

The

SCAM

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Is the
END
Really
Near
???

Tell us what YOU think!

Submission guidelines on Page Three.



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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

July is here and the “changing of the guard” is now complete. Congratulations are in order to our new LocSec, Wynn Rostek. According to the June meeting minutes (back page of this issue), Wynn’s goal is to increase member participation. While certainly a worthwhile goal, Wynn cannot accomplish this alone. He will need help—*your* help.

Do you have any ideas you would like to share with Wynn? Please let him know; his contact info is on Page Two. Better yet, perhaps you are really anxious to participate in an upcoming SCAM activity. Peruse our Calendar of Events featured in the center pages of every issue of The SCAM.

Don’t see an event that appeals to you? Consider starting that event you always wished we would have. Do you belong to a SIG (Special Interest Group)? Why not host a SIG meeting?

Whatever your passion or interest might be, I am certain SCAM has other members who share that passion or interest. Why not get together with them? Since it *is* 2012, with the world allegedly coming to an end, why not start a Mayan “The End” SIG or a SIG whose members just love a happy ending?

Finally(?), later this year, SCAM will be hosting its biennial RG. The RG Committee can use some volunteers. Even if you cannot volunteer, why not make plans to attend? After all, the 2012 RG may very well be the *last* RG...Wouldn’t you regret missing out on this one *final* opportunity???

It is now up to you...

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.

Dear Editor,

I cannot help but point out that SCAM readers were completely short-changed by *The George's* June column **Celebrity Fascination** in which he so casually brushes over the llama problem in Turkmenistan.

Turkmenistan, once a mighty nation foremost in all things associated with llamas, has fallen on hard times indeed. The once huge flocks of wild llamas that roamed the hinterlands have been decimated by the triple blows of climate change, poaching, and the devastating outbreak of frothy beak fungus.

While many shrug this off as of little consequence to them, the blow to the proud people of Turkmenistan has been cruel. With wild llamas so hard to come by, it is almost certain that Turkmenistan will be unable to field a competitive underwater llama shearing team for the next Olympics. I am sure that we can all agree that the loss of a titan in international competition diminishes the world in general.

It is not like *The George* to gloss over serious problems in such a light manner, and I am surprised that the editor missed a gaffe of this magnitude. Stay sharp, people! Even though print media is a dying art form, journalistic integrity still counts for something.

Sincerely,

Wynn Rostek

BOOK FAIR
**CALLING ALL
AUTHORS**

The 2012 RG is having a book fair. Mensa authors will have the opportunity to display, discuss, and sell their books to other Mensans. The fair will be held on one day for about three to four hours in a room devoted to the fair. Authors of all genres are welcome; fiction, non-fiction, inspirational, poetry, photography, etc., commercially or self-published. This is your chance to meet your fellow writers. Please contact me (a.belefant@ieee.org) for more information.

Income tax is the most corruptible and corrupting form of taxation ever devised. Any tax that is based on income is inherently corruptible. At the close of the current income tax season, these are some of my thoughts on the matter.

Income tax is unrealistic and unfair. That inequity is rooted in the definition of income. In our present tax code there are hundreds, if not thousands, of deductions, preferences, rebates, special considerations, offsets, exemptions, and other reductions of income for one group of taxpayers or another. A simple example; on page two of your income tax form 1040 there is a two-dollar deduction if you are blind. There is no deduction if, like me, you are deaf.

This exemplifies the unreasonableness of our income tax. Another, and more significant example, is the charity deduction. If a very wealthy individual contributes to a charity, and takes the charitable deduction, he reduces his taxable income by that amount. The government needs or wants a certain amount of revenue each year. In order to make up for the revenue lost from that taxpayer's charity deduction, and all the other reductions of income in the tax code, the overall tax rates must be increased. In other words, you and I are forced to support the millionaire's favorite charity whether we approve of it or not. Is he supporting my favorite charity?

Every modification of income, or rebate from taxes, like the earned income credit, is put there by Congress. Congress puts it there because of pressure or bribery from some group or another. That group gets the benefit at the expense of the rest of the taxpayers.

As long as there is an income tax, corruptible Congress will adjust it to favor those who support congressmen. No change in the income tax code will remove the inherent corruptibility of an income tax. As long as we have an income tax, Congress will be able to manipulate it for its members benefit. Only by eliminating income tax, repealing Article XVI of our constitution, will do it.

Gone with income tax would be the capital gains tax, which in itself is a corruption. See my article on inflation, October, 2011.

What could we substitute for the lost income tax revenue? I suggest two other new taxes. First, a sales tax. It too, could, and would be, be manipulated by congress, but not as easily as an income tax because it would be more transparent.

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Secondly, not truly a tax, but a sharing. As all corporations are creations of law, they are subject to the law. They have no inherent constitutional rights, the Supreme Court's decision in the Citizens United case to the contrary. The United States could be declared a part owner of every corporation. Thus every dividend paid out by every corporation would pay a portion to the US. The corporations could actually gain by not paying income taxes, accounting costs to jigger their income and compute their tax, and the cost of bribing (known as lobbying and campaign contributions) congressmen to manipulate the tax code. The exact percentage would be subject to computation and could vary from year to year as economic conditions warrant.

It would favor the stockholder as well. Although their income from dividends may be reduced, they would pay less in income taxes and tax preparation. Of major importance to the taxpayers would be the elimination of the time, effort, and cost of preparing the income tax forms.

Another thought. If income taxes were eliminated all the marriage benefits built in to that tax would be eliminated. Would then all the current pressure to enlarge the definition of marriage be lessened?

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*.

I recently read this fascinating article (*can't remember what it was published in*) about ants and thought I'd share it with you (*largely reproduced, with the tone modified to be less formal, along with some of my thoughts and observations*). Hope you find it as interesting as did I.

Every night, ants of the species *Forelius pusillus* bury their colony entrance to hide from their enemies, with a few of the ants working from the outside. Unable to reenter, they will be dead by the next morning through starvation or dehydration.

According to *Science* magazine, this is "the first known example in nature of a suicidal defense that is preemptive rather than a response to immediate danger." These ants sacrifice a handful of their own kind just to close the door, and they do it every night. *[Put a load of clothes in the wash, tuck the kids in and send a couple of family members on a suicide mission to lock the gate. Would you be willing kill yourself on the off chance that it might protect some stranger? No. Humans simply aren't like that. But ants? Ants are absolutely like that. They don't give two hoots about their lives.]*

Good thing they only sacrifice themselves to defend or protect their colony -- they'd never just send wave after wave of suicide-destined ants for an unprovoked attack, right?

Wrong. *Lasius neglectus*, the "Asian super ants," are naturally drawn to electricity, with a desire that's actually stronger than their need to eat and drink. Swarms of these ants can and have caused blackouts in Great Britain. Once one ant gets zapped, an alarm pheromone is sent out that calls swarms of their brethren to attack and attack until, eventually, the power goes out. Millions of ants will immolate themselves and, frankly, science has no idea why.

Humans go to college to find out what we want to do in life, and study or train or practice to be good at whatever it is we choose. Ants, meanwhile, are assigned tasks at birth, and their bodies will physically change to meet those tasks! If some ants are going to be soldier ants, they will develop harder shells and have round, flat-shaped heads that they use to blockade the nest from enemies. They're born the same, but ants from the exact same species will morph, depending on how much or little they're fed, to serve a function for society. *[That's like a human toddler suddenly developing a natural fireman's helmet at 2 years old.]*

The only job of the honey pot ant is to get fat (ants have special stomachs

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that can store liquids, so they can later regurgitate and feed other ants).
[Yuk.] These "repletes" are fed fluid by other ants until they balloon up to the size of a grape! These sumo bugs can hold fats, water, nectar or even the body fluids of dead bugs. They also hang from the ceiling all day long, like some kind of spit and bug-juice piñata. If an ant's thirsty, it'll drink from these awful, juicy fountains. If not, they'll top them off by spitting into their mouths.
[Double yuk.]

The Saharan silver ant is one of the most heat-tolerant land animals in the world. They go out during the absolute hottest part of the day in one of the most searing environments on Earth where no organism could possibly survive. Scurrying as fast as their little legs can carry them across scalding sands that can be over 150 degrees Fahrenheit, these critters are fighting against the clock. They can only forage while in the blazing heat and they can only survive for a few moments before they fry, so they have to get out, find the food and get back as soon as possible.

Getting back *should* be difficult, as there aren't exactly memorable landmarks all over the desert, but they've made their return trip more efficient. Most ants follow winding trails of pheromones to get back home, but the Saharan silver ants have built-in pedometers. They count their steps so they know exactly how far away from home they are at all times (and whether or not they'll have enough time to get back before the heat fries them), and by using polarized light from the sun, they always know what direction to run.

It's not impressive enough that ants are farmers -- they have to be super farmers. Leafcutter ants have some of the largest colonies of any animal in the world, with up to 10 million workers. They harvest more greenery in South American forests than any other animal. It's estimated that leafcutter ants alone consume almost 20% of the area's annual growth. But ants can't digest the cellulose in leaves, so they cut them up and feed it to a special fungus that they grow. They've been doing this for, oh ... about 50 million years or so. *[You get used to the smell after the first 30 million years.]*

Ants have been around for over 110 million years. Think about that for a second. 110 *million* years old. You have probably stepped on and ended the lives of no less than 10 ants today without even knowing it. But these sneaky little critters have existed long enough to see the rise and fall of Tyrannosaurus Rex, the Sabre-Toothed tiger, and Neanderthal man. Ants are like the nameless bad guys in Bond movies... you can kill as many of them as you want, but they'll always come back.

OK so you've probably heard this fact before: Ants can lift 20 times their

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own body weight. Big deal, an ant weighs like 3 milligrams. Well take into consideration that swarms of army ants have been observed to be over 1,500,000 strong. That's more than enough to drag your average 200 pound American kicking and screaming to a horrific death.

One of the scariest things about ants is their ability to get along and form global mega-colonies instead of killing each other. Most ants join forces, but even those that don't have figured out how to settle arguments without bloodshed.

When there's a dispute over food or territory, there is an alternative to fighting in the ant world. They don't attack each other. They just jerk around and throw their mandibles up and act real tough. The motions and posturing can go on for days, with the whole colony showing up to participate. When a clear winner emerges, the loser will voluntarily leave without being harmed (though sometimes the losers become enslaved, if their moves were particularly pathetic). The dance-off enables both tribes to judge each other's strengths and numbers to determine who would win in a fight, and therefore render fighting unnecessary.

If ant-dance-fighting isn't impressive enough, what about the greatest building team in history? Weaver ants dwell in trees and make little ant burri-homes out of the leaves, which they accomplish by bending the leaves and gluing them together. The leaves are gigantic, so no one ant can do this; they all have to work together. Sometimes they have to pile on top of each other and form pyramids so they can reach the leaves. Or sometimes they have to link together as a chain and pull the leaf closer. When the leaf is in place, it's time for the gluing, which means that the chain of ants have to hold the leaf in place and wait, like living staples, until a baby ant is ready to spin its cocoon. Instead of covering itself in silk for its cocoon, the larva will donate its wispy strands to be used as building material. Weaver ants cart the babies out and use them like living glue guns to stitch the edges of the leaf homes together. *["I'm so damn proud of you, son."]*

And the most amazing thing about all of this is that no single ant is in charge of it all! They just get up and unanimously decide to get things done, even the babies. *["Yeah, totally, no, for the good of the colony, I'm on board."]*

It's estimated that the combined weight of all the ants in the world equals or exceeds the total biomass of all humanity. *[That's one helluva lot of ants. Pound for pound, ants could take us in a straight up fight.]*

Add to that the fact that ants can reproduce at an alarming rate. It's not

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SCAM Calendar of Events for July 2012

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.*

11th - Wednesday 6:00 PM

EXCOMM MEETING

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

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 July 2012

WELCOME TO SCAM

Kenneth Morris

WELCOME BACK!

Patricia L. Burrows

JULY BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

3rd	Clifton Chandler	23rd	R M Livingston
4th	Luke Cornelius	26th	Pepper Stevens
5th	Robert Tuck	27th	Paul Hargraves
9th	Michael Zielinski	28th	Thomas Wheat
20th	Mary Kay Dailey	30th	Jason Harris
20th	Jeffrey Barbour	31st	Greer Maeder
21st	William Hartman		

MENSA TESTING

July 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 August 18.

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.

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unheard of for a queen to spit out 300,000 ants in a week. That's one queen. Some individual colonies have been known to have as many as 300 queens. But of course, ants don't just stop there. They've also achieved immortality.

Animals that don't need a male to reproduce are rare, but not unheard of, but the longhorn crazy ant can take the trick a step further. They not only clone themselves, but they can clone others, too. The queen produces daughters which are her genetic clone, and sons that are the genetic clone of her mate. The way they get around the complications of inbreeding is that they don't mix their genes. Somehow she is able to keep her genetic material out of the process, a feat previously assumed to be impossible. The result is that the queen will lay an egg that is a clone of her male brother. No other animal can make exact copies like this.

Normally, when ants are behaving and following the delicate laws of the universe, different ant colonies will compete with or attack each other for dominance. Their loyalties are with the colonies, not the species at large. With Argentine ants, however, the various colonies and nests never fight. If one Argentine ant colony expands and expands and eventually reaches another Argentine ant colony, instead of arguing over who was there first, they just join forces and form one giant colony. Then that colony expands and rubs up against another colony (it's not hard to find another colony when they're everywhere) and they form an even larger colony. That's called a supercolony, and it's not designed to reach a threshold. It's designed to expand and assimilate, expand and assimilate, forever and ever, until there's nothing left.

While supercolonies are specific to Argentine ants, Global "mega-colonies" aren't. In 2009, Insectes Sociaux reported that three different supercolonies -- one in America, one in Europe and one in Japan -- were actually different branches of the same colony. Scientists gathered these ants from all over the world and put them together, and whenever they got near each other, they "recognize[d] each other by the chemical composition of their cuticles" and started "rubbing antennae together." *[Which is gross in a way that I don't totally understand.]*

Think about this: It's one colony of the same ants, spread across three different continents, and it's called a global mega-colony. Yes, scientists decided that "global" and "mega" individually weren't enough to emphasize exactly how many ants are in this group, they needed to put both of those terms in the title. They're crossing oceans, now.

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There's only one other species that is so large and spread across the globe. Us. Humans. The human race is the only other single species that rivals Argentine ants. And there's going to come a time when the world's No. 1 superpower is going to be challenged by the world's No. 2 superpower for planetary dominance.

So, they're smart, they're more resourceful than us, they can adapt, they're ruthlessly patriotic to the ant cause and there are billions of them. So why haven't they attacked us yet?

Actually, the invasion's already begun. At this moment we have no idea how to stop the Argentine ants from doing whatever they want. What happens when "what they want" becomes "total global domination?" That might seem like a stretch, until you realize that Argentine ants feel no compassion, their brains are not developed to recognize the dangers of hubris, and they're not creative enough to have developed cautionary tales to warn idealistic young ants about what happens to the ant who flies too close to the sun. Argentine ants are incapable of feeling contentment. They have no reason to ever stop invading and taking over. If your family was in the billions and stretched across six continents and had never had any trouble destroying enemies, would you stop?

This is an organization that can rally its troops -- and remember that "troop" here means "every single member of the species"-- to be singularly focused on one goal. No infighting, no pettiness, no internal arguments for supremacy, just an entire species obsessively working towards one purpose. Every. Single. One. Of. Them. Sometimes that purpose is travel, sometimes that purpose is spreading out and building, sometimes that purpose is overthrowing an existing colony, and they are always successful. Regardless of their purpose, they are always unified. Can we do that? When has the world ever come together to agree on anything unanimously? When has the country? We can't get two political parties to agree on a single issue for the greater good of America, so how can we expect to rally the entire planet against a common enemy? That's totally not like us.

They're in California now, but most experts say they'll have expanded to Canada within two years, and some say they'll have completely reached every state in America even sooner than that.

Next time Sam's is running a special on Raid Ant Killer, I'm stocking up.

The George

By now, anyone watching more than a few minutes of network television cannot help but notice that the 2012 Presidential Campaign has begun in earnest. It seems as if we have from the Republicans a referendum on “ObamaCare” and another referendum from the Democrats on assessing Romney’s tenure at Bain Capital. While I would not dismiss either as being trivial, there are other important issues that, so far, are not being discussed.

Before I delve into my subject matter for this month, I will state the obvious that Florida, like most states, are struggling financially to meet its obligations to its citizens while at the same time trying to hold the line on increasing taxes. In fact, the state’s objective is to reduce taxes to accomplish what it believes will help get our economy back on track.

At this time, there are seven constitutional amendments being proposed to the Florida Constitution, all of which have been proposed by the Florida Legislature. One such measure, Amendment 8, is slated for the ballot, but, to the extent I can determine, not much has yet been said to the public.

Amendment 8, entitled “Religious Freedom”, amends Article 1 (Declaration of Rights), Section 3 of the Florida Constitution. The CURRENT Section 3 reads as follows:

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

The underlined portion of the above paragraph is to be deleted by the proposed amended Section 3 which would read as in the paragraph below. The underlined portion below is to be added to take the place of the deleted statement:

SECTION 3: Religious freedom.—There shall be no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting or penalizing the free exercise thereof. Religious freedom shall not justify practices inconsistent with public morals, peace, or safety. Except to the extent required by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, neither the government nor any agent of the government may deny to any individual or entity the benefits of any program, funding, or other support on the basis of religious identity or belief.

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What would this mean to us – the Florida voters – should this proposal become law? To answer this, we need to understand why this change is being sought. A number of years ago, while Jeb Bush was still governor, a voucher program was put in place to place children in private schools in cases where the local public school was “failing” and the child’s parents have requested the private school instead. This law was struck down by the Florida Supreme Court as being in conflict with Article 1, Section 3. This was so because:

1. Most private schools that would accept vouchers are religious schools, normally a part of a church or denomination. Christian denominations, particularly Catholics, have been promoting the idea of vouchers for years in order to obtain state funds to help with their education expenses.
2. The current Section 3 forbids public funds to be paid to aid any religious or sectarian institution.

The upshot is now, we the voters, are once again being asked to modify Section 3 to allow tax dollars to go to religious institutions, one example being school vouchers. The question then becomes, what happens if the voters approve Amendment 8?

The primary question that comes up is who would be eligible for school vouchers? Since the United States Constitution forbids the government from establishing a religion or, for that matter, favoring one religion over another, all religious groups would be eligible to participate in the school voucher program. This would include radical sects, including those that currently are fronts for terrorist groups. It would also include Satanic cults, Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Scientologists – just about any group declaring itself to be a religion. The added statement to Article 3 as amended removes all doubt that this would be the case. Somehow, I do not believe this would go over very well with the churches that are promoting Amendment 8.

I suppose it would be tempting to introduce a “qualifying test” to root out those “undesirable” religions. However, this would directly conflict with the First Amendment (US) forbidding any interference with the free exercise of any religion – in this case, discriminating against any religious group.

The next question is that of educational standards, especially in light of the incessant testing of public school students to keep their schools accountable for their performance. Since most religious schools are established as part of a church’s mission to promote its beliefs and doctrines, any attempt

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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?

From the Village Idiot:

SLEEPING

Continued.

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by the state to impose standards would also constitute interference with the church or group's religious freedom.

As I best understand the issue, the stated reason for school vouchers is to permit students of failing schools to get a better education by allowing them to attend a different school that, presumably, would provide that better education. Yet, would this really happen?

It seems to me what would really happen is that students in public schools that are not meeting minimum standards will now be able to attend a private school (or be "homeschooled") that does not have to adhere to any standards at all. Please help me understand how such a student would stand to benefit.

In any case, this amendment proposal clearly falls under the warning, "Be careful what you wish for; you may get it."

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standing committee wanted the thankless job of LocSec and immediately nominated new member Wynn Rostek (see above) for the job. Before he had an opportunity to think about it, he was quickly seconded and unanimously acclaimed.

Next came the affirmation of committee appointments, to wit:

Dennis remains as treasurer

George *(no need to distinguish between P or L any longer)* remains as RecSec

Val was officially confirmed as assistant LocSec, a position she nominally held previously but which no one was sure had ever been officially sanctioned

Karen is member-at-large

The appointments were approved by unanimous acclaim with George *(dammit, must append that cursed modifier)* P taking over the duties of membership.

We discussed the transitioning of various authorizations and responsibilities from George *(hell, I give up)* P to Wynn, and then proceeded to profusely thank George P for his centuries of faithful (and thankless) service to Space Coast Area Mensa.

Wynn explained that it was his intention, as the new LocSec, to get members **more active!** Like f'rinstance, a board game night for kids (of all ages), more representation for members who felt that religion has been ignored of late, and anything else that will stimulate more participation. Good on him! Noble goal.

The next meeting was set for Wednesday, July 11th *(to avoid the Fourth of July crazies and also because Karen would be out of town, thus leaving us meetingplaceless)*, 2012, at the home of Karen Freiberg, 876 Buxmont Ct., Rockledge, FL 32955 at 6:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned by new LocSec Wynn at 6:49 pm.

Recently I had the pleasure of attending a presentation by American Mensa Chair Elissa Rudolph on Mensa International. It is sometimes easy to forget here in the USA that we are part of an international organization and there is more to Mensa than "just us."

Worldwide, Mensa is experiencing phenomenal growth. There are fully-accredited national Mensa organizations in 28 countries, with provisional organizations in nine other countries and emerging Mensas in six more. Other countries have expressed interest as well, with China being perhaps the most significant. Mensa China has some hurdles to overcome because of government restrictions and regulations on private organizations, but we are well underway to resolving those issues. All indications are that once we do, China, which places a high value on education, will present an enormous opportunity in terms of growth potential.

Speaking as an American, one thing I find disappointing is that our numbers, as a percentage of our national population, are below those of some other countries. The US, with a population of about 311 million, has approximately 160 Mensans per million. By contrast, Finland has 487 Mensans per million, the United Kingdom has 328 Mensans per million, and Holland has 248 Mensans per million. I can't help but wonder if that may be because other countries place a higher value on education and intelligence than the United States does; in a place like Denmark (206 Mensans per million), having a high intelligence is something to be proud of; in the US, we still have serious discussions about whether it is a good idea to list Mensa on your resume (and cut school math and science budgets).

Mensa, of course, means different things to the members of different countries; not all cultures build local groups around First Friday dinners or games nights. And that, I think, is one of the nicer things about Mensa: Its ability to adapt to the culture. We see that to a certain extent even within Region 10; local cultures differ from one local group to another. But the ability of Mensans to make their local groups into something that serves local needs is a feature, not a bug.

Mel Dahl

Minutes of the June SCAM ExComm Meeting

The ExComm met at the home of Karen Freiberg at 876 Buxmont Ct., Rockledge, FL 32955 on Tuesday, June 5th (on accounta George had a conflicting appointment on Wednesday, the usual meeting day), 2012. Called to order at 6:22 pm by LocSec George Patterson.

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

Guests: Zanne Rostek (as usual, waiting for the RG Committee meeting which was to follow). Wynn was also there, but not solely for the purpose of the RG Committee meeting to follow; more on this later.

Minutes for the May, 2012 meeting were approved as published in the June 2012 SCAM.

Officer/Committee Reports

Dennis was absent; however, I believe he sent a copy of the treasurer's report to George who, unfortunately, never read it into the minutes so I don't have the information at hand. However, knowing of no major or unexpected expenses during the month, I am reasonably certain that we're still financially sound.

Hank Rhodes submitted the testing report for May 2012: No testing was performed due to schedule conflicts, 6 candidates were contacted for the first time, 6 for the 2nd or 3rd time, next testing session scheduled for June 16, 2012 at the Central Brevard Library in Cocoa.

It was noted that Dennis should be sending a copy of the treasurer's report to Mike Moakley and also that George would send a copy of the audit report to the same august individual.

George was attempting to set the world's land speed record for the shortest ExComm meeting since he was departing post haste; there was no new business and the meeting was adjourned at 6:24 pm. (Two minutes; not too shabby).

Minutes of the June, 2012 ExComm Meeting (2)

The *new* ExComm met at the home of Karen Freiberg at 876 Buxmont Ct., Rockledge, FL 32955 on Tuesday, June 5th, 2012, called to order at 6:22 pm by no one in particular, since our LocSec had departed.

The first order of business was to rapidly determine that no one from the

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