

The

SCAM

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Merry Christmas





SPACE COAST AREA MENSA

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(All Area Codes are 321 except as noted)



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

Inside the Pocket Protector

Mike Moakley, Editor

Merry Christmas to everyone! If you are not one who celebrates the Christmas holiday, you may translate this greeting to celebrate the holiday that fits your customs and traditions. My greetings do extend to all.

There really is not much for me to write about this month, so a few reminders should suffice.

First, ExComm meetings are open to ALL Mensans, not just the ones elected and appointed to run the business of SCAM. It might not be a bad idea to read the Minutes, published on the back page of each issue. The location of the next meeting is included in the Minutes.

Second, I encourage everyone to peruse the SCAM website. We have an online calendar and we keep an archive of back issues of *The SCAM*. This comes in handy when a writer refers to a prior work in a current column. For example, my article this month refers back to an article I wrote for the November 2012 *SCAM*.

Third, if you would like to see yourself in print, there is always plenty of room in *The SCAM*. Submission guideline are at the top of this page.

Finally, there is plenty of room for new calendar events. Just contact our Calendar Coordinator (info on Page 2).

This is YOUR SCAM.

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.

Most of us have heard of 'String Theory'; the idea that all things are made up of tiny little strings.

Well, just how big are these tiny little shoelaces? I made an effort to find out but I got lost in a very long string of zeros. I ended up with a guestimate that can't be more than a few light years of zeros off target which would still put it right here in our own backyard.

Okay, here we go!

If the Jolly Green Giant was expanded to the size of the present day universe and he took his plate of spaghetti with him (al dente of course), and a loaf of Italian bread, then one strand of my spaghetti (Marinara), which I am ready to dig into, would (compared to his) be the size of a single 'string'.

He could then chow down on his humongous plate of spaghetti (with meatballs or marinara) but he would have great difficulty eating mine. I'm pretty sure he would not be able to hold my tiny little fork in his big grubby hands.

Some of us used to imagine, what was then the smallest of particles like, electrons, muons, leptons, etc. to be like little balls of tapioca pudding (flavored of course). Then we realized that tapioca and flavor are two different things and therefore, something smaller must be the bedrock of both of them.

Imaginations went to work and came up with crushed beer cans, applesauce and used pizza boxes (large and extra large) but eventually tiny little pieces of thread or string won out.

We all know that little things (strings or crushed beer cans) make up bigger things like pick-up trucks, Big Macs and fries.

I can live with that.

But, somewhere between a Higgs Boson and a Big Mac things get sticky—not just a little sticky—but very, very sticky.

I don't dread the thought of having to drive a new pick-up (4 wheel drive of course) while knowing, full-well, that it is nothing more than a huge pile of strings but I just can't wrap my teeth around a delicious Big Mac made of string. And, what about the stringy fries?

I don't want to spend the rest of my life picking furry little strings out of my teeth. It's enough to put a person on a cabbage diet for life.

Someone should let McDonald's know about this.

I can just imagine Einstein ordering a stringy number 8 meal (hold the lettuce) while formulating a mental picture of Earth in a sagging trampoline-like

(Continued on page 12)

There are several ways to count things. The most common to us is the decimal system. We have units, tens, hundreds, thousands, millions, billions, *etc.*, each raised by a factor of ten, a hundred, or a thousand. When we write it though, we separate the numbers in groups of three or thousands with a comma between. In speaking, and rarely in writing, we may talk of hundreds. But once we start to count, we immediately run into trouble.

When we count in English, we use a variety of words for the first three numbers. The cardinal numbers are *one*, *two*, and *three*, but we say *wun*, *too*, and *three*. The spelling *one* and the pronunciation *wun* come from two Old English dialects, which in turn had a single word *an* for one, sometimes pronounced *on*. *An* is retained in modern English as the indefinite article *an* meaning one. *On* is retained in the word *only* and *once*, also meaning one. Another pronunciation variation *yoo* is the basis of words like *union* and *unity* indicating one.

The spelling of *two* and the pronunciation of *too* come from two Old English grammatical forms of the word *two*. *Too* was retained for the pronunciation. *Two* was retained for the spelling and remains as a poetic form for *two* - *twain*, as in the twain shall never meet.

For counting of an ordinal we say *first*, *second*, and *third*. After that it is *fourth*, *fifth*, *sixth*, *seventh*, *eighth*, and *ninth*. Other than the change of a voiced *v* in *five* to an unvoiced *f* in *fifth*, the "th" ending denotes an ordinal number based on their cardinal names with some exceptions.

One had no regularly formed ordinal for *one* in Old English. The equivalent of *foremost* was used, becoming *first* in modern English. *Two* also had no ordinal form in Old English. *Second*, derived from the French word for the cardinal, was early used in English.

Eleven and *twelve* also have their own names in English, coming from Old English forms for *one more than ten* and *two more than ten*. German, French and other languages also have separate words for 11 and 12. Greek, Turkish, Italian, and many other languages are more thoroughly constrained to the decimal system by saying the equivalent of *one-ten* and *two-ten* or in the case of Japanese, *ten-one* and *ten-two* for 11 and 12.

Twenty has its own name in English. In Old English *twēntig* means *twice ten*. This cardinal number uses the alternate form of *two* for its base. The next numbers in that series are *thirty*, *forty*, *fifty*, *sixty*, *etc.* The *ty* suffix means *ten*.

In English, we have an alternate method of expressing numbers greater than *twenty*. We follow the format that we use between *thirteen* and *nineteen*, that is, saying the unit first followed by decimal name of the tens value, such as

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

four and twenty.

Another method of counting is far more common but would not be recognized by most people. That is the binary system which consists of only two numbers 0 and 1. It is more common because it is used by all computers and digital devices. We don't see it or use it because our computers convert the binary numbers to digital numbers when conversing with us. All the numeric processing, memory, and conversing between computers is done in the binary system.

Another old system of counting would now be completely forgotten except for Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. "Four score and seven years ago. . .". He was counting in units of twenty. *Score* comes from Old Norse meaning *notch*, a way of tallying. This is an example of Vigesimal or base 20 method of counting.

It has been suggested that the earliest counting system consisted of only three numerals: *one*, *two*, and *many*. Some primitive societies still use this method of counting.



A Mensan in the Workplace?

Are you the Mensan at work? Do you work with other Mensans...or...are you the only one? If the latter is true, do your coworkers know you're in Mensa? What about your boss? What are your impressions and experiences at work? Do you have a leadership position? Do you serve in any kind of "support" (formal or informal) role? Does your status as a Mensan have a positive or negative impact on your work relationships? Finally, if preparing a resume, would you include your Mensa membership as an item (or would you state that you qualified to join Mensa)? Why or why not? Let's hear from *you*.

Heading into the holidays, many of us are busy with friends and family and have little time for extra SCAM events. Taking into account how busy the next few months will be, we have dropped the November speaker event, but will have one in December (*We don't want you to forget about us due to a long hiatus*).

It looks like we have enough people interested in competing on a trivia team that we are going forward with the planning on this. We are now looking for a venue. We may have enough people interested that we could form two teams. That would really be something!

Keep an eye open for a planned games night early in 2015, we've got several new games that we need to try out. I'm thinking it will be in February because January is best spent recovering from the holidays.

I have to confess; I've gone over to the dark side. After many decades of being a Unix user in one form or another with Windows machines for non-Unix work, I've broke down and bought a Mac. I just got so tired of waiting for Windows updates to complete so I could use the machine, and the habit that Redmond has of sending updates that break critical software.

The straw that broke the camel's back was a pair of back to back failures. After an update, I lost the Windows partition on my main computer. Windows reported it was corrupted and would refuse to boot, even in safe mode. Since Redmond has protected me against so many threats, I'm unable to overwrite that 1TB drive with a more user friendly operating system. The Debian partition keeps plugging away, so I have not lost the use of the machine, but I did lose some commercial software that I paid hundreds of dollars for. Oh well, live and learn.





The second Windows box to fall was a notebook that I used to drive my 3D printer. It too had an update, and went toes up. I was able to partially recover the notebook to the point that I could recover the settings for the printer driver. In the near future the 3D printer will be moved to a Linux box or the new Mac. I'm done with Windows.

I did not abandon Windows lightly, I've written hundreds of thousands of lines of code for Windows over the years, but these days Windows is costing me far too much time and money for it to be worth messing with.

Hope you enjoy the holidays. Please take a moment during this very busy season to remember the millions of folks in the United States that don't have it as well off as you. This includes the people with few if any friends and relatives, people in poor health, and the financially down and out. Be thankful for what you have, so many don't have as much as you.

December 2014

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

	1 C.A.B.A.G.E.	2	3	4	5	6 GO!
7	8 C.A.B.A.G.E.	9		11	12	
14	15 C.A.B.A.G.E.	16	17	18	19	
21	22 C.A.B.A.G.E.	23	24	25	26	
28	29 C.A.B.A.G.E.	30	31			

SCAM Calendar of Events for December 2014

13th - Saturday 7:00 PM

GUEST SPEAKER MEETING

Come join us at the Red Ginger Restaurant in the Melbourne Square Mall. Our speaker will be Paul Cummings. Topic for this month TBA. First glass of beer or wine is complimentary.

Hosted by: *Joe Janson, 338-5833.*

20th - Saturday 6:00 PM

SALON

Come join us at George and Barbara's, 301 Sand Pine Rd., Indialantic, for an evening of "enlightened ?" discussion. 6 PM til whenever. Light refreshments. RSVP's not required, would prove helpful for planning.

Hosted by: *G. & B, Patterson 474-4074,5 or george314159@gmail.com*

27th - Saturday 5:45 PM

S.N.O.R.T.

Join us for some Japanese cuisine at The SCAM's best attended event at our new venue, **Hioki's**, 3200 NE Dixie Hwy. (US 1) in Palm Bay. It is about 2 miles south of US 192. **Contact:** *George, 474-4075 for details.*

EXCOMM MEETING

Wednesday, Dec. 10 at 6:00 pm. This is our monthly business meeting. See back page for location.

MENSA TESTING

Jan. 17 at Central Brevard Library, 308 Forrest Ave., Cocoa. Please arrive by 9:45 am, as testing begins at 10 am. \$40 fee and photo ID required. Reservations encouraged but not required. Candidates must be age 14 or older. Testing will not be held this month.

Contact: Hank Rhodes, mentstest@cfl.rr.com.

Of CABAGES and Coffee: (Our Regular Events)

C.A.B.A.G.E.: Every Monday in the Food Court, Merritt Square Mall
6 p.m. Host: Karen Freiberg, 633-1636

GO!: Every Saturday at Books-A-Million, The Avenue, Viera. Hosted by the Space Coast Area GO Association.
1 p.m. Host: George Lebovitz,

the.rokkitsci@rocketmail.com

Membership Notes for December 2014

WELCOME TO SCAM

Kimberly King

WELCOME TO SCAM AND MENSA

Raymond Bahr III

WELCOME BACK!

David Geier

Donald Sheppard

DECEMBER BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

2nd Jeannine Stein
2nd Theresa Valek
10th Jeff Horger
11th Jim Lee Fitzgerald
16th Christopher Glass
30th Travis Elmore



The "Fine Print" for Calendar Events:

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

S-Smoking; NS- No Smoking; SS-Separate Smoking Area; P-Pets in the home; NP-No Pets present; BYO_-Bring Your Own: _Snacks, _Drinks, _Everything.

This Page is RESERVED:

JUST
FOR
YOU

We want to hear from YOU...!

See Page Three of every issue for
SCAM submittal guidelines.

(Continued from page 14)

holding their "Sun-n-Games" RG on January 16-18 (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day weekend), with details at sun-n-games.org. Many chapters have committed to helping with a big regional promotion at the MegaCon in Orlando in April, promoted as the largest fan convention in the South. And further into the year, online promotions have begun for Tampa Bay's "Margarita Bay" on Memorial Day weekend and Broward's "FLoRanGe 2015 – Another Excuse to Each Chocolate" on Labor Day weekend. Your local groups are working hard for you – volunteer to help them to prosper, or just attend and have fun!

Thomas George Thomas

Email: RVC10@us.mensa.org

Text: [RVC10@vtext.com](text:RVC10@vtext.com)

(Continued from page 4)

net depicting how gravity works. He was such a kind gentle man. I just hope the strings didn't give him constipation. But Oh! Beyond the constipation, maybe the strings work after all.

Maybe many strings align to form light rays.

Maybe some get knotted and tug at objects to make gravity.

Maybe some bend to form waves.

And, just maybe some even glob up to form tapioca.

There are just so many possibilities and its mind boggling trying to think of how small those little guys are. Even the number of strings it would take to make even a penny is more than I want to think about.

Soooo, I've given up on that and I'm now busy trying to figure out a place to put his valley so he can get started planting his crop of green beans (and other delicious veggies of course).

HO! HO! HO ...

The elections are now over, and here, as in much of the United States, if you depend on steady employment to earn your living, it is evident that, looking at the winning candidates, the results are little short of a disaster. Yet, if you look at all the nationwide results, not all was lost. In several states, pro-worker initiatives, most notably state minimum wage laws were approved by the voting public.

You may remember that, back in 2012, here in Florida, residents of Orange County conducted a successful petition drive for an ordinance that would have required employers in Orange County who have more than 15 employees to pay up to 56 hours sick leave per year. Predictably, the business community, particularly Disney and the local Chamber of Commerce, vigorously opposed this initiative. The matter was taken to court, where a judge decided that the initiative would not make the 2012 ballot, but would appear in 2014. Not to be outdone, the Florida Chamber and its allies successfully pushed for legislation in 2013 making it illegal in the State of Florida for local government to pass sick leave ordinances.

But again, all is not lost. You may also remember that about 10 years ago, much to the dismay of our corporate-owned “representatives”, in a Constitutional amendment proposal, Florida voters passed our current minimum wage law (that is also indexed for inflation). So, here is a thought. Perhaps it is time to prepare a petition for a Constitutional amendment essentially making the 2012 Orange County ordinance proposal part of the Florida Constitution.

Should such a proposal make the 2016 ballot, the benefit would be two-fold. First (and most obvious) is that if 60% of Florida voters approve the ballot, paid sick leave would be guaranteed to almost all Florida workers. This certainly is the desired outcome. Second, is if the proposal makes the ballot, it would benefit Florida workers, even if the vote was to fail.

If the paid sick leave proposal makes it to the ballot, you can bet the Chamber of Commerce and its allies to do everything in their power to defeat it. They will actively campaign to convince that a sick leave proposal is a bad idea for job creation as it imposes another burden on our business community that constantly “struggles” as the Dow continues its record highs (17,000-plus). With this public exposure, we can change the tone of political debate from “Obama is a Socialist Foreigner” to issues of concern to working families.

It would be nice to hold “sick leave debates” instigated by pro-worker candidates to expose the true anti-worker agenda of the current “representatives” who represent only our present day Robber Barons.

The next meeting of the American Mensa Board of Directors will be held on December 6 in San Diego. The agenda for this meeting has been posted on the American Mensa website under Read > Board Meeting Reports. The main motions in this agenda are:

- Establish a national event attendance policy
- Update the Avenues of Redress policy to cover online groups and forums
- Allowing parental attendance at certain gifted youth events (*including test sessions*)
- Setting a new dues rate at \$73 per year for single-year membership

There will also be several presentations. Along with the regular Treasurer's and Executive Director's reports, there will be a review of the current programs offered by American Mensa to discuss their value to the organization in order to make budget decisions in the future, and a presentation and discussion of our insurance and risk coverage.

The hot button item, as usual, is the dues motion, which has been discussed vigorously in some of the online forums. Naturally, the most frequently voiced opinion is that members do not want a raise in the dues. (Who would?) People also want to reduce the tasks that the National Office performs in order to reduce the budget. Yet at the same time, there are those who want increased support from the National Office (often the same people asking for cuts). It is, as always, a complicated topic, and there's much to discuss. I've mentioned in a previous column that I believe a dues increase is inevitable, but there is not enough information in the motion as presented to persuade me to vote for this one. The motion states that this increase will be used to increase Local Group funding, but does not specify in what form or by how much. It also states that it would be used to partially pay for IT infrastructure improvements, but again, without sufficient details to determine if the increase is worthwhile. Generally, I would prefer to see what a budget is intended to cover and then determine how to fund the budget, not the other way around.

Over the past few weeks I've been visiting most of the local groups in Florida to attend their ExComm meetings, business meetings, and major events, and most of our groups are doing well. Southwest by South Florida Mensa held their Bikers vs. Brainers Trivia Challenge, and it was so successful that they're holding another one on January 18, 2015, and Manasota is looking into holding one of their own. Miami Mensa has new members on their ExComm and will be participating in the King Mango Strut on December 28. Central Florida Mensa will be

(Continued on page 12)

Minutes of the November, 2014 ExComm Meeting

The ExComm met at the home of Karen Freiberg at 876 Buxmont Ct., Rockledge, FL 32955, on Tuesday, November 4th, 2014, called to order by LocSec Wynn Rostek at 6:08 pm.

Members Present: Wynn Rostek, Joe Janson, Karen Freiberg, Dennis Logan, and George Lebovitz.

Guests: none.

The minutes of the October, 2014 minutes as published in the SCAM were approved.

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

Treasurer's report: The November Treasurer's report¹ was unanimously approved.

Testing: Testing coordinator, Hank Rhodes, reported via email²

There will be no general meeting in November due to conflicting scheduling with the Thanksgiving holiday. We will be contacting Paul Cummins, a Buddhist priest and UU minister as our potential speaker for the December 13th meeting at the Red Ginger in the Melbourne Square Mall. Details will be forthcoming and published in the SCAM; however note that LocSec Wynn Rostek has very generously offered to buy anyone who attends their first drink (wine or beer only)!

The idea of fielding a "Beat the Mensans" team for local trivia contests seems to be gathering sufficient interest to possibly have either a second team or a cadre of alternates. We will be pursuing investigation of suitable venues to conduct our "Beat the Mensans" challenge(s). Anyone interesting in participating should contact any ExComm member.

The next meeting was set for Wednesday, December 10th, in the home of Karen Freiberg at 876 Buxmont Ct., Rockledge, FL 32955.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 pm.

¹ General Fund: \$650.77, Reserve Fund: \$1,208.71, Total Assets: \$1,859.48.

² October - Contacted 1 candidate for the first time, 10 candidates for the second or third time, tested 1. Next test session is November 15, 2014 at the Central Brevard Library in Cocoa.