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The END...



Of the RACE?



SPACE COAST AREA MENSA



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All submissions must be received by the Editor before the 10th of the month preceding publication. Please allow extra time for mailed submissions, which may be **typed** or **legibly handwritten**. Whenever possible, we prefer submissions via e-mail. They may be in **e-mail text** or any of most **word processing** formats. **All** submissions should be sent to the **Editor**, whose contact information appears on Page 2.

Inside the Pocket Protector

Mike Moakley, Editor

The word is out; something very unusual has just happened. Perhaps it's because it's 2012—maybe because it's a Presidential election year. Could it be that the end of the world is actually near? Maybe—just maybe—it could be that through my “bully pulpit” (this column), I was able to exert some influence. Could that really be?

While preparing this issue, I had just gotten the word that this year's ExComm election is a contested race. Yes, there are at present six people running for the five seats on our ExComm. Perhaps we can convince someone else to run, so Space Coast Area Mensa will finally enter the world of Mensa politics. If any of this appeals to you, please contact a member of our NomECom ASAP.

Elsewhere in this issue, Dennis Logan updates us on the First Friday SIG, which, as I understand it, is being renamed “the Misanthropic Society.” After the events at our local Hooters have been documented, his column takes an unusual turn. Dennis talks about SCAM engaging in some activity to help the community, perhaps something to do with Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Brevard. I think that's great.

I do have a thought. There are too many gifted individuals who have never had a real opportunity to develop themselves, much to their own and society's detriment. What about a program mentoring gifted children who are, for one reason or another, disadvantaged? At this point, it is just a thought.

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 Two:

When I was in college, I was taking courses in chemistry and engineering. My faculty advisor told me that in order to do Independent Research (a two -semester requirement for the B.S. degree at that time); I would probably need to be able to read foreign research papers. Since a student had an option to take as a foreign language either French (I knew some) , Japanese (I thought probably difficult), or German (the field of physical chemistry and thermodynamics was my interest and I thought there would be more material available for reading, and I always thought Germany was a fascinating country), I chose German.

I was right about the literature available. More than I could ever read in a life time. I learned enough German to at least be able to read the language well (although that *fraktur* format of the 1600's-1940s that looked like old medieval script was murder to translate). So, my research was aided immensely in learning to read German.

Later in life, I joined Harris Corporation as an engineer(where I met my German-born wife to be). I was on an assignment that would eventually require me to help install hardware and software at an antenna installation in Bavaria, Germany. Wow! What a great opportunity. I took two semesters of German (I and II), as well as a course in German conversation at Brevard Community College. My instructor was born in Mexico, had been a translator for captured German spies in WWII, and spoke French as well. What a talented, resourceful, and entertaining man! His classroom instructions were great and he made the language lab work bearable. His German accent was impeccable when speaking German. He even had us perform in the junior college Christmas presentation by singing German songs. Never let it be said that no one can learn a foreign language and have fun doing it.

When I arrived in Bavaria for the company project, I was teamed with another gentleman from Harris. Talk about good fortune! He had been stationed in Germany during his Army career. He said he knew all the places to visit while we had free time (which turned out to be a lot, through his scheduling). In my log book, I see that during my five months living in Bavaria, we visited four countries (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Lichtenstein) and 72 cities or towns (as well as all the castles built by King Ludwig II of Bavaria and Salzburg, hometown of one of my heroes, Mozart. Also Ulm, hometown of another hero named Albert Einstein).

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feel obliged to update the general membership of Space Coast Area Mensa with the goings on relative to the monthly First Friday's at Hooters community. Those goings on being minimal I haven't had the feeling frequently. My selfish daughter's decision to find her own abode and her refusal to make herself available as my designated driver/apologist plays an influential part in the watered down meetings as of late. Formerly serving as my designated driver/apologist no doubt influenced her decision to relocate.

The March meeting came to order just after 5:30 PM, March 2nd. I ordered wings; Gary had fish or something, fish tacos I seem to recall. We were the only two attendees, as usual. Other folks seem to show up most faithfully on the rare occasions when Gary and I find ourselves otherwise occupied or incapacitated. My sincerest apologies go to those who invariably attend on those occasions. Truthfully, you're probably better off without us.

Many of the familiar Hooters staff members attended, briefly. Gabriella stopped by to see us. She's always fun. Amanda stopped by and said hello, she has been absent lately. Britney briefly visited. She's pregnant. She expects to deliver in four months. Our hostess for the evening Nichole filled our orders in a timely fashion. Gabriella informed us Tara, a favored hostess at many meetings, left employment at Hooters and took up new responsibilities at a tanning spa. I can't imagine duties at a Florida tanning spa would bring the rewards one could achieve from dispensing cold beverages and fried food to unkempt geezers but what do I know. She will be greatly missed. Her sparkling attitude and fresh features remain vivid in the minds and Facebook pages of the regular attendees of First Fridays at Hooters. That fact may well have contributed to her departure.

My faithful friend Gary's recent cruise to the Bahamas served as the first order of business. He displayed photos and made a fascinating report of activities aboard ship and various ports of call. Furthermore he shared tips on obtaining reasonably priced accommodations which he himself has availed himself of by scheduling yet another cruise for the end of April. He fears he may not be available for the May meeting as a result. I found it perplexing he would eschew marginal food and beverage for the bounty found on cruise ships. Gary did not.

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An open discussion period followed. We discussed why we don't get out much. Gary said he didn't much like people. I told him I didn't either. I believe I suggested we change the name of our tiny outcast outpost to the Space Coast Area Mensa Misanthropropic Society. Gary agreed with my suggestion and thus made the motion unanimously accepted. Please address all future correspondence accordingly. We still welcome visitors and new members, but not that much.

For my part, I described my despair at learning the Mayan calendar bore a flaw relative to leap days or years and the actual date for the end of life passed unheralded some weeks ago. No longer could I count on there being a termination date to the turmoil. However, I take comfort in knowing many signs exist to indicate the Mayan miscalculation may have been miscalculated and in fact the world we know may cease to exist in December.

For example, not long ago I bought a couple of frozen chicken pot pies from my grocer. I didn't get the cheapo single crust product, I paid top dollar, maybe as many as two dollars, for the high end commodity. To my utter mortification when I read the cooking directions, I don't indulge myself with delicacies often so I wanted to make sure I followed proper preparation procedures, I found the preferred cooking method to be a microwave oven! In fact the instructions seemed to discourage the consumer from using a conventional oven by requiring extra precautions such as wrapping the edges of the crust with aluminum foil. I assumed the directions served as a nod to the instant gratification portion of society and someone willing to wait fifty minutes of cook time in a conventional oven would be rewarded with a far greater a gastronomic indulgence than someone only willing to wait ten minutes for a microwave oven to heat the same culinary paragon. The only other times my instincts failed me so completely they were under the influence of substantial quantities of brewed beverages. The doughy dinguses I pulled from the warmth of my oven proved to be as inconsumable as I was inconsolable. I couldn't even finish the second one. My dog refused to eat any part of the heresy until I achieved a proportion of 10 to 1 with Alpo. The acceptance that a food product, particularly a food product so dear to a son of the South, could be better prepared in a microwave oven served as an unimpeachable sign of the impending end of civilization. Assuming civilization has yet to end and has not already expired.

Finally, on a serious note, Gary and I discussed our desire for the whole of Space Coast Area Mensa to do something less self-serving than an even-

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ing at Hooters once a month, something to contribute to the wellbeing of our local community. On the occasions when normal members have joined our humble assembly we have found them to be some very exceptional persons, worthy of recognition for their intellectual prowess. We have had the honor of meeting some very intelligent folks with exceptional talents. Their worthiness is probably why we don't get along with them all that well. We both fear a demand for a retest. Anyway I said to Gary, "Wouldn't it be great if we could give of our talents to the youth of our society?" He agreed and added, "Children are our future." Since then I have heard that very same phrase repeatedly. Even some celebrities are repeating it and I may have even heard someone is going to make it into a song.

My enthusiasm for the project carried over to the next Executive Committee meeting. Incredibly I am the treasurer of Space Coast Area Mensa. Rest assured no funds have been misappropriated for either wings or beer. Anyway the rest of the Executive Committee embraced the idea and immediately voted me in as Chairman of the committee to make it happen. I currently am making inquiries to local agencies such as Big Brother/Big Sisters and Take Stock in Children and the Brevard School District relative to opportunity but my efforts will be in vain should the general membership, that is you dear reader, not support the concept. I do not feel the lack of local Mensa participation by most members stems from a lack of interest but rather from a lack of what average Mensans (an oxymoron if ever there was one) consider worthy activities, the Misanthropic Society (formerly First Friday's at Hooters) notwithstanding . Therefore I humbly ask you to make me aware of your willingness to participate in changing attitudes of young folk. We in Mensa have been given much and have great resources. If you would like to reinvest what you have been given I ask that you please contact me by email, dlogan@cfl.rr.com, or phone 321 501 7547 and advise me of your interest. Together perhaps we can teach a couple of old misanthropes and maybe some young ones that people are really decent after all and the end of civilization isn't as good an idea as it sounds.

Yes, I know, another of those silly elections coming up. But what!? More candidates than positions -- how refreshing. Not only is the entire ExComm running for re-election but Wynn Rostek has thrown his hat in the ring. Better qualified than a fair number of us, he would be a welcome addition. He is already vigorously at work with the RG committee. What are my thoughts on this? Without consulting with my fellow members of the ExComm, let me say I would like to see Wynn in, and I would like to see our two recent additions stay. A willing treasurer and an interesting recording secretary are hard to come by. I also think we could use a new LocSec. In any event, after the votes are counted sometime in April we will sort it all out to everyones satisfaction.

About Our Young Mensans

Once again I was embarrassed when I received a call from a parent of a pair of prospective YM's (Young Mensans.) I had to say we had no events planned for our younger members. I explained that we were structured as a social organization of adults, but 9% of our members (20 of about 220) are under the age of 18. We are hindered in our desire to create events for these YM's, partly by our own failure to find a coordinator, and partly by the National office's liability concerns. I am provided with YM's mailing addresses for our monthly newsletter, The SCAM. I have email addresses for 16 of the 20, but am discouraged from circulating them, even among themselves. I believe we can make some inroads into this problem. If the YM's, or parents thereof, will email me stating that I may circulate their email address to the other YM's, and I receive enough waivers to make it worth the effort, I will circulate the information, enabling them to contact each other. Of course, YM's and their parents are welcome at all our events. The RG this fall would be an opportunity for doing some networking. I also know the YM's age ranges but not the actual age. We have 8 at ages 7 to 10, 8 at 11 to 14, and 4 at 15 to 17. We expect a couple more in the younger group. I might add that National supplies information about the birthdays of all the Mensans, so we can acknowledge them each month, but nary a hint (except for the YM's) as to actual age. Hello National - this is a very useful piece of information for socializing. If you have any questions or suggestions, call me at 777-3721 or email me at george3141@cfl.rr.com.

Let's examine countries that have been on the economic plan that our current administration is putting into place. Let's go to Europe.

After World War II all the European countries were a shambles. The war had pulverized much of its manufacturing facilities. Homes had been raised by the military. Cities had been burned to the ground. People were starving.

Enter George Marshall and the United States that came to be known as The Marshall Plan. Basically we fed and clothed and put businesses back into production. – at no charge.

They did a good job of getting themselves back on their feet, but they had always had some form of monarchy, I said form. It is where the ruling class tells everyone what to do and they take care of their subjects

From their throne room they decide what is to be manufactured and where. Many of those in the throne room own the factories so they know what they can produce and who should be in charge. It works for a while. There is a need for products of any kind. The monarch then sets the price of salaries and how much taxes should be. Again it works fine as long as there is demand by the people.

Then comes a time when demand is satiated. Some people are laid off. The monarch (or whatever you want to call him) says I have to take care of my subjects so I will send them enough money each week to feed themselves. I will build some housing for them until they can find another job and be on their own again.

Have you been to Yellowstone National Park? There are signs that proclaim, "Do not feed the bears. They will become dependent on others feeding them and forget how to provide for themselves" Hmmm.

Some seek out employment and some don't. This costs the government money which they have at this time as almost everyone is working and taxes are low but enough to run the central government. As time goes on those receiving weekly checks ask for more and better housing. The head of state feels he should provide them. Those in the throne room agree and say taxes should be increased to pay for the increasing debt.

A few years of this and those in the throne room suddenly realize there is not enough money in the treasury to pay for the benefits being given to the people so they borrow money to give away to those who "need". This number of needy has been silently increasing.

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SCAM Calendar of Events for April 2012

4th - Wednesday 6:00 PM

EXCOMM MEETING

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

6th - Friday 5:30 PM

FIRST FRIDAY AT HOOTERS SIG

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.*

14th - 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.*

28th - 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.*

Calendar Updates

ATTENTION SCAM MEMBERS!

Every effort is made to bring to you an accurate up-to-date Calendar of Events. However, last minute changes can and do occur past newsletter deadline. For up-to-date info, visit spacecoast.us.mensa.org and click on "Calendar". Also, we are putting together a current e-mail notification list of all members who wish to be kept up-to-date on our activities. If you wish to be included, please contact George Patterson at 777-3721 or George3141@cfl.rr.com.

Of CABAGEs and Coffee:

(Our Regular Events)

C.A.B.A.G.E.: *Every Monday in the Food Court*, Merritt Square Mall
6 p.m. Host: *Karen Freiberg, 633-1636*

GO!: *Every Saturday at Books-A-Million*, The Avenue, Viera. Hosted by
1 p.m. the Space Coast Area GO Association.
Host: *George Lebovitz, the.rokkitsci@rocketmail.com*

Membership Notes for April 2012

WELCOME TO SCAM

Charles Satchwill

WELCOME TO SCAM AND MENSA

Gage Johnson

WELCOME BACK!

Paul Siefert

Aron Travis

MARCH BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

1st	Richard Hussey	17th	Suzanne Leichtling
3rd	Gregory Ashburn	19th	James Dace
3rd	George Lebovitz	21st	Carol Schoff Lane
3rd	Beth Rutenber	22nd	Marlette Berry
5th	Douglas Solomon	23rd	Mary Ellen Donahue
6th	Maribeth Salge	28th	Clifford Miller
11th	Debra Saltzberg		
16th	Sandra Morgan		

MENSA TESTING

Apr. 21 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 will be on May 19.

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.

Recently, I have come across what, in my view, amounts to a minor controversy. As of this writing, the Florida Legislature is currently in session. One of the many bills up for consideration is a proposal from Representative Ritch Workman to reform the statute that authorizes the award of alimony in divorce cases. Proponents of the bill state the current law places an undue burden on those who are required to pay alimony, usually divorced men, because the alimony award is determined largely through judicial discretion, and because it is nearly impossible to modify an alimony award to accommodate changing financial circumstances of the payer.

When I first learned of the proposal, I was watching the television news, where there a brief mention of the item. Soon afterward, I also learned that the proposal would spur controversy when, talking to a woman I know, she weighed in on the subject. Evidently, she was vehemently opposed to any alimony reform.

At first, I was amazed that she felt so strongly about this issue. At this point, neither of us knew what reforms were being proposed, as the broadcast offered no details. To my knowledge, she is happy in her marriage, as is her husband. Finally, even under current law, an alimony award is extremely rare. So, what gives?

Understanding that many confuse this issue, I saw the need to clarify that alimony is not child support. Child support is the amount of money the absent parent pays the custodial parent to help take care of their children's expenses. It is nearly always awarded in these cases.

Alimony, on the other hand, is support for a spouse, usually the wife. It was originally intended to support her because, as a stay at home mom for many years, she had little or no skills to find a job to support herself. Alimony awards are now under question because in most marriages, both partners work outside the home. This is also why alimony awards are rare these days.

Now, back to the original question: *Why was she objecting?* I could never find out.

I did a little research on the proposal and I read a news story about a small but vocal nationwide movement to reform alimony laws. There are also, it turns out, that many married women strongly object to reforming the alimony laws. But, given the rarity of alimony awards, the questions

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remains – *why?*

Then it dawned on me. Another controversy that draws my interest is the death penalty issue. Proponents of the death penalty contend that, in such cases, the criminal (usually a murderer) is simply getting what he deserves; opponents contend that execution in a wrongful conviction cannot be reversed and that, given crime statistics, the death penalty is not particularly an effective deterrent.

Like alimony awards, imposition of the death penalty is relatively rare, even in states that take pride in their executions. So, why hold onto a death penalty statute? To fully appreciate its value, one must have a basic understanding of how our criminal justice system works. Very few criminal cases ever go to trial; most cases are resolved through plea bargains where convictions can be obtained without the legal difficulties and uncertainties of a trial. Once you realize this, it becomes readily evident that the death penalty is a powerful bargaining chip in negotiating a plea deal (and a guaranteed conviction).

Let's now go back to the alimony issue. It seems to me that anyone who has married in the past 30 years quickly understands that the wife is essentially in charge of the relationship. How many times has such a husband heard words to the effect, "If you don't change (or do more, etc. ...), you will be divorced!" If you are one of these married people (husband OR wife), you know this is true.

If you are not in such a marriage, you can readily see the theme played out in our current "family" sitcoms where the wives' complaints about their husbands: They don't do enough around the house, they don't "listen", they don't perform some task the way she wanted it done, they have the wrong attitude – complaints that are usually attributed to authority figures complaining about their subordinates. Another indicator of this phenomenon is that the vast majority of divorces are filed by women. With the advent of "no fault" divorce laws, it seems that a divorce to a man is like being fired from a job – often without knowing why. Thus, it seems to me that the prospect of alimony, slim as it might be, is quite scary to many of us husbands because of the uncertainty brought on by judicial discretion in "family law" cases.

One final postscript: As I finish writing these words, I did find out the alimony reform bill died in the Florida Senate. Alas, another year facing numerous divorce threats ensure obedience to our masters.

By now, I am certain; all of us have heard the broadcast comments from Rush Limbaugh as he weighs in on the most unlikely controversy of the 21st Century. When Campaign 2012 began, I had no idea that the political argument would be over contraception. Of course, Rush did not start this controversy, former Senator Rick Santorum did. Of course, when Rush commented on the issue, he raised quite a few eyebrows when he called Sandra Fluke, a 30-year-old law student a “slut” for having the audacity to suggest that the new health care law should cover oral contraceptives, popularly known as “the Pill”.

He likened Fluke’s comments to a demand that taxpayers should pay for her to have sex. But Rush did not stop there; he suggested that Fluke provide taxpayers with a sex video featuring her sexual activity. Is this Typical Rush? Apparently he equates a woman’s use of “the Pill” with promiscuity. I suppose it would never enter Rush’s head that, at some point, Fluke might become the victim of a rape. In such a case, along with all the other trauma that accompanies a rape, the last thing she needs is the responsibility of raising her rapist’s offspring.

I think by now we know women are sexual beings in their own right. This does not mean their activity is indiscriminate. She may have a boyfriend, fiancé ... or even a husband. Is it really anyone else’s business? It would appear Rush dates back to the time when men were supposed to get laid as soon as possible while women were to keep their virginity intact. I am old enough to remember people with such attitudes. Truth be known, I never quite “got” that one – if each gender followed its proper role, who would be the mates for the males? Other males, perhaps? That would be quite doubtful, given our tendency toward homophobia. Perhaps it’s time for Rush to grow up.

Let us now turn to the political implications of Rush’s comments. Be assured these are not the isolated views of one man. Rush, for better or worse, vocalizes the views of his largely conservative audience. He gives voice to those principles many Republicans hold dear, but dare not vocalize. These Republicans are loathe to admit it, but Rush speaks for them! All one needs to do is listen.

If I were to address American women, I would give one word of advice: Listen. Listen to Rush. Listen to Santorum. Both are the embarrassing blabbermouths of their party. It is the conservatives that are trying to back away from Rush as fast as they can, lest their secret be realized by

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potential voters. I do have one question for you: Do you really want an America that Rush and like-minded individuals envision? The way you answer this may well make the difference this November.

<i>THE RIGHT SIDE</i>

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The amount to be given away has gotten to a point where they have to borrow more and more and eventually cannot borrow enough to pay the interest on what they need to borrow each year. No one wants to lend them money except at very high interest rates that their country cannot repay. Now what?

The European country has a central bank. It is allowed to create money that has no asset. The monarch says the people must turn in their gold and will be given the new paper money which "is as good as gold".

This goes along fine for many years until finally no one wants to accept the paper money. Those who had their house paid for and a garden in the back were able to survive the next few stressful years. That is the history of Europe.

Shucks. I was going to write about the U.S., but I guess I'll have to do that another time.

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As with living in Spain, I found differences in the regional dialects (*Mundarten*) of German I conversed in and read in the different countries. The Swiss German (or *Schweizerdeutsch*) of Zurich, Basel, and Bern was slightly different from the college German I had learned. But I could get by at least in reading their information and they switched effortlessly into *Hochdeutsch* or High German for me. Goodness knows the Swiss seemed to be able to speak at least 6 or 7 different languages fluently. I guess it helped to be the bankers of Medieval Europe. I had more difficulty in reading or speaking the German of Fribourg and Valais, which was more the French-speaking version of a Swiss German (they told me it was “*Welsche*”). Lichtenstein dialect was what they called *Alemanic*, which sounded very much like the High German, but some of their written words looked very different. The Austrians spoke mostly High German, with some speaking *Alemanic* version. Tyrol and Vorarlberg (more to the west) spoke a more Bavarian or Swabish (form of *Alemanic*) dialect. Swabia being a part of southwestern Baden-Wurttemberg

Swabish! Now there is a language to try and comprehend! Even my wife and mother-in-law (both born in Swabia of German parents) have difficulty following that German dialect. I remember being in Bonn and ordering a suit from a salesman in his store. In walks a Swabish German and my salesman excuses himself for a moment to talk with the new customer. He discusses the cost of suits and shirts with the salesman, there is a heated exchange, and the Swabish gentleman walks out. The German salesman walks back to me and says, “How do you like that. That guy was a Swabish farmer. Arguing about how expensive we are and how ridiculous we are to charge such prices. I could barely understand his German! Your German is much better!” I do not know if that was a compliment so much to my speaking skills or that Swabish German is so unintelligible to even Germans!

Having a German wife and mother-in-law (my ‘*Schwiegermutter*’, she hates me to call her that) has provided a good opportunity to keep that language up to some degree. But unless you constantly practice it, you lose that ability fast. Visiting their relatives in Weissenhorn, Germany gives the chance to practice the language as well. Although, like many other nationalities, they prefer to speak English to keep up their skills and not to make us feel uncomfortable).

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So, I still feel total immersion is still the best way to learn and keep a language skill. But that does not mean that one cannot study it and still gain proficiency in the language. You just need to practice when you can and think of it like any other exercise: You don't use it, you will lose it. Listening to radio stations with German songs and watching German speaking travelogues are helpful. Watching reruns of 'Lawrence Welk' and 'Hogan's Heroes' is not.

Sometime in the future, I will talk about how being forced to learn some Arabic while employed was to help me in the military.

A Mensan in the family?

Are you the Mensan in your family? Or, is your spouse, child, parent or sibling the Mensan in your household? Are two or more (maybe all) in your household Mensans? If any of these apply, The SCAM is soliciting an article from *you*. All members of SCAM or family members are invited to respond. What are your impressions and experiences?

The Last Minute

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interested should contact Dennis at: dlogan@cfl.rr.com (or telephonically, in New Jersey, at Bigelow 6, seven thousand).

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, 4th April, 2012 at 6:00 pm, in the house of Karen Freiberg (*blah, blah, blah*). Guests are encouraged and welcome to attend and each of the first 3,467 to do so will be given an entire spoonful of George P's magnificent bean soup. The proceedings of the ExComm Committee were officially adjourned at 6:26 pm.

By the time this appears in print, the AMC's March 31 meeting in Dallas will have taken place. This month, I would like to talk about a motion that is on the agenda that I will not be supporting, even though at first blush it has some appeal.

Two of my colleagues brought a motion requiring that a minimum of 1/3 of all membership dues be sent back to the local groups, with the requirement that local groups be required to spend it or not receive further money. The rationale for the motion is that people are more likely to join and renew if local groups have lots of fun activities, and so funneling a significant chunk of dues money back to the local groups (and not allowing them to bank it) makes it far more likely that local groups will have the kind of fun activities that people want. So, who could possibly object to that?

Well, me. Here's the problem: In order to return that amount of money to the local groups, programs and services would have to be severely cut at the national level. From an administrative standpoint, Mensa could not survive without a national office to send out and process renewals, troubleshoot problems that local groups are having, provide know-how and technical support to local groups, market the organization, and do the multitude of other things that most members don't see but would certainly notice in a hurry if they disappeared. The logistical support from our national office that goes into making an annual gathering happen would, if gone, be a disaster for putting on a successful AG. In the absence of a funded national office (or a severely reduced national office), these things either would not happen, or volunteers would have to pick up the slack.

I continue to believe that many of the best things about Mensa happen at the local group level. My favorite part of my job is visiting the local groups and seeing all the creative ways that they meet the needs of their members. But eviscerating national programs is not the way to support the local groups. So even though this motion is superficially appealing, I can't support it. Nor, I believe, will a majority of the rest of the AMC.

Minutes of the March SCAM ExComm Meeting

The ExComm met at the home of Karen Freiberg (*yadda, yadda*) on Wednesday, March 7th, 2012. Called to order at 6:05 pm by LocSec George Patterson.

Members Present: George Patterson, Karen Freiberg, Dennis Logan, Terry Valek, and George Lebovitz.

Guests: Wynn and Zanne Rostek (again mostly waiting for the RG Committee meeting which was to follow).

Minutes for the February 8, 2011 meeting were approved as published in the March 2012 SCAM.

Officer/Committee Reports

Treasurer, Dennis submitted his first “official” Treasurer’s report, showing that we are phat, with over \$600 in the General Fund, over 2 grand in the Reserve Fund, and more than 500 bucks seeded into the RG account. The numbers show that the money we receive from National almost balances our monthly expenditure for distributing The SCAM and that even with the minimal shortfall, we could continue to afford to send out your fave mag for a couple-three hunnert more years ennywaze.

Testing coordinator, Hank Rhodes, reported (via email) 3 first-time candidates, 11 second- or third-time candidates, and 1 person tested.

New Business

Dennis Logan proposed that Space Coast Mensa should really ought to try to put all of our vast intellectual resources to some purposeful enterprise, f’rinstance some form of community service, specifically, something youth-oriented such as a Big Brother/Sister or Mentoring Program. We all allowed as how that was a really swell idea and started kicking around ideas. Well, we were all over the board with this and decided what we needed to do was to form a committee to flesh out some specific proposals, run ‘em up the proverbial flagpole, and see if any Space Coast Area Mensan saluted. So we real quick made Dennis the Chairman of the [*need a name for this, folks*] Committee and I (non-Patterson George) foolishly volunteered to help out in whatever capacity I could. We reckoned it would also be nice to have a third member, preferably not from the ExComm, who might want to help in formulating ideas/plans/policies for the as-yet-unnamed committee. Anyone

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