

The

# SCAM

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**HAPPY LABOR DAY!**





# ***SPACE COAST AREA MENSA***

Website: [www.spacecoast.us.mensa.org](http://www.spacecoast.us.mensa.org)

(All Area Codes are 321 except as noted)



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

## *Inside the Pocket Protector*

*Mike Moakley, Editor*

**H**appy Labor Day! As the “official” summer draws to a close, many who read this will no doubt get together for a barbecue. As we enjoy the festivities, let us remember that it is for the celebration of the worker. Essentially, for most of us, it is a celebration of **ourselves**. This is regardless of whether we are currently in the workforce or are now retired after a lifetime of service. Let us also not forget the struggles of the labor movement which has vastly improved our working conditions over the last 130 years. Keep in mind it is a struggle that has by no means ended.

On to SCAM business, our LocSec has introduced a new event, Small Computer Night. It is listed in this month’s calendar; there are more details in Wynn’s WAR Correspondence column. It promises to be a great get-together as well as a means to help catch up with technology.

There is also plenty of room for other SCAM events. As I stated in last month’s issue, if you have an idea for an event you’d like to see, go ahead and arrange it. Just be sure to give our Calendar Coordinator plenty of notice, so we can publish it in *The SCAM*. It really is just that simple.

**Do you know anyone who is interested in joining Mensa?** The prospective Mensan may take an Online Home Test for \$18 just to see how he or she does. To qualify for Mensa, one must take the proctored test, which currently runs \$40. National is now running a promotion during the month of October for those who have taken the Online Home Test. If, in October, the candidates brings in a receipt for the online test, the proctored test will cost only \$22. If you do know anyone who is interested in joining us, please pass the word along.

***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.

**Is it just the lack of recognition?** Does everyone need an ‘attaboy’ and a pat on the back from time to time? Couldn’t we have a phone app that periodically tells a person how appreciated they are and what a great job they’re doing even if they are a slacker and pretty much totally worthless?

But! But, we do have groups (*SIGs for some*) that back pat each other.

Is it world records? Who can kill the most or cause the most grief? Surely, no one can match Hitler or other despots of history. Maybe it’s just the fifteen minutes of glory.

*(I’m doing hard time without a chance of parole but, I’ve had my fifteen minutes in the spotlight---- How about you, 3410689?)*

Anyone can make their place in history simply by outdoing existing records or by doing something that no one else has done before,---not only 15 minutes but a lifetime in the spotlight.

Guinness keeps records and Ripley keeps records. If you can eat 500 hotdogs in 15 minutes or cough up a 10 inch fur ball you could be in the record books. If you can turn lead into gold by crushing it in your bare hands, survive in 200 below temps without food, clothing or shelter for at least 2 months, make more money in a week than Bill Gates has in his lifetime or more than Oprah spends at Taco Bell in a single drive-thru, you could be in the record books.

Ripley has records of who has hiccupped the longest, who has snored the loudest, who has the most flatulence, who has saved the most buttons, who has tattoos in the strangest places and naturally who is the fattest, the thinnest, the shortest and the tallest.

But, there are so, so many areas that are yet to be recorded. It just takes a little imagination and ‘voila’, you’re in the books forever.

Okay! Okay! Let’s see-----I like to eat—could I match—no, no---what’s his name could have a whole cow devoured before it stopped mooing--- how about tattoos?

Now, where could I put one that no one else---no, no, that’s much too tender and some fool has undoubtedly put one there already. How about running or jumping? No, that wouldn’t work. I’m not that much of an athlete and even if I was it would take a lifetime of training. Maybe something different like running backwards in the nude while eating a plate full of Coney dogs?—No!---I’m pretty sure Oprah already has that one.

How about saving things like *ahh----ahhhh-----ahhhhh ----*I know some idi-

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**H**umans need to measure things. Except for the Metric System (**Système international d'unités (SI)**), all measurement systems are and were human based. Until the introduction of SI in France during their revolution, countries, cities, towns, trades, and associations had their own systems of measurements. SI was intended to be a universal system. Gradually, most countries, including the U. S., adopted SI as their legal national measurement system.

All measurement systems have several basic units for length, mass or weight, volume, and time. Other units of measurement are derivative.

In the U. S., partially in Great Britain, and occasionally in other countries, **Traditional** systems are still used, even though the Metric System is officially recognized.

In our traditional measurement systems we use four systems of **weight** in the U. S. The common form is **Avoirdupois** (from the French for "to have weight") weight, **Troy** weight for precious metals, **Apothecaries'** weight for medicines and **Karat** or **Carat** weight for gems.

In Avoirdupois, 16 ounces make a **pound**. The pound is subdivided decimally or fractionally. For larger units, 25 pounds is a **quarter**, four quarters make a **hundredweight**, 100 pounds is hundredweight, 2,000 pounds is a **short ton** and 2,240 pounds is a **long ton**.

In Troy weights, 24 **grains** equals one **pennyweight**, 20 pennyweights are one **Troy ounce** and 12 ounces are one **Troy pound**. Apothecaries' weights are 20 **grains** in one **scruple**, three scruples in one **dram**, eight drams in one Troy ounce, and 12 Troy ounces in one Troy pound. The ounce and pound in Troy and Apothecaries' weights are the same, but they are not equal to the Avoirdupois weights.

**Weight or mass** and volume are intimately connected. "A **pint** is a pound the world around" is an old British saying that no longer applies in Britain or its colonies. In 1824 Britain established the **Imperial Pint** as 20 **fluid ounces**. The British rule did not affect the U. S. so we retained the pre-1824 standard of 16 fluid ounces to a pint. The ounce remained the same. Thus, if ordering pints of beer or ale in a British pub, you would get sloshed more quickly than if you were ordering pints in an American bar. Also, if driving in Canada, you would get fewer gallons of gas for your dollars than you would in the U. S. even though you would get the same amount of gas.

As noted, volume and weight are intimately related. Sixteen liquid ounces (water) weighs one pound and is measured as a pound or as a **pint**. One hundred pounds is **hundredweight**, 2000 pounds is a **ton**, and 2240 pounds are a

*(Continued on page 8)*

## SCAM Treasurer's Report

**May 31,  
2013**

<u>Account</u>	<u>Balance</u>
General Fund	\$712.41
Post Office Account	0.00
Reserve Fund	1607.74
RG Fund	533.24
<b><u>Total Funds Available:</u></b>	<b>\$2853.39</b>
<b><u>Deposits</u></b>	
Mensa Funding	\$148.43
Interest	0.07
<b><u>Withdrawals</u></b>	
Printing for Newsletter	\$142.67

## SCAM Treasurer's Report

**June 30,  
2013**

<u>Account</u>	<u>Balance</u>
General Fund	\$721.21
Post Office Account	0.00
Reserve Fund	1607.80
RG Fund	533.24
<b><u>Total Funds Available:</u></b>	<b>\$2862.25</b>
<b><u>General Fund</u></b>	
Mensa Funding	\$156.99
Interest	0.06
<b><u>Withdrawals</u></b>	
Printing for Newsletter	\$148.19

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**long ton** which is equal to **metric ton**.

For volumes, two pints make a **quart**. Quart is not a basic unit, it is literally one quarter of a **gallon**, hence its name. Larger volumes of liquids are measured in **barrels**. The volume of a barrel is dependent upon the liquid or dry goods that it contains. Most liquids are measured as 31.5 gallons, with a major exceptions of oil and petroleum products which are 42 gallons and beer which is 31 gallons. For chemicals and food the standard in the U. S. is 55 gallons. For wine, two barrels make a **hogshead**, four barrels are a **pipe** or a **butt**, and two pipes are a **ton**. Other commodities, especially dry goods, have their own definitions of barrels for example, a barrel of grain is 105 quarts and a barrel of cranberries is 87 quarts.

As weight equates to volume, for culinary purposes, one quarter of a pint is a **gill** or four ounces or a **cup**. In the U. S. most recipes are volumetric based on the cup where two cups make a pint and two pints for a quart. Larger units are eight quarts in a **peck** and four pecks to **bushel**. Smaller divisions are usually fractions of a cup - one-half, one-quarter, *etc.* Even smaller fractions are measured in **spoonfuls**, one **tablespoon** equaling one half of an ounce and three **teaspoons** are the same as one tablespoon. Thus a cup is 16 tablespoons and 60 **drops** go into one teaspoon. For even smaller measurement in recipes there is the **pinch** for which there is no standard.

For liquor drinkers, a **shot** is three tablespoons or 1½ ounces.

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ot has a backyard full of paper clips and some one else has a house so full of ink pens you can't walk through. Anyway, saving things takes time, a lot of time. Well! How about speed records---I could---no I can't.

Well, what about *ahh---ahhhh-----ahhhhhh*---Okay, Okay! Do they have a record of who can be the most frustrated? Hah! Now, how do I -----*ummm*? *Ummmmmm*---

A single AK-47 would not suffice. How about---*ummmmm*?

**W**ell, it's time again for another LocSec column. This month we have two rather important items to bring to the attention of the membership. The first is a quick survey of our existing members to see if there are any out there that do not have their own computer, but would like to have access to one on a fairly regular basis. I have floated the idea of implementing a visiting computer program within SCAM. The way it would work is that someone from SCAM would drop by your house, apartment, or assisted living facility for an hour or two once a month.

We would bring a laptop computer, a printer, and a wireless hotspot with us. You would have an account on the laptop already set up before the first visit with email and facebook accounts also set up. You could use your hour surfing the web, catching up with friends using email, and of course, facebook. (If you already email, and facebook, we skip the pre-visit set up.)

If anyone is interested in using this service, or knows of anyone who could use this service, please contact anyone on the ExComm and let us know. If no one needs this service, we'll kill it before it gets off the ground. If even a single member needs it, we'll push forward.

The second program we need to announce is directed at the younger members. My family will be hosting a small computer night. Anyone that attends will be able to see several small computers in action.

The first one to be covered will be the Arduino Uno. You can buy this computer at the local Radio Shack for \$30. If you shop online, you can get the price down to \$20. We will demonstrate setting it up, programming it, and using it to interface to the physical world in order to develop useful and interesting inventions. This machine is widely used by artists, hobbyists, and inventors as well as many engineers to produce original works.

If you bring your own Arduino with you, we'll give you a chance to program it and produce your first invention! To use it at home, you'll need access to a Windows PC, a Mac, or a Linux computer. We will show you how to install the needed software on a Windows PC and on a Linux computer.

The second computer to be covered is the Raspberry Pi. This is a \$25 general purpose Linux computer, but it requires more support equipment, such as a keyboard, mouse, power supply, and a display to get working. It uses regular computer components, so you may have spare items around. It can hook up to an HDMI connection on most newer televisions for displaying output.

Somewhere between the Arduino Uno and the Raspberry Pi is our third computer, the pcDuino. This 1GHZ computer comes with Linux already loaded

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# September 2013

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1	2 C.A.B.A.G.E.	3		5		
8	9 C.A.B.A.G.E.	10	11	12	13	14 GO!
15	16 C.A.B.A.G.E.	17	18	19	20	21 GO!
22	23 C.A.B.A.G.E.	24	25	26	27	28 GO!
29	30 C.A.B.A.G.E.					

## SCAM Calendar of Events for September 2013

### 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.

### 7th - Saturday 6:00 PM

#### SMALL COMPUTER NIGHT

Wynn Rostek will be hosting this event at his home, 3456 Willis Dr., Tusville. See article in this issue for more details.

Contact: Wynn, (321) 626-3670 for more details.

### 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 a soon-to-be announced venue. Our long-time location, Miyako's, is now out of business, so we are in the process of finding a new place.

Contact: George, 777-3721 for details.

#### MENSA TESTING

Aug. 17 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 Sept. 21.

Contact: Hank Rhodes, [mensatest@cfl.rr.com](mailto: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](mailto:the.rokkitsci@rocketmail.com)

## Membership Notes for September 2013

### **WELCOME BACK!**

Margaret Bartlett  
Chari Fry

Cynthia Weiser

### **SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAY GREETINGS**

1st	Wade Hollowell	13th	Eric Swiechowski
2nd	George Patterson	17th	Michael Fuller
7th	Leah Simpson	22nd	Paul Siefert
10th	R. Kent Buchanan	27th	Harry Martin
12th	Jacqueline Jacobs		
12th	Janet Mueck		

### **WAR CORRESPONDENCE**

*Continued*

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in it's 2GB flash memory and can be used as a general purpose Linux computer. It comes with the interfaces that the Raspberry PI has, as well as the Arduino low level, hardware control interfaces. These computers cost about \$60.

So come on over to our place **September 7th at 6:00 PM** and join us for the first small computer night. One lucky person will walk away with a free Arduino Uno computer. Call (321) 267-9391 and leave a message if you have questions, or you can email me at [wynn.rostek56@gmail.com](mailto:wynn.rostek56@gmail.com). We're looking forward to seeing you there.

### **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.**

**P**art of being somewhat active in the Cyberworld is experiencing the ubiquitous “chain e-mail” that fills the Inbox with political or religious opinions. They normally contain the admonition, “If you agree, pass it on; if you do not, just delete.” This article is about one I recently received.

The message, “*Comparison: 67 Years Later,*” contains photographs of two cities. First are a couple of photographs of Hiroshima, Japan taken immediately after the first atomic bomb nearly destroyed that city. The second set, taken last year, shows Hiroshima as a beautiful thriving city.

The final set consists of recent pictures taken of Detroit, Michigan, showing the destruction of this once-thriving city. This month’s cover shows one recent picture of each city contrasting Hiroshima and Detroit. Now, let’s get to the original e-mail sender’s message (provided after the picture show).

First, the sender poses a question: “*What has caused more long term destruction, the A-bomb or government welfare programs created to buy the votes of those who want someone to take care of them?*” He then states, “*Japan does not have a welfare system. Work for it or do without.*” Let us first address this statement. It is incorrect, as Japan *does* have a government welfare system; it has been in place since the 1920s.

The author’s implication is quite clear. It is obvious that Hiroshima was rebuilt into a beautiful city after that terrible bombing. Much of this was made possible through *government assistance*. Detroit, however, did not suffer from any military action. It is clear the author is stating that government welfare destroyed Detroit, as people *just don’t wanna work*. But, is that really true?

Public assistance in this country (“welfare”) was at its height in the 1960s and 70s, at least in the perception of the public. Many of the programs came from the “War on Poverty” declared during the Johnson Administration. At about that time, the City of Detroit was at the height of its prosperity.

Detroit became prosperous in large part due to the automotive industry. Virtually unchallenged by foreign markets, the automotive industry thrived, making its investors very wealthy while providing good union jobs allowing its workers to enjoy middle class life. So, what really happened to Detroit?

Most know that Detroit’s destruction is because U.S. automakers closed most of its manufacturing facilities there. Now, did they do this because their employees with perfectly good union jobs all decided that life would be better if they, instead of working, sat at home collecting those government welfare checks? Did these facilities then close because there were no workers to be found when everyone simply left en masse to collect their welfare benefits? I believe you *know* that answer.

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Next, the sender submits several statements to support his position. Let's examine one of them:

***“What one person receives without working for, another person must work for without receiving.”***

This particular statement just happens to be true. Consider the following example. Wal-Mart is undeniably America's number one retailer. It is also America's largest employer. Wal-Mart's current CEO is a man by the name of Mike Duke; his job is to manage all of Wal-Mart, certainly no small task. For this, he is paid about \$23.1 million annually, or more than 1000 times the median pay of a Wal-Mart associate (\$22,400 annually). While Duke is undeniably wealthy, and half of Wal-Mart's associates are paid below the poverty line, we cannot deny that both Duke and the Wal-Mart associates do work for their pay.

Now consider this: Four of the top ten richest Americans are members of the Walton family, whose wealth has come from the Wal-Mart fortune. Their net wealth ranges from \$26.1 billion to \$27.9 billion, for a total of \$107.1 billion. The “poorest” Walton is worth 22.5 times than Duke (Duke's annual salary times 50 – assuming a 50-year working life at the same rate of pay).

While the contrast between Duke's wealth and that of each of the Waltons does not approach that between Duke and the average Wal-Mart associate, there is a huge difference. The Waltons did not work to earn their fortune, while Duke and the associates did work for their pay. Now, let's now take another look at that statement:

***“What one person receives without working for, another person must work for without receiving.”***

Now apply this statement: *What did Mike Duke and all the other Wal-Mart associates work for without receiving, so that each of the Waltons could receive without working for? Yet, one could argue that, because Wal-Mart is in the private sector, its profits do not come from taxes (and because of this, perhaps, it should not be our concern).*

Now, consider one more issue. Most of those eligible for public assistance do work full time. Half of all Wal-Mart associates earn less than \$22,400 annually. Of those who rely on their Wal-Mart job as their sole income, they are below the poverty line and are eligible for public assistance (yes, *Welfare*). Thus, as a taxpayer who does not even shop there, I am now *required* to subsidize Wal-Mart's payroll. But is this because the Wal-Mart associate is too “lazy” to get a “real” job? I think not. Rather, it is because of a business decision intended to enhance the Walton fortune by shifting some of their costs of doing business to us taxpayers.

Yet, in all fairness, Wal-Mart is by no means alone. Wal-Mart serves as merely one example of the tactics of Corporate America as a whole. Too many engage in the practice of maximizing their profits at the expense of their employees and the

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**T**his month, I bring your attention to the birth month of a mathematician that most people probably never heard of, yet made valuable contributions to our world of today.

James Waddell Alexander was born on September 19, 1888 in Sea Bright, New Jersey and was the son of a noted painter, John White Alexander. His forefathers were well-known Princetonians, and when you visit Princeton, you can see that a street and two buildings at Princeton University are named after them. He was brought up in New York and Paris, where his parents mingled with the likes of Claude Debussy, Oscar Wilde, Henry James, and Auguste Rodin. He completed his undergraduate degrees and PhD in mathematics and physics at Princeton University. He was a first class student and a fiery speaker for left-wing causes (which came back to haunt him during the McCarthy era). During WW I, he joined the army and rose to captain, at the technical staff of the Ordnance Department of Aberdeen Proving Ground. He was posted to Europe, where he met Natalia Levitzkaya who became his wife. After WW I, he returned to Princeton to become a full professor. Being considerably wealthy (sigh.. many of us Mensans aspire to that) he negotiated a smaller teaching load at half the salary. Later, he moved to the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS), where he became a colleague of Albert Einstein and John von Neumann. Alexander specialized in the field called *situs analysis*, or topology.

In the 1920's, Alexander studied a problem that another Alexander faced more than two millennia earlier. At that time, we are told that Alexander the Great was deliberating how to open the Gordian knot. Impatient as he was (why don't knots fall like nations?), he chopped the knot in two with a sword. Like Alex the Great, the scouts, mountaineers, fishermen, and sailors tie and untie knots all the time and are not concerned with the higher mathematics involved. But mathematicians like elegant solutions and not brute-force ones, so knot theory became a sub-discipline of topology.

The central concern in mathematical knot theory was (and still remains) whether two knots are different or if one of them can be transformed into the other without cutting and reattaching strands. Whether a tuft that 'looks like a knot' is in fact an 'unknot', because it can be disentangled by working the strings, without cutting them. Just a tuft of string or tangle of threads you say? ... 'frayed' knot. Magicians can amaze their audiences by making what appears to be a knot (but actually just a tangle of threads) suddenly untie (I'm 'knot' making this up).

This is where Alexander the Not-so Great 'comes back into the story. He discovered polynomials which turned out to be suitable for the classification of  
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knots. If the polynomials are different, the corresponding knots are also different. He published his paper on his analyses as the "Topological Invariants of Knots and Links" ('Knot' the missing link) in the 1928 edition of the *Transactions of the American Mathematical Society*. Unfortunately, the reverse did 'knot' hold true: different knots may possess identical polynomials. So, The Queen of the Sciences said to the mathematicians: "Knots to you!"

Knot Theory is an example of a mathematical theory that was developed before applications were ever considered (this often happens in mathematics). Useful application of knot theory surfaced only with time. Molecular biologists study the ways in which the long stringy forms of DNA molecule wind and twist so as to fit into the cell nucleus. Quantum physicists suggested string theory (which actually incorporates some of Alexander's work) to make quantum mechanics and gravity compatible.

During WW II, Alexander worked as a civilian for the U.S. Army Air Force. After that, he became something of a recluse. He gave up his professorship at IAS and became a permanent member without pay. During 1951 and the persecution by Senator McCarthy of people with left-wing political views, Alexander retired and disappeared from New York. One of his last public actions was the signing of a petition in 1954 in support of J. Robert Oppenheimer, the famous physicist and leader of scientists at the Manhattan Project, who was suspected of Communist sympathies.

As a younger man, Alexander typified what we might see in many members for Mensa. He was an avid alpine climber, scaling more than two hundred peaks in Colorado and then in Europe. Today you can see "Alexander's Chimney" at Long Peak in Colorado. He and his wife had a chalet near the French resort of Chamonix so that they could climb the French Alps in the summer. Alexander even took to climbing the Princeton buildings.... from the outside. Often he reached his office located on the top floor of the mathematics building, through the window (talk about 'higher' mathematics). Sometimes he left by the same way, especially when an unwelcome visitor was waiting in front of his office.

Alexander was a proficient skier and loved baseball. He was forced to give up sports when he contracted polio. So he pursued more sedentary pastimes such as music, photography, and amateur radio. The design of a radio receiver circuit is named after him. He and his wife owned a beautiful home where they entertained friends from the Princeton faculty, the world of art, and the business world. Alexander would dance the tango while waiters with trays threaded their way through the guests (sort of like threads of a knot....). After his wife's death in 1967, Alexander's health declined and he succumbed to pneumonia in 1971.

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## FROM THE VILLAGE IDIOT

*Continued*

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American taxpayer alike. This is not a “Wal-Mart issue” but a comment on what we are willing to allow in the name of “free enterprise” while blaming the less fortunate for their – and our – troubles.

To conclude, Detroit’s demise is an example, not of welfare run amuck, but the result of corporate greed. It will be just that same greed that ultimately destroys America.

## WHAT’S KNOT TO LIKE?

*Continued*

*(Continued from page 16)*

As a multi-talented mathematician and gifted lecturer, Alexander contributed much to our world of science and to the world of entertaining and making people enjoy life. He was kind to his students and quite noncompetitive toward his colleagues. He spoke for what he believed in and tried to support those who shared his ideals. When you get right down to it that is ‘knot’ such a bad legacy for the Alexander that most people never hear about.

References:

1. Devlin, Keith. *The Millennium Problems*. New York: Basic Books, 2002.
2. Szpiro, George G. *Poincare’s Prize*. New York: The Penguin Group, 2008.
3. Hatcher, Allen. *Algebraic Topology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

## THE TENTH STORY

*Continued*

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ber columns, and

- Oracle (Orange County Mensa) had a puzzle page and once again, local member columns.

Sensing a pattern here? You can participate without attending meetings by writing a column for your local newsletter, or just enjoying what others are already providing – as full members, you aren’t restricted to your local group! Let me know of any ideas you may have, or any topics you would like me to cover in future columns.

Thomas George Thomas

[RVC10@us.mensa.org](mailto:RVC10@us.mensa.org)

**A**merican Mensa is continually seeking out new benefits for its membership. In the most recent Mensa Bulletin, for example, two new member benefits were announced (discounts on HP computers and products, and discounts on LifeBound study materials). These are in addition to 31 other benefits listed on the American Mensa website ( [us.mensa.org/benefits](http://us.mensa.org/benefits) ), including a variety of discounts on car rentals, hotels, educational materials, magazine subscriptions, insurance and more, plus the Mensa Store for a variety of Mensa-branded merchandise. The Mental Floss subscription alone saved me \$28 off the price I'd been paying.

Now this is all very nice, and a careful shopper could probably earn enough discounts to offset the cost of their membership. But frankly, none of those influenced my decision to join Mensa, nor I suspect were they a factor in your decision to join. For me, the best benefit of belonging to Mensa is its membership.

The most tangible aspect of that, of course, is the social setting. Dinners, games nights, speaker evenings, picnics and socials, and of course, the Regional and Annual Gatherings, all provide opportunities to meet other members face-to-face. But fewer than half of our members take advantage of those opportunities. Members have expressed varied reasons for this: the distances are too great, the activities are not at convenient times or are not interesting, they don't really like socializing, or many others.

Fortunately, alternate opportunities to connect with other members in new ways are continually growing. I already discussed social networking in last month's column. Another great way to expand beyond the limits of your local group is to take advantage of the Local Group Newsletter repository on the American Mensa website ( [us.mensa.org/newsletters](http://us.mensa.org/newsletters) ). There are recent issues online from 96 of the 132 Local Groups in American Mensa, and many of them have substantial items of interest. Just picking five issues at random, I find:

- MENSAGENDA (Minnesota Mensa) had columns about many of their Special Interest Groups (SIGs) as well as numerous regular columns;
- Redwood Empire News (Redwood Empire Mensa) also had interesting monthly member columns and reprints from member blogs;
- "The As Yet Un-renamed Newsletter" (formerly Sally Hemings Memorial Newsletter of Thomas Jefferson Mensa) had an article about an interesting local event called a "Corn Boil" which read like a one-day Regional Gathering, plus a Geo Trivia photo series;
- MIND (Central Indiana Mensa) had a poetry page and again, regular mem-

*(Continued on page 17)*

**T**he ExComm met at the home of Karen Freiberg at 876 Buxmont Ct., Rockledge, FL 32955, on Tuesday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013; called to order by LocSec Wynn Rostek at 6:03 pm.

**Members Present:** Wynn Rostek, Terry Valek, Karen Freiberg, and George Lebovitz.

**Guests:** Zanne Rostek.

The minutes of the June, 2013 minutes were approved. Note that since we did not have an ExComm meeting in July, this one serves as the August meeting.

**Officer/Committee Reports (details may be found in the footnotes):**

**Treasurer's Report**<sup>1</sup>. Dennis Logan submitted the reported via email.

**Testing Coordinator**, Hank Rhodes, reported via email<sup>2</sup>.

Wynn proposed that we amend the bylaws to allow making motions via email. Seconded. Approved.

Wynn proposed that we amend the bylaws to allow seconding motions via email. Seconded. Approved.

Wynn proposed that we amend the bylaws to allow voting via email. Seconded. Approved.

George proposed that we amend the bylaws to allow conducting ExComm meetings electronically. Seconded. Approved.

Wynn will check with Mike Moakley and George Patterson to establish the feasibility of enacting the above proposals to ensure they are in compliance with state and national guidelines.

It was noted that the SCAM Bylaws are in need of editing to be in compliance with the NY state guidelines. Wynn proposed that we establish a deadline of 6 months in order to bring the SCAM bylaws into compliance. Seconded. Approved.

Wynn's earlier suggestion that the ExComm consider outreach to members who are home bound, unable to easily interact, and possibly in need of technological assistance be published in the SCAM as a first attempt to contact any members who may be in need of such assistance.

The next meeting was set for Wednesday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, at the home of Karen Freiberg, 876 Buxmont Ct., Rockledge, FL 32955 at 6:00 pm. The meeting was adjourned at 6:16 pm.

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1. General Fund: \$721.21, RG Fund: \$533.24, Reserve Fund: \$1,607.80, Total Assets: \$2,862.25.

2. Contacted 8 candidates for the first time, 6 candidates for the second or third time; tested 0. Next test session will be Saturday, August 17, 2013 at the Central Brevard Library in Cocoa.