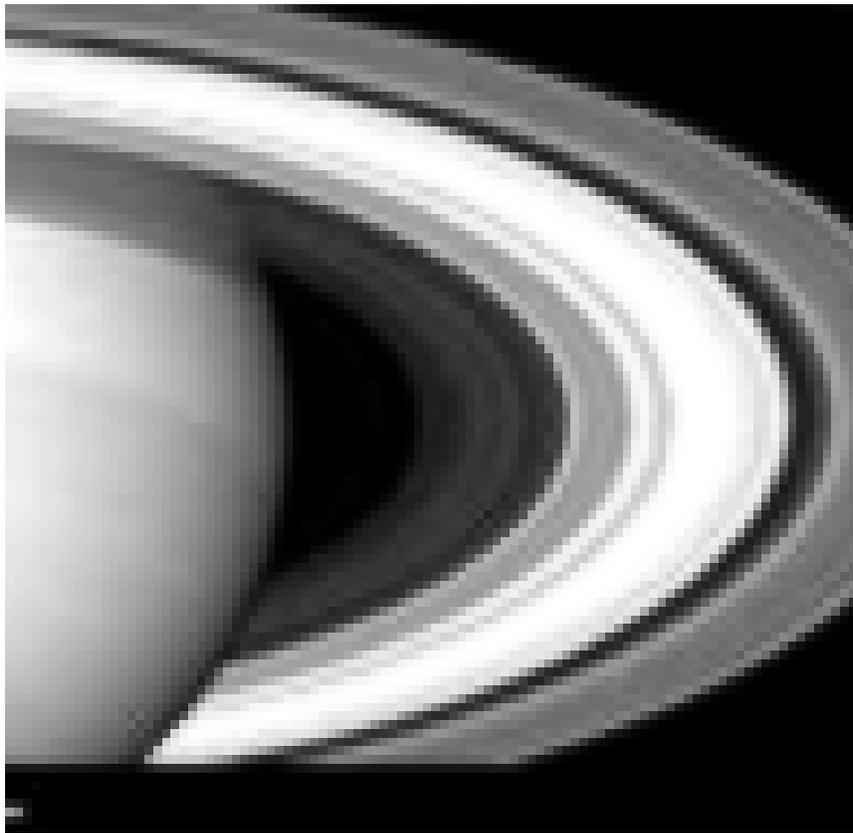


The

SCAM

pace oast rea ensa

Happy Thanksgiving!



Volume 23, No. 11

November, 2005



Contents

ONLINE EDITION

SCAM and MENSA Business

Writer's Block	4
The LocSection	6
The Tenth Story	22
ExComm Meeting Minutes	23

FEATURES

Letters	3
<i>"Don't Just Stand There" - Part Three</i>	8
The Alchemist	11
The Book Corner	12
<i>"Whatever Happened To..."</i>	13
<i>"Stars Without Light"</i>	15
<i>"Right? Damn Right!"</i>	17
<i>"A Legal Travesty"</i>	19
Guest Column: <i>"Blue Blood"</i>	21

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.

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.

Letters to the Editor

I read with interest the column concerning the Judeo-Christian commandments and have a question: Which version of these commandments is correct and should be used as a guide? It's clear which the writer is using, but that's just his tradition or preference, not really definitive.

One listing of the ten has the first four dealing with man's relation and duty to God and the last six with man's relation to his fellow man. Another has only three concerned with man/God and seven with man/man. Are there eleven? Twelve? More?

One version has the fifth, or sixth depending on which is used, as "Thou shalt not kill," while another says "Thou shall do no murder." Quite a significant difference, isn't it?

Ah well, I expect differences like this are the reason we have separation of church and state; all citizens don't fit into one church!

Until God decides to print an unambiguous text that doesn't need translation, reading and writing about matters theological will be inconclusive, albeit sometimes interesting, discussions at best. Or the cause of hatred and wars.

— *Helen Lee Moore*

I wrote this the day the story (I hesitate to say interview) was published in USA TODAY regarding Dr. Griffin's feelings about NASA's current manned space flight program. He was able to clarify himself before I got this sent to the editor of the local paper. I'm sending it to our local newsletter because I believe the words should stand as a warning to anyone who reads a newspaper and is naïve enough to believe the reporters.

I work at United Space Alliance. The recent interview in the "USA TODAY" newspaper, with Dr. Michael Griffin regarding the current space program has created a firestorm within the workforce. I am not certain he is aware of how his comments were received by the workforce.

The headline read, "Griffin says Space Shuttle is a mistake" or words to that effect. Many workers were taken aback by this. The general feeling is one of dismay. Many believe Dr. Griffin has let the workers down...that he has insulted us to the nth degree.

I'm certain Dr. Griffin did not mean to insult the entire

(Continued on page 5)

Thanksgiving - yes, that time of the year is now upon us. As we wind down from a particularly fierce hurricane season, the fact that we on the Space Coast have been spared this year is, I would believe, quite a significant reason to give thanks. Perhaps an appropriate way to express that gratitude would be to remember our neighbors in New Orleans who have been dealt with two severe blows, courtesy of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Even at this late date, whatever help you can offer is still greatly needed and appreciated. One way to offer help is to visit the National Office's website homepage (www.us.mensa.org). You can also contact any of a number of charities such as Red Cross.

Beginning last issue, the cover design has changed to themes that reflect who we are: the **Space Coast** Area Mensa. In this issue, in response to a regular political column, religion seems to be developing as a topic of discussion. I welcome this - bring it on (regardless of viewpoint)! Book reviews are also appearing - have you read a good book? Why not share it with the rest of us? Would you like to write on a topic that you don't see covered in The SCAM? Write on that topic and send it to me; I'll do the rest. Publication guidelines appear above. Let's hear from you.

A reminder here, I am always open to constructive suggestions on how to improve The SCAM. As our LocSec can readily attest to, I do occasionally act on them. Beginning this issue, we have a Table of Contents, so you can go directly to your favorite feature. If you like this, you can thank George for the idea; if not, you can blame me...

One final note. You may have learned from the published minutes for the most recent ExComm meetings that our ExComm members intend to conduct a telephone survey of all SCAM members in an effort to revitalize the activities of our local group. Let me advise you here this intent will quickly become reality, so do not be caught unaware! Remember, suggestions are great, but volunteers are even better. Of course, you can always volunteer to contribute to The SCAM. Hosting an activity, if you can, certainly helps. These are just some things to think about while you await that call...

(Continued from page 3)

workforce in United Space Alliance and in NASA's manned space program. In fact, I have not been able to see such an insult in any of his words. ... Yet, because of the sensationalized headlines, many believe he did.

What I read and understood him to say is that the shuttle design was flawed and, had he been the director or the decision maker at the time the shuttle program was conceived it would never have been built – it was a mistake to build such a craft.

The facts speak for themselves. The two accidents were caused by the poor design. He does not say that those of us who do the work to prepare the shuttle for flight are inept dummies. The proof that we, the workforce, are competent is that we have had only two accidents in more than twenty years. That we could take the bad design and make it work is to our credit, not our detriment.

Dr. Griffin, I'm certain, realizes that the shuttle is the only game we had going for manned space flight. He also stated that the space station costs more than it can give back because it is in a low Earth orbit rather than a more permanent structure on our nearest heavenly body, the moon. Only the shuttle is strong enough to push the space station up when its orbit degrades too much and we have not come up with another solution to this problem. This would not be the case on a moon-based station. Also, we are now recreating the Apollo type craft to repeat what we did to get to the moon to be able to move farther into space. Dr. Griffin said the money spent on these two projects, the shuttle and the station, over the years could have been better spent on other craft and a more permanent station on the moon. What is insulting to the workforce over this statement? We would have still flown manned spacecraft and we would have still gotten our scientific discoveries.

Unless my co-workers who are upset over Dr. Griffin's comments were actually the decision maker to put us on the track to the shuttle and space station, there can be no implied or inferred insult to any of us. We've done a great job at flying a flawed craft. That is something in which to take pride.

— *Clara Woodall-Moran*

Well, I really put my foot in it last month. Shows what happens when you try to get cute. My phone has been ringing off the wall with complaints about my mangling my figures of speech. That, by the way, was hyperbole. I got that right because I looked it up. Simple exaggeration. My dictionary of literary terms also says to see Adynaton, Bombast, Litotes, and Tapinosis. This could get out of control pretty quickly. I know Bombast, but the others. . . Tapinosis sounds like a disease an NBA forward might get. But I jest.

Back to last month. I feigned an apologetic stance and called it Socratic Irony. It was some sort of irony, which can get tricky; but not Socratic. We all remember the challenge to Winona Ryder in *Reality Bites* - "Define irony!"

Socratic Irony is feigning ignorance and/or naivete in discussion or debate to induce the opponent to answer apparently simple questions so you can massacre him in cross-examination.

But on to LocSec matters. We cancelled the October ExComm meeting for lack of a quorum. (See non-minutes on last page) This brings up the question of meeting dates and notification in the newsletter. We try to hold meetings early in the month so that we can get the minutes and the next meeting date into the calendar. Calendar deadline being the 8th and newsletter the 10th. We have had three meetings scheduled for the first Saturday at 4pm at my house and this seems amenable to the others. I will float the idea of making this a fixed meeting date, at least for a while.

Our new webmaster is busy transitioning the website to a new host, American Mensa, often referred to as AML. The other Florida chapters all use AML to host their sites. The URLs for their websites are

<http://gainesville.us.mensa.org/>, where Gainesville can be replaced by Jacksonville, Tallahassee, nwflorida, centralflorida, manasota, tampabay, broward, miami, and in due time, [spacecoast](#). Check them out. Some are minimal, some are pretty extensive. The same goes for their newsletters, which I have been receiving. Some are pretty extensive, like ours, Broward's, Tampa Bay's, Central Florida's. Some are only a single sheet. Some are highly variable. Some of the websites have a sample issue available. One thing I noticed were cryptograms, which several newsletters feature. Do we have a cryptogram enthusiast in the house? Or perhaps we could mooch from someone else. Some have a table of contents; something we might consider. I wanted to say

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

something about Tampa Bay winning a contest by enrolling 14 new members in August and September. Maggie Truelove covers it in her column, The Tenth Story. When I looked at her article I saw her making the distinction between AML and AMC which means I need to do some studying because I don't know the difference between them. Unfortunately, it is 7 pm and I swore to Mike I'd get this to him by then. It's already two days late. More mea culpas.

ADVERTISEMENT

Is The SCAM too POLITICAL...?
...Too liberal?
Too Conservative...?
Needs more fiction?
More poetry?
...Maybe you'd like to see something else?

**Why not write for
The SCAM??**

The SCAM welcomes written submissions on just about any subject matter. It must be your own work. Remember, deadline is the 10th of every month for the upcoming issue. Please see Page 3 of every issue for details.

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

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

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

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

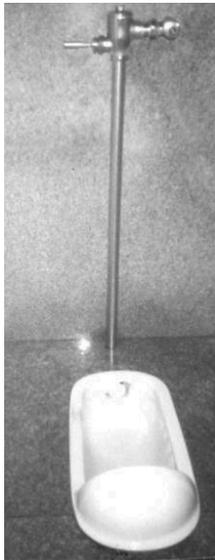
A person should be concealed from the sight of others when answering the call of nature. If a person is out in an open space and cannot find anything to conceal him when he needs to answer the call of nature, he should move far away from the other people around him.

A person should not uncover his *'awrah* (private parts) until after he has squatted close to the ground, because this is more concealing. If a person is in a (modern) toilet, he should not lift his garment until he has closed the door and is out of sight of other people. With regard to this point and the one before, it is worth noting that the habit of many people in the West and elsewhere, of urinating in a standing position in front of other people in public toilets (using urinals) is something which goes against good manners, modesty and decency, and is repulsive to anyone who possesses sound common sense and wisdom. How can anybody uncover in front of other people the *'awrah* (private parts) which Allah has placed between his legs to conceal it and commanded him to cover it? The idea that it should be covered is well established among all wise and de-

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

cent people of all races. It is wrong in principle to build restrooms of this shameful type, where the users can see one another, thus making them worse than some kinds of animals whose habit is to conceal themselves from one another when urinating or defecating. He should be careful to remove all impurity after answering the call of nature, because the Prophet warned against being careless in cleaning oneself after urinating: "Most of the punishment of the grave will be because of urine." Ibn 'Abbaas reported that the Messenger of Allah passed by two graves, and said: "They are being punished, but they are not being punished for any major sin. One of them used not to protect himself (i.e. keep himself clean from) his urine, and the other used to walk about spreading malicious gossip."



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

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

In lieu of urinals, because of the strictures of covering one's self, and because of the common Arab dress, the typical toilet found in Muslim countries is a "squatter". Squatters come in two basic types with many varieties. One is found mostly in China and the other is more commonly found in Japan and the Middle East. Both are used for defecating and urinating. The Japanese, or foot-pedal style, can be used either standing or squatting to urinate. The other style is more adapted for squatting when urinating. Note the raised cup at the end reminiscent of the design of training potties for



(Continued from page 9)

male children in the Western world. The new public toilets in Paris are unisex but have no urinals. The multi-functional toilets are basically a Middle-Eastern style squatter but can be used by a male standing to urinate, by a male or female squatting to urinate or defecate, or by a male or female sitting on the pulled down bar to urinate or defecate.

In support of the Muslim position (I could not avoid this pun) it is reported by Jasper Gerard in the English magazine, *The Spectator* that some women in Sweden, Germany, and Australia have a new cause: they want men to sit down while urinating. This demand is not religious in origin but comes partly from concerns about hygiene -- avoiding the splash factor as mentioned in the Muslim edict. But also he reports, "more crucially because a man standing up to urinate is deemed to be triumphing in his masculinity, and by extension, degrading women." Apparently shame or observation is not a factor.



Another argument is that if women can't do it, then men shouldn't either. Standing upright while relieving oneself is "a nasty macho gesture" suggestive of male violence. A feminist group at Stockholm University is campaigning to ban all urinals from campus. At least one Swedish primary school has already removed all the urinals in order to acculturate young male Swedes to the new order.

In Australia, an Internet survey shows that 17 percent of those polled think men ought to sit, while 70 percent believe they should be allowed to stand.

If this campaign succeeds, then the lines at public facilities will increase. A toilet for sitting takes up more room than a urinal and the process of lowering one's trousers and underwear takes more time than opening the front of one's clothing to urinate.

As mentioned in my previous article, the shame or embarrassment factor in the west is being addressed by placing visual barriers between individual urinals.

Photographs

(Opposite Page): "Squatters" Pictured at left is found in China, at right in Japan.

(This Page): "Multipurpose" toilet found in Paris.

This week I was watching a TV program about Wal-Mart and its spectacular operations worldwide. One part was about the stores they opening in China and there was one particular sentence by a young local Chinese “associate” (employee) that caught me and opened a whole new way of thinking about the possible change that might occur in US/Chinese relationship.

Each Wal-Mart store could be a center for the dissemination of better understanding by the Chinese about the USA. Though not intended, each store’s “associates” would be U.S. diplomats.

In the USA Wal-Mart has been misnamed as the Chinese outlet. Look again at many hundreds of products in any of your favorite stores. Products are not only made in China, but in Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Japan and a host of other Asian countries. The quality is fine. The reason they are made there is because the cost of production is so low that products can be shipped 12,000 miles to your backyard at a price you find irresistible.

Fingernail clippers or lawn mowers – it doesn’t make any difference. The workers in those Asian countries are producing and BUYING those products from American companies IN their own country. Every yen or yuan sold to them is profit for an American company. Wal-Mart is planning 2,000 stores in China by a company Sam Walton started in Arkansas – and they still have their headquarters there.

The anti-Wal-Mart sentiment is promoted by a very small group of local and union people and in many cases funded by outside interests. As a kid I can remember the opposition to the A&P food stores similar to what we are seeing against Wal-Mart today. They said it would cause the local grocery stores to close. They were right. Now answer this. Do you want to shut down your Albertson’s, Piggly Wiggly, Win-Dixie, A&P, etc. and go back to the corner grocery store? I don’t think so.

Who has benefited most from these huge changing marketing operations? YOU, the consumer. What was that one sentence that young Chinese said to the head of Asian Wal-Mart? Approximately, “Working here gives you a better understanding of other people”. This is very profound as it indicates a new thought pattern about “other people”, namely the U.S. Here is a way that might change the thinking of the Chinese about America. Imagine what 2,000 Wal-Mart stores could do for international understanding and world peace. Am I too bold in this extrapolation? Maybe, but it can give the USA a chance to reach down into the basic fabric of Chinese culture to the people.

Let the diplomats deal with the higher Chinese officials and hope that some of the change of heart of the “associates” will seep out to their customers and then upward to the leaders.

Al Thomas' best selling book, "If It Doesn't Go Up, Don't Buy It!" has helped thousands of people make money and keep their profits with his simple 2-step method. Read the first chapter at www.mutualfundmagic.com and discover why he's the man that Wall Street does not want you to know.

Two things before starting this book review:

1. I'll bet the article I submitted last month regarding the old west figures would have made a lot more sense had I not written it when half-asleep. I apologize to anyone who tried to read it. It was really poorly done and I'm sorry.
2. I've started this column based on the reply I've usually given to anyone who has complained of the articles in the newsletter..."write something different". Hope some are enjoying my book reviews as a distinct change of pace from the "political opinion" articles.

Ⓟ **kay, I got that off my chest.** By the way, before getting into the book, I'll add this point; we had a great time at Suzanne and Marc Leichtling's party. I did not get to go to brunch – I had to work, but I really enjoyed the time at the party.

The book under review is an early one by Jonathan Kellerman. **Over the Edge** was published in 1987. It was the third in the series he has created with Milo Sturges and Dr. Alex Delaware. Jonathan Kellerman is, by trade, a psychiatrist and, based on the theory of "writing what you know", his main character Dr. Alex Delaware is a psychiatrist who gets involved in crime and provides assistance to Milo, a homosexual police Detective Sergeant with the Los Angeles Police Department. The relationship between the two began tentatively. In this, the 3rd book, they were still tentative about how they would work together. Alex gets view into the world that Milo faces in the police department and sees the affect his opinion has on Milo.

Alex gets a call from a previous patient, the child of a rich family, Jamey Cadmus. The call comes in the middle of the night and the young man, as best he can, asks for help. When Alex arrives at the mental hospital in which Jamey is a patient, the place is in turmoil and Jamey is gone.

The police, through Milo, contact Alex because they believe Jamey to the "Lavender Strangler". A serial killer focused on strangling homosexuals – using the tie belt from lavender dressing robes as the murder weapon.

It seems that Jamey's family is supportive and they have provided very high-powered legal assistance but some of it does not ring true to Alex. He voices his concerns to Milo and between them they solve more than just the case of the serial killer.

The one thing that Alex is not able to solve is why Milo does not have the respect of his peers as he has a very high "clear" rate on the crimes he is given to solve. Milo's love relationship is also a bit shaky during this book, but Alex gives him confidence and en-

(Continued on page 14)

Harking back, as I often do, to my childhood, I have a very clear memory of the only time I was spanked by my mother (or father) in public. My sister and I had, on the urging of a playmate, hatched a plan to have a tantrum in local “Five and Dime Store” to get set paper dolls my sister really wanted. A tantrum is just something we did not do because “it wasn’t done in our family”. As part of the punishment for the tantrum we had to apologize to the store owner, in front of everyone in the store (this was after the spank). We had to apologize for creating a disturbance and promise to never repeat the scene.

I wonder what has happened to the apologies. There is a claim by some that Dan Rather publicly apologized for the reporting of the phony story of President Bush’s standing in the National Guard. He did no such thing. Dan Rather excused the story as a rush to get the information to the public by an overzealous staff. He went further to say that, because such a story could arise, the President should answer the claims anyway. Where is the apology? Where is there the recognition of having done something wrong, admitting that it was wrong?

Recently we had a case in the Florida court system in which two teen-aged boys severely beat another boy. The reason for the beating you ask? The victim refused to perform tricks on his skate board for them. There was an article in the newspaper regarding the outcome of the trial. One of the two perpetrators been found guilty of the crime. The headline for the article states that this young criminal has apologized. What the young man said was... “Had I ever thought in my wildest dreams anything like this would have happened, I would never have beaten him...” Where is the apology? The kid just stated that he was sorry for having gotten caught and going to jail but there is no recognition that what he had done was wrong, no remorse for hurting another individual. Why would the newspaper publish such a lie? This publication gave credence and validation to this trend of apologizing with really doing so.

I’ve had some problems with the children in my neighborhood. The parents allow the children to stand in rock gardens in my yard and throw the rocks at passing cars, people and animals. These same parents allow the children to use the culvert by my driveway to use as a launching point to practice skateboard tricks (also using my driveway to get up speed to get into the road). These children just started the first grade this August. When I yelled at kids, to get them out of my yard to see if I could get them to stop this bad behavior, I told them “you are bad”, what you are doing is “wrong”, stop doing it immediately and get out my yard, and I told them they were trespassing. The parents got very angry with me, telling me the children were too young to know better. I asked them three questions: “Did the parents know that what the children had been doing was wrong?”

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

“Did the parents know that they were trespassing?” “When did they intend to teach the children to behave properly?” The father of one of the kids then threatened me – with physical mayhem. When the other parents heard that they decided that a better idea was to just stay out of my yard.

I’ve been considering though, to call the child protective services on these people, they have been allowing these first-graders to drive an ATV up and down the street (over the posted speed limit) solo (yep, the kid is on the bike alone). I’ve hatched a theory. This is a new Munchausen by Proxy ploy. If the child is badly hurt or killed, the parents will get a lot of sympathy and money – not a bad trade for a bratty kid.

(Continued from page 12)

couragement because the lover had left a very expensive car with Milo while on a “break” from the relationship. Alex assures him that a car that expensive means he plans to come back, and he does.

I’ve been reading the Kellerman books for several years now and find them well thought out and intensely interesting. I somehow missed this one in the early days but found it recently when I discovered a new one – **Rage**. Interestingly enough, **Rage** begins in the same manner as Over the Edge, a phone call from a former patient and he compares the outcome of the two instances. I’d recommend this to anyone with an interest in mystery novels and psychiatry. It was nice to read the two books consecutively to compare them. Both are worth the read.

The expression “Star Chamber” came up in a recent conversation. This useful term goes back at least 500 years. After a 30-year period of instability and internal warfare, known to us as the War of the Roses¹, Henry VII assumed the throne of England, establishing the Tudor Dynasty in 1485. Faced with lingering challenges to his legitimacy, Henry VII asserted his authority by a variety of measures, that included executing his surviving rivals. Within a few years, the assembly of the King’s closest advisors was converted by statute into an investigative and judicial body known as the Court of Star Chamber, empowered to protect order and peace within the kingdom.

The Court of Star Chamber operated independent of other courts, and was answerable only to the King. Unlike the common law practiced in English courts, the Star Chamber was not bound by custom and precedent. The Star Chamber dispensed with trial by jury. This institution was able to call any person in the kingdom at any time to appear and submit to interrogation. The Star Chamber could reverse the decisions of other courts. The judgments of the Star Chamber were final and not subject to appeal.

The Star Chamber was less subject to the corruption, inefficiency, ineffectiveness, and improper influence that plagued the judicial system of the time. It can easily be seen, however, that such a powerful body could be a practical instrument of consolidating and exercising dictatorial rule. Under Henry VII’s son and successor, Henry VIII (who is often noted for his succession of six wives²), the powers and authority of the Star Chamber were expanded to include a wide variety of alleged crimes. The Star Chamber could order punishments that included torture, public humiliation, imprisonment, and heavy fines.

The security of the state was used to justify the expedience and unchallenged authority by which the Star Chamber operated. The name “Star Chamber” derives from the decorative painting on the ceiling of the room where the court met, in the ancient Westminster Palace. This Palace was lost to fire in the early 19th century, and the current structure on the site houses the British Parliament.

The Court of Star Chamber continued as an institution through the Tudor Dynasty, which ended upon the death of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603. She was succeeded by her cousin, the King of Scotland, who relocated his court from Edinburgh to London and took the reign name “James I.” Thus the royal family of Scotland, the Stuarts, inherited the crown of England.³

James I was preoccupied with exercising his authority and with religious conformity. He relied on the Star Chamber to enforce his edicts.

(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

While the proceedings of the Star Chamber had been public under the Tudors, the court now operated in secret. It was during this period that the Star Chamber gained the notoriety that continues to our time. Religious and political dissenters were punished or forced to leave the country, a policy that led to the Puritan migration to America and the establishment of colonies in the New England region.

The abuse of royal authority continued under the second Stuart King, Charles I. He refused to compromise with Parliament, dissolved that body, and ruled as an absolute monarch for over a decade. When Parliament reconvened, one of its first acts was to abolish the Star Chamber. The struggle between King and Parliament continued, culminating in the conflict we know as the English Civil War. King Charles had alienated the people to the extent that the King's enemies gained broad popular support. Charles I would lose the war, his throne, and ultimately, his head. Even when the Stuarts were restored to power⁴ a dozen years later, rule of law had been strengthened to the point that the Star Chamber was never revived.

The term "Star Chamber" has come to symbolize the arbitrary exercise of power, in secret, without accountability. Anyone who would embrace draconian measures in the name of expedient justice and public security would benefit by considering the example of the Star Chamber.

Notes:

1) **The War of the Roses** was an intermittent struggle between the extended families of Lancaster and of York, and their respective allies. This conflict, which took place between 1455 to 1485, arose over which family had the stronger claim to the throne of England. It takes its curious name from the fact that one side wore the White Rose as its symbol, while their opponents displayed the Red Rose. This war was waged mostly by the nobility, but the common people also suffered extensively. Since this dismal period was recent history to the two Henrys, their obsession with producing male heirs can be understood as a logical concern for a clear and undisputed line of succession.

2) **The Six Wives of Henry VIII:** Catherine of Aragon (Spanish Princess, Divorced); Anne Boleyn (Executed); Jane Seymour (Died in Childbirth); Anne of Cleves (German Princess, Marriage Annulled); Catherine Howard (Executed); Catherine Parr (Survived Henry VIII).

3) **There were five previous Scottish Kings named "James."** This one sponsored the King James Bible.

4) **After Charles I was overthrown, England was ruled as a "Commonwealth" under the Puritans.** The Puritan leader, Oliver Cromwell, took the title "Lord Protector." His government became increasingly dictatorial. After Cromwell's death, the Commonwealth failed, and the Stuarts were invited back. The second son of Charles I, James II, was apparently a slow learner. His rule invoked increasing hostility among the people, and he was chased out of England by a popular revolution in 1688.

“A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.”

Second Amendment, U.S. Bill of Rights, ratified December 15, 1791

214 years ago the Founders of our great nation ratified what is unquestionably the greatest document ever written guaranteeing the Rights of the individual - the Bill of Rights, the first 10 amendments of the Constitution of the United States.

In the years since the Constitution has expanded to 27 Amendments and, in some cases, the interpretation of individual Amendments has also been expanded, usually by the Left.

The “meaning” of the First Amendment is the best example of this. Originally intended to prevent the establishment of a national religion and to protect the right of free discourse on political matters, it has, in the last 40 years been perverted and debased. Used now to prevent any public display of traditional religions and no longer protecting political speech (“Campaign Finance Reform”), it is constantly being cited by the Left as the “constitutional” authority for “rights” non-existent until thought up by an activist judiciary. In fact, these expansive interpretations have been the result of a perceived need for greater federal authority over individuals. Only once has a reduction in such control occurred, and that was with the repeal of the 18th Amendment (Prohibition) by the ratification of the 21st Amendment.

However, in one case there has been a narrowing of the interpreted meaning of an Amendment, again in the search for a reduction in the scope of an individual Right, and that is the Second.

Liberals would have you believe that the Second is a right pertaining to the State, a collective right of the people. They point to the first phrase to prove this, claiming that the writers must have meant it to be about the states’ right to a militia.

Yet James Madison’s first draft revealed a far different intent: ***“The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed; a well armed and well regulated militia being the best security of a free country; but no person religiously scrupulous of bearing arms shall be compelled to render service in person.”*** The text was later changed by committee to what we now see.

Even in modern times there has been some semblance of sanity in the interpretation of the Second. Although heavy Lefties such as Senators Feinstein, Boxer, Schumer, and President Clinton (Bill, that is) constantly fight against your constitutional Right, as a law-abiding, mentally balanced citizen, to keep and bear arms, there have been some occasions of recognition of that right by the government.

“The conclusion is thus inescapable that the history, concept, and wording of

(Continued on page 18)

(Continued from page 17)

the second amendment to the Constitution of the United States, as well as its interpretation by every major commentator and court in the first half-century after its ratification, indicates that what is protected is an individual right of a private citizen to own and carry firearms in a peaceful manner."

Thus reads the final paragraph of the Report of the Subcommittee on the Constitution of the Committee on the Judiciary of the United States Senate, Ninety-seventh Congress (Second Session) January 20, 1982.

Even more recent was the Department of Justice Christmas gift to those same law-abiding citizens in 2004.

The Memorandum Opinion for the Attorney General released on December 21, 2004 was entitled "*Whether the Second Amendment Secures an Individual Right.*"

The 103 page report, with 437 footnotes, concluded that, "*... the Second Amendment secures a personal right of individuals, not a collective right that may only be invoked by a State or a quasi-collective right restricted to those persons who serve in organized militia units.*"

So, in the space of 22 years the Second Amendment Right of an individual to keep and bear arms was recognized by 2 branches of government. However, when has such recognition prevented those who would disarm the honest citizen from acting to do so on the slightest pretext?

Such a pretext occurred in the wake of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans.

On September 8th police officers began confiscating weapons, including legally registered firearms, from civilians in preparation for a mass forced evacuation of the residents still living here. The superintendent of police, P. Edwin Compass III, declared that "*Only law enforcement are allowed to have weapons.*" No civilians in New Orleans would be allowed to carry pistols, shotguns or other firearms. This order was purportedly in preparation for forced evacuation of the citizenry.

However, video from ABC World News of September 8th shows automatic weapons-toting officers going door-to-door and entering homes in middle-class neighborhoods undamaged by floodwaters demanding citizens' firearms. The video further shows residents being handcuffed and led from their undamaged homes. What it doesn't show was what followed: after the confiscation of the firearms the residents were freed and allowed to stay. So, just what purpose was served by the confiscations?

The Louisiana Constitution, Article I, Section 11 states: "*The right of each citizen to keep and bear arms shall not be abridged, but this provision shall not prevent the passage of laws to prohibit the carrying of weapons concealed on the person.*"

Neither the Democrat Mayor of New Orleans nor the Democrat Governor of Louisiana did anything to stop this violation of state and federal constitutions. It took a lawsuit by the NRA and the Second American Foundation to accomplish that.

Ask yourself why.

I am sure that by now most, if not all, of you have heard or read the news about the Wilton Dedge case. For the benefit of those not familiar with this story, here is a brief recap. Back in 1982, Mr. Dedge was accused of a rape he did not commit. Notwithstanding, he was convicted of the rape and was incarcerated for 22 years. Last year, largely through the efforts of The Innocence Project, DNA evidence was brought forward proving that Mr. Dedge did not commit the rape for which he was convicted. Mr. Dedge was released from prison as a result.

Earlier this year, bills were introduced in the Florida Legislature to provide for compensation for Mr. Dedge's lost years resulting from his wrongful conviction. However, no legislation on the matter was ever passed. The Dedge family is currently suing the state for that compensation. The latest news that I am aware of appeared late August in the back of the Local section of Florida Today stating that a judge in Tallahassee rejected the Dedge suit because: 1) there is no Florida statute authorizing compensation of those wrongfully convicted of a crime, and 2) Wilton Dedge did not take the necessary steps to have his criminal record cleared.

I submitted a Letter to the Editor that ran in the September 8 issue of Florida Today to express my opinion that Mr. Dedge's record should have been automatically cleared once he was exonerated. A few days later, I received a letter from Senator Bill Posey acknowledging my letter to the editor and that he appreciated it when people such as me take the time to write such letters, as this helps him better understand the concerns of his constituents. As I have written to the editor frequently, this was one of several of such letters I have received from the Senator (they are all identical!) over the years.

This time, however, I decided to follow up on his letter to me. On September 20, I wrote Senator Posey about the Dedge matter, asking him to introduce legislation in the Senate to automatically clear the criminal record of any defendant who has been exonerated of the crime for which he was accused. For good measure, I sent my State Representative Mitch Needelman a copy, requesting him to introduce the same legislation in the Florida House. Below is the text of the letter I sent via e-mail to Senator Posey:

Senator Bill Posey, Florida Senate, District 24

Dear Sen. Posey:

Thank you for your letter dated September 12 with regard to my Letter to the Editor in Florida Today. As you know, in my letter, I expressed my opinion that Wilton Dedge should have had his record cleared automatically upon being exonerated of a crime he did not commit. In your letter to me, you state that you rely on letters to the

(Continued on page 20)

(Continued from page 19)

editor to help you better understand your constituents' concerns.

My concern, as expressed in my letter to the editor, is the unnecessary difficulty in getting a criminal record expunged, even though the subject of that record was found not to have committed a crime. Granted, the Dedge case is an extreme exception, but I assure you Dedge is not alone. It appears there are obstacles in the path of any defendant in Florida to expunge his record, regardless of whether the exoneration was the result of:

1. An acquittal at trial,
2. A reversed conviction at appeal,
3. OR, as in Dedge's case, a reopened case due to new evidence, that exonerates the defendant.

For such a person to expunge his record, he must first apply to Florida Department of Law Enforcement to CERTIFY that he is ELIGIBLE to even ASK the court to order expungement of his criminal record. At this step, there are records to be obtained, fingerprints to be submitted and forms to be filed, all at the defendant's expense. The next step entails petitioning the court to expunge his record. For details of the procedure, I refer you to *Florida Statutes*, Chapter 943.0585, and Chapter 11C-7.006, *Florida Administrative Code*. Even if the steps are properly followed, there is NO GUARANTEE that his record will be expunged. If an attorney is hired to navigate through these steps, this represents yet another expense to the defendant.

In circumstances where a defendant is exonerated, I strongly believe that upon final disposition of the defendant's case, the criminal records should AUTOMATICALLY be expunged. Therefore, I am asking you to sponsor legislation in the Florida Senate to provide for the criminal record of an exonerated defendant to be automatically expunged at the final disposition of his case. By copy of this letter, I am asking House District 31 Rep. Mitch Needelman to sponsor the same legislation in the Florida House.

Thank you for your kind consideration. Please keep me posted on the progress of this legislation.

Michael Moakley

So far, as of this writing (the evening of October 7), I have not heard back from either legislator, despite the fact that I supplied contact information. I must confess that I am more than a little perplexed that I have not received a reply from Senator Posey yet, especially in view of the quick responses I am accustomed to receiving from him when my Letters to the

(Continued on page 21)

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article is reprinted from the October 2005 issue of TAMPA BAY SOUNDING, newsletter of Tampa Bay Mensa, Thomas George Thomas, Editor.

It looks like Pat Robertson has changed his mind and yielded to our tradition that assaulting one person is more reprehensible than the killing of thousands in war.

I don't think this tradition is as much morality as it is the same reason one skunk doesn't stink on another. Immorality of assassination is related to a divine right of kings to let their fighting be done by privates and privates first-class.

Royal blood was different; the kings all had it and were supposed to marry royalty, even though the new queen might be from an otherwise enemy country. The old-time pharaohs even had to marry their sister to keep the blood pure. (Excuse me, Cleopatra, I'm sure this didn't apply to you.)

But, there has also been a tradition opposite to the one that says the ruler can't risk his/her/its neck. That is the oft-stated hope that the rulers, or their "champions," could decide the war without innocent peasants killing each other off.

In the "same song but different verse" I heard that Mexican law made a distinction between a famous person and an ordinary person when it comes to being assassinated. I guess we do, too, although our laws may not.

(Continued from page 20)

Editor get published. Could it be that neither legislator has any interest in this matter? Is clearing the record of an exonerated person too much to ask of legislators who consistently preach "law and order"? Do they see it as being "soft on criminals", despite the nagging trivial fact that those who are exonerated are indeed NOT guilty of the crime they stand accused of? Perhaps they checked my credentials and discovered I was NOT a Republican, thus not worth their time? The quick and honest answer to all these questions is, I do not know.

Should I receive a response from either Senator Posey or Rep. Needelman, I will be sure to publish their responses in a future SCAM.

Inspired by the offer of free evaluation of prior evidence during August, I sponsored a competition based on which group in Region 10 gained the most new members during August and September. Congratulations to Tampa Bay Mensa for gaining 14 new members during the competition! This was double what the second place group, Central Florida Mensa, gained. Tampa Bay receives the \$100 prize.

I am pleased to announce that the fledgling Region 10 website is up and running. Hopefully, starting with the November issues of the newsletters, the editors will send me their newsletters in PDF form, and the newsletters of the region will be available to all of us to read each month on the website. This is only the beginning; hopefully, the website will grow to meet the needs of Region 10. Website address is www.region10.us.mensa.org

There have been member concerns recently that the AMC was planning to “outlaw” ride sharing and roommate matching based on risk management issues. Based on these concerns, the AMC voted to strongly recommend that websites of local groups and websites of local/regional/national gatherings direct members to the site’s “bulletin board” or “forum” area for members to make their own event-specific ride-sharing or room-sharing needs known and worked out. This removes American Mensa, Ltd. (AML) from direct involvement in this process.

Also at the September meeting, a motion failed that would have amended the host contract for Annual Gatherings, Colloquia, and Mind Games to have the national office handle advance registration processing, online registration, financial accounting (receivables and payables), and oversight of onsite registration, exclusive of providing non-staff volunteers to man onsite registration. The national office will continue to offer these services, if requested to do so by the host group.

At the request of the WG06 chair, Elissa Rudolph, I announce in this column when there are positions that need to be filled for the World Gathering. Last month it was for someone to be in charge of stuffing the goodie bags, as well as for volunteers to help with this effort. This month we are also searching for someone to be responsible for signage. If you have attended an Annual Gathering, you have seen signs by each door, showing which program is in that room. The person we are looking for is the one who will make all those signs. To volunteer for ANYTHING for the WG, email: volunteers@WG06.us.mensa.org.

Maggie Truelove, RVC 10
rvc10@cfl.rr.com
407-855-9078
3333 Honeysuckle Lane
Belle Isle, FL 32812

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is in lieu of the minutes for the meeting scheduled for October 1, 2005, that never materialized.

The ExComm meeting of Oct. 1, 2005 was cancelled due to several members being unexpectedly out of town. Various other people who have been know to show up from time to time were notified of the cancellation, because we don't want to have someone show up at an announced meeting only to find that it's been cancelled. But, in fact, we don't get that many guests showing up to sit in on our meetings. We would like more visitors, especially those with opinions on how things ought to be done. I myself am big on 'oughts', which are a little weaker than 'shoulds' and 'musts'. I think this is the general outlook of this ExComm, although I haven't polled them on just this particular way of looking at things. They will tell me if I overreach.

Had we had the aforementioned meeting, Helen Lee Moore, the Proctor coordinator, would have reported:

"One candidate was tested on 17 September. At that session, Bud Long started his certification process as a proctor. A testing session is scheduled for October." But we didn't, so she didn't.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, the next meeting is scheduled for **Saturday, Nov. 5, 2005 at 4 pm**, at my (George Patterson's) house, **301 Sand Pine Rd., Indialantic**. We expect to discuss such matters as the evolution of our web site, plans for an extensive telephone survey of as much of the membership as possible, the scholarship chair position, a possible publicity chair, and of course, that overarching question of a 2006 RG - do we have one, how do we decide if we are going to have one, where are we going to have it. Our traditional venue, the Holiday Inn, when finally re-opened, will no longer have our favorite hospitality suite. Oy ! At the very least, we shall set a timeline for this matter.

Enough said. Interested guests, please.

George Patterson

LocSec