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The
SCAM
space coast area mensa
Newsletter

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We will appreciate your submissions **legibly handwritten, typed, in e-mail text, or on 3.5 disk in IBM text or word-processing format.** We can receive your submissions by mail at: **P. O. Box 457, Sharps FL 32959**, or submit via e-mail to: **morwood@brevard.net**
Subscription — \$10.00 for 12 issues.

Happy November Birthday

03-Bernard Peterson
06-William McClure
10-Andrew Neubauer
11-Jane Saubert
12-Deirdre Jones
17-Nancy Savin
19-Jean Porter
21-John England
22-Aaron Travis
25-David Williams
30-Thomas Gachet
30-Shirley Trotter
30-Lisa Willnow



Welcome Back to Mensa & SCAM

Harry Martin, Jr. - Indialantic
Janice Axelrod - Cocoa



***On the
Firing Line***



***J.T. Moran
SCAM Editor***

I have been asked by a number of people if I am going to renew my Mensa membership after my Millennium plan expires next April. For quite some time my answer has been “no”. My intention has been to let my National membership lapse and to support Space Coast Area Mensa in other ways, such as subscribing to the newsletter and donating other funds. I would save money and SCAM would get more than the rather paltry pittance it now receives from National for each member. At this time my answer is “most likely, no.” Much of my decision depends on what I see coming out of National and the AMC. I do not like the way money is manipulated by them. Last year, all you read about in

the Chairman’s column was how great our money situation was, and how we were going to have a “bigger than expected” surplus, and just how great everything was going. Then, at the end of the year (and after the elections) we find out that Mensa ran a deficit! What happened to the “bigger than expected” surplus we kept hearing about? Then we have the Mensa variant of “Voodoo Economics” whereby we still don’t know how much our group will receive per member, only that we will be penalized because we are too successful at making ends meet. After all, we have a good core of active people, and we control our expenses well while making money by way of RGs, garage sales, and Flea Market sales. So why should we receive the same funding as groups that do little to succeed? And then, to top it off, a 9% dues increase. I have yet to see or hear a logical explanation that ties the “expected surplus” to the need for a dues increase. Other than the most obvious one. The AMC should remember the huge membership drop that occurred after they enacted the last increase. In 1992-1993 there were over 52,000 members of American Mensa. After that increase was enacted the rolls decreased by more than 15,000. In the six years since it hasn’t come close to recovering, and I seriously doubt that this increase will enhance its chances of doing so. Most especially as I do not see any proof that I am getting my money’s worth, nor is SCAM. And, unless I see some change out of National, my money won’t be going to Texas. Neither will that of a lot of others I know.

They have 5 months to convince us otherwise.



**Doug in
Deep(er)**

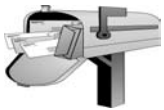


**Douglas
Paul,
LocSec**

Seeing a member of our group around town is kind of fun, especially if it's by chance. Last month, I finally met Dr. John Lurie, SCAM member at Rockledge Urgent Care. I went to see him at the behest of my employer, and he told me that I had developed a nasty case of bursitis in my right shoulder. When he found out that yes, I was THAT Doug Paul (he keeps a copy of The SCAM Newsletter on the reception desk), we had a great time chatting while he poked, prodded and gave me a nice present through a syringe into my right wrist (sorry about the left arm of your chair, Doc). He also gave me a quick tour of his office, and I got to meet his pet black scorpion that he keeps in a tank right on his desk. Thanks to him, my shoulder is on the mend and I got to add another SCAMster to my list of friends.



**We
Get
Mail!**



As a Cocoa Beach snowbird, I have been a subscriber to SCAM for ten years, and have always been impressed with the fine quality and entertainment value of the various columns over the years. They have made the SCAM consistently interesting, amusing, and informative. I could never understand why none of your excellent columnists were ever nominated for a national newsletter award. Now you tell me that the SCAM was never entered for consideration. What a loss. I hope that in this year's competition, SCAM wins all the honors. It deserves it.

Debby Saltzberg, Boston Mensa



We've Got...



**The
Answers!**

Ellen's Enigmas

1. *The Right Stuff* (1983)
2. *Dances With Wolves* (1990)
3. *Spartacus* (1960)
4. *History Of The World, Part I* (1981)
5. *Beauty And The Beast* (1991)

Doug's Dilemmas

1. C - Minneapolis, MN
2. A - Stamford, CT
3. B - Statesboro, GA
4. E - Miami, FL
5. D - Sarasota, FL

**Minutes of
the ExComm
Meeting**



**Fran
Hinson,
RecSec**
(franoosh@bol.net)

The ExComm met on 02 October 1999 at the home of J. T. Moran and Clara-Woodall Moran in Port St. John. The meeting was called to order at 14:08.

Members present were **Doug Paul, Clara Woodall-Moran, Bob Tuck** and **Fran Hinson**. **Ray Paul** was excused.

Guests in attendance were Jon Warner and J. T. Moran.

Correspondence:

None

Moved Clara, **second** Bob to approve the Minutes of the August meeting as published. **Passed** unanimously.

Officer Reports:

LocSec: No report

Asst. LocSec: No report

Treasurer: No report

RecSec: No report

Member-at-Large: No report

Committee Reports:

Bylaws: No report

Editor: No report

Membership: Jon reported that SCAM had 206 members as of 31 July and 207 members as of 31 August.

Publicity: Bob sent media advisories on the Scholarship winners.

RG: The Committee will meet in October. Thus far they have chosen a theme and logo. It was noted that Kathy Hornak had volunteered to work at the RG, not to serve on the Committee. Bob **moved** to appoint Cheryl Russell to the Committee. Fran **seconded**, motion **passed** with three votes in favor and 1 abstention.

Scholarship: Ellen reported, in absentia, that she received a thank you letter from the SCAM Scholarship winner, Evelyn Miracle. The ExComm extended congratulations to Ellen on her appointment as Scholarship Chair for Region 5.

SIGHT: No report

SIGs: No report

Testing: Jon reported that 3 people attended the test session on 11 September. Preparations are underway for the National Testing Day, to be held at the Planetarium again this year.

Ways & Means: Bob reported that Luke and Leslie Setzer had volunteered their driveway for a SCAM garage sale. The ExComm suggested that this event be postponed until February.

Webmaster: Doug reported that the web page is up to date.

Unfinished Business:

J. T. reported that work is in progress on the Membership Directory.

New Business:

The Road Cleanup program was discussed at length. Due to a lack of participation, the ExComm voted, with regret, to discontinue this program. The motion was **made** by Clara, **seconded** by Fran and **passed** with three votes in favor and one against. The ExComm thanks to all who did participate in these efforts.

Open Forum:

Nothing to present

Announcements:

No announcements

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the ExComm will be held at 6:30 PM on Wednesday, 3 November at Fat Boy's in Rockledge.

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 15:01.



Coming Soon! To a Hotel Near YOU!
Heart of Florida RG 2000 - The New Millennium: KNOT!
FEBRUARY 18-20, 2000

For Information contact: Eddie Truelove, Registrar
(407)855-9078 or
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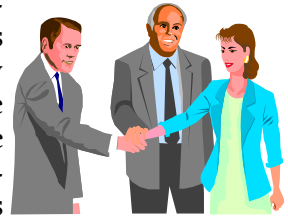
***A Cat-Tale Rede:
The Assistant
Speaks***



***Clara Woodall-
Moran***
(cw@palmnet.net)

On the first day of school, when I was in 6th grade, a new girl got on the school bus. The year before I had been the new girl and no one had offered to be a friend. As is usual for the new kid on the bus, she looked scared. I moved over and offered her a seat (there were only about 10 kids on the bus at the time). She looked relieved and sat down. We have been close friends ever since that first day.

In 1987 I went to work at Grumman in Melbourne (there is a point here). I worked with a group of people who had been co-workers and friends in New York before moving to Florida with Grumman. These were the coldest fish I've ever had the misfortune to swim with. They only allowed me into the "school" when someone else was hired after I had been there for more than a year. These folks actually believed that the new folks were supposed to try to break into the group rather than be welcomed into the group. We have new members arriving into our local chapter nearly every month but we rarely see any of them. Those who become very active to start with are sometimes discouraged because it is so difficult to feel welcomed. Granted that a lot of us are deficient in the social graces department, I think, though, that we can try a bit harder to not demand that the new folks make friends with us; rather we should be welcoming the new folks as friends. Let's not make it harder than it already is to be the new kid on the block.



The RG committee is still searching for volunteers to take the "chair" positions. Also, each "chair" will be putting together a team of assistants. See the RG Boss Chair, Ellen Shipman-Paul for more information on what jobs still need to be filled. The ExComm appointed Cheryl Russell to the committee at the last meeting. Make certain that you are clear about whether you are volunteering for an appointed position or that of "gofer" / assistant type job. We should be seeing an announcement of what positions have been filled and which vacant. If you are an appointed chair, you will get one of the neat awards (with an engraved plaque) for your efforts.



**Signifying
Nothing:**

**What's Your
Price?**

By
Jamie Glatt
©1999

In the movie *Indecent Proposal*, Robert Redford proposes spending one night with Demi Moore, for which Demi's cash-strapped husband Woody Harrellson would be paid one million dollars. That this movie portrayed any dilemma at all was unrealistic: Robert Redford's character was handsome, well groomed, wealthy, courteous, and, well, it's Robert Redford, for chrissake.

So I started a poll...most respondents volunteered they would sleep with Robert Redford for free.

Only one woman I polled said she would not sleep with Robert Redford for a million dollars. She claimed that no amount of money could entice her to sleep with a man other than her husband.

Does she not know how much a million dollars is? It's a million dollars, for chrissake.

My survey had grown predictable. I added a twist. "What if, instead of Robert Redford, the rich man had been Don Knotts? Or Samuel L. Jackson? Or, Janet Jackson? Or Joe Sixpack down the street?" Still virtually all responses agreed. It's one night. A million dollars is a lot of money.

Most of us, however, have some standards. Tyrants who have committed unspeakable atrocities stand no chance with any of those I polled, at any price. Ditto for sickos. Include in my "not at ANY price" list are a couple of apple polishers with whom I work.

Husbands with whom I spoke agreed that whatever their wives decide would be fine with them.

But an even more compelling question might be "Would you sleep with Joe Sixpack or Don Knotts for \$10,000?" There's a big difference between one million dollars and ten thousand.

If that question isn't very interesting, how about \$10,000 under the following conditions:

What if you had an \$8,000 nest egg and a steady job?

What if you were living paycheck-to-paycheck?

What if you were borrowing money from your parents to feed your kids?

NOW you have a question that requires some thought. And now husbands' and wives' answers differ. Wouldn't that make a more interesting movie?

Hollywood's answer would be "it's already been done." They'd be wrong.



Bob-at-Large:

Portents

By

**Bob Tuck,
Member-at-
Large
©1999**

My Dear Friends:

As the present Century draws to close, I thought it a pleasant-enough little task briefly to recount the great progress Mankind has made -- lo! -- these past one-hundred years. Surely, the strides made in all human Endeavors, undertaken with great toil and abounding ingenuity, rank supreme among all the other Advancements our honored Ancestors have made throughout the ages.

While we should pay homage to our Forebears, let us glory in the Knowledge that Fortune has deemed us worthy to live in these modern Times. Our Era crowns human achievement and opens the portals of boundless future Prosperity and Enlightenment. We cannot fail to extend and improve upon the wondrous discoveries and contrivances that have but so lately come into being. We advance into a new Aeon of endless Progress that soon will free Humanity from poverty, war, disease, famine, and social injustice.

Ah, yes, I well do know that the Century's true conclusion still lies a year hence. However, as many others have observed -- indeed, it is a common enough Conceit -- the zeros that will appear on next year's Calendar make so satisfying a statement, that, arithmetic aside, our current Era begs to burst from the past and start anew, fresh, resplendent and re-invigorated.

Good grace and simple honesty now bid us to look back over the past ten decades before embarking upon our journey into the next Century. I invite you to join me in a short survey, indeed a mere sketch, of the marvels and conveniences human brains and brawn have wrested from Nature, almost within living memory. Certainly, our grand-sires scarcely would recognize the world today, as matched against their own comparatively wretched circumstances when this now-expiring Century itself began. The transformations of thought, society, transport, materials, commerce, industry, and communication would astound them, fill them with amazement, and render them utterly speechless. They would stand agog -- nay, drop to their knees -- in wonder and astonishment at the Enlightenment filling our times, yet separated from their own Era by so few years, as measured by History's long shadow of past struggles, strife, hunger, and ignorance.

To be sure, our splendid Century has seen its share of woes. The vain attempts of a tyrannical Dictator to subdue all Europe earlier in

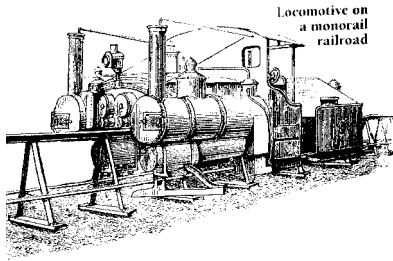
our Era thankfully were thwarted. Russia's revolutions, turmoils, and warring are behind us. The present unpleasanties over Cuba cannot last long. China's tribulations continue, but Japan has embraced our Western ways and even now is transforming itself into a productive Nation. The new Century no doubt will see both these ancient lands adopting our progressive methods and enlightened forms of Government and Industry.

Already, electricity -- a mere parlor curiosity but a hundred years ago -- has yielded up its mysteries and given us copious bounties of labor-saving devices. Electric generators today pump forth power to motors in factories, there to run enormous intricate machines. Electric lights illuminate our cities, changing night to day. Electricity now powers locomotives, both above and beneath the ground. Railroads link cities, towns, and villages, and traverse continents. In Europe, certain gentlemen are experimenting with railroads that require only a single ribbon of steel. They call them "monorails."

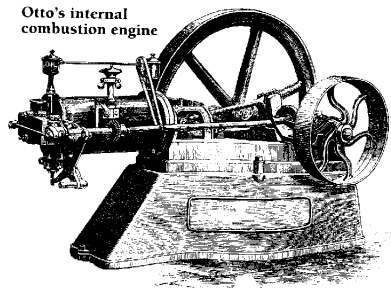
Automobiles now carry passengers to and fro, hither and yon. Farmers, their fields harvested by machines, and even their cows mechanically milked, may enjoy their leisure while yet feeding multitudes of families far beyond their meadows.

Indeed, the world's population has soared into the Billions during this wondrous Century, and developments in food preservation and processing, along with recent discoveries concerning nutrition, promise an end to hunger. Famines, such as those oppressing China not so long ago, soon will be vanquished.

New engines and means of motive power recently have been brought into being. The internal combustion engine and the turbine promise soon to liberate us from drudgery and give us access to far-flung realms. We soon shall travel over roads and thoroughfares paved according to the process that Mr. J. McAdam devised in the early decades of this Century. The newly perfected pneumatic tire will ensure our smooth, comfortable rides as we glide ef-



Locomotive on a monorail railroad



Otto's internal combustion engine

fortlessly through the countryside.

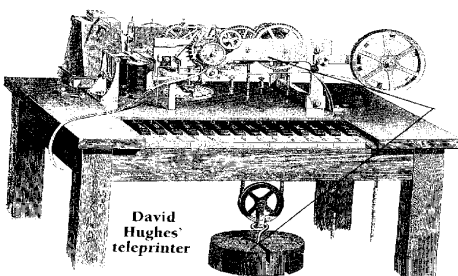
The social Enlightenment that has blossomed during this marvelous Century will continue. While some may see it scandalous, women now may vote in certain nations, and far-seeing social leaders have liberated the female gender from needless burdens by establishing birth-control clinics. Men of African descent hold office as legislators in our own progressive land. We need feel no apprehensions regarding the incoherent scribblings of such discredited philosophers as Messrs. K. Marx and F. Engels. At this moment, countless selfless Missionaries and great men of Industry are firmly guiding our benighted Hindoo, Muhammadan, and other heathen Brethren into the electric light of Progress. Soon, wayward peoples throughout the World will bless the unarguable merits of our noble Western teachings.

Our Savants are probing the nature of matter as never before. They are prying into the secrets of unseen rays and have learned to send images through the aether. They study the very makeup of stars with powerful telescopes in remote, lofty places. Discoveries this Century have enlarged the Solar System by adding a new planet, many moons, and tiny bodies known as "asteroids." A French professor, Madame M. Curie, believes that she and her husband have discovered a source of energy akin to that which may power the Sun.

Our engineers and architects have made us masters of height, using metal and concrete to erect towering structures, and giving us mechanical conveyances that safely carry us up and down within these new-made sky-scraping abodes of commerce and industry. Already, these spires glorify our vibrant cities, giving them distinctive profiles when seen from afar. Gargantuan bridges, laced with steel, hang securely suspended above bottomless gorges and span broad rivers.

Some skillful artificer, not a generation ago, wrought a clever machine that allows anyone to print clearly legible documents, letters,

and memoranda directly onto paper. This "typewriter," as it is called, emancipates Authors from the drudgery of scribbling longhand. Its productions ease the reader's eyes and eliminate misinterpretations. Indeed, Mr. S. L. Clemens, a writer of some note,



purchased one of the first of these wonderful contrivances. It is difficult to imagine how one might improve upon so useful a device, but I have heard that at least one ingenious fellow has attempted to electrify the machine.

Nowadays, the telephone allows us to speak with distant friends and associates over wires. Why, nearly twenty years ago, an enterprising Frenchman patented in Germany the means whereby these same wires can bring us the sounds of far-away orchestras, pouring music into both ears at once, that, is, stereophonically, so as to place us within concert halls while we remain seated in the comfort of our own homes!

We instantly may communicate with people around the world, gathering information about events from distant climes immediately as they occur. We have within our grasp the means to fashion a great network -- a kind of world-girdling web, if you will -- to gather in all manner of knowledge through telegraphic highways of wires and relays. The day surely soon will come when brigades of boys, mounted upon bicycles, will speedily deliver messages and news gathered from central telegraph stations directly to our doorsteps within mere hours. Neither Cleopatra herself, for all her Great Library of ancient Alexandria, nor the mightiest potentates that ever ruled any empire, be it Rome, Persia, or Cathay, could hope to match the wealth of information or the extent of reach of the humblest person so happily destined to live in the coming Century, of which our own noble Age is but the Harbinger.

Indeed, recent discoveries hint that soon we may be able to converse with -- perhaps actually see -- distant correspondents using certain newly detected vibrations in the aether. Some learned gentlemen of Science assure us that such "wire-less" communication is possible.

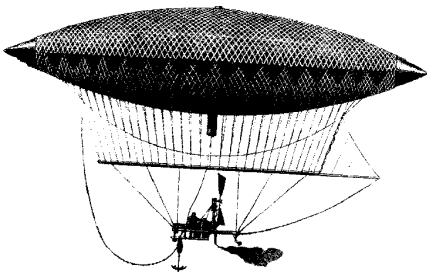
Signs of our ever-shrinking world appear everywhere. The recent standardization of Time through the establishment of global "zones" and the designation of the Prime Meridian of Greenwich insures the progress of worldwide progress in Commerce and Industry. No less important has been the wise step of adopting the French Revolutionary system of metric weights and measures by civilized Realms. No longer shall this Country be embarrassed by its stubborn adherence to such archaic encumbrances as "pounds," "feet," "yards," "miles," "inches," "gallons," "pecks," and the like. All scientific, technical, and engineering feats will profit greatly from these logical progressions, which thoroughly will eliminate all bases of confusion among Nations and even here within the United States.

Great progress in photography, an Art unknown to our great-grandfathers, now lets us see scenes in full color, even in three dimensions. Now, too, entire theaters full of awed patrons can marvel at moving pictures. The prospect of universal education and social enrichment from the use of these novel inventions must stir everyone's imagination and kindle the warmest feelings for the ever-more-enlightened Age that is upon us.

Just as sights from other places and times now may be recorded for Posterity, so, too, do we now have the means mechanically -- and, of late, magnetically -- to capture for all time sounds, music, and voices to be heard again and again, at our leisure. Unborn generations someday shall hear the very words of revered ancestors, noble leaders, and wise teachers of the past as spoken from their very own lips.

This Century has seen us master the seas with magnificent steel-clad steamships laden with the riches of distant lands and the products of industry and agriculture, transporting them from nation to nation and to ports around the globe. We can be confident that the upcoming century will soon witness enormous vessels not unlike entire floating cities, impervious to any perils. (The recently published fictional tale of a ghastly shipwreck and appalling loss of life amid icebergs in the North Atlantic Ocean must be dismissed as utterly ridiculous. The writer's choice of a name for the mythical vessel, "Titan," a great steamship supposedly filled with phenomenally wealthy, albeit doomed, travelers, smacks of the most shameless fantasy. No reader would believe so contrived a fable, or so unlikely -- indeed, impossible -- an event.)

Lately, courageous men have begun conquering the air. Their air-ships, gliders, and winged devices -- already tested -- soon will fill the skies, taking their place among the clouds and darting to the ends of the Earth. I am certain that Mr. S. P. Langley, the renowned Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, will shortly inform the World of the ultimate success of his current experiments with heavier-than-air craft. Perhaps, someday, not too far off, a few hardy aeronauts (if I may use so bizarre a term) may guide such machines through the Heavens, bearing small parcels and packets from distant cities lying over our horizons.



November 1999 Calendar of SCAM Events

Membership in American Mensa, Ltd. makes you eligible to attend SCAM social functions. Escorted and invited guests of a member or host are welcome. Adult family members of Mensans are encouraged to participate in SCAM activities, as are well behaved children. However, attendance at any social function in a **private home** is subject to the hospitality of the host. Compliance with published house rules is required, and "Kitty" payment is **not optional**. As a courtesy, notify the host if you plan to attend. When reservations are required, you may not be able to participate if you fail to call.

S-Smoking; *NS*- No *Smoking*; *SS*-Separate Smoking Area; *P*-Pets in the home; *NP*-No Pets present; *BYO* -Bring Your Own: *_Snacks, _Drinks, _Everything.*

1st **7:00 p.m.** **C.A.B.A.G.E. North**

Monday Free SS/NP

Treat yourself! Coffee, games, books, at Barnes & Noble bookstore, Merritt Island.

Doug & Ellen Paul

3rd **6:30 P.M.** **ExComm Meeting**

Wednesday Meal Cost SS/NP

The Executive Committee will be meeting tonight at Fat Boy's Bar-B-Q, 411 Barton Blvd., Rockledge. Members and interested friends are encouraged to attend.

Doug Paul (LocSec)

5th **6:30 p.m.** **Firearms & Fried Fish**

Friday \$3.00 + Meal Cost S/NP

Time to get out our guns again and rustle up some food. Meet at The Gun Site Range, 125 S. Banana River Dr., Merritt Island. **New tonight!** We will be eating right across the street from the Range at the Island Blue Crab.

J.T. Moran

6th **5:30 p.m.** **Humorous Christmas Videos**

Saturday \$3.00 SS/ P (Cats!)

J.T. & Clara are hosting their annual Post-Halloween, Pre-Thanksgiving, Humorous Christmas Video Night. Stop on by and watch some of the funniest Christmas movies around. (I know it's early, but J.T. won't be around in early December)

J.T. & Clara Moran

10th **Wednesday** **Newsletter & Calendar Deadline**

Call Jon, to schedule an event; see page 3 for NL info.

10th **7:00 p.m.** **C.A.B.A.G.E. South**

Wednesday Free SS/NP

Treat yourself! Coffee, games, books, at Books-A-Million bookstore, Melbourne.

Doug & Ellen Paul

13th **1:30 p.m.** **National Mensa Testing Day**
Saturday \$30.00 for those taking the tests SS/NP
 Today is the Second National Mensa Testing Day, and SCAM will again be participating. If you know anyone interested in becoming a member, please have them contact me for further information.
 Jon Warner, Proctor Coordinator

13th **5:00 p.m.** **Reception, Dinner, Party & Show**
Saturday Free SS/NP
 We will be welcoming prospective new members and current SCAM members at the BCC Planetarium tonight. Food and drink provided by the Ex-Comm, escorted tour of the Planetarium, Science Quest and International Hall of Space Explorers, free admission to either a Planetarium show or the IWERKS Theater show, and sky watching through the big telescope (weather permitting). Please join us to meet friends old and new and enjoy a free party, PLUS! at the Planetarium, BCC Cocoa Campus.
 Jon Warner

15th **7:00 p.m.** **C.A.B.A.G.E. North**
Monday Free SS/NP
 Treat yourself! Coffee, games, books, at Books-A-Million bookstore, Merritt Island.
 Doug & Ellen Paul

17th **6:30 p.m.** **Woebegone Wednesday**
Wednesday Meal Cost SS/NP
 Wynn & Terry are hosting a dinner party at Pumpnickel's Delicatessen at 2850 S. Hopkins Ave., Titusville tonight. This place has great German food.
 Wynn Rostek

21st **11:00 a.m.** **Brunch with Jim**
Sunday Meal Cost SS/NP
 Jim's still doing the Sunday Brunch at The Colossus Restaurant, 380 N. Wickham Rd., Melbourne, with one little change... you MUST be seated no later than 11:00 a.m., or you won't sit with us. We can't save any seats for latecomers.
 Jim Trammell

24th **7:00 p.m.** **C.A.B.A.G.E. South**
Wednesday Free SS/NP
 Treat yourself! Coffee, games, books, at Barnes & Noble bookstore, Melbourne.
 Doug & Ellen Paul

27th **6:30 p.m.** **S.N.O.R.T.**
Saturday Meal Cost SS/NP
 Tired of turkey? Come on down to Miyako's Restaurant at 1511 S. Harbor City Blvd. (U.S. 1), Melbourne for our monthly gabfest and sushi party.
 Doug & Ellen Paul



Realms beyond the clouds have exercised lively minds of late, particularly in Europe. Several imaginative writers have shown us the way to the Moon (although it is with a great deal of effort that I must force myself not to laugh at Monsieur J. Verne's absurd suggestion that such a journey might be embarked upon from so utterly forsaken and unpromising a place as Florida!). Nonetheless, only this year, a German visionary has put forth his astounding notions regarding the means by which intrepid explorers may journey through the void of space to distant worlds by employing controlled explosions, somewhat like (I do not jest) Fourth-of-July sky-rockets.

Scientific academies and observatories also are fairly abuzz with speculations concerning the possibility of living Beings inhabiting other planets, particularly Mars, thanks to astronomical observations reported first by an Italian savant, Sr. G. V. Schiaparelli, and later enhanced, or embroidered upon, by a wealthy American, Mr. P. Lowell, from Massachusetts, who recently built his own observatory in Arizona Territory. These rumors have spurred an English writer, Mr. H. G. Wells, already noted for his fanciful novels about time-travel and invisible men, to pen a clever romance of inter-planetary war. The coming enlightened Century, even more glorious than the present Age, doubtless will soberly eschew such outlandish fantasies.

How splendidly we have learned to manipulate the materials of Nature these past one hundred years! From dead matter, our chemists have forged compounds once thought only possible through the intercession of Life itself. Indeed, some imaginative writers -- among them a women! -- already have proposed the unsettling notion that men of Science someday will fabricate living beings within their laboratories.

However that may be, this century's chemists, such as Mr. A. Nobel, have made the most powerful explosives ever to be imagined. Great feats of engineering now lay before us as these new earth-and-rock-moving tools will allow navvies easily to dig canals, level mountains, and bore tunnels to link lands and seas for all Humanity's benefit.

Chemists have learned how to make artificial fibers for textiles and have spun cloth from glass. The colors of Nature herself pale alongside new dyes and hues that daily flow from great chemical vats, the likes of which our forefathers could never have imagined. Likewise, ingenious chemists have fashioned strange, new materials with plastic properties that allow them to be shaped into charming ornaments, transparent films, and billiard balls.

Sadly, I must note some blunders by otherwise intelligent men this Century. For example, the unprofitable labors of a gentleman such as Mr. Charles Babbage, and his assistant, Lady Ada, Countess of Lovelace, show us how futile and misguided are efforts to build what he christened an "Analytical Engine." There is no conceivable reason for wasting time or good money on constructing so un-called-for a device. Nowadays, teams of educated, talented young ladies of good breeding -- known as "computers" -- deftly perform complex mathematical computations for navigation and astronomical purposes. At any rate, clever mechanics lately have fabricated machines that can add, subtract, multiply, and divide -- all anyone really ever would require for ordinary purposes, and most certainly sufficient for banking and accounting endeavors. (To be sure, Lady Ada's novel use of punched cardboards to "instruct" -- an altogether odd premise -- Mr. Babbage's ill-fated contraption stimulated the use of similar materials to expedite the national Census, not ten years ago. I understand that several European countries also have adopted the same methods to quantify their respective populations, industries, produce, etc. It is a curious matter, but hardly noteworthy, I should think.)

The Era of the lone inventor seems about to close. Now, associations of inventors, mechanics, artisans, and engineers have begun to build research laboratories designed to turn out new labor-saving devices and wonders daily. Mr. T. Edison has been most diligent in this regard.

Gas and electricity have given us new ways to cook our food, boil water, heat and light our homes and factories, and iron our clothes. Ongoing progress in devising contrivances for cooling rooms and whole buildings may someday make it possible for a few civilized men and women to make their homes in such dreadfully uninhabitable regions as, say, Florida. As a matter of fact, Mr. H. Flagler (formerly Mr. J. D. Rockefeller's partner) lately seems to be investing rather heavily in that backward State.

Advances in conveying flowing water into and out of our habitations have improved levels of Hygiene and Sanitation. This, along with bounding strides in Medicine, no doubt will lengthen and uplift our lives beyond those of any human Civilization throughout History. This wonderful Century has given us freedom from pain through



anesthesia and chemically reworked extracts of willow-tree bark. Surgeons have been transformed from veritable butchers worthy only of medieval inquisitions into respected physicians. Monsieur L. Pasteur has liberated us from disease and infection. We shall no longer witness great plagues and pestilences, such as swept Russia some years ago. Moreover, as this Era draws to a close, a German physicist's astounding discovery has allowed doctors to see within living human bodies without cutting, to trace the course of flowing vital fluids, to find deeply embedded projectiles, and to examine shattered bones.

The very History of Mankind's appearance and progression upon the Earth now begins to unfold before us. Geologists and archaeologists have unearthed, and labored to understand, bones, tools, and implements belonging to beings that preceded us and gave rise to us. As more and more of these evidences come to light, we must expect the universal acclamation of the masses of Humanity as they embrace Science and Mr. C. R. Darwin's singular theories, which bring our primal origins into such clear focus.

The Earth has begun to yield other secrets. Its great age -- perhaps as much as several million years -- has become evident. Instruments, such as the seismograph, now promise avenues to understanding (dare I say predicting?) earthquakes. Someday, the horrendous loss of life and property from great volcanic convulsions, such as the recent Krakatoa event, surely will be averted.

As we move into this new Age, now so clearly before us, we carry with us the Hope -- nay, Certainty -- that wars no longer will be fought, since the hard-won Lessons of the present Century of Science, Knowledge, and Wisdom will prevail. The next Century surely will see Mankind achieving the Destiny that so long has eluded countless generations. Lives will be full, rich, and unburdened. Progress and Peace will continue unabated, untroubled by setbacks, safe from disasters, and immune to catastrophes.

Now, as we await the change of our Calendar's digits, when the 9's roll over to zeros -- as with those newly invented taxicab meters in Germany -- let us raise our glasses to toast the Dawn of the Future, the Pinnacle of Mankind's Achievements, and welcome the forthcoming, magnificent, Twentieth Century!

Your obedient Servant,
Robert
November, A.D. 1899



***A View
from the Right:***



***Failure: A New
Word for
Achievement
by***

***J.T. Moran
(buckmaster
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It was not all that long ago that the Scholastic Aptitude Tests (better known as the SATs) were the standard and last word in determining what a prospective college student had actually absorbed during his or her 12 years of schooling. It was a standard because everywhere you went in the country every student took the same objective test, and every test was scored in exactly the same way. Even Mensa accepted the scores of the SATs as qualifying standards. It was the perfect system for comparing the academic achievement and understanding of students nationwide.

Then, in the early 1990's, a curious thing happened. The objective examination, which was identical in scoring throughout the land, mutated. It added a section requiring essay responses. No longer could the test results be unbiasedly calculated, for essays cannot either be objectively scored, or compared. Mensa would no longer accept SAT scores as qualifying measures.

Later in the 90's, another, even more curious thing occurred. The Educational Testing Service, which designs the SATs, decided that it was time to "Re-norm" the exam. At the time of re-norming, the mean score in the Verbal segment was about 472. The mean for the math segment ran about 490. These numbers need explaining. The absolute lowest score possible for either segment is 200. If the student fills out his name properly he achieves 200 in each segment. The highest possible objective score is 800. It takes answering all the questions on the test correctly to earn that score. That means, of course, that the 50 percentile score is 500. Therefore, at the time of renorming it would seem that the mean score ran below 50% in both segments. So the E.T.S. decided that less-than-half now equaled half. Isn't the New Math wonderful!

But now the E.T.S. has done itself one better. Officials worry about the lower average scores of MOST minorities. So they have come up with a new way of scoring in order to "help college admissions officials identify *disadvantaged* students whose lower-than-average test scores belie their ability to succeed in college." The program designates these students as "strivers". They are students who, *based on a statistical model*, score 200 points above what would be expected considering factors such as the quality of their schools. Apparently, by some esoteric calculation newly invented, a student's

overall score could jump 200 points if, in the opinion of the E.T.S., he was “disadvantaged” and really should have scored higher. Folks, 200 points is the difference between Brevard Community College and Yale. Yet the officials at the E.T.S. would have you believe that the high school student who could not score 1000 points (50%) on the SAT was more academically capable than the student who scored 1150 (without being disadvantaged.)

This is all smoke and mirrors by America’s Liberal left, which includes a vast majority of those self-styled “*Educationists*” whose agendas become upset whenever it appears that their system of education is failing. It is also little more than an end-around attempt at political correctness and to bypass the rollbacks in affirmative action. It is also a continuing effort to prevent any comparisons between school systems nationwide, or, better yet, between the academic achievements of students nationwide. Because, almost without fail, the public schools fall woefully short when compared against private or parochial schools. Such failure brings up the dreaded “V” word: vouchers. The N.E. A. (National Educators Association) is one of the biggest, most powerful, and most liberal labor unions in the country. Its agenda, however, sometimes seems to have little to do with education. It has come out consistently against such concepts as standardized testing for students, or competency testing for educators. But it will tell you that it is doing the best job it can do under the conditions it has to perform, and if it only had... (fill in the blank: (a) more money; (b) smaller classes; (c) more money; (d) more computers; (e) more money), then everything would be just perfect and their students would achieve super grades! However, they also still espouse the concept of social promotion, so I think they doth protest, too much. But mention vouchers in their presence, and they will go ballistic! How dare you try to take public funds from their school and give it to the parents to help send their child to a school of their choosing? My response is fairly simple. If your school is giving a good education in a manner conducive to learning, then you will receive your share of those vouchers. However, if your school system is failing in its sole duty, to educate the children of this country and give them the foundation they need for their future lives, then how dare YOU even open your mouths? DO not give excuses. Bureaucrats and administrators spend all their time giving excuses, but there are others in the education systems of



this land who are quietly doing what they can, and what needs to be done, to ensure that the children entrusted to them are given the opportunity to learn. We all know the people I mean, for I doubt that



even one of my readers, no matter how old, does not remember this person. For me, it was Mrs. Ann Carney, my third grade *Teacher*. That's right, Teacher, with a capital "T". For there is no more noble vocation, no more important one. A Teacher can infuse

in his or her students a love of learning that will last a lifetime, and will be one of the most important persons in a child's life. Yet how few true Teachers do we see anymore. There are plenty of Educators and Educationists out there, we see them all the time on television and in the newspapers, bemoaning the hardships of the schools. It is a shame we never get to see the Teachers who are succeeding against all those so-called hardships. The bureaucrat sees walls that cannot be breached, so he says that more of something is needed to overcome them. The Teacher sees obstacles that MUST be overcome, and so figures out a way to do it with the means at hand.

To the bureaucrat, the needs of the system come first. To the Teacher, the needs of the students come first. Fire the "educators" and "educationists" and use their salaries for more, and better paid, Teachers. Provide the Teachers with the means to teach the impressionable minds entrusted to them HOW to think, not WHAT to think, for by giving a child the ability to do the former he will be able to do the latter for himself. But stop making excuses, and stop making up feel-good remedies that fix nothing.

And, for God's sake, stop trying to kid everyone. In 1999 the average scores on the Verbal segment of the SAT ran as follows: Whites (527); Asian-Americans (498); American Indians (484); Non-Puerto Rican Hispanics (463); Puerto Ricans (455); Mexican-Americans (453); and African-Americans (434). Overall Verbal was (505). In the Math segment the scores ran: Asian-Americans (560); Whites (528); American Indians (481); Non-Puerto Rican Hispanics (464); Mexican-Americans (456); Puerto Ricans (448); and African-Americans (422). Overall Math was (511). What is the explanation for such disparities? The concept of "disadvantaged" doesn't cut it. Ask yourself why certain groups consistently outperform the others, and why some seem mired in failure. The same school systems teach all kinds. Then ask yourself what can be done about this situation. How can the worst be made better? How can the best be made even better yet? For is that not the ultimate goal, the finest education

in the world?

I don't pretend to know all the answers, but some seem pretty logical. First, re-institute standardized, OBJECTIVE testing. Then compare the results. Then, come up with the causes. Be hard, for it is a disservice to the students, their families, and to the nation to soft-soap it or to come up with feel-good excuses. Then, and only then, come up with solutions. And again, be hard. If it is the educational system as a whole, then scrap it. If it is entrenched bureaucracy, then give it an ultimatum: Produce results, or find a new field of employment. If it is the student's home environment, then bring in the parents and inform them that if Johnny can't read, then Johnny will not be promoted. If they threaten to sue, let them. If the Liberal courts decide that failure is a right for advancement, then elect new judges, ones with common sense who will not govern social change by judicial fiat. And if it is the student, if Johnny can't read because he cannot learn, then bring back vocational schools. Regardless of what the liberal social engineers might say, the truth is that not all students are capable of academic excellence, and there is nothing wrong with manual labor (have you checked out what a plumber makes lately?)

The ability of the high schools to graduate a student who is functionally illiterate, or worse, must be excised. The ability of parents to demand that their children be promoted or graduated when functionally illiterate must also be excised. Return the emphasis in education to academics and hire teachers who have specialized in the academic subjects, and remove from the classroom the athletic coaches who are teaching courses for which they have no specialized knowledge, but only because there is not enough money for a coach AND a teacher. And remove fear from the learning environment. Do it harshly, and do it thoroughly. Protect the RIGHT of the students to learn, and ignore the demands of those who would prevent them from doing so. But don't, DON'T, under any circumstances, tell someone who is failing that he really isn't, because you have developed a standard that says he isn't. It is a lie.

No college, anywhere, for any reason, should have remedial English and Math courses for freshmen. That's all there is to it. Anyone who believes otherwise should be sitting in the corner wearing a pointy hat.



**Gourmet's
Guide:**

Eating Garlic

by

Arthur

Belefant

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You will probably receive this issue of SCAM in time to prepare your Halloween dinner. Previously (SCAM, November, 1993) I told you about a fabulous San Francisco restaurant that serves only dishes consisting of or flavored with garlic. This article will provide you with the recipes to prepare an all-garlic, anti-vampire meal at home in case you can't get to San Francisco on October 31.

Garlic is a perennial of the lily family (*Allium sativum*). Garlic is closely related to onions, leeks, shallots, and that wild mountain herb called ramp. Wild garlic (*A. candense*) is common in the woods in the U.S. It can be used in cooking and makes a delicious snack or seasoning for backpackers. There is also a variety called "society garlic" used for ornamental purposes. It has pretty royal blue flowers instead of the edible garlic's white, but it does not produce a bulb, although the flowers do have the familiar pungent garlic odor.

As with most cultivated vegetables, garlic comes in many varieties. The most usually seen in the U.S. is called common white garlic because of its silvery-white skin. Other varieties that are occasionally seen have pink, red, or purple skins. There is a variety called Elephant Garlic which has bulbs much larger than the standard garlic bulb, but also is much milder.

A garlic bulb can be separated into cloves. There may be ten to twenty cloves in each bulb and each clove is covered with a skin; this skin should be removed before using.

Garlic has been cultivated from time immemorial along the Mediterranean. Records of its use as a food date from the time of the Egyptian pyramid builders. It is still most widely used in North African, Southern European, and Middle Eastern cooking. Far Eastern countries, such as China, Korea, and Thailand also use garlic extensively, and it is common in India. Cultivated garlic was brought to the Americas with the first explorers and is now used primarily in those locations originally colonized by Spain and Portugal.

As a natural food, garlic varies in potency from variety to variety and clove to clove. Personal tastes vary and change, therefore the amount of garlic to use in a dish when given in a recipe is only a suggestion. More or less may be used depending on your and your guest's preferences. Some people may be offended by the peculiar pungent aroma of garlic. Just remember, the best defense is offense (pun fully intended) - you can't smell the odor of garlic on someone

else's breath if you have been eating garlic yourself. Therefore, as garlic is considered to be a most potent aphrodisiac, eat garlic with someone you love.

To start off your all garlic meal you want the simplest, most direct form of eating garlic. This is a common appetizer in many Mediterranean countries. Peel several cloves of garlic. Arrange on a small plate around a mound of salt. Dip the garlic in the salt and eat.

Only a small step up from eating plain raw garlic with salt is a popular Greek dish called skordalia. It is used as a sauce or a dip or spread for bread. Mash six cloves of garlic with two boiled potatoes. When thoroughly blended add four cups of olive oil and a half a cup of vinegar blending them slowly into the garlic and potato mixture. Finally, add one raw egg to the mixture.

The popularity of bagna caldo or roasted garlic has put it on menus of many restaurants in the States that heretofore would not even sprinkle some garlic salt on their food to season it. No special equipment is needed even though specialty stores sell designer roasters. Peel several cloves of garlic. Place in an oven-proof dish. Cover with olive oil. Bake or roast until the garlic is soft enough to spread on crusty French or Italian bread.

Another appetizer or dip from the Mediterranean basin is humus. I have had this in Egypt, Israel, Turkey, Greece, Cyprus, and Morocco. It's always the same and always good. Blend together two cloves of peeled garlic, two cups of cooked chickpeas (canned may be used), a half a teaspoon of cumin, and half a cup of lemon juice. A half a cup of tehina (ground sesame seed) may be added to the mixture at this point or poured on each serving. I like sprinkling chopped parsley over the lot. If you are making this in a blender instead of the traditional method of grinding it all together in a mortar, you may have to add water to allow the blender to work. This should be used as a dip or spread on pita bread.

Another appetizer where garlic is one of the main ingredients is Escargots Bourguinonne. This the quinciential French dish. The sauce is so delicious that it is said that even cardboard would taste good with it. Serve it with lots of crusty French bread to mop up every bit of the sauce. In a bowl mash together four cloves of peeled garlic, 3/4 pound of butter, two tablespoons of chopped parsley, and two tablespoons of chopped onion. Drain four dozen canned snails. Place some of the butter mixture in each snail shell followed by a snail. Cover each snail with the remaining butter mixture and sprinkle bread crumbs over all. Arrange the filled snail shells, closed end

down, on special snail dishes. If you don't have the special snail dishes, place the shells on a baking dish and prop them up so the open end stays on the top. Bake at 400° until the butter is bubbling, about eight minutes.

Almost every country on the Mediterranean littoral has a garlic soup in its cuisine. In Portugal it is **Sopa à Alentejana, Garlic Soup, or Bread Soup** (Portugal, SCAM, August 1995). I'll repeat the recipe here for those of you who don't have access to the other article.

INGREDIENTS

1 bulb garlic, separated into cloves and peeled
1 quart chicken stock
1/2 cup chopped parsley
4 eggs
salt (to taste, may be omitted)
French bread, preferably stale

METHOD

Cut the bread into thick slices and line the bottom of four soup plates (not bowls) with the bread. Bring the stock to a boil. Add the garlic and cook until it is soft. Add the parsley and salt to the stock. Pour the stock over the bread without disturbing the position of the bread and making sure that each plate gets an equal number of cloves of garlic. Immediately break an egg into each plate of soup and serve.

French Garlic Soup, (Soupe a l'ail) is different, but also excellent.

INGREDIENTS

1 bulb garlic, separated into cloves and peeled
2 quarts chicken stock
1/4 tsp ground sage
1/4 tsp thyme
1/2 bay leaf
4 sprigs parsley
3 tbs olive oil
3 cups diced potatoes
1/4 tsp saffron
grated Parmesan Cheese

METHOD

In a large saucepan combine garlic, chicken stock, herbs, and olive oil. Bring to a boil and simmer, covered, for 30 minutes. Add the potatoes. Simmer for 20 minutes longer until the potatoes are tender.

Serve with Parmesan Cheese sprinkled on top.

The Spanish version, **Sopa de ajo**, is also different but also good.

INGREDIENTS

1 bulb garlic, chopped
2 quarts vegetable stock
4 tbs olive oil
4 tomatoes, chopped
4 eggs
French bread
grated Parmesan Cheese

METHOD

Sauté the garlic in a large pot for a minute or two. Add the vegetable stock and tomatoes. Bring to a boil and simmer for 20 minutes. Beat the eggs and add to the broth stirring all the while. Place a slice of bread in each soup bowl and pour the soup over it. Garnish with the grated Parmesan Cheese.

On my most recent trip to Europe, I discovered two more garlic soups. **Creamed Mushroom and Garlic soup** served on the train from Prague to Munich, and a **Minced garlic soup** in Vienna. Both were delicious but the Creamed Mushroom and Garlic soup was fabulous. I haven't had a chance to devise a home recipe for these soups yet, but when I do I'll report on them to you.

Finally, of all the main courses that utilize garlic as a seasoning, only one comes close to being a garlic dish. It is a standard of Provence - **Chicken with 40 cloves of Garlic**

INGREDIENTS

40 cloves of garlic
1 broiler or fryer chicken, cut up
olive oil
2 carrots, sliced
4 celery stalks, sliced
1/2 cup parsley
2 onions, chopped
1 cup white wine

METHOD

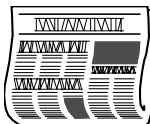
Place all the ingredients in a casserole, mixing or layering them. Cover tightly and bake in a slow oven (375°) for about an hour and a half, until well cooked. Serve with crusty French bread to sop up the

delicious juices.

You can use these recipes to make an all-garlic meal served, of course, with garlic bread; except that I have not yet found a garlic-based desert.



What Goes Around...



**Wynn Rostek,
Circulation
Chief**

Some of you may have noticed that last month's newsletter was stapled more than once. Badly. Really badly. It wasn't our fault, honest, it was all due to (dramatic pause) Frankenstapler.

Frankenstapler started out life as an ordinary saddleback stapler, but when the stapler part wore out, Jon Warner surgically implanted a new stapler part onto the old saddleback part, and Frankenstapler was born.

Dr. Warner's monster provided yeoman's service to the news-



letter crew over the years, but with every staple jam, Frank edged a little closer to creaturedom, and to frightened villagers with sooty torches standing in the rain. (Wait a minute, that was the company executives with their management fad-of-the-month approach vs. the watercooler crowd. Never mind.)

Anyway, last month was Frank's last jam. He ate one staple too many, and paid the ultimate price for getting the newsletter out.

I think it was JT and Clara that were there for the fatal jam, with our esteemed editor running Frank. (And boy was he esteemed when the stapler jammed yet another time.) Doug and Ellen offered moral support while the job of attempting to resurrect Frank fell to Val and I. (We are the engineers of the group.)



Kathy got the job of being in charge of the recently back-from-the-dead-for-just-one-night Frank. I'm sorry Susan had to see her mother like that. Helen was a real sport about all the bloodstains on the table, tablecloth, floor,

kitchen counters, bathroom, sink, towels, fridge, microwave and the living room ceiling. I'm just sorry that Jon showed up a bit late and didn't get a chance to say goodbye.



**The
Also-Rans:**



**Ellen's
Magical
Movie
Mystifier**

by
Ellen Paul

So, you think you know the movies, huh? We know all the characters in our favorite films as well as the actors who portray them, but how much attention do we pay to the important, yet secondary, characters in the movies we watch? This quiz is designed to find out.

Below is a list of five characters, each from a motion picture. The named character was important, but secondarily so. His/her/its name is spoken in the film on several occasions, but no major stars will be found here.

Your assignment, should you choose to accept it, is to name the movie in which the character appears. Good Luck!

- (1) Nurse Murch
- (2) Kicking Bird
- (3) Antoninus
- (4) Empress Nympho
- (5) Cogsworth

(The answers will be found on Page 5)



Where Do I



**Go To
Complain?**
by
Doug Paul

Oh, boy! Doug's been as busy as a buzzin' bee with these Benighted companies. He feels Bedeviled and Bewildered by all these names beginning with "B".

Help him Bash the Baloney out of them by matching each with its headquarters city.

- (1) Billy Graham Evangelistic Assn.
 - (2) Bristol-Meyers
 - (3) Briggs & Stratton
 - (4) Benihana
 - (5) Beverly Hills Weight Loss Centers
- (a) Stamford, CT
 - (b) Statesboro, GA
 - (c) Minneapolis, MN
 - (d) Sarasota, FL
 - (e) Miami, FL

(The answers will be found on Page 5)

