this highway is a sign saying "Tamaracks Beach" and a dirt road, which goes to the lake.
- Turn left onto this road and travel about 0.75 miles to the beach. This dirt road has two forks between the highway and the beach. All the forks lead to the beach. Take all the right forks for the most direct route.
- When you first get to the beach (there is a porta-potty on your right near the entrance) get out of your car and walk around a bit to make sure you don't drive into some deep sand which lies to your right. You may see us right away or you may find us down the beach to the left past some bushes which overhang the beach road.

Two porta-potties are on site. There is no drinking water or electricity at the beach. Cell phone reception is sometimes possible, often not.

Bill Kositzky, (775) 329-6791, bkos@charter.net





Minecraft

by Travis McCord

So, given that this is the games issue, I thought I might say a few words about PC gaming, which is interesting in itself, since some cynics would claim that PC gaming is all but dead, its audience (and the game makers) having gone over to consoles and now iPhones and tablets. Part of that is understandable, especially if you've ever had to deal with a compatibility problem — you don't see those in console gaming.

But PCs have the advantage of a thriving “indie” market — games created outside of the triple-A games industry, often by small groups, for a fraction of the cost of one big, well-hyped game. Because of that, they're often less refined but more creative than the typical game. As an example, imagine if I told you about a game that:

- is very much still in beta (i.e., unfinished and buggy — which often shows);
- is basically about digging stuff up and building stuff with the blocks you dig up;
- has a bizarre aesthetic where everything is square or cubical, including the player;
- has very little advertising behind it, instead relying on word of mouth; and yet
- at the time of this writing has sold over 2.7 million copies.

You might say that sounds very strange and it is. It's a game called Minecraft. From the Minecraft wiki:

“Minecraft is a sandbox construction game … The game involves players creating and destroying various types of blocks in a three dimensional environment. The player takes an avatar that can destroy or create blocks, forming fantastic structures, creations and artwork across the various multiplayer servers in multiple game modes.”

From the Zero Punctuation review of Minecraft:

“(Minecraft is) really a creativity toy that just happens to include monsters. And frankly, I can't think of a better way to improve a creativity toy…”

From Extra Credits:

“Minecraft is the quintessential example of the simple but deep mechanic. It's got more ways to play the game than the most complicated strategy game or JRPG, but it does it all based on simple core principles.”

A short description of Minecraft is: a game where you dig up (or otherwise harvest) materials in a computer simulation of a natural environment and use them to build things. The basics are relatively easy — dig, place, repeat — but as anyone who created with blocks as a kid knows, these kind of basics and imagination can go anywhere.

When you start up a single-player game, the first thing you do is create a world, which only takes a few seconds. (In a multiplayer game, this has been done for you on another machine, and you simply tell Minecraft where it is.) The game will then deposit your avatar in this world. When you look around you will probably be able to see grass, mountains, possibly oceans or rivers or deserts, maybe even lava flows — most of which are made of cubes. Almost everything in Minecraft is made of cubes.

You start out in the game by punching trees.

No, really. You punch trees.

Punching the trunk of a tree will eventually give you a smaller version of the section of trunk you just punched which you then pick up. (And, it's worth noting that the rest of the tree obligingly stays suspended in mid air until you punch the rest of the trunk into pieces. In fact, the game's physics are fairly wonky in general: you can make a 1-square column to the sky, build a wildly unbalanced structure at the top that would give building inspectors nightmares, then remove the support entirely, and it will all stay put, floating in midair. But I digress...) The next few steps are: split the wood you just got into boards (you can do this yourself), use the boards to create a crafting table, split a few of your boards into sticks, use the crafting table to create a wooden pickaxe, and then start digging.

If you're in survival mode — the one with the monsters — then you search for coal, make some torches and then hole up somewhere as the sun goes down so that the monsters don't get you. You may have seen the game's signature antagonist, the Creeper, as the symbol for the game. The Creeper is a mottled green thing that's about the height of your avatar. If you play a game with monsters, this guy will quickly earn your anger and fear, since 1) he sneaks up on you utterly silently until he's right next to you, whereupon after a second of hissing 2) he explodes, taking out a big chunk of your health and possibly a big chunk of whatever you were building at the time (when he blows up on dirt he leaves behind a crater 6-8 meters in diameter). Of course, he's not alone... the bad guys also include zombies and skeleton archers that come out at night (and burn up in sunlight) and gigantic jumping spiders.

If you're in creative mode, however, you can keep digging through the night, collecting materials to build your ultimate structure. You keep digging up the cubes the game world is made of; when you do, most of them turn into a smaller version of the cube which you can then pick up. (Some of them get changed—for example, stone becomes cobblestone.) You can then stick the cube onto another cube, whereupon it becomes normal size again.

When I mentioned "your ultimate structure" earlier, I wasn't really exaggerating... you can do a search on Google or YouTube for Minecraft and check out what other people have put together in their game worlds: replicas of famous buildings and vessels both real (the Taj Mahal, the Reichstag, the Titanic) and

(Continued on page 13)

Games:

Q1: The earliest known board game that's still played today is:

A: a 5500-year-old Egyptian game
B: a 2300-year-old Chinese game
C: a 1800-year-old Aztec game
D: a 1400-year-old Persian game
E: a 1000-year-old Japanese game

Bonus: Two of the “wrong” answers above refer to something games related, while a third is literary. Identify them.

Q2: The "Landlord's Game", patented in 1904 but played for many years earlier, was determined to be a direct ancestor of what more famous game?

Q3: The first basketball games were somewhat slower than modern ones not because of something that was missing, but because of something extraneous. What?

Q4: What famous sci-fi author wrote Little Wars, all about playing war-games with toy soldiers in your living room?

Q5: Speaking of war games, in the early 1970s a group of war-gamers were playing a variant called Braunstein, in which instead of a unit each player would control a person in a small town before the battle. Rather than the usual shooting and marching they had a plethora of options, with the outcome moderated by the guy running the game. This would be a huge inspiration for…

Q6: Match these games to their ages as of this writing (June 2011):

Games:	Ages:
the "Classic" Game of Life	51
Dungeons & Dragons	39
Paintball	37
Pong	33
Space Invaders	30

Answers on page 25



A chattering bird builds no nest.
(Cameroonian)

Q7: And, since everybody expects a music puzzle from me…
Match these songs to their performers and release years.

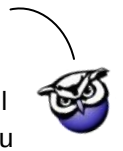
Music Time	ABBA	1965
Game of Love	Alan Parsons Project	1969
Games People Play (x3)	Chris Isaak	1975
Games Without Frontiers	Crystal Method	1977
Name of the Game (x2)	Joe South	1980 (x2)
Play the Game	Kansas	1981
Play the Game Tonight	Peter Gabriel	1982
Wicked Game	Queen	1984
	The Spinners	1989
	Styx	2001
	Wayne Fontana and the Mindbenders	

(Minecraft continued from page 11)

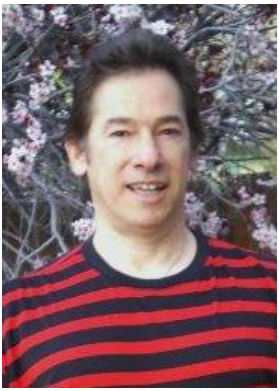
fictional (Rapture from Bioshock, the Starship Enterprise), statues and images of video game characters and web memes, even actual computer circuitry. The game allows for simple circuitry using the fictional substance "redstone," and a few folks have already used it to put together things like ALUs and even simple calculators. (For the record, that's building a simulation of computer circuitry inside a computer simulation of nature, which is utterly ridiculous.) The "model" of the Enterprise is worth talking about because of its scale — it's assumed the cubes you're working with are 1-meter cubes, so the project's creator was able to use the deck plans available to create a 1:1 scale model within the server. Of course, he had a few people helping him do the actual building.



It's this creative-mode building play that accounts for most of the good press that Minecraft gets. You could, in theory, put together anything you can think of that you can build out of 1-meter cubes. If you want to just build, there are mods (modifications) that will let you create the materials you need out of thin air. Without those, you need to find the materials you want to use by, say, digging up stone and dirt, chopping down trees, locating and smelting ore, processing raw materials into building materials, *et cetera*. Several teachers are already using Minecraft in their classrooms — everyone can learn basic computer use, younger children can learn spatial relationships, older children can learn planning, prioritization, and risk management (especially on a server with monsters, where they balance the risk of venturing far from “home” with the potential rewards of more and better building materials), and everyone can learn the value of cooperation. ■







Program Listing *by Richard Arbib*

August Monthly Meeting

Saturday, August 20 at 5 p.m.
Miniature Golf and Pizza at Wild Island in Sparks

This is a great place to go for miniature golf and pizza. You can play 18 holes for $6.50 or 36 holes for only $7.50. The weather should be perfect at this time. We'll meet inside the restaurant area of the Coconut Bowl (also on the Wild Island property) at 5 p.m. Once everyone has arrived, we'll go to the miniature golf course next door and decide whether to play 18 or 36 holes. Afterwards, it's pizza inside the Coconut Bowl. If that's not enough for some, there is also an indoor miniature golf course lit by black lights, a bowling alley, and racing go-karts you can drive on their racetrack outside.

Location: 250 Wild Island Court in Sparks
Directions: Take Interstate 80 east. Take Sparks Blvd. exit and turn left (going north). At the light (Lincoln Way), turn right then make another right on Wild Island Court.



September Monthly Meeting
Saturday, September 10
Speaker: Mensa member Julie Kriss
Topic: Slide show of her trip to Romania
Hosts: Ken and Anna Wright
Location: Fallon

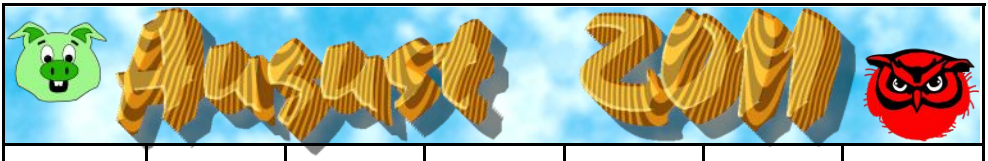
<u>New</u> Carson City Lunch or Supper Group

Interested? Call Jean (775) 841-2625

Supper Club: August 16 Supper Club will be at John's Oyster Bar in the Sparks Nugget. There is a street door immediately outside the restaurant. Meet at 6 p.m. outside the bar at the restaurant. No host.
For more info contact Anne at: maytheroad@gmail.com



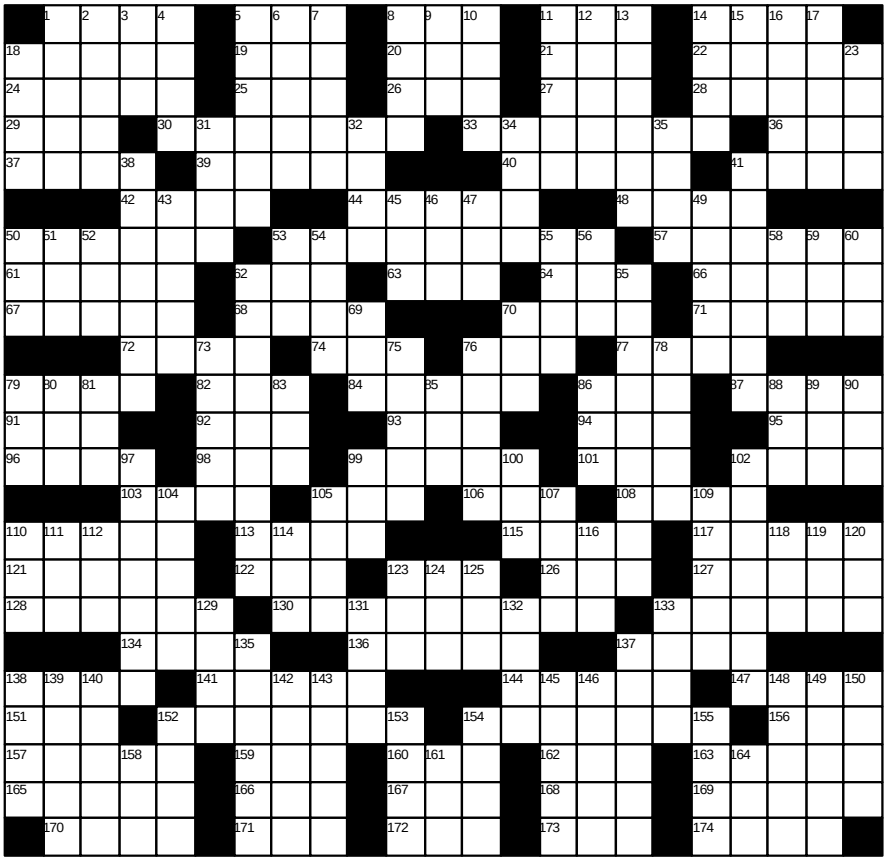
Game Night at Joe's Place: Saturday Aug 6. Potluck. 4:30 until 8:30 p.m. 1047 Table Mountain Court, Sparks. Contact: Joe (775) 338-6521 or joe_kisenwether@hotmail.com.



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6 Testing & Games
7	8	9	10	11	12	13 Catch a Falling Star Campout
14 Catch a Falling Star Campout	15	16 Supper Club	17	18	19 	20 Mensa Meeting
21	22	23 Lunch Bunch	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	Sept 1	Sept 2	Sept 3 Games

Lunch Bunch: Today's most popular app is "Angry Birds." Join us at Famous Dave's (4925 Kietzke Lane at McCarran) where you can create your own $9.99 Angry Bird Special: BBQ or Buffalo wings (how can they shoot in slingshots?) or St. Louis-style spareribs (kill the pigs!) or even Georgia chopped pork. Tuesday, Aug 23, at 11:45 a.m. Restaurant phone: 826-RIBS (7427) Need more info? Contact Don or Laura: (775) 826-5904.

Mensa Admissions Testing: Saturday Aug 6. 10:00 a.m. until noon. **Grassroots Book Store**, 660 East Grove Street, Reno, (775) 828-2665. For information contact Mindy Hsu Testing@northernnevada.us.mensa.org.



COLLECTION AGENCY

ACROSS

1 Reeled
5 Crony
8 Alias
11 Time zone
14 Flying mammals
18 Dish
19 Wing
20 Bro. or sis.
21 Bullfight cheer
22 Marry secretly
24 Alleys
25 Drunkard
26 And so forth
27 Travel term
28 Climbing plants
29 Snacked
30 Electronics brand
33 Unclear
36 Space
37 Bark
39 Board game
40 Result
41 Magdalene
42 Vilify
44 Snow athlete
48 Gait
50 Dress top
53 Larks
57 Poorly
61 Cain's eldest son
62 Duo
63 U.S. econ. indicator
64 IBM Competitor
66 Trees
67 Geico spokesman
68 Nurture
70 With 15-down, *Forty Thieves* hero
71 Hotel chain
72 Crazy
74 Tavern
76 Glee
77 Exploiter
79 Turtles
82 Abrade
84 Dukes
86 Shade tree
87 Wound covering
91 Vane direction
92 Sign lang.
93 Day of the wk.
94 Exec.
95 Wrath
96 Court
98 Fast plane
99 Pimpled
101 Resort hotel
102 Buzzards
103 Smart
105 Car speed
106 Yank
108 __ mater

110 Greyhounds
113 Adjoin
115 Ms. Moore
117 Side note
121 Asian country
122 Delivery serv.
123 Turf
126 Not (prefix)
127 Singers
128 Dissuades
130 Learned
133 Minstrels
134 Priggish
136 Very fat
137 Protective covering
138 To incite
141 Indy competitor
144 Vigorously
147 Prow
151 Mutt
152 Blankets
154 Cats
156 Tobacco
157 Bores
159 Fuel
160 Time period
162 Whales
163 Imitating
165 Bears
166 Palter
167 Aurora
168 Make do
169 Tart
170 Squirrels
171 Cease
172 Snakes
173 Japanese money
174 Fringe

DOWN
1 Candidates
2 Experts
3 Shoshonean
4 Vipers
5 Possums
6 Hawaiian 'hello'
7 Dead language
8 Troubles (2 wds)
9 Tools
10 The alphabet
11 Witches
12 Narrow openings
13 Mad Hatter's need
14 Beauties
15 With 70-across, *Forty Thieves* hero
16 Island nation
17 Pointed weapon
18 Enact
23 See
31 Off-Broadway award
32 Pear type
34 Lotion brand
35 Improve
38 Porcupines
41 Reminiscences
43 Sound of a sneeze
45 Cask
46 Lodge
47 Sixth sense
49 Jewels
50 Grovel
51 Only
52 MD
53 Marvel
54 Borax
55 Asian nation
56 Apprehend
58 Govt. agcy.
59 WWII landing vessel
60 Still
62 Bridal clothes
65 Hurt (2 wds.)
69 Regret
70 Jitney
73 Rhinoceroses
75 Cookies
76 Cars
78 Minnows
79 Clams
80 Sayings
81 Lease
83 Deli order
85 Salmon
86 Relay for Life org.
88 Spies R' U.S.
89 Biblical Boat
90 Quilters
97 Least difficult
99 Clever
100 Washout
102 Rinse (2 wds.)
104 Hummingbirds
105 Think
107 Heredity component
109 Large
110 Acid
111 Leer
112 Ornament
114 Tempo
116 __ Squad (TV show)
118 Note of debt
119 Immerse
120 Before
123 Bawl
124 Lode yield
125 Insult
129 Ride the net
131 Daybreak
132 Zebras
133 Color
135 Geese
137 Overburdened
138 Fifth book in the New Testament
139 Erect
140 Mistake
142 Islands
143 Went gently
145 Sulky
146 Arose
148 Collectable
149 Mountains
150 Nervous
152 Pallid
153 Ooze
154 Actors
155 Evaluate
158 Reno-Tahoe Intl. abbr.
161 French king
164 Paper

Answers on page 26

Julie Kriss, graduate student at the University of Nevada, Reno College of Education, participated in the "Research in Romania" program this summer with three other Nevada students and two University of Texas students. They will be helping the educational system in Romania get up to speed on teaching students with disabilities, teaching English to students with hearing impairments and other students, learning research methods and conducting research, and taking evening classes. Julie is working on a Master of Education degree in Special Education, with a particular interest in students who have Autism Spectrum Disorders.



Botanical Gardens in Cluj, Romania

My Blog

by Julie Kriss

I consider myself to be a life-long traveler. For the past 15 years I have traveled, studied, lived and been employed around the world. When I came to Romania, in addition to the opportunity to experience a new culture and country, my objective was to observe and gain knowledge about Romania's educational system. Unlike the other students on this trip, my focus is Special Education and I was excited to gain knowledge, observe teaching methods for educating students with special needs, and make new global connections in the field. I was primarily interested in how the Romanian approach to Special Education compared / contrasted to the approach in the U.S.A.

My first introduction to the special needs community occurred when our group was invited to visit the St. Mary Center, which is a small, privately-funded center for adults with developmental delays. These adults, who have a range of intellectual or developmental delays, spend each week day at the center, planning and practicing musical performances, participating in art and music therapy, spending time on the computer, learning basic life skills and creating beautiful crafts to be sold in their downtown shop. For our visit, the program participants had prepared a wonderful presentation, including acting, singing and dancing. After the performance, we were given an impressive tour of the facility.

In Romania, students with medium to severe learning difficulties do not attend ordinary educational institutions. Instead, they attend special schools, according to their specific disabilities. During the past several weeks, I have spent a great deal of time at *Scoala Ajutatoare* nr. 1 (Special School #1), which is a school for students with mild to moderate disabilities. In addition to observing the interaction between students and teachers, my colleagues and I also spend time teaching the students various songs and games in English. We also spend considerable time answering the endless questions that the students have about life in the U.S.A.!

As *Scoala Ajutatoare* nr. 1 is only for students with mild to moderate disabilities, I was invited to a different campus last week, where students with Autism Spectrum Disorders and more severe disabilities attend class. This school had the most profound impact on me, and I was extremely impressed. What I observed at this school provided me with an entirely new view of the Romanian education system.

The particular classroom I visited was for 6th grade, and consisted of five students with varying levels of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Their teacher is well educated and is full of creative ideas, various methods and information about educating students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Her classroom is bright and cheerful, filled with artwork, colorful pictures, manipulatives, large desks, a "comfy spot" with couches, floor pillows and stuffed animals. The teacher gave me a tour of the classroom and explained how each aspect of the room aided in the education process for her students. She also explained her various methods for achieving maximum success in teaching her students. For example, rather than modify a general lesson plan into a single one that could be applied to students with different needs, she modifies lessons for each individual student, based on their particular abilities. She does this for every worksheet, assignment and activity. A surprising bit of information is that this teacher has taught this particular group of students for five years. Each year, they progress to the next grade as a group with the same teacher. New students come and go, but the majority have been with her since 1st grade. As a result, she has developed deep bonds with each student and their families. Watching her classroom function was not only informative; it was inspirational, as well. I picked up a variety of methods that I hope to integrate into my own future classroom.

In reflection of my experience with Special Education in Romania, I must give the advice to never make assumptions. Although I was originally unsure as to what to expect, what I found was a group of dedicated, knowledgeable teachers who are determined to provide the best education to their students. When I began talking to teachers, I was initially shocked to discover that not all teachers share the view of inclusion, which is the majority opinion of Special Education in North America. Many Romanian Special Education teachers are happy with the "special school" system. They don't feel that their students receive an inferior education. On the contrary, they feel that the special schools offer the students all of the resources they need to find success. For example, the school I visited had 160 students and ten speech therapists. In the U.S.A., some areas are lucky if they have three speech therapists in the entire district. This humbling experience has led to the realization that I had been looking at the Romanian education system through my own lens and forgot the most important rule of cross-cultural relations: Just because something is different from what you are used to, does not mean that it is wrong. ■

Postcards from the Balkans *by Julie Kriss*

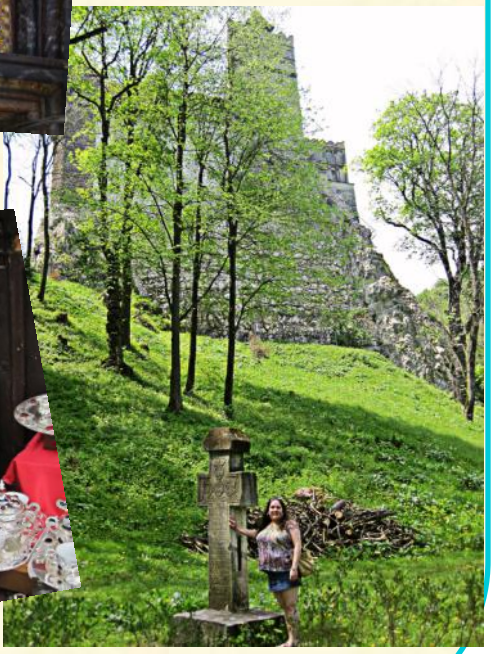


Sarajevo



In the Piata Sfatului, Brasov, Romania

Dracula's castle in Bran, Romania





Bascarsija Turkish Quarter - Sarajevo

Knez Mihailova, Belgrade





Old Town / Dubrovnik



Lokrum Island / Dubrovnik



Lopud / Elaphite Islands, Croatia

Mensa for Kids!

(and kids at heart) by Maurice Pollack and Anna Wright

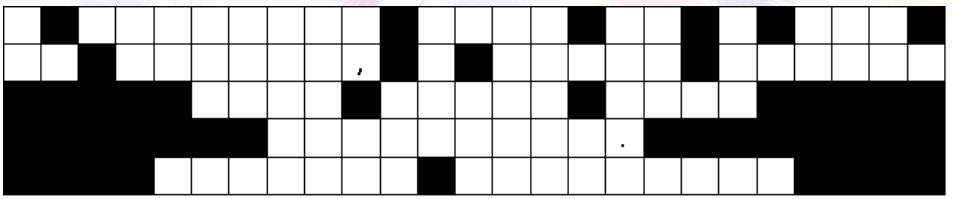


Answers on page 25.

6	-	2	-		-3
-	■	X	■	+	
	+		X	4	29
X	■	-	■	+	
	X	3	+		11
-3		7		19	

Math Square: Use the numbers 1 through 9 to fill the grid so they will equal the answer in the margins. Each digit is used only once.

Fallen Phrase. This quote was made by a famous American aviator just before his death in 1974. Find the quote by using the letters directly below the blank squares. Each letter is used only once.



z e d e
l o s e t L i s t f g
a h a v l e p l h a t u b d r
l e h h a r e r b i a w o d l e a n a h h d
t o r c C o i a i d s l r n n s l h r l h t a e r

Two new lesson plans have been posted at www.mensaforkids.org/teachers; you can also access them through the Parent/Teacher Resources section of the Mensa for Kids Web site, www.mensaforkids.org.

- "I Need a Hero," for high-school students
- "Understanding the Influence of the Media," for 8th graders

Since these plans are designed to be completed with minimal supervision, they serve as independent coursework either in the traditional classroom or outside it. You can view the course materials online and download complete copies to hand to your favorite gifted student.

GRAFFITI GALE

Anna Wright

the *a bird* hand = the *2* bush



your *a feather* cap





In *pigging*

get all your *duck duck duck duck duck* …



high eating *hog*

a *a pig* poke



pig's *in* eye



pearls *swine*





A bird does not sing because it has an answer. It sings because it has a song. (Chinese)

It's time to decide!

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Thanks!



You can cage a bird, but you cannot make him sing. (French Jewish)

Graffiti Wall:

A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.
Love birds
A feather in your cap
Naked as a jay bird
Madder than a wet hen
Pigging out
Get all your ducks in a row.
The early bird catches the worm.
Eating high on the hog
A pig in a poke
In a pig's eye
When pigs fly
Sing like a canary
Pearls before swine
Lame duck

Games challenges answers:

Q1: A. Senet is roughly 5500 years old.

Bonus: B is Go; D is Chess; E is the first modern novel, “The Tale of Genji”
(C is Patolli, the first American board game; it's not commonly played, since it was suppressed by the Conquistadors.)

Q2: Monopoly.

Q3: They used a peach basket which, like most baskets, had a bottom, which forced the players to retrieve the ball with a ladder when someone scored.

Q4: H. G. Wells.

Q5: Dungeons and Dragons, and the concept of role-playing games in general.
(Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson, who created D&D, played Braunstein.)

Q6: “Classic” Life: 1960, 51 years old.
Pong: 1972, 39 years old
D&D: 1974, 37 years old
Space Invaders: 1978, 33 years old
Paintball: first organized tournament June 27, 1981, 30 years old

Q7: Bit of a trick here...
Music Time: Styx, 1984
Game of Love: Wayne Fontana and the Mindbenders, 1965
Games People Play: Joe South, 1969; The Spinners, 1975; The Alan Parsons Project, 1981
Games Without Frontiers: Peter Gabriel, 1980
Name of the Game: Abba, 1977; Crystal Method, 2001
Play the Game: Queen, 1980
Play the Game Tonight: Kansas, 1982
Wicked Game: Chris Isaak, 1989

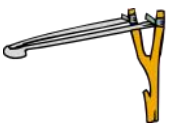
Old birds are hard to pluck. (German)

Math Square

6	-	2	-	7	-3
-	■	X	■	+	
9	+	5	X	4	29
X	■	-	■	+	
1	X	3	+	8	11
-3		7		19	

Fallen Phrase:

I	■	r	e	a	l	i	z	e	d	■	t	h	a	t	■	I	f	■	I	■	h	a	d	■
t	o	■	c	h	o	o	s	e	,	■	I	■	w	o	u	l	d	■	r	a	t	h	e	r
■	■	■	■	■	h	a	v	e	■	b	i	r	d	s	■	t	h	a	n	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	a	i	r	p	l	a	n	e	s	.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	C	h	a	r	l	e	s	■	L	i	n	d	b	e	r	g	h	■	■	■	■	■	■

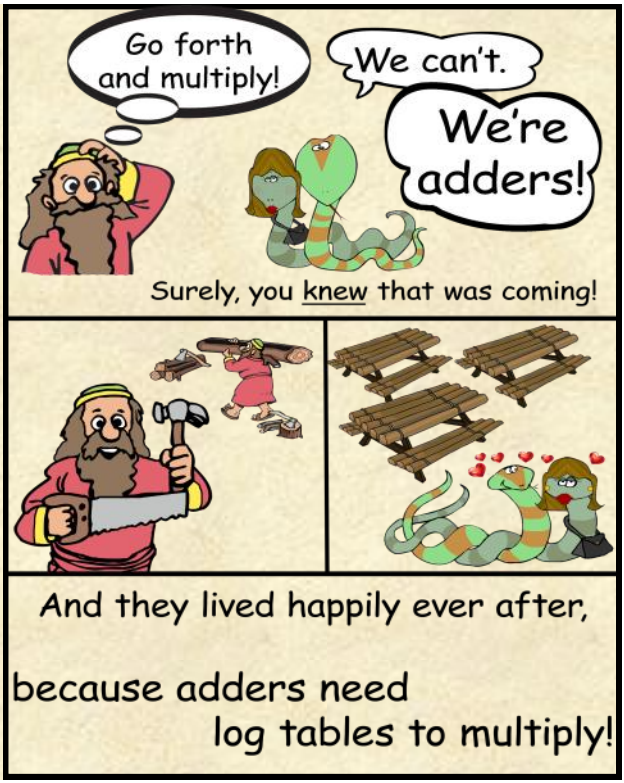




COLLECTION AGENCY

■	S	P	U	N	■	P	A	L	■	A	K	A	■	C	S	T	■	B	A	T	S	■
P	L	A	T	E	■	A	L	A	■	S	I	B	■	O	L	E	■	E	L	O	P	E
L	A	N	E	S	■	S	O	T	■	E	T	C	■	V	I	A	■	V	I	N	E	S
A	T	E	■	T	O	S	H	I	B	A	■	S	K	E	T	C	H	Y	■	G	A	P
Y	E	L	P	■	B	E	A	N	O	■	■	■	E	N	S	U	E	■	M	A	R	Y
■	■	■	R	A	I	L	■	■	S	K	I	E	R	■	■	P	A	C	E	■	■	■
B	O	D	I	C	E	■	A	S	C	E	N	S	I	O	N	■	L	A	M	E	L	Y
E	N	O	C	H	■	T	W	O	■	G	N	P	■	M	A	C	■	C	O	P	S	E
G	E	C	K	O	■	R	E	A	R	■	■	■	B	A	B	A	■	H	I	A	T	T
■	■	■	L	O	C	O	■	P	U	B	■	F	U	N	■	U	S	E	R	■	■	■
B	A	L	E	■	R	U	B	■	E	A	R	L	S	■	A	S	H	■	S	C	A	B
E	N	E	■	■	A	S	L	■	■	T	U	E	■	■	C	E	O	■	■	I	R	E
D	A	T	E	■	S	S	T	■	A	C	N	E	D	■	S	P	A	■	W	A	K	E
■	■	■	A	C	H	E	■	M	P	H	■	T	U	G	■	A	L	M	A	■	■	■
L	E	A	S	H	■	A	B	U	T	■	■	■	D	E	M	I	■	A	S	I	D	E
S	Y	R	I	A	■	U	P	S	■	S	O	D	■	N	O	N	■	C	H	O	I	R
D	E	T	E	R	S	■	M	E	M	O	R	I	Z	E	D	■	T	R	O	U	P	E
■	■	■	S	M	U	G	■	■	O	B	E	S	E	■	■	R	O	O	F	■	■	■
A	B	E	T	■	R	A	C	E	R	■	■	■	A	M	A	I	N	■	F	O	R	E
C	U	R	■	A	F	G	H	A	N	S	■	C	L	O	W	D	E	R	■	W	A	D
T	I	R	E	S	■	G	A	S	■	E	R	A	■	P	O	D	■	A	P	I	N	G
S	L	O	T	H	■	L	I	E	■	E	O	S	■	E	K	E	■	T	A	N	G	Y
■	D	R	A	Y	■	E	N	D	■	P	I	T	■	Y	E	N	■	E	D	G	E	■

You cannot prevent the birds of sorrow from flying over your head, but you can prevent them from building nests in your hair. (Chinese)



Anna Wright

with apologies to the mathematically sensitive.







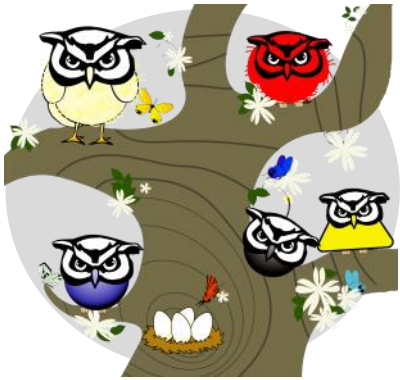
Mensa-Speak *What are we saying?*

AG	Annual Gathering (Conference)
AMC	American Mensa Committee (National Elected or Appointed Officers)
AML	American Mensa Ltd. (National Office Employees)
ExComm	Executive Committee (Local Elected Officers)
LDW	Leadership Development Workshop
LocSec	Local Secretary (Local President)
M/Ms	Mensans
MERF	Mensa Education & Research Foundation
MIL	Mensa International Ltd.
NNM	Northern Nevada Mensa
PRP	Publication Recognition Program
RG	Regional Gathering (Conference)
RVC	Regional Vice-Chair
SIG	Special Interest Group
SIGHT	Service of Information, Guidance and Hospitality to Travelers
WG	World Gathering (Conference)



Photo by BKOS

June Lunch Bunch sending warm greetings to Ed Hanley who is working in Winnemucca.



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