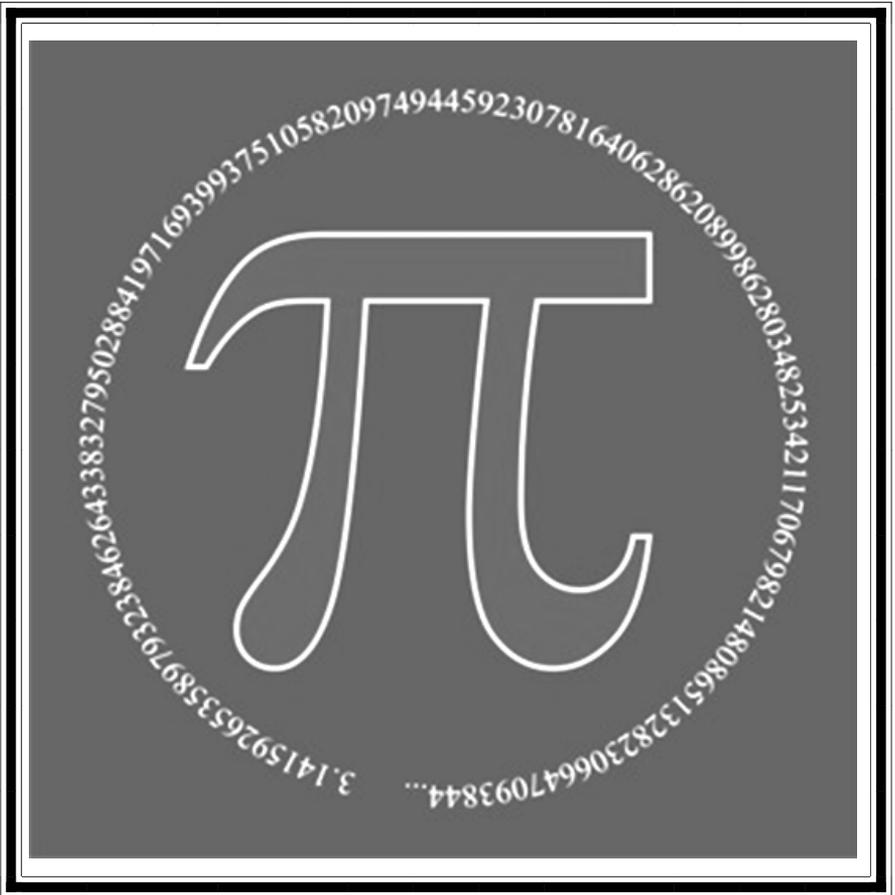


The

SCAM

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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

For March, we introduce the “Pi” issue, hence the cover art. Perhaps we can start a movement to declare as an official holiday March 14, that would henceforth be known as “Pi Day”. With our apparent national emphasis on improving our educational system in the areas of mathematics and science, what better way is there to advocate our new goals than to celebrate “Pi Day”?

At this writing, I have not yet received any feedback on ideas to revitalize SCAM. If you have any such idea, *The SCAM* has plenty of room within its pages to publish it. At the risk of being overly repetitious, the future of SCAM is entirely up to you.

Do you have any ideas for our Calendar of Events? As you can see by our “new and improved” center calendar, there are plenty of days on which nothing is happening. Perhaps you would like to host an event on one of those blank days. Simply contact our Calendar Coordinator, he will be pleased to get the word out.

Finally, if it has not already happened, you will be receiving membership renewal notices from National. When renewing, please take the time to review your membership profile, paying particular attention to your preferences. This will help us to better communicate with you. One benefit you may not know about is that *The SCAM* is now available through your e-mail.

π

***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.

What is leadership? Is it heading off in a direction you determine, hoping that others will follow? Or is it asking people what they want and producing plans with the best chance to get them there? My view of leadership is the second one, asking people what they want and making it happen. The real problem I'm running into is that most of the people I'm able to ask are other ExComm members. I have input from exactly two people that were not ExComm members at one time or another. Two.

Now if the ExComm really does represent the views of all SCAM members, we are in good shape. That's because they've provided fairly uniform input.

If, on the other hand, SCAM members have as diverse opinions as typical Mensans, I suspect I am not getting a full picture of what events our members would like. And two is a very small sample for a group our size.

Even attending events on our calendar to increase the sample size doesn't help, because the same small group of long-time members attend all the existing events.

Which leaves me with the following problem: I can call upon my extremely limited psychic powers to divine which events may interest our members. That hasn't been working too well so far. (*Consider my lack of winning Powerball tickets.*) Or I can stop trying to flog a dead horse, and just keep having the same old events. Except I'm really stubborn, and can't believe over 200 people are that apathetic.

So help me out here, please. Two more members email me, or call me with ideas for events that we have not done, or have not done in a while. That way I know this newsletter isn't going out to 200 deceased members.

Contact:

wrostek@cfl.rr.com

321 267-9391

Under 40 and looking for comrades? **Check out GenY SIG!** We are open to members 18-36, and looking to pull together activities for Ms our age. Pretty sweet, right? Check us out on Facebook at **'Mensa GenY Space Coast'**!

We are being exhorted more and more to wash our hands after using the toilet. The American Society for Microbiology and other groups have long campaigned for us to wash our hands. At first it was only a mild admonition, then it became signs in restaurants directing employees, after that signs appeared in other public toilets for everyone, electronic devices appeared to monitor conformance with directives; no doubt, soon there will be laws mandating the practice.

This article is addressed to men because it is the only first-hand experience that I have.

Why all this hype and pressure? Is a man's penis dirtier than other parts of his body? Let's examine the facts and see where it leads us.

Let's take you as a typical American male. You awake in the morning, use the toilet, and take a shower. At that point in time all parts of your body are equally clean. You dress, pick up the newspaper from the lawn in front of the house where who knows how many dogs have urinated and defecated, and have breakfast.

You get into your car and on your way to work you get some gas using the same hose that everyone else has used and then give your credit card to a clerk. He handles your card with his bare hands the same way that he has handled the cards of a dozen customers before you.

You enter your office by turning the handle of the door which has been touched by every employee that preceded you to your office. You probably shake hands with several of your coworkers as you enter. Before starting work you decide to urinate. So, off to the office men's room you go. There you either push open the door with your hand or turn a knob to get in.

Then what do you do? If like most men, you belly up to the urinal, unzip your trousers and pull out your penis, and do what you must do. Then you put your penis back, zip up your trousers, and on your way out you see a sign suggesting that you wash your hands before returning to work and as a conscientious employee you do.

Whoops, what's wrong here? Has your penis, which has been under your clothing since you took your shower this morning, somehow soiled your hands which have been every where and touched everything? How did your penis manage to dirty your hands? Unless you urinated on you hands, which I most emphatically doubt, there was no transfer of dirt from your penis to

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your hands, but rather from your hands to your penis. Then why are you told to wash your hands after you urinated but not before?

The outside of your penis is no more laden with bacteria and viruses than the rest of the skin on your body, in fact, under the described scenario, less so.

But your penis is "dirty" people will say. Is that true? "Dirty" has at least two meanings. It is obvious from the above scenario that your penis is cleaner (in sense of contamination) than your hands. But since most Americans are imbued with the Victorian concept that sex is "dirty" then it follows that any part of the body that is directly involved in the sex act is "dirty" and, like Lady Macbeth's hands, can never be washed clean. The moral "dirty" has been transformed into the unsanitary. Thus we are admonished to wash our hands after touching our "dirty" penises.

My advice to all men is, yes, wash your hands after urinating, if that useless gesture makes you feel better by conforming to a mistaken Victorian concept, but please, to protect yourself, wash your hands before urinating.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR**Art Belefant**

As I read our Constitution, Article I, Sec. 9. AUTHORIZES the government to spend money as appropriated, it does not REQUIRE it to spend. It does not have to spend all that is appropriated. All the president has to do to remain within the constitutional limits is not to spend more than the debt ceiling by spending only what Congress has mandated and to cut discretionary spending.

Art Belefant

The month of March has the famous day of '3.14' or March 14 for us to celebrate Pi (π) Day. Pi being the reference of the circumference to the diameter of any circle. Word is that the Welsh mathematician William Jones (a friend of Isaac Newton) first used the symbol for the Greek letter to represent the word 'perimeter' and 'periphery' in a mathematical book he wrote around 1706.

It was later popularized by the great Swiss mathematician, Leonhard Euler, sometime around 1737. Could you say he "Pi-rated" the symbol?

Wouldn't he have been 'sur-pi-sed' indeed at the fame of his choice of symbol?

Mathematician Jones probably got in an argument with the local, rustic baker, when he argued that the area of a circle is "Pi- R- squared". With the baker saying, "Pi- R- round, cornbread- R- square".

I have heard from some purists that the only REAL Pi day was March 14, 1592 (3.141592). But with the Western Gregorian calendar being changed somewhat after that date, how can they be that certain? Oh well. We have also had the opportunity to see a movie titled "The Life of Pi" (please read the book, I think I liked it better). But the protagonist adopted that name for short of his given name, 'Piscine'. Some may scoff at that acceptance of the word 'pi', whatever the reason. Thinking it "Pi in the Sky" hopefulness.

And 'pi- the way'....Still others in Europe say that 'Pi day' should really be 'Pi Approximation Day' of July 22 (22/7) since it is only an approximate value anyway. Some folks seem to slice their 'pi' differently from others. In the USA, it is still considered March 14, 'pi-choice' of most Americans. Even the US House of representatives in 2009 approved a resolution to designate March 14th as National Pi Day. Probably the last time they ever made a 'Pi-partisan' resolution.

It is also part of the birthday of Albert Einstein (Born on March 14, 1879 in Ulm, Germany.. a city a few kilometers from my wife's birthplace).

Quite a coincidence, although Einstein seemed to consider himself more a physicist 'pi-day' and a mathematician 'pi-night'. Einstein spoke both German and English, so he was 'Pi-lingual' of course.

Some scientists were lucky enough to have a birthday on a celebrated date, without the public having to note it (Isaac Newton on Christmas day, for example).

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Newton supposedly had an apple fall on his head (most think this event being apocryphal) to make him deduce the laws about gravity. He may have been happier if an Apple ' Pi ' had landed in his lap.

March 14 (3.14) was the eve of the Ides of March. The Roman political and agrarian calendar began on or around March 15. When farmers planted crops and elected officials took office (you remember 'Julius Caesar' and a funny thing happened on the way to the Roman Senate...). So we can certainly revel with justification for 3.14 as ' Pi day', birth of a great scientist , and raising a toast to the Roman Empire (if not so much for the death of a famous Roman general and statesman). Or celebrate with maybe ice cream and cake.. Pi a la Mode.

So whatever your choice of Pi (the pastry version or the mathematical version), be sure to enjoy that event by doing something different and enjoyable. Since Pi is both irrational and transcendental, it is best not to get into arguments that day with any Buddhists requiring psychiatric help.

Just be careful if you talk with a mathematician on that day. They will go on forever about Pi!

Pie-Pie- for- Now!

*Stacy Strickland
Melbourne, Florida*

JUMBLE

h	o	r	i	c			○	○	○		
s	c	a	i	p	t	○			○		○
d	a	n	d	i	c		○			○	○
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When I selected trivia category "Star Trek: The Next Generation" before realizing my teammate doesn't watch television, could you say I was

○	○	○	○	○	on my own
○	○	○	○	○	○

SCAM Calendar of Events for March 2013

1st - 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.*

6th - Wednesday 6:00 PM

EXCOMM MEETING

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

23rd - Saturday 6:00 PM

GAMES NIGHT (FOR ALL AGES)

George Patterson will be hosting a games night at his home, 301 Sand Pine Rd., Indialantic. See article in this issue for more details. No kitty.

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

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.*

MENSA TESTING

March 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 will be on April 20.

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

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 March 2013

WELCOME TO SCAM

Evan Smith

WELCOME TO SCAM AND MENSA

Cooper Thomson

WELCOME BACK!

Wade Hollowell

MARCH BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

1st	Kathryn Mendoza	15th	Gary Cordelli
2nd	Joseph Smith	16th	Robert Roth
5th	David Terry	20th	William Daffron
5th	Stephen Schneider	22nd	Jack Harris
5th	Lennis Bearden	26th	Jenifer Mina
8th	Gabriel Shih	30th	Shannon Cox
11th	Dennis Schindler		
13th	Gary Sizemore		

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.

Part Two: Guns

Several days before I wrote this column, I watched the broadcast of President Obama’s State of the Union Address. Toward the end of that speech, the President spoke about the need for what he believes to be sensible measures to curb gun violence. While I have my own opinion on the “gun issue”, my purpose will be better served to look at why this issue has come about at this time.

To clear the air on my own opinion on this issue: While the Second Amendment does guarantee the “right to keep and bear arms”, this Constitutional right, like all others, is not unlimited. If you doubt this, trying yelling “Fire!” in a crowded building and then claim your First Amendment rights at your subsequent trial. To me, it is clear that reasonable limits should be set. On the other hand, the “gun rights” advocates, I believe, are correct in stating

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A GAMES NIGHT — FOR ALL AGES

Last September, Wynn hosted a games night which was billed as "kid-friendly" and was quite successful. As a follow-up we are scheduling a games night for March 23 billed as "for all ages." As with most of our events, this is open to all Mensans as well as family and guests. We hope to attract a number of our 17 registered "Young Mensans" as well as some Mensan's younger family members and friends. The event has an earlier start than is customary, at 6:00 PM, with games and refreshments suitable for all ages.

We would be delighted if some 20-somethings and 30-somethings showed up as well as some of older games playing contingent. If you need further encouragement, pick up your SCAM from last September and read Wynn's pitch for his games night. What! You don't save your old SCAMs? Oh dear. Perhaps the reintroduction of the full page calendar center spread will persuade you to treasure your SCAMs more highly. Open them up to the calendar and install them on your kitchen counter. Make notes on them. Add your other appointments. Then you can save them as a reminder of what you've been doing for the last year. ‘Nuff said.

Editor’s Note: If you would like to read a back issue of The SCAM, you may find many back issues online on SCAM’s website. Every issue published for the last ten years is available, as well as some earlier issues.

I recently saw a commercial with a Toyota Tundra towing Space Shuttle Endeavour towards its final resting place in a museum near downtown Los Angeles and it made me both sad and melancholy and then more than a bit angry and frustrated. What an undignified ending for such a magnificent machine; to be used in a television commercial. I spent the last 27 years of my career at the Kennedy Space Center helping launch Space Shuttles and have been a "space cadet" since reading my first science fiction story at age 13 (Robert Heinlein's *The Rolling Stones*, if memory serves). I feel very deeply about America's space program and can only mourn the decision our leaders have made in allowing it to languish.

On May 25, 1961, President John F. Kennedy roused the excitement of the nation and the world in his address to the joint session of Congress with these words:

I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to the Earth. No single space project in this period will be more impressive to mankind, or more important for the long-range exploration of space; and none will be so difficult or expensive to accomplish.

Under Kennedy's leadership of the country and Wernher von Braun's leadership of NASA, we had two men of vision who infused not only America, but the entire world with the excitement and challenge of a manned Moon mission. The nation was enthusiastic and fascinated with the ensuing Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo programs. The live broadcast of Neil Armstrong stepping foot on the Moon on July 20, 1969, was an event that is deeply ingrained into anyone who was old enough to be watching at the time. It was arguably one of America's finest moments.

There were to be five subsequent Lunar missions, but interest waned rapidly due to (I suspect) more pressing issues back on Earth, such as the Vietnam War and others matters of social unrest. In 1971, the decision was made to cancel the last three planned flights (Apollo 18, 19, and 20) as plans were initiated for the next phase of America's manned space program: the Space Shuttle.

Unfortunately, due to lack of planning and foresight and an exaggerated concern for cost cutting, the hiatus between the end of the Apollo Program and the beginning of the Shuttle era saw the loss of a wealth of talent from the space program.

The Shuttle was intended to be America's workhorse, a sort of reusable

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space truck to be used primarily to build the future Space Station and ferry astronauts to and from the station. The original estimates for the cost of operation and turnaround flight time were wildly optimistic, however, and the Shuttle never really lived up to its expectations. Additionally, the design for Space Station Freedom announced by then-President Reagan in 1984, called for a large, multi-purpose facility which, as construction began and costs wildly escalated, was eventually scaled down by the Clinton administration in 1993 to the present International Space Station (ISS).

With the ISS completion in 2011, the Bush 2004 decision to terminate the Space Shuttle program in 2010 and Obama's continuation of that determination, with a few added launches, was the right thing to do. The Shuttle had essentially accomplished its mission to build the ISS and was never the efficient, cost-effective means of lifting us out of Earth's gravity well that it was originally intended to be. However, terminating the program without having a planned successor or follow-up, I find to be unconscionable.

We are now relegated to "hitching" rides on the Soviet Soyuz for access to the ISS, with the current plan to await private enterprise to develop a means for once again providing manned space flight for America. Unfortunately, there is no set time-frame or – for that matter – any guarantee at all that this will become viable.

Since the Kennedy/von Braun era, no President and no NASA administrator has demonstrated the wherewithal to assure America's continuance of leadership in space. Where we were a once proud space-faring nation, we have become fiscally fearful and conservatively earthbound. Despite the vast benefits we have reaped from space-related research, the space program remains a cheap target ("why are we spending all this money up in space when we need it here on Earth") for freshman Congressmen and timid Presidents.

We will now watch, earthbound, as China develops a manned space program to return mankind to the Moon (and, I believe, eventually establish a permanent colony there). The Chinese have not only planned to do so, but have already funded such a program. It would not surprise me if the French Ariane revitalized its original plan to have manned capability now that the US is out of the picture for the foreseeable future and if there might be a demand for such capability. How humiliating would that be?

I find it appalling that for the price of a few months of needless war, we could have fully funded a robust and thriving manned space program for years to come. Of course, it's a lot cheaper just to write a eulogy.

The George

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that gun control will have little effect on gun-related crimes.

The question I wish to address here involve two of Obama's statements. One is that the issue of proposed gun control measures deserve a vote. I could not agree with him more. The other point the President made is in reference to a school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, that claimed 27 lives, 20 of which were that of young schoolchildren. That incident ended when the shooter took his own life. Here, Obama claimed that, had assault weapons not been readily available as they currently are, this tragedy most likely would not have occurred. It is on this point, I strongly disagree with the President.

One of the casualties of the "Newtown Massacre" was that of the murderer himself. This is not the first time a mass killing ended up in a suicide. One conclusion that can be drawn is that the shooter had little, if any, concern for the legal consequences of his actions, much less whether he violated a gun law. In my mind, it would be ludicrous to believe that gun control laws would end these tragedies.

Equally ludicrous is the idea that arming teachers and school officials likewise would end these tragedies. The truth is, there are no ready-made answers to this issue. Finding an answer requires an open mind and plain hard work in finding out why these shootings occur. This, in my mind, is a necessary first step.

An obvious place to begin is to find out what all these school shooters have in common (besides the fact that they shot up schools and killed innocent people). For example, it seems to me most, if not all, are loners who have been shunned by their peers their entire lives. They may have been bullied at school, only to go home to what, in many cases, turns out to be an abusive environment.

These people, in too many cases, never experience any relief from the constant abuse they find themselves subjected to. When problems such as mental illnesses or developmental impairments that often interfere with one's ability to normally relate to others are added to the mix, over time the stage is set for a volatile eruption to occur. Should we not be at least inquiring whether a correlation exists between this phenomenon and the school shootings?

Will we utilize the wisdom that comes with age and acknowledge that often there are no "quick and easy" answers or will we continue to react blindly to such incidents without any regard to the fact we are not really solving anything? I believe all of us, especially our children, deserve better.

This Page is RESERVED:

JUST
FOR
YOU

We want to hear from YOU...!

See Page Three of every issue for
SCAM submittal guidelines.

It's an election year, and I'm doing something I've never done before: Publicly urge all members of Region 10 not just to vote, but to vote for a particular candidate for chair. I'm doing so because it's even more important this year than ever before. American Mensa is at a crossroads, and this election will determine which path the organization takes over the next two or four years. The two candidates for chair could not be more different in both substance and style. I have served on the AMC with both of them, and I like both of them personally. But they have very different views of where Mensa should go and how it should get there, and in my view, only one of them has the necessary policy vision and experience to effectively lead us.

There are two things a chair needs: Good ideas, and an understanding of how to implement them. The best of ideas are useless if the person offering them is unable or unwilling to do the hard work of making them happen. Organizational leadership requires attention to detail and the understanding that stuff only gets done if leaders are willing to actually do the hard work of governance.

Dan Burg has demonstrated over and over again that not only is he a skilled leader with good ideas, but he is willing to master the details and shepherd projects through to completion. As RVC, and as a former member of the Bylaws Committee, I have seen him patiently and thoroughly work with local groups on bylaws issues. I have also been impressed at his mastery of financial, policy and constitutional facts and nuances in AMC meetings. No one has ever been able to accuse him of lack of preparation, on both major policy issues and relatively minor matters. In contrast, his opponent supported a major policy initiative, and when the AMC debated it, candidly admitted that he had not thought it through, did not know any of the details about how it would be implemented, and intended to leave those details to others. That is not the way to run a major organization.

I have not always agreed with Dan on every policy matter that has ever come before the AMC, but I've never doubted his work ethic, his thoroughness, and his willingness to learn everything there is to know about whatever issue we are discussing. I've spoken with him about his long term vision for the organization, and I like what I hear. So, I hope that all of you will not only vote this year, but vote for Dan. He is, in my judgment, definitely the right man for the job

Mel Dahl

The ExComm did NOT meet in February. The next ExComm Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 6th at 6 pm at the home of Karen Freiberg, 876 Buxmont Ct., Rockledge.

Many business consultants hold that people working together in a group can make better decisions than people working alone. This reasoning is suspect on two fronts. First, if these business consultants had really been very smart at all, they would have become lawyers, or senators, something with better potential for higher income than business consultants. Second, anyone who has ever sat in on a modern business meeting can tell you, it simply doesn't work this way.

Years of observation has led to the following empirical formula for the effectiveness of any group of people attempting to achieve a task:

Take the numerical score of the member with the highest rating of the attribute critical to task being attempted. Label this Peak.

Peak may be IQ, Creativity, Cleverness, Ability to rap, Write ad copy, etc. It doesn't matter, identify the person best at it in the group, and rate their ability vs the average person. (Hopefully they are well above average, more on this later.)

Next count the number of people in the group. Label this Size.

Group ability is then Peak times $(3.5 / \text{Size})$

As you can see, for small groups, one to three people, little impairment of the best member occurs, and the group ability remains quite high.

Let's take a simple example where a group is trying to solve a problem that requires a fairly high IQ. In this hypothetical group Robert has the highest at 145. If the group has 4 other members, then the group IQ would be $145 * (3.5 / 5)$ or 101.5. This group still stands a chance of finding the restroom without a guide dog.

However, most business meetings have far more members. If we assume that Robert's group has a total of 10 members, then the group IQ falls to $145 * (3.5 / 10)$ or 50.75. At this stage little will happen beyond the consumption of a lot of coffee and doughnuts. With luck, no one will choke to death. Robert himself should will be frustrated, but should survive.