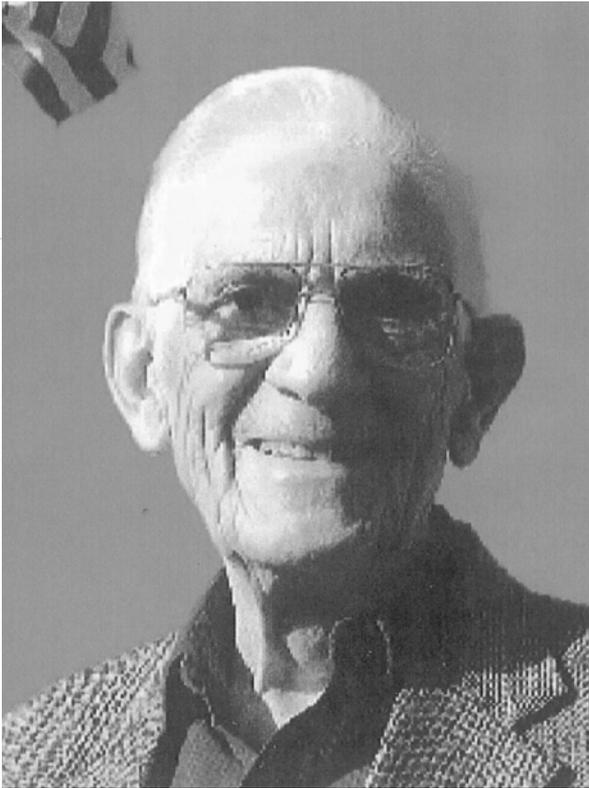


*The*

# SCAM

page oast rea ensa



*Joseph L. Cittadini*  
1916-2009



# SPACE COAST AREA MENSA



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

(All Area Codes are 321 except as noted)

## Executive Committee

Local Secretary

**GEORGE PATTERSON**

301 Sand Pine Rd., Indialantic, FL 32903  
777-3721 [george3141@cfl.rr.com](mailto:george3141@cfl.rr.com)

Assistant Local Secretary

**JOSEPH SMITH**

4317 Sherwood Blvd., Melbourne, FL 32935  
259-4966 [jsmith@arachnaweb.com](mailto:jsmith@arachnaweb.com)

Treasurer

**BUD LONG**

660 Alaska Rd., Merritt Island, FL 32953  
422-5011 [budlong@bellsouth.net](mailto:budlong@bellsouth.net)

Recording Secretary

**KAREN FREIBERG**

876 Buxmont Ct., Rockledge, FL 32955  
633-1636 [Karen@freiberg.com](mailto:Karen@freiberg.com)

Member-at-Large

**TERRY VALEK**

626-8523  
[wb4zuz@amsat.org](mailto:wb4zuz@amsat.org)

## SCAM Appointees

Proctor Coordinator

**HANK RHODES**

[MensaTest@cfl.rr.com](mailto:MensaTest@cfl.rr.com)

Membership

**KAREN FREIBERG**

[Membership@scam.us.mensa.org](mailto:Membership@scam.us.mensa.org)

S.I.G.H.T.

**KAREN FREIBERG**

[Sight@scam.us.mensa.org](mailto:Sight@scam.us.mensa.org)

RG Committee Chair

**BUD LONG**

SCAM Bylaws Committee

**MICHAEL MOAKLEY**

[editor@scam.us.mensa.org](mailto:editor@scam.us.mensa.org)

Publicity Committee Chair

**GEORGE PATTERSON**

Mediator

**MICHAEL MOAKLEY**

[editor@scam.us.mensa.org](mailto:editor@scam.us.mensa.org)

## The SCAM Editorial Staff

Editor

**MICHAEL MOAKLEY**  
808 Wisteria Dr., Melbourne, FL  
32901  
[editor@scam.us.mensa.org](mailto:editor@scam.us.mensa.org)

Webmaster

**KAREN FREIBERG**  
633-1636  
[Karen@Freiberg.com](mailto:Karen@Freiberg.com)

Assembly/Circulation

**GEORGE PATTERSON**  
777-3721

Calendar

**DOUG STARKE**  
633-1636  
[Doug@Starke.com](mailto:Doug@Starke.com)

## American Mensa Ltd.

**MEL DAHL, RVC10**  
[RVC10@cfl.rr.com](mailto:RVC10@cfl.rr.com)

**AMERICAN MENSA, LTD.**  
1229 Corporate Drive West  
Arlington, TX 76006-6103  
(817) 607-0060  
[AmericanMensa@mensa.org](mailto:AmericanMensa@mensa.org)

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

## *Inside the Pocket Protector*

*Mike Moakley, Editor*

**A**lthough I have never met most of you who are reading these pages, I believe you know by now that I like to write. Some of my writings have come easily, while others have been quite difficult.

For me, one of the most difficult works to write is an obituary, especially if it is about a person I never met face-to-face but who, just the same, has touched my life in some manner. Such is the case with fellow member Joseph Cittadini, who passed away just a few days before last Christmas.

Joseph Cittadini, a life member, was a World War II bomber pilot who flew 19 successful missions before becoming a prisoner of war at the hands of the Germans. It is easy to see that he was one of many American war heroes. But there is more.

I am certain that many of you have read his account, “20th Mission”, that appeared in *The SCAM* in serial form throughout 2008.

As heroic as Joe Cittadini was during his military career, in my eyes, he was all the more a hero by his willingness to share a rare glimpse of that period in history as seen through the eyes of *one who was there*—part of that history.

In a day and age where the powers that be would prefer that our collective memories not even span the past year or two, Joe Cittadini’s contribution to *The SCAM* is truly a treasure to behold. Therefore, it is with both considerable emotion and gratitude that I write these few words in tribute to a man who I never had the pleasure of meeting.

***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.

**L**et me review my remarks of last month regarding networking. I said that email reminders were useful and probably adequate for “pushing out” reminders of events and the online calendar was an adequate source of information for members to “pull” information from. (eek, those #\*\$& prepositions). An additional tool was needed to conduct discussions on how we conduct our affairs - and other topics, perhaps.

Hence Facebook. In TV and radio land, not to mention print media, everybody, every show, every product, seems to have a Facebook page. News programs like Fox (?), CNN, NPR, BBC are constantly referring people to their blogs or Twitter presence. I am afraid this sort of thing is with us to stay. Now it turns out that email is involved in this because to access Facebook you need a Facebook account which requires, as ID, your email address. And it seems that a fair number of Mensans prefer to keep their email address secret.

Facebook makes a big deal out of protecting members from fake identities by requiring email addresses, but I have noticed that it is pretty easy to get any number of email accounts using Google or Yahoo. In fact, people who don’t want to release their “personal” email address could probably get a separate one just for accessing Facebook. But I need to research that some more.

Meanwhile, to satisfy my curiosity, I did a review of the latest group roster from National. Rounding the numbers slightly I found that of 230 SCAM members, 100 provided both email address and phone number, 50 provided just a phone number, 30 provided just an email address, and 50 provided neither. 100 of 230 members withheld or failed to specify an email address. The roster file, in the email and phone number columns (it’s a spreadsheet) show an address, or is blank, or says “withheld.”

As a further complication, phone, home, and email info can be marked with the “carat of death,” which means that the info should not be included if the group publishes its own directory. Members provide this info when reupping at dues paying time, or by going online to *www.us.mensa.org* and updating their profile for which you need to establish and remember a password. When updating your profile, you can enter or omit phone number, email address and home address. You can then select a number of options which include, among others:

*(Continued on page 14)*

**I**n *CITIZENS UNITED v. FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION* the U. S. Supreme Court has decided that corporations have First Amendment rights as persons. I will not, at this time, discuss the political ramifications of that decision, who it benefits and who it hurts, nor what the motivations were behind that ruling. I will address something that I have not seen discussed in any review of that decision; the damage it has done to the English language.

The Preamble to the U. S Constitution says:

*We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America*

It is clear that the Constitution was written by the people and for the people of the United states.

First, let us define what “people” is. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED), the foremost authority on the meaning of words in the English language, defines “people” as “a body of persons forming a community, tribe, race, or nation“. The New World Dictionary says it is “all the persons of a racial, national, religious, or linguistic group“. Other dictionaries give similar definitions. People, then, is a group of persons.

The OED defines “person“ as “an individual human being“. The New World Dictionary says a person is “a human being“.

These dictionaries did not exist when the Constitution was written. The OED for example, was not completed until 1897. The authors of the Constitution were educated and well read. They used words as they were so intended at the time. The dictionary definitions are based on the same sources available to those men. Corporations existed from the Middle Ages. Had the writers intended to include corporations in the Constitution they would have said so. People wrote the Constitution for themselves, not for corporations. The U. S. Constitution does not recognize corporations. The word is nowhere to be found in the document. The First Amendment says:

*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion,*

*(Continued on page 6)*

---

(Continued from page 5)

*or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.*

In its written opinion, the majority of the Supreme Court addresses the word person this way in describing those who are protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution: “person or class”, “persons or entities”, “person or group”. This is done to incorporate corporations within persons. If the Supreme Court can define corporations as persons, then the Supreme Court can define any word however it wants to, subjecting the English language to political chicanery.

The Court’s minority opinion asserted that only “natural persons” are covered by the First Amendment. They were overruled by the majority.

In the context of election to public office, the distinction between corporate and human speakers is significant. Although they make enormous contributions to our society, corporations are not actually members of it. They cannot vote or run for office. The Court has thus rejected the argument that political speech of corporations or other associations should be treated differently under the First Amendment simply because such associations are not “natural persons.”

If a corporation is a person for the First Amendment of the Constitution, then it follows that that corporations are persons in the basic document. Thus, corporations have all the rights accorded to persons in the Constitution including the right to vote. The ramifications of this decision are immense. The Second Amendment says:

*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.*

If corporations are people under the First Amendment, then they are people under the Second Amendment, thus corporations, under the Supreme Court’s majority’s reasoning, corporations may keep armies. Follow this reasoning through the whole of the Constitution and you will see where it leads.

By asserting that corporations are people, the Supreme Court is going against the common meaning of “people”, the intent of the

(Continued on page 7)

***“I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to the Earth.”***

**T**hese are the words of President John F. Kennedy in his *Special Address to Congress On The Importance of Space*, May 25, 1961. This address has been so oft replayed that most Americans – even those who were not yet alive at the time – have seen and felt the impact of these impassioned words. The address electrified the country and instilled a national fervor unlike anything we have seen since. With this vision guiding us, we achieved Kennedy’s goal with the Apollo 11 moon landing on July 20, 1969, an event watched live by mesmerized viewers around the world.

Little did we realize at the time that this would be the last visionary effort in our country’s almost 40-year history of manned space flight since then.

And with the February 1, 2010 announcement of the decision by the Obama administration to cancel the only forward-looking program on NASA’s schedule, Constellation, America’s manned space flight program is effectively ended.

Not that President Obama’s decision was necessarily wrong. It was predicated on the results of the Augustine Commission’s findings which concluded that the program was woefully under funded and unrealistically optimistic in its schedule projections.

Which leaves us now, facing the end of the Shuttle Program in the fall of 2010, with... nothing.

Tragic. Yet it didn’t have to end this way. If only we’d had more men (and women, too, okay?) with Vision.

*(Continued on page 8)*

writers of the Constitution, and all authoritative sources. Thus the Supreme Court has usurped the legislative branch of the government. By defining any word in a law to mean what it wants, the Court can make any law say what it wants, leading to a dictatorship of the Court.

---

(Continued from page 7)

At least with the termination of the Apollo program at the end of 1972, there was the upcoming Shuttle program to look forward to. And even though there was an overlong hiatus until that first flight on April 12, 1981, it was still a step in the right direction. However, the Shuttle wasn't welcomed with the same ardor and national pride. Again, vision. Or – more properly – lack of.

The Space Shuttle was touted as the “truck” that would be used to haul the large, heavy parts that would be required to build (originally) Space Station Freedom. With the inevitable delays, setbacks, budget cuts, and the eminently predictable under-estimate of Shuttle costs, the Space Station became a scaled-back version of the original design and became an international venture.

All in good faith, all – again – without Vision.

Since Kennedy, we've had 9 Presidents of the United States and 14 Administrators of NASA and, sadly, not a single one of these leaders has had a vision for the future of our space program. About the closest would be George Bush's January 14, 2004 “*New Vision for Space Exploration Program*” announcement in which he formally gave the death knell to the Shuttle and made vague reference to a new spacecraft, the Crew Exploration Vehicle, by 2008 (oops!), and then a Moon landing by 2020, preparatory to establishing a permanent presence on the Moon from which we would then further explore our Solar System.

Funding? No. Plan? No. Realistic? No. Visionary? No. More hot air politics? Yes. Except for the part where we terminate the Shuttle. That caught on well.

So, here we sit, arguably the most powerful, respected, and admired nation in the world, and a second-rate space faring nation. We will watch as China and Russia are joined by Europe's ESA, Japan, India(!), Israel(?), Iran, and one or both of the Koreas as space-capable countries, leaving us earthbound, relying on the (paid) kindness of our Russian “friends” to ferry us up to the aging and useless International Space Station (ISS) in their rusted, duct tape equivalent patched Soyuz.

Meanwhile, the role of fulfilling America's ability to return to space has been left to the entrepreneurs of Private Enterprise, of which the current leading contender is SpaceX, the private rocket upstart company owned by Internet tycoon Elon Musk, co-founder of PayPal. However, SpaceX is still years away from achieving manned

(Continued on page 9)

---

(Continued from page 8)

Earth-to-orbit capability. If at all.

Will we ever see the era of the enterprising American rocket company, led by rugged explorers, ferrying intrepid astronauts and engineers to and from the ISS? Who cares? It doesn't matter whether we succeed or not. The sad truth is that the ISS, along with the cancelled Constellation program, the false promise of returning to the moon, and the even more far-fetched notion of sending humans to explore Mars are all miserable examples of empty words and lack of Vision.

Apollo served its purpose: it got us to the Moon and safely home again. But at what price? This enormous 363-foot tall behemoth, weighing some 6.2 million pounds returned to Earth only the tiny command module, 210 cubic feet of habitable space, and weighing about 12,800 pounds. 00.2% return. The rest expended. The brute force approach. It worked, but it wasn't viable.

Then we almost got it right. The Space Shuttle was actually on the design boards before the termination of the Apollo program. This mostly reusable spacecraft would ferry us into low earth orbit and give us the capability to construct a space station from which we could conduct some serious space advances. Until we hit the inevitable schedule extensions, cost over-runs, and scope reductions. The Shuttle turned out to be far too labor-intensive and expensive and the Space Station was cut so far back that it served virtually no useful purpose. At which point we really should have scrapped the whole enterprise.

Lack of Vision.

We never had another Kennedy or Von Braun who could have energized us with the possibilities of doing things right.

Imagine if you will, in 1972, newly-elected President Wernher Von Kennedy working with NASA administrator John F. Braun, announcing the "*Practical American Vision for Space Exploration.*"

*"Citizens of America, we are about to embark on a great, new adventure. The development of the Space Shuttle System will allow us to build the United States Space Station Freedom, a formidable presence in low Earth orbit from which we will expand our explorations beyond the confines of our own planet. Previous space efforts have been initiated from the bottom of the great gravity well of Earth where 90% of the propellant is used just to escape the grip of gravity. Our*

(Continued on page 12)

## SCAM Calendar of Events for March 2010

**3rd - Wednesday 5:30 PM**

### EXCOMM MEETING

This is our monthly business meeting. All members are always welcome to attend. This month, it will be held at the home of George Patterson in Indialantic.

Contact: *George, 777-3721, for details.*

**27th - Saturday 6:00 PM**

### SNORT

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: *George, 777-3721.*

### **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 [spacecoast.us.mensa.org](http://spacecoast.us.mensa.org) and click on "Calendar". Also, we are putting together a current e-mail notification list of all members who wish to be kept up-to-date on our activities. If you wish to be included, please contact George Patterson at 777-3721 or [George3141@cfl.rr.com](mailto:George3141@cfl.rr.com).

### **Your Event Here!**

### ATTENTION SCAM MEMBERS!

Do you have a great idea for that perfect event? Do you have the urge, even the *desire* to socialize with other Mensans, but simply do not want to use the extra gasoline? *Why not host that event in your own home?* If this sounds good to you, contact our Calendar Coordinator today. You'll be glad you did. *Info on Page Two.*

### Of CABAGEs and Coffee:

*(Our Regular Events)*

C.A.B.A.G.E.: **Every Monday at Books-A-Million**, Merritt Square Mall  
6 p.m. Host: *Karen Freiberg, 633-1636*

GO!: **Every Sunday at Books-A-Million**, Post Commons, Melbourne.  
Host: *George Lebovitz, 259-3070, [rokkitsci@cfl.rr.com](mailto:rokkitsci@cfl.rr.com)*

## Membership Notes for March 2010

### *WELCOME TO SCAM*

Susan Caswell  
R M Livingston

### *WELCOME TO SCAM AND MENSA*

Ethan Goswick  
Nicholas Caporicci

### *WELCOME BACK!*

Jack Thompson  
Harry Martin Jr  
Martin Vanoy

Wade Hollowell  
Richard Hussey  
Shirley Jones

### *MARCH BIRTHDAY GREETINGS*

<i>15th</i>	Joseph Cona	<i>20th</i>	William Daffron III
<i>16th</i>	Robert Roth	<i>22nd</i>	Jack Harris
<i>16th</i>	Melinda Meers	<i>23rd</i>	Donald Dalton Jr.
<i>19th</i>	Gisela Bahr	<i>26th</i>	Jenifer Mina

### *IN MEMORIAM*

Joseph Cittadini

### **The "Fine Print" for Calendar Events:**

Membership in American Mensa, Ltd. makes you eligible to attend SCAM social functions. Escorted and invited guests of a member or host are welcome. Adult family members of Mensans are encouraged to participate in SCAM activities, as are well behaved children. However, attendance at any social function in a **private home** is subject to the hospitality of the host. Compliance with published house rules is required, and "Kitty" payment is **not optional**. As a courtesy, notify the host if you plan to attend. Announced hosts should attend their events or arrange for a stand-in if unable. **When reservations are required, you may not be able to participate if you fail to call.**

**S**-Smoking; **NS**- No **Smoking**; **SS**-Separate **S**Smoking Area; **P**-Pets in the home; **NP**-No **P**ets present; **BYO**-Bring Your Own: **\_**Snacks, **\_**Drinks, **\_**Everything.

(Continued from page 9)

future efforts will be initiated from the microgravity environment of the Space Station where components of exploratory and manned craft will be lifted by the Shuttle and assembled in space by a cadre of astronauts, engineers, and scientists. We will encourage and support the private sector to develop Earth to orbit capability to provide human transport to and from the Space Station, thus freeing NASA to concentrate on the goal of returning man to the Moon to establish a permanent manned colony. From the experience gained in surviving, then thriving, in this harsh distant environment, we can extend that knowledge to plan future missions to our neighboring planets, moons, and asteroids. This logical progression of development will cost a great deal of money; however, I believe that every dollar we invest in this exciting, new endeavor will return benefits worth many times the investment, developing new technology, pharmaceuticals, materials, and many other things. Our great country has always maintained – and always should maintain – a leadership position in the field of space technology and exploration. At Launch Complex 34 in Cape Canaveral there is a plaque commemorating the tragic loss of three Apollo 1 astronauts during a full up systems test in January of 1967. The words on the plaque read: “Per Aspera Ad Astra.” Through Adversity to the Stars. With this new Vision as our goal, I am sure that we will overcome all adversity and eventually attain the stars themselves.”

Vision.

*The George*

### **SCAM Treasurer’s Report**

**As of 1/31/2010:**

<u>Account</u>	<u>Balance</u>
General Fund	\$708.76
Post Office Acct.	242.70
Reserve Fund	1616.85
RG Fund	266.24

**Total Funds Available:**  
**\$2834.55**

<u>Deposits</u>	
Mensa Funding:	\$199.76
Interest Income	0.07

<u>Withdrawals</u>	
Postage	57.08
Printing	164.50
Annual PO Permit	185.00

<u>Transfers</u>	
Reserve to General Funding:	\$500.00
General Fund to Post Office Acct:	\$200.00

—Bud Long, Treasurer

*"People who don't drink are afraid of revealing themselves."  
-Humphrey Bogart*

**F**airly recently, I received an e-mail asking all who read its content to boycott Mel Gibson's new film, *"The Edge of Darkness"*. We should do this because, as the author put it, Mel Gibson is anti-Semitic. While I generally do not give much credence to e-mails that advocate some action, I could not totally dismiss this one.

Over the past several years, I was made aware that many regard Gibson as anti-Semitic. Of course, one question that needs to be answered is: "Is this true?" Another question that needs to be answered is: "Why should it matter?" After all, celebrities are entitled to their personal lives, and certainly to their opinions, however ignorant they may be. That said, I do find a cause for concern here.

In support of the accusation of Gibson's anti-Semitism, the most recent example occurred in the summer of 2006, when a quite inebriated Gibson, when arrested for driving under the influence, remarked to the arresting officer: *"F-ing Jews...Jews are responsible for all the wars in the world. Are you a Jew?"* It turns out the officer was Jewish. It is generally known that when too much alcohol is present in one's body, it tends to loosen one's inhibitions. I would find it, at best, difficult to believe that a person in such condition would blurt out an opinion he truly does not hold. Therefore, I believe it is a safe assumption that Gibson is, indeed, an anti-Semitic bigot.

So, why should it matter? The incident, by itself, should not. We all have personal biases. Those biases do become a problem when it is no longer just a private opinion. In the case of a celebrity (Gibson is both an actor and film director), his bigotry became a problem when it showed up in his work. This brings us to *"The Passion of the Christ"* a film Gibson directed and produced in 2004.

*"The Passion of the Christ"* had received some bad press for its alleged anti-Semitic overtones. The critics point to the negative depiction of Jews as the ones responsible for Jesus' crucifixion and subsequent death. The imagery is reinforced by using stereotypic Jewish features in actors who were cast as the Pharisees. I did see the film when it first came out, so I do have firsthand knowledge of its contents. My own impression is that these critics were right on target.

A reading of the Gospels do indicate that the Pharisees, by and

*(Continued on page 14)*

---

*(Continued from page 13)*

through Roman authorities, did cause Jesus to be crucified. But to say it was “the Jews” who carried out this execution misapplies the Gospels. Jesus Himself was Jewish. So were many-*if not most*-of His followers.

According to the Bible, the reality was that the powerful religious figures saw Jesus as a threat to their power that had to be eliminated. Is this a uniquely Jewish phenomenon? If we look at today’s fundamentalist leaders among Christians and Muslims, it becomes too obvious that the tendency to eliminate perceived threats to the powerful are not at all unique to any one people. Indeed, it would be ludicrous to blame ALL Christians or ALL Muslims (or ALL Jews) for what a few extremists with too much power might do. The crucifixion of Jesus was simply an example of this universal tendency that occurred some 2,000 years ago.

The mere fact that Mel Gibson is a bigot is not, in my opinion, reason enough to justify boycotting him and his work. But when he takes that same bigoted message to the people and advocates that bigotry through his very work, that becomes a different story. Should we, then, boycott Mel Gibson and his works? By all means, an emphatic *Yes!*

---

*The LocSection*

**WATCH THIS SPACE!**

*Continued*

---

*(Continued from page 4)*

*“Release my phone number within the organization.”*

*“Release my email address within the organization.”*

*“Include my home address in local and national online or printed directories.”*

*“Include my phone number in local and national online or printed directories.”*

*“Include my email address in local and national online or printed directories.”*

It’s not really clear what the extent of including, releasing, or not, amounts to, but I would guess that a fair number of people just shrugged and said “who needs this” and didn’t check any boxes. So I can’t really tell how many of these folks are “hardline access deniers” who really want to keep their info secret or who don’t really care one way or the other. I will research this further by contacting some of the withholders, one way or another.

**T**hose among you who regularly read my column are, I believe, well aware that I have written on quite a few occasions to advocate public financing of candidates' campaigns for public office. This should not supplement private funding, as the "public funding" plans do now, but to replace our current campaign finance system. I state now, as I have in the past, if we are to have representatives of the people rather than, as we currently have, representatives of the rich and powerful, we can no longer continue our current course.

As many times as I have advocated this position, I have repeatedly heard the opposing position: Restricting, much less opposing, a person's right to donate to the candidate (or political party) of his choice directly conflicts with his First Amendment rights to freedom of speech. While I continue to decline to buy into that argument (would bribing public officials be protected speech?), it does seem that current trends are moving away from my expressed views.

Specifically, I refer to that recent Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United vs. Federal Election Commission*. The most significant part of this decision is that corporations are considered "persons" and, as such, are entitled to the same First Amendment protections as natural persons. The long-term effect of this decision is, many fear, that election laws banning corporate contributions to candidates' campaigns may be stricken as conflicting with their First Amendment rights.

While prospects for fair elections may seem to be unattainable as a result of *Citizens United*, I do not believe all is lost. Let us take a closer look at what, in practical terms, "*Freedom of Speech*" actually means. Drawing on my personal experiences, let me share a couple of examples.

Long before writing for (and now editing) *The SCAM*, I began writing letters to the editor for publication in *Florida Today*. I have written many letters over the years, and they have covered quite a variety of subjects. While many might oppose the views I have expressed in these letters, I believe few would dispute my absolute right under the First Amendment to write and submit these letters for publication.

Although I could not even begin to guess the numbers of letters I have submitted, I would guess *Florida Today* has published ap-

(Continued on page 16)

---

(Continued from page 15)

proximately half of them. From conversations with other letter writers I know, I have come to believe my “batting average” is a good one. Apparently I have done very well.

Yet, why haven’t *all* my letters been published? What about *my* First Amendment rights? The answer, of course, is obvious. My freedom of speech does *not* guarantee an audience. *Florida Today*, like any publication, can refuse to publish any letter it chooses.

Then, there is still another issue. Of my letters that were published, how many were actually read by *Florida Today’s* subscribers? While I have no way of knowing, certainly not all of the subscribers read my opinions. While that fact might disappoint me, it does lead to an indisputable fact: *My freedom of speech does not constitute an obligation for others to listen.*

Another example is this column. I submit for publication in this newsletter this column every month. Another Editor might choose to run my column; he may also choose not to do so. You, the reader might regard my writing as “liberal trash” and choose not to read this. Yet, here I have also exercised my First Amendment rights.

One more example will suffice here. Some of you may already know that I work for local government. Like any organization of its size, my employer has published a personnel policy for all its employees to follow. A section of the policy deals with accepting gifts from members of the public, especially in cases when they are given to attempt to influence an employee’s actions in the performance of his official duties. This part of the policy is in accordance with a portion of Florida Statutes that deals with the same subject. Moreover, if an applicant for employment has a financial interest in a business that might have dealings with, or is regulated by, my employer, the applicant must then reveal that interest on his application for employment.

Evidently, this rule is in place to prevent corruption of public officials (yes, we have police officers, code enforcement, purchasing agents, etc.) and employees. The point is, we work for all citizens, not special interests. Yet, I do not know of any provision of this same rule that forbids someone from offering employees a gift.

Given the above, are not our elected officials, in fact, our *employees*? Are not candidates for office simply applicants for a job? My complaint over the years has been (and continues to be) that our elected officials—that is—our *employees* are not doing the job we

(Continued on page 17)

---

(Continued from page 16)

hired them to do. In our country today, we have exactly the same circumstances that the relevant rule in my employer's personnel policy was specifically written to avoid.

Put another way, I still assert the need to effectively provide campaigns that are entirely funded by the public. But, if we cannot forbid private interests from offering campaign donations, *we must forbid candidates for office (as well as all elected officials) from accepting those donations.*

If *this* concept is found to be unconstitutional, then *Florida Today* had better watch out! But, on a more serious note, how long will it be until our bribery laws are similarly struck down?

---

<b><i>EXCOMMUNICATION</i></b>
-------------------------------

*Continued*

(Continued from page 19)

Publicity: George reported that he had contacted National regarding publicity flyers and had received a prompt reply indicating they could be of assistance in this matter and requesting further info and to the purpose of the flyers and the target audience. George is framing a response. He has not yet heard back from other Florida chapters on this matter.

There was no new or old business.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05. Next meeting will be at George Patterson's house at 301 Sand Pine Rd., Indialantic on Wednesday, March 3, 2010 at 5:30 pm.

**A**s I talk to local group leaders throughout the region, one recurring theme is the difficulty finding volunteers. There are several groups in Region 10 that are held together through the efforts of one or two or five people that would be badly hurt if any or all of those one or five people were no longer able or willing to run the local group any more.

Everything that happens in Mensa, from our annual AGs to the monthly local group potluck, happens because somebody makes it happen. If there are no volunteers, there are no events. So if you haven't found a way to be involved in your local group, I would urge you to consider volunteering. Your LocSec will have no trouble finding a spot for you, I promise.

There's another reason to volunteer, and that is that it's fun, satisfying, and a great way to meet other members. I occasionally hear from people who write to tell me that they haven't gotten anything out of their Mensa membership. When I ask them how they've gotten involved in the organization -- what volunteering they've done, what events they've attended, whether they've offered to host a potluck -- inevitably I find that they really haven't made any effort to be involved at all. In Mensa, as in life, you get out of it what you put into it.

So if you are already one of our volunteers, many thanks for the great job. If you're not, make 2010 the year in which you play an active role in your local group.

Until next month,

*Mel Dahl*

*RVC-10*

**Minutes of the ExComm Meeting.**

**T**he ExComm met at the home of George Patterson on Wednesday, February 3, 2010. Called to order at 5:47 pm by LocSec George Patterson.

Attendees: ExComm members George Patterson, Karen Freiberg, Bud Long, Joe Smith, and Terry Valek. Guests Wynn and Zane (Suzanne) Rostek

Minutes for the January 6, 2010 meeting were approved as published in the February 2010 SCAM.

LocSec Report: George reminded us for a third time that we need to appoint a NomElCom to manage the 2010 ExComm election, the schedule of which is: ballot in the May Scam and candidates statements in the April issue, which goes to press on March 10. It is hoped that last years committee can be rerecruited. Wynn Rostek has agreed to chair the committee, and should be confimed along with two others, hopefully, at the next meeting, provided that no one threatens a filibuster.

Treasurer: Bud submitted the Treasurer's Reports for January which showed a final balance of \$2,834.55.

Testing: Hank Rhodes (proctor coordinator) reported via email that no one showed up to take the test on Saturday, January 16. 7 prospects were contacted for the 1st time and 16 other prospects for 2nd or 3rd time. A test was scheduled for February 20 at the Central Brevard Library in Cocoa.

Membership: Karen reported that we had received a request from a Mensan in Indiana whose local chapter was disbanding and who wished to join our group instead of another distant mid-west group. He was told that we welcomed him and if he informed National of his desire to change his affiliation they would make it so.

S.I.G.H.T.: Karen reported that a fine social event was held to meet and greet Maggie Ruben, visiting from Broward Mensa.

RG Report: Bud reported that things were proceeding smoothly but we could use a few more volunteers. An RG committee meeting was to be held following this ExComm meeting. George reported that flyers had been distributed at the Central Florida RG and Bud reported several responses.

(Continued on page 17)