

The

SCAM

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THE FORGOTTEN AMERICAN?

Labor Day Issue:

This issue of The SCAM is dedicated to all hard-working American men and women who have made this country the greatest on Earth. Let us not forget them!

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.

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Mike Moakley, Editor

Perhaps it was a quiet week in Lake Wobegon, that mythical place in Minnesota. Here on the Space Coast (a real place, I assure you), like anywhere else, we have our quiet weeks and our not-so-quiet weeks. I am, of course, referring to a recent sequence of events involving our ExComm and me.

This story unfolds with the publication of meeting minutes in the July issue. Contained therein was the notation that the Audit committee had not yet submitted its report, and that this was not a problem as the current Treasurer served in the same capacity on the former ExComm.

This prompted a response from long-time active member and Past LocSec Clara Woodall-Moran, who submitted a Letter to the Editor reminding all concerned that the missed audit, contrary to the comment in the minutes, is quite important, and is a bylaws requirement. She also cautioned that failure to abide by the bylaws can lead to the revocation of our charter.

Since Clara's letter was sent to me for publication, I read the contents (as I do all submissions for *The SCAM*), and became concerned that the lack of an audit and the comments downplaying the error could have some serious implications for our group. I contacted George Patterson and discussed with him the issues Clara had raised. I advised George that Clara had submitted a letter for publication on the matter. Since Clara has cited some specific bylaws language, I submitted George a copy of Clara's letter.

Not long afterward, George sent me his LocSec column for publi-

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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.

I am writing to express my dismay at the LocSec's column in the August issue.

It seems to me that everyone deserves a courteous, well considered reply to any expressed concern. But that is not what Clara Woodall-Moran received. The response as published in *The SCAM* was sarcastic and taunting in tone. It was also very wide of the mark in addressing her concerns, barring the three word phrase "Point well taken."

Instead of a reasoned explication of the issue Clara brought up, the LocSec's column seems mainly an attempt to place the blame on someone other than the ExComm. But the LocSec and three other members of this ExComm were given complete, up to date copies of all the documents in question in late May or early June 2005. If they didn't like any of the Standing Rules or Guidelines, or found them confusing, they have had over a year to change them. Using the "need to get this material into shape" is a red herring.

The LocSection also contains an example of woeful ignorance or deliberate obfuscation; AML **can** withdraw a local group's charter. Clara commented that the personnel of the National Office read local groups' newsletters, which is a fact. Nowhere, as is implied in the LocSec's column though, does she suggest that the National Office or anyone else is going to behave irrationally.

If I were Clara Woodall-Moran, I would expect an apology. The membership of Space Coast Area Mensa has a right to expect a Local Secretary and Executive Committee who know and follow the rules.

Helen Lee Moore

Mike Moakley's article in the August issue of SCAM has brought me back to my origins. The first article that I wrote for SCAM was published in August 1992, exactly 14 years ago, was a suggestion of how to improve our voting system. That article became the genesis of the column that I have written every month since then.

I have only occasionally written on political matters since then, preferring to confine my remarks to less controversial subjects as food, toilets, and travel. However, this again being an election year I want to express myself once more on ways to improve our voting system.

Mike's proposal, to craft an amendment to the Constitution to limit citizenship to humans only would go a long way to eliminating many election problems. I will explain later how this would be done, but first I must say that such an amendment is unnecessary. The Constitution already defines who is a citizen.

The Preamble starts out "We the People. . ." It does not define "People" but the meaning is absolutely clear. It does not include corporations, partnerships, or other legally established organizations. Throughout the Constitution reference is made to people, persons, or specific persons such as Senators, Representatives, and Presidents. In establishing the qualifications of all offices, for example Representatives (Article I, Sec 2) it says, "The House of Representatives . . . shall be chosen . . . by the people" and "No person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the age of twenty-five years, and been seven years a citizen" There can be no question that "persons", "people", and "citizens" as used in the original Constitution means human beings and not corporations.

Furthermore, when amending the Constitution years later, the Congress knew what was meant by the writers of the Constitution when they said in the Fourteenth Amendment "All persons born or naturalized in the United States . . . are citizens of the United states" and in the Nineteenth Amendment "The rights of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied . . . on account of sex." Thus the Constitution is a pact between certain people (living human beings) and the government that it defines. No cognizance is made of other than natural beings.

What needs to be done is to bring suit in the courts to uphold the Constitution, declaring that corporations are not citizens and therefore do not have the rights enumerated in Article I of the

Bill of Rights, specifically the right of freedom of speech. Without the right of freedom of speech, corporations could be banned from contributing to political campaigns.

This would cut off all funding of political campaigns by corporations both public and private. General Motors could not contribute, nor could the Boy Scouts. PACs would disappear, even political parties could not collect and distribute funds. Money from doctors' and lawyers' organizations, unions, and charities would dry up. Only individual citizens could contribute to election campaigns. Foreigners and non-citizens could not.

To make this change complete, an amendment would need to be adopted. "Contributions to political campaigns can be made only by persons who are qualified to vote in the election of the person for which the contribution is made." Therefore someone living in Titusville could not contribute to a campaign in Melbourne Beach. Someone living in Texas could not contribute to the election of the Governor of Florida, only Floridians could do that, but all Americans could contribute to the election of a president.

This would bring about a tremendous change to our election process. The influence of corporate money and its accompanying corruption would no longer exist. Candidates would have to rely on individual contributions for their campaign funds. The tremendous amount of money spent on campaigns would be greatly reduced. All of these would be good results in my opinion. Only the prospect of candidates who are wealthy could afford to run appears to be a fault in this proposal.

But this need not be necessarily so. In recent campaigns, it has been shown that the internet can extract small bits of money from large numbers of people, and I would rather have a rich candidate untainted by corporate donations than any candidate, rich or poor, who depends on corporate contributions.

I was very interested to read John J. Ritsema's letter in the August 2006 issue concerning Islam. Having lived, worked and traveled extensively in the Middle East I have strong views about the subject. Mr. Ritsema's logical approach would be superb if we were dealing with rational people, but we aren't. I respectfully suggest that he simply fails to appreciate the depths of Muslim hatred of Western values and determination to impose worldwide Islamic dominion by force even if it means turning the entire planet into a moonscape.

Some years ago I was in a rural area in Pakistan in which the well that supplied the village with water developed some mechanical problems that resulted in no running water for a couple of days. That very weekend the local imam preached a sermon about how it was all the fault of the Jews that the well had developed problems. I would be surprised if there was a Jew within a thousand miles, but that pretty much sums up what Muslims are given along with mother's milk: irrational hatred that borders on the pathological. And the only way that they are going to stop hating us is if we agree to become a Muslim theocracy just like Saudi Arabia and use our nuclear arsenal to exterminate Israel; anything short of that is unacceptable to them.

Mr. Ritsema is of course correct that every religion has fanatics, but the difference is that Christianity had a Renaissance in which the worst elements of it were defanged; in Islam those elements are encouraged. (Imagine the pre-Renaissance popes and the Spanish Inquisitors with nuclear weapons at their disposal and you get an idea of the stakes.)

The so-called moderate Muslims who are saying the Koran doesn't support terrorism are frankly lying, and Islam clearly teaches that lying to infidels is acceptable if it advances Islam. It's like trying to reconcile gay rights with Leviticus; you can believe in one or you can believe in the other but you can't believe in both while remaining intellectually honest.

Mr. Ritsema is also, of course, correct that 20% of the world is Muslim and they aren't going to disappear. What that means, purely and simply, is that there is going to be a war. A bloody, brutal, horrific war, possibly with nuclear weapons, in which a lot of people are going to die. I would love to be wrong, but given the nature of Islam I don't see any other likely scenario. And we do

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Why does Wall Street hate me? Because I tell the truth and truth is something they can't abide. The little guy (that's someone with less than a 7-figure account) gets no real help. Every small investor is a Rodney Dangerfield.

If Joe Sixpack happens to make a few bucks they will take credit for helping him, but when he loses his money as he did in the bear market of 2000 – 2002 that is not their fault.

The little guy with the \$5,000-\$50,000 account could have been saved and his losses kept at about 10% if the moguls in New York had instructed their brokers how to protect customer's funds. It is not done and has never been done.

Don't look to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) for help. Instead they are trying to regulate the hedge funds which are playgrounds for the multirich. What nonsense. Let the rich take care of themselves.

Today 50% of all homeowners own stocks and/or mutual funds either individually or in a tax shelter such as a 401K. About 80% of these plans have less than \$50,000 and no one is looking after them. I mean no one. People at work think they have a money manager and what they really have is a money mangler. They have no idea what to do when the bear returns – as it is now.

These manglers have no experience with bear markets and have never seen one. The drop in 2000 of 78% by the NASDAQ was laid to speculation when it was actually the first phase of a 16 year long bear market. Did they protect the guy who was NOT speculating? No. Because they didn't know how and still don't.

Has any Wall Street firm held a single seminar to teach their brokers how to protect customer's money? Not one that I know of. You have to it yourself because your broker is ignorant.

During the next major down swing the safest place for investor money is not in the stock market. It is in a U.S. Treasury bond (no other kind) or a big bank CD. Brokers are taught to tell you you can't afford to be out of the market. Of course not because they don't make any money when you are in cash. Cash at zero percent will have a greater return over the next 2 years than any stock or mutual fund. See if you can get that kind of guarantee from your broker. You can't.

You and only you can protect your money. Don't rely on your smooth talking broker. You must now decide before it is too late how much you are willing to risk. If your account is \$50,000 would about

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SCAM Calendar of Events for September 2006

17th - 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.*

30th - 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".

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

Welcome to SCAM and Mensa

Justin Marks
George Lebovitz
Janet Mueck
Joseph Mueck

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

<i>2nd</i>	George Patterson	<i>15th</i>	Joseph Cittadini
<i>7th</i>	Leah Simpson	<i>17th</i>	Michael Fuller
<i>9th</i>	Bradley Carlson	<i>19th</i>	Ralph McKee
<i>10th</i>	Kent Buchanan	<i>22nd</i>	Paul Siefert
<i>10th</i>	Robin Merritt	<i>28th</i>	Vivek Sharma
<i>13th</i>	Eric Swiechowski	<i>29th</i>	Jane Bryan

Attention!!!

The SCAM is soliciting a column 500-700 words long on the following two topics. If there are enough responses, we may do “theme” issues. Of course, you are always welcome to write on any topic of your choice. Also, if you wish to suggest a topic, please contact the Editor. Contact info is on Page Two (inside front cover).

A Mensan in the family?

Are you the Mensan in your family? Or, is your spouse, child, parent or sibling the Mensan in your household? Are two or more (maybe all) of your household Mensans? If any of these apply, The SCAM is soliciting an article from *you*. All members of SCAM or family members are invited to respond. What are your impressions and experiences?

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*.

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ourselves no favors by pretending that these are people that can be reasoned with. It didn't work for Neville Chamberlain either.

Mel Dahl
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***EDITOR'S NOTE:** Mel Dahl is Editor of The Flame, newsletter of Central Florida Mensa (Orlando).*

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\$5,000 or 10% be as much as you are willing to give back? Whatever amount you set then tell your broker you want a stop loss order entered. He won't like it, but that is his job.

Do not let ignorance steal your money.

Al Thomas' best selling book, "If It Doesn't Go Up, Don't Buy It!" has helped thousands of people make money and keep their profits with his simple 2-step method. Read the first chapter and receive his market letter for 3 months at no charge at www.mutualfundmagic.com and discover why he's the man that Wall Street does not want you to know. Copyright 2006 All rights reserved.

One phenomenon that seems to have surfaced recently is the contention among some that middle-income men in their 50s are now lazy, and will not do any work that does not suit them. In fact, these critics say, many of these men are simply dropping out of the workforce altogether. According to David Brooks, a *New York Times* columnist, *“the percentage of middle-aged men who have dropped out of the labor force has doubled over the last 40 years, to over 12 percent. Many of the men have disabilities. Others struggle to find work. But in a recent ... article, The Times’s Louis Uchitelle and David Leonhardt describe two men who are not exactly Horatio Alger wonderboys.”*⁽¹⁾

Uchitelle and Leonhardt, in their article Brooks refers to, describe two men living this “life of leisure”. One *“has stopped looking for work. Laid off as a steelworker at 48, he taught math for a while at a community college. But when that ended, he could not find a job that, in his view, was neither demeaning nor underpaid.”*⁽²⁾ He is currently living off the family’s savings and the proceeds from a loan on his home’s equity.

They further state: *“Millions of men...in the prime of their lives, between 30 and 55 have dropped out of regular work. They are turning down jobs they think beneath them or are unable to find work for which they are qualified...About 13 percent of American men in this age group are not working, up from 5 percent in the late 1960’s.”*⁽²⁾

Brooks concludes this is the result of a decline in traditional values: *“Once upon a time, middle-class men would have defined their dignity by their ability to work hard, provide for their family and live as self-reliant members of society. But these fellows ... define their dignity the same way the subjects of Thorstein Veblen’s ‘The Theory of the Leisure Class’ defined theirs.”* Does this mean the “upper crust” never did share in these traditional values that we are allegedly now losing?

Is it true what these columnists are saying? Have we “fifty-something” males simply become lazy, or as Brooks so aptly put it, *“today’s prostate-aged moochers”*⁽¹⁾? To try to answer this, let us examine the statements these columnists provide us.

Brooks asserts that the percentage of middle-aged men dropping out of the workforce has doubled in the last 40 years, but

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does not offer any reason for this trend. Forty years ago, it was not unusual for one to work for one employer throughout his entire working life, and drawing a pension (a real one, not a “401 (k)”) during his retirement years. Employer and employee were mutually committed to one another. Today, the average lifespan of a job is less than three years, with little or no prospect of a real retirement. No such commitment here.

Brooks continues: Many of the “dropouts” have disabilities. Many struggle to find work. Others, such as the examples cited in both articles, have chosen to live a “life of leisure.” Of that group of men, Uchitelle and Leonhardt estimate 25 percent are disabled, while Brooks does not say. Neither mentions what portion of men is trying to find employment. Of the 12 or 13 percent who “dropped out”, how many are members of this alleged “new leisure class”? We really cannot tell.

Uchitelle and Leonhardt do state: *“Most of these missing men are ... former blue-collar workers with no more than a high school education.”*²⁾ This brings us to another contrast between the late 1960’s and now. Back then, most of our career work force was engaged in making things or engaged in a supporting role. Today, it seems, to have a successful career, one must either manipulate others into buying something not needed or wanted, or to “inspire” (that is, “motivate”) the lower echelons to work still harder for less and less in return. The set of skills needed to make the quality product of yesteryear differ markedly from those now needed to deceive and otherwise manipulate others for a living. Is it really any wonder that laid-off blue-collar workers might have trouble entering present-day careers?

Can we accurately conclude from the data provided by these two columns that men in their fifties are becoming lazy, repudiating their social responsibilities? I think not. According to the numbers both provide, the great majority do work and faithfully provide for their families. Moreover, no real distinction is made between those who cannot work and those who simply choose not to.

The truth of the matter is that most affected started out in good union jobs and expected to make their careers with their employers. Over the last 25 years, businesses, together with their representatives *we elected*, have eliminated those good jobs and displaced millions of workers. As most of this type of work is now outsourced to third-world nations, there is little or no prospect of

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those affected to find comparable employment. With the “new economy”, our “leaders” and their apologists claim that this state of affairs was instead brought on by the displaced worker’s “laziness”.

The sad reality is that the most successful of those engaged in “new economy” careers have learned their required skills exceptionally well. Too many of us believe their deceptions, including many of those who were adversely affected in the first place! By maligning American working men with articles such as the two quoted herein, the authors are merely contributing their part to the ongoing all-out War on Labor. It is a pathetic bit of irony that the aggressors are blaming the results of their actions on their victims. Yet, does this really come as any surprise? Certainly, not to me!

Happy Labor Day!

Sources:

1. “Bye-Bye Bootstraps,” David Brooks, *New York Times*, August 3, 2006.
2. “Men Not Working, and Not Wanting Just Any Job,” Louis Uchitelle and David Leonhardt, *New York Times*, July 31, 2006.

As I write this, it is 48 hours before the start of the World Gathering. I am in awe of the immensity of the event. We have put in a lot of sweat equity to ensure that this is an outstanding event. In 48 hours, most of the 2100+ attendees will be swarming throughout the Coronado Springs Resort's Convention Center. By the time you read this, in the September newsletters, it will be well past the end of the World Gathering. I can only wish that many of you were able to squeeze at least a small amount of time from your schedules to attend, and that you had a memorable time. I hope that you made new friends and renewed old friendships, that the worst dilemma you had to face was choosing which programs to attend, and that you took some time to see your leaders at work, as both the AMC meeting and the IBD meeting are open to all members.

Even though the next Mensa national election isn't until 2007, the Nominating Committee is busily finding candidates for all positions. They are hoping to have multiple candidates for each position this year. I am choosing to run again for Regional Vice Chair for Region 10. I hope that I have done a fair and reasonable job representing you so far, and I hope to have the opportunity to continue to serve.

Very few members have taken advantage of the Region 10 e-list as a way to discuss issues important to Region 10. I hope that will change as more Mensans in Region 10 sign up for the list. To subscribe to the list, send an email to region10-request@lists.us.mensa.org with the word subscribe in the subject line or visit <http://lists.us.mensa.org/mailman/listinfo/region10>.

If you have an issue you wish to bring to my attention - but not on the list - please don't hesitate to contact me, via email or phone as listed below. On to the World Gathering!

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The ExComm, recognizing the current work load to be virtually non-existent, failed to schedule a meeting for August. For those curious, the Bylaws specify meetings at least quarterly, so we are well within bounds. To further confuse things, the September meeting is scheduled for August. For those concerned with such matters, the Audit Committee has completed its work and will report at the next meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 30, 2006, at 5:30 pm, at my (George Patterson's) house at 301 Sand Pine Rd., Indialantic. (321-777-3721).

George Patterson, LocSec

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cation in the August issue. The column was essentially a rebuttal of Clara's letter. I wound up publishing both Clara's letter and the LocSec's column in last month's issue.

In my opinion, this sequence of events reflect a low point in the history of our local group. I am not referring to the lack of an audit report, as this can (and will be) remedied by a late audit. Nor is it Clara's response to that error and the comments contained in that minutes—she had every right to express her concerns.

Perhaps in his LocSec column, George should not have responded to Clara's concerns in such manner as he did. Yet, in my opinion, this is beside the point. How could this unfortunate situation have been prevented? This, then, puts the focus on me.

When I received Clara's letter for publication, the letter should NOT have been shared with anyone else prior to publication. While my intentions were to prevent trouble instead of causing it, this does not change the fact that I was wrong to share Clara's letter with George. It is evident to me that the poor results would not have occurred, had I acted properly.

Let me state here that I apologize, primarily to Clara Woodall-Moran who was unquestionably betrayed by my actions. I also apologize to the SCAM membership as a whole for being subjected to this utter lack of professionalism on my part.

Finally, I will NOT repeat my mistake that occurred here. I assure everyone that all submissions to The SCAM for publication, until such time it is published, will receive the same level of confidence given to any communication I receive—they will never be shared with anyone!