

Space Coast Area Mensa



NEWSLETTER

Volume 40, Issue 9

September 2022

From Your LocSec

We have new members to welcome to the fold; **Gisela Bahr, Kal Hodges, Ada Palles, and Corey Wilk.**

September comes and there is little you can do about it. If you were thinking, or hoping, this was finally the year of the perpetual summer, it is not. However, though summer is certainly going to end on September 20th, you have an opportunity to end it with our epic Brevard Zoo event on the 17th. Debbie Freeland of Central Florida Mensa has been hard at work designing the registration site. I hope that everyone in our chapter is planning to attend with their families and significant others. More information is on page 3 of this very short newsletter.

Why is the newsletter so short, you may wonder. Well, since the registration period for the zoo is more truncated than what I had hoped, I need to get this to the printer on August 19th so that you are able to read it on the 22nd and give you as much time as I can for registering for the zoo.

I am only contributing a short article on personal VPN as your monthly dose of IT Security. I picked this topic because there is a lot of misinformation out there and the commercials are not being wholly honest with their viewers. I wanted to set the record straight and it was too small of a subject to warrant my normal 3 or 4 page writeup.

Lastly, a small correction is necessary for the letter everyone received regarding the upcoming election of ExComm. Ballots are for voting someone to be on ExComm only; it is not a vote for a specific position on ExComm. The new ExComm members will determine their positions at their first meeting.

Oh, almost forgot, I was mistaken last month on my last day as LocSec. The current ExComm will remain in place until after the elections which is in January 2023.

Jim Fitzgerald

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RVC10—Thomas G. Thomas

On July 28, 2022, a special session of the American Mensa Committee (AMC) was held via teleconference to review a Hearings Committee report recommending the expulsion of a member who had engaged in persistent harassment and intimidation of another member during authorized Mensa activities. The AMC concurred with the recommendation, considering the situation serious enough to authorize only the 10th expulsion from American Mensa over the past quarter century.

In order to preserve the privacy of the individuals involved, the discussion was held in closed session, so there will be no recording or detailed minutes available, although the charges, recommendation and decision can be found in the mini-minutes posted at <https://www.us.mensa.org/lead/amc/meeting-reports/> under the dropdown "2022-07-28 — Teleconference".

I was asked why this special session was necessary so soon after the previous AMC meeting just three weeks earlier. Unfortunately, the Hearings Committee did not provide the AMC with their report and recommendation until the day after the quarterly meeting, but the seriousness and immediacy of the charges required that the matter be addressed as quickly as possible, and our Bylaws required a minimum 14-day notice to the membership that a special meeting would be convened.

One of the pillars of Mensa held in its Constitution is that we provide a stimulating intellectual and social environment for our

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RVC10—Thomas G. Thomas

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members. Such an environment cannot be maintained when personal boundaries are deliberately, persistently, and dangerously crossed, and such behavior must be dealt with decisively if the society is to continue. Such actions are not taken lightly, but when threats to our members are brought to our attention they cannot be ignored.

The next meeting of the AMC will be held at the American Mensa headquarters in Hurst, TX on September 17, 2022.

Until next month (or until I see you online),

Thomas George Thomas

Email: RVC10@us.mensa.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/thomas.g.thomas>

Mensa Connect <https://connect.us.mensa.org/communities/local-groups/region-10>

Region 10 Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MensaRegion10/>

Let's Talk VPN

By Jim Fitzgerald

VPN stands for Virtual Private Network. Using VPN creates an encrypted connection between your device and the server providing the VPN. That is all it does. It will not create encrypted connections to every site you visit. If you are using a purchased VPN service for home use and think that you are protected from things like trojans, viruses, and ransomware, you would be mistaken. VPN affords you little to no protection unless the network you are connecting to is private. For my VPN connection to work, I authenticate to a company server which allows me to reach company resources I would otherwise have to be on location for. At the same time, I am able to go to youtube or google. Are they secure? Nope. If I go to a site and download a file with a trojan, it will still infect my system and, potentially, other company assets.

Bottom line: Virtual Private Networks are not private and they are not secure.

Why do so many people use them for their personal Internet surfing? Because they *think* it is more secure or they think their IP address is truly hidden. They believed the hype and don't understand all the nuances of how the Internet works. If you want to be secure on the Internet, follow safe browsing practices and secure your home network and connected devices.

The title of this section uses a common cipher

7 F J < 3 J > > O F V

Add one letter, not necessarily the same letter, to each word to find seven words that all have something in common.

MAT, SEW, ART, SAG, BAN, FAN, ICE

Answer is at the bottom of page 4

Brevard Zoo (Saturday Sep 17th)

By Jim Fitzgerald

First, many thanks to Debbie Freeland from Central Florida Mensa. She has worked very hard to create the registration site for the Brevard zoo event and I am very pleased to announce that it is now live and ready for you to register yourself, your family, and significant others.

Space Coast Area Mensa, Central Florida Mensa, and Tampa Bay Mensa are subsidizing their members and their guests which lowers the cost for each participant to just \$8.

When: Saturday, September 17th, from 9:00 AM to closing

Who: Members, immediate family, significant others

A tentative schedule for the day follows:

9:00–9:30 am — Plan to **arrive at the zoo**. The zoo opens to non-members at 9:30 and they recommend we arrive early.

10:00 am — **Lodge opens** for hospitality.

10:30 am — First animal encounter: the **great horned owl**. Instantly recognizable, the great horned owl is among the most beloved American bird species as well as the unofficial Mensa “mascot.”

12:00 pm — **Lunch** served in lodge.

1:30 pm — Second animal encounter: a **sloth**. Couch potato alert! Arguably the slowest-moving mammals in the world, sloths will only descend from the forest canopy to move to another tree or go to the bathroom.

2:00 pm — Hospitality **lodge closes**.

3:30 pm — **Latest entry** to the zoo.

5:00 pm — **Zoo closes**.

Our schedule includes plenty of time to socialize with Mensans from Region 10, ample time to explore the zoo on your own, and a Mensa-level scavenger hunt designed by your LocSec. Plus, for the more adventurous who would like to take advantage of the zoo’s kayaking or Tree Top Trek (ziplining) experiences, group discounts are available with pre-registration.

For more details including lunch options or to register for the event, please visit our registration page at <https://centralfloridamensa.org/members/events/register-brevard-zoo>. You will need to log into our site with your Mensa username and password.

All registrations must be received and paid by noon on September 6th to be included in the event.

Questions about the event? Contact Jim Fitzgerald at locsec@scam.us.mensa.org.

Questions about the registration process? Contact Debbie Freeland at membership@cfm.us.mensa.org.

ExComm Meeting Minutes from 8/17/22

By Jim Fitzgerald

Meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM on 8/17/22. In attendance:

Jim Fitzgerald: LocSec

Arleigh Sharpe: Deputy LocSec

Val Valek: Treasurer

Thomas Thomas: Regional Vice Chair

Bob Roth: Area Coordinator—Indian River County

Discussions and Motions:

Minutes from ExComm meeting held on 7/19/22 were read and a motion was made to accept. Motion passed.

Financial report was provided by Treasurer **Val Valek**. General account contains \$4,055.49 and the reserve account contains \$860.91.

LocSec showed off the shiny, new Space Coast Area Mensa buttons. These will be handed out to members as they attend events and will allow us to find each other in event venues.

Robert Roth suggested printing out extra September newsletters to hand out at the Brevard zoo event. ExComm concurred and will print 50 additional copies which will be handed out by the LocSec.

Motion made to adjourn at 7:25 PM. Motion passed.

Space Coast Area Mensa

Officers and Appointees

Local Secretary	Jim Fitzgerald	locsec@scam.us.mensa.org
Deputy Local Secretary	Arleigh Sharpe	asstlocsec@scam.us.mensa.org
Treasurer	Val Valek	treasurer@scam.us.mensa.org
Recording Secretary	Rick Bugado	recsec@scam.us.mensa.org
Area Coordinators		
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Indian River County	Robert Roth	robfovrobeach@aol.com
Testing Coordinator	Hank Rhodes	mensatest@cfl.rr.com
Testing Proctor	Julie Costopoulos	
Testing Proctor	Harold (Bud) Long	
Testing Proctor	Hank Rhodes	
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Regional Vice Chair (Area 10)	Thomas G. Thomas	RVC10@us.mensa.org
Gifted Youth Coordinator	Vacant	
Ombudsman	Tom Lempicke	tom@lempicke.com

Mensa Links

SCAM Web Site

<http://www.spacecoast.us.mensa.org>

SCAM Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/138237718381/>

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/>

Receiving the newsletter electronically is easy. Just follow these simple steps:

1. Go to <https://members.us.mensa.org/eweb/DynamicPage.aspx?webcode=CommPref>
2. Edit the top box "Publication Preferences" and set 'Local Group Newsletter' to "Electronic" and click 'Save'
3. Done. Told ya it was easy and you save our chapter print costs. Win-win.

The cipher used in the title of this section is called Pigpen and translates to **Gray Matters**. You may run into this in an escape room.

Answer from Page 2: **MEAT, STEW, TART, SAGO, BEAN, FLAN, RICE**