

bilten
septembar-oktobar 2025



mense
SRBIJE





mensa
S R B I J E

Glavni i odgovorni urednik:

Nemanja M. Angelovski

Lektori:

Darko Kojić

Vladimir B. Perić

Nevena Milosavljević

Tehnički urednik:

Daniel David

KORISNI LINKOVI:

[Mensa Srbije](#)

[Mensa International](#)

[Workplace](#)

[Facebook stranica](#)

[Facebook zatvorena grupa](#)

[Linkedin stranica](#)

[Linkedin zatvorena grupa](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Youtube](#)

[SIGHT facebook grupa](#)

MENSA INFO:

[Statut Mense Srbije](#)

[Statut Mensa International](#)

[Uputstvo za uplatu članarine](#)

[Spisak lokalnih Mensi](#)

[Spisak SIG-ova i odseka](#)

[SIGHT](#)

[Popusti](#)

[Mensa za decu](#)

[Spisak projekata](#)

[Mensa prodavnica](#)

Naslovna fotografija:

[Sebastian Garcia Agudelo](#)

[pexels.com](#)

Sadržaj

Dani Mense u Vršcu 2025	3
Mensa World Journal (septembar 2025)	6
Mensa World Journal (oktobar 2025)	18

Dani Mense u Vršcu 2025

Kad se najzad smirila ruža vetrova, opojni mir namamio je radoznale umove u vinogorja vekovima stara, čije je vino natapalo jezike bečkog dvora pre nekoliko doba. Dug put nikada nije prepreka kada na kraju putovanja postoji zlato koje hrani um.



Dobro došli na Dane Mense u Vršcu, gradu ljubavi, vetra i vina.

Od 17. oktobra ove godine članovi Mense Srbije i Mense Rumunije okupili su se u Vršcu, srpskom gradu blizu rumunske granice, gradu koji je bliži Temišvaru nego svom glavnom gradu – Beogradu.

Cilj okupljanja bio je da se proslave Dani Mense, regionalni događaj koji organizuju srpski Mensaši nekoliko puta godišnje, svaki put u drugom gradu, kao i da se ojačaju odnosi preko granice. Dočekali smo goste

iz Subotice, Novog Sada, Beograda, Niša, Vranja, Temišvara, Arada i čak iz dalekog Bukurešta.

17.10. (u petak) okupili smo se oko nekoliko stolova da ćaskamo o životu sa prijateljima iz raznih delova zemlje koje dugo nismo sreli, kao i da upoznamo goste iz Rumunije.

Učestvovali smo u radionici „Crtaj i cirkaj“, gde smo razmenjivali crteže uz degustaciju vina sa lokalnih vinogorja i porodične vinarije „Selecta“. Crteži su svi napola gotovi, verovatno zbog preko 30 litara vina koje je „misteriozno“ nestalo.

Ujutru, 18.10. (u subotu) doručkovali smo i odmah krenuli u turu po gradu. Obišli smo gradsko jezgro – Vladičanski dvor, Sabornu crkvu Svetog Nikole, Rumunsku pravoslavnu crkvu, Trg Svetog Teodora, a obilazak smo



završili istraživanjem bisti i spomenika na Trgu Svetog Save, uz posetu muzeju „Konkordija“.

A potom, jedan od najbitnijih trenutaka čitavog skupa. Veliki, ukusan obrok u restoranu „Dinar“. Dinar je naširoko poznat restoran, popularan u regionu i šire. Ima sestrinski, istoimeni restoran u Temišvaru, ali naše komšije više vole da dođu kod nas, a često ih ima više nego nas lokalaca. Naši gosti iz Mense Rumunije bili su upućeniji u ponudu i meni od nas i naših članova.

Nakon obilnog ručka, uživali smo u upoznavanju dok se deo hrane i dalje vario. Združili smo se u radionici „Culture café“, gde smo jedni druge učili tradiciji, vokabularu, sličnim rečima, praznicima i ostalim interesantnim činjenicama o našim zemljama. Pronašli smo dosta sličnih reči – krastavac, vrh, pečurke, vukodlak, pa čak i onu najvažniju – *prieten* = *prijatelj*.

Kasnije, predveče, bili smo publika koncertu a kapela benda „Res Miranda“ u božanstvenom komforu „Tačke susretanja“, udruženju za promociju kulture, koje je tokom či-



tavog našeg boravka bilo naš domaćin i ne-sebično nas ugostilo.

Potom je usledilo večernje druženje u lokalnom kafiću, nakon kog smo (kad je dosadio) otišli na rok žurku u blizini.



Nedelja je bio neprevaziđen dan jer smo se u neku ruku penjali stepenicama do raja – samo kolima. Poznata vršačka katedrala – kapela „Uzvišenja svetog krsta“, Vršačka kula i odmaralište Crvenog krsta nalaze se na vrhu Vršačkih planina, uz koje se možete popeti stepenicama, koje smo, radi zdravlja i očuvanja svesti naših Mensaša, zaobišli, te smo u obilazak išli vozilima.

Odmaralište Crvenog krsta bogato je istorijom. Projektovano je od strane našeg čuvenog Dragiše Brašovana.

Vršačka kula je bila veoma osvežavajuće iznenađenje za sve, posebno zbog toga što deo puta mora da se prođe peške, tako da smo na kraju ipak malo i vežbali. Od zamka, mogu se videti planine i zgrade čak i do 80 kilometara daleko – u Beogradu. Takođe, u podnožju kule nalazi se početna platforma za paraglajdere, tako da smo iznad glave imali našu malu Kapadokiju, plavo nebo bez ijednog oblaka, išarano raznobojnim krilima



padobrana. Istorija zamka i obilazak unutrašnjosti bili su prava poslastica svima – istoričarima, ljubiteljima srednjovekovnih priča, pa i arhitektama, zbog jedinstvenog kamena koji se presijava srebrno kao jutarnja rosa – **gnajs**.

Na kraju svega, seli smo na zasluženu šoljicu kafe u klubu ekstremnih sportova „Izazov“, kafiću koji je smešten u vidu terase na obodu planine sa pogledom na ceo grad i beskrajnu Vojvodinu, sa pogledom koji oduzima dah.

U toku ove ekspedicije u trajanju od dva i po dana, prirasli smo jedni drugima za srce, zblížili se i naučili ponešto novo svakog dana. Glavni pokretač upoznavanja bio je „Bingo!“ koji smo održali u toku subotnjeg doručka.

Tokom njega smo naučili da Čedomir, Valeriu, Zoran i Željko više vole mačke od pasa, da Dunja, Dieter, Nemanja i Ruksandra govore tri ili više jezika, da Jelena, Maja i Marius slave rođendane u januaru, da su Ljuba i Nataša gledali seriju „House MD“, i da, izgleda, niko iz naše grupe ne voli Bijonse.

Načinjeni su veliki koraci da se sruše zidovi koji odvajaju naše umove i prijateljstva. Bila je čast biti domaćin tako divnom događaju i da svojim očima vidim sve zagrljaje, osmehe i sve članove naših Mensi kako se slikaju u gradu u kom je maleno dete u meni odraslo i uživalo u mirisu fabrike čokolade, ukusu grožđa i zanosnoj kulturi i istoriji.

Ostajte zbogom, dragi prijatelji. Nadam se da će vetrovi nekada ponovo utihnuti i da ćete ponovo posetiti mesto koje nas je večno zblížilo.

Sa najdubljom zahvalnošću i neopisivom srećom,

Nemanja M. Angelovski, organizator.

Ne vedem! Vidimo se!

mensa world journal

SEPTEMBER 2025 | EDITION | 152



*Australian Mensa's Annual Conference
October 10–12, 2025 in Brisbane p4*

MENSA INTERNATIONAL

JOIN THE CONVERSATIONS AT

<https://hub.mensa.org>

from the editor...



- on p2, according to latest research, it seems that music mindfulness can ease anxiety and depression
- the 2025 Mensa International Scholarship winners are announced on p3
- have a look at my Words... column on p5 and find out some interesting facts about Champagne
- on p6, our Features Editor looks at the link between babies and brilliance
- our Member Profile is on p7, while on p8, we learn that across generations, humans are driven to keep culture alive
- Supplementally is on p10, the Officer Directory on p11, and Therese's Teasers are on p12.

Happy Reading!

Kate

Cover photo by Romain Terpreau
on Unsplash.com

Music Mindfulness Eases Anxiety and Depression

Listening to music while performing mindfulness exercises targets neural and cardiac mechanisms in the brain that may treat symptoms of anxiety and depression, according to a new study led by Yale School of Medicine researchers.

The study, published in *Frontiers in Neuroscience*, found that both live and virtual music mindfulness sessions also reduced stress and altered participants' state of consciousness, but only live music sessions fostered social connections between listeners.

"We desperately need community based, accessible, and affordable treatments for anxiety and depression," said AZA Allsop, MD, PhD, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and the study's senior author.

"Music mindfulness impacts physiology and the psyche in a way that we can leverage to manage symptoms that lead to distress and hospitalisation. We are excited to test this approach in a more general manner to directly assess its efficacy as a treatment for individuals in the community with mood disorders."

Allsop is an artist, neuroscientist, and psychiatrist who researches social cognition, music mindfulness, and psychedelics. He is principal investigator at the AZA Lab at Yale School of Medicine.

The lab investigates how music, mindfulness, and psychedelics can impact mental health and social behaviour.

This study was done in collaboration with BLOOM community centre in New Haven and the New Haven Symphony Orchestra.

Thirty-eight community participants visited BLOOM and wore mobile heart rate and EEG monitors while engaging in music mindfulness sessions with a live facilitator and musician. Allsop said the participants listened to original music composed in his lab while a live musician improvised along with the track.

Based on the heart rate and EEG readings, the researchers concluded that music listening combined with mindfulness exercise increased autonomic nervous system activity, reduced stress, and altered the participants' state of consciousness.

Social connections were enhanced by the live sessions but not when the participants engaged virtually.

The results indicate that music mindfulness effectively engages neural mechanisms in the brain and heart which may contribute to the treatment of anxiety and depression symptoms, according to the researchers.

neurosciencenews.com May 4, 2025

2025 Mensa International Scholarship Winners

The Mensa Education and Research Foundation (Mensa Foundation) has announced the winners of the 2025 Mensa International and Ed Vincent Scholarships. Applicants submit an essay of up to 550 words explaining their career, academic or vocational goals and how they plan to achieve those goals.

The Mensa International Scholarship is open to international (non-American) Mensans studying at non-American universities or colleges. 2025 winners are:

USD \$2, 000 – Karine Grenier of Mensa France

USD \$1,000 – Alkistis Kallinikou of Mensa Belgium

USD \$1,000 – Patric Gudis of Mensa Germany

USD \$1,000 – Giorgio Ratti of Mensa Italy

The Ed Vincent International Scholarship is open to international (non-American) Mensans studying at American universities or colleges. The 2025 winner is:

USD \$1,000 – Creagh Factor of British Mensa

A dedicated panel of international Mensan judges scores the essays and they deserve to be recognised and applauded for their efforts. The 2025 judges were: Andreas Athanasakis (Mensa Greece), Aleksandra Borovic (Mensa Serbia), Willem Bouwens (Mensa Netherlands), Zabeda Abdul Hamid (Mensa Malaysia), Cinthia Reyes (Mensa Mexico) and Elissa Rudolph (American Mensa), Riaan Thomson (Mensa South Africa).

The 2026 scholarship program opens on September 15, 2025 and entries will be accepted up to January 15, 2026. All international (non-American) Mensans who are studying at universities and colleges are welcome to apply. Please see Scholarships for further details.

Important – Only current Mensa members are eligible to apply. Lapsed members will be disqualified. Make sure your membership stays current. Also, overreliance upon AI apps to compose essays will also result in disqualification. The judges prefer to feel the heart and soul of the Mensan in the essays, rather than formulaic, soulless AI text.

Vicki Herd – International Scholarship Chair

what's on around the Mensa world...



Join us at the 2025 Australian Mensa Conference! October 10–12, 2025 — Brisbane, Australia

Get ready for an unforgettable weekend at the Australian Mensa Conference in sunny Brisbane! Expect sightseeing tours, walking adventures, inspiring speakers, and plenty of games and challenges!

With 47% of Australian Mensa members under the age of 18, we're excited to offer three tailored programs:

- An adult program
- A high school-aged program
- A primary school-aged program

Come and enjoy true Aussie hospitality — there's something for everyone!

Learn more and register here: <https://amc25.org>

**Log in to the
International website at
www.mensa.org
for the calendar of
national events**

**articles - poetry - member
achievements**

**Send your submissions
to the Editor at
mwjeditor@mensa.org**

*Deadline for each issue is the 1st
of the month two months before
publication. Eg. the deadline for
the August issue is June 1.*

Welcome to Düsseldorf



The International Mensa Gathering called IBD+ will take place from **October 23rd to 26th, 2025**. Mensans and their friends worldwide are invited to Düsseldorf, Germany, for IBD+, a vibrant gathering surrounding the International Board of Directors' (IBD) meeting.

With over 200 activities — lectures, workshops, company tours, escape games and museum visits — IBD+ offers a unique chance to connect, learn, and enjoy time with fellow Mensans.

Details, schedule, travel, and accommodation information are at <https://ibd.mensa.de>

You can register here: <https://db.mensa.de/edetail?mpn=Events&id=5075313500002>

We look forward to welcoming you!

Your IBD+ Organising Committee
ibd2025@mensa.de

words...

Champagne

by Kate Nacard

Ah those bubbles; almost a guarantee to restore one's spirits. Elegant and chic, the source of millions of celebratory events around the world, champagne was the wine drunk by the rich and privileged during Napoleon's reign and was the wine that sparkled in the glasses of the tsars and dukes of imperial Russia.

Almost two thousand years ago, Roman slaves excavated, for building materials, limestone quarries in the smoothly sloping ridges of the region of France now called Champagne; today those hundreds of miles of chalk tunnels are used as the caves that house hundreds of millions of bottles of champagne. 'Champagne' itself is derived from *campanien*, the chalk which, mixed in the soil, gives champagne its unique flavour.

In pagan times, humans were sacrificed by the Vikings to please the gods and thus 'christen' their ships. Later, it was enough to pour wine on the ground, but in the 18th century, the French began to use champagne to launch ships. Interestingly, champagne bottles are almost indestructible. Designed to avoid explosions during fermentation, the bottle often refuses to break, leaving the important personage suffering the embarrassment of whacking the bottle against the bow of the ship fruitlessly.

According to the Guinness Book of Records, the largest champagne bottle ever was the one used to launch the huge passenger ship, *Monarch of the Seas*. It stood three

feet high, weighed seventy-seven pounds and held about the equivalent of thirty-six regular-sized bottles. Fortunately for her, Lauren Bacall didn't have to lug it around the ship, as an elaborate system of ropes and pulleys was used to hoist the bottle, so that she could simply snip a cord. Fortunately, also, the bottle smashed against the ship and broke easily...

All these years I've thought that Dom Perignon invented champagne and I've just found out that although he was a frequent taster and talented vigneron, he wasn't the first to make the sparkling stuff! (And I'm only slightly mollified to know that that most famous of champagnes, Dom Perignon was, indeed named after him.)

But, it was Dom who bottled the wine before its second fermentation (zymosis), hence allowing for a slower brewing time which then resulted in a more bubbly wine. In the 17th century, the second fermentation that gives sparkling wine its sparkle was problematic for winemakers because if the wine had been bottled in the autumn, fermentation would sometimes stop before all the fermentable sugars had been converted to alcohol. As the warmer weather approached, dormant yeast began stirring, generated carbon dioxide and, (at best), the cork would be forced out of the bottle and (at worst) the bottle would explode with a domino effect on all the nearby

bottles. It was Dom Perignon, the young Benedictine monk who was in charge of the vineyard of the monastery of Hautvillers, who solved the problem! And more than one source agree that unaccustomed as a young monk to tasting the fruits of his labours, he is said to have exclaimed (something along the lines of), "Come quickly, bros; I am drinking the stars!"

Wines from the Champagne region in France had been chosen for coronation festivities and offered as homage to other European monarchs since pre-mediaeval times, and by the 17th century were the 'in' beverage for celebration across Europe. The first commercial sparkling wine, however, was produced in the Limoux area of Languedoc around 1535. Towards the end of the 17th century, the Champagne region was producing sparkling method, stronger bottles that could hold the added pressure were invented (in England), and by 1700, sparkling Champagne was born!

(Dom Perignon was born in 1640, and died in 1715. He was buried at Hautvillers, where his tomb remains to this day. His name was originally registered by Eugène Mercier, who sold the brand name to Moët & Chandon — who had bought the Hautvillers vineyard in 1794.)



The Link between Babies and Brilliance

New research from the University of Colorado Boulder suggests that data from babies as young as seven months old, can give insight into intelligence in later life. By watching simple infant behaviours such as babbling, playing, and interacting socially, we may be able to gain insight into the cognitive ability of a baby, decades later.

The research which was published in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)*, looked at data from more than 1,000 twins and found that cognitive tests undertaken on babies as young as seven months old, held surprising indicators of their mental abilities at age 30, and beyond. The data came from a longitudinal study in Colorado which began in 1985.

The study followed 1,098 twins to assess the role that genetics, and environmental factors play in various aspects of development. Since the study began, researchers have collected a large amount of data including laboratory samples, and results from home visits, surveys, interviews, and tests.

The study used General Cognitive Ability (GCA) as a means of testing the babies' cognitive abilities. GCA broadly measures a person's ability to learn, reason, understand, and problem solve, a similar measurement as IQ. GCA is generally thought to be stable across a lifetime since the test scores for an 8-year-old often mirror their performance decades later.

Similarly, IQ scores taken at 20 are often similar to those at age 60, or 70. However, few studies have explored whether GCA traces all the way back to early infancy. As early as seven months old, researchers assessed several measures of cognition, including vocalisation, attention span (the ability to stay focussed and age-appropriately on task, and novelty preference (the tendency to choose new toys over familiar ones). The findings revealed that these early cognitive tests could account for roughly 13% of the variation in adult cognitive scores at age 30. Among the best predictors were attention span and novelty preference.

To understand how much of our cognitive ability is shaped by our genetics, rather than environmental factors, the researchers compared identical twins who share 100% of their DNA, with fraternal twins, who share about 50%. The results showed that genetics play a significant role. By age seven, inherited factors accounted for half of the variation in GCA seen at age 30.

However, the environment also played a lasting role. Around 10% of the differences in adult cognitive ability could be traced back to environmental factors from the first year or two of life. Researchers have long argued that those first few years of life are crucial for shaping people's brains, but these new results indicate that even our experiences as an infant are shaping our long-term cognition.



This means that laying down strong cognitive foundations in very early childhood might help people to reach their full potential as adults, and into older age.

The study also confirms that "polygenic scores" can be a useful tool. A polygenic score is like a genetic estimate of how likely you are to have a certain trait such as intelligence, height, or risk for a disease, based on your DNA. This score is based on genetic variants which have an effect on cognitive function, for example, memory, problem-solving, or reasoning. On their own, these variants don't mean much but when added together, they produce a score that can help estimate cognitive ability. Comparing these with the twins' scores showed a close match with what was expected based on their tests as babies.

This is not the first research that has been done into the connection between babies' and later intelligence. In 1994, a study out of San Diego University showed that early vocabulary strongly correlates with later verbal IQ and reading ability, and in 2009, research found the

(Continued on page 11)

member profile

by Susan Jensen

Liv Fjellsol of Mensa Norway is an artist who works with oil and acrylics on canvas. The fearlessness of her work echoes the wild, beautiful wilderness of her upbringing in rural Norway as well as her interdisciplinary studies.

Born 50 years ago, Liv was the middle child of five siblings. Their home in rural Norway was next to a forest. Liv would bicycle or ski to get around her community and also enjoyed going for a cold swim in the ocean.

In the safety and beauty of her surroundings, Liv was able to give full rein to her curiosity about nature/life. She joined 4-H — a youth development organisation focussed on practical, hands-on learning and positive youth development. (The name “4-H” comes from the four H’s in its original motto: Head, Heart, Hands, and Health.) She participated in a marching band but also felt like a bit of an outsider, perhaps because of her keen intelligence.

There were no classes for gifted students but Liv found a way out of her boredom in school: drawing, and later photography. An avid reader, Liv also enjoyed every type of creative hobby including woodwork and textile art.

After answering an ad posted on her school bulletin board, Liv spent her senior year of high school in Arkansas, USA. She was the only one amongst her close family and friends to become an exchange stu-

dent. Like most Norwegians, she spoke English fairly well before coming to the USA and enjoyed her experience greatly, although at sixteen she was the youngest senior in her class.

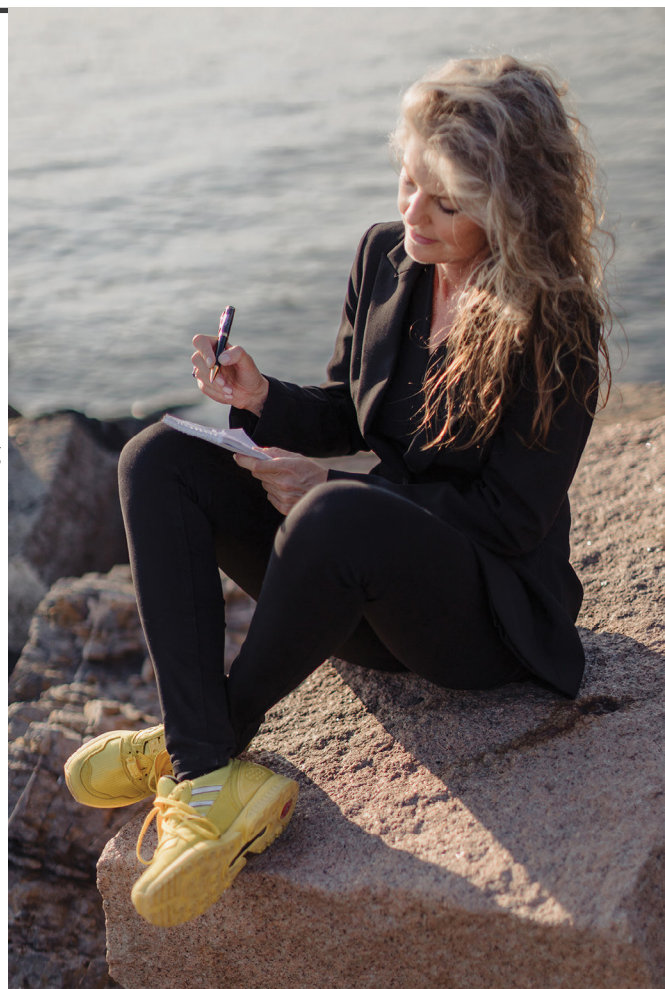
She is still in touch with her host family and visited them in 2017 for the opening of her art exhibition in Fort Smith Regional Art Museum in Arkansas.

Liv obtained a BA in Art History and also studied psychology, sociology and religion. She then became a lifelong student, continuing to this day to take classes in globalisation and cultural studies. Her art explores the connections between people, math, technology and music.

A self-made success, Liv still resides in Norway with her children. Through hard work and perseverance, she has crafted a career in art that has taken her around the world to exhibit her work.

At age 19, someone suggested she take an IQ test because she seemed exceptionally bright. She finally took the test in her early forties and became a Mensa member. Living at the tip of the world, Liv enjoys Mensa membership because she gets to connect not only with local members but Mensans around the globe. She feels Mensans are like having distant relatives worldwide.

Her art gallery has hosted some Mensa tests, a Mensa member has



helped advise her on her research articles, and some members also become friends.

Liv is currently working on her interdisciplinary DrPhilos project (temporarily called “the art of curiosity and qualitative inquiry.”)

If you would like to learn more about Liv’s work: www.fjellsol.no

Log into the International website www.mensa.org for the calendar of national events

Across Generations, Humans Are Driven to Keep Culture Alive

Each human culture consists of a unique set of values, beliefs and practices. However, a common thread across cultures is the apparent importance of preserving aspects of those cultures throughout generations.

In a new paper published in the journal *Psychological Review*, Cory Cobb, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of Health Behavior at the Texas A&M University School of Public Health, and colleagues from the University of Texas at Austin, proposed a cultural continuity hypothesis stating that humans are universally motivated to retain and preserve key parts of their cultures across time and space.

“These cultural aspects likely give people within that culture a sense of belonging and identity,” Cobb said. “This is similar to the way people create internal narratives about themselves that inform different aspects of their lives.”

The researchers reviewed literature in sociology, psychology and anthropology to support their hypothesis and explore factors influencing varying cultural preservation efforts. Extensive research has shown that virtually all cultures share a need to preserve those aspects of the culture that people see as important.

The cultural continuity hypothesis also notes that which parts of a culture are preserved, and to what degree, vary widely across populations and generations.

Such variations are apparent in immigrant populations where younger generations often identify more closely with the host

country’s culture than that of their group’s country of origin. Studies have found that children placing different importance on cultural features than their parents is a common occurrence.

Similarly, some elements of culture are more likely to be preserved over time than others. This depends on factors like the perceived value of those cultural traits and whether they are beneficial in daily life. The perceived status of those working to preserve cultural aspects also plays a role in the degree of cultural transmission.

“This evolving process means that cultural values can shift over time, and also that perceived threats against a population’s cultural heritage often lead to greater efforts to retain important cultural aspects,” Cobb said.

Although cultural retention practices vary widely, Cobb and colleagues indicate that cultural continuity itself can be seen in all cultures.

Evidence for preference toward familiar faces, language and music in infants, the universal presence of customs and rituals to preserve culture, and efforts by immigrant families to retain cultural aspects in new efforts all support cultural continuity being something common to all cultures.

Efforts to preserve important cultural aspects also appears to be crucial to psychological and social well-being. Multiple studies have identified an association between successful cultural retention and



positive mental health in many populations.

In contrast, wide cultural differences between older and younger generations are associated with negative mental health and behavioural outcomes in youth such as higher rates of depression, family conflict and poor academic performance.

Cobb and colleagues state that they welcome further testing and development of their cultural continuity hypothesis. In their study they identified several areas in need of further exploration.

These include exploring how culture retention might satisfy psychological needs beyond those already identified, determining which cultural aspects are most worthy of retention in different populations, and digging into the many factors that influence cultural continuity’s effects.

Although all cultures are unique in their practices, this study indicates people are compelled to preserve the aspects they consider most important.

neurosciencenews.com June 13, 2025

Brain Circuit Discovery Reveals How Empathy Shapes Our Behaviour

A team of researchers at UCL and UCLH have identified the key brain regions that are essential for logical thinking and problem solving.

The findings, published in *Brain*, help to increase our understanding of how the human brain supports our ability to comprehend, draw conclusions, and deal with new and novel problems – otherwise known as reasoning skills.

To determine which brain areas are necessary for a certain ability, researchers study patients with brain lesions (an area of damage in the brain) caused by stroke or brain tumours.

This approach, known as ‘lesion-deficit mapping’, is the most powerful method for localising function in the human brain.

Studying brain injuries can be difficult and time-consuming because researchers need a large number of patients with specific brain damage. This kind of damage can affect how a person thinks, feels, or moves.

However, very few research centres have access to enough patients to conduct these studies effectively.

As a result, previous studies have mainly relied on functional imaging (fMRI) techniques in healthy individuals. However, these results can sometimes be misleading as they provide correlational rather than causal evidence.

The new study, led by researchers at the UCL Queen Square Institute of Neurology and Department of Neuropsychology at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, UCLH, used lesion-deficit mapping to investigate 247 patients with unilateral focal brain lesions in either the left or right frontal (front) or posterior (back) regions of the brain. An additional 81 healthy individuals served as controls.

To assess reasoning skills in these patients, the researchers developed two new tests.

These included a verbal deductive reasoning task (a type of puzzle where participants are asked to find relationships between words to solve problems), which included questions such as: “If Sarah is smarter than Diana and Sarah is smarter than Heather, is Diana smarter than Heather?”

And a nonverbal analogical reasoning task (a type of puzzle where participants are asked to use pictures, shapes or numbers to figure out logical patterns and solve problems), with questions like: “Which set of numbers is 1,2,3 most similar to: 5,6,7 or 6,5,7?”

The results showed that people with damage to the right frontal lobe had a much harder time on both tests compared to those with damage in other areas. They made about 15% more mistakes than the other patients and healthy individuals.

Lead author, Dr Joseph Mole (UCL Queen Square Institute of Neurology and Department of Neuropsychology, UCLH) said: “Our study explores how the front right part of the brain helps people think and solve new problems.

“It also shows that our two new tests can help detect reasoning problems in individuals with brain damage, improving diagnosis and treatment.”

Senior author, Professor Lisa Cipolotti (UCL Queen Square Institute of Neurology and Department of Neuropsychology, UCLH) added: “By combining a detailed cognitive investigation in a large sample of brain-damaged patients with advanced lesion mapping techniques – developed by Professor Parashkev Nachev and his team at the UCL Queen Square Institute of Neurology – we have deepened our understanding of the complex and, so far, poorly understood, neural structures underlying human reasoning.

“Our findings show a close connection between the right frontal brain network involved in reasoning and the right frontal brain network essential for fluid intelligence (our ability to solve problems without prior experience).

“This suggests that a common area of the brain plays a critical role in both reasoning and fluid intelligence.”

Continued on page 11

supplementally...

by John Blinke

Ancient people were as smart and clever as we are. We know this because hunter-gatherers in Turkey built Gobekli-Tepe long before Egyptian farmers built Karnak. We may grudgingly give these folks credit for their accomplishments, but we still resist recognising others for the same level of cleverness we have. Some people take this too far, insisting that a mediaeval-level civilisation rose immediately after the most recent ice age, and fell when a comet impact initiated the Younger Dryas cold spell.

Still, people got to the Americas somehow. Did they walk or paddle? In the Mediterranean, settlers crossed 100km of deep water to reach Malta from Sicily. They certainly did not walk!

Historic Glass Brain

“Vesuvius Turned a Roman Man’s Brain Into Glass.” (Scientific Reports) Smithsonianmag.org, March 3, 2025.
Some of the victims of Italy’s Mount Vesuvius were immortalised by the casts left by their bodies when they were covered in volcanic ash in 79CE. But a 20 year old college custodian in the small Roman town of Herculaneum also gave us a piece of his mind. Well, just his brain. It was transformed into a lump of

“Scientists have found several kinds of evidence that people from Sicily settled on the remote Malta archipelago 8,500 years ago. That’s a thousand years longer than previous research had indicated.”

black glass in a rare kind of soft tissue preservation. Researchers from Roma Tre University, in Italy, say a thin hot cloud of volcanic ash probably enveloped the man without causing the catastrophic damage a denser pyroclastic flow would have inflicted. Then the remains cooled quickly to vitrify parts of the brain and spinal column. Some experts doubt whether the glassy lumps were really a brain, but it contained traces of neurons and axons.

Maltese Voyaging

Nature, April 9, 2025. Scientists have found several kinds of evidence that people from Sicily settled on the remote Malta archipelago 8,500 years ago. That’s a thousand years longer than previous research had indicated. They found stone tools along with animal remains and charcoal that could be dated. The assumption has been that humans didn’t really start to get around until technology improved around 7,500 years ago. And a place like semi-desert Malta did not seem to have much to offer for the effort.

Super-Greenhouse

New Scientist July 4, 2025.
252 million years ago, carbon dioxide in the atmosphere rose to

epic levels due to volcanic activity. The climate heated up. Green plants died off to a great extent so they were not able to throttle the CO₂ and could not mitigate the heating. Forests were replaced by scrub brush. It was a bad situation that should have corrected itself in 100,000 years. But according to scientists at University of Adelaide in Australia, it actually persisted for millions of years. The old equilibrium had died and a new one took its place for 5 million years. This is frighteningly similar to our current climate situation.

Too Much!

“Cockatoos Have Learned To Operate Drinking Fountains In Australia” (Biology Letters)
Problem-solving is no problem for wild sulphur-crested cockatoos in Australia. They are world famous for their ability to raid closed garbage bins. Now, they are tapping the public water supply. According to scientists at University of Nevada, the birds prefer to slurp water from public drinking fountain rather than drinking from ponds and puddles. They stand on the handle of a water fountain and apply weight until water starts to flow. Then they grab the spigot with their beaks and drink. Crows are not dexterous enough to do this, even though they are equally smart. And only some flocks of cockatoos have the knack. They seem to learn by watching successful birds perform the task.

(Continued from p6)

University of Chicago demonstrated that babies who use more gestures at 14 months had significantly larger vocabularies and better verbal IQ later on in life.

While the 10% result in this latest study may seem modest, the implications are notable. While the study does not imply that all cognitive ability is fixed at seven months old, the researchers feel that the idea of cognitive-testing infants to predict cognitive ability at age 30 is an exciting one. The study also sheds light on the impact of early life environ-

ments, and how they shape lifelong cognition. If cognitive ability can be predicted as early as infancy, then it emphasises the importance of this period in our lives for our cognitive development and outcomes decades later. And, while polygenic scores can't predict exactly how smart you'll be in later life, it gives a clue about your genetic potential. But keep in mind, environment and life experience still matter a lot. Your genes set a starting point, not a limit.

Taryn Dryfhout

(Continued from p9)

The researchers believe that these findings have significant clinical implications, as the two new tests can help identify cognitive impairments that would otherwise go undetected.

With further validation and implementation, the team aim to make their new reasoning tests widely available in the NHS, addressing an unmet need for tools specifically designed for assessing right frontal lobe dysfunction.

neurosciencenews.com April 26, 2025

OFFICER DIRECTORY

Chairman:

Ms Robin Crawford
chairman-mil@mensa.org

Director of Administration:

Mx Mel Jäger
admin-mil@mensa.org

Director of Development:

Mr Eivind Olsen
development-mil@mensa.org

Treasurer:

Ms Jovana Kostic
treasurer-mil@mensa.org

Dir. Smaller National Mensas:

Ms Sorana Burcusel
dsnm-mil@mensa.org

Immediate Past Chairman:

Therese Moodie-Bloom

Honorary President:

Mr Chris Leek

International SIGHT Coordinators:

Mr Henkhenk Broekhuizen
Ms Andrea Schwelm
Ms Audrey Chooi
Mr Bill Zigo
sight@mensa.org

International SIG Coordinator:

Mr Steve Coles
SIGs@mensa.org

Ombudsman:

Ms Vicki Herd
ombudsman@mensa.org

Mensa International

Executive Director:
Mr Michael Feenan
mensa@slatebarn.com
executivedirector-mil@mensa.org

Slate Barn, Church Lane,
Caythorpe, Lincolnshire
NG32 3EL, UK

mensainternational@mensa.org
+44 (0) 1400272 675

www.mensa.org

EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor: Ms Kate Nacard, 36 Macaulay Rd, Stanmore NSW 2048 Australia
mwjeditor@mensa.org T: +61 402152858

Sub-editors:

Science: Mr John Blinck

johnb44221@Mac.com

Puzzles: Ms Therese Moodie-Bloom

tmbmensa@gmail.com

Profiles: Dr Susan Jensen

suejensen57@gmail.com

Features: Ms Taryn Dryfhout

anotherdesperatehousewife@gmail.com

Proofreader: Ms Christine Pretty

Therese's BRAIN TEASERS

MENSA MINI IQ CHALLENGE

1. Which two words associated with trains make up the name of another kind of vehicle?

2. Leadership is displayed by the person represented below.

SCCAPTAHOOL

3. Which pleated collar sounds very unsmooth?

4. Find a word for each pair of words below, which can be added to the end of the first word, and also to the beginning of the second word, to make two new words.

BAT		ADS
PIGS		OW
AD		ICE
KING		HER
LA		ME
BOO		THING

Now read down the centre boxes to find out why Jackie won't play golf with Kyles.

5. Mary was 16 two days ago, yet next year she'll turn 19. What day is it?

If you would like to discuss answers directly with MENSA, you can email Therese at therese@mensa.org.au

6. What number comes next?

67	35	19	11	7	?
----	----	----	----	---	---

7. Which word does not belong?



8.

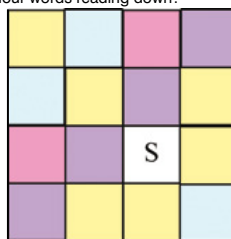
62	28	90
? (a)	? (b)	28
77	41	118

9. John is a quarter of Bob's age now, but in 30 years time, he'll be half as old as Bob will be. How old will John be then?

SCORECARD: 1 POINT FOR EACH CORRECT ANSWER

15 - 16	Genius material
10 - 14	Excellent lateral thinker
6 - 9	Very good
4 - 6	Good
0 - 4	Bad hair day

10. Each colour represents a different letter. Given that the yellow represents one of the two vowels used, can you fill in the coloured squares so that the four words reading across are the same as the four words reading down?



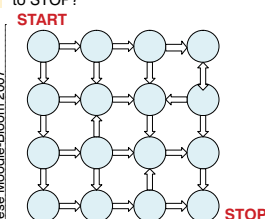
11. Fill in the missing letters to find the word which is the opposite in meaning to the other four:

- a) T _ _ _ T _ _
b) _ _ E A _ _ A _ E
c) _ _ _ _ OO _ _
d) _ _ I N _ _ I N _ _
e) _ H I _ _ _ T H _ _ _ I _ T

12. Which of the above has a namesake in Disneyland?

13. If Jack arrived home the day after the week after the day before Jim; and Tom arrived home the day before the week before the day after Bill, and Bill got in the day after the week before the day after yesterday; and Jim got back a week before yesterday, who was first back, and who was the last back?

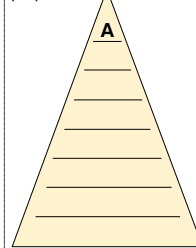
14. How many different routes are there from START to STOP?



© Therese Moodie-Bloom 2007

15. Which number is three times the sum of its digits?

16. Start with 'A' and build down to 'SPARKLER' by adding one letter at each step. Letters can be rearranged at each step, but must produce a proper word.



SPARKLER (Other combinations are acceptable).
27. 16. A AS SPA SPAR SPAR PEARLS SPARKLE
12. Scrooge. 13. Tom arrived first, Jack last. 14. 9. 15.
(Others are Tightwad, Cheapskate, Scrooge and Skintight).
9. 45. 10. OPAL POLO ALSO LOOP 11. e) Philanthropist
All others can be used as collective nouns. 8. 8. (a) 15 (b) 13.
she'll be 18; so next year she'll turn 19. 6. 5. 7. Strangle
yesterday (Dec 31) she turned 17. At the end of this year
will just hit the 100. 5. Today is Jan 1. Dec 30 Mary was 16;
1. Stationwagon. 2. School capta-in. 3. Ruff (rough). 4. He

mensa world journal

OCTOBER 2025 | EDITION | 153



GLAM & eGLAM Cancún, 2025

p5

MENSA INTERNATIONAL

JOIN THE CONVERSATIONS AT

<https://hub.mensa.org>

from the editor...



- we have two ExComm columns this month. On p3 we hear about member safety from Mensa Germany's Peter Fröhler, and on p4, our Treasurer Jovana Kostic brings us her thoughts after her first year in office

- on p5 there's a report on the very first Gathering of Latin American Mensas (GLAM) held in Mexico in July, while on p6, our Features Editor looks into whether AI is making us 'dumber'

- our Member Profile is on p7 as per usual

- on p8, Hiroyuki Shigeta, a member of Mensa Japan shares his thoughts on "War and Peace"

- our Science guru, John Blinke brings us the latests snippets of scientific news on p10

- the Officer Directory is on p11, and Therese's Brain Teasers are on p12

Happy Reading!

Kate

Cover photo courtesy of Xavier Alexandro Díaz, a member of Mensa Mexico

Dementia Often Goes Undiagnosed for Over 3 Years...

People with dementia are diagnosed an average of 3.5 years after symptoms are first noticed, or even longer (4.1 years) for those with early-onset dementia, finds a new study led by UCL researchers.

The study, published in the *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, is the first systematic review and meta-analysis of global evidence examining time to diagnosis in dementia. The researchers reviewed data from thirteen previously published studies which took place in Europe, US, Australia and China, reporting data on 30,257 participants.

The research team was investigating the average interval between symptom onset (rated by patients or family carers using interviews or medical records) to the final diagnosis of dementia.

Lead author Dr Vasiliki Orgeta (UCL Division of Psychiatry) said: "Timely diagnosis of dementia remains a major global challenge, shaped by a complex set of factors, and specific healthcare strategies are urgently needed to improve it. Other studies estimate that only 50-65% of cases are ever diagnosed in high-income countries, with many countries having even lower diagnostic rates.

"Timely diagnosis can improve access to treatments and for some people prolong the time living with mild dementia before symptoms worsen."

In a pooled meta-analysis of 10 of the included studies, the researchers found that it typically takes 3.5 years from the first alert of

symptoms to a patient receiving a diagnosis of dementia, or 4.1 years for those with early-onset dementia, with some groups more likely to experience longer delays.

They found that younger age at onset and having frontotemporal dementia were both linked to longer time to diagnosis.

Dr Orgeta said: "Our work highlights the need for a clear conceptual framework on time to diagnosis in dementia, developed in collaboration with people with dementia, their carers, and supporters."

Dr Phuong Leung (UCL Division of Psychiatry) said: "Symptoms of dementia are often mistaken for normal ageing, while fear, stigma, and low public awareness can discourage people from seeking help."

Professor Rafael Del-Pino-Casado, of the University of Jaén, Spain, said: "Within healthcare systems, inconsistent referral pathways, limited access to specialists, and under-resourced memory clinics can create further delays. For some, language differences or a lack of culturally appropriate assessment tools can make access to timely diagnosis even harder."

Dr Orgeta added: "To speed up dementia diagnosis, we need action on multiple fronts. Public awareness campaigns can help improve understanding of early symptoms and reduce stigma, encouraging people to seek help sooner.

"Clinician training is critical to improve early recognition and referral, along with access to early intervention."

(extracted from *neurosciencenews.com* 7/25

from your ExComm

*from Mensa Germany's
Peter Fröhler*

Member Safety in Mensa Germany

Across our governing documents, we refer to the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of our members. But rarely do we talk about their needs. Member safety, in particular, is a basic need of growing importance, and one that more and more national Mensa groups are now taking seriously.

At Mensa Germany, I firstly think about the safety of children and youth who we take charge of when we run activities for them. But we are also responsible to ensure the well-being of every participant at the wide range of events we organise.

Our Approach

Child and Youth Safety

Mensa Germany is maintaining strict regulations to safeguard children and youth. Supervisors are carefully selected from among trusted members, thoroughly vetted, and screened in accordance with national laws. Before working with minors, they must also submit an extended police certificate of good conduct, complete appropriate training, and sign a code of conduct to ensure responsible and respectful behavior.

We strongly encourage other national Mensa organisations to adopt

similar practices to protect their youngest members.

Safety at Events

While we take many precautions, serious incidents can still occur. Some members may be especially sensitive to such situations and can be deeply affected. To address this, Mensa Germany has established the "People of Trust".

They are introduced at the beginning of the event and wear a badge when they are on duty.

The People of Trust serve as on-site contacts for members who feel uncomfortable or unsure in any situation. That also includes, but is not limited to, feeling threatened, or harassed. They are available in cases involving inappropriate behaviour such as unwanted physical contact, offensive remarks, bullying, sexism, racism, or other boundary violations. This team will be present at the upcoming IBD meeting in October, where we will also hold a workshop titled "Building Trust and How to Deal with Boundary Violations".

Safety outside Events

There is a single point of contact for any member in case a violation of boundaries has occurred. It is

reachable by phone or e-mail and tended to by professionals. In severe cases, the point of contact notifies the "intervention team".

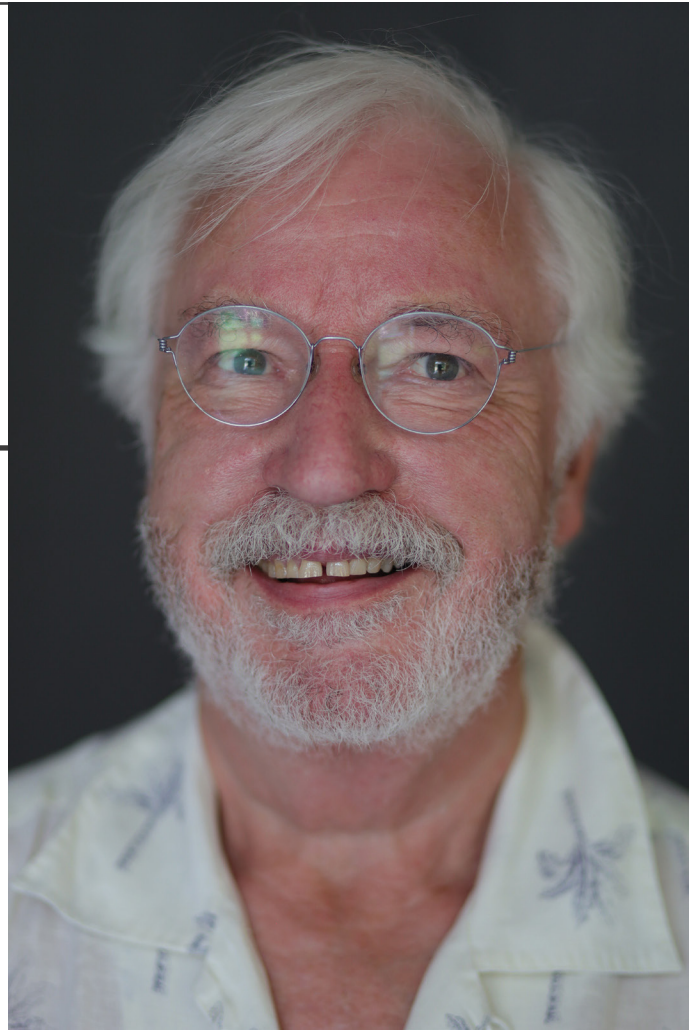
The intervention team acts as a dedicated group if more serious incidents, such as abuse, violence, or assault occur.

To proactively prevent such occurrences, we are working on a comprehensive institutional protection plan. This includes a code of conduct, systematic training, and other preventive measures designed to foster a safe, respectful environment. Our guiding principle is that awareness, not avoidance, is key to protecting our members.

Support and Prevention

We also offer our many volunteers

(Continued on p4)



free access to an independent psychosocial counselling centre. Prevention remains our goal, but we acknowledge that no system is flawless. Therefore, it is vital to create a culture where those who are affected or those with concerns can reach out for help without fear. This includes not only victims and witnesses, but also those accused and the volunteers involved.

Such openness requires courage and commitment, and we deeply respect all those who step forward. We are committed to fostering this climate of trust and will continue to do everything we can to ensure people feel safe turning to our contact and advisory centres when needed.

Membership Oversight

In line with the Mensa International Constitution, admission to Mensa Germany is based solely on IQ testing. However, we also maintain a safeguard regarding former members who left under problematic circumstances. If such an individual seeks to rejoin, their application must be reviewed and approved by the board. This ensures that individuals previously removed for behavioural reasons cannot return without proper oversight. This policy has been reviewed and approved by the Constitutions Review Officer on multiple occasions.

The above text has benefited from inputs and review by Dominik Konrad and Christian Peters who lead the Mensa Germany Prevention Team.

Peter Fröhler
Mensa Germany

from your ExComm

*from the Treasurer,
Jovana Kostic*

July marked a full year since I took on the role of International Treasurer. That's one third of the mandate and somehow it feels like both a blink and a marathon. Perhaps this is because, like many volunteers in Mensa, I wear more than one hat in my daily life. When I'm not in a spreadsheet or a strategy session for Mensa, I'm doing exactly that in the corporate world.

Over this past year, I've seen just how much the two worlds—professional life and international volunteer work—have in common. More than anything, this first year reminded me how quickly things can change and how essential it is that we adapt as an organisation to keep pace.

When Mensa was founded 80 years ago, the world was rebuilding after a war. Intelligence was seen as a resource to be harnessed for peace and progress. Mensa's mission was forward-looking: to bring together the intellectually gifted, not for elitism but for contribution.

Today, the world moves at a pace our founders could hardly have imagined. Technology, geopolitics, work, identity—everything is shifting. Fast. Raw intelligence remains at the core of Mensa; however, in a world as complex and dynamic as ours, it's what we do with that intelligence that truly matters. It's about channelling it with purpose, empathy and agility to shape



solutions, inspire progress and serve a world that needs more than just answers. It needs wisdom in action. Relevance matters. If we want to be a home for future generations of gifted individuals, we must constantly ask ourselves: what are we offering them? Are we helping them to grow and challenge themselves to contribute meaningfully?

Being Treasurer of Mensa International isn't about guarding a safe. It's about stewarding trust. Every pound we manage, every project we approve, every partnership we pursue—it's all a reflection of how seriously we take the future of this organisation. Much of this work happens behind the scenes and it's rarely glamorous yet it matters deeply.

(Continued on page 9)

GLAM & eGLAM Cancún, Mexico, 2025

For the first time ever, Mexico proudly served as host nation for an official Mensa International event. From 11 to 14 July 2025, in the vibrant city of Cancún, Quintana Roo, we convened the Gathering of Latin American Mensas (GLAM) 2025.

We welcomed forty in-person participants representing nine countries. The on-site program ran in conjunction with our 2025 National Summer Meeting and the second edition of the Mensa Mexico International Award for Research and Arts, creating a milestone moment for our organisation and for the broader High Ability community in our country.

When Mensa Mexico goes to a new location, we do much more than simply show up. Guided by Mensa's core values of intelligence, curiosity and service, we design immersive experiences that build relationships, learn from local communities and leave something positive behind. In Cancún we curated an integrated program that combined well-being, culture, nature and social engagement in partnership with the warm community that welcomed us.

To generate lasting impact, delegates assembled and donated school supply kits to a foundation that supports children undergoing cancer treatment. We also directed contributions to environmental



conservation initiatives and cultural institutions in the region. These actions advanced three pillars that are central to sustainable development: education, environmental stewardship and cultural preservation.

Our environmental engagement extended to hands-on volunteer work in Cancún's Sea Turtle Protection Program, for which participants received appropriate training before assisting with nest protection and awareness activities.

In addition, we visited the Cancún Maya Museum and the adjacent San Miguelito Archaeological Zone, experiences that deepened our appreciation of the area's extraordinary heritage and reinforced our support for ongoing educational outreach to future generations.

Because human connection matters, the agenda also included ecotourism outings, wellness intervals at the host hotel and traditional Maya ceremonies. These shared moments created space for reflection, integration and friendship

across borders and disciplines.

Engagement actually began a week earlier with eGLAM, the first 100% online regional event open to the general public, aimed at bringing Mensans closer together and connecting with communities outside Mensa that are interested in us. It included game tournaments, workshops and free conferences that connected 1,014 participants from 16 different countries, extending the reach of the gathering and enriching the conversations that continued in Cancún.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who joined us, virtually and in person, and who contributed time, expertise and enthusiasm to make GLAM 2025 an unforgettable chapter in the history of Mensa Mexico.

¡Muchas gracias!

Xavier Alejandro Díaz

(Xavier Alejandro Díaz has been a member of Mensa Mexico for 15 years.)

Is AI Making Us Dumber? by Taryn Dryfhout

Since the appearance of ChatGPT three years ago, mounting questions around the role of artificial intelligence (AI) and its impact on human intelligence have circulated without any real studies to speak to this problem.

While the impact of AI has been debated since early episodes of *The Twilight Zone*, with AI technologies becoming an increasingly present part of our homes, jobs, and daily lives, new research seeks to address the question that we are all thinking: is AI “dumbing down” human intelligence? According to a recent study by scientists from MIT, it appears so.

Of course, this is not new. People have questioned the impact of technology on our intelligence for centuries. Socrates warned that through writing, people would learn to rely on external marks, rather than their memory, and in the 15th century the invention of the printing press caused fear that printing would diminish intellectual depth and cause an information overload. The industrial revolution raised questions about the mechanisation of thinking, and modern intellectuals such as T.S. Eliot speculated that the rise of mass media would lead to passive consumption, in place of critical thinking. In the 1970s, even the introduction of the calculator in school classrooms raised concerns.

In the current age, the rise of computers and the internet has raised more serious concerns about eroding memory, concentration, and critical thinking. The smartphone and social media era has raised concerns about the constant

connection that we have with devices and how it impacts on our real-world cognitive development. Every generation has worried that new technologies will erode critical skills, and questioned whether the trade off of cognition for convenience is worth it.

Today, in a world where instant answers, essays, and conversations are possible, we are offloading more cognitive effort than ever before. Anyone who owns a mobile phone or computer can access this through AI tools such as Siri, Google Gemini, and ChatGPT. Whilst it might seem like a harmless quick fix, the offloading of our executive processing to AI, is becoming an everyday event. AI allows us to check out from some of our cognitively demanding tasks by delegating them, and outsourcing our brain work.

This is where the idea of “use it, or lose it” comes into play. Whilst generative AI has the potential to improve our lives in many ways, automating our cognitive tasks is depriving our brains of the opportunities to practise its cognitive skills and weakening the neural architecture that supports these. Just as neglecting physical workouts will lead to muscle deterioration and poorer physical performance, outsourcing our brain work is detrimental to its health.

This latest research, which took place over a four-month period, found that the use of ChatGPT to help write academic essays results in a decline in user’s ability to think critically, and prevents people from developing basic problem-solving skills. The team at MIT asked participants to write a series of



three essays using either ChatGPT, a search-engine, or their brains only. Cognitive engagement was then examined using electrical activity in the brain, and through analysis of the essays.

The results showed that the cognitive engagement of the group who used AI, was significantly lower than the other two groups. Understandably, the AI group also had a harder time recalling quotes from their essay, and felt a lower sense of ownership over their work.

Minutes after the participants wrote their essays, more than 80% couldn’t recall a single sentence from it. Those who did not use AI had no trouble remembering.

After this, the research participants switched roles so that those who had previously used AI now had to write one using the brain only. The group who went from AI to brain-only performed worse and their engagement in this final essay was far below the engagement level of the initial brain-only group, suggesting that the use of AI diminished their cognitive skills over the course of the experiment, causing them to perform more poorly when they had to use their brains. In addition, brain connectivity during the writing of these essays dropped 47%. The researchers called this an

(Continued on page 11)

member profile

by Susan Jensen

American Mensan Dr. Jenny Grant Rankin helps people communicate technical information in clear, engaging ways — even when audiences bring inherent biases against the ideas being presented. Through her books, lectures, TED Talks, and other work, she shows educators and professionals how to make dry or complex material resonate across political, cultural, or disciplinary divides. Her work has earned international recognition, including a U.S. flag flown over the Capitol in her honour and accommodations in a Cambridge University tower (including a butler) while teaching there.

Jenny grew up in Laguna Beach, California, in a home where intellectual curiosity and creativity were the norm. Her architect father and artist mother encouraged her and her sister to take on hands-on projects, whether building a wooden tricycle or operating a mitre saw before elementary school, or hiking and climbing California cliffs, sometimes to the alarm of nearby bystanders. Her parents answered endless childhood questions — “Why don’t inanimate objects have feelings?” — with enthusiasm, fueling Jenny’s love of learning.

By fourth grade, she was reading and writing at a high school senior level, often completing classwork early and spending the rest of her school day drawing.

Her artistic interests led to a scholarship at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where

she earned her degree in art. After graduation, she moved to Edinburgh, Scotland, knowing no one and finding work quickly as an aerobics instructor — a job she had started at age 17 and would continue for decades — and as a bartender, learning on the fly while grateful for the forgiving patience of Scottish patrons.

The experience sparked a lifelong love of travel and cultural exploration. Jenny’s ability to assess different styles of learning was honed in her first job as a junior high English teacher. That work deepened her interest in how people process information, eventually leading her to earn a PhD in education and a Doctorate of Humane Letters (LHD).

Today she writes extensively for educators and researchers, serves as an international speaker and consultant on education and data use, and continues contributing to the conversation on how professionals present information effectively.

A Mensa member since 2014, Jenny has been active in Southern California’s Orange County Mensa,



including serving as Gifted Youth Coordinator, on American Mensa’s Diversity Committee, and on Mensa panels at Comic-Con.

She is happily divorced, enjoys a wide social circle, and lives in California with her teenage daughter and their dog, Sidekick. She is currently working on her 15th book, *Data and Goliath: An Underdog’s Guide to Communicating Knowledge*. More about her work can be found at jennyrankin.com.

**Mark your calendars!
December 28 - January 1
Silvensa in Milano, Italy**

<https://2025.silvensa.org>

War and Peace — A Structural Consideration

Eighty years since the atomic bombing and the memory that lives within me...

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. On August 6 and 9, 1945, two atomic bombs instantly claimed countless lives.

Since childhood, I have grown up hearing stories from relatives who survived the aftermath of the bombings.

Their accounts carried not only the physical pain caused by radiation sickness but also the enduring emotional scars.

That is why the horror of war is by no means a thing of the past. It is a living memory, etched into the marrow of my bones.

The Rising Question: Why Does War Occur?

Every August in Japan, peace memorial ceremonies are held throughout the country to mark the end of the war.

The vow of “Never again shall we wage war” is deeply rooted in our society. And yet, the reality is that somewhere in the world, the flames of war still rage: the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the tensions between Israel and Iran, and numerous other regional conflicts.

Whenever I confront this reality, the same question arises: why does humanity continue to repeat war?

The Dual Nature of “The State”: As I pondered this question, one

symbolic event resurfaced in my mind: the “Kyūjō incident”, which occurred on August 14, 1945, just before the end of the war.

A group of young military officers, opposed to surrender, attempted a coup, trying to block the Emperor’s official declaration to end the war and this incident revealed that the Japanese state was far from being monolithic.

In other words, a nation does not function with a single unified will.

There are always internal divisions and conflicts, and at times, a small radical faction may act under the banner of “the state,” plunging the nation into war.

The Structural Tragedy Brought About by the Concept of Justice

Why do such internal divisions and radicalism take the form of war?

My hypothesis is paradoxical: it is that the very existence of the concept of “justice” serves as a mechanism that triggers war. Justice is often regarded as the foundation of our ethics and morals, yet throughout history, it has been used as the justification for countless wars.

Every war is legitimised by some form of “justice” in the eyes of its participants. Justice may sound noble and beautiful, but when multiple forms of justice collide, it becomes a double-edged sword that legitimises the most brutal acts of violence.



This “plurality of justice”, I believe, lies at the structural root of war as a tragedy.

Justice is merely an abstract concept created by human beings. Yet the moment it is believed to be “absolute”, it can lead nations, societies, and individuals into war.

Thus, the very birth of the concept of “justice” on Earth ironically contains the mechanism that gives rise to war.

How Can We Prevent War?

Still, if there is any “system” that might help ensure that war never occurs again, I believe it lies not only in treaties and military deterrence, but more importantly in a transformation of human consciousness.

Here are two proposals I would like to offer:

- we must spread the understanding—through education and dialogue— that

understanding, we must expand the “chain of friendship” among nations.

- By applying the logic that “a friend of a friend is also a friend” to international relations, we can connect and enlarge networks of friendly countries. The more relationships and mutual dependencies grow, the less rational and viable war becomes as an option.

The Significance of Continuing to ask “Why does war occur?” “Is lasting world peace truly possible?”

These are not questions with easy answers. They are often dismissed as idealistic. Yet I believe there is value in continuing to ask them. Questions compel us to face reality. And even the smallest step forward— taken with creativity and care in addressing real-world problems— can help promote constructive progress.

That is why I continue to ask:

Is a world without war truly impossible?

Hiroyuki Shigeta

(Hiroyuki is a member of Mensa Japan.)

DID YOU KNOW...

THAT MENSA HAS MEMBERS IN MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED COUNTRIES?

(continued from p4)

Over the past year, I’ve heard a wide range of views — some appreciative, others more sceptical — about the role MIL plays in our broader Mensa community. Some see it as distant or overly procedural; others expect it to solve everything from member benefits to visibility, often overlooking that it’s a structure designed to support not govern.

Let me try to reset the conversation. Mensa International isn’t a building in the UK or a list of committees. It’s the framework we have collectively established to foster consistency, coordination and ambition across a highly decentralised network. It exists not to dictate but to empower. When we stop seeing it as “them” and start recognising it as “us,” we unlock its full potential — a platform for unity, a driver of support and a tool for turning shared vision into real progress.

Looking ahead, my focus will stay on transparency, long-term planning and ensuring that our financial structure enables innovation rather than limits it. At the same time, I want to keep challenging us to act like the global organisation we aspire to be — smarter not just in intellect but in collaboration, accountability and shared direction.

Mensa has always thrived on the brilliance of individuals. To grow though, we need structures that scale trust. That’s what I hope to keep building. More than anything, I want to help Mensa show up in the world as what it truly can be — a community of gifted individuals who not only think well but do good and who are brave enough to rethink themselves from time to time. We’ve inherited something

remarkable. Let’s make sure we leave it even stronger.

Jovana Kostic

Treasurer, International Mensa
treasurer-mil@mensa.org

Did you know that...

The average brain weighs about 3 lbs (1.4 kgs) and of this, about 85% is taken up by the ‘upper brain’, the cerebrum. Covering the cerebrum is the ‘grey matter’ called the cerebral cortex, which consists of two hemispheres, connected by a large knot called the corpus callosum. The cerebral cortex is about 2 mm thick and contains about 9,000,000 neurons.

Each hemisphere in the cerebral cortex receives sensory information from the opposite side of the body, and each hemisphere also controls movements of the opposite side of the body.

From the left hemisphere, one’s rationality, logical and analytical abilities evolve, and it’s in the right hemisphere that emotional, intuitive and creative abilities are centred.

Neither hemisphere operates independently though, as the two sides complement each other. It would be impossible, for example, to create a piece of music without knowing the ‘structure’ of music — the knowledge involved in knowing key signatures, how notes are written, the values of the minim and crotchet, and so on.

Brainpower can be increased by pursuing activities that involve both sides of the brain.

KN

supplementally...

by John Blinke

Jet Set

Why do some galaxies have jets? It is not the galaxy but something it contains. If there is a jet, there will be an “accretion disk” associated with a supermassive black hole. The disk is made of gas and dust that is trying to feed itself to the hole. It cannot fall in from every angle at once, so it assembles into a flat, orderly disk of which the inner edge comes close to the smallest possible circular orbit. If stuff crosses the line at some normal pace, nothing spectacular happens. But when a substantial gob of matter touches it, the hole spews geysers of excess material from its poles until the balance is restored.

The jets, themselves, are focussed by tightly wound magnetic fields that are anchored on the event horizon. The spin of the hole winds the fields into tight coils that resemble electromagnets.

It is worth saying that all of this is “best guess” based on available observations and modelling. The situation will come into focus over time.

Pluto Plus Ten

Science News, July 11, 2025.

“New Horizons Visited Pluto 10 Years Ago. We’re Still Learning From It.”

Ten years ago, the New Horizons space craft flew by the dwarf planet, Pluto. The mission blew away all expectations of what Kuiper Belt bodies would be like. Scientists had thought of them as boring billiard

balls of snow. But Pluto is as diverse as any major planet, with a thin atmosphere and its own kind of tectonic activity. It even has a vast heart-shaped glacier made of frozen nitrogen!

See: “New Horizons Visited Pluto 10 Years Ago.” <https://www.sciencenews.org/article/new-horizons-pluto-flyby-anniversary>

RSV Not so Bad

Science News May 16, 2025.

“RSV Wasn’t As Hard On U.S. Babies Last Winter. This May Be Why” (Johns Hopkins University) RSV, or respiratory syncytial virus, can be rough on infants because their airways are tiny and doctors have a difficult time keeping them clear. Luckily, the 2024-2025 season was mild compared with the norm. Why? Well, this was the first time there was an RSV vaccine for Moms, and the first time monoclonal antibodies were available to treat infants who became infected. Doctors were amazed and pleased at the decrease in RSV hospitalisation rates.

Walk the Talk

Eurekalert NEWS RELEASE 29-JUL-2025.

“Pick Up The Pace Of Your Daily Walk To Boost Longevity, Experts

Say” (American Journal of Preventive Medicine). Walking is really good for your health. Do you know what is even better? Walking faster!

...15 minutes of fast walking were better for longevity than three hours of slow walking. That is to say, a 20% reduction in overall mortality.

Scientists at Vanderbilt University, have found that picking up your walking pace is hugely better than strolling. In fact, 15 minutes of fast walking were better for longevity than

three hours of slow walking. That is to say, a 20% reduction in overall mortality. This was already established for middle and upper class people.

Fungus in the Fields

ScienceDaily. July 23, 2025.

“The Fungus That Makes Bread Better For You” (Plants, People, Planet) Farmers use chemical fertilisers to maximise yields. This is a problem, because fertiliser costs money and the nitrogen runoff pollutes waterways. Scientists at University of Adelaide, in Australia have found that growing food crops in soil with the right kind of Rhizophagus irregularis fungus can increase yields and improve nutrition content. Soil fungus helps plants grow by infiltrating the soil with tiny filaments, letting roots get at more minerals.

(Continued from p6)

accumulation of “cognitive debt”. According to the research, when the participants used AI, but then had to use their brains, they were unable to perform as well as those who used their brains first, without first relying on AI. This suggests more than simply dependency, but rather, a cognitive weakening. A research paper from late 2024 also shows this detrimental effect on intelligence. Students were shown to “offload critical engagement” when they used AI, which resulted in “metacognitive laziness”.

Alarmingly, this latest research is part of a clearly forming pattern. Another study from the SBS Swiss Business School in Switzerland found

a similar result. When almost 700 people in the UK were tested, a significant correlation between frequent AI use and lowered critical thinking skills were demonstrated.

Similarly, a study done at the Microsoft and Carnegie Mellon University in Pennsylvania showed that people who used generative AI at least once a week had higher efficiency but lower critical thinking long-term. Other studies have suggested that using AI for memory-related tasks leads to a decline in our own memory capacity.

Being served information rather than acquiring it through cognitive effort is impacting our ability to think critically. So, what can

we do? If we want to maintain our cognitive skills, and protect our brain health we need to carefully consider how we engage with AI. Long-term brain health requires ongoing critical thinking, and making your brain redundant by reaching for AI could lead to terrible outcomes.

While using ChatGPT may be faster and feel more empowering, consider the lost engagement, and the loss of practice that your brain gets in this instance. We don't need to throw AI away, but we need to be intentional about how we use it. Use AI tools to assist your mind, not replace it. And, use it to build cognitive strength, not dependence.

TD

OFFICER DIRECTORY

Chairman:

Ms Robin Crawford
chairman-mil@mensa.org

Director of Administration:

Mx Mel Jäger
admin-mil@mensa.org

Director of Development:

Mr Eivind Olsen
development-mil@mensa.org

Treasurer:

Ms Jovana Kostic
treasurer-mil@mensa.org

Dir. Smaller National Mensas:

Ms Sorana Burcusel
dsnm-mil@mensa.org

Immediate Past Chairman:

Ms Therese Moodie-Bloom
tmbmensa@gmail.com

Honorary President:

Mr Chris Leek
chris.leek.uk@gmail.com

International SIGHT Coordinators:

Mr Henkhenk Broekhuizen
Ms Andrea Schwelm
Ms Audrey Chooi
Mr Bill Zigo
sight@mensa.org

International SIG Coordinator:

Mr Steve Coles
SIGs@mensa.org

Ombudsman:

Ms Vicki Herd
ombudsman@mensa.org

Mensa International

Executive Director:
Position Vacant
executivedirector-mil@mensa.org

mensainternational@mensa.org
+44 (0) 1400272 675
www.mensa.org

EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor: Ms Kate Nacard, 36 Macaulay Rd, Stanmore NSW 2048 Australia
mwjeditor@mensa.org T: +61 402152858

Sub-editors:

Science: Mr John Blinle

johnb44221@Mac.com

Puzzles: Ms Therese Moodie-Bloom

tmbmensa@gmail.com

Profiles: Dr Susan Jensen

suejensen57@gmail.com

Features: Ms Taryn Dryfhout

anotherdesperatehousewife@gmail.com

Proofreader: Ms Christine Pretty

Therese's BRAIN TEASERS

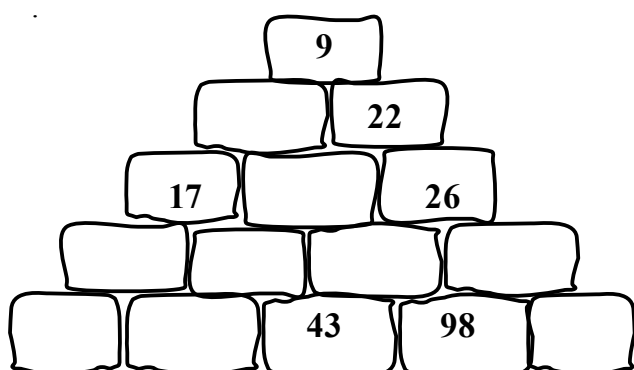
Cryptosum

Each symbol represents a different digit from 1 to 9. The sum of the digits in each row and column is shown. Find the sum of the numbers along the diagonal line from the top left-hand corner.

				25
				16
				18
				18
25	17	11	24	?

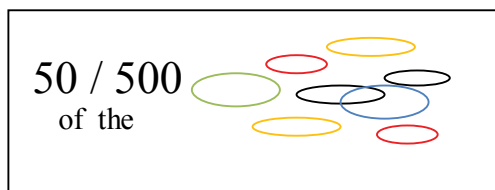
Cairn

The number on each stone represents the difference between the numbers in the two stones on which it sits. There is a two-digit number in each of the bottom stones, using the digits 0-9 once each.



Rebus

Decipher the rebus to find a book/movie title:



Two hearts

Behead a DECAL to produce a HEART.
Behead a TALLY to find a different HEART.

Synonym Chain

For each pair, find a word synonymous with both. eg Park [RESERVE] Book

- Advertisement [.....] Observe
- Score [.....] Attempt
- State [.....] Proviso
- Dog [.....] End
- Leaf [.....] Call
- Reserve [.....] Volume
- Corner [.....] Fish

Elemental Riddle

*Tin, iodine, add phosphorus too
Add on some erbium, best you can do.
Now there's a soldier, a marksman, I say,
He'll save us from foes – come what may.*

Answers

Cryptosum: 23 (9 + 4 + 2 + 8) **Cairn:** 26 50 43 98 17
Rebus: Lord of the Rings **Two Hearts:** (S/) ticker and (S/) core **Synonym Chain:** a) Notice b) try c) Condition d) Tail e) Page f) Book g) Angle **Elemental Riddle:** Sniper (Sn-I-P-Er)

© Therese Moodie-Bloom