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Vol. III, No. 5

Key West, Florida

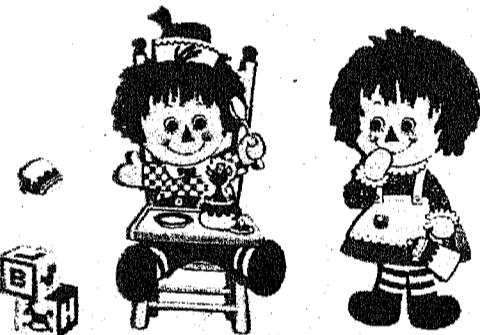
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## From the Editor

Hello -  
 We have an article and an editorial on the Salt Ponds this issue. We devoted a lot of space to report the attempt of the County Commission to place the new weather station there because we feel very strongly that there should be no construction in these ponds. Please read the editorial and the article and see if you don't agree with us.

It's no fun to try and run a meeting of the Greater Key West Chamber of Commerce these days. There are two hostile camps dividing the group and little that one group wants is pleasing to the other group. I've watched President Billy Appelrouth in action at two big meetings and I feel he's been doing a good job of giving each side a fair chance to present its point of view. I really doubt that the Chamber will accomplish much of anything until one or the other of the camps dividing the Chamber prevails or until - miracle of miracles - a compromise between the groups is achieved.

Looks like Island Renovations, Inc. found help in its efforts to keep the South Beach concession. We'll bring everyone up to date on this affair next issue.

Go and see The Real Inspector Hound at the Greene Street Theatre if you haven't already. It is a thorough delight.

I called the Gerald Adam's School and spoke with a teacher there whose students had written letters of complaint to the mayor about the stink and the flies coming from the dump. The teacher, Ms. Lillis, said that the situation

had improved somewhat. I will check back with the school at the beginning of their next school year.

The County jail is a real hell-hole. I'm glad that the Grand Jury reported this to the public, but I wonder why didn't they choose to investigate it instead of leaving it for the incoming Grand Jury? In any event, the Sheriff is trying to get some other temporary facilities for some of the prisoners, but this will not be a final solution. We need a stockade here. We have too many prisoners who are picked up on minor offenses, stashed away in that dark pit of a County jail, and thrown in with professional criminals. I hope that the pressure is kept up on the County Commission by the Sheriff to correct this disgraceful condition.



The cover this time is by Cecelia Johnson.

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With a little help from our friends . . .

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## BOB DANIELS

"I'VE TRIED to be good to Key West, and Key West has been good to me," says Bob Daniels, sitting one afternoon on a folding beach chair in front of the B & B Bike Shop on Fleming. Known to children as "Uncle Bob," he also has a

experiences as landlord and friend to young people...from keeping many an ailing Key West bike on the road make him a likely candidate for SH.

PEPPERY HAIR - sparkling eyes -



by Phoebe Coan

photo by Kim Wise

Years ago Bob used to take his 1st grade boy for rides up the Keys before school in the mornings. Now Ray, his son, has been looking for someone to take a truck innertube with a sail on it, out to Boca Grande. None of his young friends have a willing spirit. "But Dad does," asserts Ray.

BOB FIRST came to Key West in 1929 from Minnesota. He met a girl, La Dorna Louise Saunders, from Key West while in Miami, and came for a week's visit. He ended up staying and marrying her. Frank Saunders, her father, had a grocery on Southard and Grinnell. She's in Colorado now...he stays on. "I like Key West and I like the people," he says.

Daniels has been in the bike business since getting out of the Army in '44, when he bought out Gould Curry's business on Simonton Street. For \$100 he got seven rental bikes and a handful of tools.

BOB HAD BEEN tinkering since an early age, he used to repair bikes as a kid. The man who had the bike shop in his home town got angry because Bob was getting so much business and charging only ten cents for flats while he was charging fifteen cents. The cops were called since Bob was only 14 and operating without a license.

He had learned in early days from the big workshop that was in the family's barn. He'd even built a little car (though it had no engine) and always did his own mechanical work.

ON NEW YEAR'S DAY of '45, the bike shop moved to its present site, and he has passed along this mechanical knowledge to his two sons. Frank, who has always repaired bikes naturally, runs the B & B. Ray (who used to have a pet shop) has Ray's Bike Shop on Truman.

Bob has always had pets of some kind and is as protective as a mother hen with them, sensing any discomforts or possible disturbances from those who may not understand animal signals and needs.

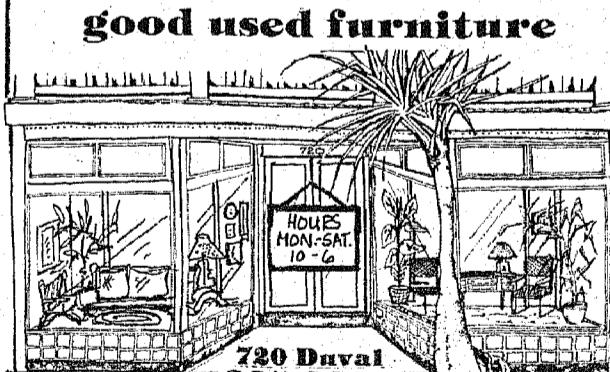
HE HAS LIVED with chickens, turkeys, ducks, raccoons, monkeys, rabbits, sheep, and other animals.

The sheep came from Cuba, and at one time he had five. One tenant didn't believe there were sheep in the back yard until he got rammed by a ram! Bob sold the flock eventually, and next day the market advertised "spring lamb."

He's had some exotics, for sure. There was the Wooly monkey (Suzie) and a silver langur (Trixi).

NOW HE LIVES with Sassy, a dog (little fellow with wrinkled up face and very enormous round black eyes),

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way with wild animals which not too many people possess.

A matter-of-fact benevolence, a desire to help others (that has extended into organizing many groups), and his

he once was commander and is a lifetime member of the American Legion. Now at 70, he's still game for adventure "and perpetrating a little craziness of mind," according to his son.

OKAY, LET'S DO IT SIMPLE. I'LL SAY THE 1978 END OF THE ROAD KEY WEST CALENDAR IS NOW ON SALE SO LOCAL FOLKS CAN BUY A FEW AND SEND 'EM TO FRIENDS.

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and Kinky, a kinkajou, from South America, also known as a honey bear. "They're a lot of fun, real friendly if you don't abuse them. If you do, they won't forget it," Bob says of his long-haired friends.

In the late 1920's, Bob was into charter boats and captained his own for four or five years. "There were just a dozen of us operating then and everyone worked together." He helped organize and became the first president of the still existing Charter Boat Association.

HE AND THREE other captains kept a fish car with live fish in it for indigent people who would come to get the seafood. Fish were distributed according to how many family members were involved.

Daniels recently went to Boulder, Montana, to a uranium mine which is not in operation now, but is open for healing purposes. Seems that the gases that still hang in there are beneficial for many ailments, especially arthritis, which has been a real problem to Bob. "You go there into that mine for one and a half hours a day, sit down and breathe that air. People have gone there in wheel chairs and walked out," he declares.

General Omar Bradley was there and apparently benefited. Bob was considerably helped, too, with his emphysema problem.

CONCERNING BIKERS, Bob says that he'd like to see people riding with the traffic and obeying traffic rules and using lights. As for the bikes, he says a tire wiper cuts down on the glass problem.

He advises against jumping curbs (it bends the rim), and suggests oil on the chain and a complete lubrication twice a year, adding, "A new bike should be waxed."

MOVIE STARS have rented bikes from Bob and people have asked to buy their rental slips for autographs. But he is not sentimental that way and doesn't like sensationalism either.

He and his second wife, Dorothy, were very active in the American Cancer Society and helped keep it going for many years. He also organized a walking blood bank. "We had a drive and typed people's blood. Then when it was needed we'd make the contacts. That was the only way you could get blood in Key West, in other years."

"The cancer stricken often are immediately indigent, even back 20 years ago when things were cheaper. Now more are being helped," he says.

Every Friday, either Bob or his wife would drive patients to Miami for treatment. There were no cancer society doctors here, and no free treatment in the past.

DANIELS SPENDS a lot of time these days sitting out in front of his shop. Friends come by, among them Monkey Joe. At night Bob sits with his pet, Kinky, who is nocturnal, and watches the evening hours pass by. There was a spectacular sunset splashed against the sky up the street from us when I spoke with him and his son, Ray, that evening about the Fogarty House which he had rented as a rooming house for two years in 1969-70.

"It was a catch-all," said Ray. "We got all the people nobody else wanted to rent to. It was the time of the first wave of hippies to Key West. We ended up feeding half of them, too."

THE BOYS and their dad also ran a restaurant adjacent to the old Fogarty House, Daniel's Native Sea House, which featured fresh fish, crushed ice fruit drinks and salads. "Most of the time we got along pretty good," says Bob of his tenants then.

There was a complaint once at Fogarty House about a ghost in the attic. When Ray offered to change the fellow's room, he backed down...saying there would probably be a worse one in another room.

ONE TIME, "Dutch" (a roofer there), was the creator of giant soap bubbles which he sent floating on Duval Street. He used glycerine (made bubbles stronger and more able to reflect colors) and wafted the bubbles from a bent wire hanger. The enormous size of one foot across, and three feet long, amazed people.

"AT FOGARTY HOUSE, the biggest problem," claims Ray, "was where to put all the extra bodies that ended up in the halls at night. Many took showers there. We never really objected unless they left a real mess."

He recalls that once he rented a room to a couple of guys of whom someone said: "Hey, you got some strange people up there." He checked, and through the already opened door saw these guys chanting, with candles lit. About 20 people were there, bones through their noses. They killed a chicken. Voodoo drums were sounding in the stillness of the night.

"We asked them politely to leave," says Ray.

BOB NOW OWNS 822 Fleming, which is the bike shop, and up above, another "easy going apartment house." His standards for tenants are "good vibes and nobody who will tear the place up."

"FATHER HAS a natural ability with wild animals," says Ray. "He trains them on word command. They become his babies." There was Mr. Bad, the badger (as far as they know, no one has been able to train a wild badger before or since) who would roll over, sit up and

do somersaults on command. He would lie on his back and leave his tummy vulnerable, showing complete trust.

Bob has taken other animals no one could train and done wonders with them. I saw Kinky eating an apple and then kissing Bob in his ear, and on his cheek. When Bob was small, chickens would perch on his shoulder, and although his mother prohibited animals, Bob finally did get a cat and later a raccoon.

HE GAVE his sons three rabbits for Easter once and built a fine hutch for them. The rabbits had babies, and they ended up with about 80 rabbits.

Ray says he got to know each one since he fed and watered them and gathered weeds and herbs for them. "When Pop came home we'd let them all out. Thumper was the most enormous one and at 10 o'clock at night - a ritual - he'd thump the floor of the cage for 20-30 minutes. Nothing could change his behavior."

IT IS Bob's desire to tame a wolverine (badger family, but ten times meaner) and a Tasmanian Devil, which will attack unprovoked. He says you can do it if you "get them young, be kind to them - don't fear them or let them know you're afraid of them. The worse thing an animal can do is bite you. A bite usually means you're not paying attention."

Both Bob and Ray agree that you must never disturb a wild animal while he is nibbling (Bob gets a nip every once in a while himself); and they both advise not to give alcohol to animals.

Bob even had a pet grouper for about three months. It came into the live well of his boat. He would feed the fish, pat his head, and talk to him.

Ray intoned, "There's no generation gap between Dad and me. We're buddies."



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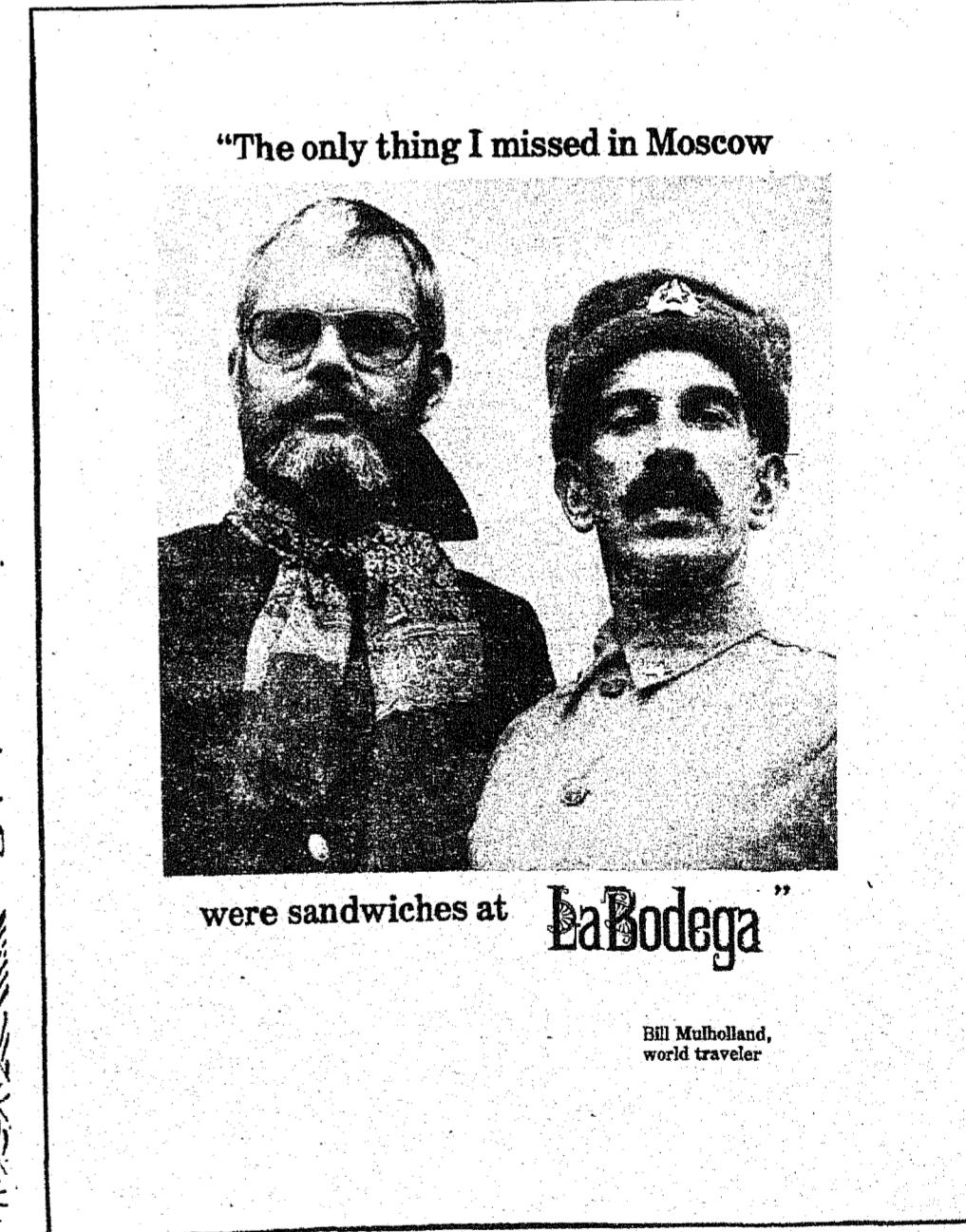
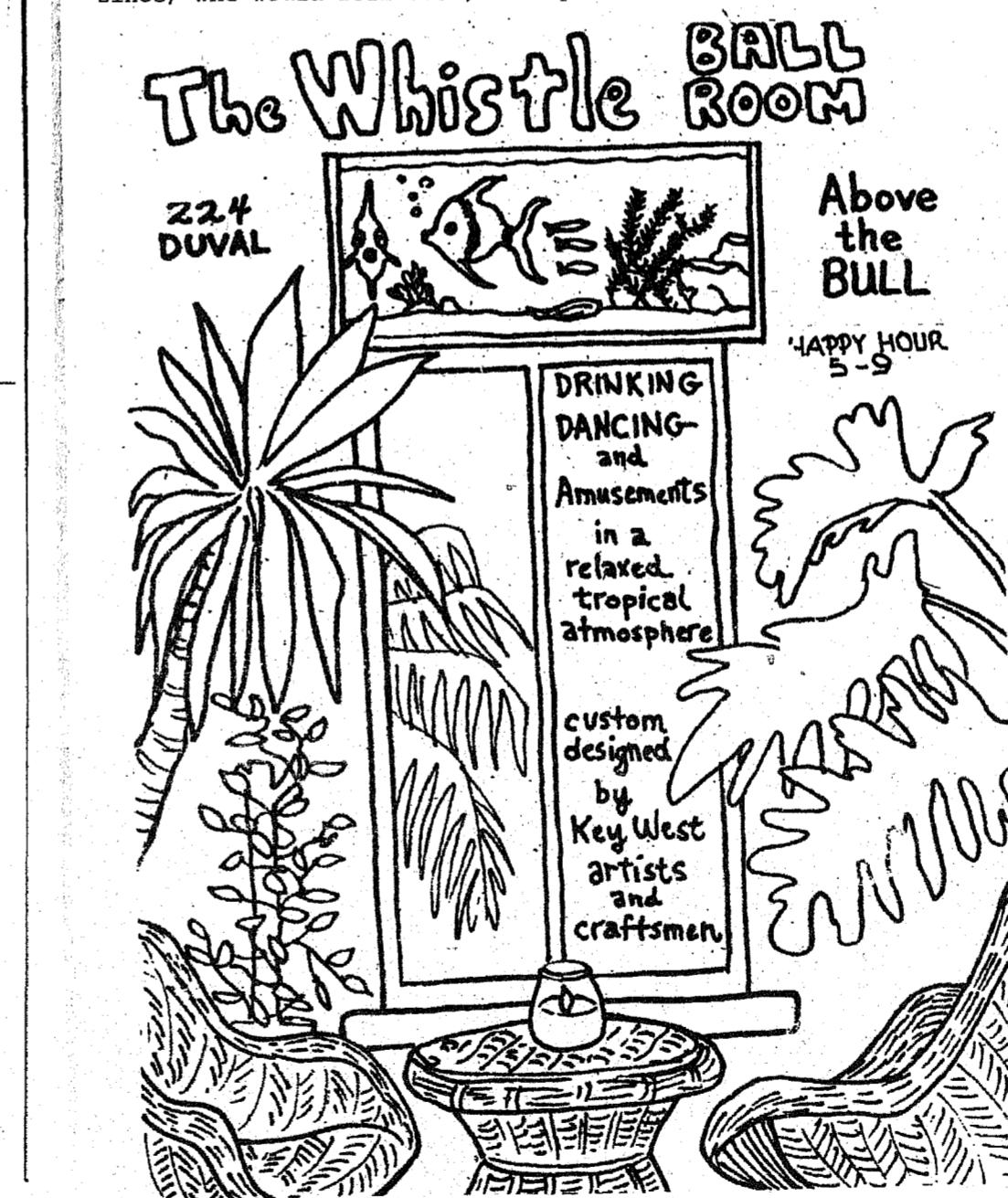
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## notes and antic-dotes

by Dorothy Raymer

"WHY DOESN'T Key West put on an annual pageant based on its colorful history?" was a question asked me by a friend who has seen several such events in various parts of the country including the Cherokee Indian pageant set in the Great Smokies.

The answer probably lies with the staging of a local pageant some years ago. The effort was tremendous, but the results were farcical.

LET ME RECALL the pageant which was planned as the main attraction for La Semana Alegre, or Week of Joy celebration, which took place traditionally in February. This particular performance was in the early 1950s and was designed to be a cultural exhibition.

Appointed as pageant director was a woman known as Mme. Irma Labastille. She was large, energetic and had an expanded imagination to match her upholstered, continental-shelf bosom. She came here from Miami at the request of officials to whom she had been recommended as an expert. On arrival, much feted by local society fixtures, Mme. Labastille made a hurried study of material for the pageant. Her conglomerate knowledge was incorporated with what must have been previous experience in the more classic forms of dance, drama and historical productions. Accent was on mob scenes. She had a Cecil B. deMille penchant for these and might have been good at composing a banquet scene for Roman revels.

BUT KEY WEST adults, being the independent segment as usual, did not respond to the call for participation en masse, so local school students were recruited for the casting.

On with the show! More than 500 spectators turned out at West Martello Tower (now the Garden Center), where bleachers were set up on the grounds with the center stage in what is now an outdoor display area. The evening began serenely, but wind velocity continued to increase. Mini-gales kicked up a caper at a minimum of 23 miles an hour and havoc resulted!

FIRST, a contrived galleon, which was to furnish offshore background, broke its moorings and since it was only flimsy scenery, it took off for points unknown along with other hunks of impressionistic backdrops -- gone with the gusts.

Undaunted, the audience huddled on the board seats, clamping on to caps, hats, capes, stoles, shawls, and mantillas, and the show went on in the best the "show biz" tradition.

THERE WERE some highlights in the opening setting with a Fountain of Youth structure, complete with two huge goblets and giant seahorses as the central design. Around this creation danced nymphs in filmy garments subject to the whims of the wind. Much Southern exposure resulted in appreciative whistles from the males in the audience.

MUSICAL BACKGROUND was excellent, a chorus of about 50 vocalists directed by the late Tom Whitley. The singers were accompanied by pianist Millicent Taylor. The sound of the sea and wind blended in with enchanting results, for part of the time. Unfortunately the blend was not consistent. Without adequate sound equipment, as the wind velocity increased, voices were carried away in sporadic puffs.

Up on an embankment, 60 high school students chanted the stories of historical sequence with some difficulty, since they held fluttering scripts and flashlights in order to read the overlong lines incorporated into the pageant by the director.

Indians, Calusas versus Caribes.

The savages entered into the fierce combat with zest. Outside of football scrimmages, Key West had not seen such riotous frenzy in years.

Scalping action was easy. The wigs of long black braids didn't have to be "lifted" by the warriors. Nearly every one of the fighters flipped and lost his wig as the struggle went on and on, until there was complete annihilation. All those loose scalps, strewn willynilly on the battleground, "slayed" the audience.

AND TO MAKE it all the more hilarious, a small band of strangely calm Indians sat on the sidelines and beat on their tomtoes. You couldn't "hear them for miles." The drumtones were just barely audible in the noisy melee.

IN THE SEQUENCE, a few Spaniards in helmets and armor, appeared on the scene and discovered what was supposedly a pile of bones, aftermath of the tremendous conflict between native tribes. Scarlet banners of Spain and a white one of the Church, were planted on the soil. The name of Cayo Hueso, Isle of Bones, was pronounced by a black-robed priest. This scene was truly dramatic, with the armor gleaming in the moonlight, but, alas, the effect was marred because the moonlight also reflected with a glitter on modern eye-glasses worn by some of the explorers.

PIRATES were depicted next, landing not like Marines with the situation well in hand, but with careless abandon, rolling in, roistering and guzzling bottles of rum (synthetic, of course). The motley crew (and never was an expression more appropriate) kept taking swigs between bouts of burying a treasure chest, along with a couple of their own men, after flashing displays of earrings, gritted teeth and swordplay. Some wag in the audience cracked, "Looks like an overflow delegation from Sloppy Joe's."

YEARS OF THE WRECKERS were marked by a witty sermon delivered by Fr. John Armstrong of St. Paul's Episcopalian Church. He portrayed "The Wrecking Parson" who kept his congregation enthralled while he, having spotted a wreck from the elevation of his pulpit, made his way down the aisle to the door, and then put on a dash to his salvage vessel shouting "Wreck ashore!" At least so goes the legend.

ACTORS in this part of the pageant were attired in 1825 costumes and one couple arrived in a creaking buckboard drawn by an equally creaky horse. At one point the horse balked and seemed to want to stay in the limelight. There was a little confusion about getting him offstage. He left "souvenirs" of his appearance.

ETHNIC GROUPS fared better with interludes of a rumba band, a calypso unit, and a choral insert by students from Douglass High School, plus the Key West High School band. These musical treats were esteemed as topers of the evening.

Ironically, the ballet on the 1935 Labor Day Hurricane proved to be almost as disastrous as the devastation of the Flagler Railroad. A handsome and popular couple portrayed the "Spirits of the Hurricane." They stood high on a fort embankment. The robes they wore were windtossed and the performers were hard put to maintain a semblance of dignity and modesty, not to mention precarious balance. Between classical posturing, the tableau figures were given to madly clutching their garments, with the wind fighting to tear the robes not only asunder, but completely away.

continued on page 29

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## Some remarks

THE NEWLY FORMED Key West chapter of the National Organization For Women, the Monroe County Commission on the Status of Women, American Association of University Women and the Human Rights Ad Hoc Committee are organizing a march and rally with local and national known speakers to kick off several days of events in support of ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. Colorful posters with the following message read in part:

**EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT  
(ACTUAL WORDING)**  
"EQUALITY OF RIGHTS UNDER THE LAW SHALL  
NOT BE DENIED OR ABROGATED BY THE UNITED  
STATES OR BY ANY STATE ON ACCOUNT OF SEX."

IMAGINE! Women who represent 51% of our population and who are 90% of the single parents, do not have the protection of equal rights under the United States Constitution. People have been struggling for this right since 1923 when another bill, which said "Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and everywhere subject to its jurisdiction," was presented to the United States Congress and was defeated. This occurred just after women had won the right to vote. The time is NOW, after 55 years, for the United States to recognize that WOMEN MUST BE FREE to participate fully and equally as citizens of this country and that their rights must not be denied by any unjust State or Federal law.

COME AND JOIN US Thursday, May 11, at 4 p.m. on the County Court House steps and show your support for a basic

right for women. The march will proceed from the County Court House steps down Duval Street to Mallory Square. At the square there will be a rally with speakers.

For further information or if you wish to donate your time and/or money to organize this demonstration, please phone 294-7474.

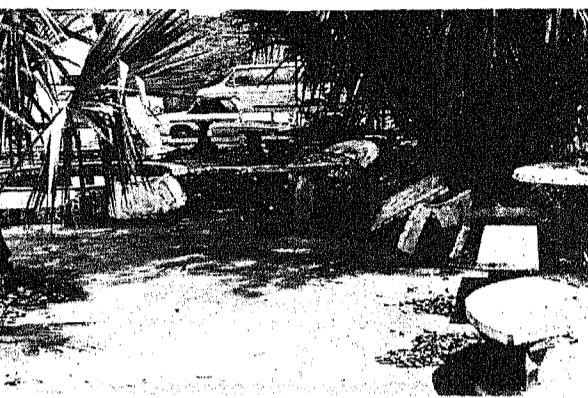


photo by Kim Wise

The Fogarty House looks awful these days. There has been widespread damage to it by vandals, garbage and bottles are littered in the yard, and the fence pickets are routinely broken off. It would be nice if the city could find some way to force the owners to clean it up.

continued on page 29

## Endangered Salt Ponds

photos and article  
by Richard Marsh

### CIVILIZING THE SALT PONDS

IN THE BEGINNING Key West was strictly for the birds. A collection of shallow salt ponds, mangroves, and spots of dry ground bred mosquitos. Killifish and other small, shallow water fish and marine life fed off the mangroves and mosquitos and mosquito larvae. Herons, egrets, roseate spoonbills, shorebirds like plovers and sandpipers, and migratory waterfowl feasted freely on the banquet that abounded here, thanks mainly to the island-building red mangroves.

Indians came here to trade with Cuba, but apparently were only seasonal visitors with no fixed settlement on the island. The European explorers were welcomed with arrows and did not press the matter. The Indians came later when the white invaders moved into Florida and pushed the Creek, Catawbas, and Seminoles, who pushed the weaker Calusas and Caribs south through the Keys. Unsubstantiated rumor has it that there was a final pitched battle on Key West which left the island strewn with bones, hence one of the Spanish names for the island -- Cayo Hueso or Cayo Huesson, the Isle of Bones. No one ever testified to seeing the bones, and reliable historians doubt the story.

Pirates liked Key West, but only because no one else did. They were left alone here to live low while the heat was on, until Commodore Porter chased them out when the United States claimed possession of the Keys.

THE KEYS were not specifically included in the 1819 treaty with Spain which gave Florida to the United States. Nobody really wanted the Keys until the U.S. recognized the military importance of this "Gibraltar of the Gulf," and a sharp businessman bought the island for \$2000. Even then, a yellow fever outbreak in the 1820's nearly caused the

island to be abandoned by the Navy, until Porter identified the origin of the fever as the Cuban islands.

Since then, Key West grew slowly and naturally, with the exceptions of the wrecking, cigar, shrimp, and various military booms, when there were sudden fluctuations of the economy and immigrants. Between the booms, things slowed down to a comfortable Caribbean pace.

DEVELOPMENT of the island started near the harbor and spread slowly throughout the rest of the island. Wet places were bridged, then filled, as land was "reclaimed" from the sea and the salt ponds, as if the water had stolen the land from the people and the people were only recovering what was rightfully



theirs. The birds kept moving over as the settlement spread out.

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the new weather station be located in the salt pond? Because it's in the airport master plan which was approved last year, according to County Commissioner Jerry Hernandez, and any one objecting to that location should have said something last year.

Because that is the only place approved by the Federal Aviation Authority, according to County Development Director Jack Burke.

Local environmentalists would like to see the new weather station placed anywhere but where the county wants it, except in another salt pond.

WHAT ABOUT those pads near the east end of the runway, suggested one of the regulatory agency staff members I spoke with. What pads? Sure enough, on an aerial photo of Key West taken about 1960 there appear an unusual northerly-running runway and three circular pads lying north of the east end of the present runway. I tramped around the area and found the pads, the old runway, and a 40 x 40 foot building foundation that looks like it was laid several years ago and abandoned.

I could not be sure whether these pads were on the airport property or private property. They appear to be included in either the Conley or the Context-Marks (Islands in the Sun) parcels or both. The most recent assessment of the Conley parcel, which is about 50 acres, is \$128,000, making it worth about \$256,000. This value is speculative, since under current environmental regulations there is little that can legally be done with that property.

This area seems a logical alternative site for the new weather station, subject to FAA approval. The site is already filled, and purchasing a few acres of this parcel should be cheaper than filling in part of a salt pond.

ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE seems to be the ideal location: the County's compound just east of the terminal building where impounded vehicles are kept.

Urbanak says that it makes no difference to him where the new station is built, and he guesses that building the station where the county's compound is located would save \$75-80,000, since there would be utilities close by to

hook into (which there are not at the proposed site), and any fill required by the building code would be much less than in the pond. Also, it would be more convenient to private air traffic.

ACCORDING TO the DER, the proposed site is in a salt pond which is not biologically productive enough to save. The DER is considering approval of the fill with mitigation, which means that damage to the environment would be allowed if an off-setting improvement is made.

In this case, the DER would require the county to do one of two things to make up for the damage caused by constructing the weather station in the salt pond: culvert South Roosevelt Boulevard to open the pond to tidal action, or improve the tidal action from the Gulf through the canal that runs into the salt ponds from the north and passes under North Roosevelt Boulevard and Flagler.

County Development Director Jack Burke says that all the county has to do is culvert the access road and connect the disputed salt pond with the pond directly to the west. Culverting South Roosevelt would be prohibitively expensive, he says.

BUT ENVIRONMENTALISTS say that connecting the two ponds would damage the pond to the west. The disputed pond is not productive because it receives fresh water from rain runoff from the runway, and, since it is not open to tidal flushing from the ocean, it is not salty enough to support salt water life and not fresh enough to support fresh water life. If the two ponds were connected, the disputed pond might be improved somewhat, but damage to the other pond would not make it worthwhile.

APPLICATIONS FOR fill permits are currently under consideration by regulatory agencies. Their decisions will be made according to various rules and



A white ibis, foreground with the down-curved beak, and reddish egret in the white phase feed together in a muddy pond (or a wet mudhole) just west of the access road to the projected weather station. The reddish egret is rare, and the white ibis is a species of special concern. The white ibis is as easy to identify as a pelican. His beak and the front of his face are a bright red.

guidelines. Staff members I spoke with seemed genuinely concerned, but they emphasized that even though they might

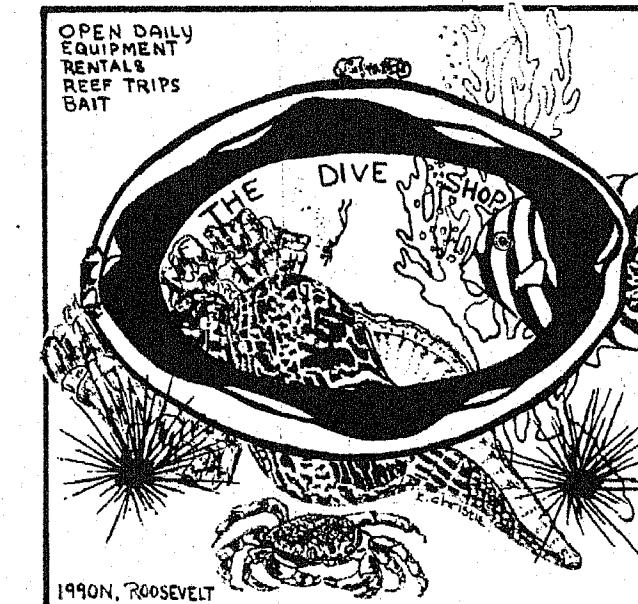
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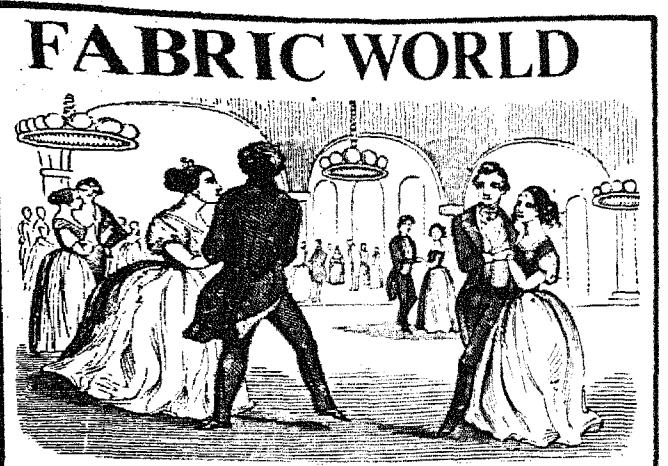
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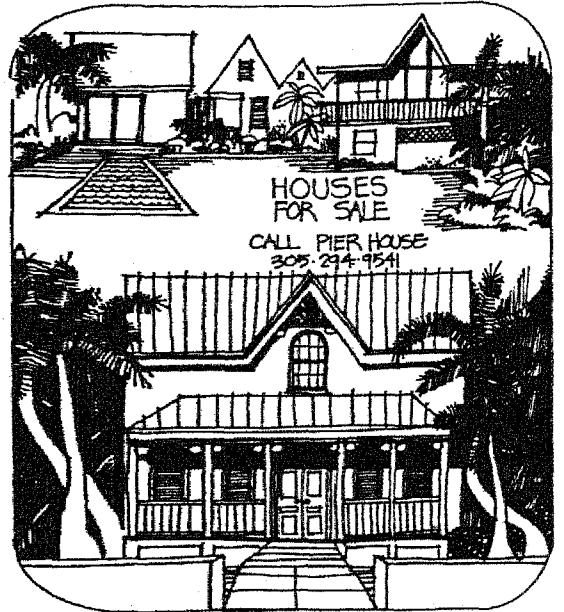
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Reddish egrets in the rarely seen white phase perch in the wasteland at the eastern end of the airport. Photographers and bird watchers travel hundreds of miles to see a reddish egret in the white phase. This bird disappeared from Florida for several years and was never very numerous in the state until relatively recently. Now it occurs frequently in the Keys, but rarely elsewhere in Florida. Its range in the United States is confined to Texas, Louisiana, and the Florida Keys. It breeds in March and April. This pair was photographed April 2 this year. Its scientific name, *Dichromana rufescens*, means "two-colored queen becoming reddish." It is categorized by the Audubon Society as rare, which means that it is not endangered or threatened, but may become so.

However, there is one variable factor that may influence the decisions

of all government agencies involved in the fate of the salt ponds -- public reaction.

No one is going to pay attention to a staff person of a regulatory agency in Marathon, Vero Beach, Punta Gorda, or Tallahassee who says, "I think the Key West salt ponds should be protected from development because the birds are pretty." But anything that one or a dozen or a hundred residents of Key West have to say on the subject will be heard. One agency staff member told me that when a permit application is under consideration the developers and those with a vested interest in development are extremely vocal in support of the permit, but that the agency rarely hears from the general public. Apparently as a result of our March article on the weather station, in which we printed the address of the Army Corps of Engineers, the Engineers received more mail opposing the filling of the salt pond than supporting it. So far the Engineers have not made a decision, but public reaction will be a factor when they do.

A RECENT EXAMPLE of public pressure affecting a governmental decision is what happened to the proposed city ordinance regulating garage sales. Both the Key West Citizen and *Solares Hill* editorialized strongly against the ordinance, which had passed unanimously on its first reading.

Key West residents were so adamantly and vocally opposed to the ordinance that the City Commission, with obvious embarrassment, quickly withdrew the ordinance. Commissioner Bruce Esquinaldo explained, "Actually what we did was to take a hot potato and throw it into cold water as fast as we could."

The people spoke, and their government listened.

LOCAL BIRD WATCHERS, beach strollers, and many residents, whose esthetic senses were offended, wrung their hands in silent distress while the Rongo town-

houses were being constructed on Rest Beach. The same people are wringing their hands over the proposed incursion of a weather station into the salt ponds and the precedent that its construction will set. This time, however, they are not silent. Some have written protests to the Corps of Engineers, the City Com-

ers from throughout the U.S. and enjoys considerable recreational useage by local birders."

THE FLORIDA KEYS Citizens Coalition, representing about 4000 county residents, including several hundred in Key West, protested the fill. Here are excerpts from their letter to the Army Corps of Engineers.

"This project would permanently alter a portion of one of the few remaining parcels of natural wetlands in Key West. The application states that this project will reclaim land in an artificial salt pond. This is an error. This site is located in a natural salt pond area, and is part of approximately 40 acres of natural salt pond south of the airport runway, all of which are environmentally sensitive and important..."

The letter mentions an adjoining parcel for which the Engineers previously refused a fill permit.

"This salt pond is an important bird sanctuary for many types of wading birds, waterfowl and other species. It is the habitat of a number of rare and unusual birds... Key West and the Lower Keys are important areas for bird-watchers from all over the United States and many other parts of the world. This specific area is part of one of the few accessible wading bird observatories in the Florida Keys. It is a stopover on the Eastern Flyway and a feeding and roosting area for several resident species.... The value of this natural attraction to the tourist-based economy of Key West is incalculable..."

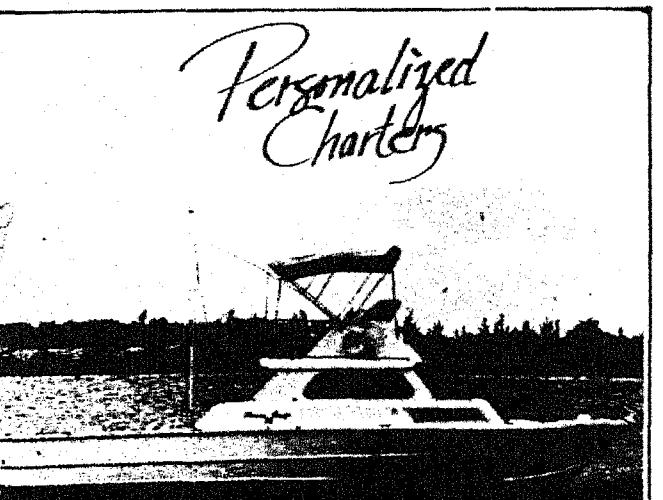
"It is a fish breeding area, and a protected area for small and larval fish...."

THE LETTER suggests that alternative sites be investigated.

Public opinion started the Spanish-American War and stopped the Vietnam War, elected President Nixon in a land-

continued on page 22

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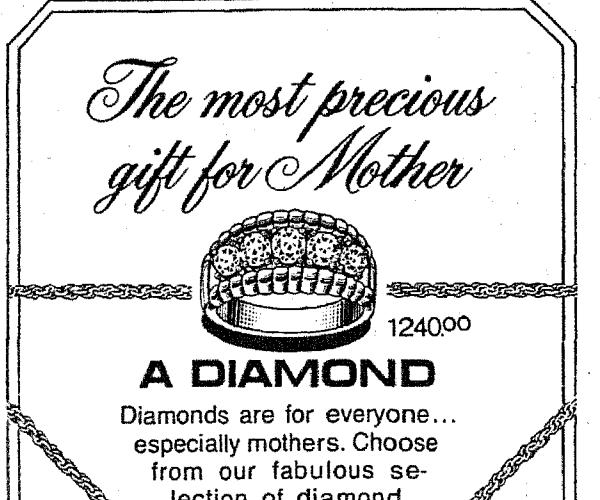
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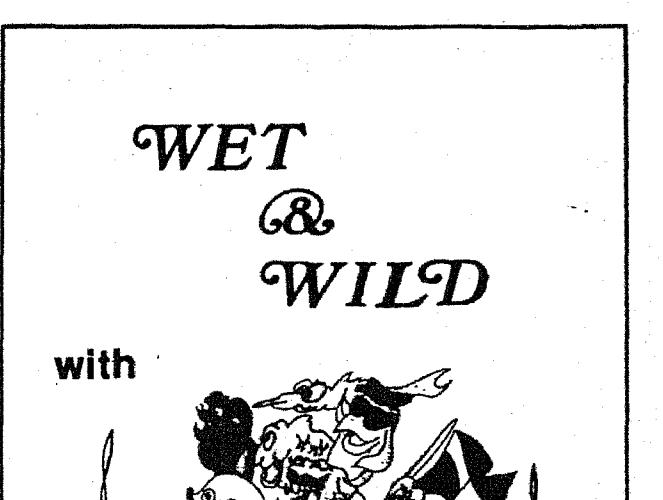
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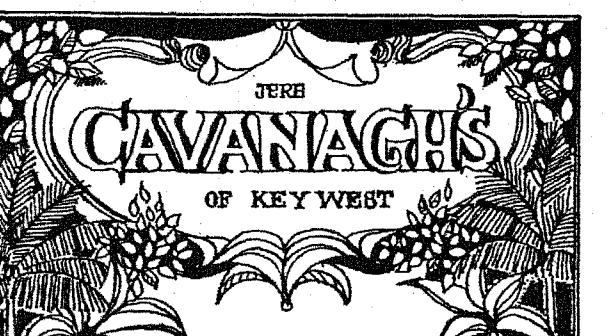
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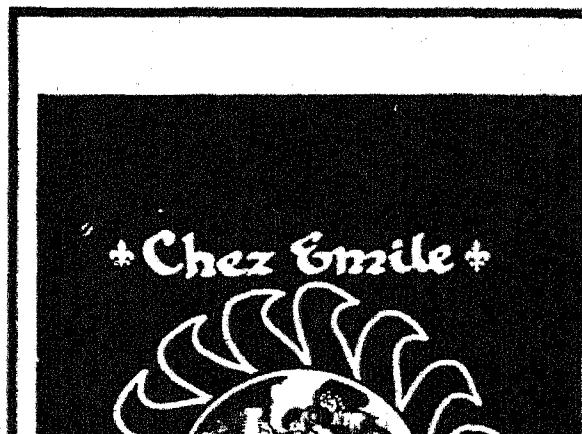
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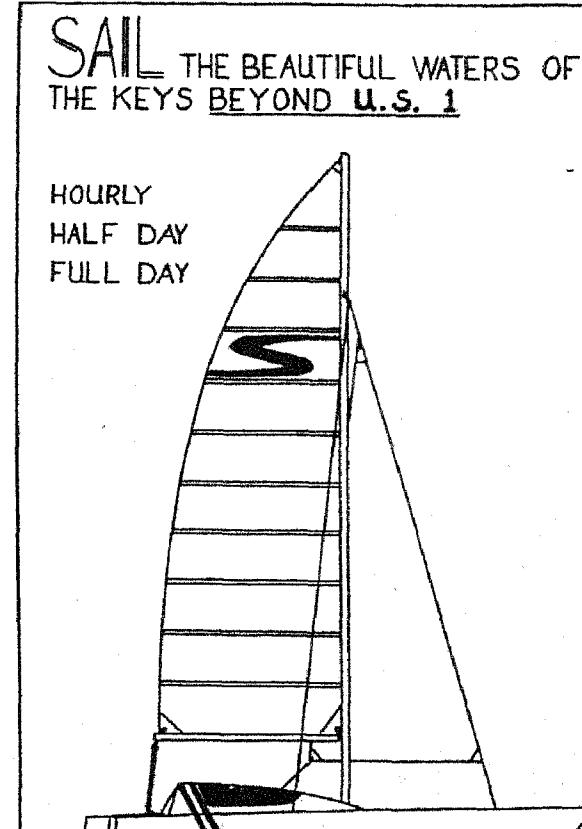
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# WHO IS ROBERT WATSON?

written and illustrated by Malcolm Ross

THE FOLLOWING is the second installment of the Civil War Journal of Robert Watson who left Key West to join the Confederate forces in the fall of 1861. Although Watson's initial enlistment was in the Coast Guard, the account of his day-to-day experiences generally covers the period spent in the Army and his subsequent transferral to the Confederate Navy.

Upon his return to Key West after the war, Watson set up a carpenter shop on Ann Street, married and reared a family. He built several houses in the older section of Key West. Watson is survived by several grandchildren and countless great and great-great grandchildren. Watson Street in the city was named for him and his brother.

THE FIRST installment of the diary dealt with Watson's enlistment in the Coast Guard, his subsequent transfer to the Army, and his activities in Tennessee, particularly in the area around Knoxville. After engaging in several skirmishes (and retreats) in Tennessee, his detachment, Company K of the 7th Florida Infantry Regiment, marched for several days in a southerly direction towards the Georgia border. Watson did not know it, but the game in which he was a pawn developed into the battle of Chickamauga, one of the bloodiest confrontations between the north and south.

IT IS difficult to pinpoint the exact location of Watson at the times of his diary entries, but it appears that he was in the general area around Chattanooga where the states of Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina and Tennessee come together.

(His journal continues:)

SEPTEMBER 13, 1862: Our brigade started early this morning to meet the enemy, marched about 4 miles and halted for 1 hour, cannonading in front. Started again and marched back to the place we left in the morning and camped for the night.

SEPTEMBER 14: Started at daylight and marched about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile and halted in an open field for about 1 hour, then marched about 3 miles to the top of a hill, halted and remained all night.

SEPTEMBER 15: Drew 1 days rations of corn and flour bread which was not half cooked, having been cooked during the night by the wagoners of the Regt. The corn bread musty and the flour bread burnt outside and raw inside and very heavy. No meat.

(Food is only one of the problems that the fighting man must contend with.)

SEPTEMBER 16: I must here state that nearly every man in the Regt., officers and all, are blessed with some of "Job's comforts," the itch, head and body lice and bed bugs. I am one of the number and although I hunt for them every day I can't get clear of them. It is a common thing to see officers and men almost in a nude state hunting for the infernal devils.

At 9 p.m., just as we were all turned in we were ordered to pack up and march and had it not been for the fires along the road we never could have got down the mountain. We had to go in single file. The fires looked grand. Arrived at our old camping ground.

SEPTEMBER 18: Marched this morning towards the enemy. Cannonading began at 12 M (sic). Halted and rested 1 hour and again advanced. Double quicked 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Dust so thick that we could not see the ground. Halted at 6 p.m., stacked arms and broke ranks to the rear, gathered wood, and just as we were light-

ing our fires, we were ordered to fall in.

Marched by divisions through a thick wood and halted in line of battle among the woods, stacked arms and sent a detail after water. Heavy skirmishing in front. Turned in and at 10 p.m., just as we were sound asleep, we were ordered to fall in without noise and marched about 300 yards and camped in line of battle. Slept with our accoutrements on and our guns in our arms. So cold that I could not sleep.

SEPTEMBER 19: Fell in and marched off at 5 a.m., very cold. Formed line of battle in a large corn field, built fires to warm ourselves. Ate my breakfast of sour corn bread and water. Heavy cannonading and musketry on our right and left; we are in the center. Moved at double quick and changed positions several times, pieces of shell falling among us several times. At 4 p.m. we engaged the enemy and charged them through an open field. When within about 400 yards of their battery, we

fore he could fire his gun, therefore the Yankees took it for granted that we were their own men!

We then proceeded to the top of the hill within about 50 yards of them and halted and took 30 prisoners when the Yankees opened a fierce fire upon us. We soon silenced them. They tried to escape by running but they ran into the 6th Florida and were all captured. Our company captured a colonel and several officers and horses belonging to the general's staff. All the prisoners except the officers were armed with Colt's 5 shooting rifles. Our brigade took 470 prisoners including those we took.

We then marched to the rear and camped on the battlefield which we occupied in the morning. We were nearly all dead for want of water and were very tired and sleepy.

SEPTEMBER 21: At 4 a.m. we turned out and at daylight marched off about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  miles and halted, formed line of battle, stacked arms and remained there all day, the enemy being completely



"IT WAS A TERRIBLE SIGHT, FRIEND AND FOE LYING SIDE BY SIDE."

were ordered to right flank and marched at double time quick to the right. The enemy threw a complete shower of grape, cannister, shell, and musketry among us, but although we were exposed to their fire for some time our company did not have a man hurt, but the Regt. was not so lucky for it lost a good many.

THE BATTLE lasted until 9 p.m. and ceased, but there was heavy skirmishing all night. At 4 p.m. we drew some bread and bacon which was greatly needed for I have had nothing to eat all day except a little sour corn bread. Very cold all night and no fires were allowed. I scarcely slept a wink all night but lay shivering with cold. The groans and shrieks of the wounded and volleys of musketry and falling of trees made it impossible to sleep.

SEPTEMBER 20: But little sleep all night. Built some small fires in the morning to warm ourselves. "Iron-clad" and bacon for breakfast. (Apparently a type of biscuit so named because of its resemblance to the iron-clad vessels of the day.) Proceeded to a point  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile distant where we planted a battery and opened fire across (sic) a large field but received no reply.

At 4 p.m. we were ordered to the front at double quick, distance 3 miles. We arrived there in  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour. In going there we had to pass through an open place on the brow of a hill and the enemy opened a heavy cross fire of grape, cannister, shell and shot but did not hurt any in our regiment. We rested a few minutes and then we were ordered to charge a hill  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile distant. We went at double quick and got to the foot of the hill at dark.

THE ENEMY seeing us sent a man towards us to see whether we were their own men or not with directions to fire if we were enemies but we took him be-

routed. The ground was solidly covered with dead and wounded. Our troops were occupied carrying off the wounded and burying the dead all day. It was a terrible sight, friend and foe lying side by side.

SEPTEMBER 23: Started for Chattanooga at 8 a.m. and halted 2 miles from the city, formed line of battle and lay down on our arms. The enemy shelled us for some time and had we been standing up many of us would have been killed for the pieces of shell flew around our heads very close and plentiful. We did not reply to them but remained here all night, no fires allowed.

SEPTEMBER 24: At daylight the enemy began to shell us but did not hurt any of us. At 8 $\frac{1}{2}$  a.m. marched off a short distance and halted in line of battle. Remained about  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour and marched a short distance, halted, stacked arms and sat down. Remained here all day, the enemy shelling us occasionally but without effect. We made no reply. At 11 p.m. we were aroused by heavy picket firing and soon after the enemy opened their batteries on us. Our battery opened in reply and soon silenced them. We then lay down and slept till morning, very cold and no fires allowed.

SEPTEMBER 25: All quiet in front. At 9 a.m. we moved about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile and stacked arms under the lee of a high hill and remained there all day. At 5 p.m. we commenced building breastworks of fence rails and worked till dark, when we were ordered to fall in, but did not move away. At 10 p.m. just as I was asleep the sergeant major called on me for 3 men to picket guard and a few minutes after, the adjutant gave me orders to have one third of the company up at a time all night so that in case of an attack we could all be aroused

(October begins with rains and mud ankle deep. Watson's health is complicated by diarrhea and the cold October nights. Sporadic cannon fire occurs, but there appears to be no major fighting for several days as the troops dig in and wait.)

SEPTEMBER 26: Could hear the Yankee bands playing this morning quite plain. At sunrise our pickets and the Yankee pickets had a lot of engagement and we fell in and marched to their support, halted in sight of them for we were not needed. The enemy opened a battery on our pickets and one of our batteries returned the compliment and kept it up for some time.

SEPTEMBER 27: Just two years today

since I left home. We are behind the breastworks this morning, all quiet through the night. Some of the boys that were lucky enough to steal some ears of corn from the horses last night are busy grating it and making mush of it for we are almost starved to death. We draw enough in 2 days to make one good meal. Firing through the night. Suffered very much with rheumatism in my hip and pain in my breast.

OCTOBER 14: It still continues to rain and I feel none the better for it, have had no sleep for 2 nights and my clothes have been wet for 2 days and nights.

OCTOBER 16: I feel greatly refreshed this morning having had a little sleep for the first time in four nights, but I have a violent cold and pain in the breast. Nothing to eat for the roads are so bad that the wagons can't get along. All hands as hungry as wolves. I went to bed but was so hungry that I could not sleep, for when I would doze off I would dream that I was at my mother's table eating all sorts of nice things, then wake up and find it all a dream. Very cold and a heavy frost. Suffered very much with rheumatism in my hip and pain in my breast.

(Hunger and illness follow the men from day to day. Rations, when and if they did come, were barely edible. Watson was plagued by a violent headache and hot fever. Nineteenth century medical assistance is available to the regiment.)

OCTOBER 20: I reported sick this morning and the doctor gave me 2 powders and rubbed my breast with croton oil.

OCTOBER 21: Sick this morning. Took a blue pill about half the size of a pigeon's egg and rubbed my breast with croton oil. Sick all night, violent pains in my breast, head and bowels and severe cough.

OCTOBER 22: I feel some better today. My breast is one mass of blisters caused by the croton oil. Took 2 more pills.

(Although the battle has quieted there are other problems that beset the Confederate forces.)

OCTOBER 29: Drew 1 days rations of corn bread and bacon, just enough for one meal and we ate it up immediately although it is for tomorrow. There is some rascality about it for our full rations are drawn from the brigade commissary and then cooked at the wagons. We think that our commissary sergeant sells it.

OCTOBER 30: All quiet through the night. Our men at work all night building breastworks. Nothing to eat but we are all well supplied with lice. Many of the Regt. sick from drinking bad water and poorly cooked food. I think we will all be sick soon if they don't give us more food.

(October begins with rains and mud ankle deep. Watson's health is complicated by diarrhea and the cold October nights. Sporadic cannon fire occurs, but there appears to be no major fighting for several days as the troops dig in and wait.)

OCTOBER 10: At 1 p.m. our brigade fell in and marched about 1 mile and halted in line of battle in an open field to be reviewed by President Davis. At 3 p.m. he came up escorted by all the generals and their aides in this army. As he stopped opposite each Regt. he received 3 cheers and on returning received a regular "Rebel" yell. I saw Genl. Bragg for the first time.

(Watson's health improves somewhat, but rain continues to complicate the situation.)

OCTOBER 13: Rained all day and oh what a fix we are all in, wet to the skin and everything we have are soaking wet, rations, blankets, guns, and everything else. Mud ankle-deep. Rained all

night and of course I got no sleep. Some of the boys have made tents of their blankets but mine is so small and thin that it is of no use but to throw over my shoulders.

OCTOBER 14: It still continues to rain and I feel none the better for it, have had no sleep for 2 nights and my clothes have been wet for 2 days and nights.

OCTOBER 16: I feel greatly refreshed this morning having had a little sleep for the first time in four nights, but I have a violent cold and pain in the breast. Nothing to eat for the roads are so bad that the wagons can't get along. All hands as hungry as wolves. I went to bed but was so hungry that I could not sleep, for when I would doze off I would dream that I was at my mother's table eating all sorts of nice things, then wake up and find it all a dream. Very cold and a heavy frost. Suffered very much with rheumatism in my hip and pain in my breast.

(The rains continued intermittently, and although there was no direct combat, shelling from both sides became a daily occurrence. In the absence of the company's Captain Smith, who had gone to Atlanta on some business -- much to the relief of the men who have come to regard him as somewhat of a tyrant -- and the illness of the two Lieutenants Bethel and W.C. Maloney, also of Key West, Watson was left temporarily in command. A small ray of hope breaks through the cold and rain.)

OCTOBER 21: Sick this morning. Took a blue pill about half the size of a pigeon's egg and rubbed my breast with croton oil. Sick all night, violent pains in my breast, head and bowels and severe cough.

OCTOBER 22: I feel some better today. My breast is one mass of blisters caused by the croton oil. Took 2 more pills.

(The folks at home had not forgotten the men at the front, and on October 26, each man received 1/2 gill of molasses, sent to the Florida troops by the people of Florida. Watson and his comrades constructed huts of any available material in an effort to protect themselves from the harsh October elements.)

OCTOBER 27: Busy all day on our hut which is built of poles, corn stalks, straw and dirt. It makes a warm and comfortable hut but I don't think it is healthy.

(The location of Watson and his company becomes more clear from the following references.)

OCTOBER 28: At 3 a.m. we were ordered to fall in and march to the left which we did reluctantly, for we have all been hard at work since we've been here building huts, then just as we got tolerable comfortable we have to leave. But this is the way a soldier is treated!

OCTOBER 29: The enemy advanced and Watson's company is detailed to work on roads six miles away. Cannonading increases as the detachment gets closer to northern positions and Watson is now detailed to cook rations for the rest of the company.)

NOVEMBER 23: The enemy advanced

After marching and countermarching and humping half the forenoon we camped on a hill between the first and second row of breastworks.

(Watson gave vent to his annoyance and gave it for it.)

OCTOBER 29: Several of us were drilled today for swearing. I was one of the number. Our captain has got very pious and particular lately. I told him that when I joined the Confederate Army that I did not intend to become a Methodist preacher and if he thought that he could make a preacher or hypocrite of me by punishment that he was mistaken, for the more he punished the worse I would be for I was neither a slave or a school boy. He thought it strange that nobody else said anything about it but me. I told him that I was talking for my rights.

(The rains continued intermittently, and although there was no direct combat, shelling from both sides became a daily occurrence. In the absence of the company's Captain Smith, who had gone to Atlanta on some business -- much to the relief of the men who have come to regard him as somewhat of a tyrant -- and the illness of the two Lieutenants Bethel and W.C. Maloney, also of Key West, Watson was left temporarily in command. A small ray of hope breaks through the cold and rain.)

NOVEMBER 7: Received a letter from S.R. Mallory (then Senator from Key West) in answer to the one we wrote him from Glade Springs, Va., requesting a transfer to the Navy. He said that whenever there was a call for seamen that we would be transferred.

(Captain Smith returns to his company from Atlanta but his men are not glad to see him.)

NOVEMBER 8: Captain Smith offered us some brandy but we declined drinking any. He seemed very anxious to get into our good graces again but he can't until he does better.

(Food supply was still a problem and Alfred Lowe, Watson's chum from Key West, acquired seven cows hooves which were used for the following delicacy.)

NOVEMBER 10: Made a fine cheese of the cows hooves, which are boiled into a jelly, a little corn meal, pepper and salt are added to it and then poured into pans to cool.

(The regiment relocates.)

NOVEMBER 14: We are now in a brigade composed of all Floridians. Our new camping ground is a low, wet, nasty, muddy place...

NOVEMBER 18: We have been hard at work for the last four days building a log chimney and additions to our hut. Have to carry the wood 3/4 mile on our shoulders. Heavy firing on the right yesterday. Nothing to eat all day.

(The location of Watson and his company becomes more clear from the following references.)

NOVEMBER 19: All quiet except an occasional shot from Lookout Mountain which was returned by the Yankees. The southern forces are in control of this height.

(The rains continue again and Watson's company is detailed to work on roads six miles away. Cannonading increases as the detachment gets closer to northern positions and Watson is now detailed to cook rations for the rest of the company.)

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at 2 p.m. and drove our pickets in and just as I was about to eat my dinner we were ordered to fall in and march to the breastworks at double quick so I had to go without any dinner. At 3 p.m. our Regt. was detached from the brigade and went to the right 4 miles. We went up on Missionary Ridge at 5 p.m. and remained there in line of battle until 8 p.m. when we were relieved and marched back to the breastworks, distance 1 mile. Remained there until 12 midnight. During the time I went back to camp and got my blanket and knapsack and started back to the Regt. When I got within a half mile of it I met them going back to camps. We arrived at camps at 2 a.m.

I JUDGED from the looks of their numbers that there must be all of 100,000 men. We mowed them down until they were within 30 yards of us and then we retreated up the hill and made a short stand at the second breastworks. But it was of no use, for although we mowed them down, yet they advanced on us and we were again forced to retreat.

Then came the worst part of the fight, for the hill was dreadful steep and the enemy kept up a continual fire



"I STOPPED SEVERAL TIMES AND TOOK A SHOT AT THE D-D YANKEES  
AND AT THE SAME TIME IT RESTED ME."

and threw a continual shower of bullets among us and I only wonder that they did not kill all of us. Many a poor fellow fell exhausted and was taken prisoner.

NOVEMBER 25: At 7 a.m. some of the boys came in from the company to get the rations. The enemy were shelling our quarters at the time and some of their shells fell among our huts but nobody hurt. We carried the rations to the Co., who were then in the breastworks about 3/4 mile to the right of us, and issued it to them; the enemy shelling us all the time.

At 2 p.m. the enemy advanced on us in 4 columns. They played us a Yankee trick by bringing out their artillery

I DID NOT think that I should be

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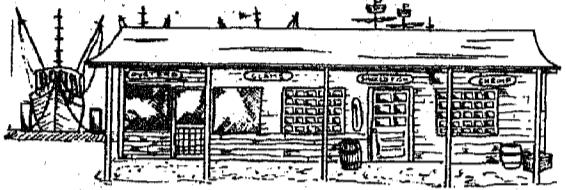
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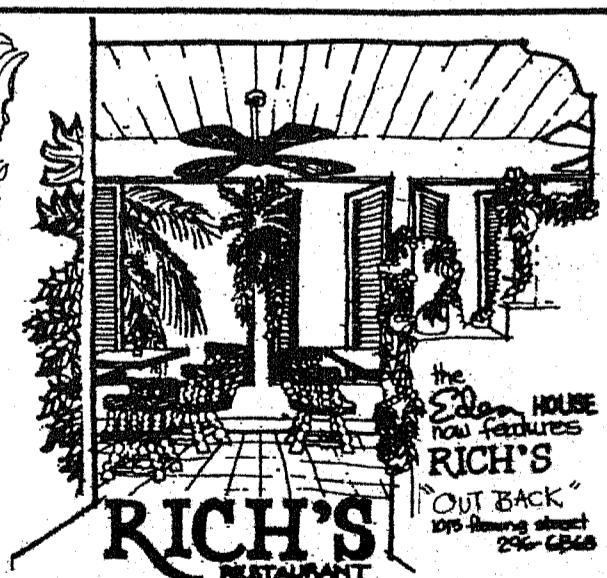
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## editorial

by Bill Westray

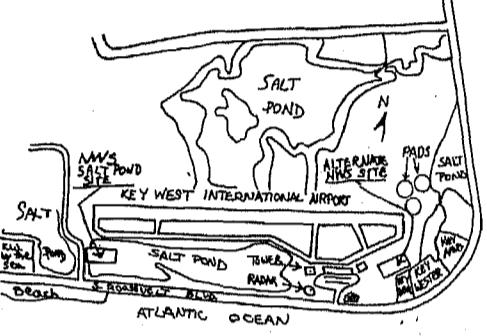
## SALT POND

ON TUESDAY, April 18, the Board of County Commissioners at their Marathon meeting, voted to investigate alternate sites for the new National Weather Service (NWS) facility at the Key West International Airport. The decision to seek another site rather than fill in a portion of the salt pond at the southwest corner of the airport, came after the commissioners heard the writer's presentation arguing against the environmentally sensitive salt pond location.

Solares Hill's interest in this project was first aroused last fall when several Key West naturalists expressed concern about the possible loss of the few remaining acres of salt pond south of the airport. These ponds have become nationally famous among the bird study community because of their easy accessibility, and because so many of the 66 separate species of birds observed there are on the endangered or threatened species list.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR Richard Marsh collaborated with naturalist Thurlow Weed in an article in November to inform our readers of the county plans to fill the site, and to voice our objections to it. We reported at that time that the project seemed to violate the City of Key West bird sanctuary ordinance, and that it had been adversely reported on by the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation (DER).

It was a surprise to receive an Army Corps of Engineers (C of E) "green sheet" in February, indicating that the salt pond location for the weather station was still being pushed by Monroe County.



AFTER CONSULTATION with Marsh and Weed, I commenced my own investigation and quickly concluded that the site was not only environmentally deleterious and technically substandard, but would set a dangerous precedent for filling the few remaining acres of salt pond south of the airport along South Roosevelt Boulevard.

In 1974, private owners of parts of these same salt ponds had been denied fill permits by both DER and C of E. Our concern was that if the county weather project were approved, the private owners might then reapply with the argument that they should be treated the same as the county. We had visions of high rise condominiums or townhouses all along the southern edge of the airport runway.

AFTER EXAMINING airport maps and doing a preliminary on-site survey, I concluded that alternate locations certainly appeared feasible. Several inquiries were made to county officials about alternate sites, and the vague, guarded replies produced the inference that alternate locations were indeed feasible, but were not being considered for political reasons.

EARLY IN MARCH, the influential Florida Keys Citizens Coalition (FKCC) and the Florida Keys Audubon Society took strong positions in opposition to the salt pond site with C of E and DER, and called for public hearings. Decision on the hearings is still pending.

Meanwhile, Marsh, gathering material for his articles on wildlife habitat in the Key West area, suggested that a county-owned site behind Key Bowl Lanes appeared usable as an alternate site. He passed this information on to me for further investigation.

Suddenly, there appeared on the county commission agenda for April 18, a resolution calling on DER and C of E to approve the salt pond location in spite of the opposition. Pressed for time, I made a concerted effort to complete my investigation before the commission meeting. The alternate site behind the bowling lanes was examined and measured and indeed looked highly suitable.

LOCATING THE project file proved somewhat more difficult. Initial inquiry was made in the office of the Senior County Planner, where one would normally expect to find the file, but the planners had had no part in the project. Henry Weinkam, senior planner, was out of town on other business, and his assistants were only vaguely aware that the project existed. I next went to the Planning and Zoning Director's office, Kermit Lewin, and got the same result...no files, little knowledge of the project. At the suggestion of Lewin's secretary, I then went to the airport manager's office, George Hoagland; there I found the files. Hoagland was absent but his secretary was most cooperative.

I FIRST REVIEWED the airport master plan, having been told previously by a county commissioner that the weather station location was included in the master plan. It was not. No reference to a new weather station is contained in the master plan. However, the master plan did state, "Any construction as proposed by the master plan is not expected to affect the local wildlife or behavior patterns of any animal or bird species in or around the airport."

I next reviewed the project file, which became important as much for what it didn't contain as for what it did include. Nothing in the file indicated that any alternate sites were considered! The consulting engineer's report started with the premise that the salt pond site was "it," and then proceeded to develop a site plan around that location.

In its environmental section the plan stated that aquatic and plant communities would not be significantly affected. The plan ignored the effect on birdlife in its conclusions, in our opinion the most serious environmental concern.

Nothing in the file indicated that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approval was either sought or obtained. Indeed, in its initial letter to the county in 1976, the NWS established a criteria for the site: that it must be within a 1,000-foot cable run from the present weather radar tower. The salt pond site being some 3300 beeline feet from the radar tower, requires relocating the radar.

ARMED WITH the knowledge elicited from the project files and the on-site inspections, I proceeded to the Marathon meeting where I joined Dr. Arthur Weiner, chairman of the FKCC.

When the subject resolution came up, I secured permission to speak to the commissioners. I started by expressing concern that alternate sites had not been considered.

County Mayor Purie Howanit replied that the salt pond site had been selected and approved by the FAA. This was refuted, based on my review of the file. The Mayor then stated that the remote location was selected to avoid radio interference. Again this was refuted on the basis that the consulting engineer's report stated that there had been no frequency interference from the weather radar in the past and that none was expected in the future.

I THEN RECOMMENDED that the commissioners direct the senior county planner to investigate the county owned site behind the Key Bowl Lanes. Speaking on behalf of the FKCC, it was pointed out that the salt pond site, besides being important as a wading bird and waterfowl feeding and roosting area, does not meet the criteria originally set by NWS in their initial letter to the county in 1976. This required that the weather site be within 1,000-foot cable run of the present weather radar tower. The salt pond site would require about a 3000-foot cable run, besides requiring extended runs for water lines, electricity, sewerage, and access road.

The site behind the bowling lanes would need no filling of wetlands, therefore Corps of Engineers approval would not be required; it is about 1000 feet from the radar tower with no intervening structures. Water, electric and sewer connections would require a much shorter run and a much shorter access road would suffice.

THE ALTERNATE SITE would also be much more accessible to pilots desiring weather briefings. I ended by stating that I thought considerable money and time could be saved by using the alternate site, and that this would preserve the salt ponds as a very important bird sanctuary.

Commissioner Jerome Shipley stated that he had already been investigating the site behind the bowling lanes and that a representative of the consulting engineers had indicated that it looked promising. Shipley then proposed the resolution that the county investigate the bowling lane site and other alternatives, which was adopted unanimously. (Commissioner Jerry Hernandez was absent.)

ON THURSDAY, April 20, representatives of the consulting engineers for the new weather station, examined the bowling lane site in more detail, and advised Commissioner Shipley that the alternate site appeared quite suitable. They are now proceeding to develop the new site plan.

As was said earlier, one of the concerns that the Florida Keys Citizens Coalition had expressed in opposing the salt pond site to the Corps of Engineers and the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation, was that approval of the salt pond site, even to meet a public need, would set a dangerous precedent that might allow owners of the privately-owned adjacent salt pond areas to secure fill permits.

SOLARES HILL has learned that private owners had submitted applications to DER for fill permits for three salt pond parcels around the airport. One of these is for the 2.5 acres immediately south of the weather station site for the construction of townhouse apartments.\*

The other two applications were projects so large that they had to be sent to Tallahassee for processing. Copies could not be viewed in the local DER office.

IN SUMMARY, we feel that the salt pond site is far from the best site for the weather station, and that alternate sites, not having an environmental impact, have not been adequately studied and documented. We have an uneasy feeling that the site selection might have been contrived using public need as an excuse

continued on page 31



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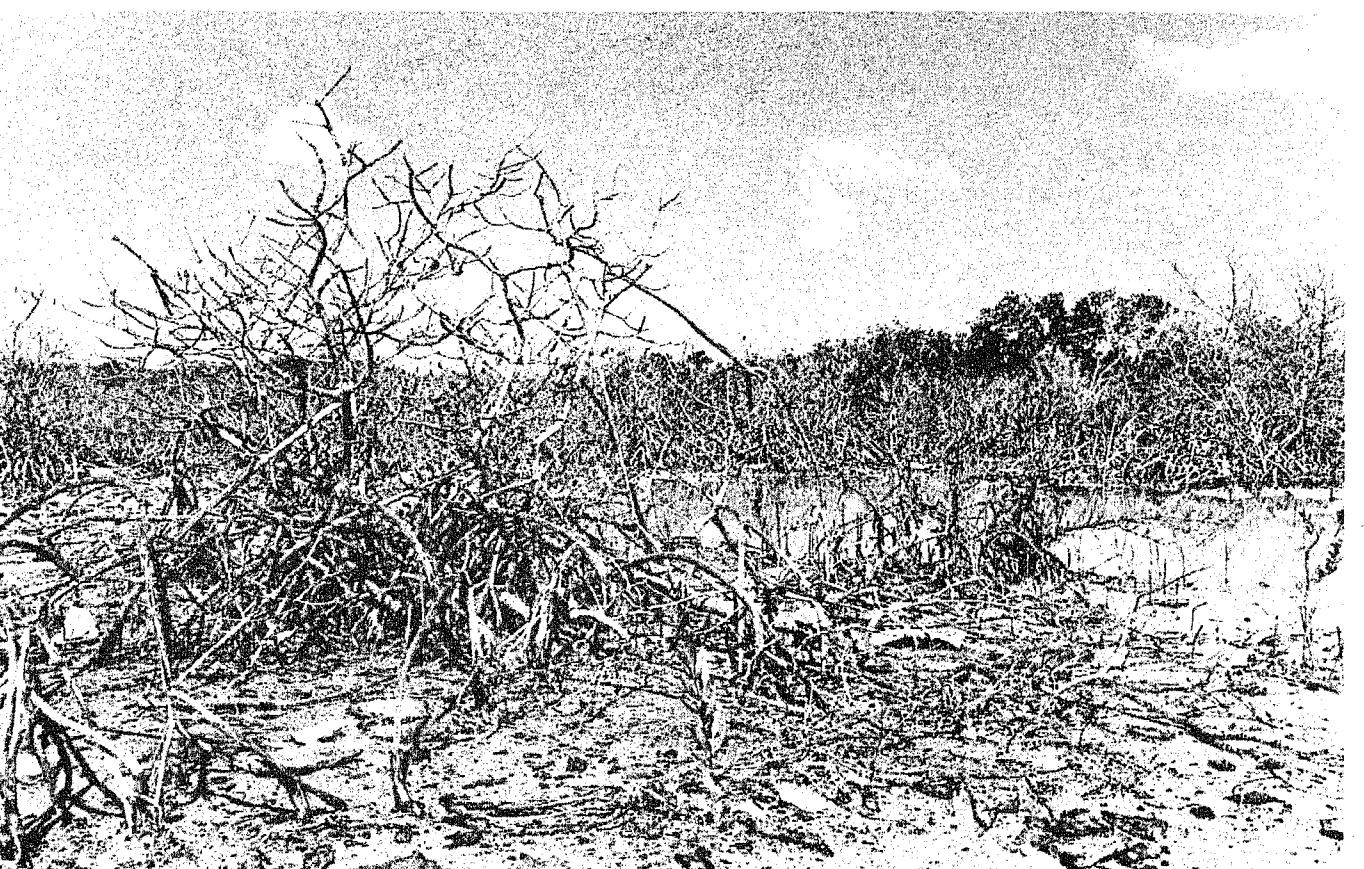
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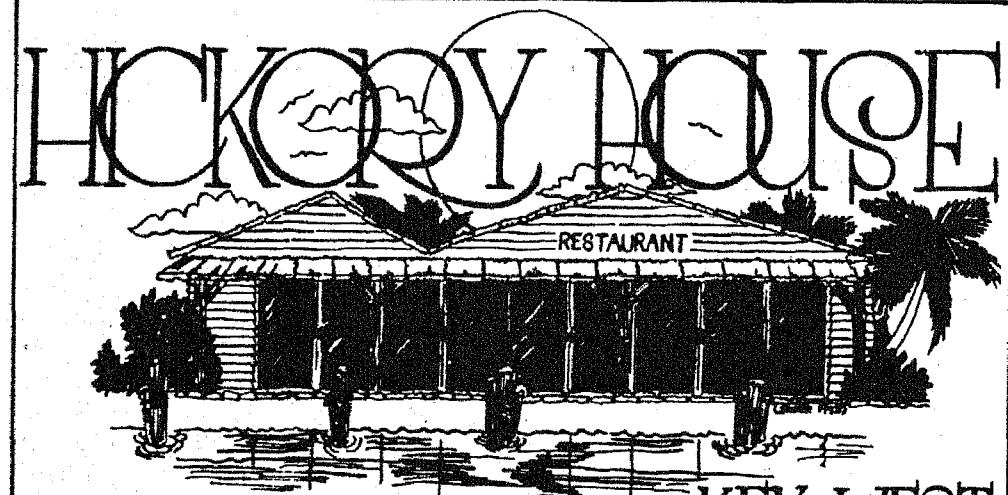
Dead and dying red mangroves, the builders of islands like Key West, show the result of the illegal fill at the eastern end of the airport runway. The fill project for a resort complex called Islands in the Sun was stopped by the Corps of Engineers, who are trying to get a court order to make the developer restore the site as much as possible to its original condition.

Salt Ponds continued from page 15  
slide and threw him out of office, and forced the City Commission to reverse itself on the Garage Sale Ordinance.

National public opinion caused the government to concern itself with protecting the country's environment, and

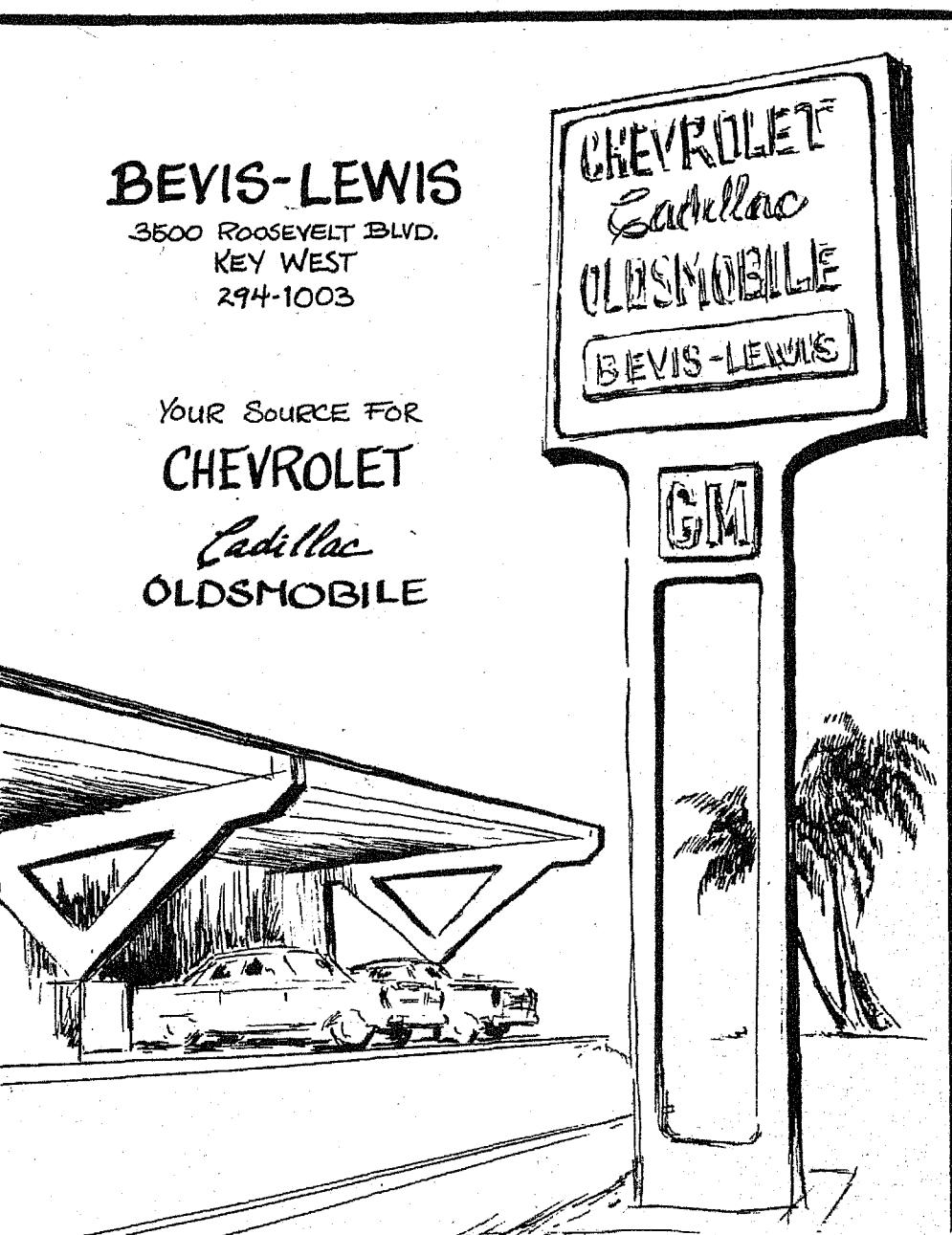
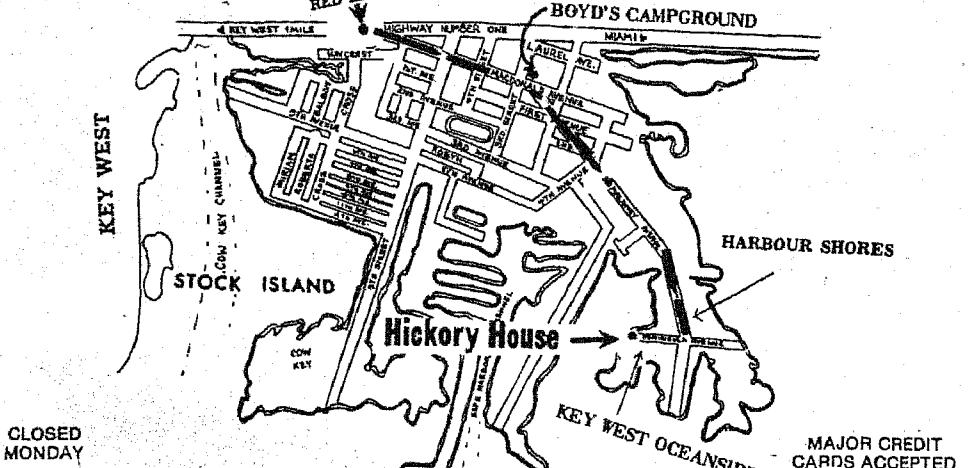
local public opinion can cause the city and the county to preserve the salt ponds from development. The state and federal governments can be prodded into providing grants for public purchase of environmentally endangered lands for public use.

There are many alternatives from which to choose for the purpose of preserving land for public enjoyment. We will investigate some of those possibilities in the June/July or the August issue.

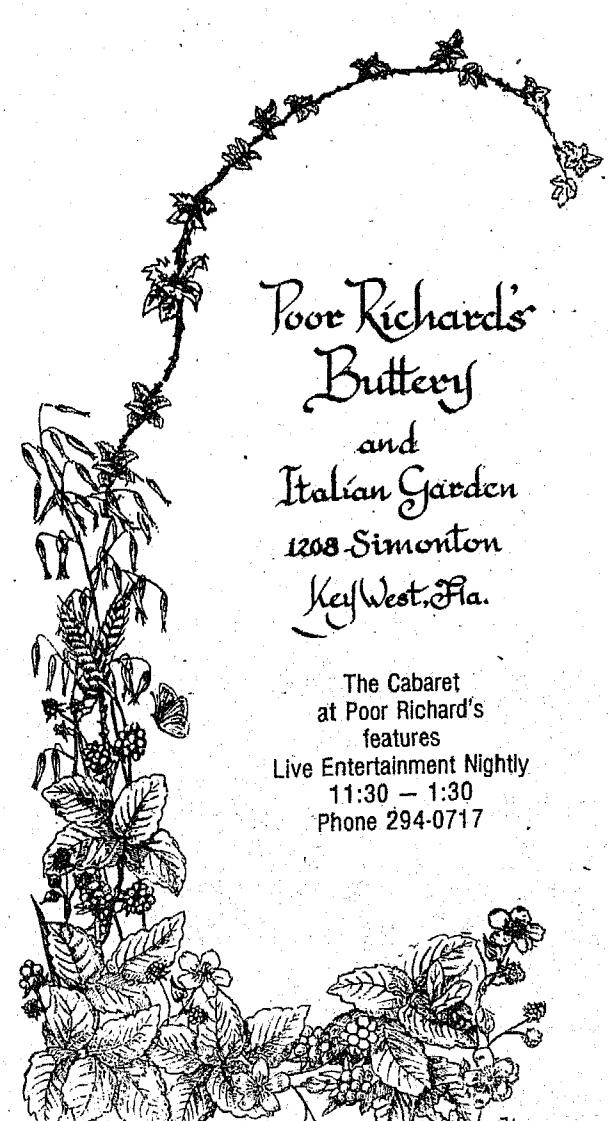


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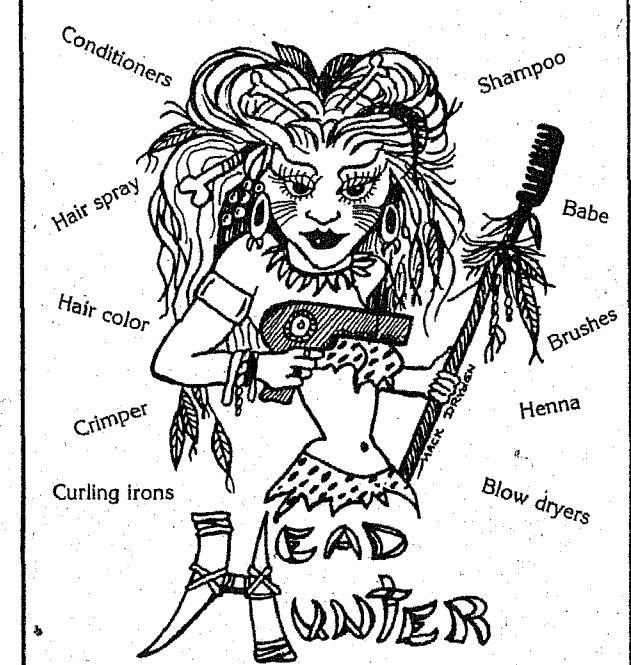
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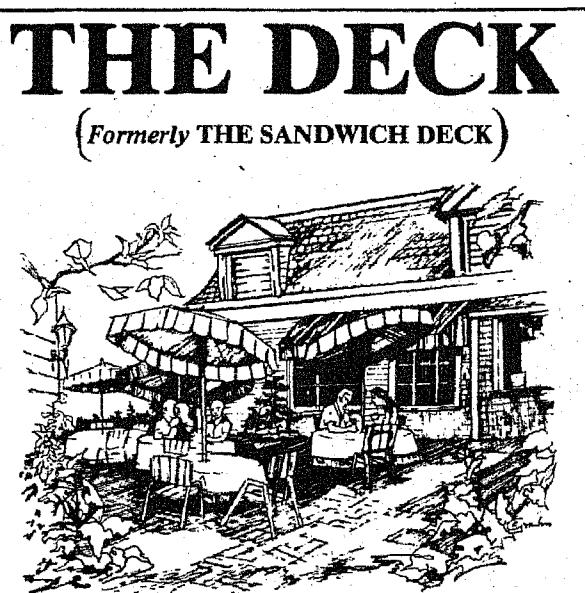
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— N. Y. Times Sunday, January 22, 1978

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## poetry

### IT'S TOO BEAUTIFUL DOWN HERE

Well, now your mama disowned you  
And your queen, she dethroned you  
And all your friends seem to say  
"Hey, man, what ever happened to him?"

So you head for the little Keys  
Stop in at the Southernmost  
And your Pa says "Son, it's good to  
see you  
But I just can't be your host."

So you try to make the best of it  
You invite guilt and seek regret  
But those blue skies that please  
And that ocean breeze won't let you.

Lord, it's too beautiful down here  
For a man to cry in open fear  
And that Key West sun just evaporates  
my tears  
Before they appear. Lord, it's too  
beautiful  
Down here.

Well, now you can contemplate leaving  
So you can commence grieving  
In a place where the sun don't shine  
And the sky won't welcome you.

But, it's easier said than done -  
Key West won't let you go!  
Not with her lovely Atlantic  
Nor her sun-setting smile in the  
Gulf of Mexico.

Yes, Lord! It's too beautiful down  
here  
For a man to cry in open fear  
And that Key West sun just evaporates  
my tears

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Key West  
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Before they appear. Lord, it's too  
much, much  
Too beautiful down here.

by Ronnie Sands

Ronnie Sands, who is the son of well-known Key Wester, "Pop" Sands, has just returned to Key West after a twenty year absence.

### GREEN PAPER

Seagull sails across the sky  
Men below don't wonder why  
No, oh, oh, oh, time to.

Blossom grows upon the vine  
Turns to grapes, then turns to wine  
Man who drinks it thinks it fine?  
Hell no, no time to!

Sun comes slowly out the sea  
Think all men would look to see  
Breathe the morning virgin air  
Take the time to stop and stare.

Green paper keeps 'em running round  
Keeps 'em dashin' 'bout the town  
Makes 'em old before their young  
Nervous chevin' on their tongue  
Never stop to see a bird  
To view the sky would be absurd.

Don't you know you mustn't do it  
If there is no money to it?  
Oh, oh, oh, green paper.

Cram it all into one day  
You know there is no other way  
Measure of the time and just  
In green paper do they trust  
Oh, oh, oh green paper.

by Jody Adams

## BUBBA'S BIKE RENTAL

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705 DUVAL STREET  
KEY WEST, FLA.

### THE RETURN OF THE BALLOON MAN

photo and article by Richard Marsh

TIMOTHY WEGMAN, the Balloon Man, is back in business, licensed and legal this time.

We wrote about him two years ago when he and a partner were arrested and jailed for selling balloons at Seastown without an occupational license. The fine was about \$15 more than he gained from his heinous crime.

(Newcomers to Key West may be surprised to learn that selling balloons in public without a license is considered a major threat to the security and moral well-being of our citizens. Only banjo-playing on the sidewalk and a two-year-old swimming nude pose greater dangers to the public safety, except for the one or two days each year -- chosen by a mysterious process known only to the City Fathers -- when the paddy wagon roves up and down Duval Street arresting unlocked bicycles to save us from City Hall only knows what unimaginable fate.)

BUT THE Balloon Man got his revenge. There is no law (yet) against going from door to door giving away balloons, so that is what he did. I wrote an article about the balloon he brought to our house ("It Was A Gas While It Lasted," June 1976), and Bill Huckle raged in an editorial about the "ponderous seriousness" with which the police dealt with a "nit-picking situation."

WEGMAN WAS sculpting a flock of his tame clouds one day last month in front of the picturesque Fine Crafts Gallery - Nibbles building at Eaton and Simonton. Like autumn leaves trying to fall up, like tropical fish swimming and dodging around an aquarium, like a

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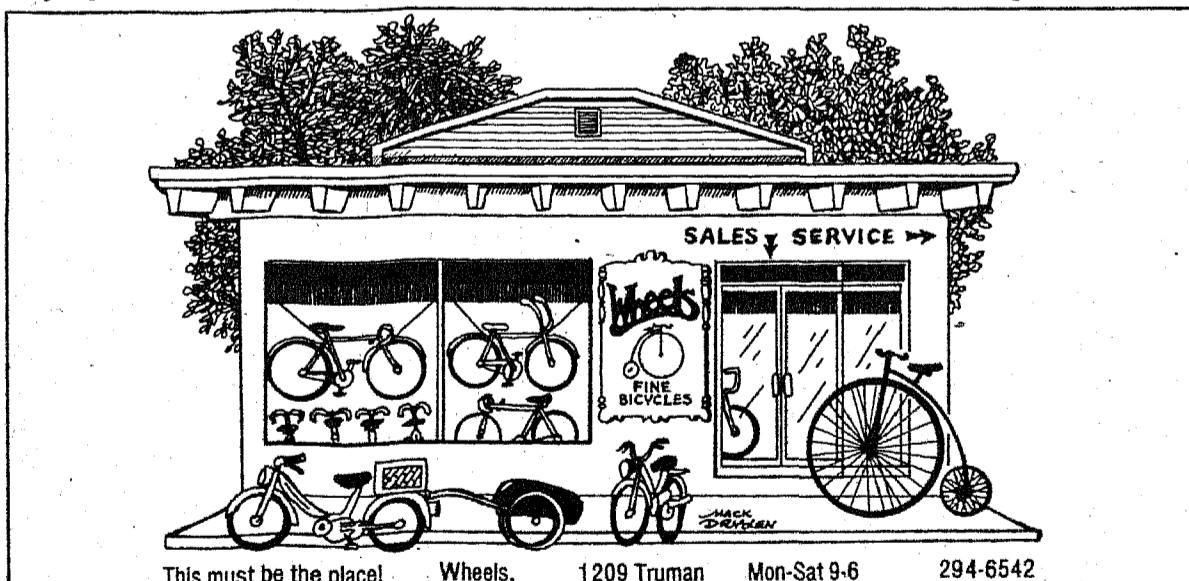
400 FRONT STREET  
KEY WEST

litter of roly-poly puppies squirming and tumbling, like the New Year's Eve crowd on Duval Street or the



winter people at Mallory Sunset or the disco dancers at the Monster, the balloons floated and jostled in a bunch tethered to the tamarind tree, fleeing each other, yet joined almost umbilically, and softly re-turning again and again.

WEGMAN BOUNCED up and down



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"I know of no translator ever hurting any cable system nationwide. I mean they're not competitors."

Give up? Robert E. Tudek, president of the Tele-Media Corporation said that in August, 1975, at a meeting of

that in August, 1973, at a meeting of the board of county commissioners. A commissioner had asked Tudek why his company was spending \$4 million for the cable system (then called Cable-Vision, Inc.) when the county was pushing hard

...), when the county was pushing hard for a translator system. Tudek referred to a situation in Pennsylvania that was "just like yours" (Monroe County's). Translators were built where a CATV was in operation, he said, "but they have not hurt that cable system one iota. I don't think there are any translators in Monroe County."

I don't think there was one single person that I know of or ever met in that community who was drawn to the translator rather than the cable. Not one."

THAT'S SURPRISING, considering that Tele-Media claims in its petitions to the FCC that it would lose about half its subscribers to the translator.

Regardless of whether Tudek's implied prediction or the petition's claims come true, precedent is on the

county's side. In 1971, the FCC said, "We are convinced that the public interest...requires that the public at least be given the opportunity to choose between competing services and should not be limited to a single service when a choice is possible."

TWO YEARS earlier, the FCC ruled in an Oregon case that "We cannot protect a CATV system against translator competition on the basis of an expectation that the CATV system may, someday, complete an expansion of its system."

Tele-Media admits that even its long-term expansion plans would exclude about 15 percent of the keys population from tv service, and the translator system would reach everybody.

## THE COURT HISTORY of the contro-

## Pier House Restaurant

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Cigar Factory  
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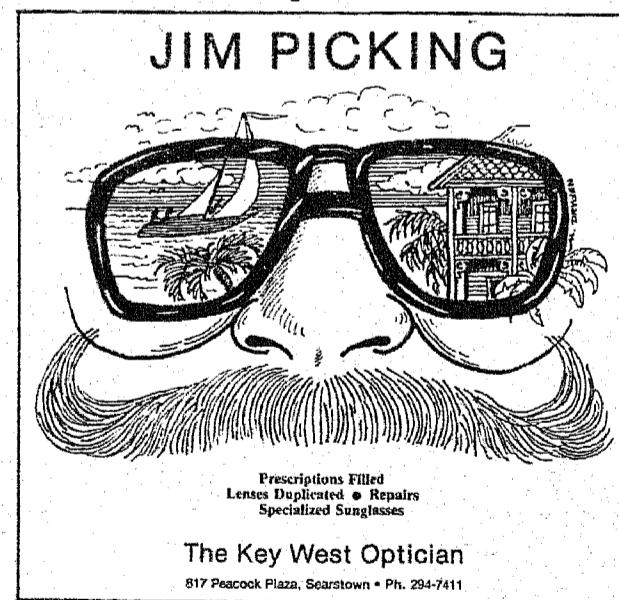
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# KEY WEST'S HOROSCOPE

BY EMMA CATES

Sun in Taurus, after 20th in Gemini  
Venus in Gemini, after 21st in Cancer  
Mercury in Aries, after 15th in Taurus  
Saturn in Leo  
Jupiter in Cancer  
Mars in Leo  
Uranus in Scorpio, retrograde  
Neptune in Sagittarius, retrograde  
Pluto in Libra, retrograde

on the problem of the care and housing of small animals and pets. This area of contention may find an amiable solution. Key West continues to be aspected favorably in the 10th house of business careers and national exposure. This very positive aspect continues through September of 1978.

The new moon in Taurus on May 7th occurs in the twelfth house of the chart of Key West. There will be much behind the scenes maneuvering going on. Legal matters, and federal government and agencies will be getting the impact of this aspect. Key West's natal sun in the sign of Capricorn conjoining Uranus may bring some sudden and unexpected occurrences. Some surprises may be in the offing. This may concern some secret deals that have been made in the past, which will now see the light of day. Jupiter in Cancer is bringing positive vibration to our public image, not only in the area of recognition and fame for the City of Key West, but in monetary profits. The full moon in Sagittarius on May 22 may bring some final agreement between the governing board and the Humane Society.

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Editorial continued from page 21  
in order to set a difficult-to-denry precedent for private developers to secure fill permits.  
Of course the submission of the private applications for fill permits at this time may have been pure coincidence, but regardless, if the latter are approved, the people of Key West will surely be the losers of a valuable natural resource.  
OUR CONCERNS SEEM WELL FOUNDED.

\*It was recommended in the DER appraisal that this request be denied because this was a highly "valuable feeding and roosting habitat for birds and is still biologically significant."

#### SALT POND UPDATE

AS WE WENT to press, the County Commission in its Plantation Key meeting on April 25, reversed the position taken at its April 18 meeting, and in a sharply divided decision, voted to press for the salt pond site for the weather station at Key West International Airport. Commissioners Hernandez, Kerr and Howanitz voted for the salt pond site with Commissioners Shipley and Schloesser dissenting.

The vote came after consulting engineer Andrew Daniluk presented a proposal for an alternate site on county property, just west of Key Bowl Lanes, which he described as a "viable site." But he went on to state that the salt pond site still seemed "ideal," seeming to ignore the problems associated with securing fill permits from the Corps of Engineers and the Department of Environmental Regulation (DER), and in spite of the questionable availability of adequate electrical power, water, telephone service and sewer facilities.

WHEN PRESSED by Commissioner Shipley for the negative aspects of the alternate site, Daniluk could give none, stating vaguely that NWS would prefer to have the new facility out of public view.

Daniluk described a meeting he had in Vero Beach, on April 20, with various state and federal regulatory agencies involved in giving the fill permits for the salt pond site. He said that he felt he could resolve their environmental concerns, and that he had received off-the-record assurances from C of E and DER representatives at the meeting, that they would probably approve the salt pond site if there were no better alternate. However, this would be only after a public hearing to be held in July.

COMMISSIONER KERR then stated that NWS must have a firm commitment from the county by June in order to meet their equipment installation deadline of February 1979.

In the discussion, it developed that they planned to relocate the present weather radar to the salt pond site in order to avoid a 3000 foot cable run, but if the alternate site were selected, the radar could remain where it is.

Commissioner Shipley, supported by Schloesser, pressed for an immediate decision to approve the alternate site next to the bowling lanes, because it would require no fill permits or other approvals by any other agency.

Schloesser added that the commission could make a final decision and give a firm commitment to NWS at that meeting.

COMMISSIONER HERNANDEZ, however, opted for the original site for various seemingly invalid reasons, and was joined in the split vote by Kerr and Howanitz to go ahead with the salt pond site in spite of the obstacles.

As the salt pond site was approved, Schloesser concluded, "This motion is essentially saying to the weather bureau, we don't want your station."

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cup 190	190
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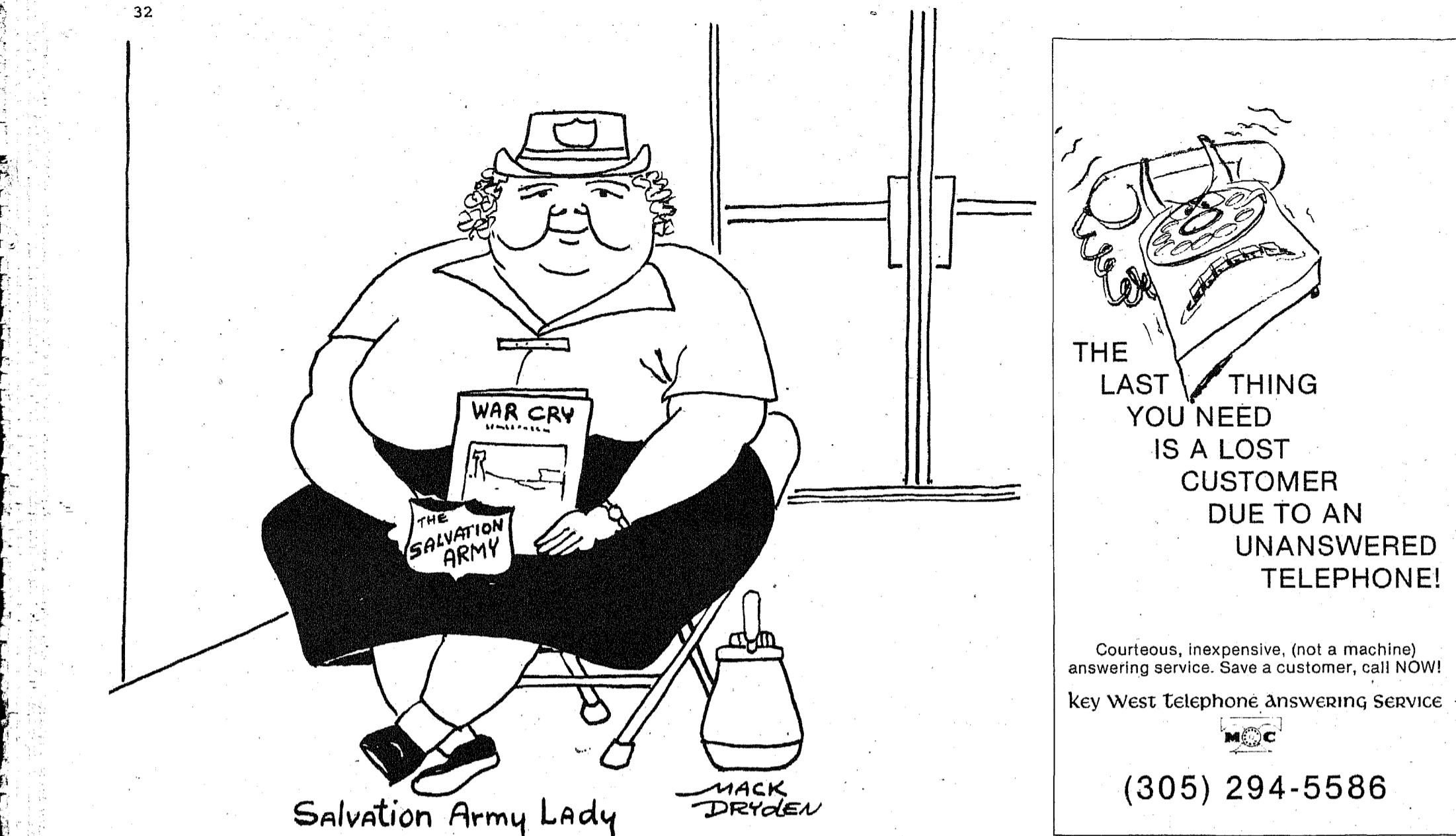
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