

The

SCAM

page coast area mensa

25th Anniversary Issue

*A long, long time ago,
a new group of extremely intelligent
people was formed: It was not just
any group, but a very special group
of a very unique people. For it was,
back in 1983, the first issue
of The SCAM debuted, thus
marking the birth of
Space Coast Area Mensa...*



SPACE COAST AREA MENSA



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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 on Page 2.

Inside the Pocket Protector

Mike Moakley, Editor

Happy New year! In fact, Happy New Quarter-Century! Yes, It's been 25 years since our first Editor, Stephen Schneider published these words, "*A Letter From The Editor*" in Volume 1, Number 1 of *The SCAM*:

The publication of this, our first independent Space Coast Area newsletter, has been one of the most educational experiences one could encounter. The intricacies of word processing, the complexities of reproduction, and the labyrinth of postal regulations were totally unknown realms only a few weeks ago. Although these areas still remain strange to me, I would like to thank those who have acted as excellent guides during this first trip. Craig Adams was the graphics artist who composed the front cover and taught me the (formerly unsuspected) importance of aligning and centering. Duplipress, our printer, was extremely patient in explaining the many options available to even small publications such as this. And finally, a hearty "well done" goes to all those responsible for Mensa's "Editors Handbook". It was an example of the well written, quality work to which this publication will aspire.

As I was not a Mensan back in 1983, I can only surmise the feeling of excitement and enthusiasm that must have pervaded our charter members. I would like to thank one of our charter members **Helen Lee Moore**, who was kind enough to share this passage from our first newsletter with me. On occasions such as this, it is great to

(Continued on page 4)

The SCAM sells classified ad space. SCAM members, non-commercial, no charge. Others: \$20 full page; \$10 half-page; \$5 quarter-page per month, we offer discounts for multiple insertions, and we can help with layout and design.

Subscriptions: SCAM members, included in dues; others, **\$10** for 12 issues.

(Continued from page 3)

look at our history, whether it be to learn from our successes and failures, or be it just a sense of curiosity. Since Mensa, and SCAM in particular, is essentially family, could this be similar to researching one's genealogy?

While we reflect on our past, we would also do well to focus on our future. The SCAM is our newsletter, Space Coast Area Mensa is our local group, and we are all Mensans. In what direction shall we head? It is truly up to you. I offer this challenge to you: What would it take to restore the excitement, the enthusiasm that gave birth to SCAM in the first place? What are you willing to do in that regard?

As you may already know, later this year, we will be hosting the SCAM Back in Business RG. Let's make this the best RG ever! Willing to volunteer? Contact Bud Long, our Treasurer—he is also the RG Chairman. His contact info is on Page Two.

In other SCAM business, our bylaws are in need of an overhaul to comply with current AML standards. In the near future, you will be asked to consider and vote on amendments to these bylaws. I will keep you posted.

Now, I call your attention to this month's *The Tenth Story*, wherein our RVC Maggie Truelove states, "One of our Region 10 editors has taken me to task in his December column for holding and promoting attendance at the November LDW..." That Editor would be me.

I never criticized her (or anyone else) for holding or promoting a Leadership Development Workshop. Why would I do such a thing? My issue was with her comments wherein I believe she needed justification from local officers for not attending this voluntary event. As I do not wish to continue to belabor this point, I would direct any reader interested in this issue to read this RVC column, the November RVC column, and my December editorial. The reader may then draw his own conclusions on the matter.

Finally, as I have indicated many times in the past, The SCAM belongs to you. Why not write for it? Your contributions are always welcome. Publication guidelines are on Page Three of any issue.

Editor's Note: History is best told by one who has participated in its making. What follows is the experience of an 8th Air Force crew on a daylight bombing mission flying out of the English Midlands, Target, Berlin. 7 May 1944. LCL Cittadini has flown 19 successful missions. This is the story of the 20th...

Part One: The mission begins:

Shaken awake at three thirty in the morning by the 'night owl' assigned to get the flight crews out of bed and on the way to the mess hall for early breakfast, I mumble something unintelligible to let him know that I'm awake. I get up and hastily dress in the cold of the damp English night. It is early May 1944. My mind is dull and my body is tired. I shake my head in a vain effort to release the tension of my neck muscles. I try massaging the back of my neck but that too offers no relief. Two and a half hours sleep after a week of carousing in Scotland on flak leave is hardly enough for me. I am fatigued, mentally and physically.

Ted and Jeff, my roommates and good buddies are getting ready too. We have nothing to say to each other. We are automatons responding as robots do without conscious thought. I guess we're all too tired and uninspired to think, let alone talk. When I'm ready I gather up my briefcase of navigation equipment, sling my knapsack containing my escape articles over my shoulder and hurry out into the cold darkness. With flashlight in hand as a headlight for my bike, I pedal wearily off to the base mess hall about a mile away.

My mind is still in a daze as I enter the brightly lighted mess. My briefcase and knapsack are silent sentinels at a chair while I get on the fresh egg line. Fresh eggs in Britain are a luxury. I guess they are hard to get back home too. Personnel not slated to fly will eat powdered eggs if they want them but most will settle for cereal. There are many tired looking new faces among the diners here this morning. I glance nervously around to try to locate a familiar face. A kind of panic wells up within me until I see one.

"Hey Al." I shout across the room. "What's new!?" Al Coloruso shouts a greeting back to me and I feel better. Al is navigator flying with Ted Goller, my former pilot. I'm flying with his former pilot, George West. The switch was made to give me the opportunity to fly in a lead position. George West was now flying in the lead or deputy

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

lead positions when our squadron was scheduled to fly group lead.

“Hey Tony, here’s a chair” ... Tony Credidio just entered the mess hall. I need Tony near me to change my mood and cheer me up a bit.

Tony fills in the news of the last week for me .. He tells me of group leader changes made for the 545th and 546th squadrons. I recognize the names mentioned but don’t know them. I give him a quick rundown on our flak leave in Scotland. About our visit to Loch Lomond where it was cold and drizzly and the fish weren’t biting. And of course of the beauties of Scotland that were so friendly. He explains the new faces by telling me of the plan to increase our group strength to 24 crews per squadron. He guesses that the invasion of the Continent will take place soon.

“How does the weather look to you, Tony? Do you think the mission will be scrubbed?” “Nah, we’ll go today. It’s a M.E. Every plane will be flying today,” Tony replied.

I leave Tony outside in the blackness because he has no bike and will take the truck down to the flight line. I mounted my bike and pedaled down to the briefing room. I locked my bike and wandered into the darkness behind the building. The night was black with many tiny stars feebly trying to alter it. I contemplated the hazy sky for a cue on what to expect of the weather. The blackness was beginning to relent with early signs of daylight approaching. The cirro-stratus gave no hint of what the weather would be when we returned from the mission. I secretly wished that it would turn bad so I could return to my barracks to resume my sleep, but I knew that it wouldn’t. A shiver convulsed my body as I zipped my zipper and wearily made my way to the briefing room. The equipment trucks were lined up outside waiting to carry the combat crews to their planes which are strategically located around the perimeter of the airfield. It is almost 0430. Most of the aircrews were converging on the briefing room.

The large room was well lit. The wall behind the podium was draped to conceal the mission route and destination. Cigarette smoke began to cloud the low ceilinged room. The seats are beginning to be filled by the crew members who will be briefed on the route, times of departure and pertinent points leading to the initial point where the bombing run will begin. The location and time we can expect to have fighter support. The location of flak emplacements and any other information needed to complete a successful mission.

I find a chair in the rear of the room between Ted and Jeff. I

(Continued on page 16)

-EST: (Without Werner Erhard)

Last month's column was a brief examination of the ending -ER, so it makes sense to continue this month with -EST. The former is more flexible since it not only forms the comparative of many adjectives but also creates verb-based nouns such as FARMER. On the other hand, the latter contains an S that can be hooked onto many words when playing a SCRABBLE® crossword game.

As stated last month, according to *The Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary, Fourth Edition* (OSPD4), the adjective FRONT can be modified to form the comparative FRONTER but not the superlative FRONTTEST*. It also turns out that SWINGING, an adjective meaning "lively and hip," can be modified to form SWINGINGEST but not SWINGINGER*.

If UNIQUER annoyed you last month, brace yourself for UNIQUEST. Recall that OSPD4 gives the secondary definition "very unusual" besides the primary definition "existing as the only one of its kind" for the word UNIQUE. (And maybe we'll take a moment to mourn the inclusion of another abuse of the English language, IRREGARDLESS, in the *Official Tournament and Club Word List, Second Edition*; at least it is more than eight letters long and therefore not to be found in OSPD4.)

Recalling that using all seven tiles on your rack earns you a fifty-point bonus, here are the twelve most probable seven-letter words ending with -EST: AERIEST, AIRIEST, ARIDEST, EARNEST, NEAREST (an anagram of EARNEST), GORIEST, ARTIEST, INANEST, IRATEST (an anagram of ARTIEST), DEAREST, LEANEST, REALEST. Making a "top twelve" list is not an attempt to one-up David Letterman (although this actually two-ups him); it is just that the last three words are equally likely. Note that even though EARNEST ends with -EST it is not the superlative of an adjective. Of these twelve words, only AIRIEST cannot be anagrammed into another word: AERIEST/SERIATE, ARIDEST/ASTRIDE/DIASTER/DISRATE/STAIDER/TARDIES/TIRADES, EARNEST/EASTERN/NEAREST, GOITERS/GOITRES/GORIEST, ARTIEST/ARTISTE/ATTIRES/IRATEST/RATITES/STRIATE/TASTIER, INANEST/STANINE, DEAREST/DERATES/REDATES/SEDATER, LATEENS/LEANEST, ELAT-

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

ERS/REALEST/RELATES/RESLATE/STEALER. (Some words ending with -ER sneaked in here: DIASTER/STAIDER, TASTIER, SEDATER, STEALER.)

Since it is not always possible to hook onto the end of another word even if the word you are playing contains an S, here are the ten most probable eight-letter words ending with -EST (which would involve incorporating a tile already on the board): ONERIEST, RAINIEST, RANDIEST, EARLIEST, LEARIEST (an anagram of EARLIEST), READIEST, ANGRIEST, RANGIEST (an anagram of ANGRIEST), HOARIEST, LARDIEST. (With this list, since the eleventh word had a lower probability than the tenth, there was no need to add two more words unless you belong to the Dozenal Society of America.) These are all superlatives; your first encounter with a non-superlative on this list is INTEREST at #28 with your next such encounter, REDIGEST, at #53.

The interjection ER itself is acceptable, but EST* is not. There are thirteen four-letter words ending with -EST: BEST, FEST, GEST, HEST, JEST, LEST, NEST, PEST, REST, TEST, VEST, WEST, ZEST. There are also thirteen five-letter words ending with -EST: BLEST, CHEST, CREST, DOEST, DREST, EGEST, GEEST, GUEST, PREST, QUEST, REEST, WEEST, WREST.

The number of six-letter words ending with -EST jumps up to 87.

Although the playing board would be large enough to accommodate it, at present there is no acceptable fifteen-letter word ending with -EST. The longest words ending with -EST are the fourteen-letter COUNTERPROTEST, the thirteen-letter BEAUTIFULLEST, and 22 twelve-letter words.

Here's to this being your HAPPIEST New Year yet!

Next month: *Just My Type*

“I’m from the government and I’m here to help you.”

Gosh, that makes me feel good. I know they will solve all the problems. That housing thing is a doozy. Let’s see.

The Secretary of the Treasury said so and you have to believe him. He is going to help everyone, well, almost everyone, keep their home. He said they will be helping 250,000 homeowners stay in their houses. Of course there are currently 1,100,000 who need help.

The plan is to freeze the mortgage payment at its current rate and level for 5 years. He didn’t say what will happen at the end of the fifth year. He also didn’t mention anything about home prices declining during the next 5 years or that the mortgage might be more than the value of the house at that time. It will help people stay in their homes and help banks continue to receive payments instead of having to foreclose on a house the bank doesn’t want.

Mr. Paulson also did not mention that folks might not want to pay property taxes if that happens or keep the property up so when the bank finally does take it in 5 years the neighborhood could be run down affecting the value of other folks who live nearby.

Many of these homeowners had a no-money-down deal and a discounted interest rate mortgage. Of course, they wouldn’t walk away and leave the house vacant and the bank would not evict them.

There is another group that may or may not be eligible for the “freeze”. How many (and there are millions) have been using the home as a “piggy bank”. Instead of building home equity they have been refinancing and spending that extra cash.

Now that they will not be able to refinance because the home value has dropped they will have less money to spend which could slow the economy and even cause many companies to lay off employees. Seventy percent of the spending in the U.S. comes from the individual consumer and not from the business sector.

Slow buying of the U.S. consumer by as little as 1% can affect the world economy. It means China, India and Europe will ship us less merchandise and they will be laying off their employees. It’s a domino effect.

No one has asked the banks or the mortgage makers if they want to do this “voluntary” plan. It means the Uncle Sam is going to

(Continued on page 10)

Fellow Mensans - Sorry I haven't updated you on the RG for the last couple of issues. There is really no excuse except that with the lack of ExComm meetings, I have just been putting it off. Anyway, I hope everyone is getting excited for it. It is still 10 months away, but we are getting started on planning everything now.

We need your help too, so please feel free to jump in and get involved. Don't worry if you have never done it before, neither have I. We do have a venue – it is the Comfort Inn & Suites in Cocoa Beach. The details for making your reservations are included this issue.

I also wanted to mention that the RG is not a closed event. If you have family members, friends, or past members that you know who might be interested, don't hesitate to invite them to come along. We will all have a good time, and as they say "the more the merrier". Once again, feel free to call me if you have any questions and especially if you want to help.

Bud Long, RG Chair
455-9749, e-mail: budlong@bellsouth.net

(Continued from page 9)

change a contract. Does that sound like a violation of a person's constitutional right. This will go to the Supreme Court and that could take years to clarify. In the meantime make the payments or move. If there aren't enough "volunteers" what will happen?

The Secretary didn't say who was going to make new mortgages or who would refinance those that are coming due. Lenders aren't lending any more. It sounds like the taxpayers will be funding the excess debt as they always have before.

It is a plan. It is up to you to decide. Hairbrained or Harebrained?

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 and receive his market letter at www.mutualfundmagic.com to discover why he's the man that Wall Street does not want you to know. Copyright Williamsburg Investment Co. 2007 All rights reserved.

SCAM Calendar of Events for January 2008

2nd - Wednesday 5:30 PM

EXCOMM MEETING

.This is our monthly business meeting. All members are always welcome to attend.

Contact: *George, 777-3721, for details.*

26th - Saturday 6:00 PM

S.N.O.R.T.

Join us for some sushi and tempura at The SCAM's best attended event at Miyako's, 1411 S. Harbor City Blvd. (US#1) in Melbourne.

Contact: *George Patterson, 777-3721.*

Calendar Updates

ATTENTION SCAM MEMBERS!

Every effort is made to bring to you an accurate up-to-date Calendar of Events. However, last minute changes can and do occur past newsletter deadline. For up-to-date info, visit spacecoast.us.mensa.org and click on "Calendar".

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

Welcome to SCAM

Paul Bisson

JANUARY BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

<i>2nd</i>	Rose Marie Martinez	<i>14th</i>	Gary Tower
<i>4th</i>	Vito Jimenez	<i>15th</i>	Jack Thompson
<i>4th</i>	Joseph Richardson	<i>21st</i>	Diane Mullinax
<i>10th</i>	Dennis Logan	<i>26th</i>	Brad Daszinski
<i>14th</i>	Lee McLamb	<i>31st</i>	Joanne Ricker Abowitt
<i>14th</i>	Barry Signorelli		

Note: If your birthday is not listed, and you want it to be, please let us know.

As you read this, it is just after the Holidaze and you are full of good cheer and good eats and are basking in the afterglow of enjoying time with family and friends. However, as I write this, the Holidaze are just ahead and I am, like the rest of you surely were, all aquiver with anticipation. The reason I am palpitating is that the upcoming Holidaze are comprised of both my favoritest and worstest galas of the year.

ThanksEating Day

ThanksEating Day is far and away my most frabjous festivity of the year. Consider: The only things expected of you are that you eat (generally, too much), watch parades and football, and fall into a tryptophan-induced stupor.

I absolutely love turkey and gravy, stuffing and mashed potatoes, and all the wonderful side dishes and condiments and alcoholic beverages. Plus, the event is usually conducted amidst a confluence of family (which may or may not be a good thing, depending on your relationship with your relations [which -- in my case, a tenny rate -- is quite delightful]) and friends. Can it possibly get any better than this?

Excesstime (a.k.a. Christmas)

Then my least favorite annual jubilee: Excesstime.

Make no mistake; I am not the proverbial Grinch or Scrooge. I do not disdain the actual celebration, only the excess baggage we've attached to it. I know my thoughts aren't original, but we really need to divide the season into two separate, distinct holidays.

Christmas should be a religious holiday (Christ Mass, y'know) commemorating the birth of arguably the most influential individual ever born. I won't get into a theological debate about whether he was divine, the son of God, or just another of the era's popular self-acclaimed messiahs. Suffice it to say that he has had a profound influence on life as we know it and deserves the recognition. So the worshipful should acknowledge this most solemn and spiritual event in a solemn and spiritual fashion, in either the solemn and spiritual environs of the home or in a solemn and spiritual place of worship with other solemn and spiritual faithful.

Then we can pull out all the stops and enjoy the frenzy and fun of the pagan part of Excesstime without guilt or restrictions. Let's hear

(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14)

it for a revival of Saturnalia or maybe the Seinfeld idea of Festivus (for the rest of us). The whole schtick with the trees (which originated either with the Druids, the Germans, or the Scandinavians long before the Boy Scouts started selling them from corner lots) and the lights and the presents could then be segregated from any religious overtones so *everyone* could play, not just the select. No more worry about political correctness, wishing everyone a Happy Holiday Season. We can finally get back to a Merry Christmas for our religious friends and then a Funtastic Festivus (or whatever) for the rest of us!

New Hangover Day

Finally we come to the wrap-up of the Holidaze.

Long ago (December 31st, 1968), I once celebrated this event amidst the throngs of Times Square (an experience not for the faint-of-heart, but which everyone should try once), watching with the mass of revelers as the lighted ball descended to herald in the New Year. I have a distinct recollection of wanting to go uptown afterwards to catch a subway back home. However, the masses wanted to go downtown, and being very much back-to-belly with hundreds of thousands of fellow celebrants, I went downtown. I think I had fun, though.

This is definitely a young person's holiday. I think that after the age of forty or so, people should be granted an exception from this one. I know that my lovely wife and I struggle just to stay awake long enough to commemorate the passing of the year with a hurried smooch, then off to sleep. Meantime, earstwhile youth are just getting started, partying like it's 1999.

The Doldrums

The Holidaze Season is a whirlwind of celebration which lasts for over a month. But the afterglow of the Holidaze fades rapidly with the realization that an interminable stretch of holiday-free time looms before us. Barely counting St. Sweetheart Day (a.k.a. Valentine's) and the convenient rescheduling of the Washington/Lincoln birthdays into President's Day, we have to tough it out until Memorial Day in late May. I guess the strategy is to fill up on Holidaze Spirits to tough out the long, dry spell to come.

the george

A cult is a religion with no political power.

- Tom Wolfe

(Continued from page 6)

glanced at the formation board and noticed that Ted was flying in the number four position in the high squadron and West was in the three position in the lead squadron, neither position being a lead position.

The MP brought us to our feet with a snappy “AT...TEN...SHUN!” as Col. Smith came into the room. He put us at ease and asked us to be seated. “Gentlemen ... today we’re going to hit the Hun with everything in the Eight Air Corp. We are returning to a place where we’ve been to before...”

As Col. Smith makes his speech the MP removes the curtain from the route map. All eyes are focused on the target for today ... Big ‘B’. Big ‘B’ is Berlin. There are murmurs of disapproval and trepidation in the room which will in no way alter or affect the plans of the Bomber Command.

After big Col. Smith (he was all of six foot five or six, too big to fit in a fighter plane so as a West Pointer he was assigned to the heavy bombers) gives us his ‘pep talk’. Old Major ‘Pop’ Dolan tells us about the number and placement of flak guns around Berlin. Most of us have heard and seen the guns in action before so we listen with half a mind.

‘Cloudy’ gives us the weather forecast and as usual we can expect to have low ceiling upon our return this afternoon. The Navigators and the Bombardiers are dismissed to report to their respective rooms for special briefing covering their particular jobs.

Our big plane gracefully left the runway and climbed to see the rising sun over the dip of the horizon. I glanced at my watch and checked my flight plan. We should be climbing to mission altitude by now in group formation and shortly we would be crossing the English coastline heading out over the North Sea. A quick glance at my flight instruments .. I press my intercom button. .. “Navigator to crew ... We’re at 10500 adjust oxygen masks and check in.”

“Tail-gunner, OK!” Snapped Walton.

“Right waist gunner, OK!” From Howell.

“Left waist gunner, OK!” From Way.

“Radio, OK!” From Bier.

“Ball turret, OK!” From Wearne. He is a replacement filling in for Houston our original ball turret gunner. Houston ‘was stood down’. He had a face rash and was unable to put on an oxygen mask. .

“Engineer, OK!” from Reed. Reed’s position as engineer was behind

(Continued on page 17)

(Continued from page 16)

the pilots where he could keep an eye on the flight instruments and man the top turret guns.

“*Pilot and Co-pilot, OK!*” from Ted Goller (in an undertone Ted instructed Martin, “You answer for me and yourself on these oxygen checks.”)

I said. “*Navigator, OK!*”

I waited for the bombardier who was sitting in the nose with me to answer. Grilli figured it was unnecessary because I could see him.

“Navigator to bombardier, I didn’t hear you check in.” I paused a moment. “Grilli, we run these oxygen checks every fifteen minutes. The way we do it, if everyone cooperates, it takes only a few seconds. It starts at the tail and works forward. You are expected to answer after I do. If you don’t, the crew is on pins and needles waiting to hear your lovely voice. From now on you initiate the oxygen check every fifteen minutes unless we are in a battle and you are firing your guns ... out!” Grilli acknowledged with a, “Roger, out.”

“Navigator to Bombardier, give me a nod when we cross the England coastline.” The ground below was still visible through the breaks in the clouds. He could look straight down from his position. That portion of the floor was plexi-glass he could determine precisely when and where we crossed the coastline. “Here’s my map. Mark the point and the time of crossing. I want to determine the wind direction and velocity over the North Sea.”

“*Navigator ... we just crossed the coastline.*” This was from Walton our trusty armament Sgt. “Thanks, Walton,” I mutter and at the same time I am checking the time and the position as well as I could determine after looking at the map Grilli returned to me with an X to mark the spot we entered over the North Sea.

My flight plan tells me that we should be crossing the coastline now so I look out my small window and all I see are clouds. White and fluffy and tinged with morning sunlight.

“*Flak!! 3 o’clock.*” bristled over the intercom. I get up from my desk which is on the left side of the B-17 nose and crane to see out the right window with my hands on my 50 cal. machine gun. I see the familiar black blossoms opening about two hundred yards away at our altitude.

“Well, that proves that we are over enemy territory.” I state mordantly as I jot the necessary information in the log...

...To be continued in next month’s issue.

In the last few months, yet another major global catastrophe has descended upon us. Let me introduce you to the evil perpetrator who, if not stopped, could bring down the world as we now know it. Meet Gillian Gibbons, a 54-year-old British teacher employed in a private school in Sudan. What was this work of evil that Ms. Gibbons committed? According to the *New York Times*:

“The case started in September when Ms. Gibbons, who taught at one of Sudan’s most exclusive private schools, began a project on animals and asked her class (composed of 7-year-old pupils) to suggest a name for a teddy bear. The class voted resoundingly for Muhammad, one of the most common names in the Muslim world and the name of Islam’s holy prophet.”⁽¹⁾

To impress upon you just how serious this transgression was, I offer these passages from the Associated Press:

“KHARTOUM, Sudan (AP) – Thousands of Sudanese, many armed with clubs and knives, rallied Friday in a central square and demanded the execution of a British teacher convicted of insulting Islam for allowing her students to name a teddy bear ‘Muhammad.’... ‘They massed in central Martyrs Square outside the presidential palace, where hundreds of riot police were deployed. They did not try to stop the rally, which lasted about an hour.’ ... ‘They called for Gibbons’ execution, saying, ‘No tolerance: Execution,’ and ‘Kill her, kill her by firing squad.’”⁽²⁾

For her crime, Ms. Gibbons was sentenced to 15 days imprisonment and deportation to her native Great Britain. One might be tempted into believing that the issue at hand is limited to a real or perceived insult to a sacred figure in a powerful world religion. As the next passage will show, there is more at stake:

“‘Her letter said there was an intelligent bear named Muhammad, and the letter instructed parents to take pictures with that bear,’ Dr. Rabie said. ‘This is not acceptable, according to the general opinion of our society.’” (emphasis mine)⁽³⁾

If I did not know better, it would be tempting to believe that I was watching an old episode of *The Twilight Zone*. Yet, what does this real, true to life episode really mean? Certainly, some would contend that it is those crazy, fanatical Muslim terrorists at it again,

(Continued on page 19)

(Continued from page 18)

with their legendary blood lust for Christians and other “infidels”. Right?

Not so fast. Let’s consider this item from CNN, shortly after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack in our country:

“I really believe that the pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays and the lesbians who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle, the ACLU, People for the American Way, all of them who have tried to secularize America. I point the finger in their face and say ‘you helped this (9/11) happen’ ... (Jerry) Falwell, pastor of the 22,000-member Thomas Road Baptist Church, viewed the attack as God’s judgment on America for ‘throwing God out of the public square, out of the schools. The abortionists have got to bear some of the burden for this because God will not be mocked.’”⁽⁴⁾

SCAM Treasurer’s Report

As of 11/30/2007:

<u>Account</u>	<u>Balance</u>
General Fund	\$704.67
Post Office Acct.	440.00
Reserve Fund	2608.75
<u>Total Funds Available:</u>	\$4099.29
<u>Deposits</u>	
Mensa Funding:	\$519.52
<u>Withdrawals</u>	
Printing Costs	\$142.89
Postage	64.01
Annual Bulk	
Mailing Permit	175.00
<u>Transfers</u>	
General Fund to Post Office Acct.:	\$200.00

—Bud Long, Treasurer

Please note these words were from a *Christian* pastor, here in the “Land of the Free”, blaming a terrorist attack, the worst in our history, on fellow Americans who do not believe the way he does. One could reason that when Pastor Falwell spoke, emotions were running high (as they were), so he may have spoken in the heat of the moment. Out of fairness to the late pastor, let us consider the following from 2005, four years afterward, from another prominent Christian leader, the founder of the Christian Coalition and a former U.S. Presidential candidate:

(Continued on page 20)

(Continued from page 19)

“You know, I don’t know about this doctrine of assassination, but if he thinks we are trying to assassinate him, I think we really ought to go ahead and do it,’ (televangelist Pat) Robertson said. ‘It’s a whole lot cheaper than starting a war...and I don’t think any oil shipments will stop.’”(5)

It is certainly evident that religious extremism and thuggery is by no means a unique characteristic of Islam. It seems like Christians too, if given the power, also would engage in extreme and violent behavior. I believe the same can also be said for any other religion.

Why, then, in a country where an overwhelming majority of its citizens identify themselves as Christians, do we not incarcerate people for disrespecting Jesus (perhaps by naming a child’s toy after him)? The following passage provides the answer here:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; ...”(6)

It is evident from the above that it is illegal to establish a state religion, or to prohibit anyone from practicing his or her religious faith. It forms the doctrine of *Separation of Church and State*. If we are to survive as a civilization, this doctrine must be preserved: *Never the twain shall meet!*

Sources:

1. Gettleman, Jeffrey, “British Teacher Found Guilty in Sudan,” *New York Times*, November 30, 2007
2. Osman, Mohamed, “Calls in Sudan for Execution of Briton,” *Associated Press*, November 30, 2007
3. Gettleman, Jeffrey, “Sudan Accuses Teacher of Islam Insult,” *New York Times*, November 27, 2007
4. Cable News Network, *Falwell Apologizes to Gays, Feminists, Lesbians*, CNN.com, September 14, 2001
5. “Pat Robertson Calls For Assassination of Hugo Chavez”, USA Today, August 22, 2005.
6. Amendment 1 of the *United States Constitution*

de the submission of said changes to the national office for their approval, and handle final membership voting on same. It is expected that prior to submission to national, there will be some interaction between the committee and the ExComm regarding the committee's views on these changes.

New Business: There was no new business.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:56 p.m. Next meeting will be at George Patterson's house at 301 Sand Pine Rd., Indialantic on Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2007 at 5:30 pm.

Editor's Note: If you plan to attend the ExComm Meeting, please call George beforehand at (321) 777-3721. All members are welcome to attend.

(Continued from page 22)

org)

February 15-17 - Valentine RG - Holiday Inn in Destin - link is on the region 10 website

May 23-26 - ARRR-RG - Hampton Inn and Suites in Ybor City - Contact registrar katshe@aol.com

July 2-6 - Rocky Mountain High AG - Adam's Mark in Denver - Info on national website (ag2008.us.mensa.org)

October 24-26 - SCAM RG - Comfort Inn and Suites in Cocoa Beach - Contact (budlong@bellsouth.net)

May all your New Year's resolutions be reasonable.

Maggie Truelove, RVC 10
407-855-9078
rvc10@cfl.rr.com

One of our Region 10 editors has taken me to task in his December column for holding and promoting attendance at the November LDW, and I feel I must respond to that, since many of you may have had occasion to read his writings.

He stated that only those wishing to become a regional or national officer would want or need to attend an LDW. I can only guess that his erroneous views about a Leadership Development Workshop may come from the name of the event. Perhaps it would be better called a Local Group Improvement Workshop, as that is the function of an LDW. The sessions held included such things as “*ExComm Basics*” and “*Whole Family/Child Friendly Events*” and “*Welcoming New Members*” and “*Special Events and Speaker Meetings*”. These were all things listed as items of interest from those leaders and members around the region who responded to a survey sent out back in the Spring, things they felt their groups needed help with. They are also topics designed to improve either the workings or the activities of local groups, not grooming someone for higher office, as the editor stated.

He also stated that I implied that “local group officers are somehow obliged to attend such a workshop as part and parcel of their positions.” If anyone else felt that I had made such an implication, I certainly apologize. The LDW is put on for those current or future officers wishing to somehow improve the things done by their local group. No one is obliged to attend, although I hope that most of the 36 people who did attend benefit from it in some way.

I did find it interesting that there were only two negative responses about attending the LDW, both editors, one in a column and one in a private email.

On December 1, the AMC held its Winter meeting in West Palm Beach. Most of the Mensans attending, other than AMC members, were from the West Palm or Broward groups, except for another of our regional editors, who drove all the way from Orlando to see the AMC in action. As far as I know, no one told him he was “obliged” to attend.

At the risk of being redundant, I share these upcoming events with you:

Smarti Gras RG - January 18-20 - Renaissance Hotel near Orlando's airport - form on the region 10 website (*region10.us.mensa*).

(Continued on page 21)

The ExComm met at the home of George Patterson on Wednesday, December 5, 2007. Called to order at 5:40 pm by LocSec George Patterson.

Members present: George Patterson, Joe Smith, Terry Valek, and Bud Long. Thomas Wheat was unable to attend. Minutes for the September 5, 2007 meeting were approved as published in the October 2007 SCAM.

Reports:

Treasurer: Bud handed out the August Treasurers Report which showed total funds at the end of November of \$4099.29. Once again, as several months ago, the funding deposit from the national office was incorrect, being excessive by several hundred dollars. The excess will be returned. Bud also reminded us of the need to open a second checking account for RG finances. The bank requires a copy of our minutes showing the authorization for the opening of such an account. Following some grumbling by George over the bank telling us how to run our business, it was moved seconded and passed unanimously that the ExComm authorized Bud Long to open a checking account to handle RG matters.

RG Committee: Bud, who is also the RG committee chairman, reported that he had completed negotiations and signed a contract with the Comfort Inn & Suite Resort of Cocoa Beach for our 2008 RG to be held on October 24-26. Copies of the contract were distributed and Bud described the setup. It is expected that the membership will be presented with the details in the January or February SCAM.

Testing: Helen Lee Moore (proctor coordinator) reported by email that one candidate was tested in September by Proctor Hank Rhodes and one in November by Proctor Bud Long. The testing schedule for 2008 is being firmed up.

Old Business: George reminded us that we had a revised version of our Bylaws, prepared by him and Terry, that had been reviewed at the August meeting. No significant changes have been made to the draft since then. George moved and Terry seconded that that version be submitted to the Bylaws Committee as the ExComm's proposed new bylaws. Passed unanimously.

It is the view of the ExComm that the role of the Bylaws Committee is to review this and any other proposed changes to the Bylaws, make recommendations of whatever sort they feel appropriate, han-

(Continued on page 21)