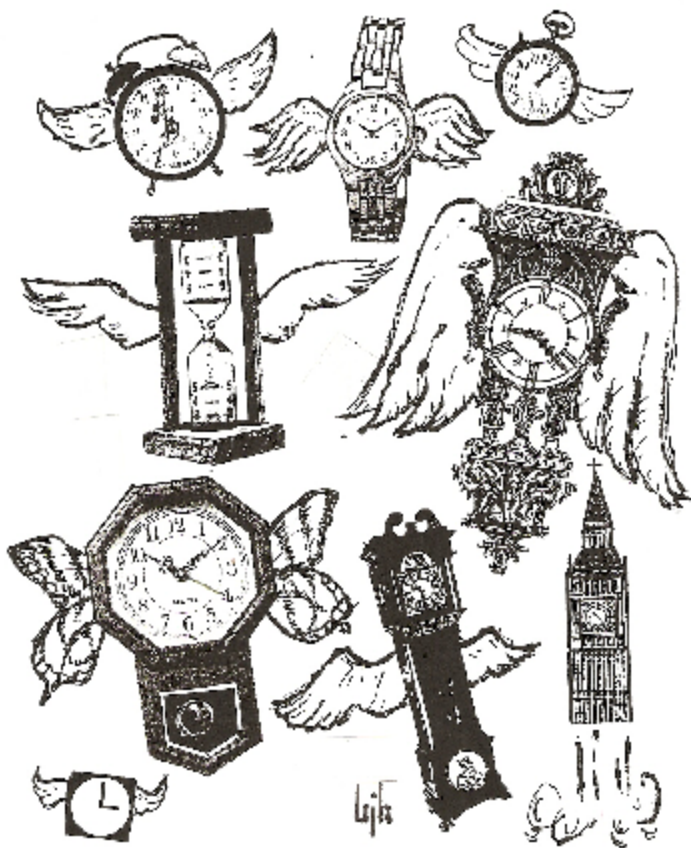


The

SCAM

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Happy New Year





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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 2011, one and all! For those among us who follow the Mayan Calendar, take heart, for according to the followers of the Mayans, there are only 720 days left in our mortal existence. I do not know if any virgins are eagerly awaiting out arrival, but I believe most of us are too old (and too wise) to care.

Ever since I heard of the Mayan Calendar and its purported implications, I've often wondered what was the significance of stopping the calendar at a specific date. I must admit, to date, I still do not know. Maybe it's because I'm not educated enough, or perhaps I am just too lazy to do the necessary research. So, I'll do the next best thing.

In the great tradition of most of our religious leaders, I'll simply make up the story. The Mayan who was involved in this great calendar project—I'll call him Fred—was a hobbyist doing this project in his spare time. Like all such dedicated hobbyists, he had become increasingly obsessed over his calendar, much to the neglect of other things of importance in his life. His lovely wife—we'll call her Maya—certainly can attest to that.

Anyway, it all happened one day when Fred paused as he noticed his bladder had become just too full to wait any longer. As he finished relieving himself, a very lonely and frustrated Maya had stepped behind him and began nuzzling him. As Fred began feeling their mutually growing desire that had so long been

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***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.

I wanted to chime in on a couple of definitions provide in the recent "National-Isms" column in the December, 2010 issue. In that article, it was proposed that "*socialism, fascism and communism are all very similar.*" I would like to focus on the significant difference between fascism and the other two terms. While socialism and communism may be viewed as extreme 'Left' positions, fascism resulted from an extreme conservative, i.e. 'Right', response to the fear of a potential rise of socialist influences. While a concise definition of fascism is difficult to find, there is consistency in that it would include a large dose of corporatism, totalitarianism, and nationalism. We, therefore, need to be mindful of potential threats posed from extreme 'Right' or 'Left' philosophies.

Similarly, I would question the source for the definition provided for 'Progressive'. I found several published definitions for this term consistently described along the lines of "*favoring or advocating progress, change, improvement, or reform, as opposed to wishing to maintain things as they are*" and "*characterized by such progress, or by continuous improvement.*" As I read these, I would characterize the term as not only a positive ideal, but it seems that it is a fundamental component of the American psyche and "Can-Do" spirit that created this created this great nation.

Max Salinas

SCAM Treasurer's Report

As of 11/30/2010:

<u>Account</u>	<u>Balance</u>
General Fund	\$699.29
Post Office Acct.	77.04
Reserve Fund	1618.02
RG Fund	1893.96

Total Funds Available:
\$4288.31

<u>Deposits</u>	
Mensa Funding:	\$183.23
Interest Income	0.13
RG Income	1610.56

<u>Withdrawals</u>	
Postage	56.69
Printing	137.16
RG Expenses	2505.54
PO Acct Adjust	10.00

—Bud Long, Treasurer

Charles Dickens's novel opens with one of the most famous lines in English literature, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times". The novel ends with the most poignant line in English literature, "It is a far, far better thing that I do". Between these two great lines lie more than three hundred pages of twaddle.

I recently reread the novel, the first time since my high school years. It has been extolled as great literature and as a window into the life of society of the time.

Much of the first half of the book is about a London family of aristocrats, all of whom, including servants and retainers, are unadulterated examples of honor, loyalty, proprieties, and, of course, good looks. The young woman of the group, who has a fine inheritance from her now dead mother, is cloyingly sweet.

The action, in this first part is about rescuing her father, a doctor, from imprisonment in Paris. He has been imprisoned so long that he has gone mad. The rescue is successful and he is taken to England. In London, he recovers and becomes one of the family group, who lead an idyllic life, money, position, servants, retainers, et al. It is the best of times (for them). Dickens gives us no view into the lives of other Londoners.

One of their intimates is a French nobleman, the nephew of the man who imprisoned the doctor, disgusted with his uncle's character, has left France, dropped his aristocratic name, takes an ordinary English name, and becomes like the other English characters full of honor, loyalty, proprieties, and, of course, good looks. All this occurs before the storming of the Bastille in Paris.

This very noble aristocratic Frenchman receives a letter from a former servant begging his help during the reign of terror after the revolution. Despite his knowledge of how aristocrats are being treated in France (a *la guillotine*), he decides to go to help her. He is caught and is imprisoned.

The noble family, including the formally imprisoned father and his daughter, go to Paris to rescue the noble Frenchman. The rest of the story is about how this extended family avoids the *bêtes noirs* of the tale, a wine shop owner and his wife, to rescue the noble Frenchman and escape from Paris.

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placed on hold, he spent the next few hours in Maya's loving arms. Afterward, needless to say, Fred had forgotten about his calendar! What was Fred's stopping point? The last date inscribed on the Mayan Calendar, from our translations was December 21, 2012.

As in any "End Times" scenario, next I will need to expound on how the world will end. As I write these words, I am entertaining two possibilities. The first would be by flood, symbolized by Fred's need to relieve himself. The second might be an orgy *en masse* in some upper middle class suburb instigated by all those lonely, desperate housewives long neglected by their workaholic husbands. Can you come up with a better ending? Only 720 more days to come up with it...my contact info is on Page Two.

Just think, if I can get enough people to buy into my version of those events, I just might have time (before the end of 2012) to form my very own cult. If I choose to do so, perhaps the investors in our midst will wish to invest in the stock of the company who manufactures Kool-Aid.

Of course, my greatest satisfaction as Editor will be to get up one morning and read the just-delivered January 2013 issue of The SCAM, regardless of whether it is edited by me or, by then, a new Editor.

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The final confrontation is so forced, that it does not seem plausible. It is as if Dickens could not figure how to extricate himself from his plot up to this point.

The final lines are said by a peripheral member of the noble English family who, in extremis, after living a dissolute and wanton life in Paris, returns to his English nobility and offers himself as sacrifice to save the noble Frenchman.

Oh my goodness but doesn't the time just fly. Seems like only last week we were celebrating St. Swithin's Day and here it is the end of the year already. So without further ado, it's time to update all you dear people with the exciting and fascinating news of the past year.

As most of you know, my job as Obama's Director of the Department of Redundancy Department keeps me pretty busy. But I still find time to pursue some of my favorite pastimes including knitting underwear for flipperless flounders, honing my dwarf tossing skills, and practicing on my beloved cast iron flugelhorn. In the spring, I was hospitalized briefly for a second brain transplant (the first one didn't take), but I'm happy to report that the new one is functioning extremely well except on days that end in the letter "Y." A couple of months ago, some friends invited me on my very first Big Game Hunting Safari just outside of Philadelphia. We flew into Indianapolis, and then hiked through the desert to the pinball grotto where there were reports of some impressive platypii having been spotted. My friend, Spyros, almost bagged a three-point mallard and would have won the pool we'd formed except he had to be disqualified for using radioactive ammo in his howitzer. Better luck next year, you mad Greek, you!

My lovely wife, Prunella, is still working to get the results of her conviction for upsetting the apple cart overturned, but our lawyer says that the trial date can't be set until she gives up the hostages. Meanwhile, she is still very active doing volunteer work for the Homeless Pearl Oyster Divers of Omaha. We are very proud of the fact that she was recently awarded third place, in a competition including 3 other red-haired women, for stuffing the most artichokes into a plastic Eiffel Tower souvenir.

Our eldest son, Bowersox, and his wife Roxanne, are trying to get permission from government officials to adopt a stray baby lemur they encountered whilst on vacation in Turkmenistan. The proceedings have been temporarily delayed until they can determine the little tyke's political affiliation. As many of you know, B&R are unable to have children of their own since they were accidentally irradiated by alien spacecraft.

Our beautiful daughter, Clotilda, has made the cheerleading squad at her high school! And she only had to sleep with half the

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SCAM Calendar of Events for January 2011

5th—Wednesday 5:30 PM

EXCOMM MEETING

This is our monthly business meeting. All members are always welcome to attend. This month, it will be held at the home of George Paterson in Indialantic.

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

7th - Friday 5:30 PM

“HOOT LIKE AN OWL”

Come join us for drinks, open discussion and food (latter two optional) at the Melbourne Hooter's, 877 S. Babcock Street.

Hosted by: *Dennis Logan, 501-7547.*

22nd - Saturday 6:30 PM

DINNER AT DAVID'S

Join us at David's Restaurant, 2480 S Washington Ave (US1) in Titusville for just about any kind of dinner, ranging from steak to sushi.

Contact: *Mike Zielinski, 747-0097.*

29th - Saturday 5:45 PM

SNORT

Join us for some sushi and tempura at The SCAM's best attended event at Miyako's, 1511 S. Harbor City Blvd. (US#1) in Melbourne.

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

Of CABAGEs and Coffee:

(Our Regular Events)

C.A.B.A.G.E.: **Every Monday at Books-A-Million**, Merritt Square Mall
6 p.m. Host: *Karen Freiberg, 633-1636*

GO!: **Every Sunday at Books-A-Million**, Post Commons, Melbourne.
Host: *George Lebovitz, 259-3070, rokkitsci@cfl.rr.com*

Membership Notes for January 2011

WELCOME TO SCAM

James Conklin

WELCOME TO SCAM AND MENSA

Benjamin Velie
Holly Velie

Nathan Rao
James Scutti

WELCOME BACK!

Clayton Pendergrass
Dan Starkey

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>8th</i>	Dan Starkey	<i>14th</i>	Lee McLamb
<i>10th</i>	Dennis Logan	<i>21st</i>	Diane Mullinax
<i>10th</i>	Arleigh Sharpe	<i>23rd</i>	Michael Mustard
<i>14th</i>	Lee McLamb	<i>31st</i>	Joanne Ricker-
<i>14th</i>	Barry Signorelli		Abowitt

The "Fine Print" for Calendar Events:

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

S-Smoking; **NS**- No Smoking; **SS**-Separate Smoking Area; **P**-Pets in the home; **NP**-No Pets present; **BYO**-Bring Your Own: **_**Snacks, **_**Drinks, **_**Everything.

Take it from me, boredom can be a horrible thing. When one is reduced to reading a “Dear Abby” column, it is not difficult to figure out that hitting the bottom cannot be far behind. Yet, not in the too distant past, that’s exactly what happened to me in mid-November.

At that time, I picked up the paper and began reading such a column where an irritable wife, who signs herself as “*Unfairly Equal in Phoenix*” complains about her husband’s apparent obsession with equality in handling all the requirements that crop up in their relationship. According to her, he obsesses over whose turn it is to wash dishes, change the baby’s diapers, and ensuring each set of in-laws get equal time from them.

From the hints provided in the column, I would guess the couple is not likely to be more than thirty years of age. If that is indeed the case, neither husband nor wife has any firsthand experience of the days when it was common to treat women like second-class citizens. In fact, their entire lives have been lived in an age where, at least on domestic issues, the tables have turned.

One of the greatest failures I’ve witnessed in my lifetime is that the Equal Rights Amendment, despite eighty years of prior effort, failed to pass the ratification process, most recently in 1982. What I found rather interesting was that, throughout the 1970s, when the Women’s Liberation movement was at its height, it was women who were behind the most recent effort to ratify the ERA. During those years, legislation had been passed removing much of the worst forms of inequality faced by women at the time.

Then, around 1979, something happened. During the Carter Administration, someone (I cannot remember who) raised the question, if women became the legal equals of men, would 18-year-old girls, like their male counterparts, be required to register for the draft? The larger question became, would women be better off as equals to men? The women of the day must have answered “no”, as they were instrumental in ERA’s ultimate defeat.

A generation has now passed without any serious attempt at reviving ERA. Shortly after ERA was defeated, I was between marriages and had a few dating relationships. On occasion, when I was foolish enough to ask the “equality question” to a woman I had met, the answer was invariably the same: “*I want equal pay for equal*

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work, but I don't want to be a man's equal." Why not?

It's a funny thing, that concept of equality. In general, supporters of equality are those who are at a disadvantage in the situation. Those who benefit from the status quo generally will resist any attempts to achieve equality. So, is it any great surprise that most of today's women do not seek equality with men?

One last comment on the plight of "*Unfairly Equal in Phoenix*." It is obvious to me that she deeply resents the direction her husband is taking in their marriage. Most likely, they both work to pay the bills and she, understandably, wants her husband to be involved in household chores and caring for their child. But she wants to define what his level of involvement should be. I have seen, too often, that in parenting issues, the husband's involvement means she sets the rules; his task is to carry them out. Anyone care to bet whether "Unfairly Equal" would ever support another movement to ratify the ERA?

Isn't it time we men start advocating the passage of ERA?

My Summer Vacation:

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN

Continued

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football team, instead of the entire football team plus the chess club like the other girls.

And our bouncing baby boy, Bruno, will soon be eight years old and is almost ready to stop breastfeeding.

This year, we took our happy family vacation in exotic Boise, Idaho. If you're ever able to get there, don't miss the fantastic Largest Ball of Belly Button Lint in the World Museum. You will be absolutely amazed. But be extremely cautious not to touch any of the green, slimy things since they are highly toxic. Little Bruno had one in his mouth before anyone could stop him and it was only the quick action of the museum's resident proctologist that saved him from having to undergo a frontal lobotomy. Whew! Close call.

Well, it was an eventful and fulfilling year for our family and our wish to all of you for this holiday season is that you can contain your excitement until you hear from us again next year.

The George

As a regular columnist for *The SCAM* for the past several years, I can testify that it is indeed a rare and gratifying event when a column such as mine generates reader feedback. Yet, this is exactly what has occurred in response to my “Tea For Two” articles published in the October and November issues. This column, written as an unanticipated “Part Three”, is in response to an e-mail message I received just as the December issue went to press.

In the e-mail entitled, “*Hey, That’s Not Tea You’re Smoking,*” member A. M. Gehringer writes: “*After visiting the Libertarian Party’s website, I am more convinced than ever that this is the only way we can ever hope to regain the freedom and liberty that this country was founded on. Nowhere did I see a call to abolish our police force, libraries, or public education. What on Earth are you smoking, anyway?*”

Alas, it most definitely was not tea that I’ve been smoking. While reading the e-mail, I must have been smoking *something* since I failed to remember stating in either of my articles that the Libertarian Party called for the abolition of our police force, libraries or public education. So, to pick up where my memory has apparently failed me, I reviewed the 2010 Libertarian Party Platform and my two prior articles.

Here and now, I will admit that the Libertarian Party does not explicitly call for the abolition of these services. In reviewing my articles I must state that, with the exception of public education, I never stated that the Libertarian Party called for their elimination. I do, however, contend that the Libertarian Party *does* clearly call for the elimination of public education in its Platform. To support my contention, here is the entire text of Paragraph 2.8:

Education, like any other service, is best provided by the free market, achieving greater quality and efficiency with more diversity of choice. Schools should be managed locally to achieve greater accountability and parental involvement. Recognizing that the education of children is inextricably linked to moral values, we would return authority to parents to determine the education of their children, without interference from government. In particular, parents should have control of and responsibility for all funds expended for their children’s education.”

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Public schools, as is currently the case, are in the form of local school boards run by government officials elected by voters in the communities they serve. All property owners pay taxes to support the schools in their district, usually whether or not they have children in school. Moreover, taxpayers do not have individual control over the tax funds expended. There are compulsory attendance laws requiring parents to send their children to school. Finally, public schools have been considered a government monopoly impeding the “free market” choice called for by the Libertarian Party. It is not difficult to infer that the current incarnation of public schools would conflict with the ideals cited in Paragraph 2.8.

So, what about all other “government services”? Although the Platform does not specify abolition of public libraries or local police forces, we cannot ignore what the Platform does state. For example:

Paragraph 2.0: *“Libertarians want all members of society to have abundant opportunities to achieve economic success. A free and competitive market allocates resources in the most efficient manner. Each person has the right to offer goods and services to others on the free market. The only proper role of government in the economic realm is to protect property rights, adjudicate disputes, and provide a legal framework in which voluntary trade is protected.”*

Excerpt from the Statement of Principles: *“Even within the United States, all political parties other than our own grant to government the right to regulate the lives of individuals and seize the fruits of their labor without their consent. We, on the contrary, deny the right of any government to do these things ...”*

Given our historical opposition to taxes, any attempt to tax citizens is regarded as “seizing the fruits of their labor without their consent,” even in cases where taxes are approved by referendum. This is because the nature of democracies is majority rule; in contrast, “consent” is on an individual basis. In a mythical society of four, John, Peter and Paul might vote to take Mike’s money to finance a local library. What happened to Mike’s consent?

Police forces and public libraries are currently taxpayer supported. Given the Libertarian position, how can we justify seizing the fruits of individuals’ labors to provide these services, no matter how desirable these services might be? Moreover, would these services be offered in the “free market”? If so, how would that work?

Perhaps I *should* smoke some of that tea.

As we begin a new year, I want to share a resolution I've made, not just for myself but for Mensa: To not look back at the end of the year and regret lost opportunities; things that could and should have been done that weren't.

Most of life's regrets come from the things we didn't do: The person we didn't have the courage to ask out on a date, the job we didn't get, the class we didn't take, the things that might have been.

Mensa is at a crossroads; we're taking a look at our governance from top to bottom. Maybe nothing will come of it; maybe a year from now our governance structure will barely resemble what we have now. It's too early to know.

But I do not want Mensa, a year or two years from now, not to have moved forward. I want us to increase in members, in revenue, in fun activities, in great times with friends, and in good conversations with other smart people. I want us to have new adventures, make new friends, and experience new things. In short, I want 2011 to be the year that we look back on and say, "wow."

Is the money we spend on our current committee structure money that could better be spent on other things? Should we be more picky about who runs – and gets elected to – local and national office? Do methods that worked when we were small no longer work as well now that we're pushing 60,000 members, and if not, what should we replace them with?

There are people reading this who have never come forward as leaders but who have fantastic skills at seeing the big picture and figuring out how to get there from here. I'll take all the advice I can get. So will Mensa. Don't hide your light under a bushel; if that's your skill set, let us hear from you.

Finally, I'm petitioning to run for re-election (which is different than other petitioning I've also been doing.) If anyone wants to sign my re-nomination petition, you can find it at the Mensa Web site, http://www.us.mensa.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Petition_List&Template=/customsource/Petition_Signatures.cfm&id=40

Until next month,

Mel

Minutes of the December ExComm Meeting.

The ExComm met at the home of George Patterson on Wednesday, December 8, 2010. Called to order at 5:45 pm by LocSec George Patterson.

Attendees: ExComm members George Patterson, Karen Freiberg, Bud Long, and Joe Smith. Terry Valek was unable to attend..

Welcome Guest: Doug Starke

Minutes for the October 6, 2010 meeting were approved as published in the November, 2010 SCAM.

LocSec Report: George had no formal report, but discussions that arose during the meeting touched on the following: We should extend Kudos to all those that helped make the RG a success, but if we name them we might forget someone - perhaps in a separate article; We needed, in the coming season, to be more prompt in the appointment of committees such as Audit and Elections and we should start beating the bushes for new ExComm blood; We should consider a Spring Picnic, sponsored by ExComm as per 2008 and 2009; We should look to improve our publicity to attract more new members. Hank Rhodes (see below) consistently contacts people showing interest, but not enough interest to take the test. George observed that the publicity chair (himself) had not been doing a very good job and should put a little bit more into the job.

Treasurer: Bud submitted the Treasurer's Reports for November. It showed a final balance of \$4,288.31.

RG Committee: Bud also reported that books were almost closed for the RG account, which showed a tidy profit.

Testing: Hank Rhodes (proctor coordinator) reported via email that no individuals were tested in November. Five candidates were contacted for the first time, and 10 candidates for the 2nd or 3rd time. A test was scheduled for January 15 at the Central Brevard Library in Cocoa.

There was no new or old business.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:56.

The next meeting will be at George Patterson's house at 301 Sand Pine Rd., Indialantic on Wednesday, January 5, 2010 at 5:30 pm.