

The

SCAM

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Happy St. Patty's Day!





SPACE COAST AREA MENSA



Website: www.spacecoast.us.mensa.org

(All Area Codes are 321 except as noted)

Executive Committee

Local Secretary

GEORGE PATTERSON

301 Sand Pine Rd., Indialantic, FL 32903
777-3721 george3141@cfl.rr.com

Assistant Local Secretary

JOSEPH SMITH

4317 Sherwood Blvd., Melbourne, FL 32935
259-4966 jsmith@arachnaweb.com

Treasurer

BUD LONG

660 Alaska Rd., Merritt Island, FL 32953
422-5011 budlong@bellsouth.net

Recording Secretary

KAREN FREIBERG

876 Buxmont Ct., Rockledge, FL 32955
633-1636 Karen@freiberg.com

Member-at-Large

TERRY VALEK

626-8523
wb4zuz@amsat.org

SCAM Appointees

Proctor Coordinator

HANK RHODES

MensaTest@cfl.rr.com

Membership

KAREN FREIBERG

Membership@scam.us.mensa.org

S.I.G.H.T.

KAREN FREIBERG

Sight@scam.us.mensa.org

RG Committee Chair

BUD LONG

SCAM Bylaws Committee

MICHAEL MOAKLEY

editor@scam.us.mensa.org

Publicity Committee Chair

GEORGE PATTERSON

Mediator

MICHAEL MOAKLEY

editor@scam.us.mensa.org

The SCAM Editorial Staff

Editor

MICHAEL MOAKLEY
808 Wisteria Dr., Melbourne, FL
32901
editor@scam.us.mensa.org

Webmaster

KAREN FREIBERG
633-1636
Karen@Freiberg.com

Assembly/Circulation

GEORGE PATTERSON
777-3721

Calendar

DOUG STARKE
633-1636
Doug@Starke.com

American Mensa Ltd.

MEL DAHL, RVC10
RVC10@cfl.rr.com

AMERICAN MENSA, LTD.
1229 Corporate Drive West
Arlington, TX 76006-6103
(817) 607-0060
AmericanMensa@mensa.org



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

Although, as I write this, it is only mid-February, it surely seems spring is well on its way (at least, here in Florida). As you may notice in this issue, we have a few more activities than we have normally had in the recent past.. If this trend continues, I might have to add another page to our calendar. That's a good thing.

In my several years with Mensa, I have come to learn that only a small minority of our members attend our activities. With the increase noted above, I would encourage you to check these out and attend one or more of these activities. Try it, you'll like it.

If, even now, you do not see an activity that appeals to your interest, you may wish to host one. Contact our Calendar Coordinator for details.

In your life's experiences, do you know some family, friends or colleagues who are not in Mensa (but you always thought they just might be eligible to join)? If so, you might be in luck.

Beginning this issue, in Membership Notes, we are announcing our scheduled Mensa testing. Included are the requirements, and the time and date of each testing session. Where is Membership Notes? Open The SCAM to its center, then look on the right page.

Finally, if you are interested in a better-looking front cover, I welcome any appropriate artwork. E-mail me for details.

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.

In past columns, I have noted that the English language uses some common words as modifiers for other words. Past examples were dogs, egg, and French. Now I will take up the word "Dutch".

"Dutch" is used by Americans to denote Hollanders or Netherlanders (Lowlanders) and is a corruption of the German word for Germans - Deutsch, which apparently was a matter of confusion years ago. The Dutch language is spoken in the Netherlands, Belgium, Suriname, Curaçao, Aruba, and the Netherlands Antilles. The South African Boer language is a derivative of Dutch.

As with most attributes assigned to a foreign nationality, in American English the attribute often is derogatory. As with my prior listings, I omit obvious and non-controversial items such as Dutch cheese, Dutch tulips, and Dutch windmills.

A common use of the word "Dutch" is as a nickname, often associated with sports, especially football. The most well known is that for Ronald Reagan. Others include:

Dutch Boyd, professional poker player

Dutch Clark, National Football League player

Dutch Leonard (left-handed pitcher), Major League baseball player

Dutch Meyer, American collegiate football coach

Dutch Ruppertsberger, U.S. congressman

Dutch Savage, professional wrestler and promoter

Dutch Schulz, the gangster

"Dutch" is also commonly used as a modifier, among which are these

D auction - The reverse of a standard auction where the auctioneer starts with a high asking price, which is lowered until some participant is willing to accept the auctioneer's price.

D belted (Lakenvelder) - a breed of dairy cattle.

D bob - a hair style cut straight across the forehead and straight below the ears.

D bond - a brick-laying pattern. It is created by alternately laying headers and stretchers in a single course. The next course is laid so that a header lies in the middle of the stretcher in the course below.

D clover (*Trifolium repens*) - a species of clover native to Europe,

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North Africa, and West Asia.

D courage - bravery gained from intoxication by alcohol.

D crocus (*Crocus vernus*) - a plant of the *Crocus* genus in the Iridaceae family.

D defense - a chess opening characterized by the move d4 f5

D door - a door divided in lower and upper halves.

D elm (*Ulmus* × *hollandica* 'Major') - a distinctive English cultivar.

D elm disease - a fungal disease of elm trees which is spread by the elm bark beetle. Believed to be originally from Asia,

D gin - juniper-flavored and strongly alcoholic traditional liquor of the Netherlands, from which gin evolved.

D gold - an alloy of 11 parts of copper and 2 parts of zinc. A cheap imitation of gold.

D comfort or consolation - "Thank god it's no worse. "

D feast - where the entertainer get drunk before the guests.

D oven - a heavy metal pot with a high domed lid.

D pins - a bowling game using nine pins.

D treat - where each person participating in a shared activity pays for himself or herself.

D uncle - a person who issues frank, harsh, and severe comments and criticism to educate, encourage, or admonish someone.

D widow - a whore.

D wife - a large (long) pillow laid aside a person with which to snuggle in bed.

Other uses.

Double Dutch - a jump rope style in which two long ropes are turned in opposite directions. They are jumped by one or more players jumping simultaneously.

Double Dutch - a language game usually used by children. In it, vowels are pronounced normally, but each consonant is replaced with a syllable from a more or less standard table.

Pennsylvania Dutch - Early German settlers in Pennsylvania and later colonies in the Midwest. The name also refers to their distinctive language, culture, food, religion, and lifestyle.

To beat the Dutch - To do something extraordinary.

The Grim Reaper; a grim subject this month.

Faithful readers of this column (that would undoubtedly be the two of you in the back corner doing I-don't-want-to-know-what-with-that-three-legged-llama) know that I have been in Arizona taking care of a friend who had terminal cancer. I won't go into details of this emotional and stressful experience other than to say I had a great deal of time to think. One of the things that I thought about was, inevitably, death.

As an atheist, scientist, and skeptic, I really don't buy into either the wings and harps bit or the fire and brimstone bit, and held the notion that death was the end of all things. When you die, you die dead and that was that, the end of the E-ticket ride. You were no more. But being as intimately involved with the process as I was, I began to think about it more functionally, from a scientific perspective, and I came up with a very interesting theory.

I noticed that as my friend succumbed to his disease, the sparkle faded from his eyes, his engaging smile waned, and he became more and more lethargic. The energy that used to virtually emanate from him dissipated, and then disappeared. Energy: that was the key. After all, isn't it energy that really defines life? Whether human, animal, or plant life, all have energy. Without energy, there is nothing to power the cells that define living things.

Energy can be quantified and defined. Moreover, according to the first law of thermodynamics, energy can be neither created nor destroyed, only changed in form. Furthermore, in a closed system, the total energy remains the same. Considering our universe a closed system, these basic tenets of thermodynamics have suggested – to me, at any rate – profound implications regarding my understanding of death.

The medical definition of death is the cessation of all vital functions of the body including the heartbeat, brain activity, and breathing. In other words, when the energy-producing organs stop. So, death can be considered the absence of energy in the body. Then where did that energy go? Science tells us energy can only change form. Since there is no great explosion at death (that would be the $E=mc^2$ bit Einstein theorized), it has to go somewhere.

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This is where it becomes intriguing.

It would seem to me that, upon death, the energy that used to be within anything living is returned to some “pool” of sorts that constitutes the total energy of all living things.

This is all pure speculation and is not intended to form the basis for any belief, religious or otherwise. However, the door is now open to a wide variety of interpretations regarding just what this “pool of life” may be. It would not seem to conform exactly with the idea of cosmic consciousness, since I’ve chosen to include *all* living things as constituting this energy pool and I don’t think plants or microbes can legitimately be thought of as being conscious. Nor would this concept readily adapt to any accepted definition of divinity; my “pool of life” is not God. Neither does it fall into line with what I understand of the concept of reincarnation, since I can’t conceive of any way for a former living being to be perpetuated in another living entity unless this “life pool” is somehow comprised of separate components instead of being homogeneous, and then the implications make my brain hurt.

So, although we may not run into dear departed Aunt Sally or our childhood dog in the great hereafter, there would be the consolation of knowing that Aunt Sally or Fido at least constitutes part of the “allness” of which we also would be a part.

Now, this is just conjecture and I haven’t reasoned it out completely, so I would invite opinions from anyone out there more knowledgeable than I am about physics, cosmology, theology, philosophy, or astronomy to comment. I would entertain any ideas you smart folks might come up with to either shoot the theory full of holes or expand upon the skeletal premise that I’ve laid out.

But I do know that this idea gives my heathen soul some comfort in thinking that perhaps death is not quite the finality with which I formerly viewed it.

The George

SCAM Calendar of Events for March 2011

2nd—Wednesday 5:30 PM

EXCOMM MEETING

This is our monthly business meeting. See back page for location.

4th - 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.*

5th - Saturday 10:00 AM

CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL

Orlando Science Center, admission \$17 adults, \$12 children, \$5 parking. Meet at Wynn and Suzanne's at 9:30 am if you wish to carpool.

Contact: *Wynn Rostek, 267-9391.*

19th - Saturday 6:00 PM

SCOTCH TASTING

Join us at Wynn's home, 3456 Willis Drive in Titusville for indulging in such flavors as Logavulin, Talisker, Cool Ila, and Glenlivet as a baseline.

Contact: *Wynn Rostek, 267-9391.*

19th - 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.*

26th - 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 March 2011

WELCOME TO SCAM

Jeff Sams

WELCOME BACK!

Ellen Lee Owen
Jakob Unger Jr.

MARCH BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

<i>1st</i>	Kathryn Juarez	<i>16th</i>	Robert Roth
<i>2nd</i>	Joseph Smith	<i>18th</i>	Mark Tietig
<i>5th</i>	Lennis Bearden Jr	<i>19th</i>	Gisela Bahr
<i>5th</i>	Stephen Schneider	<i>20th</i>	William Daffron III
<i>5th</i>	David Terry	<i>22nd</i>	Jack Harris
<i>15th</i>	Joseph Cona	<i>23rd</i>	Donald Dalton Jr
<i>16th</i>	Melinda Meers	<i>26th</i>	Jenifer Mina

MENSA TESTING

March 19 at Central Brevard Library, 308 Forrest Ave., Cocoa.
Please arrive by 9:45 am, as testing begins at 10 am. \$40 fee and photo ID required. Reservations encouraged but not required.
Candidates must be age 14 or older. Testing next month April 16.

Contact: Hank Rhodes, mensatest@cfl.rr.com, for details.

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.

There are hundreds of technical indicators, but the most basic is the simple trendline.

It is an extended straight line connecting 2 or more points used to demonstrate where the lines are going up or down. In the stock, commodity and bond markets it indicates the direction of a move of the price either higher or lower. It is not a predictive line as the direction of whatever is being charted may change at any time.

It may be predictive of price if what is being followed penetrates the trendline. That may be an indication of a change in the direction of the move. For the technical analyst it is one of the signals to warn that something is happening. No single indicator should be used as an investment guide.

The way trendlines are formed also gives more information. They may be slowly coming closer as the price progresses or becoming wider as the price progresses. The analyst then may determine along with other factors if this stock or bond should be bought, sold or held.

As lines continue along the price action it may be interpreted as signals for trading.

When a long line is in place on the bottom of the price range this is called the support area. Some traders will consider when the price touches the upward trendline it is a place to buy or add to a current position.

When the trend line is along the top of the upward moving price action many traders will sell or establish short positions as the price touches the line in anticipation of the price moving down. All professionals use close stops should they be wrong.

A trendline is almost always used in conjunction with other technical indicators such as the RSI (Relative Strength Index). For example an equity may have been moving steadily up for weeks or months respecting a long trend line. As the equity has been rising the RSI that is an indicator of bullishness has been increasing in value above the zero line. It may have grown from 40 to 50 to 60 to 70 to 80 and has remained at 80 for quite a while still above the trend line. The professional trader will wait

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for the trendline to be broken before he exits his position or goes short.

This was always one of my favorite methods when I was a floor trader.

The novice trader should search the Internet for more in depth information about how to use trendlines.

There are many companies that want to teach the new trader all about everything in technical analysis. STOP. Do not try to learn all the techniques. After looking at several methods and talking to a good broker who knows technical analysis (and there aren't many) select only 3 or 4 and learn those. Take your time.

Trendlines are a good place to start your technical education.

Al Thomas' new book, "If It Doesn't Go Up, Don't Buy It!", 3rd edition, Chapter Two shows in detail a method that made 400% during the 2000-2010 period with only 7 trades, no losses and paid no commission. Read the first chapter at <http://www.mutualfundmagic.com> and discover why he's the man Wall Street does not want you to know. Copyright 2011 Williamsburg Investment Co. All rights reserved.

SCAM Treasurer's Report

As of 1/31/2011:

<u>Account</u>	<u>Balance</u>
General Fund	\$910.09
Post Office Acct.	159.54
Reserve Fund	2654.73
RG Fund	225.00

Total Funds Available:

\$3949.36

Deposits

Mensa Funding:	\$189.61
Interest Income	0.22

Withdrawals

Postage	58.74
Printing	118.30
Bank Fees	25.00

Transfers

RG Fund to Gen'l	\$500.00
RG Fund to Reserve	
	\$1036.35

—Bud Long, Treasurer

Scott's War: Part One

This week, I heard in a television newscast a reporter discussing a proposal by our new Governor to eliminate DROP from the state's pension plan. He went on to talk about "double-dipping", a practice by some public officials whereby they retire, only to be "reemployed" by their former employer a month later, effectively collecting both a pension and a paycheck. Specifically, according to the broadcast: *"Governor Rick Scott laid out his state budget in Eustis on Monday. In it, he's trying to put a stop to the DROP program. That program lets government managers draw pensions and six-figure salaries."*

It seems typical of those wishing to promote conservative causes to engage in a deliberate misinformation campaign in support of those causes. The above quote, from a Channel 9 News broadcast by WFTV on February 8, 2011, is certainly such an example. The only question remaining is, *Did Channel 9 News seek to misinform their listeners, or did they simply pass on bad information received from whatever source the reporter depended on?* We may never know that answer.

In my formative years, I was taught that I should gather all the facts before arriving at a judgment. I am aware that, in this political climate, such a value system might get a person branded as a liberal – or even a socialist. Nonetheless, let's now review the facts.

First, let's discuss "*double-dipping*". An employee retires, begins collecting his pension, and becomes reemployed with his same employer. He collects both his pension and a salary. The Florida Legislature dealt with this problem back in 2009. A retired public employee under the Florida Retirement System cannot be reemployed by any employer covered by FRS for a minimum of 6 months following his retirement without forfeiting his pension in the process. As FRS covers employees of many public employers, this legislation is more far-reaching than most people realize – and is quite effective.

Now, let's discuss DROP. DROP is an acronym for Deferred Retirement Option Program. To better understand DROP, let's first discuss the basics of the Florida Retirement System. Currently under FRS, most employees are eligible for full retirement benefits if he is vested and either reaches the age of 62 years OR completes 30 years of service under the FRS. The pension plan takes the average salary

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of the retiree's last 5 years of employment, the number of years of service and multiplies these by a percentage factor to arrive at the pension the retiree will receive. Enter the DROP.

The Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) is an option. For the employee, it has advantages as well as drawbacks, depending on his individual situation and goals. Briefly, here is the way it works:

The employee reached his eligibility for full retirement (30 years' service or age 62). For this example, let us choose the "30-year" employee. Upon reaching 30 years of service, he now has three options:

1. He can retire with 30 years of service. He gets his pension based on 30 years' service beginning immediately.
2. He can work another several years. In this example, he chooses to work an additional five years. He retires with a pension based on 35 years' service, which is considerably greater than if he worked only 30 years.
3. He can enroll in DROP for up to five years following his 30 years' service. He continues to work, having a total of 35 years' service. However, once enrolling, his pension begins to accumulate in an account held by FRS . Once retired, he will receive the lump sum plus a pension. The plus side is he has a nest egg of accumulated pension (perhaps to pay off his mortgage). The downside is he has worked 35 years for a pension based on only 30 years' service.

Essentially, this is how DROP works. As you can plainly see, it has nothing to do with "double-dipping"; they are truly two distinct issues.

In deciding what adjustments are needed in the state's pension system, the main question to ask is, Why? The pension fund is solvent. The pensions themselves are modest, with the average annual FRS pension being around \$17,000 per year. The only credible argument proffered by Governor Scott is that it is unfair to private sector employees who, more often than not, will not receive a pension.

I agree with Scott that it is, indeed, unfair for public employees to receive a pension while private sector employees do not. However, I suspect we differ on the remedy. My remedy? Ensure private sector employees also receive pensions.

Central Florida Mensa just concluded its annual Regional Gathering and I want to thank Ernst Hall and his magnificent team of volunteers who put together a fantastic event, a fantastic program, and a great time. National Chair Elissa Rudolph and First Vice Chair Dan Burg were both in attendance, and it was nice to almost have an AMC quorum in hospitality. Congratulations also to Maggie Truelove for her new gig as Central Florida Mensa LocSec; I don't know not only how she juggles everything she does, but how she does it all so well.

I am now looking forward very much to Northwest Florida Mensa's RG the weekend of February 11 in Destin (which I know will already have come and gone by the time most of you read this). Last year the weather was less than cooperative, but NWFMS always -- always -- puts on a fantastic RG. RVC-5 Nick Sanford usually joins us and takes the lunch money of anyone who challenges him in poker, so we may have another almost-AMC quorum. Then, the next RG after that will be Tampa's event in Ybor City in May.

One of the issues being discussed at national is changing the default method by which members receive publications (both the *Bulletin*, which is published by our national office, and your local group newsletters). Currently, the default is that people receive hard copies by mail, with the option to request electronic delivery instead. A change has been proposed that would make electronic publications the default, with the option to request hard copies by mail.

As with most proposals, there are things to be said both for and against it. On the pro side, it would save a lot of money. On the con side, it is far from clear that we could adequately notify all of our members that they need to change their defaults if they wish to keep receiving hard copies of publications. There is also an issue with ensuring everyone receives adequate notice of local and national elections; it could be that election materials would have to be mailed as hard copies whether or not the default is otherwise changed.

If you feel strongly about it, let me know.

Best,
Mel Dahl

There was no February ExComm Meeting.

I pulled up my files for non-meeting minutes and found this gem from last year:

"The ExComm, recognizing the current work load to be virtually non-existent, failed to schedule a meeting for October. For those curious, the Bylaws specify meetings at least quarterly, so we are well within bounds. After deciding to pass on the October meeting, an item did arise, namely that a few people have expressed dislike of our proposed name for the 2010 RG, i.e., 'The We Don't Need No Stinkin' fancy Name RG.'"

Well, the RG got renamed and went pretty nicely, but we are still in need of a permanent name that our RG can be known by over time. Maybe SCAM-O-WEEN will hold up, but . . .

This time the ExComm did have some work that needed doing, but our schedules just couldn't get us together. I have suggested that we try to manage committee appointments and picnic planning via email. If we can work out a decent protocol it would be a good way to perhaps drag some Vero or Titusville members into the ExComm if they could be relieved of some of the travel to mid-Brevard meetings. As of this writing, I believe we have a NomElCom and I believe we will approve a picnic in a park for sometime in May (or maybe June.) Any action taken via email will be verified at the March meeting, which will definitely take place. And speaking on behalf of the NomElCom to be, and the rest of the ExComm, how about some new blood -- that doesn't sound so good -- how about some new faces on the ExComm.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, March 2, 2011**, at 5:30 pm, at my (George Patterson's) house at 301 Sand Pine Rd., Indialantic. (321-777-3721)

Respectfully non-submitted, (*in-joke*)

George Patterson - LocSec