NEVA-MIND



Neva-Mind, Northern Nevada Mensa
Volume 36, Issue 2, February 2012

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MEMBERSHIP
SCHOLARSHIP
UNR PROCTOR

A Note From the Editor

by Anna Wright



Welcome to February!

We've packed lots of wonderful items for you in this edition. Just look:

- A closer look at *Snowflakes* by our LocSec, Bob McAllister (page 4)
- A special article: *Groundhogs*, about a special Mensa couple by Loren MacArthur (page 6)
- *Hiking Mt. Whitney* — with pictures! by new contributor Frank Bursick (Welcome Frank!) (page 8)
- A special "Help Wanted" item from local Mensan, Brian Underdahl, at Vermillion Road Press (page 19)
- A scholarly article about *The State of Gifted Education in America's Public Schools* by Kathe Oliver of Oregon Mensa (page 22)
- And curiously, *Whatever Happened to?* by Ken Wright (page 25)

And, of course, our regular features:

- Happy Birthday and Welcome! (page 12)
- Puzzles (pages 13 and 16)
- Calendar events and programs (page 14)
- A note from Debra Reiger, our Region 8 RVC (page 18)
- Mensa for Kids! and Graffiti Wall (page 20)
- (The ExComm did not meet in January.)

There's something for everyone! Enjoy!

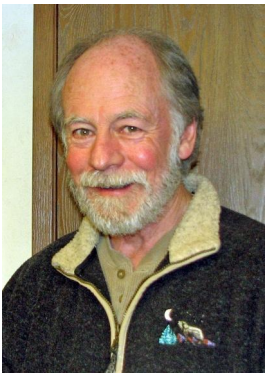


CultureQuest®

Northern Nevada Mensa: Get Your Game On!

Every year, teams from all over the country compete in Mensa's Culture Quest®. Every team takes the same quiz at the same time. We'll meet on the afternoon of April 29, right here at home. The test takes about an hour and a half. Sign up now! For more info, contact Anna editor@northernnevada.us.mensa.org

From the LocSec



by Bob McAllister

Snow Flakes

We live in an area that has its share of snow — not yet this season, though.

Many who live in our snowy part of the winter's world have been in the snow a good deal and still have never seen typically hexagonal snowflakes.

They come in many designs, all of which are predicated on that hexagonal form. It's often said that, as in fingerprints, no two are alike. That's not necessarily so. If two were to be found identical, it would be exceedingly rare. Freezing water, or water vapor, tends to crystallize under the right conditions. This is usually in atmospheric conditions. Water vapor comes from the sea (salt), from rivers and lakes (different parts of the world with concomitant particulate "contaminates.")

Different forms of hexagonal crystallization occur at different temperatures.

When water freezes, it expands. There is a four degree "expansion" area. As objects become cold, they contract. Water, at the freezing point, stops contracting .

That it is less dense at that temperature is what keeps water from sinking as it becomes ice. Were this not so, all our water would become more bound up in the polar regions and sink, leaving new water to sink until all water becomes ice.

Water does other odd freezing manifestations in snowflake formations. Though snowflakes are all based on hexagonal expressions, they appear in different manners:

From 32 to 25 degrees Fahrenheit, they are expressed as hexagonal plates.

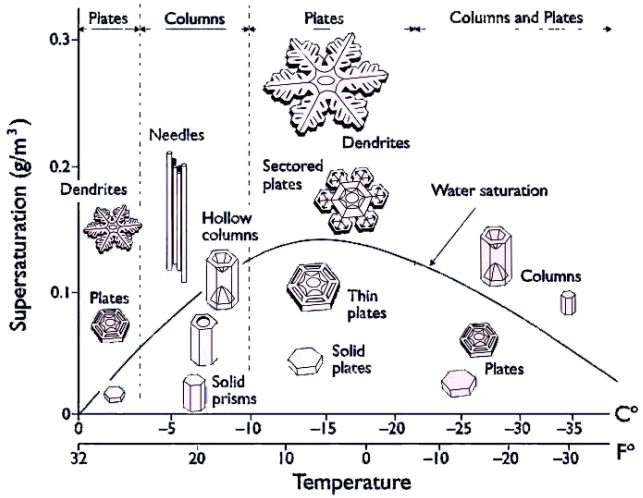
From 25 to 21 degrees F, they appear as needles.

From 21 to 14 degrees F, they are hollow (hexagonal) columns.

Then, from 14 to10° F, they are sector plates.

And, finally, from 10 to 3° F, they become dendrites (lacy hexagonal shapes.)

This all is dependent on the extent of humidity, as well as particulate matter present. Water from the water droplets, either in clouds or merely in the atmosphere, evaporates and the water vapor then condenses on the growing snow crystals. As the snow falls there is a net flow of water from the liquid state (cloud droplets) to the solid state (snowflakes). There are a lot of dynamics in snowflake development, hence the seeming infinite variety from a simple hexagonal start. There are three-sided and twelve-sided snowflakes. They are all predicated on the hexagonal genesis.



http://www.its.caltech.edu/~atomic/snowcrystals/primer/primer.htm
SnowCrystals.com was created by Kenneth G. Libbrecht, Caltech

Artificial snow is another story, altogether. It is ice droplets, not snow crystals — just as snowflakes aren't likely to be encountered in the freezer section of your refrigerator.

Though we may not have noticed the intricate variety of ice crystal expression, it has been noticed for a long while. As far back as the early 1600s before microscopes and continuing to the present, inquirers as disparate as astronomers, philosophers, mathematicians to nuclear physicists have been curious about the nature of snowflakes: Johannes Kepler, astronomer; philosopher and mathematician René Descartes; Robert Hooke; Wilson Bentley (1865-1931) American farmer and snow crystal photomicrographer; and Ukichiro Nakaya, nuclear physicist. (Further items of interest about these science luminaries can be found at http://www.its.caltech.edu/~atomic/snowcrystals/earlyobs/earlyobs.htm.)

Recently, an article appeared in the local Reno Gazette-Journal about John Hallett, a semi-retired at scientist Nevada's own Desert Research Institute who has made great strides in researching ice in the upper atmosphere with applications relevant to everything from aerodynamics to atmospheric dynamics.

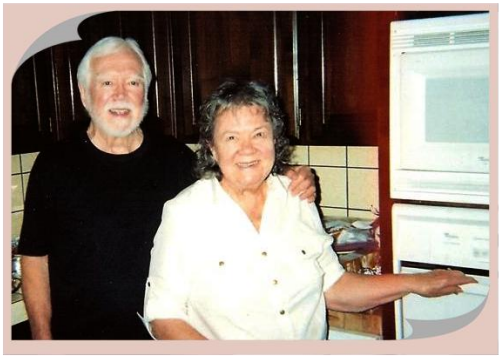
All of this water reflection is, in a round about way, to reflect on the taken-for-granted phenomenon of water. Our economy is pretty much irrevocably in the clutches of a petroleum-based paradigm. We could live without it. Certainly not in the manner to which we have become dependent. We cannot at all live without water. Our exploding population's demands for water will determine our future political directives, not oil.

Our demands on water will come vastly to outstrip our ostensible need for oil.

(Continued on page 24)

Groundhogs

by Loren MacArthur



On Groundhog Day, February 2, we'll find out if Punxsutawney Phil, the groundhog pundit, says we'll get six more weeks of winter. On Groundhog Day 60 years ago, Don and Laura MacGregor of Reno were celebrating a totally different ceremony. They were getting married. Groundhog Day 2012 will find them aboard a ship sailing to Mexico as they celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary.

The MacGregors, well known in Mensa for their sponsorship of the Lunch Bunch, say their romance didn't get off to a storybook beginning. Both were students at the University of Michigan. "There was a ratio of five men to one woman at the university after World War II," Laura said. "I was dating 20 different guys. When Don called to invite me for a coffee date, I didn't know who it was. He said we'd both been at a fraternity party. When he came to pick me up, I thought, 'Who the hell is this?' I didn't remember him at all. The date was pretty bad. He smoked. I didn't."

Don persisted. "I'd go out with him Sunday evenings," she said. "I saved Saturdays for my other dates."

"She never said 'no.' Don said. "She just said 'okay.' She was a freshman at the age of 16 with a full four year academic scholarship, two years behind me. I had the same."

It all changed the next year on the night of the M-Hop, the university's popular annual dance held in a hall so big "there are two bands. If you're at one end of the hall, you can't hear the other band," said Laura, by then a sophomore. "That's when I fell in love."

The custom in the Forties was to "pin" your girl (pin your fraternity pin on her dress) — a major romantic moment in a girl's life. "Don told me his pin was on a shirt he'd taken home for his mother to wash and that I should ask him for it later so he wouldn't forget to give it to me. 'What's this?' I thought. 'This isn't very romantic.'" But Don showed he understood a little about romance when he showed up with his fraternity brothers to sing the *Sweetheart Song* under her second story dormitory window with a large cardboard replica of the pin in front.

"He wanted to marry in September," said Laura, but my family was poor; and

I wanted a proper wedding, the flowers, the photographer. We all did, back then. I knew I'd have to earn the money to pay for it so we agreed to wait and marry the day after he graduated from college. His last final was February 1, 1952, and we married the next day. That's how we got to be Groundhogs."

"I married the prettiest girl on campus," said Don. "I knew I wanted to marry her as soon as I started dating her."

Sixty years later, having celebrated one anniversary by visiting Punxsutawney to watch Phil emerge from his burrow, reared four children, retired from successful careers, and moved from New Jersey to Reno in 2005 to be near their children, the MacGregors pause to consider when asked what makes a successful marriage.

"A lot of it has to do with friends," said Laura. "We've had friends for 30 or 40 years into marriage. When you grow up in a group like that, there's so much support."



"Marry the right person," added Don. "You've got to have a family. Without kids, you're probably going to stray."

"It's called commitment," said Laura, "and you've got to have a sense of humor." ■



Double your fun! The Annual Gathering and Colloquium are presented together in Reno beginning July 3.

Hiking Mt. Whitney

by *Frank Bursick*



I am a member of Northern Nevada Mensa although I haven't participated in any gatherings or meetings. As I enjoyed your "Road Trip: Manzanar" in our *Neva-Mind,* I was reminded of my hike up Mt. Whitney last August.

My hiking group made our initial decision to climb Mt. Whitney during one of our weekly outings last summer. Then we did much research, preparation, and training. We are from Reno/Sparks and our group leader Dave submitted our permit application last February for our original group the "Whitney 11." We felt lucky that we were able to get our first choice of dates for our hike. Several alternate dates we submitted were earlier in July and I think the snow was a bigger factor at that time. A few of the original group dropped out for various reasons and we recruited some outstanding replacements.

Spring in Reno arrived later this year because of the huge snow pack and this delayed our opportunity to hit the trails. My training consisted of 9 trips to a very nearby Galena Park and 4 climbs up nearby Mt. Rose (elevation 10,776 feet). Those switchbacks in Galena Park are excellent training. One day after reaching the top of the switchbacks, we went down and climbed them again. I know our group had an advantage because Reno's elevation is 4,500 feet and my house is at over 5,000 feet. Also I started dieting in early June and lost 15 pounds — less weight to carry up Mt Whitney.

I started carb loading a few days before our hike and at the advice of my doctor I loaded up with Ibuprofen starting two days before we left. I had ask him for some Diamox but he said the altitude would be no problem but that my biggest problem would be my aching knees and hips (My wife and I are both 60.) So he refused to prescribe it and he was right.

After spending the night anxiously trying to sleep in our motel in Lone Pine we met at the trailhead at 3 a.m. While waiting for some of our group we were entertained by a bear at the trailhead not 30 feet from us. He was not aggressive and finally wandered off when someone shooed him away. We were finally under way at 3:20 a.m. Three members of our group were still *enroute* from their motel in Bishop about an hour away. We didn't wait for them, (1) because they're always late (Scott), and (2) because they are the fastest and strongest of our group.

As we progressed up the trail my wife and I quickly fell behind the rest of the group. Twice we caught up as they rested and waited. I remarked, "I thought our

Whitney pace was going to be slower than our regular pace," but I was wrong. So my wife Bea and I often reminded each other to keep our own pace to conserve our energy. We had lots of snacks — M&M's, mini Snickers bars, small Cliff bars, and several packets of GU energy gel. As advised, we hydrated and fueled our bodies regularly. We each also carried two sandwiches each. Bea carried 3 1/2 liters of Gatorade and I carried 3 3/4. We did refill on the way up at Trailside Meadows where we finally caught Dave as he was filtering water. Scott, Michelle, and Kyle passed us a little after sunrise and they made the summit in a little over 6 hours.

I found the stretch between Trailside Meadows and Trail Camp especially difficult — a relentless climb. I had been looking forward to the 97 switchbacks and was not disappointed. We crossed the running spring water around switchback 23 and were at the cables sooner than I expected. As we neared the top of the switchbacks I could see people up at Trail Crest and was elated when we arrived there. As we passed the John Muir Trail junction we noticed that many hikers had left their back packs at this junction. Soon after that Bea decided to leave her pack and continue with her bottle of water and side pack of snacks. After that she increased her pace and I had to ask her to slow down. She was wearing me out.

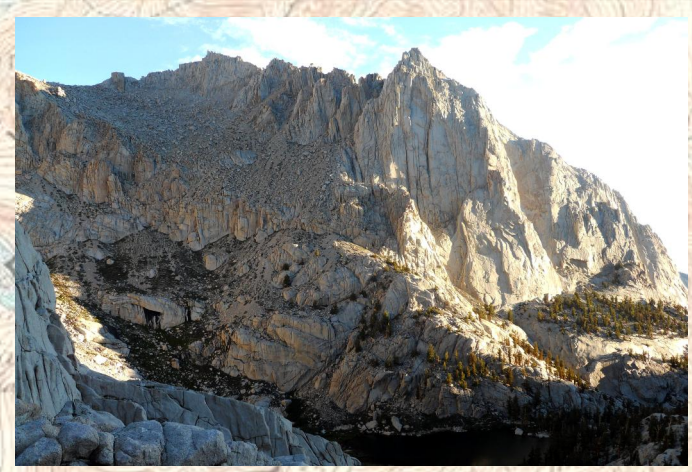


Bea (my wife) on the switchbacks

Our group had name tags that I had made and many people asked "What's with the name tags?" Some even called Dave by name. All the water crossings were easy, no need to get wet, and the snow was not much of a factor. We found no snow on the trail or on any of the switchbacks, only a fairly short snow field close to the summit where there was a narrow path about 3 feet deep.

We summited at about 12:20 p.m. for a 9 hour ascent. (We had hoped for 8 hours up and 6 hours down.) All but one of our group was on the summit so we all celebrated and soon Dave also arrived — all 11 of us had made it. I had a sandwich and some snacks. The altitude did not seem to affect me at all. In fact I felt great at the summit. I know I often felt more exhausted after some local hikes. All our training had paid off. We soon left. Dave, Bea, and I were together for the entire descent. We refilled our water bottles at the springs on the switchbacks; we did not bother filtering and the water was ice cold and tasted great. I felt good most of the way but about half way down I started feeling the fatigue and those last 2 miles from Lone Pine Lake seemed to never end. Around 8 p.m. we had to put our headlamps on again and we arrived back at the trail head around 8:30 p.m. — 7 1/2 hours to come down. ■

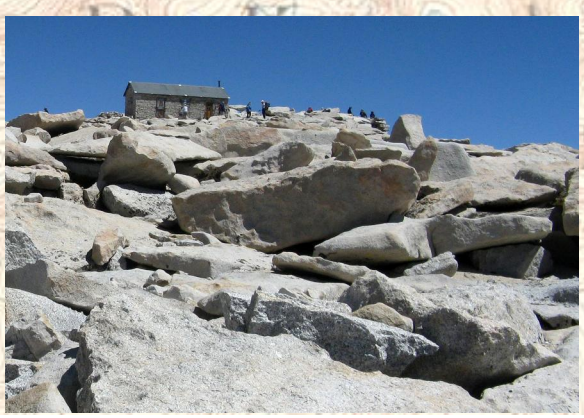
Photos continue on page 10



Mt. Whitney



Trail Crest



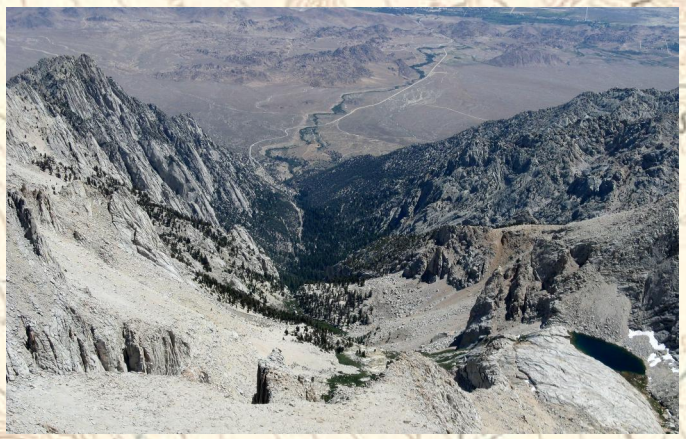
Summit (Smithsonian Hut)

Want to know more about this hike, or just contact someone else who also likes to hike?
Contact: Frank Bursick
franklincarter@charter.net



Mt. Whitney

View back down the valley to Lone Pine, CA



Take a peek. You can also watch his trip video here: http://vimeo.com/28565779

Alpenglow on Wotan's Throne



Background is
1907 map of the area.

Happy Birthday!





3	Peter Boyum	Reno
8	Howard Chen	Reno
13	Frederick Jones	Yerington
17	Judith Crillo	Reno
20	Leslie Williamson	Gardnerville
22	William Mainland	Portola
24	Randal Peterson	Reno
26	Carole Preisach	V.C. Highlands
27	Lynn Hendricks	Carson City

Welcome!



David Alley, Reno
Peter Boyum, Reno
Judith Crillo, Reno
Nico Aguilero, Reno

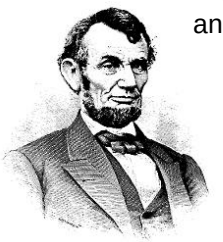
Willkommen, Bienvenidos, Chaire, Irashaimasu, Dobro pozhalovat', Bienvenue

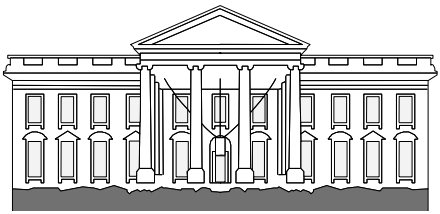
Presidents' Day Salute

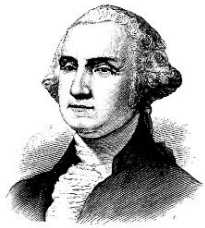
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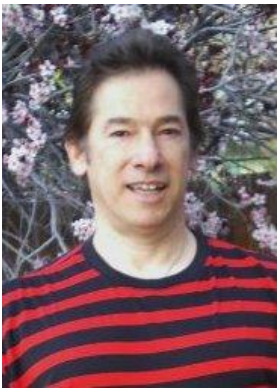
You've known their last names since your school days. But, can you remember them all without a list? They're all here. Names can be spelled in any direction and duplicate names (i.e. Adams and Adams) are listed twice.







Answers on page 27



Program Listing

by Richard Arbib

February Monthly Meeting

Saturday, February 11 at 6 p.m. sharp
(Eat at 6 p.m., speaker at 7 p.m.)
Speaker: Richard Arbib
Topic: "How I Published My Book and How You Can, Too."

Location: Famous Dave's BBQ Restaurant, 4925 Kietzke Lane, Reno 89509, between South McCarran and South Virginia Street. Famous Dave's has great barbecue. We ate here before and everyone liked it.

"How I Published My Book and How You Can, Too" by Richard Arbib

Since this month is Valentine's Day, it's most appropriate for me to talk about how I published my romantic novel, *The Vampire Girl Next Door*, at this month's meeting. However, I won't really be going into detail about how I wrote it or how you can write a novel, but rather, how I published it and how you can publish your own book through self-publishing. If you've written any kind of book or are thinking about writing a book, the advice I'll be giving will save you money in getting your book out and maximizing the royalties you'll receive once it's published.

Among the things I'll be talking about:

- Why you should consider self-publishing over traditional publishing.
- Why you need your book available as both a softcover and an ebook.
- Who has had success with self-publishing.
- How to pick a publisher and a cover artist for your book.
- What you can expect to pay for their services and what you can expect in royalties.
- What you can do to publicize your book.
- Where your book will be sold.
- When you should publish your book.

The website address is: www.thevampiregirlnextdoor.com

Supper Club (6 p.m.)

Tuesday, February 21. Bavarian World, German Cuisine (and bakery!), 595 Valley Road, Reno. Wunderbar!

Contact Anne maytheroad@gmail.com

Lunch Bunch (11:45 a.m.)

Tuesday, February 28. To celebrate during February, we've used U.S. presidents as the theme and located Fuddrucker's at 1655 E. Lincoln Way in Sparks!

Contact Laura or Don at 826-5904.

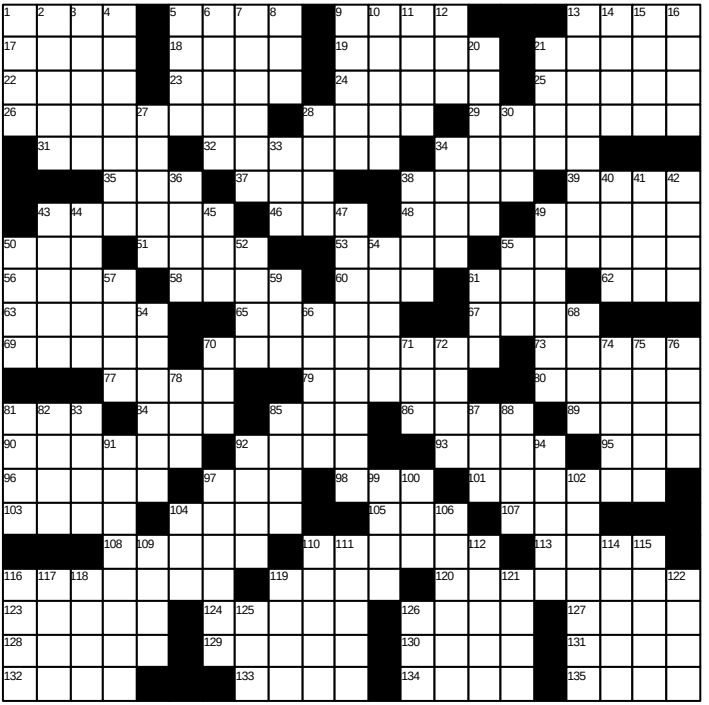
FEBRUARY

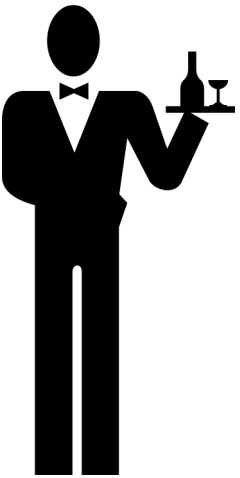
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Game Night at Joe's Place: Saturday, February 4. 4:30 to 8:30 p.m. Potluck. 1047 Table Mountain Court, Sparks. Contact: Joe (775) 338-6521 or joe_kisenwether@hotmail.com.			1	2 Groundhog Day 	3	4 Game Night at Joe's
5 Super Bowl XLVI 	6	7 Jewish Tu B'Shevat	8	9	10	11 Mensa Meeting
12	13	14 Valentine's Day 	15	16	17	18
19	20 Presidents' Day	21 Supper Club & Fat Tuesday 	22 Ash Wednes-day	23	24	25
26	27	28 Lunch Bunch	29 Leap Day!	March 1	March 2	March 3 Game Night at Joe's

Next Mensa Meeting: Saturday, March 10 at the home of Loren MacArthur, 6240 Stone Valley Drive, Reno. Potluck. Bill Kositzky will present a slide show of his photography taken at Burning Man 2011.

Thank You, Jeeves

by Anna Wright





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ACROSS

1 Pant
5 Smart
9 V.P.'s boss
13 Bolted
17 Car
18 Blessing

19 The Baxter's comic maid

21 Reflection
22 Support
23 Infant
24 Assent

25 Housekeeper for the Jetsons

26 Lobes (2 wds.)
28 Afloat
29 Begun
31 Move effortlessly
32 Bawled
34 Side note
35 Doze
37 Nix

38 In service to Captain Hook

39 Type of star
43 Ruffle (2 wds.)
46 Stiffen
48 Charged particle
49 Real estate
50 Awful
51 Celt
53 Future chicks
55 Ships
56 Little Mermaid's love
58 Lock openers
60 Closest star
61 Disconnected
62 Child
63 New Testament book
65 Opposite of avant-garde
67 Retired persons association (abbr.)
69 Rush

70 Jack Benny's valet

73 Goofed
77 Loosen
79 Turn out

80 Waitress on *Cheers*

81 Point

84 Manservant to the Hart's

85 Kimono sash
86 Otherwise
89 Asian bird

90 Author Defoe's famous "right hand man"

92 Muffin ingredient
93 Vend
95 Possessive pronoun
96 Boca ___
97 Henna
98 Zulu time
101 Graduates
103 Upon
104 Britt Reid's valet and driver
105 Goddess
107 Before, poetically
108 European river
110 Two-dimensional
113 Oaf
116 Hoss, Ben, Adam, and Little Joe's cook
119 Deed
120 Understood
123 Gives off
124 Burp
126 With 4-d "practically perfect in every way" governess
127 Prefix for half
128 Smears
129 Indian prince
130 Secondary
131 Valet and assistant to young Frankenstein
132 Tier
133 Ore origin
134 Engage
135 Throw off

DOWN
1 Yawn
2 Halos
3 Large billed bird
4 With 126-a
5 Reduce (abbr.)
6 Layers
7 Arthur's acerbic valet
8 Vane direction
9 Stage
10 Got angry
11 Jewish scribe
12 Behold
13 George and Louise's flippant maid
14 Final
15 Canal
16 Title
20 Decrease
21 High School senior
27 Accumulate
28 Competent
30 Equal
33 Vast
34 Biblical prophet
36 Oberon's impish servant
38 Omen
40 Lodes
41 Refuse to sign a bill
42 Part of PTA (abbr.)
43 The Von Trapp family governess
44 Revises
45 *Raven* author
47 Limiting
49 He maintained stately Wayne Manor
50 *Little Women* woman
52 Misprint
54 Approximate
55 Agriculture club (abbr.)
57 Fetching
59 Pouch
61 Paddle
64 Tar
66 Biblical Queen
68 Formal
70 Tyrannosaurus
71 Day of the wk.
72 Snaky fish
74 Synthetic fabric
75 Boredom
76 Beloved
78 Voice
81 70's Hairdo
82 Persia
83 Baseball glove
85 Dunking cookies
87 Ocean
88 Fashion magazine
91 Stoop
92 Computer memory unit
94 Tall manservant to the Addams family
97 Hazard
99 Beef
100 Weight unit
102 Songlike
104 Relation
106 African expedition
109 Boo
110 Nut
111 Woodworker's tool
112 Less cooked
114 Alpha's opposite
115 Previews
116 Cuts
117 Neglect
118 Conduit
119 P.O.W. cook for McHale's Navy (TV)
121 Ilk
122 Filth
125 Male sheep
126 Vel.

Answers on page 26



From the RVC *by Debra Reiger*

Hello Region 8 members, and happy new year (I'm writing this in January).

Here is a quick Mensa story from my personal life. My new year's resolution for 1991 was to get out and do new things, at least one new thing a week. Well, the first local Mensa event in January was a potluck brunch. I was a little shy about it because I didn't know many Mensa people, despite having been a member for nearly a decade. It was so easy and fun; I met many friendly Mensa people and had a great time. That made it easy to keep doing something new each week. As an added bonus, the stranger who answered the door was a friendly and quirky single guy whom I later married (it's been 18+ years now). I can't guarantee you romance or good food for Mensa events, but those things do happen. Here's the good part: there are plenty of very smart and often quirky people that are just plain fun to be around.

If you are an inactive member, I hope you will give your local group, or a nearby group, a try. If you don't find events that resonate with you, most groups are eager for someone to step up and schedule/plan something new. Mensa life can be fun and has been rewarding for so many members.

Remember to check the national web site for updates, a calendar of events across the country, games and puzzles, and useful information. I find it very helpful. www.us.mensa.org. If you don't have a password or user name, you can get help by calling 1-800-66MENSA. Hint: you can use your member number as a user login.

The Oregon Regional Gathering will be the 1st weekend in May. I have always enjoyed it and I hope to see you there!

Best regards,
Debra Reiger, RVC 8

Oregon Mensa Presents:

Oregon Mensa BeaveRG XIV

May 4, 5, 6, 2012
Red Lion Inn, 1021 NE Grand Avenue
Portland, OR 97232 — (503) 235-2100
Portland, Oregon
W. Brewster Gillett, RG Chair
Stephen Darnell, Registrar

Support Your Local Mensans:

Reviewers Needed!



Local Mensan and long-time member Brian Underdahl seeks readers to review three of the books that he currently e-publishes at his company, Vermillion Road Press (www.VermillionRoadPress.com). All three of these books were also written by Mensans. The books are available only in e-format; they are not available in paper form. (By the way, free reader apps are available in two formats — it's not necessary to have an actual Kindle or Nook device.)

→THE FINE PRINT: Only one version of each book is available free to be read (the first to ask will get the book), and the reader must agree to author a book review. Are you interested? The *Neva-Mind* will also print your review as a service to our readers.

The three titles are:

I Hate to Criticize, But... Professional Writers and Broadcasters Are Murdering the English Language, by Gordon K. Andersen, former *Mensa Bulletin* editor and SOTS founder. Gordon is well-known in Mensa and his book is a must for anyone who cares about language.

Threadbare, by Darlene Underdahl, is an intriguing narrative of escape, understanding, and forgiveness set in the Scandinavian communities of Northern Minnesota. It contains sex, violence, religious con men, and is most definitely not the Lake Woebegon of Garrison Keillor! Darlene has been a Mensa member for over 30 years.

The Sociopath of Carson City, also by Darlene Underdahl, is the story of greed, drugs, sex, attempted murder, and the IRS as the good guys. Is it really fiction?

Please contact Brian at (www.VermillionRoadPress.com).■

Prior Evidence — The Easy Way to Join Mensa!

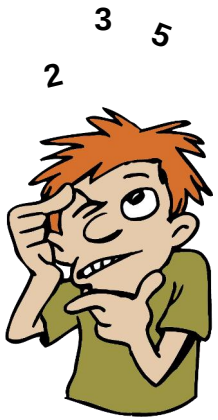
Do you have a friend, colleague or family member who should be in Mensa? Prospects can receive $10 off a prior evidence (PE) review through February 29. To get this discount, prospects should put the promotion code WPE-896 on their applications. Most children who are in a gifted or magnet program at school have been given a test that could qualify them for Mensa. Two other groups where there may be people with easy access to PE are those in law or business schools (the LSAT and GMAT, respectively). All they need to do is submit those scores to start the admission process.

Get them started here: http://www.us.mensa.org/join/testscores/

Mensa for Kids!

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

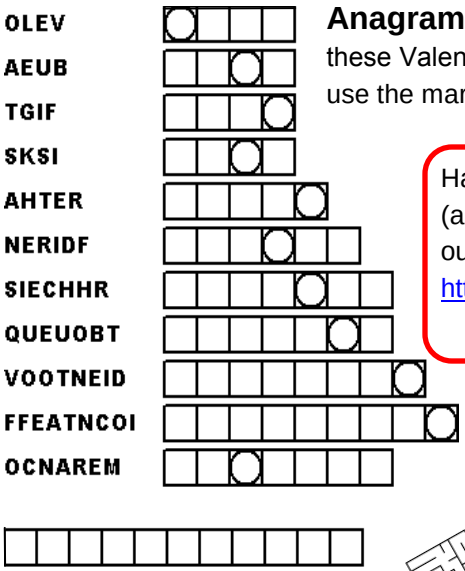
Calendar Conundrums:



A. The year 2011 was a prime number. This year 2012 is obviously not a prime number, because it is divisible by a smaller number. But, there is still something special about 2012. Geronimo Jones wonders whether you know what that is.

B. Geronimo knows that every number that is not prime, has smaller numbers "hidden" in it, that divide into the given number. At least two of those smaller numbers are prime, and are called "prime factors." For example the number 6 has two prime factors; 2 and 3, because 6 = 2 x 3. And for the number 60, the unique prime factors are 2, 3 and 5, because 60 = 6 x 10 = (2 x 3) x (2 x 5) Geronimo wonders if you can find the unique prime factors of 2012.

C. The next leap year is 2016. Can you find the unique prime factors for 2016?

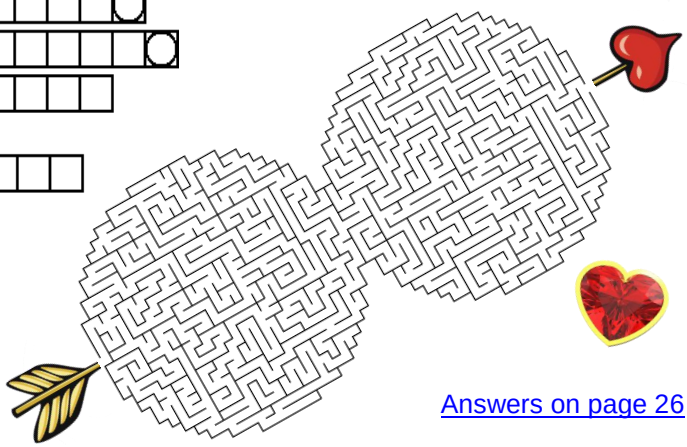


Anagrams Double Puzzle: Unscramble these Valentine's Day vocabulary words. Then use the marked letters to form one last word.

Have you ever noticed how beautiful bugs (and other small animals) can be? Check out this photography on the web: http://www.aimishboy.com/wonderland.html

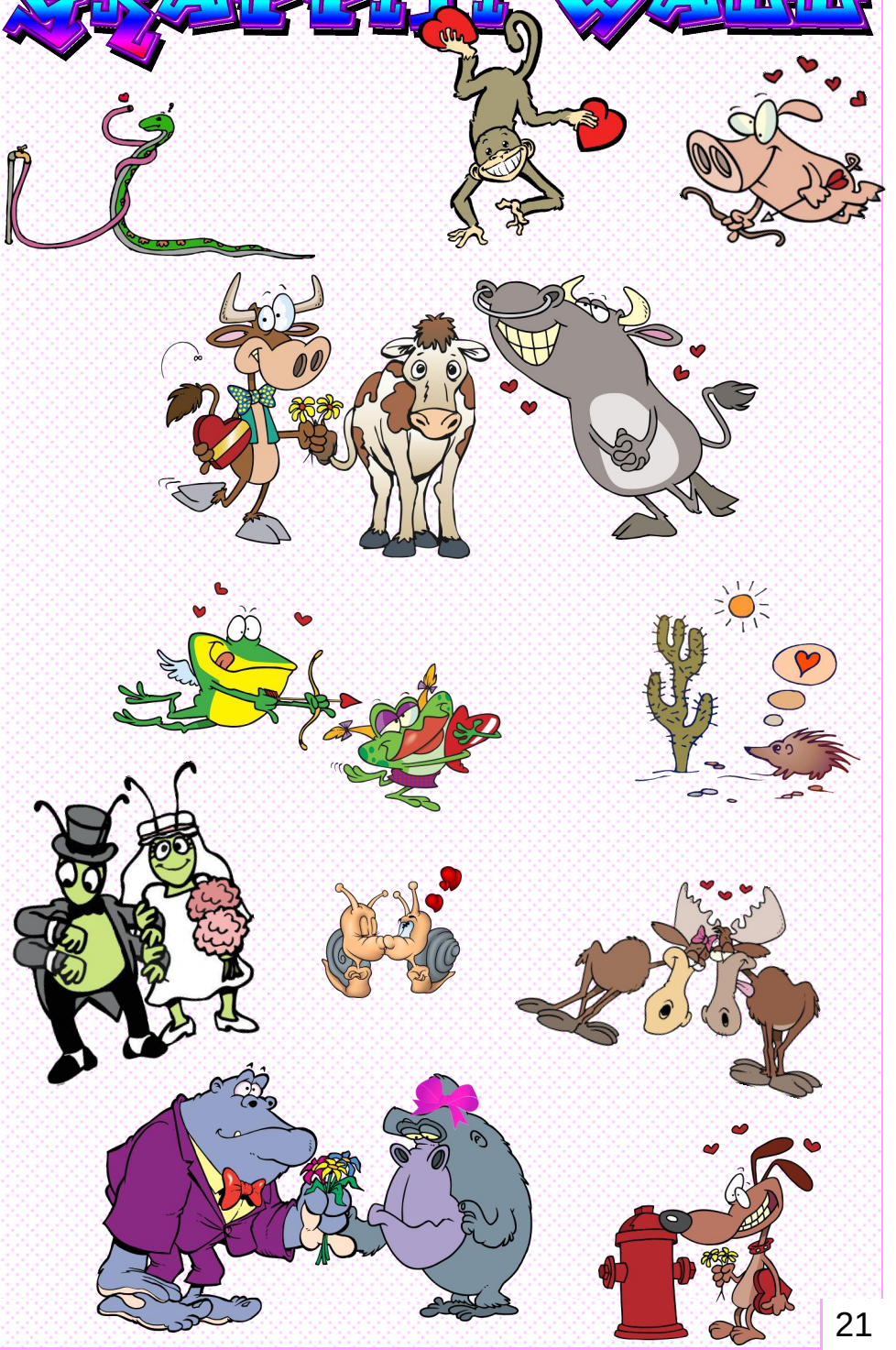
Link thanks to Anne Stewart





Answers on page 26

GRAFFITI WALL



The State of Gifted Education in America's Public Schools *by Kathe Oliver*

Education is a popular topic of conversation. Everyone has their own expert opinion on the topic because of their experiences as a student, and many people have experience as parents or teachers. Too often discussions and analysis bog down in anecdotes. People know their own experiences, but how close to the norm are they? What are the facts?

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) and the Council of State Directors of Programs for the Gifted decided to break through the anecdotal evidence and find the facts on gifted education in the United States. They joined forces to produce "2010 - 2011 State of the States in Gifted Education: National Policy and Practice Data", a unique compilation detailing the state of gifted education in the United States.

Information was gathered from answers submitted by state education agencies (SEAs) to a 175-question survey. Most of the questions were in a multiple choice format, but there were also opportunities for extended responses.

Forty-four states and one territory (Guam, henceforth included in the states for the sake of simplicity) responded to the questionnaire. They didn't all answer every question. In some cases, states said that they did not collect requested information.

Several major areas of concern appeared in the answers. They told of limited accountability accompanying decentralized decision-making, limited service options, and the importance (and lack) of professional development opportunities. The answers showed basic agreement on concerns about federal education law, and on financial shortfalls.

For most parents, the key questions in the study deal with the legal status of gifted education, and TAG (talented and gifted) student identification and services. Here is a summary of the responses on those topics. All of the data tables referenced below are available at http://bit.ly/uGXaAk.

Fourteen states reported that they have no legal mandate for gifted education, while 31 states said that they do have one. A summary of the data is available in Table 12. Of the states with a gifted education mandate, 28 require identification of TAG students, and 26 require service after identification. Twenty-four states require both, while four require identification but not services, and two require services without specifying identification.

Forty-one states reported having their own definition for giftedness, in addition to the federal definition. Links to the definitions are in Table 11*. Forty of those states answered a question about the areas included in their definitions. The most common category was intellectual giftedness, specified by 36 states.

Other categories included creativity and leadership. The criteria are shown in Table 15*.

"State of the States in Gifted Education" confirms TAG identification problems noted in earlier studies. Whether students are identified as TAG is dependent upon where they live, and upon both state and school district policies. There is no national consistency, and only limited consistency within most states.

Identification of TAG students is required by 28 states, but only 19 states said that all of their school districts actually identified TAG students. Three of those 19 responses came from states which do not mandate identification. Follow up questions are needed for clarification.

The percentage of students who are identified as gifted varies widely. Twenty-nine respondents reported percentages ranging from 1.7% in West Virginia to 22.3% in Guam. See Table 17* for more information.

Twenty-six states responded to questions asking how many TAG identified students received educational services. Three states said that they supplied services to more students than were identified as gifted, and 17 said that they served all identified TAG students. Of the remaining six states, Ohio (which mandates identification but not services) reported helping 20% of eligible students, Hawaii (with no mandates) reported serving 60% of eligible students, and the remaining four states answered 80%.

The highest rates of gifted educational services are reported in grades 3-5. Many states provide no services for TAG students until second grade. Available services run the gamut from boarding schools for students with a specific strength to mainstream classroom differentiation.

Funding for gifted education varies wildly among the states. Only four of the 31 states with TAG education mandates fully fund them, while 19 offer partial funding and 5 have unfunded mandates. Three states did not answer the question. Unsurprisingly, money problems were the most commonly cited source of weakness in TAG education, just as in other areas of public education.

Accompanying the negatives, there are positives in "State of the States in Gifted Education." It shows ways in which gifted education is expanding, as well as problems that are widely recognized from state to state. These responses contain ideas for improving TAG education. Success stories relating to specific mandates, funding, professional training, and accountability provide potential models for future growth.

A short summary can only begin to describe this study. To make your own judgments about gifted education in American public schools, go to http://bit.ly/ufKBFh, and read "2010 - 2011 State of the States in Gifted Education: National Policy and Practice Data." That way you'll have data to accompany your anecdotes the next time that you discuss gifted education.

*****

(Continued on page 24)

(Gifted Education continued from page 23)

"The State of Gifted Education in America's Public Schools" was adapted from an article written for the January 2012 edition of *Omen: The Magazine of Oregon Mensa* and reprinted here with permission from the author.

* Ms. Oliver's references are not included in this printing.

(LocSec continued from page 5)

Last Month:

In last month's column, I invited readers to visit http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhPdH3wE0_Y&feature=player_embedded.

Someone brought to my attention that it had been "shut down" due to an apparent proprietary issue. Almost as though it had been censored.

It's back.

A New Technology Coming to a Demonstration Near You:

Also, this URL http://www.gigapixel.com/image/gigapan-canucks-g7.html is an interesting example of a new technology known as mega-pixel photography.

It is a photograph of a crowd of some hundreds of thousands of participants at a demonstration in Vancouver, B.C. that had devolved into a riot.

If you care to visit the URL, hover your cursor over any (any) point in the photograph. Click the cursor and wait a moment for the "picture" to respond. With each click, the area resolves increasingly. It's possible to pick a spot more than a mile from the foreground and resolve down to individual faces that are clearly identifiable. Look on the terraces of adjacent buildings or in to some of the building windows. Some of the demonstrators can be seen to have painted their faces with clown-like distortions. I would venture to say that they were aware of this technology and didn't want to be identified in the crowds — as everyone else apparently can be. ■

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What Ever Happened to?

by Ken Wright



This December Anna and I traveled throughout Southern California on a photographic trip for our own pleasure. Our second stop on this journey was the beachside city of Santa Barbara, where much to my surprise we found the only remaining Sambo's restaurant in existence. As a child I have very fond memories of going to Sambo's in Hollywood, Florida for breakfast which was a rare treat in those days. I also owned a Golden Book called *Little Black Sambo* which told a fanciful tale of a dark skinned Indian boy who encountered tigers who took his clothes and eventually were turned into butter. It was a great story at the time.

Years later the restaurants closed and we were told it was because people felt that Sambo's made fun of black people.

I asked our waitress and restaurant manager about their business and learned that we were in the first and only surviving Sambo's and the name was actually a composite of the two original owner's names: SAM Battistone, Sr. and Newell "Bo" Bohnett. That was 1957 and the children's book *The Story of Little Black Sambo* was well known having first been published in 1899. The two men capitalized on the popularity of the book illustrations and decorated their restaurants with artists renderings of the little boy and tigers.



The fact that people used "Sambo" as a hurtful word for dark skinned people is unfortunate and helped cause the demise of the restaurant chain. I can't change that humans are cruel to each other. I still like the story and I definitely liked the Sambo's Restaurant in Santa Barbara. I hope that it stays open and does well. It was founded upon good service and good value and is unique in a world full of clones. ■

Thank You, Jeeves answers:

(*Thank You, Jeeves* is the title of one book in a series of short stories and novels by P.G. Wodehouse.)

1 G	2 A	3 S	4 P		5 A	6 C	7 H	8 E		9 P	10 R	11 E	12 S			13 F	14 L	15 E	16 D
17 A	U	T	O		18 B	O	O	N		19 H	A	Z	E	20 L		21 G	L	A	R	E
22 P	R	O	P		23 B	A	B	E		24 A	G	R	E	E		25 R	O	S	I	E
26 E	A	R	P	27 A	R	T	S		28 A	S	E	A		29 S	T	A	R	T	E	D
	31 S	K	I	M		32 S	O	33 B	B	E	D		34 A	S	I	D	E			
			35 N	A	36 P		37 N	I	L			38 S	M	E	E		39 N	40 O	41 V	42 A
	43 M	44 E	S	S	U	45 P		46 G	E	L		47 I	O	N		48 A	C	R	E	S
50 B	A	D		51 S	C	O	T			53 E	54 G	G	S		55 F	L	E	E	T	S
56 E	R	I	57 C		58 K	E	Y	59 S		60 S	U	N		61 O	F	F		62 S	O	N
63 T	I	T	U	64 S			65 P	A	66 S	S	E			67 A	A	R	68 P			
69 H	A	S	T	E		70 R	O	C	H	E	S	71 T	72 E	R		73 E	R	74 R	75 E	76 D
			77 E	A	78 S	E			79 E	N	S	U	E			80 D	I	A	N	E
81 A	82 I	83 M		84 M	A	X		85 O	B	I		86 E	L	87 S	88 E		89 M	Y	N	A
90 F	R	I	91 D	A	Y		92 B	R	A	N			93 S	E	L	94 L		95 O	U	R
96 R	A	T	O	N		97 D	Y	E		98 G	99 M	100 T		101 A	L	U	102 M	N	I	
103 O	N	T	O		104 K	A	T	O			105 E	O	106 S		107 E	R	E			
			108 R	109 H	I	N	E		110 P	111 L	A	N	A	112 R		113 C	L	114 O	115 D	
116 H	117 O	118 P	S	I	N	G		119 F	E	A	T		120 F	A	121 T	H	O	M	E	122 D
123 E	M	I	T	S		124 E	R	U	C	T		126 M	A	R	Y		127 D	E	M	I
128 W	I	P	E	S		129 R	A	J	A	H		P	R	E	P		131 I	G	O	R
132 S	T	E	P				133 M	I	N	E		134 H	I	R	E		135 C	A	S	T

Mensa for Kids!

Anagrams Double Puzzle answers:

OLEV	(L)	O	V	E	
AEUB	B	E	(A)	U	
TGIF	G	I	F	(T)	
SKSI	K	I	(S)	S	
AHTER	H	E	A	R	(T)
NERIDF	F	R	I	(E)	N	D
SIECHHR	C	H	E	R	(I)	S	H
QUEUOBT	B	O	U	Q	U	(E)	T
VOOTNEID	D	E	V	O	T	I	O	(N)
FFEATNCOI	A	F	F	E	C	T	I	O	(N)
OCNAREM	R	O	(M)	A	N	C	E	

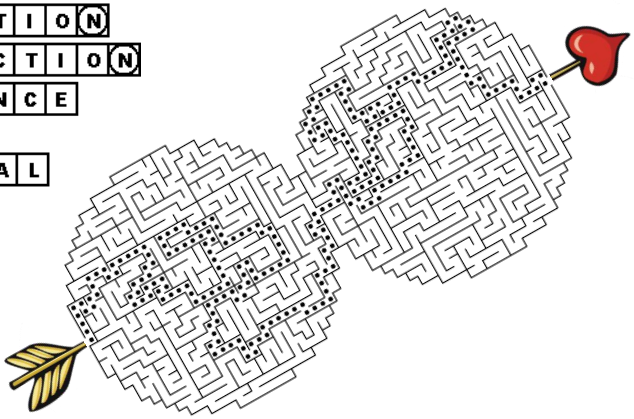
S	E	N	T	I	M	E	N	T	A	L

Calendar Conundrums answers:

A. 2012 is a leap year. Depending on your school board, you may spend an extra day at school.

B. The unique prime factors are 2 and 503, because 2012 = 2 x 2 x 503

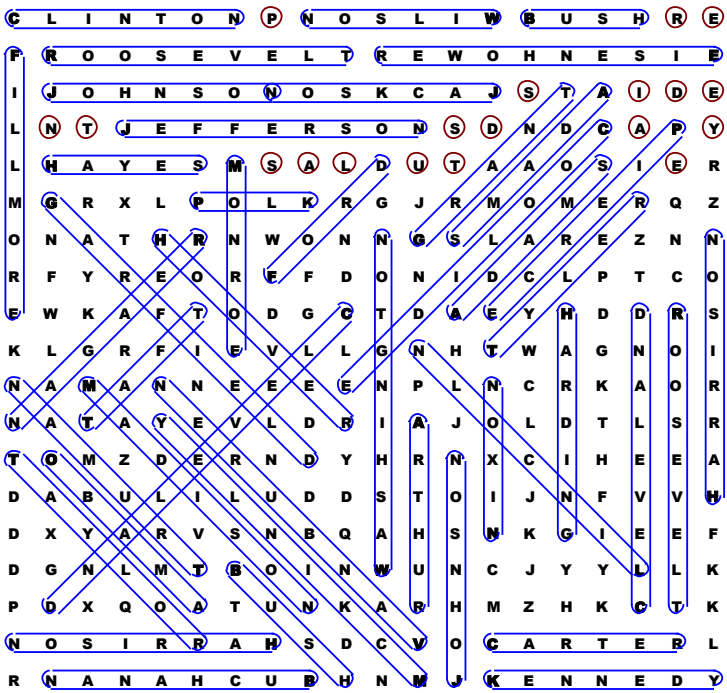
C. The unique prime factors are 2, 3 and 7, because 2016 = (32) x (9) x (7), which is also (2 x 2 x 2 x 2 x 2) x (3 x 3) x 7.



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)

Presidents' Day Salute Answers:



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Arlington, TX 76006-6013

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