

Space Coast Area Mensa



NEWSLETTER

Volume 40, Issue 1

January 2022

From Your LocSec

I'm excited to finally get a newsletter out and I hope you are excited to get it.

Central Florida Mensa has scheduled their Regional Gathering for Jan 14-17 at the CoCo Key Hotel & Water Resort in Orlando. It is open to all Mensans from any chapter. 4 days of Mensa-style fun and I will be hosting the inaugural Lyricology event. More info is available at <https://centralfloridamensa.org/public/regional-gatherings/frequently-asked-questions>

I am bringing back "Brunch with the LocSec". It never really got off the ground



due to COVID but, with an ever increasing number of

vaccinated people and booster availability, I see no reason to curtail such a small event. Please email me if you plan to attend. Brunch will be on 9 Jan @ 9:00 AM at Kay's Bar-B-Que, 1552 West King Street.

We need volunteers to be on the nomination committee. Please contact any ExComm member if you wish to volunteer. Duties are to select candidates for the ballot.

I wanted to take some of the newsletter space to notify you of the Discord server I've set up. Facebook is a poor place for any meaningful group collaboration and Discord is feature rich supporting voice communication in custom channels, screen sharing, video, message notifications, calendaring, etc. It is also much more likely to draw in members who abandoned Facebook years ago. Please sign up with this invite:

<https://discord.gg/s82uBqPTj4>

This URL is set to never expire. Vetting members to the server might initially be a challenge so please set your Discord nickname to your real name to make that process easier.

I have set up a few channels which I thought would be appropriate and I can add as many as needed so feel free to offer suggestions for channels and add-ons.

Lastly, I want to be very clear on a subject, though I think most of you already have a full understanding; the ExComm is not responsible for organizing events. If we organize an event, it will be at the level of our own Regional Gathering or an event that one or more of us on the executive committee wish to host ourselves. Nothing prevents our membership from planning, scheduling and hosting their own events. We will gladly announce

Inside this issue:

FROM YOUR LOCSEC	1
RVC10	1
DYSLEXIA: LEARN. ADVOCATE. EDUCATE	3
GEOCACHING	5
UPCOMING EVENTS	7
PICTURE OF THE MONTH	7
ORGANIZATION	8

them on Discord and in future newsletters. The same goes for a Special Interest Group (SIG). Involvement with our membership is up to each member. If you want to host an event just let us know and we will get the word out. I encourage everyone to create a SIG or an event.

Lastly #2, my intention is to keep doing this style newsletter. Full color, hyperlinks, multi-page, and all that jazz. I implore all members of SCAM to update their communication preferences on the National site by logging in to American Mensa at

(Continued on page 2)

RVC10—Thomas G. Thomas

Happy New Year to everyone in Region 10! With the holidays behind us, there wasn't much activity to report on from the National front, although various committees have been hard at work.

I've been working with the Communications Committee to update the Internet Com-

munications Services policy (Appendix 23 in the Actions Still In Effect, or ASIEs). There hasn't been a substantial overhaul of these guidelines since they were first established in 2005, so it's due for review. Some of it covers regulations that we are required to observe with our

websites and social media, such as the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) and the CAN-SPAM Act of 2003 (Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography And Marketing Act) (don't you just love government acronyms?), both of which

are still in effect, but there are other topics to cover with the proliferation of social media sites since then, such as how to maintain ownership of Facebook or Meetup groups if the person who established them is no longer available for whatever rea-

(Continued on page 2)

From Your LocSec

“I ENCOURAGE
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(Continued from page 1)

<https://www.us.mensa.org/> and then go to ‘My Profile’, followed by ‘My Communication Preferences’. Edit the top box “Publication Preferences” and set ‘Local Group Newsletter’ to “Electronic”. This will get you the digital copy which does not need to be printed, folded or stuffed into an envelope. The digital copy means all the hyperlinks will work as well, so that is a plus. It is nearly 2022 so let’s go digital. Have you ever seen paper in Star Trek? No. Why not? Because they went digital.

I welcome input on the newsletter. Tell me what you like or don’t like, what you want to see. Send me articles, recipes, inputs, jokes, whatever and I will try to include everything.

Jim Fitzgerald

RVC10—Thomas G. Thomas

(Continued from page 1)

son and the passwords are lost. Much to think about on that topic.

I have also been working with the AML History Committee to pull together a history of officers and committee members over time. In 1997, Vincent Bonzagni compiled a “Book of Lists” from the beginnings of Mensa in 1946 through the establishment of American Mensa (then “North American Mensa” in 1965) and up to November 1997, but no comprehensive lists have been maintained for member perusal since that time. The charge of this committee includes formatting and setting up the information so it will be viable for online viewing, but the first step is to collect the data.

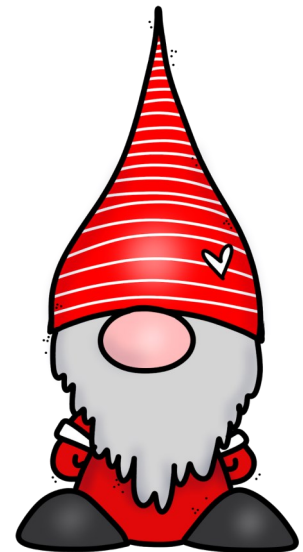
Other committees have been moving along as well, such as the Gifted Youth Committee, which is almost finished updating its Gifted Youth Program Handbook. And the Community Services Committee is getting ready to announce Mensa Cares Week in April, soliciting community projects from Local Groups to show that Mensa is fulfilling its Constitutional purpose to use our intelligence for the benefit of humanity.

That’s just four committees, out of 25 that were identified in a list provided to the AMC members by Executive Director Trevor Mitchell (not including the AMC, or American Mensa Committee, that oversees all of them). We’re always in need of members to serve on these committees, so of COURSE we are setting up a new committee, with the Volunteerism Task

Force charged to generate recommendations to improve volunteer levels and satisfaction in Mensa at the local and national levels. The intention is that this committee will complete its charge by this coming December, so we don’t permanently add to the list of committees.

That said, there isn’t enough room in this column to outline ALL of the committees, so I’m going to provide a breakdown to Dan Tobias, our Region 10 webmaster, so you can see if there are committees that you might like to help with. I also hope to find more Regional assistants to help our local groups with their projects. We already have Julie Warriner serving as Regional Scholarship Chair, but we also need a Regional Ombudsman to assist with the gap between Local Group issues and National issues, and some groups have been looking for assistance from a Regional Young Adult Mensan (YAM) Coordinator. I will be posting job descriptions for these and more on the Region 10 website (region10.us.mensa.org) as well as to the Mensa Region 10 Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MensaRegion10/>).

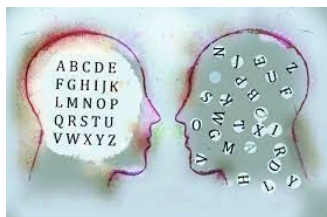
Finally, I will be holding an RVC Chat session at the Central Florida Regional Gathering (“It’s All Sun ‘n’ Games”) on Friday, January 14th to Monday, January 17th. If you have any questions about these topics or anything else, I hope to see you then, or as always you can reach me at RVC10@us.mensa.org.



What is this?
Answer on last page

Dyslexia: Learn. Advocate. Educate.

By Mandy B.



What do Albert Einstein, Stephen Hawking, Charles Schwab, CA Governor Gavin Newsome, Steven Spielberg and Sir Richard Branson all have in common? They are all dyslexic and have accomplished amazing things in their lives.

Oxford Languages defines dyslexia as: *a general term for disorders that involve difficulty in learning to read or interpret words, letters, and other symbols, **but that do not affect general intelligence.***

Did you know that one in six students are dyslexic? Their challenges can include time awareness, rote memory (for example, math facts), reading, and spelling. But their strengths can include being good problem solvers (they see the big picture), being creative, having good observant skills and being empathetic.

I would like to share with you what we've learned about dyslexia, watching, advocating and being inspired by our daughter. She is now a junior in college, a thriving homeowner and is working full time while attending college full time online.

Background:

When our daughter was in 2nd grade we realized we needed to do more than wait for her to continue to develop to "catch up." After being tested, we learned she was dyslexic.

We learned early in our daughter's academic career that teachers, in many cases, while knowledgeable about other challenges children face in early education, dyslexia was either never dealt with or completely misunderstood. As parents who were trying to learn about it, we realized we needed to learn everything we could and educate where we could, to help our daughter.

Brevard County School Accommodations: We talked with our daughter's school guidance counselor to learn what accommodations they provide for students with dyslexia.

- ◆ Extra time was granted for assignments & tests
- ◆ No requirement to read aloud in class, which was something she had always been uncomfortable with

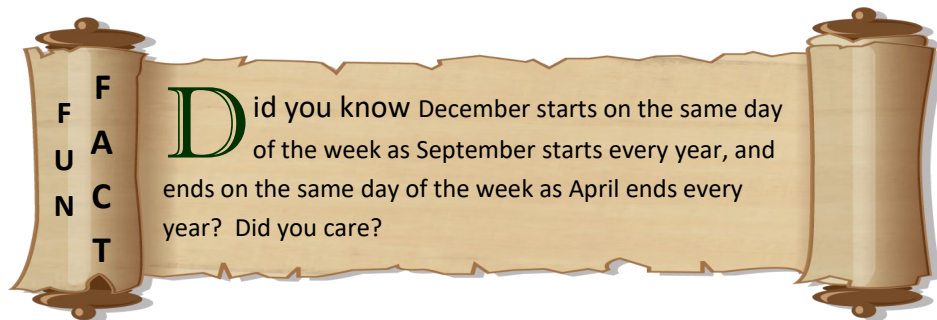
We also opted out of all state testing every year.

Thanks to the accommodations and a lot of extra studying, she made good grades in school all the way through high school and now, in college. We explained to her that school was going to take a lot of effort. She put in the work, and we did too, right alongside her. When the teachers were hesitant to give her accommodations, despite having the paperwork from Guidance, we stepped in and met with them and/or Guidance.

Our Daughter's Amazing Accomplishments:

We believe our daughter's academic regimen translated into her impeccable work ethic. She started working part time at 15 years old. She was also a soloist in the Performing Arts program for chorus, the captain of the high school swim team, and a district, regional, and state swim qualifier. She received the Bright Futures Scholarship, a music scholarship and had planned to attend college in the fall of 2020. Then came Covid-19. Attending class in person was no longer an option. However, she was

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What is this?
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Dyslexia: Learn. Advocate. Educate.

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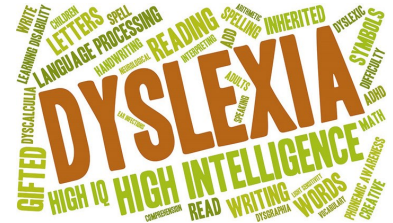
already familiar with online classes because she had done several of those in high school while dual-enrolled in her senior year.

She is now working full time and is starting her junior year online at EFSC majoring in Organizational Management with a focus on finance and banking.

Our daughter is happy. She is doing great at EFSC and, as an adult, accomplishing amazing things, all while continuing to live with the daily challenges dyslexia brings.

What We've Learned Along the Way:

- Learn, advocate, educate, and never give up
- Dyslexia can make someone stronger in many different areas
- Help teachers understand dyslexia and your child's specific challenges. I would bring one-page handouts to Guidance about dyslexia for them to give to teachers and parents.
- Opt out of all state testing and any testing not necessary for promotion
- Virtual classes can be great for your child if they are self-disciplined
- The two year foreign language high school requirement for the Florida University Systems can be satisfied with two semesters of college American Sign Language classes
- The SAT and the ACT tests are different enough that if your child doesn't do well on one, they may do better on the other



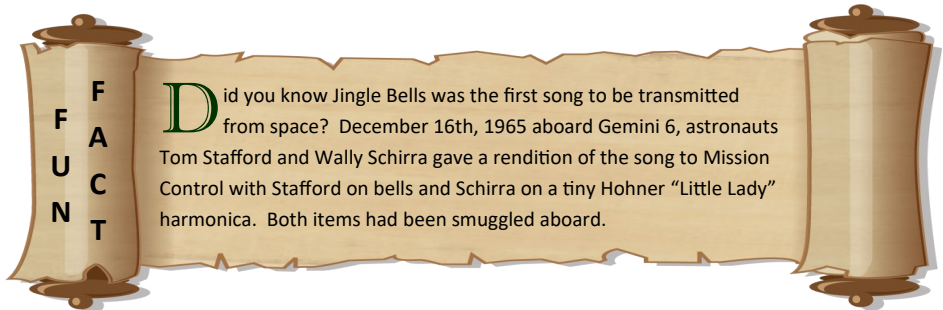
“LEARN,
ADVOCATE,
EDUCATE, AND
NEVER GIVE UP.”



Dyslexia Resources

For more information on dyslexia please visit these resources

- <https://dyslexiaida.org/>
- <http://dyslexiahelp.umich.edu/tools/informational-websites>
- <https://dyslexia.yale.edu/resources/parents/>
- <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/top-10-resources-dyslexia>
- <https://childmind.org/guide/parents-guide-to-dyslexia/>



Geocaching

By Jim Fitzgerald



On May 2nd, 2000 the Global Positioning System (GPS) was made available to everyone with the removal of Selective Availability which used an algorithm designed to intentionally create accuracy errors of up to 328 feet. This day is known as 'Blue Switch Day' and the first geocache was placed on the very next day, May 3rd.

Since then, millions of caches have been placed in ~200 countries. But what is a geocache? A geocache is something that someone has hidden for others to find utilizing GPS. <https://www.geocaching.com> is the principal site to list caches and track who has or has not found it.

Caches: There are many different types of geocaches; Traditional, multi-cache, offset cache, mystery or puzzle caches, challenge cache, chirp, night, whereigo, and others.

A traditional geocache is simply a container which may contain only a log book or toys and trade items. They range in size from the nano, about the size of a pencil eraser, to large which might be a giant box.

While puzzle caches would probably appeal to Mensans, I would suggest starting off with traditional so you can learn how to accurately reach the cache coordinates, or 'coords' for short. If you are looking for excellent family time, children especially enjoy finding traditional caches as the larger sizes often contain items they can permanently remove from the cache though it is expected that if they take something, they leave something.

Puzzle caches can be extremely hard as most are designed to present a challenge. The vast majority of puzzle caches must first be solved to reveal coords. Cryptography, imagery, story-based, etc. are often used to create these listings.

All geocaches have attributes assigned to them identifying hazards or accessibility concerns. Listings also rank the difficulty of finding the cache and the difficulty of the terrain to get to the cache.

Trackables: Geocaching also supports trackables which are typically an item placed in a traditional cache that, when found, can be 'discovered' by the finder and then taken and placed in a new cache to be found by someone else. I have a trackable which I placed in a cache at Port Canaveral on December 31st, 2010. It has been taken by other cachers to 636 caches and has traveled 52,425 miles. It currently resides near Glenwood Spring, Colorado. The farthest it has been away from me is Afghanistan, 7,687 miles away.

Technology: For my caching efforts, I use a device that is purpose built for GPS navigation and has a mode specific to geocaching. While you can use your mobile phone, I have not found the accuracy to be as good as a dedicated device and accuracy is important when you are out there on the hunt. Any device which uses WAAS (Wide Area Augmentation System) can be used. Non-WAAS compatible devices have a GPS accuracy of approximately 15 meters while WAAS enable devices are accurate to less than 3 meters. In cities with tall buildings or forests, even WAAS accuracy can be compromised due to signal reflections. It takes experience with using the device to isolate a location in these situations.

(Continued on page 6)



Geocaching

(Continued from page 5)

Awareness: The term used to describe someone who knows nothing about geocaching is 'muggle'. Cachers must take extra care that a muggle is not exposed to the caching world. We do this to protect the cache itself because if someone sees you sign a cache log and return a container to some hidden spot, they might be curious enough to go grab it themselves to see what you were up to.



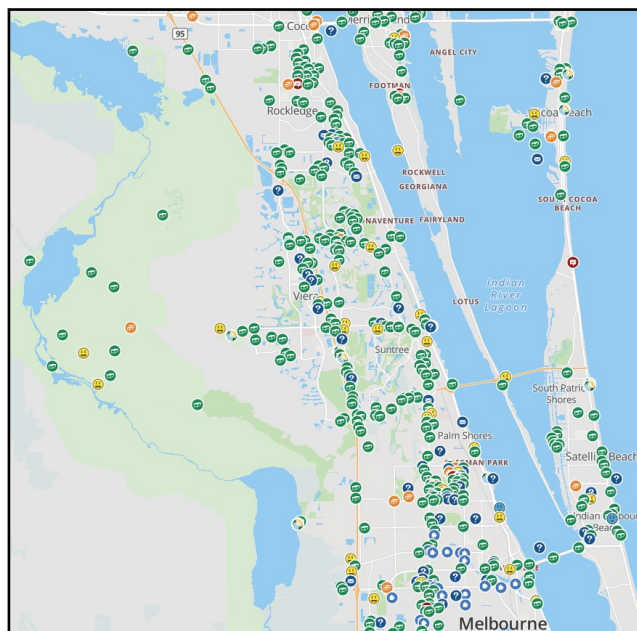
“THE TERM USED TO DESCRIBE SOMEONE WHO KNOWS NOTHING ABOUT GEOCACHING IS ‘MUGGLE.’”

Governance: Though geocaching is not governed per se, there are rules on where you can place a cache. When you have decided to place a cache and selected your location and container, you would create the cache listing and submit it for review. Adherence of the rules is enforced by the person who approves the cache. Once approved, the cache listing is public and cachers can begin looking for it.

Local: In Brevard, we also have a geocachers association which meets annually and all geocachers are welcome. They also organize numerous events known as CITO; Cache In-Trash Out. These events are designed to get you some new caches and to clean up trash from the area they are hidden in. In this way, the geocaching community is giving back to the community at large.

There are 508 caches in Brevard as of 5 Dec 2021 located between 528 and Eau Gallie so you will not have to travel far to get your first cache.

My user name on geocaching.com is 'Hirogens', named after the nomadic hunters from Star Trek: Voyager. Feel free to send me a friend request on that site and reach out to me if you want to learn more about geocaching or if you want to go caching.



Newsletter Submissions

To submit articles, events, SIGs, announcements, please email
locsec@mensa.org

All submissions must be received by the Editor before the 10th of
the month preceding publication. Whenever possible, we prefer
submissions via email.

Editor contact information is listed above

Upcoming Events

9 Jan: Brunch with the LocSec 9:00 AM @ Kay's Bar-B-Que, 1552 West King Street, Cocoa

14-17 Jan: Central Florida Mensa RG @ CoCo Key Hotel and Water Resort, 7400 International Dr, Orlando

Picture of the Month



Male Painted Bunting

Photo by: Jim Fitzgerald

For the high resolution image, visit the Picture of the Month channel on our Discord server

SPACE COAST AREA MENSA

Officers and Appointees

Local Secretary	Jim Fitzgerald	locsec@scam.us.mensa.org
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Recording Secretary	Elizabeth (Libby) Wilder	recsecretary@scam.us.mensa.org
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Testing Coordinator	Hank Rhodes	testing@scam.us.mensa.org
Testing Proctor	Julie Costopoulos	
Testing Proctor	Harold (Bud) Long	
Testing Proctor	Hank Rhodes	
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Scholarship Chair	Julie Costopoulos	scholarship@scam.us.mensa.org
S.I.G.H.T Coordinator	Karen Freiberg	sight@scam.us.mensa.org
Social Media Chair	Jim Fitzgerald	locsec@scam.us.mensa.org

Vacant Positions (volunteers needed)

Gifted Youth Coordinator
Area Coordinator, Brevard County
Publicity
Mediator
Circulation
Assistant Scholarship Chair
SIG Chairman
RG Chairman

Mensa Links

American Mensa

<https://www.us.mensa.org/>

Mensa Connect

<https://www.us.mensa.org/connect/mensa-connect/>

Your Membership Profile

<https://www.us.mensa.org/my-mensa/my-membership-profile/>