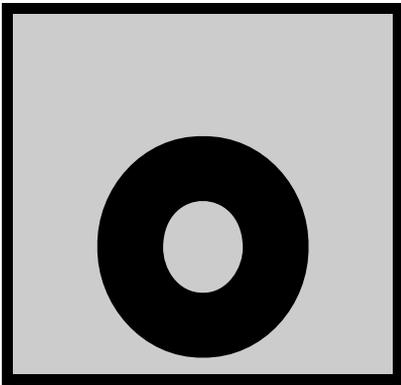
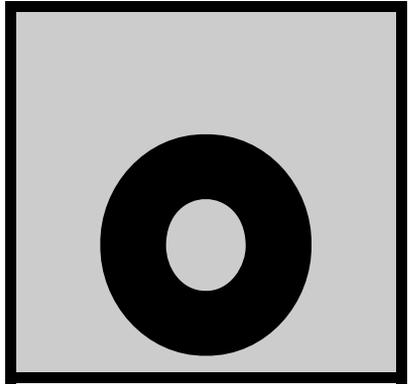


The

SCAM

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Happy New Year!





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

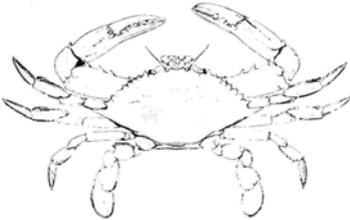
***The SCAM* sells classified ad space.** SCAM members, non-commercial, no charge. Others: \$20 full page; \$10 half-page; \$5 quarter-page per month, we offer discounts for multiple insertions, and we can help with layout and design.

Subscriptions: SCAM members, included in dues; others, **\$10** for 12 issues.

Well, by the time you read this, 2005 will have bitten the dust; 2006 is now here. After the last couple of issues heralding the end of the 2005 Hurricane season, I believe it is now safe to say that season is now behind us. Here's hoping that 2006 does not feature a repeat performance. Resolutions, anyone? As in previous years, I make one and only one New Year's Resolution: *I resolve to never make New Year's Resolutions!* That's it for this month. I wish you and yours a happy and healthy 2006.

I am going to be very brief this month because our editor is waiting with bated breath for my words of wisdom, and I don't seem to have any. I am not really sure what I want to say about our most pressing problem which is the looming prospect of the cancellation of the 2006 RG. For those not wholly familiar with the situation, let me review. We, Space Coast Area Mensa, have presented a fall event every two years for I don't know how long. I fondly remember the RG's of 1998, 2000, and 2002. Our planning for 2004, to my perception, was a bit slow off the mark, with an RG chairman appointed in or about September, 2003, but with adequate committee staffing not occurring until well into 2004. As we all know, the event was eventually washed out by an ill wind blowing very little good. It also blew out our favorite location for the event. The Holiday Inn is still undergoing major repairs, and reconfiguring to eliminate our favorite hospitality suite. We currently have no location for a 2006 RG, although several possibles have turned up. We also have no chairman or any other volunteers for the committee. While I am reasonably sure we (the ExComm and a few other mildly interested souls) could raise up a committee, I personally feel it would require a lot of begging, pleading, and arm twisting, and I don't really feel we want a committee created under duress. While I don't really know how I feel about this state of affairs, I am planning to introduce a motion at the January ExComm meeting to formally cancel the 2006 RG. This I view as better than just letting things peter out with our failure to proceed with any planning and preparations. I would really like to hear from anyone who has strong feelings on this matter. I'm sure you must be out there.

Crabs are creatures in the order *Decapoda*, which translates into ten-legged things. Actually they have only eight legs plus two claws. They are hard-bodied crustaceans found in oceans all over the world. Crabs are classified into several families, many genera, and a vast number of species, about 1,000 having been named. Found and eaten all over the world, most are an inexpensive form of animal protein and therefore are an important part of the diet of people living adjacent to water. Aside from the taxonomic designations, crabs can be distinguished as walkers or swimmers.



Of all the crabs found in U. S. waters, the most commonly known, first and foremost, is the **Atlantic Blue Crab** (*Callinectes sapidus*), pictured at left, a swimming crab, considered by many as the best tasting of all crabs. It is found all along the eastern coast from Delaware south, around Florida, to

the Gulf of Mexico. It is an introduced species in the Atlantic coast of Europe. Blues were once so plentiful that one of my friends, who has a house on a canal that leads to the Indian River, would keep a couple of crab traps hanging off of his seawall. Whenever he wanted a crab dinner, he would just pull up the traps and there would always be a couple or more crabs in them.

Most of the commercially sold crabs are Blues from the Chesapeake Bay, however pollution has reduced the numbers of crabs in the Indian River and Chesapeake Bay. They are not so plentiful as before. Some of the canned crab meat found on grocer's shelves today comes from Southeast Asia where the cost of labor to pick the meat from the shells is much less than that in the U. S. One typical canned crab uses the species *Portunus pelagicus*.

Blue Crabs are sold live as hard-shells or soft-shells. The normal condition of the crab is the hard-shell state. Being crustaceans, the animal lives in a shell made of chitin, a tough, horny polysaccharide. To grow and increase in size, the shell is shed, a new soft shell, having been formed under the hard shell, expands to a size larger than the old hard shell, and then hardens.

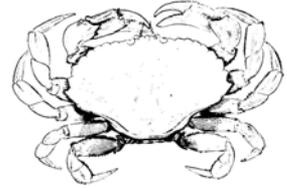
The time between the shedding of a hard shell and the hardening of the new shell is called the soft-shell state. This is a very short time, only a few days. As the crab is most vulnerable to natural predators during this period, they hide, do not eat, nor move around, and thus are difficult to catch. In order to supply the market, peelers, or crabs that are about to molt, are segregated from the rest of the crab catch and kept in pens until they do shed their shells. Then they are soft-shells and are sold live imme-

diately.

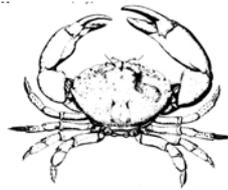
Most of the Blue Crab catch is processed at crab houses by cooking them and removing the meat. It is difficult to remove the meat from a crab until it has been hardened by cooking. Most cooking is done by steaming or boiling. When boiled at home, the water is often flavored with a spice mixture called Crab Boil. The commercial ready-mixed spices sold as Crab Boil usually contain mustard, coriander, dill, cayenne, allspice, pepper, and cloves.

The meat from the claws, legs, and back fin is white. The body meat, which consists of the reproductive organs and the digestive organs, collectively called “liver”, is brown meat, although a small amount of white meat can be found in the body. All together, the amount of edible meat in a Blue Crab is about one-third of the whole crab weight.

There are a number of other crabs that one is likely to encounter in Brevard County in restaurants or markets. One is **Rock Crab**, pictured at right. The common name Rock Crab is applied to



several different walking crabs.



Another is the **Southern Stone Crab** (*Menippe mercenaria*), pictured at left. Usually only the meat from the claw of the Stone Crab is eaten. When caught commercially, usually one claw is removed and the crab is returned to the water. The removed claw soon regenerates. When served whole, the hard carapace is cracked before serving. Damon Runyon said of Stone Crabs: “It is served cold with hot melted butter with a dash of lemon on the side. Probably the right place in in which to eat stone crabs would be in the bath-tub. The fingers are used in toying with them. Some high-toned folks use those dinky oyster forks, but the fingers are far speedier and more efficient.”

The most common crab on the European shore of the Atlantic Ocean is *Cancer pagurus*. They are similar to our Blue Crabs but range further north. Known as Partans in Ireland, they can be found almost anywhere there.

Another swimming crab found on both sides of the Atlantic is the Shore or **Green Crab** (*Carcinus maenas*), pictured above, left. As befits its name, the carapace is green.

Sand, Calico, or Lady Crab (*Ovalipus ocellatus*) is a small, three-inch crab found on the American Atlantic coast.

Hermit Crabs, pictured at right, belong to several spe-



cies, *Eupagurus bernhardus* being the most common. The upper portion of the body, the head, claws, and legs, is encased in the usual hard carapace. The lower portion, consisting of the body, has no armor at all. To protect itself, the crab finds a suitable container, such as a snail shell, and wiggles into it backwards. If the shell is still occupied when found, the crab will eat the snail and then move in. As the crab grows it must find ever-larger shells in which to dwell. Sometimes two Hermit Crabs will get in a fierce fight over an appropriate shell. Hermit Crabs are eaten in France.

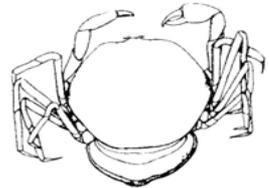
In addition to the Green and Blue Crabs, there is the Red Crab (*Geryon quinquedens*). It is a deep-sea walking crab. Little fished, it is found mostly in New England.

The Dungeness Crab (*Cancer magister*) is a Pacific species that can occasionally be found for sale in Brevard County.

The most well known Pacific species of crab goes by the name of Alaska King Crab (*Paralithodes camtschatica*). When I was working in Japan during the cold war, I had to visit the fishing village of Wakkanai on the northern tip of Hokaido, the northernmost island of Japan. We were building a radar observation post that would look across the straight to a Soviet island about 12 miles away. While we were building our radar installation, including a radar dome, power plant, dormitories, mess halls, and the rest of the infrastructure, we could see through binoculars, when the weather allowed us, the Soviets building a parallel installation *i.e.* radar dome, power plant, dormitories, mess halls, and the rest of the infrastructure. It was so similar to our installation that we wondered if they had stolen our plans and were using them for their construction.

Anyway, at each visit to Wakkanai I would go to the docks and find a fishing boat that had just come in. For the equivalent of two dollars U. S. I would buy a complete set of King Crab legs, eight legs in all, from one crab, already frozen. The legs were so long that they had to be doubled over to fit into the top freezer of our refrigerator. In Japan that crab was called Wakkanai King crab but it is exactly the same species as Alaska King Crab and fished from the same waters.

At the other end of the size scale is the **Oyster Crab** (*Pinnotheres ostreum*), pictured at right. This crab is only one-half inch wide. It makes its home inside an oyster and is permanently soft shelled. When eating oysters it is considered a delicacy and a prize second only to finding a pearl. When eating oysters on the half shell, if an Oyster Crab is found, it is eaten raw along with the oyster. In oyster stews or chowders, occasionally an oyster crab will be found floating on top. They are to be eaten by the lucky finder.



EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is reprinted from the November 2005 issue of Flamenco, the newsletter of Miami Mensa, Mark Puddephat, Editor. Reprinted by permission of the Author.

Galileo, facing the Inquisition, had tried to tell the inquisitors that all they had to do was look through his telescope, and they could see the evidence of his claims with their own eyes. The inquisitors dismissed the telescope as a tool of the devil, designed to deceive, and they refused to look. (Not so inquisitive, then.) To save his life, Galileo recanted from his claim that the Earth revolved around the Sun. He spent the rest of his life under house arrest. Some 300 years later, the Church finally got around to admitting it was wrong in the case of Galileo. Gee, thanks.

I suppose there's nothing wrong with a religionist having an opinion about science, just as there's nothing wrong with a scientist having an opinion about religion. Everyone's entitled to his or her own opinions, after all. But the problem arises when that right of opinion aspires to become a controlling opinion. The compulsion to enforce one's will on everyone else, because one knows better, is arrogance. It is just as unseemly when it comes from a politician, educator, scientist or businessman as when it comes from a religious leader. But, since religion is caught up with beliefs of eternal life, God's will and the fate of one's mortal soul, defying a religious authority may carry more weight (and threat) to many people.

Once again, it is useful to emphasize the distinction between spirituality and religion. Spirituality is the effort to attune oneself with the divine presence and awaken to cosmic reality. Religion is the attempt to narrow that effort into a system of beliefs, rituals and behaviors, which is most correct and seems "best" (AKA orthodoxy). While religious systems give many people comfort and provide considerable moral guidance, they tend to lose the capacity to bring most people to God except in the most emotional, excitable and hypnotic manner. There will always be some people who discover the divine presence within the context of a particular religious faith; but, for most people, religion is mentally constructing a complex God-concept, projecting that concept into the sky, and then worshipping that projection, rather than the much harder but realer search for the presence of God within.

Science has its root in the Greek concept of "Natural Philosophy." This school of thought held that all natural phenomena were the manifestation of underlying fundamental natural principles, and that studying and uncovering these principles was an essential part of understanding the Universe. Before the modern explosion of science, and the resulting specialization with blinders on, "natural philosophers" were scientific generalists, interested in all forms of natural phenomena, from astronomy to botany. The key quality of a really good scientist is the willingness to pursue the

truth, no matter where it leads. There are no forbidden questions, and no taboo lines of thought, just hypotheses and theories, hopefully, guided by a wise moral compass.

What I find most interesting is the confluence of awareness by those at the very apex of both religious and scientific study. The greatest minds are never threatened by intellectual challenges; rather, their universe just keeps expanding into a world of greater possibilities. An Einstein was not repelled by spiritual considerations; rather, he embraced them. Matters of “forbidden science” do not distract a Gandhi or a Dalai Lama; rather they emphasize love, compassion, humility, harmlessness, righteousness and an open mind. Some of the most spiritually far-out people you could meet today are some of the more tuned-in astrophysicists, who are looking back to the birth of the cosmos and seeking to unravel the “theory of everything.” They are awestruck and “God-drunk” by the amazing universe that Cosmic Intelligence has let them see. Spiritual people are not threatened by science; indeed, some of their most profound experiences of the immanence of God’s presence are awakened through scientific understanding.

It’s different for people who already know everything, though. If the Bible, Koran, Vedas or Sutras are to be taken literally, then those ancient tomes are more than an opinion or a hypothesis; they are the law. The same orthodoxies arise in politics and science, of course: note the dead-end ideological purity of devout Marxism, for example; or the dogmatic resistance of each generation of doctors to every new school of medical innovation. Science and religion are designed to ask different questions. It is generally a mistake to use religion to ask “why” questions. Inevitably, religion’s answers to all those whys boil down to “Because God so ordains it.” Which doesn’t really explain anything, and serves mainly to halt the questioning, much like Daddy’s “Because I said so.”

Science is better at answering the “Whys.” Why do we die? Because oxidative stress and the errors of gene duplication gradually add to the deterioration of tissue and the inability of life to regenerate itself further; because heart attacks, cancer and other degenerative diseases so weaken the system that it fails; because brainwave activity is reduced to a flat-line. And so forth.

Religion (or, more accurately, Spirituality, which is much less pretentious) does a much better job with the “Hows.” How do we die? With dignity, faith, peace and a sense of having fulfilled our life’s purpose; with the willingness to let go of the burdens of ego and responsibility; with love for our dear ones and a blessing to console them through our departure, with amusement at the seriousness with which people regard the “next great adventure,” with a certain sense of surrender and even welcoming of the inevitable, with the relief of removing too-tight shoes and finally resting after an awfully long day. That is a good death.

The nature of life’s greatest mysteries is that no one knows for sure. The spiritual reasons are really just conjectures. But the spiritual methods

are real, because they are not designed to explain the inexplicable, but rather to enable the unbearable. Science can't provide the soul-lessons that help us cope with life's transitions and hardest experiences. It can only describe the process clinically. But every doctor who's done hospital rounds can tell you that spiritual condition frequently trumps medical condition. We simply heal better when we are faithful, serene, hopeful, gentle and emotionally prepared, rather than troubled, scared and angry. And we deal with the people in our lives more fruitfully when we see them and ourselves as beloved children of God, rather than as victims and victimizers, or mere bundles of drives and impulses.

Certain "great issues" of the present day revolve around the presumed conflict between religion and science. Really, the conflict is between orthodox belief and the non-sectarian, secular society. Most people really can and do accept both religious and scientific principles. A majority of Americans accept evolution, but a majority of those believe that God had something to do with it. The varieties of religious and spiritual experience are about as diverse as humanity itself, or, as I like to say, "One true path; six billion lanes on the one true path. Don't like the view? Change lanes." The problem isn't with the regular person who quietly says, "I've got my beliefs and you've got yours; let's agree to live and let live." The problem is with the loudmouth who says that only his beliefs are right. Unfortunately, he's the one who gets the attention, which was just what he intended.

The Bible says that the bee has four legs, and that rabbits chew their cud. The simplest of anatomical observation would show that these assertions are simply not so. When people decide that science must be wrong because it conflicts with what they read in their Bible or Koran, they essentially decide not to believe their own eyes. This decision inevitably creates a schizoid mentality, which is hostile to anything that threatens its preconceptions. A wise person is grateful for any new information that might disabuse him or her of false ideas. The "foolish consistency that is the hobgoblin of little minds" will invent elaborate Rube-Goldberg-like mental contraptions to explain away that which is inconvenient or heterodox. The result is people who are talking past each other, not really hearing what one another is saying but just trying to score points, and reassure God that their faith is pure.

I don't believe that faith is harmful. On the contrary, it is one of the things that make life meaningful. But most people confuse belief systems with faith, and slavishly worship a way of thinking, or a book or a denomination, rather than the underlying divine presence that inspired it. I suspect that the same thing happened to atheism, which for some became a church in its own right. All isms and ideologies are suspect when they claim to have the last word on everything. And while both faith and reason are among our highest gifts, faith without reason tends to do a lot more mischief in human affairs than does reason without faith.

What really bothers me about the current climate is that a political

clique is ruthlessly exploiting a religious movement for its own purposes. I do not believe that the present powerful give the tiniest damn about religion, evolution, abortion, gay marriage or any of the other controversial “hot-button moral issues” that they exploit. They are a cynical, greedy corporate elite, addicted to money and power, period; and they’ll do anything to grab and keep them. They could not care less about religion, science, the environment or the public good. It is only our own folly to believe them when they claim to care. What is pitiful is that the right-wing religious conservative zealots are happy to be exploited because they believe these heartless, conscienceless, monstrous thieves are championing their agenda. But it’s a classic “deal with the devil.” When history catches up to these elitist knaves, I am confident that their skullduggery will be judged as far worse than Nixon and his plumbers; their shameless demagoguery as far worse than McCarthy and George Wallace, and their mendacity and larceny far worse than the robber barons of Harding or Teddy Roosevelt’s time.

For the true scope of their theft and deception is breathtaking. The test of a democracy is not the first time a party gains power in a free election, but rather the second time a party surrenders power. If the next two elections are stolen, as many believe the last two were, then the slide into fascism may be irreversible; and those of us who can take refuge in other citizenships in other lands will consider ourselves lucky.

Every ism can be hijacked by people with ulterior motives, and if you stick around long enough, they all will. This fact makes independence of thought is so precious. If we have hitched our wagon to a whirlwind, everything we have will be torn apart. The beauty of America to date is that, while we have a right to believe whatever we like, only facts could rule in court. Once facts become superfluous, anything goes. That’s why science, not religion, has to be turned to for evidence. The evangelicals are not bothered by environmental devastation, because these are the “end times,” and the world will be destroyed soon anyway. The corporate elite doesn’t care because doing so would interfere with profits. These beliefs make a cozy confluence. But those who accept science and don’t believe that either profit or prophecy should justify abetting the destruction of the natural world want evidence of global warming, species extinction and pandemic pollution to determine public policy, not belief systems or greed.

There’s a great line in “The Godfather,” where Kay says to Michael, “Senators and Presidents don’t have people killed!” And Michael replies, “Who’s being naive, Kay!” Religion uplifts and also brings crusades and jihads. Science produces vaccines and also stockpiles nukes. Politics liberates and also enslaves. Only goodwill, an awakened conscience and a reasoning, enlightened mind have the power to save us from our self-created hells. God loves us but will not rescue us from those nightmares we insist on bringing to life.

are real, because they are not designed to explain the inexplicable, but rather to enable the unbearable. Science can't provide the soul-lessons that help us cope with life's transitions and hardest experiences. It can only describe the process clinically. But every doctor who's done hospital rounds can tell you that spiritual condition frequently trumps medical condition. We simply heal better when we are faithful, serene, hopeful, gentle and emotionally prepared, rather than troubled, scared and angry. And we deal with the people in our lives more fruitfully when we see them and ourselves as beloved children of God, rather than as victims and victimizers, or mere bundles of drives and impulses.

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SCAM Calendar of Events for January 2006

4th - Wednesday 6:00 PM

COFFEE, ETC.

Come join us at the House of Joe, 1224 W. New Haven Ave., Melbourne. Great place for a get-together over coffee; a free Wi-fi connection is featured for those so inclined. *One of our best regular events.*

Contact: *Trish Thornton, e-mail: coffeetc@scam.us.mensa.org*

10th - Tuesday 12:00 Noon

SCRABBLE AT GRETCHEN'S

Join Gretchen for a challenging game of SCRABBLE at her home in Melbourne. Be sure to call for directions. We also meet at the same place and time on the 24th.

Contact: *Gretchen Zimmerman, 242-7257.*

15th - Sunday 11:00 AM

BRUNCH WITH JIM

Join Jim for Sunday Brunch at the Colossus Restaurant, 380 N. Wickham Road, in Melbourne. You must arrive on time or you may not be seated with our group.

Contact: *Jim Trammel, 242-8985.*

28th - Saturday 6:00 PM

S.N.O.R.T.

Join us for some sushi and tempura at The SCAM's best attended event at Miyako's, 1411 S. Harbor City Blvd. (US#1) in Melbourne.

Contact: *Your Newsletter Editor, or e-mail: snort@scam.us.mensa.org.*

Calendar Updates

ATTENTION SCAM MEMBERS!

Every effort is made to bring to you an accurate up-to-date Calendar of Events. However, last minute changes can and do occur past newsletter deadline. For up-to-date info, visit scam.us.mensa.org and click on "Calendar".

Here is a selection out of the *A View From Somewhere Else* collection of useful quotes:

“It is given a man, sir, to attack the rights of others, seize their goods, assault the lives of those who defend their nationality, make of their virtues crimes, and one’s own vices a virtue, but there is one thing beyond the reach of such perversity: the tremendous judgment of history.”

---Juarez to Maximilian

Behind this statement is the story of three men: a great man, a pretender, and a fool.

The Great Man was Benito Juarez, a Mexican politician and social reformer. Born in 1806, Juarez came of age at the inception of Mexico’s nationhood, a period marked by considerable instability. Conservative groups, representing the landed aristocracy, the military, and the religious authorities opposed those who sought land reform and the extension of equal rights to all parts of society. The country was subject to constant political struggle, as conservative regimes, usually dominated by men wearing General’s uniforms, replaced reform-minded governments, only to be themselves displaced in a short time. Each party attempted to enact its program during the short time it held power. As a result, there was little progress, and the people and economy suffered.

A lawyer by education, Juarez associated himself with the reformers, and held a series of public offices, rising to a position of national leadership. It should be noted in passing that Juarez’s success is even more remarkable in view of the prejudice he confronted due to his Indian ancestry.

Mexico’s political crisis worsened in 1857. The reformers published a new constitution, which the conservatives refused to accept. The lawful President was deposed, and the two factions engaged in an internal war that lasted for several years, with the reform party emerging victorious.

Juarez had become President in 1858, but was only able to fully exercise his authority upon the conclusion of Mexico’s civil war in 1861. At this point, the national treasury was depleted, and Mexico experienced a debt crisis. Using the Mexican government’s default as a pretext, and taking advantage of the United States’ distraction with its own civil war, several European nations landed troops at Veracruz.

The driving force behind this incursion was the Pretender, Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, better known to us as Napoleon III. Only seven years old when his illustrious uncle met final defeat at the Battle of Waterloo, Louis Napoleon spent most of his first 40 years in exile, associated with

other French expatriates who favored a return to the imperial system of the first Napoleon. The death of the first Napoleon's son without heir extinguished the direct Bonaparte line, and in the eyes of the nostalgic imperialists, Louis Napoleon was now the rightful ruler of France.

After several failed attempts to seize power, Louis Napoleon managed to get himself elected President of France in 1848. Facing the expiration of his term with no possibility of reelection in 1852, he engineered a coup that suspended the constitution, and within a year he was proclaimed emperor, taking the reign name of "Napoleon III" in acknowledgement of his dead cousin's priority in the imperial line.

Although Napoleon III expressed sympathy for social reforms, he was in fact an autocrat and employed the usual methods of dictators in preserving his power. Attempting to live up to his uncle's reputation as a conqueror, he engaged in several military and colonial adventures with the intent of expanding his authority beyond the borders of France.

Encountering some of the disaffected Mexican conservatives, Napoleon III developed a plan for a "Latin American" empire under French control, that would include Mexico and portions of Central and South America. The first step in executing this plan was sending French troops, along with those of Spain and Britain, to Mexico in late 1861. When it became apparent that Napoleon's ambitions involved more than settling the debt problem, Britain and Spain withdrew, leaving Napoleon III a free hand in Mexico.

Although at a serious disadvantage, the Mexican Army mounted a heroic defense, and Napoleon III was required to send reinforcements. An 18-month campaign elapsed before the French Army conquered Mexico City. Juarez escaped, and became the center of resistance to the occupiers.

Here, the Fool enters the story. His name was Ferdinand Maximilian Joseph, and he was the younger brother of the Hapsburg Emperor of Austria-Hungary. Born in 1832, Maximilian had held the usual ceremonial offices of a European princeling, aware that he would most likely never rule. When Napoleon III offered Maximilian the newly-established throne of Mexico, no doubt, Maximilian hoped to write a new chapter in the history of his family, which had dominated Europe for centuries. In reality, Napoleon III intended that Maximilian would be a mere puppet in establishing the new Latin American empire.

To his credit, Maximilian made his acceptance conditional upon popular approval. Napoleon III, however, had little trouble convincing Maximilian that a plebiscite had confirmed that he was the legitimate choice of the Mexican people. Maximilian was married to a Belgian Princess, and some sources suggest her ambition to rule an empire exceeded her husband's.

In the middle of 1864, the imperial couple crossed the Atlantic, landed at Veracruz, and made a triumphant procession to Mexico City. Although

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

Welcome to SCAM

Catherine Anderson
Debra Saltzberg

Welcome to SCAM and Mensa

Alexios Vrotsos
Yanni Vrotsos

Welcome Back

Edward Johnson

JANUARY BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

2nd Rose Marie Martinez
4th Joseph Richardson
12th Arleigh Sharpe
12th Albert Thomas
14th Lee McLamb
14th Barry Signorelli
14th Gary Tower
23rd Rita Johnson-Aronna
31st Joanne Ricker-Abowitt

(Continued from page 17)

the French Army controlled the capital and the major cities, their hold on the countryside was never secure. Bands of irregular soldiers staged frequent raids against French targets, and brigands took advantage of the chaos. The French and their Mexican allies pursued the leaders of the deposed government, forcing Juarez to retreat nearly to the border with Texas.

At the ebb of the Mexican Republic's resistance, Juarez received a solicitation from Maximilian to surrender, prompting the response quoted at the beginning of this article.

(To be continued)

It has often been said that a dictionary does not define the words we use in our language; rather it catalogues the current usage of each word therein. When dealing in politics, many terms are used to evoke certain emotional reactions based on perceived meanings that often have no relation to their true usage. With this in mind, I have decided to create *The Conservative Dictionary*. What follows is a partial list of terms commonly used in conservative circles, followed by each term's current usage. This list is by no means complete; in fact, I invite readers to introduce terms not found herein along with their current usage. Here is this month's list.

Atheist. Anyone other than one who professes to be a member of a favored church, religion, or doctrine.

Class Warfare. A condition brought about when public attention is brought to expose the inequities imposed on ordinary people by the small minority that owns the majority of all the available wealth. This condition must be avoided at all costs. Labor unions, where they still exist, are often major perpetrators of *class warfare*.

Common Sense. When applied to legislation, regulations that are relatively ineffective in serving their stated purpose. May also apply when the effect of a regulation results in significant profits for a favored industry. Quite useful for obtaining campaign donations for those candidates supporting *common sense* regulations.

Consumer Freedom of Choice. The doctrine wherein a business can sell dangerous products to a consumer without being compelled to warn the consumer of the product's dangers or being held to account for any resultant harm done to a consumer. Also, it is the right of a vendor to sell junk food at a public elementary school.

Defense of Marriage. (Also known as *protection of marriage*) The doctrine that no marriage shall be legally recognized unless it is the union of one man and one woman. This doctrine does *not*, however, serve to protect such recognized marriages.

Entrepreneurial Spirit. The unconditional support of "laissez-faire capitalism", that is, no rules unless they exist for the benefit of large corporations. Also, the belief that all should be in business for themselves (including "employees" who are "independent contractors" with no employment legal protections).

Frivolous Lawsuits. Any legal action taken by, or on behalf of, an ordinary person or people against large corporations, espe-

cially when represented by a lawyer on a contingent fee basis. See *personal responsibility*.

“God Bless America!” Asserts that this country is the Promised Land, and that its (conservative) political leaders and its wealthy class are the Chosen People. One might do well to research the *Christian Identity Movement* (not provided here). This, of course, leads to the question of whether God’s blessing will be bestowed upon the majority of Christians who are *not* Americans.

Homeschooling. (Also *Home Schooling*) Any arrangement, not in any recognized school, whereupon children under the age of 18 are given a basic education. *Home School Academies*, for example, are sometimes daycare centers that may offer organized instruction. Some *home-schooled* children may actually be taught at home.

Immorality. The concept or act whereupon an ordinary person engages in any sexual activity for purposes other than procreation. Other acts proscribed by law or by the Ten Commandments are not necessarily immoral unless they are also sexually based.

Innovation. The skill or expertise in getting around all undesirable rules or regulations, particularly in business transactions.

Judicial Activism. Any court order or finding that does not agree with the views of conservatives.

Keeping God out of School. Any rule, practice, or doctrine whereupon a public school or school district refuses to engage in organized “voluntary” prayer as part of its curriculum.

Local Control. The doctrine whereupon each school district is a distinct independent entity, controlled by the local school board and the people who elect board members. All school taxes collected are used only in the local district. This assures that school districts in wealthier localities provide better educational opportunities to their students than those districts in poorer areas.

Opportunity Scholarship. Money used for the purpose of educating a child in private school at taxpayer’s expense, often taken out of the public school budget. This is the politically correct term for a *voucher*. Both terms have the same meaning and are interchangeable.

Personal Responsibility. A doctrine where the ordinary individual is held responsible for his actions, but large corporations and their leaders are shielded from all liability in their dealings with ordinary people.

Preemptive Defense. Starting a fight under the pretext that not doing so would allow the opponent to throw the first punch.

For example, a schoolyard bully may justify his aggression by saying, “Yes, I hit Joey first, because I was afraid he was going to punch me in the nose if I didn’t.”

Property Rights. The concept, “A man’s home is his castle” extended to corporate property. Some uses of the *property rights* doctrine include ejecting vocal liberals and other undesirables from stores, shopping centers or workplaces although such areas are normally open to the public during posted business hours; the refusal to allow routine inspections on worksites without a search warrant; attempts to nullify undesirable environmental laws.

Public-Private Partnership. The practice of using private contractors to perform all or part of a governmental function. Those who are *not* conservative often refer to the practice as *privatization* or *outsourcing*.

Religious Freedom. The perceived right of the members of a dominant religion to impose their beliefs upon others anywhere including, but not limited to, public schools. Does not apply to minority religions such as Wiccans, Baha’is, or Buddhists.

School Choice. The professed right of a parent to send his or her child to a private school at public expense. Often, this is accomplished by the use of *vouchers*. See *Opportunity Scholarship*.

That’s it for this month. Now we’ll do another “Posey Update”; this time there is news to report. You may recall from the last two issues of *The SCAM* that I requested the Senator to sponsor legislation to automatically expunge the criminal record of a person exonerated of that crime. On December 1, I received his response to my request by mail. The body of the letter reads as follows:

“Thank you for your thoughts about automatically expunging criminal records.

Only due to the unfortunate and unusual nature of Mr. Dedge’s case, am I aware of any possible need to automatically expunge criminal records.

Your suggestion makes sense. However, inasmuch as I do not serve on any of the legislative committees that focus on law enforcement or criminal justice, I do not have a lot of expertise in such matters, and am not aware of all possible consequences.

Therefore, I will be asking the Senate staff, which does have expertise, to explore the merits of the legislation you have proposed.”

I sent the Senator a message thanking him for his response and requesting that I be kept posted on this issue. Next, I will be pursuing the matter with Rep. Mitch Needelman.

Happy New Year! That seems odd to say, as it is not yet Christmas when I am writing it. In fact, I am writing this from Arizona, shortly after the 4th quarter AMC meeting. One thing that was a point of concern to many of you at this AMC meeting was the motion to begin an “Angel Fund” at the national level. Those of you who communicated your feelings to me will be pleased to know that the motion failed. Even so, from time to time there are members unable to pay dues who would benefit from some assistance. These members may be elderly or those with unexpected medical or other catastrophic expenses. Many of these members are folks who have given many volunteer hours to the organization. Hopefully more of our local groups will take it on their shoulders to assist such members. I encourage you to consider this.

Project Inkslinger is gearing up for major involvement with restocking libraries around the gulf region when they are rebuilt. The national coordinator told the AMC that he knows that many local groups have an Inkslinger coordinator, but he doesn't have their contact information. To build this network, if your group has someone doing Inkslinger, please either let national office know, or let me know and I will pass it on.

For National Testing Day, Region 10's results were disappointing. The region with the most candidates tested within the testing window tested more than 200. Region 10 tested the least of any region, with 53 candidates. I credit this poor showing to the fact that 1/3 of our groups were seriously affected by Wilma just before this testing. We will do better next year!

Many of our groups received a notice from National Office that it was time to review the bylaws and bring them into compliance with minimum standards as needed. Let me know if you need any assistance with this review and revision.

Next month is **Valentine** in Destin, Florida, up in the panhandle. Details are available on their website (Northwest Florida) and on the Region 10 website (region10.us.mensa.org). And coming up in April is the next MindGames, this time in Portland, Oregon. Details are available on the national website.

Congratulations are in order for Howard Prince and the IT team at the national office. The website has received a national award for excellence. Kudos!

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The ExComm met at the home of George Patterson on Saturday, December 3, 2005. Called to order at 4:26 pm by LocSec George Patterson. All of ExComm in attendance except Cliff Miller

Welcome Guests: None.

Minutes as published in the December 2005 SCAM are approved unanimously.

Officer Reports:

Treasurer: The November 30, 2005 report was distributed by Bud Long and showed current funds of \$4,347.11. Bud reported that the Post Office had requested the annual bulk mailing fee of \$150. ExComm decided that this was a normal business expense which Bud could pay without need for an ExComm vote.

Testing: Helen Lee Moore (Proctor Coordinator) reported via email that one candidate was tested in October. None appeared for a scheduled November test. A test was scheduled for later in December.

Committee Reports:

There were no committee reports.

Old Business: George reported that when in June, the current ExComm extended all appointees, it failed to note that the Bylaws committee no longer had its full contingent of three members. Since the Bylaws require this, it was moved by George that Dennis Schindler, Thomas Wheat, and Joe Smith be so appointed. Tom and Joe were present and Dennis had been consulted. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business: It was noted that a NomElCom should be in place by January 15. George agreed to seek out volunteers for appointment at the January meeting. An Audit committee need is also in the offing. There was a brief discussion regarding the need for the Treasurer to maintain our accounts in two different banks, keeping the bulk of our funds separate from the account which the national office has some access to. This question will be pursued further.

Joe moved to adjourn at 4:40 pm, passed by unanimous vote. The next meeting of the ExComm is scheduled for Saturday, **January 7**, at **4:00 pm** at **George Patterson's house, 301 Sand Pine Road, Indialantic.**