

The

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It's That Time Again...



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Writer's Block

Mike Moakley, SCAM Editor

Just a few items this month:

We now have a new ExComm! Elected to serve on the 2005-06 ExComm are: **Bud Long, Cliff Miller, George Patterson, Joe Smith, and Thomas Wheat.** Congratulations to all. To all the members of the outgoing ExComm, thank you for your hard work and dedication. To everyone else, Space Coast Area Mensa has plenty of room for willing volunteers; you need not be bashful.

I wish to remind you at this time that some of the material published in The SCAM are copyrighted by the author. This indicates the author, and not The SCAM, owns the work. All other material is copyrighted by The SCAM and is owned by the Space Coast Area Mensa. Contact me for any relevant information. The SCAM's policy regarding using published works is outlined on the back cover beneath the return address. With regard to my own copyrighted work, I grant permission to any Mensa group to republish my work subject to the same policy set forth by The SCAM.

SAVE THOSE COUPONS! The March issue of *The Bulletin* contained a coupon worth \$5 toward the cost of the Mensa Entrance Exam. If you're not planning to give the coupon to a friend or relative, we request you pass it to Helen Lee Moore or Hank Rhodes. What better way to welcome prospective members than by giving them a break on the

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.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is a reprint from Mensa World, Issue 2-2005. Dr. Salny is Honorary Vice-President of Mensa International.

The term I.Q. itself is a misnomer. Originally, it was an intelligence quotient. When Alfred Binet was asked by the French government in the early 1900's to design a test that would separate those who could but wouldn't, from those who would but couldn't, he devised a test that set up levels for each childhood age. The quotient was obtained by dividing Mental Age (M.A.) by chronological age (C.A.), moving the decimal point two places to the right, and producing a score.

Thus, a 4 year old with a 6 year mental age would have an I.Q. of 150. This was adopted generally, but it obviously didn't work for adults. One cannot measure a 40 year old on such a scale. In the 1930's, David Wechsler, a noted psychologist, developed the Wechsler-Bellevue Intelligence Test, which is now known as "deviation I.Q." This meant that adults were divided into age cohorts. A normal curve was built for each age cohort and the individuals in that age range were measured against others in the same age range.

That system has been used ever since. Even the Binet has been changed from a simple ratio to a set of scales. It is now impossible, for example, to obtain an I.Q. in the 200's. The top score is probably around 180.

Even this does not tell the whole story. The I.Q. is a measure of a statistical figure. It is, on a normal curve, derived from the Mean and the Standard Deviation. This gives a percentile rank, and many psychologists would much prefer to see percentile ranks instead of I.Q. scores. The reason is simple. It is possible to design a test with a mean of 100 (which is where most tests have their Mean), and a standard deviation of 50. This would mean the cut-off score for Mensa would be 200 – obviously absurd. For example, on a test with a Mean of 100 and a Standard Deviation of 16, like the former Stanford Binet developed at Stanford University, the 98th percentile on a normal curve is 132. On the various early Wechsler scales, two standard deviations was a score of 130. On the very old Cattell, the 98th percentile was 148, since it has a Standard Deviation of 24.

I.Q. scores are meaningless unless you know what percentile rank they represent. It is the percentile rank that Mensa accepts, not the I.Q. score. It is possible to fit most standardized tests to a normal curve, and thus derive a percentile rank, even if the scores are not given as I.Q. scores.

This is a very important point to remember. Mensa's Constitution says the 98th percentile based on a normal population. For this reason, tests given to non-normal populations must be specifically adjusted. When Mensa originally took the SAT scores, for example, the SATs were given only to college bound students. When they were given to everyone, the 98th percentile changed slightly for the general population.

American Mensa now no longer accepts the SAT, as it is no longer an intelligence test but represents many learned abilities. The SAT test used in Britain only identifies the top 5%, so it too is not able to be used by Mensa. Only in a country whose own SAT tests IQ only and also provides small enough increments to measure the top 2% would an SAT test still be valid.

Mensa cannot accept tests that represent learning. They are content oriented and not intelligence tests. For this reason, Mensa had to drop many tests, as they became achievement oriented. This seems to be a change in attitude on the part of institutions of higher learning. They now seem to be interested not only in basic intelligence but in how much the student has learned and achieved. This is probably helpful in college admissions, but it doesn't meet Mensa's constitutional requirements.

So the next time you see someone who claims to have a very high



Deb's Corner

If you have old magazines lying around the house or business, please drop them off at Turf Master, a collection spot for the VFW. All donated magazines will be shipped twice monthly to soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Contact Brad the Parts Guy at:

Turf Master Tractor and Mower, 2335 Aurora Road, Melbourne.
(7/10ths of a mile East of Wickham Rd.)

Just a reminder...if you have **books** lying around, your local library could use them for an upcoming Book Sale. All proceeds benefit the library.

Thank you for visiting my corner,

Deb

Botanically, nuts are the dry, one-seeded fruit of certain trees and shrubs. The kernel is contained in a hard and woody or leathery and tough shell from which the kernel is more or less easily removed. A true nut does not split along a definite seam at maturity. True nuts include the acorn, chestnut, and hazelnut.

In culinary usage, a nut is any seed with an edible kernel surrounded by a hard or brittle shell. Most of our common food nuts fall into this second category, including peanuts, pecans, pistachios, and walnuts.

Acorn - *Quercus* (many varieties). A true nut. The seed of the oak tree. Although not commonly used for human food now, acorns were an important part of the diet of Native Americans of the eastern forests. They were prepared by grinding, leaching, and cooking. Acorns are still used as animal feed, especially in the South where pigs are allowed to forage in the woods.

Almond - *Prunus amygdalus*. The seed of a drupe, a fruit with a soft flesh and skin enclosing a single seed. Almonds come in many varieties but fall into two main classes, sweet and bitter. The sweet almonds (*var. dulcis*) can be eaten raw, or they may be processed in several ways. Bitter almonds (*var. amara*) contain prussic acid, which is removed before being processed for oil or confectionary.

Almonds are native to Central Asia and are now grown extensively around the Mediterranean. They are closely related to peaches and are considered by some to be their precursors.

Culinarily important, almonds are eaten raw or roasted. They are used in candies, especially marzipan, which is made of almond paste, or are covered with sugar and sold as Jordan Almonds, traditional at weddings.



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They are also used for flavoring ice creams, vegetables, and fish.

Beechnut - *Fagus grandifolia*. Not now used much for food, beechnuts, along with other nuts, formed a major part of the Native American diet of the eastern woodlands. Pigs are often fattened on mast or the fallen nuts in the woods.

Brazil nut - *Bertholletia excelsus*. Originally from Brazil but now also grown in Bolivia and Peru. It grows in a cluster of eight to twenty-four nuts in an outer shell. The shell of the nut is extremely hard.

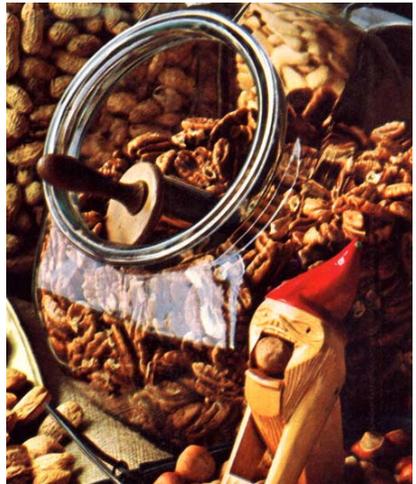
Cashew - *Anacardium occidentale*. Native to tropical America. The kernel is about an inch long and kidney shaped with a double shell. The nut is not eaten raw but must be roasted to destroy the caustic juice that it contains. Cashews are about 50% fat.

Chestnut - *Castanea dentata*. The American Chestnut is nearly extinct being destroyed by an imported chestnut blight. It was a widely disbursed and common tree east of the Mississippi providing food for native Americans, colonists, and contemporaries until the blight. Chestnuts sold in stores are imported and are of a related species (*C. sativa*) resistant to the blight. Wild chestnuts can no longer be found in the eastern woods.

Coconut - *Cocos nucifera*. The largest seed is the double coconut of Madagascar. The common Coconut is the second largest. The coconut is self-propagating by water because the outer husk is waterproof and buoyant. The inner shell is hard with three soft spots at one end. Coconuts provide a ready source of food in the tropics and form a major export commodity. The dried meat, copra, is processed for its oil, the residue being used for cattle food. Coconuts are eaten raw or cooked. In Western cuisine, shredded coconut is often found in cakes and desserts.

Hazelnut, filberts, cobnuts - *Corylus avellana*. Filberts are the European name derived from "nuts of St. Philbert" whose feast day in August coincided with the harvest of the nuts. There are several varieties of hazelnuts. Strictly speaking *C. avellana* is the European filbert, *C. maxima* is the cobnut, and *C. americana* and *C. cornuta* are hazelnuts.

Litchi - *Nephelium litchi*. Except for the name this Chinese fruit should not be included in this compilation. The kernel is not eaten. The sweet pulp under the hard outer case is the only edible part when eaten fresh or preserved. When dried and sold as litchi nuts, the sweet pulp turns dark



and loses most of its flavor.

Macadamia - *Macadamia proteaceae*. Native to Queensland, Australia, they are widely grown in Hawaii for the U. S. market. California also has a commercial crop. The kernel has an extremely hard shell so they are usually sold shelled. Special nutcrackers have been devised for those who grow their own or buy them unshelled. The oil content can reach 70%.

Peanut, goober, ground nut - *Arachis hypogaea*. The seed of a legume, it is not a nut in almost any sense of the word. It is, however, the most common “nut” eaten. See *SCAM* January 2004.

Pecan - *Carya olivaeformis*. A species of the hickory in the walnut family. The pecan is remarkable in that it contains more than 70% oil, the highest concentration of oil of any vegetable crop. Pecans are used, especially in the South, in pies and pralines. They are also used to flavor ice cream.

Pecans are native to North America and along with related hickory nuts, shagbark, and mockernut, were part of the Native American diet.

Pine nut, piñon, Indian nut, pignolia - *Pinus* (various species). Used for food in Native American, southern European, and Middle Eastern cookery. The pine cone is heated to release the seed or nut; an adaptation designed to foster regrowth after a forest fire.

Pistachio - *Pistaci vera*. A tree of the Sumac family native to the Middle East. The roasted greenish kernel is eaten out of hand and used in confections. Turkish baklava is usually made with pistachios whereas the Greek version contains walnuts.

Walnut - *Juglans nigra* (Black Walnut), *J. regia* (English Walnut), *J. cinerea* (Butternut). The name “walnut” was originally *wealhnutu*, which in Old English meant Welsh Nut. In the U. S. they are usually eaten out of hand or used in Waldorf Salad and other dishes. In France, oil is extracted from walnuts and is preferred by many to olive oil. In England they are pickled or made into ketchup.



EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is reprinted from Mblem, newsletter of Mensa of Eastern North Carolina, January 1999; Nina Ward, Editor.

J was on jury duty in November. At the New Hanover County Courthouse, the lady in charge of the jurors gave each of us a pamphlet entitled "Handbook for Jurors," originally prepared by the North Carolina Bar Association. The revised version given to us jurors was published by the "Administrative Office of the Courts," which I took to mean a local county office. The purpose of this seven-page booklet was to instruct us in our responsibilities as jurors and to explain something about legal procedures.

In this booklet it says, "The Judge must declare the law as it is, and you must find the facts under the law as it is. Under your oath, you are not at liberty to substitute your own idea of what the law ought to be." The part about not substituting my own ideas made me suspicious about unconstitutional manipulation of the legal system for reasons I will explain later in this account.

Having read the above statement, I listened to the oath administered by the lady in the jury room. I did not hear in the oath that we had to apply only the law as explained by the judge. As I recall I did swear to render an honest verdict according only to the evidence presented in the courtroom. I wasn't sure I could agree to even that.

I listened carefully to the jury instructions because I had recently read another pamphlet published by the Liberty Lobby, a patriotic, back-to-the-Constitution group headquartered in Washington, D.C. In this pamphlet are some statements which contradict all of the above. I submit them to the reader for his judgment. Who is being bamboozled here?

"The general rule is that an unconstitutional statute...is wholly void.... No one is bound to obey an unconstitutional law and no courts are bound to enforce it.' Sixteenth American Jurisprudence, Second Edition, Section 256. "No man is bound to obey an unjust command. Which means if the defendant has disobeyed some man made criminal statute and the statute itself is unjust, that defendant has committed no crime."

"There can be no doubt that the jury has an 'unreviewable and irreversible power...to acquit in disregard of the instructions on the law given by the trial judge.'" U.S. vs.. Dougherty, 473 F 2d 1113, 1139 (1972), United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. "We recognize, as appellants urge, the undisputed power of the jury to acquit, even if its verdict is contrary to the law as given by the judge, and contrary to the evidence." U.S. vs.. Moylan, 417 F 2d 1002, 1006 (1969), United States Court of Appeals for the District of Maryland.

"Jury lawlessness is the greatest corrective of law in its actual administration." Dougherty, cited above, note 32, at 1130. I submit to this Jury of My Peers: Is the Constitution being violated in New Hanover County?

Have you had one of those huge investment winners – a stock that went from \$2.00 to \$80.00? Or any other numbers you want that gave you a gigantic percent profit?

Did you take the profit or did you watch the equity drop back down to what you paid for it? I hope you sold and kept the money. That's what it is all about. So many times when I was a broker I have seen customers make large profits and then think they were omniscient about trading and within a short period give back what they had made.

As a brokerage company owner I had seasoned brokers do the same thing. One of my men made \$150,000 in a short time. I called to congratulate his performance and suggested he take a vacation from trading for a while. He said, "No, Al, I know what I am doing". The very next month he lost \$155,000. What happened?

Listen carefully as I am going to tell you one of the great truisms not found in the trading training manuals. If you are doing any trading whether in stocks, mutual funds, real estate, currencies, whatever, this applies. Print this out, frame it and put it up on your office wall.

"Making a lot of money is just as upsetting to your mind as losing a lot of money".

A big score destabilizes thinking. Many people want to do it again and again so they immediately plunge back into their investments with their winning cash and make bigger bets. It is almost without exception that they become losers and give back their winnings.

For many years I have advocated taking time off after a big profit. It takes time to get your head on straight again. As a former floor trader I would have about 6 or 8 times during the year when I made a good "hit". Then I would immediately call my travel agent to ask where I could go for a week. I knew I must get away because my investment strategy would be clouded by success.

Too many of the big winners seem to alter their basic trading plan because they now had a large amount with which to trade causing them to deviate from their successful pattern. They then became losers. Because of their success their thinking changed and they were not aware of what had happened. The trader must get away and let his emotions down.

A disturbing event, even a positive one, can alter up your thinking. If you want to keep your investment profits you must keep your emotions under control.

Al Thomas' best selling book, "If It Doesn't Go Up, Don't Buy It!" has helped thousands of people make money and keep their profits with his simple 2-step method. Read the first chapter at www.mutualfundmagic.com and discover why he's the man that Wall Street does not want you to know.

A Reminder from the Editor

- **All** Newsletter submissions are due on the **10th**. Items for the **Calendar** are due on the **8th**.
- **All** correspondence sent to The SCAM may, at the Editor's discretion, be published in The SCAM, **unless** it is marked "NFP" or "Not for publication".
- **All** opinions on a topic are welcome; none are censored. However, attacks on members, and other offensive material are **not** welcome.
- **Opinions** you disagree with are **not**, solely for such reason, included in the category of offensive material.
- **Please see Page 3** for the Editor's contact info.

**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!!

Welcome to SCAM and Mensa:

Jared Friedman



June Birthday Greetings!

02-Glen Martinie
03-Patricia Drew
05-Joyce Megginson Kircher
08-Robert Ruhge
14-Jakob Unger
17-Ellen Rogers
24-Richard Kerlin
24-Sam Kirschten
26-Judith Wiksten
29-Daniel Hamlin
29-Mark Murphy



What do the 16th and 17th century pirates Captain Kidd, John Avery, John “Blackbeard” Teach and Sir Henry Morgan have in common with 21st century Democrat senators Charles Schumer, Dianne Feinstein, Ted Kennedy and Robert Byrd (and just about all the remaining 40)?

Well, to answer that, a little history lesson is in order

Sixteenth century Dutch sea pirates were known as *vrijbuiters* (“plunderers”), combining the words *vrij* meaning free, *buit* meaning loot, and the ending *-er* meaning agent.

The word *vrijbuit* was corrupted into the English *freebooters* and French *flibustiers*. It eventually evolved back into English as *filibusters*, who were not pirates, but adventurers involving themselves in Latin American revolutions and coups, overthrowing governments.

Now for a little more history.

During the 16 month senatorial career of John Randolph of Virginia (12/1825 - 3/1827), Senator Randolph had the propensity for giving long, boring, and totally irrelevant speeches on the floor of the Senate. Vice-President John C. Calhoun, the president of the Senate, was given the authority to shut down such activities by a Senate that was tired of Randolph’s antics.

However, in 1872, Vice President Schuyler Colfax ruled that *“under the practice of the Senate, the presiding officer can not restrain a Senator in remarks which the Senator considers pertinent to the pending issue.”* This ruling allowed a return to unrestrained irrelevance in the Senate. A few years later an American legislator, disgusted with the tactics that had become endemic on the Senate floor, described the tactic as *“filibustering against the United States.”*

The description stuck, and eventually came to mean the “obstruction of legislation in the US Senate through prolonged speechmaking”.

Uncontrolled speechifying continued in the Senate until 1917 after the obstruction of a bill supporting World War I by a group of 11 Senators. President Woodrow Wilson lobbied for a change in Senate rules. The Senate complied, in part. Since they didn’t wish to give up their right to unlimited speaking time they passed Senate Rule XXII. This rule, as passed, required a two-thirds vote to invoke cloture on any matter on the floor of the Senate. Note, it addressed any matter on the floor, but not on any motion to bring a bill to the floor.

This condition lasted until 1977 when, under the new Senate Majority leader Robert Byrd, the Democrat-controlled Senate amended Rule XXII to allow cloture by only 60 votes. Interestingly enough, from 1977 to 1979 the Democrats held 61 Senate seats.

To quote Senator Byrd from the Congressional Record, January 15, 1979: *“This Congress is not obliged to be bound by the dead hand of the past...”*

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The first Senate, which met in 1789, approved 19 rules by a majority vote. Those rules have been changed from time to time... So the Members of the Senate who met in 1789 and approved that first body of rules did not for one moment think, or believe, or pretend, that all succeeding Senates would be bound by that Senate... It would be just as reasonable to say that one Congress can pass a law providing that all future laws have to be passed by two-thirds vote. Any Member of this body knows that the next Congress would not heed that law and would proceed to change it and would vote repeal of it by majority vote."

Meanwhile, a couple of years earlier, Senator Byrd had proposed a new method of filibustering: the "two-track" system. This would allow for the obstruction of only the "filibustered" matter on the floor while allowing the Senate to otherwise continue with business as usual. This procedural change was rammed through by Democrat Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield.

What this change actually accomplished was to allow one Senator to simply threaten to filibuster and thereby effectively kill any matter unless cloture could be forced - which would soon take 60 votes. The concept of one Senator, or one group of Senators holding the floor for days on end (ala *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*) preventing all other business from being tended to was killed by the party that had enough votes to force cloture. Senator Byrd referred to this way of doing things as the "*casual, gentlemanly, good-guy filibuster. Everybody goes home and gets a good night's sleep.*"

So what is all the hoorah from today's Democrats about a "nuclear option" to change Rule XXII to allow cloture with a simple majority? You would think that God had handed the Senate Rules to Moses instead of the Ten Commandments.

It is certainly true that if in 1872 V.P. Colfax had the power to make filibusters legal, then in 2005 V.P. Cheney has the power to make them illegal. It was after all only a V.P.'s ruling that made the filibuster legal.

If the Democrat *vrijbuiters* of today really wish to retain the 60 vote rule, then just add judicial appointments to the list of 26 laws already on the books that eliminate the possibility of filibusters in certain areas of national security, national defense, energy policy, environmental policy, federal budget, international trade, and arms control. The Constitutional role of the Senate is *Advise and Consent*. Not *Selection and Approval*.

As for legislation, leave the 60 vote cloture alone, but let's eliminate the "virtual" filibuster. Make them get up and talk... and talk... and talk some more. Make sure it is thoroughly covered by all media outlets. After all, there is nothing like looking like an ass to make a public figure shut up. And while we're at it, let's make it 75 votes to pass new laws.

After all, really good laws should have bi-partisan support and easily pass. If they don't, then they shouldn't be laws.

While membership in Mensa conveys a certain sense of uniqueness, this author suspects that he is one of a very few people who have received solicitations from both the Republican and Democratic National Committees within a matter of weeks. Unlike most of what passes for political discourse in our country these days, this strange experience was thought-provoking, although probably not in the way the initiators intended.

The Republicans start out with a four-page letter that begins “Dear Fellow Republican...” *What an unprovoked and gratuitous insult! One is reminded of the code of the old west, when someone calls you a “Son of a _____,” the correct rejoinder is “Better smile when you call me that!”* “You are among a select group of Republicans who have been chosen...as a representative of all Republicans living in your voting district...” *Can anything be more scary than this? Or is this simply weird?*

Then there is a two page form, which repeats much of the text of the cover letter, in the format of a questionnaire with fill-in circles corresponding to “Yes/ No/ Undecided” answers. It isn’t very difficult to identify the politically-correct answers. Unfortunately, to answer these questions *accurately* requires more than a simple yes or no. A sample:

- **Do you support President Bush’s initiatives to promote the safety and security of all Americans?**

Does this mean that almost four years after we were attacked, our Dear Leader is going to get serious about checking cargo loaded onto airliners, screening shipping containers at our seaports, assuring adequate security at chemical and nuclear facilities, and using the resources of the federal government to control our porous borders?

- **Do you support the use of air strikes against any country that offers safe harbor or aid to individuals or organizations committed to further attacks on America?**

You mean like Saudi Arabia? Oops! Forgot that they were part of the family business. State-sponsored terrorism by our so-called friends can be so inconvenient...

- **Should the Inheritance or “Death Tax” be permanently repealed?**

Better fire the copyeditor who failed to delete the word “Inheritance.” We want all Americans to believe that they get taxed when they die. Why should rich people be expected to pay for any of the security measures we’re alluding to above?

- **Do you think Congress should focus on cutting the federal budget deficit by reducing wasteful government spending?**

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(Continued from page 13)

Just kidding! After all, this administration, with the help of a Republican Congress, has managed to create a record-breaking mountain of debt that must be paid off by future generations. All because we've managed to get you to believe that you can expect security and services from your government without having to pay for any of it! Vote Republican, the Party of evading responsibility and easy choices.

- **Do you think Congress should pass legislation on the Federal Marriage Amendment?**

Even though the states have always regulated marriage, we need this amendment, because although states' rights is one of our stated principles, this principle only applies when the states make the right choices.

- **Do you think U.S. troops should have to serve under United Nations' [sic] commanders?**

This question is raised because we always treat the United Nations as the bogeyman, except when a country like North Korea or Iran calls President Bush's bluff. When macho posturing fails, then we have to run back to the United Nations, and seek a resolution to a crisis through diplomacy.

- **Do you agree that our top military priority should be fighting terrorists?**

Yes, especially after turning our backs on North Korea, Iran, Hezbollah, and Al-Qaeda, and then creating a golden opportunity for terrorists by destabilizing Iraq.

- **Should the U.S. continue work on building a defense shield against nuclear missile attack?**

Seems that car bombs and truck bombs have killed many more Americans than missiles in the past 25 years. Is there a high-tech multi-billion dollar line item in the budget to solve that problem?

- **Do you support the election of Republican candidates across the country and rebuilding our majorities over the next ten years?**

How much of a majority needs "rebuilding?" After all, the Republicans won't be able to continue blaming their own failed policies on the "liberals," if the few remaining "liberals" are exiled out of government.

- **Did you vote in the year 2000? 2002? 2004?**

You Bet! See you at the polls in 2006!

Finally, the true purpose of the solicitation is revealed: "Will you join the Republican National Committee by making a contribution today?"

In contrast, the Democrats dispense with the faux questionnaire and only need two pages to come to the point: THEY NEED MONEY! While they need not stoop to the gimmickry of the Republican mailer, the Democratic solicitation definitely needs some "sexing up." Here's a possibility:

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Dear Fellow American,

Wouldn't you like to show your children a Woolly Mammoth?
Or a Steller's Giant Manatee? Well, you can't! Why not? BE-
CAUSE THEY'RE EXTINCT!!!!

Which is exactly the fate of the Democratic Party if we don't
hurry up and get our act together. Friends, we are engaged in the
process of committing institutional suicide just as fast as you can
say "Don Quixote rides again, YEEEEEEEEHAAWWWW!"

And only you, YES THAT MEANS YOU reading this let-
ter, can prevent that from happening!! How can you help, you
ask? SEND US MONEY!! Multiples of hundreds are preferred,
but we're not particular. Please see the enclosed form. And how
about being snappy with your response, because we need your do-
nation TODAY! Otherwise, the Democrats are just as doomed
as the Dodo bird!!!

Thanks to:

The Republican National Committee
310 First Street
Washington DC 20003

The Democratic National Committee
430 South Capitol Street
Washington DC 20003

In recent issues of The SCAM, as well as in the mass media, much has been said about the possibility of an upcoming Social Security crisis. However, other than the Bush Administration's stated proposal to allow younger workers divert part of their Social Security taxes to a private account, little has been offered as possible solutions to this problem.

Few, if any, would dispute that unless there is a change in our current course, Social Security will become insolvent at some point in the future. The Bush Administration's position is that we must solve the crisis without raising payroll taxes or reducing benefits. Let me go on record here that I *agree* with the Bush Administration on this point.

In this installment, rather than criticizing the politicians (which I've already done), I am proposing concrete solutions to the Social Security crisis. Please keep in mind that my list of ideas is not intended to be complete and, since I do not have all the numbers, I cannot state that my ideas will completely solve the problem. These ideas I present, if not the complete solution, should make for a very good start.

Let us now review some facts. First, and most important, is that Social Security is a "pay as you go" system. Money paid in to Social Security by current workers is paid out to current recipients, mostly retirees. Second, the Baby Boomers (roughly ages 40-60 at present) will begin to draw Social Security within the next few years. Third, the Baby Boomers did not reproduce at as rapid a rate as their parents' generation. What all this adds up to is that once most Baby Boomers are retired, there will be fewer workers per retiree paying into Social Security, thus the projected shortfall. The problem, defined, is: How shall we ensure that Social Security will continue to meet its obligations to current and future retirees without unduly penalizing the workers paying into the system or the retirees drawing the benefits?

One must keep in mind that in order to balance any budget that seems to be heading toward a deficit, one must do one of three things: 1) *increase revenues*, 2) *reduce expenditures*, or 3) *both*. Because of the size and nature of the Social Security problem, I believe we must choose option 3 – increase revenues AND reduce expenditures.

My suggestions to increase revenues:

- Eliminate the cap on taxable earnings, currently set at \$90,000 per year and indexed to inflation, while retaining the current tax rate of 12.4 percent (split evenly between employer and employee).
- Enact "living wage" legislation. A "living wage" is defined as the minimum amount necessary to bring a family of four out of poverty (currently about \$9 per hour for a full time employee). Since Social Security is the closest thing to a "flat tax" on income, higher wages means more taxes collected.

-
- Reform collective bargaining laws to make it easier for employees to form a union without fear of retaliation by their employer. Union wages are normally higher than nonunion wages for comparable employment. As a rule, union employees pay more into Social Security than do nonunion employees.
 - Stop “Form 1099 Employee” abuse! “Form 1099 employee” is the term I apply to a person who is regarded by his employer as an “independent contractor” when he actually should be regarded as an employee. Businesses will use this ruse to escape compliance with various laws designed to protect employees (including minimum wage laws). Employees properly labeled as such generally earn more than “independent contractors”.
 - Discourage job “outsourcing” to foreign countries. At the very least, discontinue tax breaks to businesses that engage in foreign outsourcing while increasing tax breaks to those who hire and retain more American employees instead. More American workers equates to more Social Security taxes collected.
 - Earmark a portion of fines paid by employers violating employment related laws to help supplement Social Security funding.

My suggestions to reduce expenditures: While most Social Security beneficiaries are retirees, some collect disability payments. While I strongly oppose reducing benefits or in any way making it more difficult to be entitled to such benefits, some reductions can be made, nonetheless.

- Strengthen worker safety laws and OSHA’s enforcement powers. Give OSHA and similar agencies the full funding necessary to effectively carry out their duties. Many disability claims arise from work related injuries. Safer workplaces result in fewer employees becoming disabled, thus fewer disability payments.
- Strengthen and fully enforce the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). More people with disabilities who are gainfully employed full time means fewer disabled people collecting Social Security disability payments as well as more employees paying into Social Security.
- Make adequate national health care available to all. Proper and timely medical attention can often prevent an illness from becoming disabling, thus reducing the need to rely on disability payments.

If these solutions are implemented, we will come a long way toward resolving the Social Security crisis. The only losers I can see are the Wall Street brokers and others in the financial community who are currently salivating at the idea of using private (er...personal) accounts to substitute for part of the younger workers’ future Social Security benefits.

This is my last RVC 10 column. The next one will come from Maggie Truelove, my able successor. She will keep all of you on your toes, ready to answer questions, and guide you through tough times. My hat is off to her-you better be nice to her!

Seems just a short time ago, I was just getting to know you. And now, I might still get to know you, but as a plain vanilla member, rather than an elected official. Who knows how the race for Second Vice Chair will come out?

Five new games earned the Mensa Select® label during MindGames last month in Tampa. DaVinci's Challenge, Ingenious, Loot, Niagara, and Zendo all challenged the 160+ Mensans gathered to rate the games. Fifty-one entries were tried with five rising to the top. MindGames 2006 will be held in April in Portland, OR.

I hope you voted. By now, all ballots are in and counted. A new AMC takes office after the Annual Meeting in New Orleans. Plan to be there to welcome these willing volunteers.

Advance notice: National Testing Day will be held on Saturday, October 22. If your group has yet to respond to this idea, get moving and return your participation form by mid-July. Don't let your group be left out! This is such a great PR opportunity.

See you in the Big Easy?

MensAGumbo, July 6 & 10, in wonderful New Orleans. Laissez les bons ton roulet!

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The ExComm met at the Cocoa Public Library on Sunday, May 1, 2005. Called to order at 3:00 pm by LocSec Sam Kirschten.

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

Welcome Guest: John Warner

Minutes for the April 3, 2005 meeting were approved as published. Moved by Helen, approved unanimously.

Officer Reports:

Treasurer: The April 30, 2005 report was distributed by Helen.

Testing: Helen (Proctor Coordinator) reported that a test was scheduled for May. Three candidates were tested in March.

Committee Reports:

There were no committee reports.

Old Business: Sam reported that an audit committee had not yet been secured. Helen pointed out that it was desirable that a committee be appointed and the audit conducted before the next meeting, since we would be installing a new treasurer at that time. It was suggested that an email vote to confirm appointment of the committee should be conducted. (see addendum below)

New Business: There was no new business.

In an open forum discussion, John Warner spoke in favor of the Standing Rules and Guidelines, especially those relating to election procedures. An extended discussion followed the gist of which was that the SR&G should be maintained but could use some updating.

The next meeting of the ExComm is scheduled for Sunday, June 5, at 4:00 pm at the home of Helen Lee Moore.

Helen moved to adjourn at 3:26 pm, passed by unanimous vote.

Addendum to the Minutes of May 5, 2005

On May 6, 2005, the RecSec (George) sent an email to all ExComm members, reading in part:

“.... assuming this to be an *ad hoc* convening of the ExComm, I move that Doug Starke, Theresa Valek, and Wynn Rostek be appointed as the audit committee, commissioned to review the Treasurer's accounts from the time of the last audit in May 2004, to May 31, 2005 (or as near as possible) so that we can transition to a new Treasurer at the next ExComm meeting on Sunday, June 5 at 4:00pm at Helen's home. In a telephone conversation, Sam seconded the motion.

Please note that, as explained to me by Helen, placing Doug first in the ordering of the names means he is appointed as Chairman, *pro tem*, meaning that he should chair the first meeting, at which, presumably, the three will chose for themselves a chairperson.”

All members responded promptly with an “aye”, thus passing the motion unanimously.