

The

SCAM

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*The 2011-12 ExComm Election Results
are finally in:*

Please welcome our new officers:

**Karen Freiberg
Bud Long
George Patterson
Joseph Smith
Terry Valek**



SPACE COAST AREA MENSA

Website: 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

As one can readily determine by this month's cover, the ExComm election results are finally in. The results, of course, were as predicted. I have also been reappointed as your Editor. Life goes on.

Some of you may notice that *The SCAM* looks a little bit different this month. I have changed to a new font in an effort to make this newsletter a bit more attractive and easier to read. Have I been successful in this effort? Drop me an e-mail and let me know.

Just a reminder—as Editor, I am always open to suggestions on how to make *The SCAM* a better newsletter. That said, I do offer one observation. Of the few suggestions I have received over the years as Editor, most often it is expressed that *The SCAM* does not carry content he or she finds desirable.

It may seem by the content that I might not be responsive. I assure you this is not the case. One of the columns in each issue is mine. Beyond that, I rely on fellow SCAM members to submit material for publication. Nearly all submissions are published in these pages. And, so far, no limits have been imposed upon me as to the size of each monthly issue. This means each issue of *The SCAM* can be as fat or as slim as you want.

If you want to see more of a variety in our material, the best way to assure this is to submit your own material for publication. It must be

(Continued on page 4)

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

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

(Continued from page 3)

your own work. It can be on just about any topic. It can be commentary, it can be poetry, or it can be a work of fiction. You can have a regular column, write occasionally, or on a “one time” basis. The choice is yours.

I have occasionally received suggestions about including puzzles in The SCAM. I have not done so, because most puzzles are copyrighted material. As such, I generally cannot use them without violating the author’s copyright. However, if any among you create puzzles, you may submit one to The SCAM; I’ll be pleased to publish it.

Over the years, I have often reminded all of you that The SCAM is *your* newsletter. As such, you certainly have a voice in what appears on these pages. Yet, to provide you the reading you desire, these things you desire must be made available to me. Yes, I rely on you.

As a member of Space Coast Area Mensa, you are not merely a “consumer” of my efforts as Editor; you are also the source for all material contained in each issue. As Editor, I will continue my efforts to make The SCAM the best newsletter possible. But, in the final analysis, this newsletter is only as good as *you* make it.

A Mensan in the Workplace?

Are you the Mensan at work? Do you work with other Mensans...or...are you the only one? If the latter is true, do your coworkers know you’re in Mensa? What about your boss? What are your impressions and experiences at work? Do you have a leadership position? Do you serve in any kind of “support” (formal or informal) role? Does your status as a Mensan have a positive or negative impact on your work relationships? Finally, if preparing a resume, would you include your Mensa membership as an item (or would you state that you qualified to join Mensa)? Why or why not? Let’s hear from *you*.

The English language is full of mystifications. Since there are no absolute rules, only accepted usages, it is amazing that anyone not raised speaking English can eventually do it correctly. Correctly, meaning speaking or writing it like a native.

There are many oddities in the English language. Some gender related words have disappeared. Others have been added. Most grammar books had a rule that when referring to both male and female persons, the use of the male pronoun is expected. In writing about children or child care,

One was admonished to use the pronoun "she" for the mother and "he" for the child in order to eliminate confusion about whom the writer was writing. Dr. Spock did that in his many books. Political correctness now forces us to use the awkward expression "he/she", or the more politically correct "she/he" instead. Sometimes, for maximum political correctness only "she" is used. How this managed to extend to animals, I do not know. We used to refer to a dog or any other animal as "it". Now we are obliged to say and write "he" or "she".

"Heroine" is gone, now, most writers apply "hero" to both sexes, as is "actress", "hostess", "waitress", and several other explicitly feminine nouns, but we still have "princess". Where has political correctness gone?

You can find other examples of "non-grammatical" writing in almost any book, magazine, or newspaper. Most modern writers omit the comma before *and* or *or* in a series. Yet the GPO and many grammar books say that it should be included. Another example is the omission of a period after an abbreviation in newspapers. Thus, we have "Mr" instead of "Mr.", "Dr", "Mrs", and so forth. My word processor does not like that, but insists on the period. Also, we have the omission of spaces in some abbreviations. In the case of my profession, "P. E." is often written "P.E."

English speakers, especially Americans, have a compulsion to shorten words in common usage. We say *phone* instead of *telephone*, *fax* instead of *facsimile*, *cab* for *taxicab*, and *gas* for *gasoline*. With the advent of Twitter we can expect expressions like LOL (laugh out loud) to become commonplace and accepted terms. In fact, OMG, FYI, and LOL have been

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

added to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and FYI and LOL are uncorrected in my computer's spell checker. We also tend to speak in incomplete sentences, "Tennis, anyone?".

The use of articles before nouns is strictly a matter of custom. You **CATCH A** cold but **GET THE** flu. You go to (no article) school for an education but you go to **A** hospital for medical treatment. However, an Englishman would go to hospital. For entertainment you go to **THE** theater or to **A** concert. If you are famous, you may be **IN THE** movies but you will be **ON** TV. You cannot make just one amend. You tell **A** lie when you don't tell **THE** truth

The use of modifiers *versus* possessives is also a function of custom, not grammar. Thus, United States Navy *vs.* American Navy, not United States' Navy, and French Navy *vs.* France's Navy, not France Navy.

You may think that the information age would put an end to grammatical anarchy with the advent of spelling and grammar programs for our computers. Not so. These programs essentially are just another group of style manuals. Each spelling and grammar program will differ from others. In fact, there are programs for formal, informal, academic, medical, legal, colloquial, literary, and other forms of English, such as Canadian, Australian, British, Southern, and Mid-western. The use of a grammar and spelling checker will not always help. A writer must always be above those most useful tools.

In the February issue of *Mensa Bulletin*, the article "Technically Speaking" begins, in bold lettering, "Advances in communication aides continue to hit society at an ever quickening pace". This shows that even Mensa writers and editors should not rely on communication aids such as spell checkers.

Y'know, it seems we're becoming obsessively clean and hygienic in this country. Everybody's running around plopping antibacterial solution on their hands and wiping everything down with antiseptic towelettes as they admonish their children not to touch anything and certainly not to eat something that fell on the ground.

I remember when we didn't know to sterilize the cutting board after carving raw chicken or beef, the "five second" rule was in effect for anything edible that hit the ground, and no one in the grocery store wore disposable gloves when handling fruit or vegetables. Yet we survived. Thrived, even.

I was at one of my daughter's houses recently (don't ask which one, there are so many, I get them confused) and she served us some yummy snacks. I figured I'd be a good dad and help her clean up. I grab a sponge off the sink and start cleaning off the counter, which had become littered with snack prep debris.

Alluvasudden there's this hideous scream and I quick look around to locate the alien invaders or maybe even a mouse in the house or p'raps The Midday Strangler has burst through the door wielding a machete. Dotter is staring at me in horror and screeches: "What are you doing?"

I come back with this snappy reply: "Cleaning off the counter?"

"But you're using the **DISH** sponge!"

"Ummmm..."

"There's a dish sponge and a counter sponge and now you've contaminated the dish sponge."

"Ummmm..."

I feel lower than whale poop at the bottom of the ocean. How could I have committed such an egregious offense? I was only trying to help and now I've brought catastrophe to mine own flesh and blood. The cleaning crazies are running rampant everywhere. Even my very own kid, whom I did raise to be clean and orderly, has gone off the deep end. Dish sponge and counter sponge... yeah, right. Not from me she didn't learn this. Must be something she contracted from when they changed the water.

I have postulated a theory: We are so assiduously avoiding contamination from anything that we are becoming more susceptible to everything because we no longer are building up antibodies to protect us. Seems to me

(Continued on page 11)

SCAM Calendar of Events for July 2011

1st - 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.*

6th - Wednesday 6:00 PM

EXCOMM MEETING

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

23rd - 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.*

30th - Saturday 5:45 PM

S.N.O.R.T.

Join us for some sushi and tempura at The SCAM's best attended event at the Miyako Restaurant, 1511 S. Harbor City Blvd., Melbourne.

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

Your Event Here!

ATTENTION SCAM MEMBERS!

Do you have a great idea for that perfect event? Do you have the urge, even the irresistible *desire* to socialize with other Mensans, but simply do not want to use the extra gasoline? *Why not host that event in your own home?* If this sounds good to you, contact our Calendar Coordinator today. You'll be glad you did. *Info on Page Two.*

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 July 2011

WELCOME BACK!

Gary Cordelli
Savannah Olivas

JULY BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

5th	Robert Tuck Jr.	27th	Paul Hargraves
9th	Michael Zielinski	28th	Thomas Wheat
20th	Jeffrey Barbour	30th	Jason Harris
23rd	R M Livingston	31st	Greer Maeder
26th	Pepper Stevens		

MENSA TESTING

July 16 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 Aug. 20.

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**.

This month's column, for me, represents somewhat of a departure from my normal ways. Perhaps it is inspired by a recent prediction by an 89-year-old gentleman by the name of Harold Camping who asserted that, as of 6 pm on May 21, 2011, the Rapture would begin. Of course, May 21 came and went, but somehow I must have missed the Rapture! Of course, Camping assures us that the error was due to a slight miscalculation; the new date (if I heard correctly) is October 21, 2011.

For those of us who do not believe in this sort of thing, we are content to wait with bated breath until, according to self-styled experts on the Mayan Calendar, our world as we know it will end on December 21, 2012. You may remember that, a few months ago in my "Pocket Protector" column, I did provide an alternative explanation for how the Mayan Calendar might have ended on that particular date.

Overall, I believe it is fair to say that I am no prophet, and I certainly do not claim to be one. Even so, I do have a prediction. It concerns the 2012 Presidential Election (no, I'm not predicting the winner – not even in the primaries). Even today, there is much speculation as to who will be the Republican nominee to run against President Obama. Like everyone else, I do not know the answer to that one.

Specifically, here is my prediction: The Republicans will claim that Obama raised our taxes and, because of this, has held back our economic recovery. This claim will be made despite the fact that none of the tax rates have been raised thus far. Even so, the claim will have traction. Here's why.

You may recall that effective the first payday in 2011, our (the employee's) share of our Social Security tax was reduced from 6.2% of our earnings to 4.2%. Intended as a means to boost our economy by putting more money in each worker's pocket, this change represented a tax decrease of 32.3%. However, this tax break was intended to be temporary; it was set to expire in one year.

Herein lays the rub. As of the first payday in 2012, the Social Security tax reverts to 6.2%. Thus our 2011 rate of 4.2% will "increase" to the 2012 rate of 6.2%. If we conveniently ignore the fact that the higher rate is actually the original Social Security tax (that was assessed even through Republican Administrations and Congresses), the Republican and Tea Party campaign ads will scream that American workers were slammed with a 47.6% tax increase—imposed, of course, by none other than Obama and his "socialist" Democratic allies! This, then, is my prediction. Tea Party Express, here we

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

come! But then you saw us coming...

Several months ago, in my SCAM column, I criticized the decision to temporarily decrease the Social Security tax as bad policy; it now turns out that this decision may have been bad politics as well. Of course, there is another possibility. Congress and Obama may extend the 4.2% rate for another year, thus removing the “tax hike” issue for the election cycle.

This, however, would lead us into another trap. Social Security, already regarded as cash-strapped as more Baby Boomers begin to retire, will take a greater hit, thus exacerbating the problem. Politically, this will lead to Republican claims that Obama and the Democrats are undermining Social Security. Unfortunately, in this case, they would be right.

My Summer Vacation:

EAT MORE DIRT!

Continued

(Continued from page 7)

that small quantities of doo-doo-ka-ka are actually more beneficial than harmful by helping our natural defenses naturally build up natural defenses against them; wonderful thing, nature.

Thus, as reflected in this month’s title, I am making a conscientious effort to Eat More Dirt. I don’t wash celery, fruits and vegetables before eating; no longer do I peel my carrots; and I make no attempt to avoid touching doorknobs, railings, or anything else previously contacted by others. I have a new attitude: Bring It On! That which does not kill me, etc., etc. And I’m building up a nice tolerance to the comestibles laced with DDT; now they only make me dizzy instead of nauseous.

(I know you’re wondering: Yes, I *do* wash my hands after going to the bathroom!)

The George

SCAM TREASURER'S REPORT*Bud Long, Treasurer***May 31,
2011**

<u>Account</u>	<u>Balance</u>
General Fund	\$999.82
Post Office Account	177.76
Reserve Fund	2305.52
RG Fund	550.00
<u>Total Funds Available:</u>	\$4033.10
<u>Deposits</u>	
Mensa Funding	\$173.16
Interest Income	0.19
<u>Withdrawals</u>	
Postage	\$52.27
Printing for Newsletter	120.63

**April 30,
2011**

<u>Account</u>	<u>Balance</u>
General Fund	\$947.29
Post Office Account	230.03
Reserve Fund	2305.33
RG Fund	550.00
<u>Total Funds Available:</u>	\$4032.65
<u>Deposits</u>	
Mensa Funding	\$198.81
Interest Income	0.19
<u>Withdrawals</u>	
Postage	\$62.26
Printing for Newsletter	199.07
<u>Transfers</u>	
Savings Acct. to RG Account	\$250.00

(Continued from page 14)

tral Florida Mensa's Flame. Micki Kaplan is also up for an award for her artwork, "AtomArt - Life," that was published in the Flame.

For a small Region, we've done very well in the nominations department, as we always do, and I'm proud of all of our publications, Websites and contributors. And we do not get results like that without dedicated, hard working and creative volunteers. Thanks to one and all; I couldn't be prouder to be your RVC. And, and always, we are on the lookout for more dedicated, hard working and creative volunteers.

Mel Dahl

(Continued from page 15)

Analog. Hank noted that we needed more or a presence in them, as well as such publications as *National Geographic* and *Smithsonian*. Good idea.

New Business: George moved and Karen seconded that we appoint George Patterson, Terry Valek, and Dennis Logan to the Audit committee. Carried unanimously. Committee to meet following July ExComm meeting to perform audit.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:52 pm. The next meeting will be at Karen Freiberg's house at 876 Buxmont Ct., Rockledge, FL, 32955, on Wednesday, July 6, 2011 at 6:00 pm. It will be followed by an Audit committee meeting.

The votes are in, and I have been returned as RVC-10, your representative on the AMC. That result was expected since I had no opposition, but I still appreciate the trust and confidence you have placed in me and look forward to serving you for the next two years.

On that note, the strong probability is that I will not be running again in two years. I may change my mind in the event of unusual circumstances, but at this point there is a 90% likelihood that I'm not running. Part of it is that I don't think anyone should get too comfortable on the AMC; unless someone aspires to higher office (which I do not), I think the RVCs should reflect the grass roots and that's easier if the seat gets turned over every couple of terms or so. Part of it is personal; I still have residual health issues and I'm back in school to make a career change. But the reason I'm telling you this now, instead of waiting until closer to the next election, is so that the Region can have a nice, leisurely two years to think about and talk about who should be the next RVC. It's been my pleasure to meet more of our local leadership throughout the Region and I can think of several people off the top of my head who would, in my opinion, make superb Regional Vice Chairs. But under our system of governance I don't get to annoy my successor; the job of deciding who should represent you belongs to you, the people of Region 10. So, please start thinking about and talking about who that person should be. In the meantime, I look forward to serving you for another two years and will be available whenever and wherever I can help out.

Last month I talked about our national office and all the fine work they do. This month I want to talk about our local volunteers. Three of our local newsletters -- Broward County's *Brow Beat*, Miami's *Flamenco*, and Manasota Mensa's *4-M* -- have been nominated for national awards this year: The *Brow Beat* for Member Recognition, the *Flamenco* for best newsletter for a medium-sized group, and the *4-M* three times, once for member recognition, once for its website for best overall entertainment, and once in competition with Miami for best newsletter for a medium-sized group.

Northwest Florida Mensa's Website is up for three nominations: Overall presentation, overall entertainment, and best small group Web site. Broward Mensa's Web site has been nominated for best members section, and Central Florida's Website has been nominated for best large group Web site. And on the individual level, Deborah Freeland has been nominated for a national award for her piece "Membership Director" that appeared in *Cen-*

(Continued on page 13)

Minutes of the June ExComm Meeting.

The ExComm met at the home of Karen Freiberg on Wednesday, June 8, 2011. Called to order at 6:23 pm by LocSec George Patterson.

Members Present: George Patterson, Terry Valek, Bud Long, and Karen Freiberg. Joe Smith was unable to attend.

Welcome Guests: Doug Starke and Dennis Logan.

Minutes for the April 6, 2011 meeting were approved as published in the May 2011 SCAM. The ExComm did not meet in May. The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 pm for the purpose of seating the new ExComm.

The new ExComm was called to order at 6:26 pm by LocSec George Patterson... All positions on the new ExComm are as before, all members expressing satisfaction with that arrangement. It was noted, for the record, that the full ExComm was re-elected, in the May voting, by the nearly unanimous vote of 12 voters, a fifty percent increase in voters over 2010. Two write-in votes were received for Dennis Logan, and one for Mike Zielinski. Also for the record, it was an uncontested election of five people for five positions. *(Note similarity to last two year's elections.- G.P.)*

Officer Reports:

LocSec: George observed that the NomElCom was decommissioned following the elections and thanked the members, Wynn Rostek, Art Belefant, and Suzanne Leichtling, for their participation. All other committees, appointees, and volunteers remain as they were. George reported that he had talked with Dennis Logan, who was present, and found him interested in joining the ExComm, were Joe Smith, whose status is uncertain, to resign.

Treasurer: Bud handed out the April and May Treasurer's Reports which showed total funds of \$4033.10, at the end of May.

Testing: Hank Rhodes (proctor coordinator) reported via email that one candidate was tested in April and two in May. Also, nine candidates were contacted for the first time, and a fair number for the 2nd or 3rd time. A test is scheduled for June 18 at the Central Brevard Library in Cocoa.

Hank also discussed with library staff the possibility of posting flyers in the library with as yet uncertain outcome. Hank is considering designing a flyer. We should offer him some help. He also mentioned that a tested candidate mentioned Mensa-like "brainteasers" he encountered in *Omni* and

(Continued on page 13)