

The

SCAM

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ExComm Election Issue:

Your BALLOT
Is
ENCLOSED!



SPACE COAST AREA MENSA

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(All Area Codes are 321 except as noted)



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

Inside the Pocket Protector

Mike Moakley, Editor

It's that time of year again where we at SCAM get to choose five people to lead our Local Group for yet another year. I could say this is a hotly contested election. But we know that would not be true. In my nearly ten years as the Editor of The SCAM, I do not believe I have seen but one or two contested elections.

In the past, I had served on our NomElCom; part of my task was to count the votes. During that time, out of approximately 200 members of SCAM, I doubt if our vote count had ever exceeded 15 ballots.

Where do we go from here? What can I say that has not been said before? Perhaps I could rant about apathy, but I've done that before. Besides, I wonder if, perhaps, most of our members do not bother to read this.

Perhaps part of the problem is that our newsletter is not up to snuff. Even though I have put together some 115 issues, I have no professional skills in the field of writing and editing publications. Thus, I must conclude my efforts in producing The SCAM leave much to be desired.

That being said, I have received little feedback from you in this regard. This makes it necessary for me to guess whether my work is satisfactory or you do not see the point in saying anything. Yet, I do not really know.

Perhaps the real question is do I continue as Editor?

As the Editor's position is appointed, it is up to the "new" ExComm. If the ExComm chooses to reappoint me, I will be pleased to serve for another year. I truly enjoy producing The SCAM each month, but fatigue is beginning to set in.

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.

This Page is RESERVED:

JUST
FOR
YOU

We want to hear from YOU...!

See Page Three of every issue for
SCAM submittal guidelines.

In my first article in this series, I mentioned that this ship had no urinals. That referred only to the public men's toilets, of which I visited all. In the public men's toilets there were only fully enclosed stalls, with the sides and the doors going only a few inches from the floor to only a few inches of the ceiling, making it virtually impossible to look into a stall even if lying on the floor. Inside each stall was a standard commode.

As for the crew areas, I did not penetrate that far, and I can vouch for only our cabin although I would not expect to find urinals in any of the cabins as they are not usually provided in other ship's cabins, hotel rooms, or homes. Urinals in public men's toilets were to be found on every ship on which I traveled, except this one. Why would this be so?

The *Poesia* was launched in 2008. Two other MSC Ships, the *Lirica* was launched in 2003 and the *Opera* in 2004. Each of these other ships had urinals in their public men's toilets.

I contacted MSC to query them about the lack of public urinals on the *Poesia*. They replied only that it was a different design. I could not get any further information from them.

I refer you to a chapter in my book *The Toilet Tractate*.

CHAPTER 13. MUSLIMS

In the western world we assume that the normal position for a male urinating is upright, that is, standing. The majority of men in the western world do that. But in the Muslim world, which covers much of the Earth, that is not so. Islamic *sharee'ah* (The code of law based on the Koran. In many Muslim counties there is no distinction between religious and other matters, all is religious.) includes a number of rules and etiquettes to be followed when answering the call of nature. What follows is an explanation of some of the rules governing urinating from a Muslim source. The source also provides extensive explanations of the laws regarding defecation. Rather than paraphrase the religious rulings, I present them as written but I have edited them for simplicity and clarity, but retained the language as written.

Not to face the *Qiblah* (direction of prayer, i.e. the Kabala) when urinating. This is out of respect for the *Qiblah* and for the symbols and rituals of Allah.

He should not touch his penis with his right hand when urinating, be-

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

cause the Prophet said: "When any one of you urinates, he should not hold his penis in his right hand or clean it with his right hand."

The Sunnah is to answer the call of nature sitting, making oneself close to the ground, because this is more concealing, and makes it less likely that spray from one's urine will come back on one's body or clothes, making them dirty. If a person can be sure of avoiding this, then it is permissible to urinate standing up.

A person should be concealed from the sight of others when answering the call of nature. If a person is out in an open space and cannot find anything to conceal him when he needs to answer the call of nature, he should move far away from the other people around him.

A person should not uncover his 'awrah (private parts) until after he has squatted close to the ground, because this is more concealing. If a person is in a (modern) toilet, he should not lift his garment until he has closed the door and is out of sight of other people. With regard to this point and the one before, it is worth noting that the habit of many people in the West and elsewhere, of urinating in a standing position in front of other people in public toilets (using urinals) is something which goes against good manners, modesty and decency, and is repulsive to anyone who possesses sound common sense and wisdom. How can anybody uncover in front of other people the 'awrah (private parts) which Allah has placed between his legs to conceal it and commanded him to cover it? The idea that it should be covered is well established among all wise and decent people of all races. It is wrong in principle to build restrooms of this shameful type, where the users can see one another, thus making them worse than some kinds of animals whose habit is to conceal themselves from one another when urinating or defecating.

He should be careful to remove all impurity after answering the call of nature, because the Prophet warned against being careless in cleaning oneself after urinating: "Most of the punishment of the grave will be because of urine." Ibn 'Abbaas reported that the Messenger of Allah passed by two graves, and said: "They are being punished, but they are not being punished for any major sin. One of them used not to protect himself (i.e. keep himself clean from) his urine, and the other used to walk about spreading malicious gossip.

The religious/legal requirement for men to squat or sit while urinating may

(Continued on page 13)

SCAM Calendar of Events for May 2013

1st - Wednesday 6:00 PM

EXCOMM MEETING

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

3rd - 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.*

18th - Saturday 6:30 PM

VOTE COUNT & POTLUCK

Come witness democracy at work as we tabulate the returns, then join us for potluck food and fun at Karen Freiberg's in Rockledge.

Contact: *Karen (321)633-1636.*

25th - 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

May 18 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 June 15.

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 May 2013

WELCOME BACK!

Mary Erdmann
Karen Todd

Alexander Van Rens
Joann Webster

MAY BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

3rd	Brian Conway	19th	Denise Jeffreys
6th	Barry Ebert	23rd	Stephen Curtis
12th	John McKeown	25th	James Stewart
14th	Mike Friedman	26th	Mark Williams
15th	John Moore	26th	Mark Zelios
15th	Jean O'Brien	27th	Sean Freeman
17th	Douglas Dial	27th	Karen Freiberg
19th	Eric Sperry	30th	Francis Stump

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.

Last year, my daughter asked me to go with her to a Toastmasters International meeting. She'd read about the organization and thought it might help her improve her communications skills. You see, Toastmasters gives people the chance to give short talks on - well, anything. The idea is to prepare a short talk - averaging about 5 minutes - on the subject of your choice. Most local clubs are small, usually under 25 members. Ours - the Viera/Suntree Toastmasters Club - meets on the second and fourth Wednesday of a month. There are usually 3 talks in a meeting, plus a round of impromptu talks of 1-2 minutes on a "surprise" topic. The average meeting is about an hour. The atmosphere is friendly and encouraging. The meetings are at the Viera Hospital on Wickham Road - just off Interstate 95.

While I originally went to give moral support to June, I got totally swept up in the fun. So far, among other subjects, I've given talks on American Presidents, Construction of a Joke and the History of Cinco de Mayo (*It's not what you think*).

Most members average about one talk every 4 or 5 meetings. I've found that Toastmasters is an ideal place for a Senior Citizen like me to meet and mix with a whole variety of people while keeping my mind sharp and my vocabulary strong.

Whether you're a young person looking to improve your communications ability for the job, a middle manager who makes regular presentations, a teacher, salesperson or member of the military looking to get an edge toward that next rank, or a retired person like me, these semi--monthly meetings are fun, entertaining and educational. Contact me by e-mail at mhf1@netzero.com or call me at (321) 610-8621 so I can invite you to our next meeting.

Mike Friedman

At this writing, the Florida Legislature is still in session. The Florida House voted to approve the “Committee Substitute” for House Bill 655. In terms of the bill’s objective, the Committee Substitute does not substantially differ from the original bill. Yet, what is this bill about? To answer that, we need to review a little recent history.

Last year, a citizens’ group in Orange County decided to petition the county government to place a ballot initiative before the voters, which, if passed, would create a county ordinance requiring employers within the county who have 15 or more employees to provide up to 56 hours per year of paid sick leave (See my article in the November 2012 *SCAM*, “Sickening”). The petition drive had been successful and met all the legal requirements to be presented to the County Commission to include the sick leave measure on the November ballot.

Predictably, the local business groups, notably Disney and the local Chamber of Commerce, were less than enthusiastic about the prospect of Orange County businesses being required to provide paid sick leave to their employees. As a result, much litigation followed challenging the initiative and attempting to keep the measure off the ballot. After the smoke had finally cleared, the court finally ruled in favor of the petitioners but, because of the time element, effectively prevented the measure from going to the voters. In an effort to remedy this, the court has now ordered the measure to appear on the November 2014 ballot. Thus, the voters will have an opportunity to weigh in on whether Orange County will have a sick leave ordinance.

Back to the present, enter House Bill 655. This bill, if passed, would prohibit local government from requiring employers in its jurisdiction to provide employee benefits not required under state or federal law. The bill would not prohibit employers, including public employers, from providing these benefits to their own employees. At this time, the Senate version of this bill has not yet been approved. It is my guess that CS/HB 655 will soon become Florida law. If this happens, the Orange County ballot initiative will be rendered meaningless.

Yet, all is not lost. All House seats will be up for election next year. We have time to inform Florida voters how each candidate for reelection voted on this bill. Likewise, there is still time to begin a petition drive to place on the ballot an initiative making the proposed Orange County sick leave ordinance state law by amending the Florida Constitution to that effect. I believe that, no matter what political views Floridians hold, that most would support such a measure. Back in 2004, Florida voters overwhelmingly passed the Florida Minimum Wage, which cannot be repealed by the legislature. This happened despite a massive effort

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

by the Chamber of Commerce and its allies to characterize the measure as "Storm #5" (We had four major hurricanes that year and the measure was on the ballot as "Amendment 5").

Most Floridians work for a living, almost all for employers (*despite the lip service to "entrepreneurship"*). Moreover, if you patronize a business whose employee is working, although sick with a contagious disease, your own health may well be at risk as a result. If the business does not offer paid sick leave, his employee will most likely show up for work (as he cannot afford to lose the day's pay).

Finally, it seems that on many workers' issues, the majority of Florida's legislators' actions conflict with their constituents' views. The Minimum Wage amendment is one example of this. It is also evident from the very introduction of House Bill 655 that they fear a positive outcome on the Orange County ordinance proposal. However, Orange County voters could well vote "no" on the measure, but our legislators do not wish to leave this to chance. Is the voice of the people something that our elected representatives fear? If that is the case, why do we, as Florida voters, keep on electing them?

Stay tuned...

THE GOURMET'S GUIDE

Continued

(Continued from page 6)

have begun with Mohammed, but the custom existed long before his time. There is a note in Richard Burton's translation of *A Thousand Nights and a Night* (1865), "*In the East women stand on minor occasions while the men squat on their hunkers in a way hardly possible to an untrained European.*" Herodotus, who wrote in the fifth century B. C. about Egypt says, "*The women stand up when they make water, but the men sit down.*"

This practice was strongly brought to my attention when I was in charge of designing the Saudi-Arabian Air Force Academy at Al-Kharj. There are no urinals in this all-male institution. We were directed by the Saudi liaison not to put any urinals in the academy and the toilets could not face Mecca.

Does the design of the *Poesia* presage the gradual dominance of Muslim values over that of Western ones?

At the last AMC meeting, we had three discussion items that, in my view, are all parts of a larger issue: How do we connect members with other members who share the same interests? We heard an interesting presentation from our national SIG coordinator, Barbara Kryvko; our national membership officer gave a talk on how local groups can make new members feel welcome; and RVC-1 Andrew Heffernan and Heather Poirier spoke to us about the use of mobile technology to keep members in touch with one another.

Mensa has both local groups, based on geography, and special interest groups, based on common interests. Thus, a Mensan who lives in Miami and is interested in gardening, politics and travel, has two ways to meet other Mensans: Through local group activities, and through joining a Mensa special interest group devoted to gardening, politics or travel. Over the years, I have made many friends by both methods, and I encourage other Mensans to do the same. Look through our SIG list, available on the national Web site, to see which groups might interest you, and attend local group events to meet other local Mensans. Or, if you have an interest but we don't already have a SIG for it, start one. I will be more than happy to put you in touch with the necessary people to get your SIG formally recognized as a Mensa group.

At one time, there was a one-SIG per subject rule, which meant that if there was already a history SIG, nobody could start another one. We have come to realize that free market competition can be a good thing, so that rule has been repealed. If you're not happy with the direction in which a SIG to which you belong is going, feel free to start another one.

And this brings us to the subject of mobile technology. Once upon a time, members learned of Mensa events through print newsletters only; thanks to social media it is now possible to plan a spur of the moment event and have a dozen people show up for it. This is very exciting, because as it becomes easier and easier for people to stay in touch, spontaneity will allow for far more opportunities to meet up. This is a good thing.

I'm excited about the direction mobile technology is taking and I'm looking forward to seeing its use expand. In the meantime, opportunities to be social have exploded; please take advantage of them. Other people look forward to meeting you.

Mel Dahl

The ExComm met at the home of Karen Freiberg at 876 Buxmont Ct., Rockledge, FL 32955, called to order by LocSec Wynn Rostek at 6:05 pm.

Members Present: Wynn Rostek, Terry Valek, Karen Freiberg, and Dennis Logan. (RecSec George Lebovitz (*myself*) was not present).

Guests: George Patterson and Zanne Rostek.

After calling the meeting to order, there ensued a discussion which can basically be summarized as: cancer sucks, chemo sucks, and hospitals suck.

In last month's minutes, George Lebovitz (*still myself*) volunteered for the position of Gifted Youth Coordinator. George Patterson pointed out that the official position of Gifted Youth Coordinator has some restrictions and requirements mandated by National beyond just volunteering to accept the title. There ensued some discussion regarding whether we intend to create the actual Mensa position or just call the job a central coordination point for gifted child information in Brevard County. Wynn intends to discuss the matter with George Lebovitz (which is I [very weird to talk about myself in the third person]) to determine which course of action we will pursue.

Officer/Committee Reports:

Treasurer's Report¹. Although the RG didn't lose money, the pathetic profit did not significantly bolster the coffers and since we have recurring costs (primarily that of mailing out the SCAM), Treasurer Dennis Logan offered up the professional opinion that we are going broke. George Patterson suggested a garage sale. Had I been there, I would have suggested a llama petting marathon, but I wasn't, so I didn't.

Testing Coordinator, Hank Rhodes, reported via email².

The March minutes as published in the April 2013 issue of the SCAM were approved. The next meeting was set for Wednesday, May 1st, at the home of Karen Freiberg, 876 Buxmont Ct., Rockledge, FL 32955 at 6:00 pm.

The format of the calendar published in the SCAM was discussed; however, not being present, I really didn't understand exactly what moving stuff from "here" to "there" was all about. But it's really not all that important since the folks who *were* there and *do* know what moving stuff from "here" to "there" is all about, intend to contact our beloved editor, Mike Moakley, to explain what stuff needs to be moved from "here" to "there."

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 pm.

Editor's Note: This ExComm meeting took place on April 3, 2013.