

The

SCAM

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2001 Newsletter Owl Winner



And the winners are...

Volume 20, No. 6

June, 2002

*The
Newsletter*
SCAM
space coast area mensa

Editor J.T. Moran
Assembly/Circulation Helen Lee Moore
Events Coordinator Ellen Paul
Cover Artist Desperately Seeking Someone
Proofreader The Crew Askew

We will appreciate your submissions legibly handwritten, typed, in e-mail text, or on 3.5 disk in IBM text or word-processing format. We can receive your submissions by mail at: P.O. Box 457, Sharpes FL 32959, or submit via e-mail to: morwood@cfl.rr.com

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Happy June Birthday

02 – S. Glen Martinie
03 – Joyce Drew
05 – H. Walter Hower
06 – Wilbur Sweeten, Jr.
08 – R. Jex
17 – Art Belefant
17 – Ellen Rogers
20 – Thomas Moor
21 – Richard Kerlin
24 – Sam Kirschten
25 – Takeya Southerlan
25 – Timothy Thompson
28 – Mike Surdyk
29 – Mark Murphy



Welcome to Mensa and SCAM

Mike Surdyk – Merritt Island

Welcome Back to SCAM

Lennis Bearden – Melbourne
Thomas Moor – Indian Harbor Beach
James Travis – Palm Bay
Richard Ward – Melbourne Beach



**On the
Firing Line**



**J.T. Moran
SCAM Editor**

A month or so ago, this letter appeared in the *InterLoc*, the information newsletter of American Mensa (available to any member for free - just subscribe.) It was written by Mensan Richard Wylie, from out west:

“While on a business trip in Florida, I decided to spend a Wednesday evening (March 6) with some (eight) Space Coast Area Mensans. We met to play cards in the small coffee shop inside a much larger bookstore at the Merritt Island Mall. I bought a mango smoothie as my contribution toward payment for use of the tables.

I didn’t bother writing down anyone’s name, and most of them have probably forgotten mine, but I felt that I was among friends while I was there. In other words, no one’s

a stranger in Mensa.

The card game most of them played is called Hand and Foot, and its complexity reminded me of the Fizzbin card game described in a *Star Trek* episode. One advantage of the Mensa environment is that they knew all about the *Star Trek* card game; in fact, they remembered it a little better than I did.

Everyone was patient with my needing extensive tutoring, and I helped my team win two rounds. I told them that I was going to tell the rest of the world that they had exposed me to an extremely complicated card game, and they indicated that I should take a look at Mao, which they said has much more elaborate rules than Hand and Foot.

The Mensa environment certainly has special qualities. The arcane jokes, the obsession with trivia, and the acceptance of individuality number among them. The opportunity to find that special environment while away from home is certainly one of the “member benefits” of Mensa.”

Richard hit the nail on the head, and brings a second point out into the light: that the behavior of our individual local members has an impact on the image the group presents to Mensa as a whole. It is, in fact, one of the three most important ways our group is presented.

For a long time, the only way to show off the group to the whole of Mensa was through its newsletter. In our case, it has been the luck of the draw that we not only have some great authors, they are willing to contribute to *The SCAM*. We have also had a long line of superlative Editors to put together *The SCAM* every month from those contributions.

Nowadays, we also have the World Wide Web to give even greater distribution of our group’s image, and having the newsletter online gives many people the opportunity to enjoy the products of our great columnists’ fertile minds.

Add all these things together, and I can tell you that we demonstrate the best qualities of Mensa.



**Still Lurking
About.....**



**Jon Warner,
LocSec**

As I write this short missive, the election ballots have not yet been counted. I have no idea of the outcome of the SCAM election or if I was even re-elected. So, on with the column.

Many of you have probably wondered about the logo in this column. It's the penny farthing bicycle logo used in the old TV show, *The Prisoner*, starring Patrick McGeehan. I loved that show and when, years ago in Delaware, the local PBS station showed all 17 episodes, I recorded them on tape and now have a couple books about the show. For those of you who never saw it, the show was about a British secret agent who resigns and is planning a vacation. He never makes it. He's captured, taken to a remote spot, which is called "The Village", and cannot escape. Nobody has a name, only a number ... he's number 6. Every week there is a new number 2, but you never get to see number 1. The logo on my column heading is a replica of the identification badge everyone in the show wears. Since I'm the LocSec of SCAM, I'm number 1! The beginning of the show always had this dialogue:

"Where am I?"

In the Village.

"What do you want?"

Information.

"Whose side are you on?"

That would be telling. We want information... information... information...

"You won't get it."

By hook or by crook we will.

"Who are you?"

The new Number 2.

"Who is Number 1?"

You are Number 6.

"I AM NOT A NUMBER, I AM A FREE MAN!"

Considering the quantity of numbers we are represented by in different places, these should be words to live by.

More to come (maybe... depending on the election results).



**Minutes of the
ExComm Meeting**



**Clara Woodall-
Moran, RecSec**

Call to order 15:05. Present: All members. J.T. Moran and Pat Aronna visiting.

Previous minutes approved – *unanimous* vote

Officer Reports

LocSec – MERF sent us certificate of thanks for participation in scholarship program

Treasurer – presented printed report of accounts

AssistantLocSec, RecSec, Member-at-Large. No report

Committees/Volunteers

Editor – no word yet about Newsletter PRP nominations

Scholarship – proceeding on course for August SCAM scholarship award

Membership, Testing – one tested last month, gained a few new members. Some discussion ensued. Stated that a call for additional proctors would appear in the SCAM.

SIGs – reminder of SIGs night and thanks for support. New ideas for next SIGs party nights.

RG – more registrations coming in and the process is gaining momentum. Thanks to Suzanne Leichtling for agreeing to be the Games coordinator.

SIGHT – assisted a visitor from Akron, Ohio.

Bylaws, NomElCom, Publicity, Ways/Means – No report

Old Business: Rita *motioned* to confirm George Patterson, Sam Kirschten, and Joe Smith for the audit committee; Helen *seconded*. Vote *unanimous*.

New Business - None

Open Forum/Announcements - None

Next meeting: 3:00PM Sunday, June 9, 2002 at Rita's in Palm Bay.

Clara: *Motion* to adjourn, *second* Helen, vote *unanimous*. Close: 15:24



We Have...



Our Winners!

Don May 17th, the SCAM NomElCom met and counted the ballots for the 2002 - 2003 ExComm. The results alphabetically are:

Elected:

Rita Johnson-Aronna

Helen Lee Moore

Joseph Smith

Jon Warner

Clara Woodall-Moran

The results and ballots will be kept on file for 60 days. Challenges must be filed within that period.



***The Casebook of
Anthony Chianti,
Private Eye***



Ken Thornton-Smith
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The Wabasso Triangle - Episode 9, Rev. B
A Concise History of Pasta

It should not have happened, but one thing is certain: it did happen. Defying all known rules of grammar and positively dripping with clichés, the Wabasso Triangle has struck again.

Anthony Chianti, Licensed Private Eye and Indian River Community Pasta Detective, reporting:

It was Monday. Another perfectly ordinary Monday. I spent the afternoon at the beach in response to a rumor that some illicit Liberian Linguini had been washed up. OK, the rumor was in 1983, but you have to make sure.

Back at the office, things were looking grim. My desk was piled high. I mean, like, stuff was backed up to the point where I now had sixteen unfinished crosswords and no end in sight.

The pressure was too much – I grabbed last Thursday’s paper and practically ran out the door. Little did I know that, thanks to the Wabasso Triangle, this would be an evening to remember.

As I swung into Dr. Pepperoni’s parking lot, the car died. Not again. I cranked it, but... nothing. It hasn’t run properly since I put on that Nascar bumper sticker: “We’ll never forget you, Dale Eckerd.”

And, whoa, it’s incredibly bright out there. I put my sunglasses on – perhaps it’s some new parking lot security. The car wobbled and lifted straight up. I looked out the driver’s window, and then down – that must be Sebastian, fast getting smaller. There was a “Whoop, Whoop”, followed by a loud thump on the roof. Looming straight ahead was a large loading bay. Years of Pasta Detective training paid off as I instinctively knew this wasn’t Dr. Pepperoni’s parking lot.

I came to, still groggy, and found myself strapped to a large table and surrounded by bug-eyed teenagers with green hair. Something was wrong somewhere, and for once it wasn’t Detective Inspector “Raving” Ravioli of the Serious Pasta Crimes Squad breathing down my neck.

“Let me outta here!” I wriggled.

“Rethistance is fertile!” Three of them spoke at once.

“Rethistance?” I queried.

“Yeth, apparently, ith fertile!” They tilted their heads from thide to thide and warbled.

A lab-coated greeny came in the door, “The genetic material confirms our remote DNA scan, but we have bad news – bonehead Earthling broke our brain probe!”

“Then we must interrogate the thuthpect.”

“OK, thuthpect, what did you do with it?”

“Huh?”

“Mitherable Earthling thuthpect – what did you do with our landing thite?”

“Do with what?”

“Thilly, you know what we talk about.”

“I have no idea who you are or what you want.” I took the fifth.

“Earthling thcum report no knowledge of landing thite,” They mumbled among themselves in a high-pitched warble, “...and no one here can repair Ronco Brain Probe...”

“OK, thuthpect Earthling, here is propothal: we tell you our thide of the shtory if you tell us your thide of the shtory. Also, we tell you answers, like 17 Acroth, ‘Former Italian Bigwig’, is ‘MUTHOLINI’, do we have a deal?”

I nodded – these guys are pretty smart.

“But firth we need to know what ‘Extrovert’ mean?”

“Extrovert? Er, you mean like an outgoing personality...?”

“OK, that make thense,” they warbled and nodded to each other, “... we think maybe ‘Extrovert’ is French for Bright Green so we pretty of-fended reading Mr. Freud,” they said, pointing to their pea-green perms.

A gray-haired bug stepped forward, “OK, Earthling thuthpect. This hithtory of what happen: After we build prototype stone landing thite for our mothership we move location and build new, better landing thite.”

“Warble, warble,” they all said together.

“New landing thite in place you call... warble? OK, new landing thite in place you call ‘Thithily’. And you have Thithilian genes...”

“Huh? These are Wranglers...?”

“No thtupid, we can tell from your thmelly DNA that Thithily is where your people come from. So, what you do with landing thite? Huh?”

“Warble, warble,” they said, excitedly.

“I don’t know what you mean by landing thite,” I tried to defend myself.

“Landing thite really big – look like wide big thircle made out of advanced geopolymer material. Some bits stick up and some bits sit on top. We call landing thite... warble? OK, in your ridiculouth language landing thite called ‘Henge’.

“We try wood, but wood rot quickly on your wet planet. Then we try stone, but it too ugly – it look like style of décor we call: ‘Early Government Repo’. Also, it too damn cold, so we relocate landing thite to Thithily.

“Then we try new contemporary design using advanced and very thpensive geopolymer composite material we call ‘Pathta’.

“So, we call landing thite ‘Pathta-Henge’. Now you know what we talk about, so what you do with landing thite?”

“Pastahenge? You made a UFO landing site out of Pasta?”

“Thure we did, new material last longer and it look killer – better than old stone prototype. Only, when we come back, new award-winning Pathta-Henge design gone. Last report said thtupid locals eat entire landing thite, but we don’t believe as no one eat advanced geopolymer materials like Pathta. For a start, way too thpensive. Also, stick to teeth.”



“Let me get this straight – you built a flying saucer landing site, a great big circle like Stonehenge, only in Sicily, and made out of pasta, and now you want it back?”

“Too right we want it back, buthter, we still making payments on construction material. You think Pathta grow on trees?”

“Hang on, when did you build this?”

“Warble – warble? OK, thuthpect, in your years we build Pathta-Henge 7,000 BC.

“I remember it well: we finish around teatime on a Thatursday afternoon. Then we land Mothership on Pathta-Henge with terrific thunset backdrop and hand out crayons for coloring competition. I came second, but only because Tiramithu cheated, otherwise I won fair and thquare.”

“We do not cheat!”

“Yeth you do!”

Suddenly, the whole mass of skinny aliens divided in half and took up position behind two of the elders.

“No we don’t, nyah, nyah!”

Before I knew what was happening, the place erupted with green hair and skinny arms and legs flying everywhere. I wriggled my right arm free and unstrapped myself. They were so busy fighting I slipped off the table and out of the room.

At the end of the corridor was the dock with my faithful 76 Buick Testudo, unguarded. I pulled several levers until the car started to move, just allowing me time to jump in as it accelerated backwards.

The bright lights came on again and I watched out the window as we were gently lowered onto the roof of Dr. Pepperoni’s Fine Italian Dining and Package Lounge.

“Neat landing, Earthling Thcum!” said the green-haired guy in the passenger seat, “Oh yeth, I claim Pretty-kewl Athylum!”

Well, amazing but true, and it can only have happened here. That’s about it for this month’s update from the Wabasso Triangle.

Anthony Chianti, Indian River Community Pasta Detective, signing off.
Bed 14, Psycho Ward, Indian River Memorial Hospital.



Bob-At-Large:



**My Not-Quite-So
Close Encounters**

by

**Bob Tuck,
Member-at-Large**

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Recently, a survey included in the U.S. National Science Foundation's biennial report on the state of science understanding, research, education, and investment, found that the belief in "pseudoscience" is common in America. The study found that science literacy has improved only slightly since the previous survey and that seventy percent of American adults do not understand the scientific process.

The survey of more than fifteen hundred adults found that although fifty-seven percent of those surveyed disagreed that UFOs came to Earth bearing aliens, about thirty percent believe that some reported objects in the sky are really space vehicles from other (presumably extraterrestrial) civilizations.

Meanwhile, not long ago, folks in Australia's Outback Territory claimed to have seen colored lights in the sky, cigar-shaped and hat-like objects moving erratically, and a spate of triangular-shaped craft. According to the accounts, such sightings had occurred almost nightly over the preceding month.

One woman, on her way home to Alice Springs, even reported that three silvery creatures approached her after a triangle-shaped craft landed in a small field. Understandably, she panicked and drove off – or so she said.

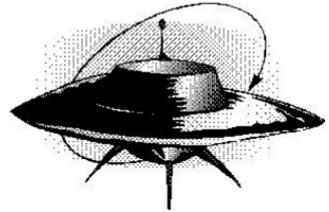
Another person supposedly inadvertently photographed a "an object, like a big, black ball, in the background while taking pictures of work at a nearby bridge."

A few weeks later, some Beijing residents contacted local media to report four UFOs surrounded by a bright yellow light hovering in the sky above the Chinese capital. They reportedly were flying at a height of ten kilometers and moving in pairs.

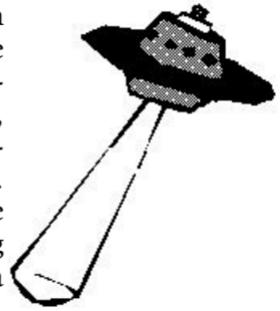
I cannot pretend to explain these various reports, nor the tens of thousands of previous accounts of unidentified flying objects that have appeared during the past decades -- indeed, centuries. Explanations of "silvery creatures" associated with such encounters are beyond my ken. However, I have experienced three briefly baffling sights – the last one in daylight – that for fleeting moments threatened to undermine my world-view.

Well, actually, my first not-so-close encounter puzzled me for many years.

It happened during a total lunar eclipse. An astronomer friend, Glenn Sandlin, and I were on the roof of our high-rise apartment building in downtown Washington, D.C. We watched the eclipse. From our vantage



point we could see many well-known Washington landmarks and the lights of Andrews Air Force Base to the southeast. Suddenly, two glowing, orange, triangular lights silently streaked overhead, traveling within seconds from southeast to northwest. My companion and I were dumbfounded. To me, the blunt-pointed triangles seemed to be separate, flying in formation, and slightly banking together. My friend thought them to be part of a single object.



No subsequent reports of strange, fast moving, silent, glowing objects showed up in the press. Apparently, we were the only witnesses to the phenomenon that April night. To be sure, Glenn and I spent hours discussing matter among ourselves. We didn't come up with a satisfying **explanation**. Neither of us entertained thoughts that our eerie experience stemmed from anything other than an interesting, natural, terrestrial source. Something ordinary happened to show itself to us under unusual, unfamiliar circumstances.

Over a decade and a half later, a second experience solved the mystery for me.

In November 1985, Halley's Comet was making its appearance over El Paso, Texas, and I went out with my binoculars into my apartment's parking lot to observe the object as it drifted through the constellation Taurus the Bull. Having examined the celestial fuzz-ball, I happened to glance overhead. Above me, high over El Paso, a silent formation of perhaps a dozen glowing, somewhat rounded, triangles was merrily making its way amid the stars, heading toward Juarez, Mexico.



Fortunately, my binoculars had a strap, and the strap was around my neck; otherwise, they might not have survived the drop to the concrete.

A quick inspection of the overhead spectacle with the binoculars proved rewarding. The objects resolved into a formation of Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*), their white bellies reflecting the combined lights of El Paso and Juarez while their dark wings and necks remained invisible to the unaided eye.

Perhaps two of their kin had passed over Washington one April night some years past.

Soundless lights sweeping in formation across dark night skies provide little reference points to judge distance, size, or speed. Human eyes work poorly after sundown. However, a great shimmering disk flashing on and off as it hovers over an adjacent field in late afternoon daylight evokes

some pretty primitively basic emotions.

I know.

I was driving home from my office at Cerro Coso Community College, Ridgecrest, California, heading west across the Indian Wells Valley, toward the tiny town of Inyokern. Directly ahead, the sun was about to plunge behind the Sierra Nevada range. To my right lay the vast expanse of the China Lake Naval Weapons Center's testing range, site of many top-secret military projects and home of the famed "Sidewinder" missile. On my left stretched acres and acres of alfalfa fields, dotted with occasional outbuildings and elaborate irrigation apparatuses. Nothing remarkable or unusual, so far.



Then, ahead, above the alfalfa, in plain view, an enormous, silvery, circular apparition materialized. Then it dematerialized. And re-materialized. And vanished. And reappeared.

Keeping a firmer grip on the steering wheel than on my guts, I guided the car to the shoulder of California Highway 78, almost directly opposite the incredible marvel. I stared at the astounding sight across the deserted road.

Some years before, I had read an account of a similar puzzling phenomenon, written by the late maverick zoologist and popular writer Ivan T. Sanderson. He asserted that this "object" must have been artificial and controlled by non-terrestrial intelligence. Having earlier disproved at least one of Sanderson's improbable claims (about a tropical lizard: that's part of another story), I resolved to crack this one too. Fortunately, my trusty



binoculars lay on the console beside me. I shakily grabbed them.

What I saw proved more wondrous to me than "little green men." I half expected to observe some sort of super-secret military device (and promptly be hustled away by the CIA or their kindred agents). Instead, my binoculars revealed a stupendous globe of small birds, all swirling in near-perfect unison, turning first to present their dark, silver gray backs to me, then swerving so that their narrow profiles became well-nigh invisible in the late afternoon sunlight. Their amazing coordination, doubtless while they feasted together upon multitudes of insects swarming over the greening alfalfa, created the astounding vision of a gigantic solid *something* winking in and out of existence right before my eyes.

So much for Sanderson's observations (again). So much for my personal "encounters" to date. If I meet any "silvery creatures" in the future, you'll be among the first to know.



***The Gourmet's
Guide:***

***Pots and Pans:
Part Two***

by

Art Belefant

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(belefant@juno.com)

The first attempt to improve heat conductivity and make the heating across the bottom more uniform was to put a layer of copper on the outside of the bottom of the vessel. Although copper has a much better heat conductivity than stainless steel, this approach was not successful because the copper layer was too thin. Copper bottoms on stainless steel pots can be classified as a decorative item only. The appearance of the shining copper is supposed to make the kitchen more "professional" looking. This type of pot is still made.

Then a thick aluminum plate was provided on the bottom of stainless steel pots. Aluminum is not as good a conductor as is copper, but the thick layer did distribute the heat more effectively.

Finally the manufacturers came up with laminated sheets. Usually it is an aluminum sheet between two stainless steel sheets, although other combinations are available such as two layers of aluminum beneath a stainless steel sheet. The interior stainless steel sheet can be had bare or have a Teflon coating. The effectiveness of heat transfer of these pots is a function of the thickness of the aluminum and stainless steel layers.

Less common these days are copper pots. At one time copper was the standard material of pots in Western kitchens. Of all the common metals, copper is the best conductor. Copper pots can be had in various thickness of metal. The thicker the copper, the better the heat transfer. Copper is soft and can be damaged easily. To keep copper pots looking elegant, and most people with copper pots display them in the open and not put them in drawers, takes a great deal of polishing.

More importantly, when cooking some foods in bare copper pots, poisonous compounds are formed. To prevent the foods from contacting the copper, traditionally, copper pots were tin lined. Unfortunately the tin lining is soft, thus susceptible to damage from utensils used in the pot, and soon wears away requiring the copper pot to be re-tinned, a service which is not now readily available. Some copper pots are now made with a stainless steel lining.

The Teflon lining used on many aluminum and stainless steel pots is also susceptible to damage from utensils and wears away in time. Once the lining has been damaged or worn away, the pot must be used as an unlined pot or replaced. I know of no re-Tefloning service.

To suggest what pots some one should have in his/her kitchen battery would be presumptuous of me. Most, if not all, of my readers already have a kitchen full of pots acquired over period of time. The matched sets of pots that are displayed in stores or featured in catalogs are pretty, but not truly functional. They are fine for display; however, a serious cook will want a specific type of pot for the specific type cooking done.

The following list is what I have found to be the best for me although it may not suit you. None of my pots are lined.

Three small cast-iron frying pans. These are used for frying eggs, small quantities of shrimp, potatoes, or kippers. Several are needed, as more than one dish at a time may be prepared. I use two at a time when making crepes.

A large cast-iron frying pan. For large quantities of the above items. It is also used to cook a pound of bacon at one time.

A cast-iron griddle. For pancakes of all sorts. Many years ago it was dropped and small piece was broken off. It has not been replaced and is still in use.

A 3/4-quart stainless steel sauce pan. To cook oatmeal and other hot cereals or boil an egg. Mine has a thick aluminum bottom.

Two 1-quart stainless steel sauce pans. A multi-use pot. They are good for boiling vegetables, eggs, and soups. Mine have copper bottoms which I gave up polishing many years ago.

Two 2-quart stainless steel sauce pans. For larger quantities of the above, also with a copper bottom.

Two cast-iron sauce pans. One is 1-quart in size, the other, two quarts. They are used for sautéing, deep fat frying, and browning meats.

A sheet steel wok.

Several stainless steel, cast iron, aluminum, and glass pots of various capacities with heatproof handles for use in the oven.

A stainless steel frying pan which is never used for frying. It is used for poaching eggs and steaming asparagus and artichokes. It too has a copper bottom.

Two cast iron Dutch ovens which can be used on top of the stove and in the oven.

A large copper-bottom stainless steel stock pot. Rarely used nowadays, but it comes in handy when I make cactus pear syrup.

I never wash my cast-iron pots. If they are used for frying all that is necessary is to wipe them out with a paper towel while they are warm. If they are used to make a sticky food like goulash, then soaking in hot water and a wiping out will get them clean.

Most of the copper-bottom stainless steel pots were inherited from Rita's mother. They must be at least 75 years old, and they are still serviceable. This attests to the ruggedness of stainless steel. Some of the cast-iron pots are over 50 years old, attesting to the durability of that material.

One last item. Several years ago I made a sauce pan to end all sauce pans. It is one quart in size and made of sterling silver.

Silver is the best heat conductor of all the metals. Conduction of heat is so good that in making a sauce in this pan I must use a lower heat than with any other pan. Also, because of the excellent conductivity, the heat can be adjusted instantaneously. Silver is also nonpoisonous and does not react to most foods, so the pot need not be lined. I can use any utensil in the pot without fear of damaging it. I can cook, fry, or boil in it without the food sticking to it.

I do not polish the pot.



June 2002 Calendar of SCAM 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.

Regular Events

C.A.B.A.G.E. (North) at Barnes and Noble: Monday the 3rd & 17th

6:00PM, Merritt Island, across from Merritt Square Mall

C.A.B.A.G.E. (North) at Books-A-Million: Wednesday, the 12th & 26th

6:00PM, Merritt Square Mall, Merritt Island

C.A.B.A.G.E. (South) at Books-A-Million: Wednesday, the 19th

7:00PM, Post Commons, Wickham Road, Melbourne

Spend the evening with friends playing games, drinking gourmet coffee, and devouring sweet treats, and perhaps even reading a bit. It's free (except for any purchases), no pets, and outside smoking.

C.A.B.A.G.E. North Host: Karen Freiberg

C.A.B.A.G.E. South Host: Jon Warner

8th	12:30 p.m.	Mensa Entrance Exam
Saturday	\$30.00	NS/NP

Contact Clara Woodall-Moran for full information about testing for Mensa.

Clara Woodall-Moran

8th	6:00 p.m.	Great Books Discussion
Saturday	Free	NS/NP

Come out to *Barnes and Noble on Merritt Island* to join in a discussion of the Great Books. Former local member and friend of SCAM, Luke Setzer, asks us to join him and others in this "shared inquiry" setting. This event will include Mensans and non-Mensans alike, and the recurring theme will be books of interest to Objectivists. The Great Books programs is what the group is currently exploring.

Luke Setzer

<http://WideSCOPE.tripod.com>

8th	7:00 p.m.	Movie Night
Saturday	\$3.00	SS/NP

Dan Lange invites us to his apartment for a night of movie watching. His "small, but rapidly growing collection of DVDs" awaits us all. A movie can be chosen by the group and munching and rehashing will, in all likelihood, be included. Dan has a third story walk-up, so the faint-hearted are forewarned!

Dan Lange

9th	3:00 p.m.	ExComm Meeting
Sunday	Free	SS/NP

Plan to attend the change-over meeting of the Executive Committee. Not only can you see how the leadership of the group conducts its business, you can volunteer to

hold an appointed position, as they are re-filled each year when a new ExComm is seated. All members are welcome to attend, to volunteer, and to see how things are done. This month's meeting will be held *at the home of our Assistant LocSec, Rita, in Palm Bay.*

Jon Warner (LocSec)

Rita Johnson-Aronna (Host)

9th Following ExComm RG Committee Meeting

The RG Committee will meet to work out the plans for the 2002 Regional Gathering. If you're on the committee, would like to join, or just want to volunteer help and ideas, come on out to Rita's (see above).

10th NL and Calendar Deadlines

All newsletter submissions must be to J.T. no later than today. Ditto for calendar events being to Ellen.

14th 6:30 p.m. Pub Night

Friday Consumables Cost

SS/NP

Helen has discovered a poorly-kept secret in Titusville: the Shamrock and Thistle Irish Pub at *2035 Cheney Hwy (SR-50)*. Good food and great drink are available... just add great company, and what more can you ask for?

Helen Lee Moore

15th 7:00 p.m. SIG Games Night

Saturday

\$3.00

SS/NP

Our SIGs officer, Rita Johnson-Aronna, has offered her beautiful home for a games night, with an emphasis this month on Chess. She hopes to make this a recurring event, each time emphasizing a different game. *Palm Bay.*

Rita Johnson-Aronna

16th 11:00 a.m. Brunch with Jim

Sunday

Meal cost

NS/NP

We'll join Jim for his monthly Sunday brunch at the *Colossus Restaurant at 380 N. Wickham Rd., Melbourne*. Note: you must be seated no later than 11:00 a.m. or you may not be seated with us, as we can't save seats for latecomers.

Jim Trammell

22nd 7:30 p.m. Games Night

Saturday

\$3.00

SS/NP

Want to play games, socialize, munch, hang out in a beautiful home? Well then come down to George Patterson's home for a Games Night. Our host has many games on hand, but feel free to bring your own to play, as well. Fun, food, and friendly competition will be the order of the night. George lives at *301 Sand Pine Road, Indialantic.*

George Patterson

29th 6:30 p.m. S.N.O.R.T.

Saturday

Meal Cost

SS/NP

Wasabi! Join us at our best-attended monthly event and sample some great Japanese fare; take a break from your mundane, humdrum daily fare with some sushi and tempura. *Miyako's* is located at *1511 S. Harbor City Blvd. (US1) in Melbourne.*

J.T. Moran

Your Health



Radiation

Ann Schindler

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Radioactivity is the spontaneous disintegration of an atom of an element. Radiation refers to energy traveling through space, emitted as electromagnetic waves- alpha and beta particles and gamma rays. Radiation is a part of our everyday environment. Approximately 80% of the radiation we are exposed to occurs naturally in water, soil, food, and sunlight. Other radiation comes from man-made sources as computer screens, color TVs, smoke detectors, and x-rays. Radiation exposure is measured in millirem, a measurement to determine the biological effects of radiation on the body. The average exposure to radiation is 360 millirem a year, and varies depending on factors as place of residence.

From the earliest experiments with radioactivity in the late 1800's, scientists have been fascinated with its properties. The discovery of x-rays by Wilhelm Roentgen occurred in 1895 followed, in 1896, by the discovery of a strange phenomenon by Henri Becquerel. Pierre and Marie Curie further researched his finding and in 1898 they termed the discovery radioactivity. They showed that radioactivity was not a chemical reaction, but a property of the atom itself. They also discovered several radioactive elements including radium. Their daughter, Irene Joliot-Curie worked on synthesizing radioactive substances, the creation of artificial radioactivity. Over 400 artificial radioactivities have since been discovered and subsequent developments have lead to nuclear fusion, the atomic bomb, nuclear reactors, and many medical uses for nuclear radioactivity.

Because of dangers associated with exposure to radiation and nuclear material, the need for safety protocols when dealing with these substances has long been acknowledged. There are numerous government agencies and groups here and abroad that draft, maintain, and monitor proper procedures when dealing with nuclear material. Exposure to radioactivity can result in various problems from burns, nausea and vomiting, diarrhea, loss of hair, and depression of the immune system, to chromosomal abnormalities, radiation sickness, cancer, cardiovascular breakdown, and death. Symptoms depend on amount and duration of exposure.

The thyroid is an endocrine gland found in the neck on either side of the trachea. It secretes the hormone thyroxine, which regulates metabolism, growth, and development. Iodine is important to a properly functioning thyroid gland. It is a chief component of thyroxine and important to its production. A normal intake of iodine is about 150 micrograms a day.

If a nuclear reactor accident occurred, many different dangerous radioisotopes would be released. These various isotopes will be absorbed, inhaled, or ingested and be dispersed throughout the body of those people in the area. The radioactive iodine, however, will always be absorbed by the thyroid gland and concentrated there. If the thyroid is saturated with ra-

radioactive iodide, abnormalities of the thyroid cells are likely to result, manifesting in loss of function, thyroid nodules, or cancer of the thyroid. These conditions may not manifest until many years later. If, however, a person were to take potassium iodide prior to or immediately after a nuclear event, the thyroid would be filled with harmless stable iodine, and leave little room for radioactive iodine to be absorbed. Approximately 99% of thyroid damage would be prevented if this were done. Each 130-milligram potassium iodide tablet gives 24 hours of protection. Dosing should continue for 10 days, at one tablet per day, or until the state or local officials order its discontinuance. Potassium iodide tablets should never be taken by anyone with an allergy to iodine, or those with certain medical conditions as myotonia (muscle spasms), hyperkalemia (high potassium levels in the blood), tuberculosis, kidney disease, or several other conditions. You should check with your doctor if there is any doubt about using this product. Side effects are rare and usually only manifest as skin rash, upset stomach, diarrhea, metallic taste in the mouth, hyperthyroidism, or enlargement of the thyroid gland. Potassium iodide is what is added to table salt to make it iodized. To match the 130 milligrams found in a potassium iodide tablet, you would have to ingest 250 teaspoons or more than 5 cups of iodized salt a day.

On February 13, 2002, an article appeared in the Florida Today Newspaper entitled "State orders pills for protection in nuclear disaster". In the article, Susan Jenks discusses the stockpiling of potassium iodide pills by Florida health officials to be used in the event of a nuclear accident or explosion. There are three nuclear power plants in Florida: St. Lucie, Turkey Point, and Crystal River. The St. Lucie nuclear power plant is about 50 miles from southern Brevard County. In the event of an accident at a nuclear power plant, people living nearby would be in danger of absorbing radiation. The state would dispense the tablets immediately after an "event" and also vacate residents from the area. The number of doses ordered by the state was calculated on the numbers of population within a 10-mile radius of a nuclear power plant. The dosage to be administered per resident is 2 pills. One pill gives protection for 24 hours.

Though there are many local governments proposing and initiating plans like this, the nuclear power industry has long been against any program to stockpile potassium iodide tablets thinking that it conveys the idea that nuclear power is unsafe. There are, in reality, several problems connected with the plan. First, potassium iodide tablets are for the prevention of thyroid problems only. They will do nothing for other types of problems related to radioactive fallout. Second, in the event of a nuclear accident, radioactive iodine gases are released which can travel hundreds of miles on the wind. This proposal only addresses potassium iodide for that segment of the population within a 10-mile radius of a nuclear power plant. Third, there is bound to be general panic. How does the govern-

ment propose dispensing the tablets while trying to evacuate the area as quickly as possible? If the pills are dispensed ahead of time to each household, another set of problems can arise. Where will they be stored, will they be found when they are needed, who might gain access to them who should not take them, will any resident be overlooked for a supply, what about people moving out of the area and new people moving in, and people may forget the proper dosage and create more problems. The idea is excellent, but how to facilitate the idea requires additional planning.

It is interesting to note that the danger of radiation damage and cancer of the thyroid is inversely proportional to age. The most danger is to infants and young children. Because of the smaller size of a child's thyroid, radiation accumulates at a higher rate per unit of intake and there are also more years in the young life for cancer to develop. In individuals over the age of 40, radiation risk seems to be greatest for causing hypothyroidism (under activity). There are various places on the web to order potassium iodide. Consider your risk of exposure to radioactivity, your overall health, and risk factors before deciding to purchase this product and initiating self-dosing.

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***A View... From
Somewhere Else***

The Green Team

by

Hank Rhodes

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It appears that drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) is a dead issue. The author does not wish to belabor this as a "win" for one side and a "loss" for the other. It is important that the President and his opposition move on and attempt to find common ground on the many other critical issues confronting our country.

Like many issues, however, the topic of energy usage impacts other matters of concern, such as national security (i.e., dependence on foreign sources of energy) and environmental protection.

Unfortunately, these issues are often dominated by short-term and reactive (as opposed to pro-active) viewpoints. All too often, the argument is presented as American jobs versus spotted owls, or as snail-darters (a sort of fish) versus people. Part of the problem is that we have not achieved a national consensus on what must be preserved, and what is available for exploitation. Our nation does not have a long-term program to develop

sustainable, non-exploitive sources of energy. Consequently, there is always pressure to open previously-reserved areas (such as ANWR) to new



drilling and pumping, and this pressure becomes most acute in times of rising prices.

Offshore oil rigs create employment opportunities and represent a domestic resource, but does anyone who lives here (full-time or part-time) want them off our Florida beaches?

We must recognize that our own species has grown, both in numbers and in power, to the point where we can unwittingly inflict serious damage to our environment, which includes the spotted owls, the snail darters, but also means the kids who live next door. As the richest and most powerful nation in history, it is important that we commit ourselves to the process of controlling and minimizing the waste products that we spew into the environment.

The President's approach to environmental protection has largely been through a series of economic incentives and voluntary compliance measures. Credit this administration, however, with upholding standards limiting arsenic in drinking water and supporting a strict regulation on diesel emissions (both initiatives of the previous administration being carried forward by the current one).

While the President's program may bear results, there ultimately must be firm standards. The ability for polluters to avoid penalties in one location by gaining credit for environmental restoration in a different (and possibly distant) venue doesn't do much for the people living downwind of the toxic zone. Effective environmental protection will require some enforcement leverage on the part of the government. It is preferred that this leverage not be used, but it must be available for any such program to be effective. It is only fair to the corporations that strive to do the right thing that their competitors be held to the same set of standards.

A good example of what can be done is the hybrid-powered automobile. At the risk of over-simplifying, hybrid propulsion uses conventional gasoline-powered engines, which are supplemented by electric motors powered from a storage battery. At slow speeds and when idling, the gasoline engine shuts off, eliminating their most inefficient phase where emissions are at the maximum. When accelerating, the electric engines gives the gasoline engine a boost. And at higher cruising speeds, the gasoline engine recharges the storage batteries.

The hybrid automobile entering the market is rated at 51 miles per gallon of gasoline, which represents an 89% improvement over the standard for fuel consumption for U.S. manufactured passenger cars (and it should be noted that this category excludes trucks and SUVs, which typically have a greater rate of consumption).

An additional means of achieving this efficiency results from the technique of regenerative braking. In a conventional vehicle, the energy consumed when brakes are applied is lost, usually in the form of heat. Regenerative braking takes advantage of the fact that certain types of electric motors (electric input with a mechanical output) can readily reverse functions and act as generators (mechanical input generating electrical energy). Thus, the energy previously lost in braking the vehicle can be converted into electrical energy and stored in the onboard battery.

Regenerative braking is not a matter of gaining something for nothing, but rather, making better use of the available energy. The beauty of regenerative braking is that it is not a case of “passing the problem” elsewhere, as in electric vehicles, which in order to charge their batteries, necessitate the consumption of additional fossil fuels (and additional pollution) at the point of generation, the power plant.

Another promising technology is fuel cells (used on the Space Shuttle), although there are some unresolved safety issues with storing large quantities of hydrogen and oxygen in a vehicle intended for use in a minimally-controlled, high-volume environment, such as the roadway.

Historically, giant steps in technology result in a broad improvement in quality of life, to include plentiful employment and better jobs. This was true during the Industrial Revolution, and is true of the high-tech revolution, the current contraction in the industry notwithstanding. Products and services not previously conceived of become major sources of wealth. Before the 1980s, the term “software” pertained to flanges and gaskets. Twenty years ago, who could have predicted the impact the internet has had on our lives, let alone the new companies that have arisen directly as a result, and the greater efficiency and marketing opportunities the internet affords existing businesses?

Thus, we can be confident that a comprehensive program of environmental protection, conservation, and clean energy development will result in long-term sustainable economic growth.

The reality is that the environment can be an issue where everyone “wins.” The cause of jobs can be reconciled with spotted owls and snail darters. Conservatives and Liberals can find common ground, without anyone (other than the usual idiot media pundits of all political stripes) keeping score about who is ahead. Wouldn't that be nice for a change?

Sources for this article are: *“How Green is the White House?”* and *“Why Hybrids are Hot”* - Time Magazine: April 29, 2002, pages 30 and 52 respectively.



***A View
from the Right:
Pork: The Other
Green Meat***

by
J. T. Moran
(morwood@cfl.r.com)

Well, it is that time of year again... if you listen closely you can hear the wailing of bereft liberals that the "tax cuts" have wiped out the "surplus", and that the old and children will starve because the Republicans are mean and won't spend any money on them.

In fairness, you will also hear from the conservative side a soft whisper that "there is nothing available to spend."

The truth, however, is that both the whisper and the wailing are wrong. There is money there for programs that need it... it is just being spent elsewhere. For this is the time of year when the Pork is harvested... Congressional Pork, that is.

In the budget for fiscal 2002, Senators and Congressmen stuck 8,341 projects in the 13 appropriations bills, an increase of 32 percent over last year. The cost of these projects was \$20.1 billion, or 9 percent more than last year. Total pork identified by Citizens Against Government Waste (the nation's largest nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to eliminating waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement in government) since 1991 is \$140 billion.

Let's see where most of the numbers come from. The CAGW rates legislators according to their fondness for, and support of, pork spending on an inverse scale from 0% (The Whole Hog) to 100% (Not Even Pig's Knuckles):

In the Senate, of the 50 Democrats, NOT ONE exceeded a 50% rating from the CAGW. In fact, the highest rated non-Republican was, of all people, Jim Jeffords of Vermont. The Republican-turned-Independent was rated at 47%. The only Dems to be rated higher than 40% were the two Wisconsin Senators, Kohl (45%) and Feingold (42%).

On the Republican side, NO senator rated below 50%, with Stevens of Alaska rated the lowest (50%). Unfortunately, he also grabbed the most for his constituents (\$451 million), with Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) second with \$432 million, and the Prince of Pork, Robert Byrd (D-WV) falling to third at a mere \$388 million.

On the House side, only FIVE Democrats bested the 50% mark, with first-termer GOODE of Virginia (70%) the highest. A total of EIGHTEEN (out of 211) exceeded a rating of 40%. Whereas, on the Republican side, only FOUR (out of 222) were rated below 50%, with Fletcher of Kentucky (43%) the lowest.

But, you ask, where does the money go? To items necessary to fight terrorism? Ahhh... no. For the military, to equip the troops in the battles to come? Well... no, again. Then, for what?

Each department of the bureaucracy seeks its own slice of the tenderloin. However, frequently the pork is unasked for, simply added to their budget to benefit a ranking member's state. For comparison sake, in the War Against Terrorism, note that each Tomahawk Cruise Missile costs \$1 million; each Sidewinder Missile costs \$41,300; each F-15 fighter costs \$15

million; and each Daisy Cutter bomb costs \$27,000.

Some Interior Pork:

- (1) \$500,000 to save the *Prebles Meadow Jumping Mouse* in Colorado.
- (2) \$3.5 million for the “urgent” need to accelerate land acquisition for the *Ice Age Trail* in Wisconsin
- (3) \$2 million for preservation of the 1904 *Statue of Vulcan* in Alabama (the State won’t do it)
- (4) \$5 million for the *Palace of the Governors* in Santa Fe, New Mexico (after \$10 million in 2001)
- (5) \$450,000 to *restore chimneys* on Cumberland Island, Georgia

For you travelers out there, a few examples of the more egregious Transportation Pork:

- (1) \$4 million for the Bainbridge-Seattle Ferry *dolphin replacement project* in Oregon
- (2) \$20 million for the *Alaska Railroad Rehabilitation* project
- (3) \$250,000 for *two bike paths* in South Dakota (\$4 million nationwide)
- (4) \$5 million for the Mobile *Waterfront Terminal* in Alabama

Energy and Water was included in the act:

- (1) \$1 million for *shoreline erosion* in Indiana (\$10.4 million in last 5 years)
- (2) \$400,000 for the *Los Angeles County Shoreline*
- (3) \$11.6 million for *lakes* in Mississippi
- (4) \$8.6 million for Kentucky *Lock and Dam project*

Even the Veteran’s Administration was not immune to the diversion of funds for “national priorities”:

- (1) \$12.5 million in CDBGs (*Community Development Block Grants*) for Missouri
- (2) \$1 million for infrastructure improvements and for a new multi-purpose room and event center for the *Dona Ana County Rodeo and Fair* in New Mexico
- (3) \$740,000 to complete a *Soccer Center* in Lancaster, California
- (4) \$1.1 million for the *refurbishment of theaters and performance centers* in Hawaii, Rhode Island, and Vermont
- (5) \$190,000 for the *Motor Racing Museum* in Spartanburg, South Carolina

You might think that Pork doesn’t grow on trees, but the Farm Security Act, a \$73 billion hike in agricultural subsidies enacted with the ostensible purpose of aiding impoverished farmers, would prove otherwise. The restrictions that link these subsidies to select crops and total acreage ensure that “impoverished farmers” such as basketball star Scottie Pippen and billionaires Charles Schwaab, David Rockefeller and Ted Turner each re-

ceived six-digit farm subsidies over the past five years.

Other Farm Pork included:

- (1) \$200,000 for *hoop barns* in Arkansas
- (2) \$978,000 for *advanced spatial technologies* in Mississippi
- (3) \$800,000 for *health education leadership* in Kentucky
- (4) \$5,670,000 for *wood utilization research* in Alaska, Idaho, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oregon, and Tennessee (\$67 million since 1985)

The Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, as well as the Judiciary, were also fattened up:

- (1) \$14,000,000 for the *Hollings Marine Laboratory* and \$1,000,000 for the *Hollings Cancer Center* in South Carolina (also home of - who else? - Sen. Fritz Hollings)
- (2) \$4,000,000 for *DNA research projects* in Connecticut
- (3) \$3,000,000 for *Hawaiian sea turtles*
- (4) \$750,000 to *prevent Atlantic salmon from escaping state streams* in Alaska

These are not even the tip of the iceberg. However, in almost every instance noted, the originator of the Pork is a member of the relevant appropriations committee.

Sometimes, money is truly thrown about for no justifiable reason, like the \$50,000 added by the House for a *tattoo removal program* in San Luis Obispo, California; the \$500,000 added by the Senate for the Historical Society of Washington (D.C.) for *capital improvements* to the new City Museum (*Grand Opening not until 2003*); the \$450,000 added by the Senate for *Pacific tropical ornamental fish research* in Hawaii, and the \$600,000 added for *research into the mating habits of the African ground squirrel*.

Congressional pork is just a drop in the bucket of misused money that pervades Washington - it has been estimated that over \$1.2 *trillion* will be thrown away in waste, fraud, and mismanagement over the next five years - but its elimination would be an awfully good start. And part of that elimination should entail the rotation of those appropriations chairmen. And, maybe, the rotation of many of those people frittering away the money you and I work so hard for. They show no shame in this mismanagement of funds, even though many of these solons are actively condemning Enron for fiscal chicanery. Yet, Enron and Global Crossing combined pale to insignificance compared to the amounts the current members of Congress have misappropriated and misspent over their careers.

Term limits are needed... if only as a cost-saving measure. But if you feel that you are under-taxed, then send some extra in... those squirrels may need some Viagra.



My Point of View

Question: What Is A Liberal?

by

Mike Moakley

In current usage, it appears to me that, rather than representing a political philosophy, the word *Liberal* has become a profane epithet to be hurled at some poor misguided soul who had the audacity... or foolishness... to disagree with (or merely question) the political views of the person who uttered that unspeakable word. Yet my question remains: *What is a Liberal?*

Some of my colleagues use the “L” word to describe any person who is a registered Democrat or is regarded as likely to vote for a Democrat in an election. Yet other colleagues use what might be described as sort of a “litmus test”. Loaded questions such as, “Are you ‘Pro-life?’”, “Do you support the right to bear arms (as opposed to gun control)?”, “Do you favor ‘voluntary’ prayer in school?”, if answered incorrectly, will earn the hapless interviewee that much maligned “L” label (A scarlet letter of sorts?). I have observed on occasion a Democrat who has “passed” the litmus test. This conflict just further confuses the issue: *What is a Liberal?*

Still others contend that a liberal is one who is not bound by morality, a heretic, an atheist, and, lest we forget, one who is a gay activist bent on indoctrinating our children and corrupting our military establishment. To such individuals, all liberals attempt to escape any sort of personal responsibility for their actions.

In my state of confusion, I decided to search AOL and find a concise working definition of liberalism (thus perhaps enlightening me on what a liberal is). Well, here it is: According to Alonzo L. Hamby, Ph.D., Professor of History, Ohio University, in *World Book Online Americas Edition*, “**Liberalism** is a political and economic philosophy that emphasizes *freedom, equality and opportunity*.” Well, there we have it. It follows, then, a *Liberal* is a person who subscribes to such a philosophy.

To expand upon my new found knowledge, I note that our Declaration of Independence contains the oft-quoted statement: “*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.*” This almost sounds liberal to me, as the elements of *freedom* and *equality* are covered in that single statement. This would leave *opportunity*, meaning this lofty concept would also have to be attainable by all Americans.

Liberals recognize that you cannot have freedom if you are hungry. You cannot be free if you have been “downsized”, “outsourced”, “privatized”, or “globalized” out of your job, unless you’re fortunate enough to have immediate prospects for providing your family with life’s necessities. You cannot be free if your upstream neighbor pollutes your drinking water supply, especially if (when you fall ill) you lack health insurance and are fast approaching bankruptcy. You cannot be free if you have no voice in your own workplace, especially if you’re employed “at will” (Your employer might even *fire* you if he reads your letter to the edi-

tor that might not sit well with his interests).

In short, a liberal knows that the rights we Americans cherish are not worth the paper they're written on unless our government takes an active role to extend the protection of these rights to *all* citizens, *especially* those who lack the means to protect themselves. Liberals believe that society exists for the benefit of all its members, and not the other way around.

This logically leads to another question: *Am I a Liberal?* Well, I'm not even a Democrat, I don't cheat on my wife, I certainly do assume responsibility for my actions, and, yes, I do believe in God (although I might be seen by some as a heretic). *I also believe in freedom, equality and opportunity for all.* The answer: Yes, I am a Liberal. As a Liberal, I shall carry that label with pride!



Just Chillin'



A Terrific Book
by
Susan Thomas

When Rose Knight Linsha Majere, protagonist of Mary Herbert's *The Clandestine Circle*, took her vow to become a secret agent for the Solamnic Knights, she didn't know on what path destiny would lead her. All she knew was her mission: to discover the secrets of the mysterious Lord Hogen Blight, governor of Sanction.

Lord Blight was a mysterious man, an enigma to the Clandestine Circle, head of Linsha's secret operation in Sanction. The lord governor had saved the city from the oppressive rule of the dark knights of Takhisis and the wicked black dragon, Sable. Through unknown magic he could control the violent eruptions of the volcanoes surrounding Sanction and use their lava to make defensive molten moats to protect the city from its numerous enemies. Through the governor, the port city had become prosperous, but who really was Hogen Blight, and would he betray Sanction in the end? This was the question that Linsha was sent to answer, but she found much more.

Linsha takes on the under cover identity of Lynn of Gateway, a cut-throat ally-basher. Through a heroic action, she gains a place on the elite bodyguard corps of Hogen Blight. She comes to know and respect the confident yet admirable Lord governor; she also finds an incompressible attraction to the handsome commander, Ian Durne. Linsa feels unsure of her position in Sanction and doesn't know where her loyalties lie, especially after she finds that the secret Clandestine Circle wants to discredit Lord Blight and remove him from power, only so that they might rule instead. Linsha suspects corruption from within.

The more she gets to know Lord Blight, the more she is sure he and Sanction are connected and he is the best one to rule the unique city, not the Circle or the Knights of Takhisis. Yet time is running out. There is a traitor in Lord Blight's government and a plot to take over the city. An un-

known plague threatens the citizens, and dark ships wait in the harbor, ready to attack at any moment. The fate of Sanction rests in Linsha's hands. Will Linsha, with the help of her friend Varia, a talking owl, have enough courage to follow her heart and do what is right?

The Clandestine Circle is an interesting combination of fantasy novel and a secret agent mystery. It has an excellent, imaginative plot. It is suspenseful, exciting and often impossible to put down. It features a great mystery, although much about it is somewhat predictable. Like other books in the "Dragonlance" series, it has a little bit of everything: action, adventure, fantasy, romance and comic relief.

But, unless you have read the first trilogy in the "Dragonlance" series (Dragons of the Autumn Twilight, Dragons of the Winter Night and Dragons of the Spring Dawning), you might be a little confused with the references to events, people and monuments that were in the previous novels. You most likely will enjoy *The Clandestine Circle* more if you have read the other three. Linsha is the granddaughter of heroes in the previous books.

The best thing about this book is that it's fun to read, unlike the hard-to-understand Shakespearean babble we have to read in school. It's an exciting page-turner and the main character is well-characterized and easy to relate to. I recommend *The Clandestine Circle*, especially if you like fantasy novels or have enjoyed other Dragonlance books in the past. The story line keeps you on your toes, and it's great if you want a break from the world. It's an adventure story, mystery, a fantasy novel and a romance all in one.



The Gad-About Returns!



H.B. Apian

Just because the SIG (Special Interest Group) night focused on Chess, the night was not limited to Castles and Kings; we had a great Trivial Pursuit game going on the back porch with the visitor from Akron, Ohio, Dick Turner, getting all the pieces of pie. J.T. Moran played a round of chess with Susan Thomas and George Patterson and Helen Lee Moore battled over another chessboard.

If playing games does not tickle you fancy, would you find photography does? The second monthly SIGs night will focus on photography. Bring your camera, any type, and bring your questions. We will have answers, helpful hints, and lots of pictures and slides to look at for fun and edification.

The following SIGs night (July) will focus on cooking. Bring favorite recipes and, if you make your favorite food and bring it along with the recipe for sharing, there will be no kitty. We will, if we get enough recipes, assemble a SCAMster's cookbook. This will turn into another SIGs event, putting together the cookbook.



It's Coming!

**News from the
RG Front**

Mark your calendar for the 2002 SCAM Rollback RG, happening on October 18th thru the 20th. Use **THIS** form, or call the registrar for further information. Only \$35 until 9/1! It's the SCAM event of the year!

**Gimme That Ol' Time RGIN'...
It's Good Enough For Me!**



That's right, it's time to roll out the way-back machine, and roll back... back... and even further back until we arrive at... FUN! In fact, all the way to the 2002 Space Coast Area Mensa Rollback RG!

Here at SCAM we have heard your cries and lamentations, and we have hearkened unto thee with rolled-back registration costs and rolled-back room costs.

The **NEW** management of our favorite hotel, the Holiday Inn Oceanfront in Indialantic, has been most receptive to our negotiations, resulting in lower room costs, lower-cost meal plans, and a rejuvenated Penthouse suite. So, in the Rollback spirit, we are passing those savings on to **YOU!** Room rates are only \$69 a night for up to four Rg'ers, with oceanfront rooms priced somewhat higher.

Even Meal plan prices have been rolled back to pre-'96 RG levels, with Saturday Night Buffet at a miniscule **\$23** and the Sunday Buffet Brunch costs only **\$14**. And there is also a brought-back combo plan of a mere **\$36** for both meals!!! Full menus can be seen at our website:

<http://spacecoastareamensa.tripod.com>

Registration starts at \$30 thru 2/28/02, \$35 from 3/1/02 thru 8/31/02, and \$40 from 9/1/02 thru 10/20. Day rates will be available, and registration fees will be cheerfully refunded!

So contact the Registrar, J.T. Moran, at (321)632-0854 or by e-mail at morwood@cfl.rr.com to get in on this great deal. You can also send in the form underneath to: Registrar, P.O. Box 457, Sharpes FL 32959-0457.

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**The
Also-Rans:**



**Ellen's
Excellent
Movie Quiz**
by
Ellen Paul

So, you think you know the movies, huh? We know all the characters in our favorite films as well as the actors who portray them, but how much attention do we pay to the important, yet secondary, characters in the movies we watch? This quiz is designed to find out.

Below is a list of five characters, each from a motion picture. The named character was important, but secondarily so. His/her/its name is spoken in the film on several occasions, but no major stars will be found here.

Your assignment, should you choose to accept it, is to name the movie in which the character appears. Good Luck!

1. August de Winter
2. Star
3. Johnny Caretti
4. Robert Dudley
5. Pantouf

(Answers will be found below)



At Your Service



**Clara
Woodall-Moran,
Membership Chair**

Calling all members who have one Saturday per month to spare: we have a dearth of proctors and we need to have more qualified persons (a minimum of a BA or BS degree is required) for administering the tests used by Mensa for membership. If you took the test then you know how important the proctor is for relaxing the would-be candidates and getting them settled. The proctor is the first member most of candidates meet, and that experience can be the difference between gaining a member or losing out on a opportunity

to meet a new friend.

Helen Lee Moore is our chief proctor, and I have the application forms. The prospective proctor is required to sit in on at least two test sessions and then to present the test under the tutelage of the proctor.

Please give this some thought .



We Have....



The Answers!

1. *The Avengers* (1998)
2. *The Lost Boys* (1987)
3. *Mermaids* (1990)
4. *Mary, Queen of Scots* (1971)
5. *Chocolat* (2000)