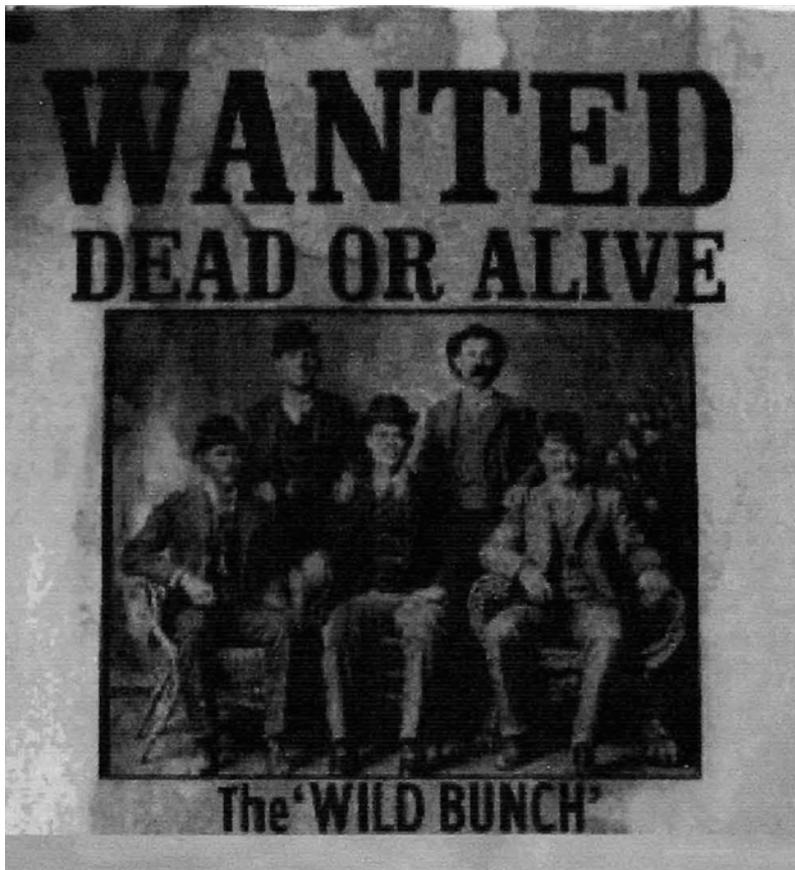


*The*

# SCAM

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**25th Anniversary Issue**





# SPACE COAST AREA MENSA



Website: [www.spacecoast.us.mensa.org](http://www.spacecoast.us.mensa.org)

(All Area Codes are 321 except as noted)

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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*

**O**nce again, we will be duly reminded of the joys of Florida living, as this issue marks the official opening of yet another Hurricane Season. We can only hope that, like last year, it will be a quiet one—one which does not provide homeowner's insurers an excuse to once again double the premiums while providing less coverage.

In our calendar, there is some good news. The number of social events have significantly increased. If you've never attended a SCAM event, why not try one this month? There are more to choose from.

If you have ever wanted to host an event, you certainly are welcome to. It's as easy as contacting our Calendar Coordinator and filling him in with the details. These can be in-home events or a dinner out at your favorite restaurant—or it could even be a baseball game. Anyone for a trip to the zoo?

Ideally, there should be events at all areas of Brevard and Indian River Counties. With the price of gas, keeping this in mind might just bolster attendance. Let's not overlook carpooling as an option.

If anyone is interested in setting up carpooling to a SCAM event, please let Doug and me know. In the near future, we can set up a centralized point of contact to make this happen.

This complete results for the ExComm election were not available as of this writing. The new officers will be installed at the June ExComm meeting. The officer information will be updated in the next issue of *The SCAM*. By the time you read this, our website will have posted the results as soon as they become known.

***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.

### Part Six: Interrogation at Dulag Luft

**W**hen the train arrived in Frankfurt it was moved to a siding that bordered the interrogation center. DULAG LUFT is a contraction of *durchgängslager* or 'entrance camp'. We were marched to the gate and then herded into individual cells. Apparently we were being subjected to complete isolation. My cell had a small window near the ceiling at what appeared to be just above ground level. It provided light for which I was grateful. The bunk bed had a makeshift mattress and two blankets which were dirty. I'm sure that the room hadn't been cleaned since the start of the war.

There were no other comforts. To use the latrine I had to bang on the door to get the attention of the guard. He would escort me then wait for me to return me to my cell. The trip to the latrine was a diversion from the long hours of nothing to do. Alone with my thoughts the hours were interminably wearisome. No one to talk to and nothing to read. Welcome distractions were: Twice a day I received a ration of food. The morning meal was some black bread and margarine with a large cup of ersatz coffee made from roasted grain and chicory. In the late afternoon I received a bowl of soup. I call it soup because I didn't know what else to call a thin watery gruel resembling porridge. That and the ever-present sour, heavy, under-cooked bread. After the evening meal I tried to blot out my discomfort with sleep. Sleep was hard to come by.

In the morning after breakfast I was escorted to the commandant's office for interrogation. The German officer offered me a cigarette, which I eagerly accepted. He was a mild-mannered gentleman. His neat uniform had the insignia of what I believed to be a captain. I was not familiar with the insignia denoting the rank in the German military. He asked me to be seated and we engaged in small talk for a minute or two. He then told me the date and place of my enlistment, my army serial number, 1208388 as a 'GI', the location and the time of the various schools I attended in the Army, the date of my commission and my serial number, 0809104 as an officer. After a pause he recounted the date and port of embarkation and the date of arrival at my air base in Grafton Underwood. He backpedaled to tell me that I graduated from Brooklyn Technical High School in February 1935 and that I was employed at Todd Shipyards in Brooklyn after enlisting while awaiting orders to report to

(Continued on page 5)

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the Army Classification Center in Nashville, Tennessee.

“Lt. Catatonia, you can see that I am in possession of a comprehensive resume of Lt. Cittadini’s background. It is my aim to identify the person sitting before me as Lt. Cittadini. Our enemies have had spies and saboteurs flown into Germany with bomber formations in the past. It is my responsibility to determine that you are not a spy and that you are in fact, Lt. Joseph Cittadini, navigator on a B-17 piloted by Lt. T. Goller.”

“But I am Lt. Cittadini, here are my dog tags to prove it!”

“Dog tags are easily supplied to spies. They are not proof” The German Officer cajoled.

“What other way do I have to identify myself that will satisfy you?”

“If you will name all the members of your crew and their positions I will feel secure in believing you are who you say you are.”

I told him that I am authorized to give only my name, rank and serial number. The captain then called the orderly and asked him to return me to my cell. I had another long day and night of recalling the past. At one point I tried to remember the words of the popular German war song, which was very popular among the Allied soldiers too.

*Underneath the lamplight, by the garden gate  
Darling I remember the way you used to wait.  
'Twas then that you whispered tenderly  
That you love me, and would always be  
My Lili of the lamplight, my own Lili Marlene.*

*Orders came for sailing somewhere over there March-  
ing by the barracks was more than I could bear I saw  
you standing in the street I heard your feet  
But could not meet my Lili of the lamplight  
My own Lili Marlene*

*Now I'm in the trenches on a frozen morn  
Thinking of my darling and my distant home  
Wondering if she is waiting there for me*

(Continued on page 6)

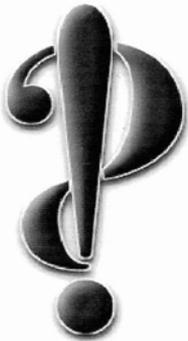
(Continued from page 5)

To come her joys to share my Lili of the lamplight  
My own Lili Marlene

But I'll never see her and she'll never know That  
I've been wounded and very soon will go Think-  
ing of her and long ago brings tears to me  
I love her so my Lili of the lamplight  
My own Lili Mariene

The following day was essentially the same. We went through the same drill almost as if we were rehearsing a play. He may have added a few more details to what he knew about me and he emphasized the insignificance of the details he asked for. He repeated, "German Intelligence knew more than I knew about the 384th Bomb Group and the 8th Air Force." I did not tell him, but I did agree with him. He sent me back to my solitary cell to be left alone with my thoughts.

*...To be continued in next month's issue.*



**SCAM Treasurer's Report**

**As of 4/30/2008:**

<u>Account</u>	<u>Balance</u>
General Fund	\$701.06
Post Office Acct.	227.20
Reserve Fund	2112.92
RG Fund	980.00

**Total Funds Available:**  
**\$4021.18**

<u>Deposits</u>	
Mensa Funding:	\$198.68
Interest Income	0.43

<u>Withdrawals</u>	
Printing Costs	\$166.31
Postage	64.25
Treas. Supplies	15.46

<u>Transfers</u>	
General to Post Office Acct	\$200.00

—Bud Long, Treasurer

## Herbalicious

(*Mea culpa*: I left out a punctuation mark and a word from the May 2008 column. Anyone interested can go back and try to figure out what they were and where they should have gone. And in the April 2008 column I somehow left out RUMMY as a word defined as “a card game.”)

**I do not enjoy watching paint dry.** However, I occasionally get some satisfaction from searching *The Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary, Fourth Edition* (OSPD4) for words with related definitions. This month I went hunting for herbs.

Alphabetically, the first herb in OSPD4 is ABELMOSK, a tropical herb. (Other tropical herbs are CAPSICUM, CARDAMON, CRINUM, EPISCIA, and PETUNIA.) Next is ACANTHUS, a prickly herb, followed by ACONITE, a poisonous herb. (Also poisonous are CONIUM, HEMLOCK, HENBANE, and VERATRUM.)

AGRIMONY comes next. It is the first of many words defined in OSPD4 as “a perennial herb”; some others are BENNET, CALAMINT, DICENTRA, EREMURUS, FENNEL, GAYWINGS, and HAREBELL. (No word beginning with “I” is defined as an herb, perennial or otherwise.) At least two definitions are more specific. BISTORT is “a perennial herb with roots used as astringents” and EGGPLANT is “a perennial herb yielding edible fruit.”

The definition “an annual herb” applies to BLITE, CLARKIA, DILL, EUPHRASY, FLAX, and a few other words in OSPD4. ARUGULA is “a European annual herb,” GODETIA is “a showy annual herb,” and TOBACCO is “an annual herb cultivated for its leaves.” What would Shakespeare’s Richard III have made of OKRA, a tall annual herb? “Small herbs have grace; gross weeds grow apace.”

Online information from Texas A&M classifies plants (not just herbs) as annuals, perennials, or biennials. This is off-topic but interesting: A Black-eyed Susan would behave as an annual if grown in Louisiana but as a perennial if grown in Ohio. Also off-topic is the difference between garden herbs and botanical herbs.

A few of the herbs classified only by geography are AXSEED (European), FREESIA (African), OCA (South American), PACHOULI (East Indian), PERILLA (Asian), TUBEROSE (Mexican), and UDO (Japanese). As stated previously, ARGULA is defined as “a European

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annual herb.” According to OSPD4, LIRIOPE is “a stemless Asian herb.”

GARLIC is a verb based upon a noun. It is defined as “to season with garlic (an herb used in cooking).” Some of the other herbs with a culinary connection are CARAWAY (used in cooking), COSTMARY (used in salads), ENDIVE (cultivated as a salad plant), and LEEK (used in cookery).

You may already be familiar with some of the following medicinal herbs: ALLHEAL, BLUEBALL, BORAGE, CAMOMILE, CENTAURY, ERYNGO, HYSSOP, and SANICLE.

The following words are defined in OSPD4 as simply “an herb”: CAMPION, ERIGERON, GERARDIA, GERBERA, GROMWELL, and POLYGONY.

Definitions are of less importance to players of the SCRABBLE® crossword game than points earned for playing a word. A “Q” is worth ten points, as is a “Z”; herbs containing one of these letters are EPAZOTE, GAZANIA, JONQUIL, and SQUILL.

Remembering that the most plentiful tiles are E (12), A (9), I (9), O (8), N (6), R (6), T (6), D (4), L (4), U (4), and G (3), a player can look for seven-letter words that contain mostly these letters with little repetition. Such a combination of letters has a high probability of being on a player’s rack, and if all seven tiles can be played at once a fifty-point bonus is scored. Herbs in this category (some which have already been mentioned) include ACONITE, BONESET, FREESIA, GODETIA, OREGANO, PETUNIA, and SANICLE. FREESIA anagrams to FAERIES; SANICLE anagrams to INLACES and SCALINI.

Would you like to know why I called this month’s column “Herbalicious” (other than for the obvious reason)? Recently I happened to discover “Mathmaticious,” a parody of “Fergalicious,” on YouTube and mentioned it to my son. The next day he told me that he heard “Latkelicious” on WMNF-FM. Further YouTube exploration yielded “Calculicious,” “Persialicious,” “Grandmalicious,” and many others. You are truly fortunate that I did not take this one step further.

*Next month: Do UN- to Others*

**Y**ou take a risk every time you get out of bed in the morning, but today let's limit risk-taking to finances and especially the stock market.

Whether it is stocks, exchange traded funds (ETFs) or the supposedly safe mutual funds there is always a risk. The amount of that risk depends on you. You didn't know that? Well, it's true.

When money is put into a 401K (assuming you have some say about which fund your money is deposited) it is not safe from loss. Funds have promoted the myth they are safe.

There are many fund and stock owners who watched their cash disappear from 2000 to 2003. Even when the general market is advancing there are sectors that will not participate and others that will decline.

Do you know that 80% of all mutual funds do not perform as well as the S&P500 Index and it lost 40% of its value in the 2000 bear market. What will happen if there is another bear market? Wall Street likes to call anyone who buys stocks or funds for retirement 'investors'. These folks are really long terms gamblers.

When a person opens an account no broker or fund manager ever talks about risk or protecting the account from large losses. No matter where anyone puts his money it must be determined how much loss will be taken before the position is abandoned. Don't dive in the water until you know how deep it is.

There are times when money is invested and it is known that it is possible to lose it all. But it was known (I hope) before cash was put in. Other times the risk may be estimated at 3 to 1 or 5 to 1 or some reasonable amount. Two to one is not a good bet.

Few brokers or financial planners ever talk about risk protection. Small losses will not hurt a retirement portfolio, but big losses can be devastating. If a 50% loss is experienced it means a 100% profit must be found to make up for that loss. Don't let any financial "expert" sweet talk you into holding any loss greater than 10 or 15%.

When there is risk the risk taker should be informed of the amount of risk and if there is a way to mitigate it. That is usually not the way Wall Street plays the game. Brokers are not taught to have

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**MEMBERSHIP NOTES**

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**Welcome Back to SCAM:**

John Moore Jr.

**Welcome to SCAM:**

Robert Fink  
Joseph Hughes

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**JUNE BIRTHDAY GREETINGS**

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2nd	Bill Emmons	24th	Sam Kirschten
3rd	Joyce Drew	25th	Andy Barclay
8th	Robert Ruhge	25th	Eric Rantanen
18th	Donald Paauw	26th	Judith Wiksten
21st	Richard Kerlin		

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

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**THE ALCHEMIST**

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*Continued*

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investors sell out of losing positions because the brokerage firm continues to profit even while the client loses money.

There is one course of action for the investor. He must ask for a written exit strategy from his broker or financial planner. This will ensure it will be carried out.

Any intelligent investor will always have a plan to limit risk in any situation.

*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](http://www.mutualfundmagic.com) to discover why he's the man that Wall Street does not want you to know. Copyright Williamsburg Investment Co. 2008 All rights reserved.*

## SCAM Calendar of Events for June 2008

**1st - Sunday 11:00 AM**

### JUNE FOOLS—POOL'S BRUNCH

Come join the fun as we really begin summer at Terry's home in Rockledge. *Kitty is \$3.*

Contact: Terry, 626-8523, for more details.

**4th - Wednesday 5:30 PM**

### EXCOMM MEETING

.This is our monthly business meeting. All members are always welcome to attend. *The new ExComm will be installed today.*

Contact: George, 777-3721, for details.

**7th - Saturday 7:00 PM**

### GAMES NIGHT

Come join us for your favorite games at Terry's home in Rockledge. *Kitty is \$3.*

Contact: Terry, 626-8523, for more details.

**10th - Tuesday 6:00 PM**

### DINNER AT EL CHARRO

Tonight we are having dinner out at El Charro, located in Cocoa Village.

Contact: Val, 626-8523, for details.

**13th - Friday 6:00 PM**

### MOVIES AND MEATBALLS

Come join us for your favorite movie and meal at Terry's home in Rockledge. *Kitty is \$3.*

Contact: Terry, 626-8523, for more details.

**21st - Saturday 12:00 PM**

### LUNCH BUFFET AT TASTE OF INDIA

Join us for lunch at Taste of India, 606 N. Wickham Rd., Melbourne. Bring your appetite with you!

Contact: Karen or Doug, 633-1636, for details.

**28th - 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.

*I hate wasting time.*

**I'm not talking** about time spent watching TV or reading a book or even just daydreaming. I'm referring to the useless, unproductive expenditure of a quantum of the space-time continuum.

For instance. Classes where they tell you what they're going to tell you, then tell you, then tell you what they told you. Yes, I understand the concept of reinforcement, but if it's a class where I'm supposed to learn something, I'm already pre-disposed to receive information. I don't need to be prepped, then fortified. If I can't/won't/don't get the material under my own steam, the instructor isn't going to change my mindset with some psyche 101 techniques. The pre- and post- reinforcement is just a waste of my time, pure and simple. Odds are the intro and summation are an in-one-ear-out-the-other deal anyhow. Just tell me! And you don't need to be my pal either. Save the little homilies and anecdotes for your drinking buddies. Just cut to the chase.

*Talking to women.*

Hold on! Hold on! I'm not a misogynist. I love women. I'm still crazy about my wife of over 30 years. I'd have no problem voting for Oprah for President. I abhor the fact that a man and a woman doing the same job don't get equal compensation. But there's no denying that there's something to this Mars/Venus stuff.

A guy comes up to another guy and says, "Hey, you got a Phillips screwdriver I can borrow?"

A woman comes up to you: "Hi! I really like your shirt. I bought one almost exactly like that for my boyfriend last year. I found it on sale at Mullet-Mart when I went there to get some tooth curlers and he really liked it a lot. But he got this ugly, brown stain on it and I tried to wash it out, but when I hung it on the clothesline in the backyard, the squirrels chewed it up pretty badly. So, I just shredded it and used it for mulch around my begonias. It works a lot better than the stuff you get at Mullet-Mart because my neighbor, Charlene, uses that stuff and my begonias are much bigger than hers are. Of course, I talk to my begonias and I think that helps a lot too because Charlene spends way more time working on her yard than I do. But she's got problems with her

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husband, Ralph. Sometimes I can hear them arguing even though they have their TV turned up really loud. I don't know how many times I've had to go over there to ask them to turn it down because the noise really upsets my gerbils. Especially the theme from the Springer show. I wonder why that is? They start making these funny chicken noises and won't even touch their fluffed groat cluster flakes no matter how hungry they are. Anyhow, that's what I wanted to talk to you about. When I went out to the backyard, I noticed that the thingie that closes the screen door was real wiggly and I saw that the whatchamacallits – screws? – were like loose. I tried to screw them back in with a butter knife, but they're those criss-cross kind. So I was wondering if maybe you had one of those screwdrivers with that criss-cross shape that I could borrow?"

*Ten minutes of my life shot to hell for a 3-second question.*

*Customer service automated systems.*

Now, you're calling customer service because you have a problem. You don't need the computer to tell you your outstanding balance; you can read it yourself on your bill. And does it really matter whether your question concerns menu item 1, 2, 3, 4...? You're going to (eventually, maybe) be connected to the wrong person anyhow. Then you have to enter your account number. More foolishness. The first thing they ask you for -- should you be fortunate enough to contact a living human being -- is your account number. The one you just entered. This is followed by an entrance exam to prove that you are you: name, address, zip, last 4 of your social, mother's maiden name, birth state of the 14<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> vice-presidents of the U.S., and the maximum airspeed of the Himalayan Chimney Swift flying into a 10 mph headwind at sea level. You've been on the phone waiting on hold and verifying your identity for 45 minutes and you have yet to broach the subject of what it is you called for in the first place. Three-quarters of an hour to achieve what could have been accomplished from a simple "Hello" had an actual flesh-and-blood person just answered the phone.

*Please arrive at the airport 2 hours before your flight departs!*

You know, I'm just as concerned with security and terrorism as the next guy. But let's be reasonable, people. I'd like to see some statistics that compare how much jeopardy we have actually avoided vs. the number of people hours (millions? billions?) we've

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squandered waiting in airport security lines. Are we really safer now that TSA has confiscated all our toenail clippers? Does it make you feel more secure when the computer program that selects random passengers has armed agents wanding a cute, little, blond 5-year old girl or an 87-year old grandma in a wheelchair?

Besides, the entire process is flawed. If I'm a terrorist, I don't need to blow up a plane to win. I just slip 20-or-so lbs. of C-4 under my turban (*Oh no! We can't profile! That would be prejudicial!*), get in the security line, then wait until I'm about halfway to the checkpoint before I push the button to go collect my 70 virgins from Allah. I've killed hundreds of heathens, closed down the airport for probably a week at least, undoubtedly disrupted operations at every other major airport in the country for the next several days, and made everyone start looking over their shoulders everywhere they go. Without getting on a plane. So, does this added security really buy us anything that just arming the cabin crew wouldn't achieve more effectively? It's just about gotten to the point that we spend more time in the airport than on the plane.

*Tick-tock. Tick-tock. Hours we'll never see again.*

## *the george*

*A gentleman is a man who can play the accordion but doesn't.*

- Unknown

**WANTED...**

A **Florida attorney** who can help me file a Motion in a suit against Citizens Insurance. The case exists and is open. I do not have, need, or want legal representation, but I can use advice and help. I can and will prepare the factual information. I need help in properly preparing the Motion and properly filing it. The attorney's name will not appear on the Motion or elsewhere.

*Arthur Belefant.*

[a.belefant@ieee.org](mailto:a.belefant@ieee.org)

**W**OW! There's a lot of hype all over the country about religion. These two movies (The Last Temptation of Christ & The Da Vinci Code) have brought out all kinds of religious activists. What is going on? Some people embrace and appreciate the effects of these movies while others are offended by them. This commotion has certainly stimulated my own thoughts about my beliefs and brought to light some interesting topics worthy of discussion.

Let's take a look at a very popular controversy surrounding the most recently released production. *Did Jesus Christ get married?* I don't know of any documentation in the ancient works (the Bible) that specifically tells us he was married (then again there's almost no documentation on the spouse of any great figure in the scriptures) but wasn't it his mother who approached him at the wedding feast about a shortage of wine? Correct me if I'm wrong but the custom and tradition of that place and time was for the mother of the **groom** to oversee the wedding feast and the Jewish people now and back then are strong on custom and tradition. Let's not forget he was Mary's first born and most likely the first to be wed. And don't forget, when Adam & Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden they were given the commandment to multiply and replenish the Earth which was intended for all mankind and theoretically still in effect today (I don't believe in celibacy whether you're clergy or not). If he did not get married and have children he would have disobeyed one of God's commandments and disqualified himself from being the Lord and Savior of the world. Not to mention all the knowledge, experience and *patience* he developed by raising his children in preparation for his ministry.

What do you think he did for the 30+ years of his life before he started his (2-3 year) ministry? The only other references to his previous life was his birth, some time before he was 2 years of age when Herod tried to have him killed and when his family traveled for the census when he was 12. That's when he started to educate himself and study to prepare for his ministry. Upon discovering his absence his parents left the caravan and found him at the synagogue in dialog with the scribes and other learned men teaching and learning. As an adult he worked as a carpenter, the trade of his step father Joseph (as was the tradition of the time) to support his family and prepare for his ministry. To me, not being married to at least one wife (possibly 2, 3 or more) doesn't make sense.

(Continued on page 19)

**I**n the not too distant past, then-Florida Governor Jeb Bush had suffered a resounding defeat, when the Florida Supreme Court ruled his voucher plan unconstitutional under Article I, Section 3 of the Florida Constitution. This Article reads as follows:

*“SECTION 3. Religious freedom. – There shall be no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting or penalizing the free exercise thereof. Religious freedom shall not justify practices inconsistent with public morals, peace or safety. No revenue of the state or any political subdivision or agency thereof shall ever be taken from the public treasury directly or indirectly in aid of any church, sect, or religious denomination or in aid of any sectarian institution.”*

The voucher program, using public school funds to educate Florida students in private schools, under certain prescribed circumstances, was struck down because a significant portion, if not the majority, of vouchers would be to religious schools. This was a program that, for obvious reasons, was supported by the Christian Right. Despite this legal setback, support for vouchers among our overwhelmingly Republican lawmakers has remained strong.

So strong, in fact, that the Taxation and Budget Reform Commission has proposed amending this Section as follows:

The amended Section 3 would delete the following text: *“No revenue of the state or any political subdivision or agency thereof shall ever be taken from the public treasury directly or indirectly in aid of any church, sect, or religious denomination or in aid of any sectarian institution.”* The following text would then be added: *“Individuals or entities may not be barred from participating in public programs because of religion.”*

An amendment such as this one might delight the Christian Right, at least at first. That is, until the full impact of the new law is felt. Since, under this amendment, *any* religious or sectarian group may receive public funds, and *no* such group can be barred from participating, we might wind up with some quite interesting results. Here are a few examples.

Consider the following scenario: The state Department of Children and Families wishes to contract out their emergency shelters and foster care program. A branch of the Fundamentalist Church of

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Latter-Day Saints decides to bid on the opportunity. If theirs is the lowest bid (they might do it for free, to propagate their faith), on what grounds may they be denied? Yet, would we really want the FLDS (or a similar institution) taking care of Florida's most vulnerable population?

The Taliban (under a different name, of course) could set up a rehabilitation program for prisoners who are addicts. Again, how would we stop them? Perhaps, some much-needed mental health treatment might be contracted out to a group similar to the former People's Temple (plenty of Kool-Aid will be available). We could go on.

A word of caution is in order to those who would support such a constitutional change: *be careful what you wish for - you may get it.*

**JESUS WHO?**

*Continued.*

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The way I picture Jesus in my mind is a strong, muscular (don't forget there were no power tools for carpenters back then and any thing made of wood is heavy), possibly taller than normal with a pleasant mannerism (not the skinny, shy, wimp portrayed in many pictures). He lived his life in the upper middle class of society (he had a highly desired skill) and was able to secure a comfortable future for his family knowing he wasn't going to be around to grow old with them. He had great leadership ability, was charismatic and his presence commanded respect. But don't push him too far, he doesn't tolerate disrespect of his Heavenly Father (remember he turned over the money changers tables in the Temple and no one dared to stop him).

Next time you read about Jesus keep an **open mind** and do a little research, the Bible is to learn from, not for **thumping**. I'm looking forward to seeing The Da Vinci Code.

John F. Snyder

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**I am not a sports fan**, nor have I ever been a sports fan of any sort.. Due to the content of this column, I felt the need to include this disclaimer—so there you have it.

In last month's SCAM, George Patterson wrote about a new calendar event, watching a baseball game at the Space Coast Stadium. In that column, he expresses one regret: *"One of my major disappointments with Mensans is their almost total lack of interest in professional sports."*

While I agree with George's observation, I do not see that lack of interest, in and of itself, as a disappointment. Yet, George's comment does bring one question to mind—*Why?* Below is my take.

Many years ago, when I was a boy of ten, team sports in some form was part of the required torture at school known as Physical Education. In these events, the class was typically divided into two "teams" for the activity. While grudgingly participating, I could be charitably described as rather clumsy (I could never catch a ball). As you can imagine, this was the source of considerable mutual frustration between my "teammates" and me.

Then there was one day where my post-game frustrations had reached an especially high level. Expressing these feelings at home afterward, I made some statements to the effect: "I just wish the whole damn team would just lose!" My tirade caught my father's attention—enough to raise his concerns to the level that he saw a need to have a long talk with me.

The topic was "school spirit"—the importance of rooting for your school team in any competitive sports event. Apparently, this was because the team was representing "my" school. I was able to pose one question: "If we had moved and I went to a different school, should I then root for that school's team?" Shortly afterward, the lecture was over, as I was sent—still not understanding the concept—to bed.

Nearly half a century later, I must confess I still do not get it. To me, it does not make sense. Perhaps "my" team doesn't play as well as the opponent. Why should I hope for a classmate's success if that classmate was one of many who continually mistreated me?

In professional sports, for instance, why should a New Yorker root for the Yankees—even when no team member lives in New York? In any case, is a "homeboy" always in the right, simply because

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of that fact? Why? I guess one can see my antipathy toward sports.

Does it stop there? I don't think so. Also, while I was young, I was taught that it was good to be patriotic. Why? Because this is "my" country, "my" home. By virtue of this, "we" are always right. As in sports, to a thinking person, this just does not compute.

Consider: In late 2001, after the terrorist attacks, there was a renewed drive to show devotion to our country, often in the form of hanging American flags and wearing flag lapels. I noticed a local Walgreen's selling these lapel pins at the checkout counter. Upon examining a pin, I found it to be manufactured in *China*. I guess patriotism does not extend to the American worker. Some of this drive seems to be still with us today, as evidenced by our current presidential campaign, where an issue has been made about candidate Barack Obama not wearing the "requisite" flag pin.

There seems to be a parallel between rooting for the home team and believing "my country right or wrong". In both cases, it would appear that blind loyalty is required. We may now also have a clue as to why it seems Mensans lack interest in professional sports.

While the only qualifying factor that separates Mensans from the general population is the person's IQ, it would also appear that people with higher IQs are less likely to simply accept blanket statements at face value.

This may, then, explain George's observation. But, what about George? Does this mean he is given to blind loyalty? I don't believe this is necessarily the case. It is my guess that George simply likes baseball.

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<i>ExCommunication</i>
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The meeting was adjourned at 6:11. Next meeting will be at George Patterson's house at 301 Sand Pine Rd., Indialantic on Wednesday, June 4, 2008 at 5:30 pm.

**O**ne of the perks of being the Regional Vice Chair is receiving the newsletters from the various groups around the region. I thoroughly enjoy reading about what is going on and take delight in some of the news and information found in the newsletters. Since most members only receive one newsletter, I think I could and should share some of the news from around the region in this column.

As I write this, it is the beginning of May, and some of the May newsletters have arrived. Tampa Bay Mensa's LocSec, Thomas Thomas, shared some great news in his column in the Tampa Bay Sounding. TBM is growing, to the point that they actually ended the fiscal year (end of March) with 703 members! Most impressive! And to add to that, the group must be doing something right, because Thomas reported on their annual Spring Picnic, stating that they lost count of the attendance, after running out of the 50 name tags. Keep up the great work, Tampa Bay Mensa!

Another newsworthy mention comes in the May Tallahassee Mensa newsletter, MenTally. LocSec Debi Carruth's column talks about how starting a movement takes just ONE member passionate about ONE thing. That passionate member is Harry Mursten, who was frustrated that Mensa didn't do anything but social activities. He has connected the local Mensa group with a Community Outreach Program and hopefully some of the members there will soon be helping at risk smart kids. So thank you to Harry Musten for being the motivating force, and thank you to Debi Carruth for sharing it with us.

Since this is for the June newsletters, the ARRRR-RG will be already past and ensconced in our memories. I hope I will have seen all of you there! Tampa Bay does know how to party . . . and with a 3 day weekend it is quite a bargain.

For those of you who will be joining us in Denver for the Annual Gathering in July, please do plan on joining us on Thursday, July 3, at 3:00 p.m. for a Region 10 Meet and Greet. No program, no refreshments (unless you bring something from hospitality), just an hour for us all to touch base and socialize with the rest of our Florida friends. So mark your calendars, and see you then!

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**Minutes of the ExComm Meeting:**

**T**he ExComm met at the home of George Patterson on Wednesday, May 7, 2008. Called to order at 5:47 pm by LocSec George Patterson. Members present: George Patterson, Terry Valek, Bud Long, and Joe Smith. Thomas Wheat was unable to attend.

Welcome Guests: Helen Lee Moore and Jon Warner.

Minutes for the April 2, 2008 meeting were approved as published in the May 2008 SCAM.

**Reports:**

Treasurer: Bud submitted by email the Treasurers Report which showed total funds at the end of April of \$4,021.18. \$980 of this was in the RG account from early registrations. Bud also reported that he planned to attend the Tampa RG and hopefully sell some more tickets.

Testing: Helen Lee Moore (Proctor Coordinator) reported on the status of her search for a new testing site, the public library having disallowed our use of their rooms, since we charge for the test. Helen reported that she had lined up a couple of possibilities and that she needed a vote from the ExComm authorizing her to commit funds to the enterprise. ExComm assured her this would be forthcoming. Helen also expressed the view that it would be wasteful to commit money for use of a test site if we did not make an effort to advertise said testing in throughout the county. The ExComm concurred with this opinion. Helen sends letters and material to all candidates she is informed of by the national office, but feels there is a large untapped potential in the local citizenry (not her exact words.) LocSec observed that he was attracted by a notice on a library bulletin board, back in '95. It was observed in later discussion that Florida Today and the many local outlets like Hometown News carry a weekly events column for which a testing notice would be appropriate. The ExComm concurred and promised to work at finding a Publicity chairperson.

**Old Business:** Joe moved the following: That the ExComm authorizes the proctor Coordinator (HLM) to locate, negotiate, and pay for a bi-monthly test site for up to \$75 per session for up to six test sessions. Seconded by Terry. Passed unanimously.

**New Business:** There was no new business.

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