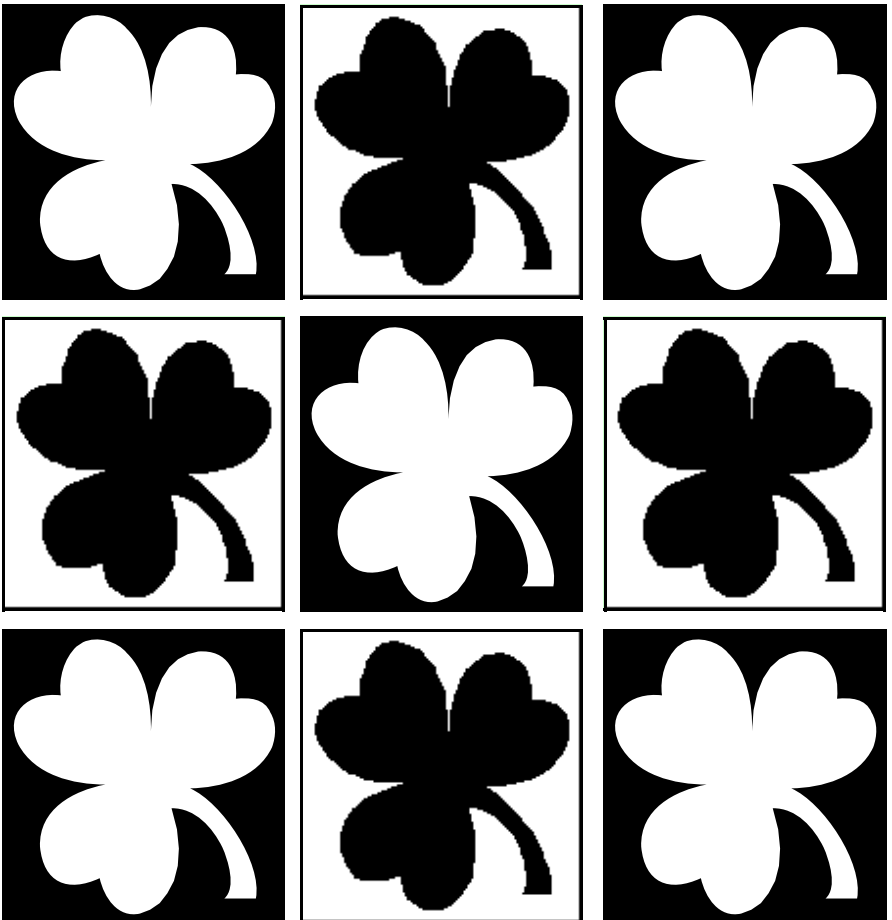


The

SCAM

pace oast rea ensa

Happy St. Patty's Day!





Assembly/Circulation
CLARA WOODALL-MORAN
632-0854


Calendar Coordinator/Webmaster
KATHERINE COCHRANE
432-9703

Editor
MICHAEL MOAKLEY
808 Wisteria Drive, Melbourne, FL 32901
952-8400
editor@spacecoastareamensa.org

Volume 23, No. 3
March, 2005

WRITER'S BLOCK

Mike Moakley, SCAM Editor

ften, when writing my columns, I ask myself the question: Does mankind exist for the benefit of society or does society exist for the benefit of mankind? In my personal opinion, it is the latter.

Specifically, I am referring to Mensa. Mensa, be it AML or SCAM, exists solely for the benefit of its members. As members, we agree to abide by a set of rules that govern Mensa. In turn, however, we are given a voice in determining what those rules shall be.

Where am I heading with this? First, as a member of the SCAM Nominations and Elections Committee, I am seeking qualified candidates to run for office on our Executive Committee. Much has already been said on this subject—if you are interested in running, please let one of us on the NomElCom know. Whether or not you decide to run for an Ex-Comm position, please be sure you vote. The ballot you need will be in an upcoming SCAM.

Second, why did you join Mensa? What are your expectations of our group? What kind of activities would you like to see? What are you willing to do to make this happen? Volunteers are always welcome; perhaps you can host an activity. I also invite you to send me a short column detailing why you joined Mensa and what your expectations are.

Finally, what subjects would you like to read about in The SCAM? Why not consider writing a column on that topic? One warning is in order here. Once any topic becomes open for discussion, it is open to all views on that topic, not just the ones we might agree with. To do otherwise would be grossly unfair, as our members come from all walks of life and hold many different opinions on any given topic.

All submissions must be received by the Editor before the 10th of the month preceding publication. Please allow extra time for mailed submissions, which may be **typed or legibly handwritten**. Whenever possible, we prefer submissions via e-mail. They may be in **e-mail text** or any of most **word processing** formats. **All submissions** should be sent to the **Editor**, whose contact information appears above.

**SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT
SCAM'S TESTING PROGRAM**

Does SCAM charge for administering the qualifying tests?

No. The testing fee is set by American Mensa. It is really quite reasonable; the cost of materials, the licensing fees, the scoring, all for only \$30.00.

Does SCAM profit from giving the tests?

Yes. American Mensa returns \$12.50 for each person tested, and additionally, SCAM benefits from every new member just as it does from existing members.

Are the SCAM proctors paid for their time and mileage?

No. The group is Proctor of Record, which means that SCAM receives the \$12.50 per test administered. Of course, the proctors **do** benefit by serving SCAM and Mensa, and from the new members who may well become new friends!

Are the SCAM proctors appointed by the ExComm?

No. All proctors are certified by American Mensa. If you're interested in becoming a proctor for SCAM, contact Helen Lee Moore. You'll find her email address and telephone number on the inside front cover of this newsletter.

What's all this about the testing program I've been reading in my newsletter? Is there something wrong with it?

No. The fact that the testing schedule is not in the newsletter does not affect the program. Tests are being given at least 10 months per year. Simply call or email Helen Lee Moore if you know someone who wishes to join Mensa, or have the prospective test taker contact her.

I don't want to be a proctor, but is there anything else I can do to help with the testing program?

Yes! You can tell people about Mensa and the testing program. You can explain the different ways a person may qualify for membership. You can help people contact the proctor coordinator for accurate information. You can be an ambassador for Mensa and SCAM!

SCAM is your group, and the way to make it grow is to get new members for Mensa.

Don't hide your membership under a bushel – be proud of Mensa!

Episode nnn: Tire Yellow Ribbon

It should not have happened, but one thing is certain: it did happen. Defying all known Laws of Physics, most weather forecasts and those labels on the back of cookie packets where it says: "Servings per Container, Approximately 7," the Wabasso Triangle has struck again.

But first, here is this month's Oat Cuisine Tip:

As you know, I like cooking with wine. Once, I even put food in it.

Meanwhile, back in Florida, the hunt continues for a pesticide that actually kills cockroaches, instead of turning them on their backs and making them do bicycle exercises with their legs.

Anthony Chianti, Licensed Private Eye and Indian River Community Pasta Detective, reporting:

It was Monday, and what a day it had been. After two pastacides in the morning, I needed a break and spent a relaxing afternoon shooting pool.

I always hated that aboveground monstrosity taking up half the backyard. In a few days, as soon as the green slime has drained away through the bullet holes, I'll throw out the entire pool.

Playtime was over, so I wandered back into the office, ducking around the shirts and underwear hanging up in the dining room, and picked up the crossword. After a fruitless hour in search of 11 Across, I threw the page down in disgust. There, on the back of the crossword, an advertisement caught my eye: TIBETAN LAUNDROMAT -- MONDAY NIGHT IS SINGLES NIGHT.

Of course, I explained to myself, the real reason that I was going was that the dryer had broken. I put on my best T-shirt, rubbed deodorant in the crotch of my week-old jeans and loaded the car.

The place was packed, stuffed to the gills. It looked like the mosh pit at the Orlando Opera. But I was on form, and after two hours in line I eventually got the name and phone number of the girl next to me. She reminded me of my old Monte Carlo, a bit on the large side, but still curvy. Her name was Lobsangy Sanklark.

"...and how do you pronounce this?" I said, pointing to her strange last name.

"Sanklark. You probably heard of my great, great-grandfather Louie?"

"Er... no – not sure I have..."

“You never heard of Louie Sanklark? What you do in school? He explored half of America. You so ignorant I don't know why I give you phone number...” and with that she snatched back the slip of paper.

My lingering suspicion that she might not respect me in the morning was now academic, and in any case I preferred the Monte Carlo. I turned my attention to the task at hand, carefully folding the mountain of clothes and neatly stashing piles across the back seat.

On the way home, I even turned on the car heater to help with any residual dampness. Like most car heaters, mine has four settings: One: Off – Two: Practically Off – Three: Mainly Off – Four: JUMBO JET ON FULL AFTERBURNER.

I was just passing Malabar on US1 when a car zoomed past, my full-size Buick swaying gently in the rush of wind. Thirty seconds later a police car came up behind me, lights blaring. I pulled over, but he was in too much of a hurry, clipping my rear bumper and pirouetting gracefully across the median, then backwards across the northbound lanes, eventually coming to rest in a cloud of steam and four feet of Indian River.

Naturally, I floored it. Less than a mile ahead there were wanted outlaws. Yet more antisocial miscreants that think they can get away with murder – but not on my watch! And those little Honda Tiramisus are no match for my trusty old Buick Testudo, once she gets rolling. Also, it seemed a good idea to evaporate before the Palm Bay SWAT team waded ashore. As you know, SWAT stands for Soaking Wet And Testy.

Slowly, I began to gain on the speeding delinquents. They jumped a red light in Sebastian before cutting off the corner of Nelson Mandela Avenue then slowing down and swinging into the parking lot of Dr Pepperoni's Italian Restaurant and Package Lounge. I backed off and cruised by, then parked at the far end of the block in Glock and Spiel's piano factory parking lot. From there I took the shortcut behind the abandoned Amish Microbrewery, but as I walked past, there was a dim light at the window and I could hear voices inside. I stuck my ear to the wall and listened:

“No, we're not going to do that, not for months. We will wait patiently until the dust has settled before dividing up the loot.”

“But I need some cash now...” said a very deep voice.

This was a classic heist going down, and here I was right on top of it, uniquely positioned to foil their little plot. Almost, for there are very few things in life that offer convincing proof that God is, in fact, a woman. Foremost among these is that uniquely male accessory, the nostril hair. Whoever thought of putting hair up there has no sense of

humor. Nostril hair has no choice but to grow straight across so that it eventually touches the very sensitive lining on the other side. It touched. I sneezed.

The fact that it happened at exactly the wrong moment can mean only one thing: the Wabasso Triangle has struck again! Like last Wednesday, when I discovered Alfabetini couldn't spell.

"What was that?" came from inside the building amid much scurrying. I sneezed again. The lights went out, so I tiptoed around the corner and into the side door. The place looked pretty much empty, but I walked towards the back in case they had left some evidence behind. Years of Pasta Detective training paid off as I searched an old table for evidence.

When I came around, my first impression was: cold. And then: dark. And then: sore head. Okay, I thought to myself, that makes sense, they hit me on the head and took me to Alaska. I felt around me – smooth walls – smooth and cold. I was sitting upright in a freezing cold box. And it was small, quite a tight fit, possibly because these days my svelte self makes Broderick Crawford look anorexic...

Just then the lights came on, hurting my eyes.

"Look at this – I found one of them, hiding in the refrigerator!"

"That's not one of them..." I recognized the gruff voice of Detective Inspector "Raving" Ravioli. "It's the idiot that followed me down US1 and completely blew the stakeout."

"Chianti..." He peered inside, showering me with halitosis fumes, "You're often aloof, but today you definitely have a Frigidaire about you..."

Well, amazing but true, and it can only have happened here. That's about it for this month's update from the Wabasso Triangle.

Anthony Chianti, Indian River Community Pasta Detective, signing off.

Bed 27, Men's Hypothermia Ward, Indian River Memorial Hospital.

© 2005 Kenneth R Thornton-Smith

We are quickly approaching the election of the 2004-2005 Executive Committee for Space Coast Area Mensa. I'm going to take this time to provide some information to those members who will take the time to vote.

What is required to get my vote counted?

We have some simple rules for getting a ballot into the counting pile: The outside envelope, called the MAILING ENVELOPE, must have the Name, Return address AND the Membership number of the person voting. We ask that only one BALLOT be included in either the mailing envelope or the inner envelope. The inner should not have anything written on the outside of it.

What is the purpose of the two envelopes?

We have to be certain the person voting is a valid voter (some folks forget to send in the dues monies and that makes them ineligible to vote). Anyone voting must be a member as of the roster received before the vote count in May. Hence we have to know the voter is actually eligible. But, "we need also to protect the sanctity of the ballot box", as it were...since the ballots are secret, we needed a means of getting the ballots cleared as eligible without knowing which ballot came from which voter. The inner, unmarked envelope became the accepted Standing Rule.

To whom do I send my Ballot?

There are several means of getting a ballot to the right source for counting. The ballot can be mailed (remember to leave enough time for the post office to get the ballot delivered to whichever member of the NomElCom to whom you decide to send it – leave more time for REGISTERED mail. The ballot can be hand delivered but you still have to use the envelopes.

Can I email my ballot?

No.

Who can attend the vote count?

Any Member of Mensa can attend – even visitors. However, the vote count can be handled only by the three members of the NomElCom.

Who can run for office?

I'm glad you asked that...any member of Space Coast Area Mensa

can run (and if elected, serve on the Executive Committee). To become a candidate, contact one member of the NomElCom (addresses, email address and phone numbers to be included at the end of this column).

What does a member of the ExComm do?

Attend to the business of Space Coast Area Mensa. That's pretty much all there it is to it. No office is really hard or excessively time consuming. We do not run for a particular office. The Elected members of the Executive Committee sorts that out for themselves.

Where can I get my Membership number?

It is on the address label of your newsletter, your Mensa membership card, and your copy of the Bulletin from the National Office.

Is there an age limit?

No upper or lower age limit.

Do we have a Space Coast Area Mensa "address"?

Because our membership is scattered over such a wide area, we have never established a single address such as Mailboxes, Etc. We have 40 miles separating the members of the NomElCom. It could become inconvenient to have a box some place for Space Coast Area Mensa. The people needing to get the mail would have too far to go to get the mail.

Call if you have further questions. This year, being the chairperson of the NomElCom, I started early getting promises of candidates. I have 6 members running for the five spaces...I'd like to see more names for the ballot, however. We still need volunteers and candidates for the elections to the Executive Committee.

SPACE COAST AREA MENSA
Nominations and Elections Committee

Clara Woodall-Moran,
Chair
5685 Friendly Street
Cocoa, FL 32927
(321)632-0854
cew@cfl.rr.com

J.T. Moran,
Member
5685 Friendly Street
Cocoa, FL 32927
(321)632-0854
morwood@cfl.rr.com

Michael Moakley,
Member
808 Wisteria Drive
Melbourne, FL 32901
(321)952-8400
Editor@
spacecoastareamensa.org

Here's a new cruise ship on the Caribbean Sea, The *CMS Opera*, launched in 2004. The ship was built in France and registered in Panama, but it is essentially an Italian ship. The captain and the officers are Italian, the chef is Italian, and most of the serving crew are Italian. It is an interesting change. Most of the cruise ships in the Caribbean are American owned, Panamanian registered, and multi-national (third nation) crewed.

On our Christmas cruise, although 1,019 of the 1,443 passengers were American and all the crew that a passenger was likely to come in contact spoke English, there was a definite Italian flavor to the food, service, and entertainment.

The ship is, by contemporary standards, a medium sized cruise ship. It is 825 feet long and displaces 58,600 tons. The maximum speed is 21.7 knots. With a crew of 700 for a maximum passenger capacity of 2,243, the ship does not seem to be over-crowded, however, there was never a lack or degradation of service. The ship would probably never sail with 2,243 passengers. In the 828 cabins, 200 of which have balconies, there are only 1756 beds. Our cruise, in addition to the Americans, carried 117 Italians and a smattering of passengers from other countries, such as one each from Japan, Peru, and Denmark to 45 from Mexico, 30 from the U. K., and 24 from Germany.

Food service was in two sittings in two unequally sized dining rooms. The larger restaurant, *la Caravella*, at 628 seats is almost twice the size of the smaller, *l'Approdo*, at 384 seats. The smaller restaurant is more luxuriously appointed than the larger. Although on this cruise the menu and dining times were identical in both restaurants, I suspect the design was to follow the pattern of dining on the QE2 and some other cruise ships. On the QE2 there are three main dining rooms. The dining room to which a passenger is assigned is determined by the price of the cabin purchased. The largest dining room has two sittings, the other two have only one. The menus are different in each dining room, but not by very much.

Aside from the main dining rooms, *Opera* has a pizza bar, an ice-cream bar, a hamburger-hot dog stand, and the usual cafeteria. After breakfast and before lunch there are croissants and coffee available. Afternoon tea is served at four o'clock. After dinner and the show, there is the midnight buffet. The pizza bar and hamburger stand are open all day and are served by the swimming pools. A separate ice-cream stand is located in the children's area. There is no reason to go hungry on this ship.

The food is mostly North Italian style. Each lunch and dinner has a pasta course, served before the main course. Each pasta course was different, a total of seventeen on this Christmas cruise, each one excellent. One reason for the excellent pasta was that it was made aboard ship daily, none of the dried packaged stuff. With each pasta a different sauce was served. Among the pasta dishes were chitarrine with a creamy ham and

green pea sauce, lasagne Goece d'oro, pappardelle with white veal ragout, spaghetti with fresh tomato and pecorino cheese (my personal favorite), fusilli alla Norma, mezze maniche with wild mushrooms, ham, and tomato sauce, and bavette with seafood sauce. These were the best pastas that I ever had, including those that I have had in Italy. In many a meal I was tempted to forgo the main course and have another serving of the pasta.

Among the main courses, there was always a regional Italian speciality such as turkey scaloppini Parmigiana, ossobuco, lasagne, frito misto, and scaloppini Sorrento. The ossobuco was a two-inch thick slice of veal shank, simmered in a delicious sauce until it was as soft and tender as butter. The scaloppini Sorrento was a paper thin slice of veal topped with a layer of melted cheese and a slice of fresh tomato over all. A much lighter North Italian dish than the Neapolitan or Sicilian version.

On the whole the food was excellent but I did have few quibbles. A soup with truffles had no truffle flavor. A tomato sauce listed as "hot spicy" was not hot, which should not count as a quibble as I do not like "hot" dishes. The cantaloupe served with the prociuto was not sweet. On the whole, the pastries did not come up to quality of the pastries found on other cruise ships.

The ship is a vision in glass and mirrors. There are an abundance of bars and lounges, five major ones in all. There was music for entertainment in most of them all the time. The theater is large, with excellent visibility from every seat, stadium style.

The entertainment is more European than American with voiceless comedians, acrobats, and magicians, an Italian operatic tenor, and a marvelous dance group that can do a Russian kazatski, a French can-can, an Irish stomp, and an American rhythm dance with equal facility and tremendous verve.

Opera will cruise the Caribbean in the winter sailing out of Ft. Lauderdale, and the Mediterranean in the summer. It is a welcome addition to our cruise scene giving us a real choice of ambiance and food.



Back in the January SCAM, in response to some controversy over my December article, I asked the question: How would the Bush Administration resolve the projected Social Security shortfall without raising payroll taxes or reducing benefits? I did get one response which appeared last month. In the news, as well as in this month's SCAM, Social Security remains a hot topic.

Moreover, as many of us are too well aware, this is a topic that hits close to home. Regardless of our personal political views, I believe most would agree that the Social Security issue is a real problem that needs to be addressed. All of which leads to my second question on the topic: In your opinion, what steps must be taken to resolve the Social Security problem and to assure that Social Security will remain solvent and able to meet its obligations to future retirees? Feel free to provide details to explain how your plan would work.

Now we have two questions to consider in my "search of a village"; in short, What would the Bush Administration do? and What should be done? You are free to submit an answer to either or both questions. Your responses will be published in an upcoming issue of The SCAM.

Please, fellow SCAM members; please help this Idiot in his search of a village.



Welcome to SCAM:

Paul Bisson
Carol Craig
Scott McBride

Welcome Back:

Nicole Smith

March Birthday Greetings!



- 02-Joseph Smith
- 05-Stephen Schneider
- 05-David Terry Sr.
- 11-Dennis Schindler
- 16-Melinda Meers
- 17-Janice Axelrod
- 18-Ellen Paul
- 20-William Daffron III
- 22-Jack Harris
- 23-Donald Dalton Jr.
- 28-Cheri Allen
- 31-Francesca Hinson

Larry, Moe and Curley were sitting in their favorite restaurant just off Wall Street having their usual 3-martini lunch and were discussing the day's events and their client portfolios.

Larry: "I had 12 calls this morning from customers wanting to know why the market was going down".

Moe: "What did you tell them?"

Curley: "Yeah, what", taking another gulp of his libation.

Larry: "You know, the usual. This is a normal correction and not to worry. I am watching your account. The market always comes back."

Moe: "That's the same BS I tell them."

Curley: "I have more than 300 accounts and I can't watch them except my 5 big traders. Who cares about the others anyway? My company won't let me tell them to sell when their stock starts down and they believe the old saw about 'hang in there for the long haul'. I blew out of all my stocks last week. Thank goodness. The market has dropped 300 points since then.

Moe: "It would be better for the customers if our company would let us tell them to use stop loss orders."

Larry and Moe, shouting in a single voice: "Don't say that or we'll get fired". They both bonk him on the head spilling his drink. "Nyuk. Nyuk."

Yes, it may sound funny, but there is more truth than fiction in that imaginary conversation.

Why don't brokerage companies tell their customers to sell when the market is declining? There are two reasons. First any large brokerage does not want to get on the bad side of a company. That company might have a public offering later on and they will definitely not be asked to sell any of the stock or bonds. This is where the big money is on Wall Street. The second reason is they don't want the customer to have cash in his account. He might take it out. Brokers make money even if you do not trade. It is not much, but it does keep the pilot light lit.

Brokers also discourage customer stop loss orders because it is more paper work for them and then they do have to watch your account. Unless your account is high 6-figure or 7-figure you are not on the radar screen. Mr. Broker (an appropriate name for what he does with your money) has an average of 300 accounts and many have 600 or 700. As new guys come into their office they give them the little accounts.

When a broker passes his securities license he is given two manuals. One is SEC regulations that must be followed and the second is how to open accounts. There is no third manual on how to protect customers' money or trade. Brokerage companies want their salesmen to follow the company line and push certain products. There is no thought of customer protection.

If your broker is Larry, Moe or Curley it is time to find a new one.

*F*R*E*E investment letter www.mutualfundmagic.com Author of best seller "IF IT DOES-N'T GO UP, DON'T BUY IT!" Never lose money in the market. Copyright 2004 Albert W. Thomas All rights reserved. Former 17-year exchange member, floor trader and brokerage company owner.*

Editor's Note: This article is a reprint from Tampa Bay Sounding, newsletter of Tampa Bay Mensa, November 2003, Sylvia Zadorozny, Editor.

I have come to realize, much to my chagrin, that most folks are not overly fond of super-smart people. This may not seem too earthshaking, and I am generalizing, but it is a bit baffling! Society talks a good game about the value of intelligence, but in point of fact, finds its members with an abundance of those qualities an annoyance. And in some places on this planet the very bright are considered dangerous!

Anyone who has ever seen those bumper stickers, "My child is rocket scientist of the month at Plainville Elementary" knows parents love to brag about how brainy their children are. But the only people, other than the kid's parents, who are happy to see those bumper stickers, are the kid's grandparents! Even the objects of those awards are often a little embarrassed by those stickers.

Employers like smart employees. Again, this is a relative statement. An employee smart enough to be an asset and not a liability is prized. But a super-smart employee may be viewed as a threat, if not by his or her boss, then by fellow workmates. I am sure many of our members can relate to this.

In those dating personals, women will list intelligence as a quality they would like in a mate. False flag here too, my brainy hunks. They want a man smart enough to remember to put the toilet seat down and make a good wage, but not smart enough to figure out what happy crap they are running on their men. And men generally don't list smarts as a quality they are seeking because their own brains often don't think that far up a woman's frame!

And just as some very tall people will slouch, some high IQ types "play dumb" because they learned early that it will be easier for them to "fit in"! Most of us didn't pick up on this though. I have experienced this first hand. At a Mensa Regional Gathering, an engineer and I were having a discussion when suddenly, he stood up, blurted out that the Hubble Telescope group was giving a talk in five minutes and walked off. No "good-bye," no "nice talking to you," nothing. I sat there stunned, watching him walk away in his mismatched socks! (Are all engineers colorblind?)

And for years my ex-wife would call me Mr. Spock (of *Star Trek* fame) and tell me I had no people skills. I took many courses and worked very hard to develop the few skills I now have. But it does seem to be an area of weakness with the highly intelligent. I don't know if the lack of people skills is the effect of our treatment by the general populace or a manifestation of the arrogance of dealing with smooth-brained humans! And I don't really care one way or the other. That debate is for another time and

(Continued on page 15)

This month, I will be addressing a local issue. For a number of years here in Melbourne, a soup kitchen, The Daily Bread, has been in existence. The Daily Bread's reason for being is to feed and otherwise assist the homeless in the downtown Melbourne area. In addition to hot meals, the facility provides showers and laundry services for the homeless. Few would dispute that the Daily Bread serves a noble purpose. The problem arises when it becomes evident that few if any residents wish to have the Daily Bread near where they live or work. Hence the term "NIMBY" (Not In MY Back Yard!!!).

Admittedly, homeless people are not a pretty sight. Moreover, there are attendant nuisances associated with some of our homeless population. According to a recent news story in *Florida Today*, "Daily Bread is dishing out unwanted helpings of drug abuse, prostitution and crime in the soup kitchen's surrounding neighborhood, some residents say. ... Daily Bread's clientele is wrecking their quality of life." Among the problems cited: Drug needles found in neighbors' yards, intoxicated people urinating in the bushes, and a mentally ill man approaching and frightening a local woman (who never before met him) professing his love for her.

According to the same news story, Harry Goode, the mayor of Melbourne, said the city's Code enforcement may start cracking down on the soup kitchen. It would seem that the Daily Bread, while providing a valuable service, should simply do it elsewhere. In what I regard as a quite appropriate response to these complaints, a spokesperson for the Daily Bread asserted, "We don't bring the homeless people here. We're here because the homeless people were already here."

What then, do we do? Is it a matter of sweeping the less than desirable among us under the rug, as the Daily Bread's neighbors might have us do? Shall we follow suit of other communities, notably Orlando, who in response to downtown business complaints, simply make it virtually illegal for the homeless to be present, thereby subjecting them to arrest? Do we deal with this problem by treating the symptoms (a typical conservative response), or do we do it the right (small "r") way?

The right way is to discover and deal with the underlying causes. Among the homeless, drug addiction (including alcoholism) is surely a problem. Prostitution is generally a means to support an addiction. Should we not be offering rehab for the addicts? Would it not be cost effective to return these people to their former status as contributing members of society?

Mental illness is certainly a problem among the homeless. Would it not make sense to deal with these issues? Some mental illness

(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14)

is treatable; these people likewise have a lot to offer society. For those who are not treatable, should they not be protected from the outside world (and vice versa)?

Or is it really better just to throw them out to the streets where they can continue to be a nuisance to their more fortunate neighbors?

Source:

Soup Kitchen Losing Favor, *Florida Today*, February 7, 2005, page 1B.

**Why not write for
The SCAM??**

The SCAM welcomes written submissions on just about any subject matter. It must be your own work. Remember, deadline is the 10th of every month for the upcoming issue. Please see Page 3 of every issue for details.

Your work could appear on these pages!!

(Continued from page 13)

forum. But I digress!

I am proud of this gift I have. I learned early in life that I would never be a jock or big scary guy. I had heard that we humans only used a very small portion of our brainpower. I figured if I worked harder I could build this organ up and that would be my edge in life. I was eight years old! It worked . . . kind of! But at a price. I don't fit in, and I know some people are intimidated, others are envious, and a few even a tad hostile! We all have our crosses to bear! Well, I have a project to finish up Oh! Nice chatting with you, goodbye!

“This fiscal crisis in Social Security affects every generation. ... That would be unconscionable, especially since, if you move now, we can do less and have a bigger impact...”

I am sure that all of you are aware of the reaction of the liberals in Congress to those words from the President. The effect that the word “crisis” had on all the far-left Democrats:

“Save Social Security first,” said Al Gore.

“Save Social Security first,” said Teddy Kennedy.

“Save Social Security first,” said Barbara Boxer.

Oops, that’s right... the quote up top was by President *Bill Clinton*, on February 9, 1998.

Amazingly, he stumped for most of that year warning America about the soon-to-be “crisis” in Social Security. Incredibly, not one Liberal occupying offices in Washington denounced this as “fear-mongering”, but instead jumped on the bandwagon about the looming “crisis” in Social Security.

On March 22, 2000, in his support of the “Senior Citizens’ Freedom to Work Act of 2000” then Senate-Minority leader Tom Daschle spoke about the “serious Social Security crisis”.

On March 30, 2001, on the floor of the US Senate, the Prince of Pork, Robert Byrd, spoke of the *“long-term financing crisis that faces the Social Security program”* while discussing “The Budget Resolution”.

On June 12, 2002, in his attack against a reform in the “Estate Tax”, soon—be Vice-Presidential candidate John Edwards spoke about *“a Social Security crisis”* on the floor of the US Senate.

Now, let’s move on to February 2005, and President *George Bush*, who has actually proposed doing something about the problems facing the Social Security program. His change: permitting wage earners to earmark up to 2% (4% with employer contribution) for a private investment account. The new Liberal response to this “crisis” solution?

Well, first off, they call the President a liar, stating that there is no crisis: *“So now we have the crisis in terms of the funding of Social Security that is non-existent.”* stated Teddy Kennedy on Sunday, January 16, 2005 on *Face The Nation*.

“There is no looming crisis in Social Security, and Congress should not rush to create private accounts.” said Rep. Charles Rangel (D-NY) on Sunday, January 9, 2005.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, (D-CA): *“Well we’re not in crisis.”*

Sen. Barbara Boxer, (D-CA): *“The crisis he’s talking about doesn’t happen until 2042.”* She also stated that even if we do nothing, *“it would still have enough money in there to pay everyone 70 to 80 percent of benefits.”* (Just imag-

(Continued from page 16)

ine the Liberal uproar if a Republican suggested that a real 20-30% benefits cut would be acceptable!)

So, what has changed? Less than ten years ago all these lefties were ranting about the “crisis” in Social Security. They acknowledged that it was there and would become serious if nothing was done. Now they deny that a crisis exists in any amount.

In 1998 the President and the Dems had this little ongoing problem with a particular little blue dress and the person who wore it. And for the length of that problem, Social Security was their number one talking point. When “Monicagate” dropped off the national radar, so too did Social Security as a topic of any importance. Nothing was resolved, no cures or fixes were proposed. Not even rescinding the act, passed by the Democrat-controlled Congress, with Vice President Al Gore casting the tie-breaking vote as President of the Senate, that made your Social Security benefits subject to federal income taxation. Right, money you were already taxed on, that has accrued interest at a rate of less than two percent for more than a decade, gets taxed at a minimum fourteen percent when they let you have it back.

In 1935 President Franklin D. Roosevelt introduced Social Security. In his proposal he made these promises to the American people:

1. That participation in the Program would be completely voluntary;
2. That the participants would only have to pay 1% of the first \$1,400 of their annual incomes into the program;
3. That the money the participants elected to put into the Program would be deductible from their income tax;
4. That the money the participants put into the independent "Trust Fund" would only be used to fund the Social Security Retirement Program, and no other Government program, and;
5. That the annuity payments to the retirees would never be taxed as income.

Well, it is surely not voluntary—try opting out of it; we are up to 12.4% of the first \$90,000 in income; it isn't deductible; since Lyndon Johnson was President there has officially been no such thing as an independent “trust fund”; and President Clinton took care of that last item. So much for the liberal concern for “FDR's Legacy”.

So why is it the Dems and other liberals do not want any changes in Social Security (other than higher FICA deductions from the paychecks of wage-earners)?

Two words: Power and Control. If people were not dependent upon government for their paltry retirement, they just might begin to demand more fiscal responsibility from it. And without the total control over the money, the Dems could no longer use scare tactics about Republicans' attempts to throw granny out or make her eat dog food.

We need to take the power and control of our own lives and futures back. Government can't guarantee anything... even that SS will be there.

*AN OPEN LETTER TO
PRESIDENT
GEORGE W. BUSH*

January 13, 2005

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The purpose of this letter is to request your intervention in the case of Major Cathy Kaus, Chief Warrant Officer Darrell Birt, Sergeant Robert Chalmers, and the other members of the U.S. Army's 656th Transportation Company, who have been victimized by a miscarriage of military justice.

Although you are probably familiar with the situation, to recap: The 656th Transportation Company is a component of the Army Reserve, mobilized in early 2003 to support the current war in Iraq. The mission of the 656th is to transport fuel under combat conditions, from the depot to front-line forces of the 4th Infantry Division. This unit performed its mission in a superlative fashion, and played a key role in the initial victory by American forces. The 656th drove over 1.2 million miles and delivered approximately 33 million gallons of fuel, under the most arduous conditions. As the Commanding Officer of the 656th, Major Kaus deserves great credit for this achievement and she was, in fact, awarded the Bronze Star, as was CWO Birt.

The members of the 656th, however, encountered obstacles with the supply system. In order to fulfill their important mission, they appropriated two government tractor-trailer rigs that were not needed by their assigned unit, and that had been left behind in Kuwait. Later, the 656th cannibalized a 5-ton truck that had been abandoned by the side of the road in Iraq for critical spare parts.

Months later, a disaffected member of the unit reported this as the 656th was returning stateside. As a result, Major Kaus and CWO Birt were court-martialed, sentenced to six months confinement, and dishonorably discharged from the Army. Major Kaus was also fined \$5000. Their civilian jobs, which they willingly left to answer the nation's call in 2003, are now in jeopardy due to their status as convicted felons. Sergeant Chalmers

was reduced in grade and fined, and is now heavily in debt. Eleven other members of the 656th have received punishment.

As someone who has served in the military, Sir, no doubt you encountered irregularities in the supply system where critical spares are unavailable or lost in transit, and requisitions are mishandled or arbitrarily cancelled. As most veterans know, there is an imperative to support the mission at all costs, and honor bestowed on individuals who by initiative and ingenuity can acquire parts and materials, where the lack of such materials would prevent full mission success.

Sir, certainly you are aware that appropriation of government material in this way, strictly for the purpose of achieving the mission, is not only tolerated but often encouraged in our military. Mr. President, like me, you probably heard your share of stories from the older and senior members of your unit that started out something like: "Back when I was your age/your rank, I did this..."

It is important to note that Major Kaus and the 656th were only motivated by accomplishing their critical mission. There was no personal gain involved in what they did, other than the satisfaction of knowing that they fulfilled their commitments. The two tractor-trailers were never reported as stolen, and as previously noted, the 5-ton truck was roadside junk. It is hard to see how the actions of the 656th gave any advantage to our enemies, and as has already been noted, the 656th played a key role in keeping the 4th Infantry Division moving, in a campaign that you, Sir, have characterized as a "catastrophic success."

It is true, that Major Kaus and other members of the 656th are probably guilty of failing to properly report their irregular procurement. But does correcting this oversight require destroying the lives of people who have served America during long military careers in peacetime and performed heroically in a time of crisis? A reprimand would be an appropriate punishment. Certainly nothing more severe than an Article 15 (non-judicial punishment) could be justified in this case.

Just recently, in another case, Sergeant First Class Tracy Perkins was convicted by court-martial at Fort Hood. While serving in Iraq in January of last year, Sergeant Perkins ordered his men to throw two Iraqi prisoners into the Tigris River, one of whom is believed to have drowned. Sergeant Perkins will serve six months in confinement. He has been reduced in rank by one grade, but he has not been discharged.

The purpose of this letter is not to dispute the severity of Sergeant

Perkins' punishment. One cannot help but note, however, that a more severe punishment is inflicted upon U.S. military members for a minor property crime than for assaulting and killing an Iraqi. This fact will most likely serve as grist for the enemy's propaganda mill, in a part of the world where all too many people are willing to believe the worst about Americans, despite the good conduct of most American service members, and the great work being accomplished by our Navy and Marines in providing relief to the victims of the recent South Asian Tsunami.

Although Major Kaus and CWO Birt have already completed their sentences in confinement, justice can still be served.

I respectfully request that Major Kaus, CWO Birt, and the other members of the 656th Transportation Company be restored to their original ranks and good status as American soldiers.

Sincerely,
Henry Rhodes
Veteran and Concerned Citizen

Copy to:

Senator Bill Nelson
Congressman Dave Weldon
Newsletter

Senator Mel Martinez
Editor, Space Coast Area Mensa

Author's Note: *At deadline, there has been no change in the status of the punishments awarded to the members of the 656th Transportation Company. The author has only received a response from the office of Congressman (for life) Dave Weldon. In his letter, Congressman Weldon stated he "...can do nothing to help until [he has] written authorization from the constituent with the problem." Enclosed were several Privacy Act forms, presumably for the members of the 656th Transportation Company (based in Ohio) to fill out, despite the fact that this situation has already received considerable coverage in the media!*

If you read the title, you know this isn't going to be Elissa writing, and I am sure you are wondering what is going on. Well, the story is this: our intrepid leader, Elissa Rudolph, is focusing for a couple of months on finishing her master's thesis, and I am fulfilling my duty as her assistant by doing what I can to relieve the load. Your part in this is, for March and April, if you need the RVC's attention or help, contact me. If I can help, I will do it. If I can't, I will find the answer for you, hopefully without bothering Elissa.

There are a lot of terrific things going on in Region 10. Did you know that Keri Guilbault, of CFM, has been named to a national position with Mensa's Gifted Children's Program? Did you know that the Gainesville group is successfully working on rebuilding their calendar?

Did you know that Mind Games is being hosted by Tampa Bay Mensa this year? Did you know that Region 10 has some of the best Regional

Gatherings in the country? (Okay, maybe I am a little bit prejudiced there.) I am sure there are a lot of other outstanding things going on in the region, but most of us don't know about them. If something is going on in your group, share it with me, and it will be my pleasure to share it with the rest of the region.

Speaking of Mind Games, it has an effect on two of our region's regional gatherings. Tampa Bay usually hosts Beach Bash Memorial Day weekend. But that is too soon after Mind Games in April. So Tampa Bay Mensa and Broward Mensa have traded dates for this year only. Broward Mensa's gathering will be Memorial Day weekend, and Tampa Bay's gathering will be in October. The fact that our region's groups can work together that well is another one of those terrific things going on in Region 10. Broward and Tampa Bay, I applaud you!

Most of you know by now that American Mensa is hosting the 2006

World Gathering, in celebration of Mensa's 60th birthday, and it will take place right here in Region 10, at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort. Notice that I didn't say that CFM is hosting it. American Mensa is hosting it. That means all of us across the country should get involved. And most especially those of us here in Region 10, just because we are closest at hand, have an opportunity to be actively involved.

Think about what you might like to do to participate. Do you have an interest that would make a good program? Contact me! I am program chair. Do you want to help out in hospitality, even if it is only for an hour or two? Contact Jerry Fortner. He is hospitality chair. If you want to help but you aren't sure how, contact Kay Klasen, in Broward Mensa. She is volunteers chair.

Thank you all for helping me give Elissa the time she needs to finish that master's thesis. We can all be proud of her!

Maggie Truelove

The ExComm met at the home of Helen Lee Moore on Superbowl Sunday, February 6, 2005. Called to order at 4:04 pm by LocSec Sam Kirschten.

Members present: Sam Kirschten, Helen Lee Moore, and George Patterson. Suzanne Leichtfling and Joe Smith were unable to attend.

Minutes for the January 9, 2005 meeting were approved as published. Moved by Helen, approved unanimously.

Officer Reports:

Treasurer: January 31, 2005 report distributed by Helen.

Testing: Helen (Proctor Coordinator) reported that two people were tested in January and that a testing session was scheduled for Saturday, February 19, at the Cocoa Public Library. There were no other officer reports.

Committee Reports:

There were no committee reports.

New Business: Helen reported that there were a number of errors in the information on the SCAM Website and presented some notes on the same. George agreed to discuss these items with the Webmaster.

The next meeting of the ExComm is scheduled for Saturday, March 5, at 3:00 pm at the Cocoa Public Library.

George moved to adjourn at 4:29 pm, passed by unanimous vote.

ADVERTISEMENT

HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS. How far have you traveled to just the "right job"? And then you changed jobs or retired anyway? So how do you figure to find just the "right mate" within 25 miles of home? Especially when that person is a healthy single Mensan, nonsmoker, down-to-earth, patient, flexible, fun, adaptable, spontaneous, independent, nonreligious, all in one durable package that has been maturing for at least 60 years? So here's the golden opportunity: If you are male and fit the above and live anywhere reasonably close to a route from Orlando to San Diego, and will be available to meet between March 29 and April 5 (at some local Mensa venue would be nice!), e-mail me at jwjsd@aol.com before March 25, or phone me on the road at 619-977-8054.