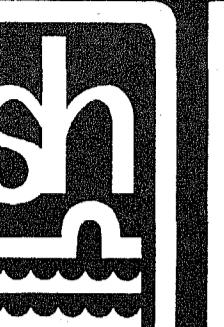


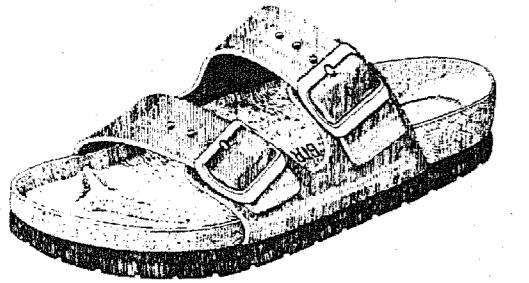
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FROM THE EDITOR

Hello.

My friend Arthur, who has no use for the Reagan presidency, passed by my breakfast table the morning of the Tower Report and said he thought it was a "whitewash." I hadn't read the excerpts yet from the newspaper but felt that he was over-reacting. Now I'm beginning to wonder.

Most people, by now, realize that the initial scheme was to barter weaponry for a handful of prisoners. President Reagan as much as called then-president Carter a wimp for not being able to bring home the hostages then held in Iran. Facing a similar dilemma in his administration, Reagan was committed to freeing the current hostages. The Tower Report spoke of his compassion for the hostages and earlier packaged administration disinformation spoke of opening doors to moderate leaders in Iran but no real mention has been made of what I can only presume was a burning desire to show up Carter and bring home these hostages.

In the February 28 editorial page of The Miami Herald, columnist Sandy Grady wrote:

"Even friend John Tower painted Reagan as an uninformed, forgetful, passive chief, a man out to lunch -- 'a little too aloof,' said Tower. More painful was Don Regan's quote about the Iran deal:

"The President was told but by no means was it need up for him what the downside risk would be as far as the American public."

"In blunt words, the President was too dumb to figure by himself that Americans would howl when they found he'd run guns to the country they despise."

Solares Hill is a community newspaper published every month on the slopes of Solares Hill, Key West's highest point, by Solares Hill Company, #4 Key Lime Square, Key West, Florida 33040

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THANK YOU

Lighting Candles: Fred Shaw

by Carol Shaughnessy

Whether the President was "too dumb" or too driven to care about the consequences of his actions is moot. What happened was that when he finally had a coterie of advisors who "yessed" him, the weapons-for-hostages plan was put into effect.

Brushing aside the obvious that this action caused a bull-market in hostage taking -- this has certainly been widely reported and has, indeed, taken place -- I'm bemused by the lack of attention paid to what these actions might have wrought militarily. The great Iranian and Iraqi stalemate (odious as this war is, it is to our advantage that in the absence of peace at least Iran remains stalled) appeared to be broken with a major territory-gaining offensive by Iran in which it is believed that at least 10% of Iraqi airpower was destroyed and was presumably destroyed by the timely arrival and use of our weaponry! If this tipping of the balance of power toward Iran permits them a victory in Iraq, there is little to stop a forward surge of Moslem fundamentalism from sweeping across the Middle East and totally upsetting the tenuous balance of power there.

Maybe if this occurs it will really be all for the good -- I don't know; I doubt it -- but my point is that these shipments of weapons may have caused immense changes in the most volatile region of an unstable world. AND ALL THIS, TO FREE A FEW HOSTAGES, HAS ACCOMPLISHED NOTHING!

Con't on pg. 7

Our cover artist this month is Jean L. Lebrun. The translation of the French is: *And it was adorable when the big bosomed, ardent-eyed girl, -- that one, it's not a kiss which frightens her! -- smiling brought me toast with butter, warm ham, in a colorful dish!* He will have a show at Lucky St. Gallery on Duval Street opening the 18th of March.

last maybe four or five years — have I been outgrowing vestiges of that kind of conditioning."

Some people would have allowed such conditioning to drive them down, but it just made Fred Shaw all the more determined to



Photo by Richard Watherwax

Fred Shaw cares. He cares about his family, his strong commitment to his religion, and the students — teenage and adult — with whom he comes in contact. And he cares about Key West. In fact, Fred Shaw is seriously concerned about the future of the island and the balance between the black and white communities here.

He's a serious man, introspective, given

to thinking out every side of a question

before answering it. He doesn't laugh

much — but then, there wasn't much for a

black kid growing up in North Carolina in

the forties and fifties to laugh about.

"I was born November 14, 1940 ...

spent most of my (early) life in Fayetteville.

We didn't have an awful lot, so we made do with what we had," Fred recalls. "As a

youngster I played Little League football

and baseball ... I loved dancing, social

dancing."

Fred discovered at a young age that life

wasn't going to be all dancing. "I ...

attended a segregated school ... quite an

experience in North Carolina. I heard the

words 'Jim Crow' very early in life. It was

very, very hard racially.

That time, I

suppose, had a lot to do with my developing

a lack of self worth. It affected me a great

deal. And just recently — I suspect in the

rise above it. He graduated from high

school and went on to get his Bachelor's

Degree at Fayetteville State University. "I

was not ... brilliant intellectually; I'm

extremely tenacious. I think it was a matter

of my envisioning a goal that I wanted, of

application and discipline and the fact that

once I realized what I wanted out of life, I would not allow ... lack of preparation to stop me. I was going to materialize my goals in spite of the odds."

Fred's degree was in education and his first job out of college was teaching fifth grade in a small town in Georgia.

Later came the service, which brought him to Key West. In 1969 Fred Shaw arrived here to serve his last few months in the Army. When his term was up he stayed, somewhat to his surprise.

"I had no idea that I'd ever end up in Florida," Fred says, shaking his head. "My ideal area for living, I suppose, would have been the New England states, the northeast — never Florida. Because of my experiences in North Carolina, I was a little bit turned off by the south at the time.

"I had, like everyone else, expected Key West to be a ... small spot hanging off the United States, but ... to my amazement it was much larger and cosmopolitan. By then I had traveled quite a bit, and I realized that I could find a lot of the cosmopolitan lifestyle that I'd experienced in other places right here in Key West. And I later realized that Key West is probably one of the most forgiving cities that I've ever lived in. It allows one to live one's lifestyle, regardless of what that ... may be."

After doing some substitute teaching at the school that is now Glynn Archer, he took a job with the government as an education advisor for the military. A short stint spent in Pittsburgh getting his Masters Degree only confirmed Fred's liking for Key West.

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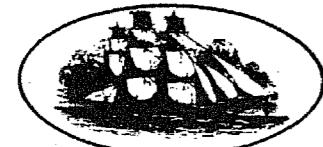
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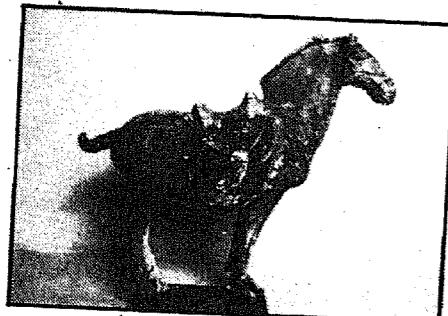
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"Much to my surprise, even though I had several offers (from the Pittsburgh area) after finishing grad school, I also received some offers from Key West ... and all of a sudden I had a decision to make: do you really have sand in your shoes and do you return to Key West, or do you stay in Pittsburgh where you are closest to the northeast where you've always dreamed of living? And I guess it's obvious; I made the decision to return to Key West."

Fred worked at the May Sands School on United Street until asked to be an assistant principal at Key West High School in 1972 — a time of racial reorganization on the island. The offer caused him much soul-searching. "I was torn with not wanting to be a ... segmented assistant principal; I had been subjected to partial, segregated education. I was ... concerned with being an assistant principal for all of the students at Key West High School. My expectations for the black students were the same as my expectations for the white students," Fred emphasizes. "And I wanted them to perceive me the same way. I insisted they perceive me the same way."

Fred relaxes a bit. "I think it went well. At the time (the principal) was Kerry Highsmith, one of the nicest and most open persons that you could work with. We sort of struggled through, and fortunately we made it through the early and middle seventies. Extremely tough time. I think at that time, the change and the stress and the turmoil that went on were necessary. It was not meant to be a smooth racial transition; it was meant to be a turbulent time. And I

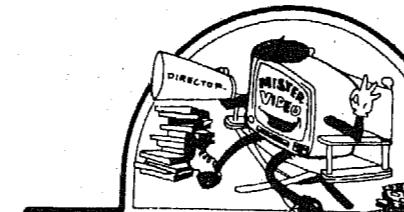
think the greatest contribution that we made at that time was that we stabilized the situation."

It was during Fred's early years at Key West High School that his daughter, JoAnna, was born. He had met his wife, Joyce, in college, and been sure from the moment he saw her that she was the woman he would marry. Fred and Joyce greatly enjoy traveling during his summer breaks from his profession.

The summer break also gives Fred time to indulge his great passion, that of restoring vintage automobiles. "I love to collect and restore antique automobiles. I think my first one that I did was an XK Jaguar. Dr. Hayes in town was nice enough to sell it to me. It came out very well. Since then I've done everything from Jags to Mercedes to Mustangs, Corvettes and the like." He generally sells the cars after they're restored, but keeps an album of them to remind himself of the work he's done.

Cars, however, are not the only things Fred likes to renovate. "I suspect I'm also a frustrated architect, because I enjoy doing houses too, even though they're a bit more expensive. One of the places we did when we first moved here — the first project we took on — was a little store located on the corner of Petronia and Simonton. It is now called Aunt Lolly's." He's currently on the lookout for another restoration project.

If the opportunity ever presents itself, Fred says he'll return to school for his architect's degree. He is an insatiable student — more so now than when he was



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Photo by Richard Watherwax

A KEY WEST DAY TO REMEMBER



Although enthusiastic about Key West and the opportunities living here has offered him, Fred is deeply concerned about the future of the island — and especially the island's blacks. He recalls speaking to a class about Dr. Martin Luther King's greatest contribution to the cause of equal opportunity, that of widening the choices open to blacks. Economic and social pressures, however, are narrowing those choices once again.

"I think the thing that discourages me most about black advancement is when I look around me," Fred states earnestly, leaning forward to make sure his point is understood. "Over the last ten or fifteen years that I've been associated with Key West, I've seen two black lawyers. When I look on Duval Street, I see no black merchants. I see others coming into this community from other countries and becoming a part of the main economic stream — but the once-healthy black economy, which is Petronia Street, is a sick economy. I don't see us being a part.

"There are blacks serving on a lot of the boards in this town. We have one elected black official ... on the Utility Board. The rest are appointed in positions that pay nothing. Not that I'm saying that that should be your objective, but certainly if

you're worthy to serve in some of the non-paying positions, you're worthy of serving in some of the paid positions."

Fred wonders if the black community has simply relaxed too much after the big struggles of the 1970's. "I think we got to a point in the seventies where we felt that ... it was going to be all right. And yet, just like the Reconstruction, we're now experiencing a reversal in some of the gains that had taken place. There's a lot of hopelessness, a lot of despair.

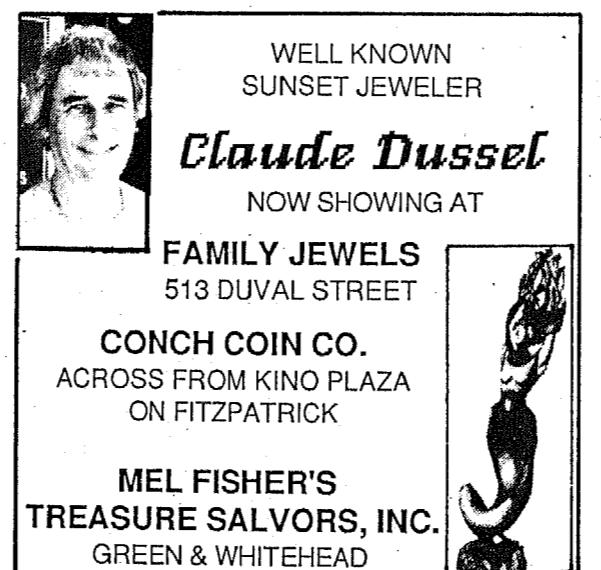
"I think we are still evolving into the kind of a community that we will ultimately become. We are not there yet," he states intently, with a strong emphasis on the word "there." "We should be further along."

Fred speaks of Daniel in the movie *The Karate Kid*, who was taught that life must have an inner balance. Unfortunately, he says, in Key West there is no such balance between black and white ... and he wonders if the traditional methods of problem-solving can be successfully applied here — or to today's other problems.

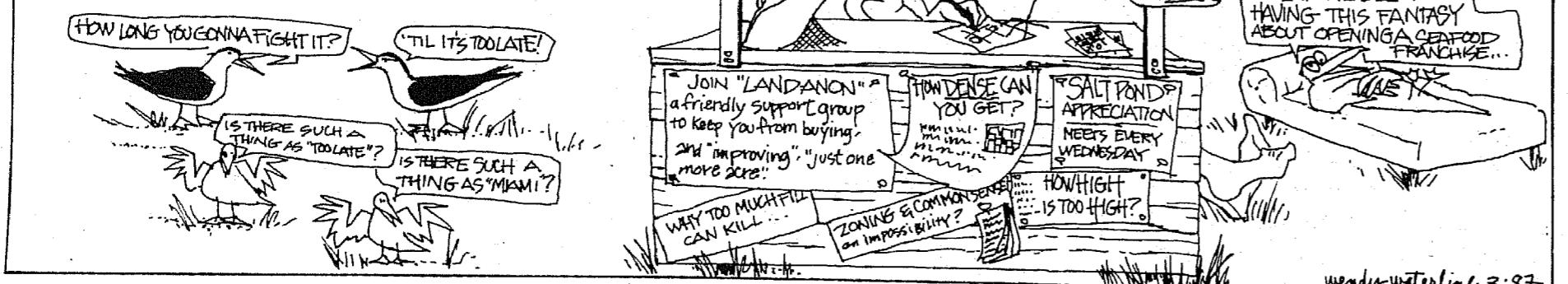
"I'm wondering if rather than doing things better, maybe we should be doing better things. In other words, (instead of) the old solutions that we've used to solve the problems, maybe we should be using

different solutions now. Rather than cursing the darkness, we should be lighting candles ..."

It's people like Fred Shaw — concerned, intelligent people dedicated to their work and their community — who are helping Key West find the balance that is so necessary. Thanks to Fred Shaw, more than a few candles are being lit here on the island.



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Con't from pg. 2

Perhaps my twin perceptions about Reagan needing to show up Carter and the upsetting of the balance of power in the Middle East are completely off the mark. But even if I'm wrong on this, enough evidence of spacey, out-to-lunch leadership has been shown that there is a serious question of Reagan's competence. Is it an impertinence to wonder if there should be a competency test administered every few years to an incumbent president? Is our system too shaky to handle this? Are we ultimately too royal in protecting our leaders' prerogatives? It really looks as though this emperor has no clothes, and I find it profoundly disturbing. Without being judgemental about Reagan's presidency up to the Iran scandal, there is no denying that the recent grotesque doings dwarf Watergate and show us a President out of control. Do we permit this change of presidential advisors to lull us into believing all is well or do we wonder at the Tower Report for not being aghast at the President's actions and for suggesting that changing advisors might make things alright?

Arthur, I think you were correct.

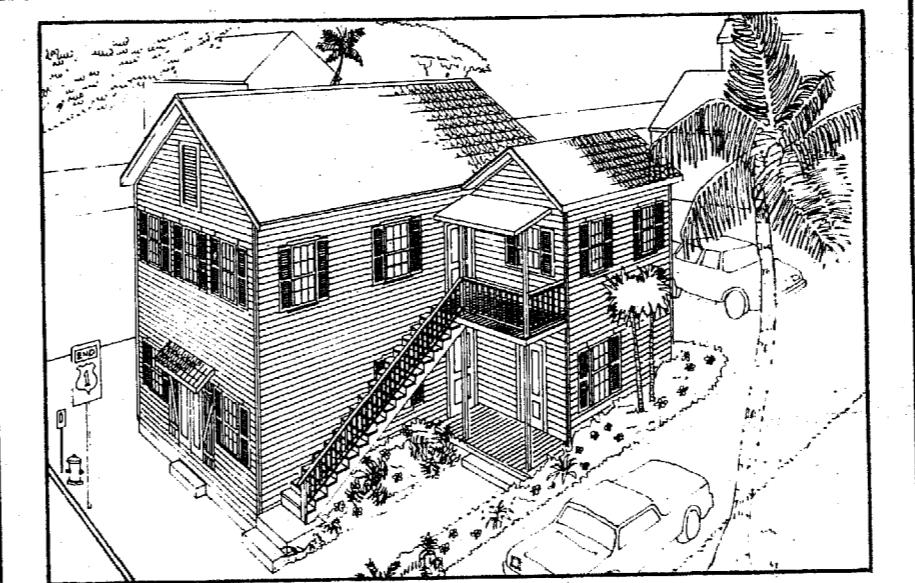
Now, back to where I belong. I was pleased when acting Police Chief Vince Catala made some new appointments in the Key West police department. I was particularly pleased to read that George Lastres was made head of detectives — he's a good man. But all is not mellow in the police department. A few weeks ago a

series of incredibly stupid raids were launched against people drinking in public. The beach and sunset crowds were treated to a spectacle of visitors and residents alike being handcuffed and taken to headquarters to be booked. Man, talk about unnecessary police action. Unfortunately, there has been a historical antipathy toward the tourist from our local police and it hasn't gone away. This was a senseless overreaction by the police and many members of the community have voiced their objections. There are more important actions the police can involve themselves in.

We lost two fine Key West men recently. Dr. Frank Bowser, a fine doctor, a distinguished painter, the father of a legendary group of girls, and the husband of the great "Izzie" died at his residence a few weeks ago. Then, in Bradenton, Florida, Roland Barker, a sea captain who had graced our shores for years, a gentleman of the old school whose tales of sailing around the Cape in the early years of this century thrilled many a Key Wester, and also an accomplished artist, passed away. Both of these men were written about in *Solares Hill* and both men met the highest standards of life. We will miss them.

See you next month.

WT
P.S. Maybe the police could pay more attention to the dangerous practice of people riding their bikes on our sidewalks downtown. Bikes should stick to the streets



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in crowded areas.
P.P.S. We were wrong when we wrote last month that incoming Police Chief Webster would be the first non-Conch to hold that job. There have been others.



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I miss Mary Reynolds Brown.

Mary and I go back to the time when she, like an equinoctial gale, first breezed into Key West. She then wore a neck brace because her horse fell on a difficult jump on a track in Ireland, and Mary broke her neck. She already at the time, at age 25, was a world equestrienne. She came here to stay at the bedside of her grandmother. Grandmother was a neighbor of mine in one of those large houses that still sit broodingly there on the skirts of the ocean.

Perhaps platonic lady friend friendship is as nice and warm and whole as love. Mary and I are of complete diversity in life style, chronology and intellectuality, and, yet, dear she is to me.

I have been a long time away in a far

place and, having returned, I decide to visit Mary who now, report has it, is living on her yacht. I stand there wearing my Minnie Mouse underpants, a Christmas present, beside an adolescent palm tree, regarding the yacht. I know little about yachts, but this one looks decidedly unoccupied. Yachts enchant and awe me, as they do most inlanders. My worst water experience came years ago when my Shetland pony, Bevo, laid down on me while we were fording a shallow crook of the Pecos River. And, while I was running about covering island social tremors in the sixties here, I met a lot of boaters at their annual festivity at Logun's Restaurant. They wound up setting fire to the head table where Miami doctor boat owners sat drinking pina coladas from skulls. The most tireless arsonist could have trouble getting a good blaze going at a table drenched in barbecue sauce mixed with pina colada. But these sweethearts managed it. Honcho sat at head of the table raising his skull in a toast, chunk of salad tomato protruding from his ear like a cork from a bottle. Stuck there,

thrown unerringly by another honcho, length of table, through wisps of smoke. I recall Stu Logun striding through, smoke issuing out of his ears, giving the bar counter a tendentious bang that set the maraschino cherries and the thin lemon slices to jiggling. I retired to my car where I wrote a little poem to myself on a crumpled napkin clenched in my hand. There was a spidery mist creeping in off the ocean, it being gone 3 a.m. Shivery enough to pull on an old white sweater always in the car. Had a button missing on the bosom and a coffee stain a year old. As I start off, man pounding on the window, "Weren't you with the Enrude bunch in Tampa?"

Back to Mary's yacht in the present time frame. I raise my eyes to three authoritative port holes. "Red Rover, Red Rover. Let Frances come over!" No reply. A pelican atop a pole gives an uncommitted twitch. I sadly walk away and indulge in a long drive clear around the island thinking about Mary. She should have been painted by Goya, with her pale, narrow muzzle, aquamarine blue eyes. Her lovely hair springing from

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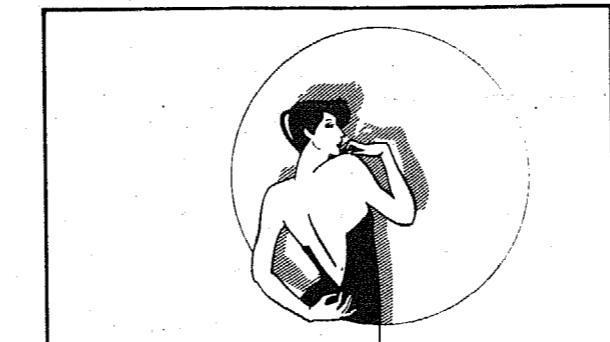
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her head is the color of a piano. Wearing the Reynolds pearls. Picture framed in gold leaf.

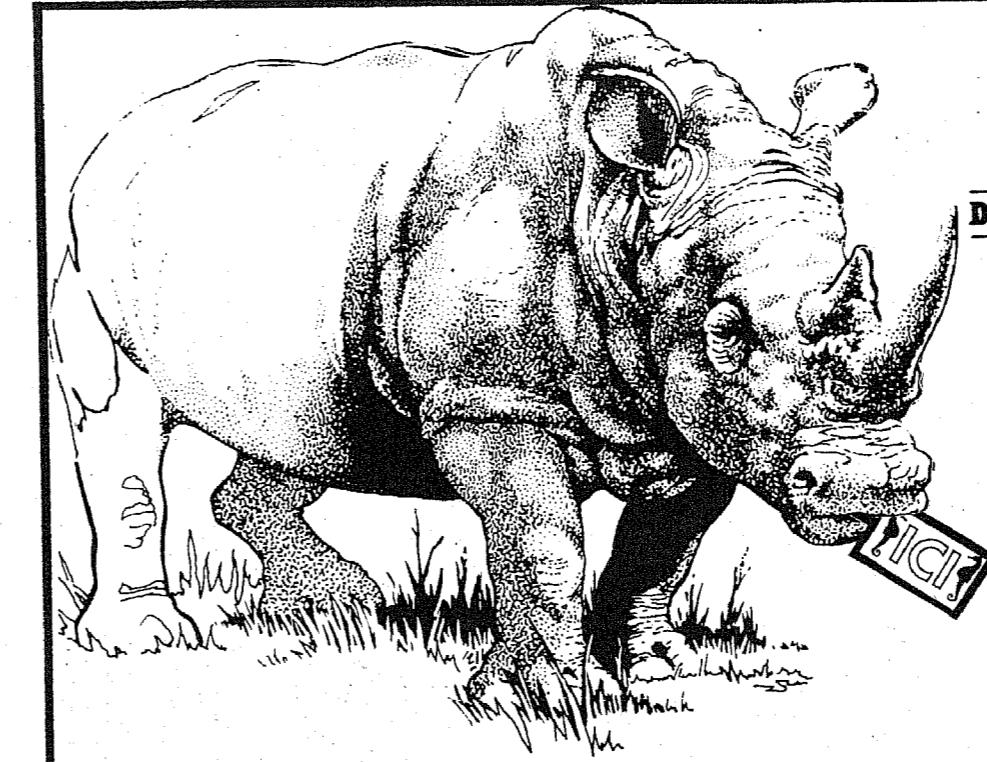
Back here a little while ago, Mary called me where I was in North Carolina. There is a subliminal note in her voice coming from Key West, or perhaps it's the telephone connection. I scald my tongue on a cup of Earl Grey tea I just poured. What thing

now is happening to Mary or is Mary happening to what thing. Images flicker on the backs of my eyelids: Mary riding a Harley Davidson motorcycle for Reynolds Aluminum to Hawaii ... Mary aboard the Orient Express in the candlelit dining car sipping from a crystal goblet of Perrier water as the tundras flash past ... Mary in a sable jogging suit on Fifth Avenue giving her pet ocelot walkies. Mary is as romantic as a historical novel. More than a decade ago, when she met and fell in love with a swashbuckling sheriff Bobby Brown, the island keeled over a bit on its axis. She turned in and pulled off a successful marriage with B.B., whom she adored, adopting his two youngest children of his six children. She is a loving mother to them. When B.B. passed away, she was like that goddess of the myths who in her brief wanted to turn into a fountain and let people drink her tears. Mary endeared herself to this island, being a wonderfully caring citizen on all worthwhile projects. She scooped up a lot of votes, served a swift little spell (very swift, very little) as Supervisor of Elections, then fled. A political figure nabbed the post with a sharklike snap.

Here is a typical Mary memory: One afternoon in the seventies, she called me when I was in Tallahassee, my roommate being aide to a senator. I believe that I was nibbling a Ritz cracker, and I suppose Mary, who is a bleeding heart, thought that my voice sounded depressed. Mary sent me a consolation gift, air freight. When I opened our door on the third floor of the

Tallahassee Hilton Hotel, a little group was lingering in the hall, all eyes: bellhop, little black kitty in cat-carrier, a senator from Jacksonville, two Miami congressmen, the attorney general's wife, a man delivering liquor to a party down the way and the maid.

Mary Parham. The Reynolds family calls her this after her mother's maiden

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Commodore Porter Bases The Mexican Navy at Key West

by Colin G. Jameson

Key Westers know that Commodore David Porter, USN, drove the pirates from this area early in the last century. His West India Squadron, based on the island from 1823 to 1826, also cleaned up the Gulf of Mexico, the coastal waters of Cuba and Puerto Rico, and the northern Caribbean Sea.

Few realize, however, that following that stint, Porter entered on a new seagoing career in a foreign service. He joined the fledgling Mexican Navy as its commanding officer, or "General de la Marina," as it was called.* This responsibility led him to revisit Key West and establish Mexican naval outposts in U.S. territorial waters.

In those days Mexico and Colombia (at the time the latter included Ecuador, Panama and Venezuela) were anxious to spread their newly found independence to Cuba, still a threatening outpost of Spain, their former mother country. On paper Porter's mission was to blockade the Pearl of the Antilles. In practice this meant interfering with Spanish commerce in and out of Havana, one of the world's seven busiest ports.

The planned blockade would also force the vastly superior Spanish Navy to set up a

* Prior to Porter, guns on Mexican naval vessels were served by army artillerymen, while other soldiers performed the duties of sailors and marines.



Commodore Porter

one foster child (Admiral Farragut). After numerous exploits as a young officer, Porter commanded the frigate Essex during the War of 1812. On a South Pacific sweep, the Essex captured 12 vessels as prizes, thus extinguishing the British whaling trade and turning Porter into a national hero.

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In 1822 Congress decided to eliminate the Caribbean area pirates, who by 1820 had committed 3,000 attacks since the war. Porter was a popular choice for command, and a wise one. In the two years after the West India Squadron first dropped anchor at Key West in 1823, it did away with more than 75 pirate vessels.

But in so doing, its commander did not endear himself to the group of hardworking civilians trying to make a go of it in Key West, or Thompson's Island, as the Navy called it. He operated under the theory that all property, from pigs to plants, was held by his permission and at his sufferance as agent of the U.S.*

* Example: The father of Stephen Mallory, Confederate Secretary of the Navy ("Mallory Square") was jailed for selling cider to a sailor though Mrs. Mallory insisted he had Porter's permission to sell such, "and when arrested was sick in bed, undergoing a course of mercury."

Thus Key Westers were overjoyed when two things happened: (1) Piracy was subdued; (2) Porter was court-martialed for forcibly releasing one of his officers whom the Spanish in Puerto Rico had jailed as a suspected pirate.

In Washington the Commodore defended himself vigorously against Samuel Southard, Secretary of the Navy (hence, Southard Street in Key West), and other critics but was suspended from the Navy for six months. Being a man intolerant of inaction, he resigned and went to work for Mexico. He disdained (and probably discredited) a \$60,000 offer from the Spanish crown conditioned on his refusal to accept the Mexican proposal.

Mexico Builds a Navy

In the 1820's Mexico was in political turmoil that would make recent electoral history in that nation look like teatime in a nunnery. When in 1823 strongman Iturbide

caused himself to be elected emperor, the chaos hanging over from the basic Revolution of 1810 was only temporarily eased. Within a year Iturbide had abdicated on request and was put out to grass in Italy. He was succeeded by Guadalupe Victoria, the first elected president.

A week after taking office, the new chief executive made a pitch to the Mexican Congress for a new navy. He said that if the nation were to be successful in communicating and trading with the rest of the world, its rundown navy would be inadequate to fend off "warpaint enemies" (a state of war still existed with Spain, the mother country) and "adventurers seeking asylum" (perhaps the pirates would return).

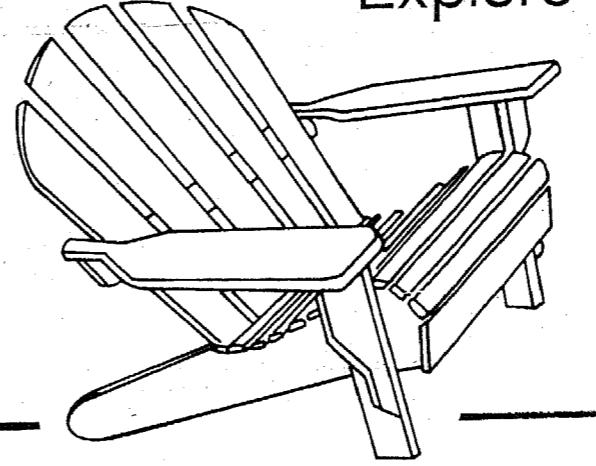
Congress agreed. Money was found, some of it lent by Great Britain in recognition of the fact that the empire of Iturbide had been replaced by a republican form of government. Ship construction was

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contracted to foreign powers, notably the U.S., where the state-of-the-art brig *Guerrero* came along fast after initial delay.

Historians agree that in this frantic buildup "money was badly allocated and worse distributed." Despite this, a new and relatively formidable Mexican navy was coming along. Who should run it? A new commander, with experience and drive, and no local axes to grind or be ground, was needed to train and lead the force.

Don Angel Laborde, admiral commanding at Havana, at once put to sea to counter Porter's threat to Cuban sealanes. Whereupon the Commodore, after inflicting light damage, prudently withdrew to the familiar waters of the Lower Keys. There the more cumbersome Spanish vessels, fearful of reefs and tricky channels familiar even to Porter's young sons, did not choose to follow.

Thenceforth the Commodore used Key West as a permanent haven and base of operations and supply. At the age of 47, he was full of energy and enjoying this workout with the Spanish authorities whose Puerto Rican representatives he considered responsible for his exit from the U.S. Navy. His mood may have prevented him from observing that his old enemies on The Rock were concerned by his presence in the harbor. Their complaints were muffled by the fact that he brought in prizes that were

the source of substantial profit, while the provisioning and upkeep of the Mexican squadron were also of commercial importance.

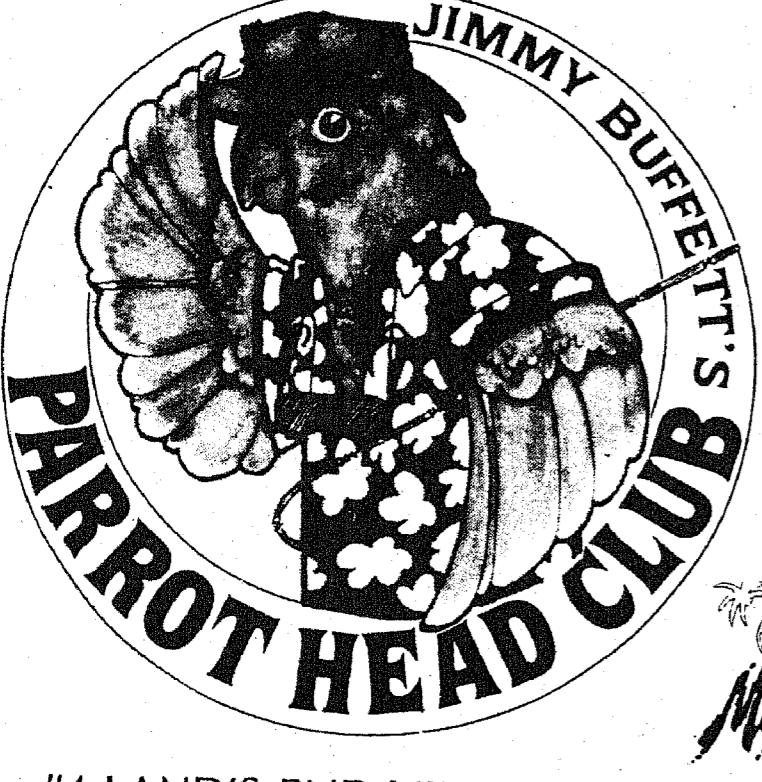
Now and then the squadron would sneak into the Straits of Florida and pick off a Spanish vessel or two, once even landing a party near Havana and gathering up a mule train laden with coffee. Plunder was put ashore at Key West and disposed of in the ordinary course of the island's as-yet-unregulated salvage economy. Actually Porter was running a privateering enterprise much like the ones he had

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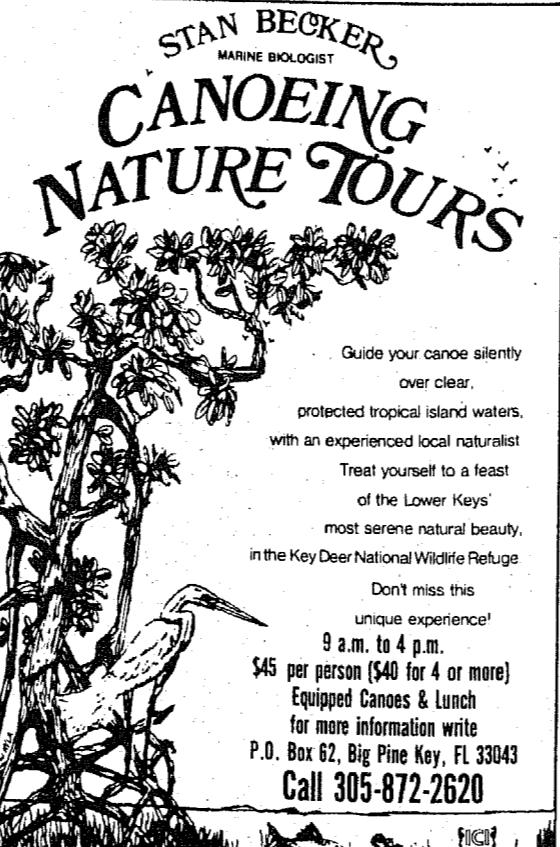
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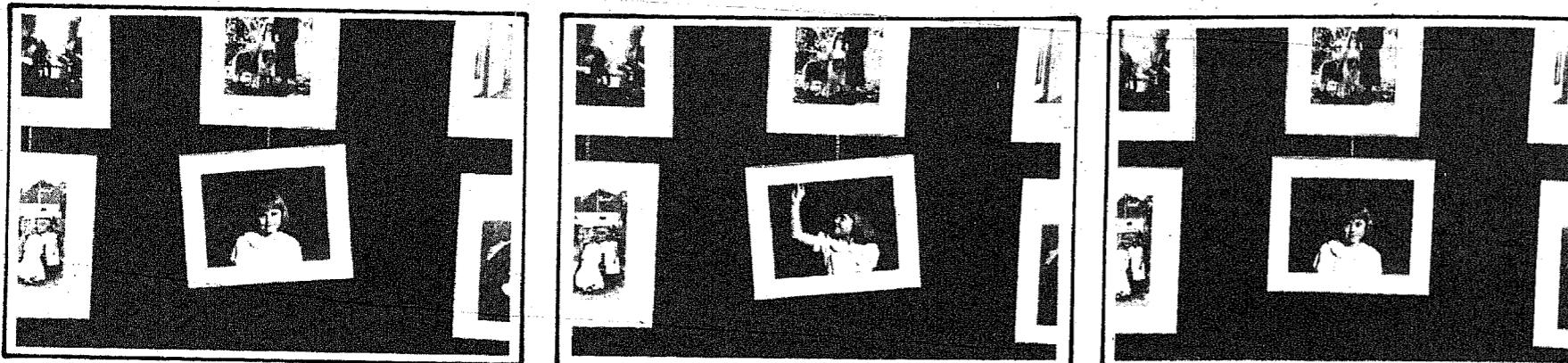


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discouraged when chasing pirates.

The Mexican Government authorized the "General of Marine" to issue letters-of-marque, creating private commerce raiders to sail under the Mexican flag. But he commissioned only one such, *La Molestarada*. After a successful cruise in Cuban waters, this vessel boldly moved to the Mediterranean. She operated there for five months against the Spanish, taking nine ships.

Admiral Laborde was not amused by the goings-on at Key West. He responded with raids along Mexican shores. His ships destroyed a few small coastal vessels, but when a Mexican naval unit was captured, she was bloodily retaken by her crew.

As the planners had foreseen, Laborde could not commit significant forces to

Mexico while Porter threatened his rear from unassailable Key West. But the Spanish admiral's counter-blockade against Porter was nonetheless unrelenting. When the Commodore would sail out against the small Spanish sentinels in the Straits, they would melt away toward Cuba to summon their big brothers. But often the interval was helpful, enabling Porter's swift ships to make it to the high seas before they could be cornered by overwhelming firepower.

Mexican naval historian Chavez Orozco quotes a letter from a friend in Key West, dealing with the early Mexican presence there:

"(As I write) the Squadron remains in port. The *Hermon* has slipped away to Veracruz with prisoners. Discipline on all the ships had drastically improved, and it is

now a pleasure to observe them. The former soldiers are making excellent sailors and handle the guns very well ... Commodore Porter is adopting the most effective means to harass the enemy ... the blockade is minimal (but) the Squadron can sortie at will through any of the four channels from this key."

"Porter is so scrupulous in observing the neutrality of this country that he has refused services he would gladly accept if he were at sea ... He is too prudent to risk action unless he is sure of coming out victorious. His squadron maintains itself for half of what it was spending in Veracruz."

Spanish navy deserters, reaching New Orleans and other ports, had observed discontent among crews stationed at Havana. They said that only iron-fisted

control kept others from deserting en masse. At the news that Porter had entered Mexican service, "everybody (had given up) for lost the Spanish naval forces in the (Havana) Bay."

Questionable Neutrality

The Spanish minister in Washington did not consider Commodore Porter quite so law-abiding as the Mexicans did. He exerted steady pressure on the administration of John Quincy Adams, likening Porter's activities to those of the pirates he had once pursued. Adams, former secretary of state, had more than once dealt with the Commodore's overly patriotic attitude toward foreign regimes. He could not help but listen sympathetically to these complaints.

The Key Westers chimed in. Occasional lucrative dealings with Porter had not made them forget their earlier experiences with the feisty little martinet. They were convinced that unless he was better controlled his shady dealings and the wartime atmosphere

would soon devastate their long-time enterprises, especially the burgeoning salvage industry.

These arguments finally sparked action. Porter's one-time flagship, the *John Adams*, was dispatched to Key West from Pensacola. She was escorted by USS *Eric* and USS *Peacock*, a magnificent model of which is on display at the Lighthouse Museum. Mission: To find out exactly what was going on down there in Porterville.

By this time, a number of the Commodore's anti-pirate veterans had gravitated to the Mexican Navy and his command. Others still served in the U.S. vessels. When the Pensacola force arrived, old cronies from the West India Squadron

Mexican Navy didn't seem to be fighting anything except the rum bottle.

Nevertheless, the Spanish minister kept bugging the State Department. In belated response, Porter upped anchor and shifted his headquarters back to Veracruz. This

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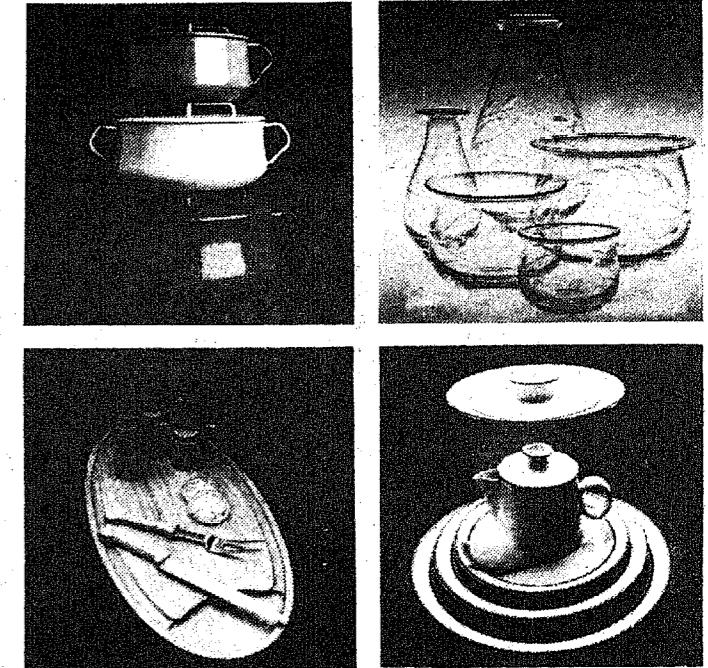
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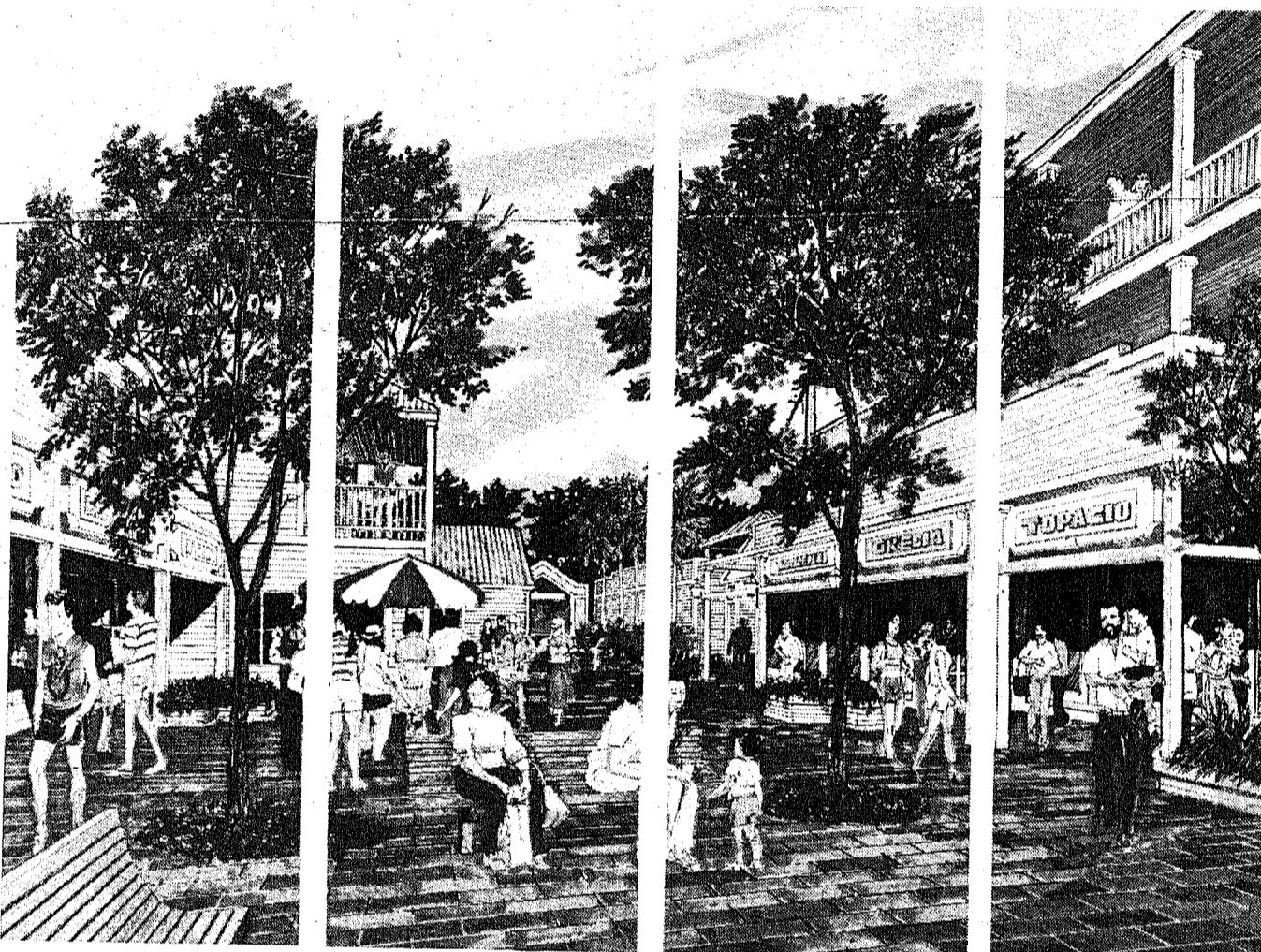


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took the spotlight off what remained of business as usual at Key West. Up to now, 24 Spanish ships had been seized or destroyed, with damage to many more. Mexico, as a republic, had made evident progress toward becoming a sovereign nation.

But not in politics.
The Politicians Take Over

In Mexico extreme turbulence ushered in the electioneering weather of 1828. Incredible as it may seem today, politics then derived from a vendetta between two Masonic lodges, the Scottish Rite and the York Rite. The outgoing president, Guadalupe Victoria, was a Yorkist. The party standard-bearer was Vicente Guerrero, hero of the Revolution, namesake of Porter's newest ship and also of the western Mexican state in which Acapulco is located.

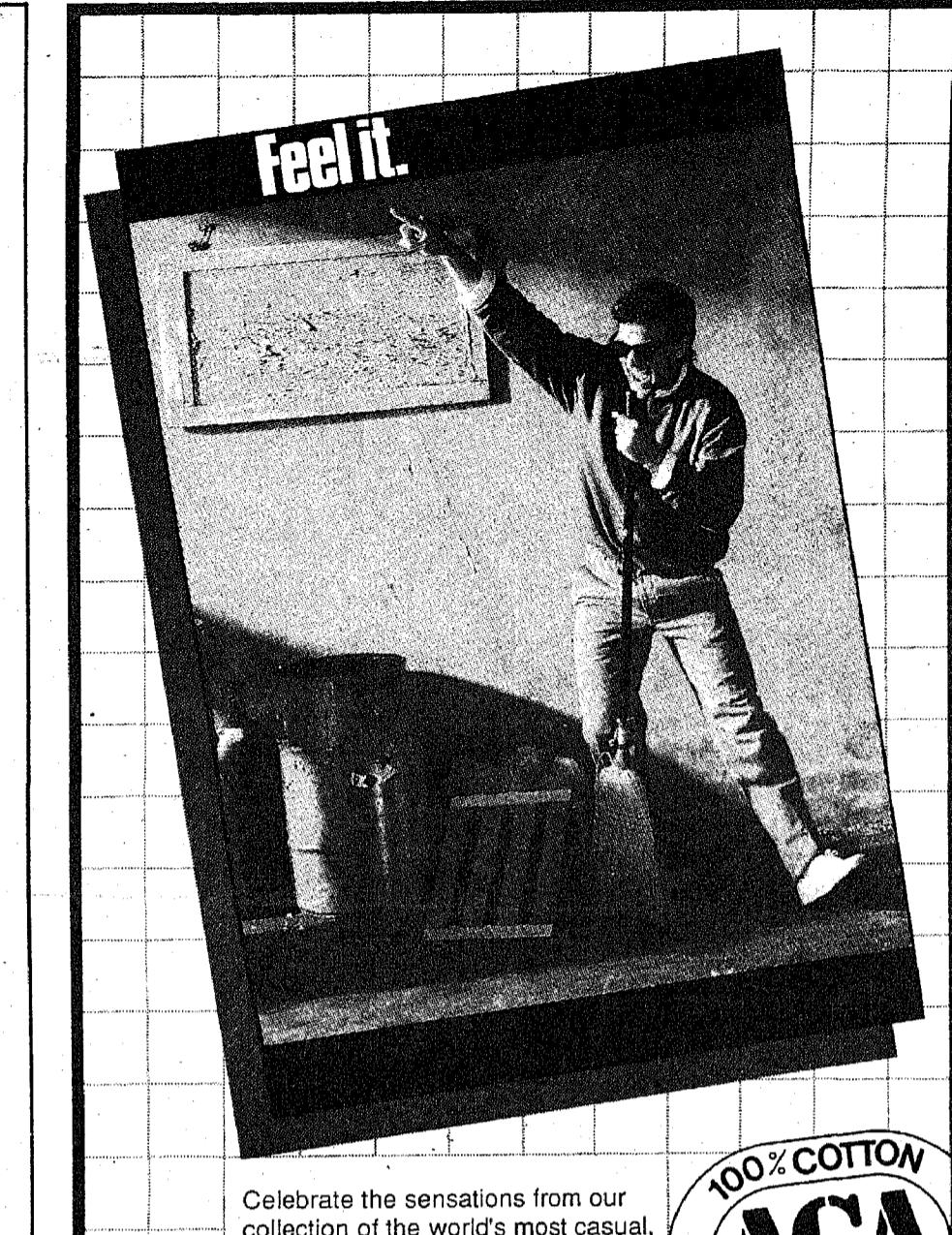
Unfortunately for Porter, and, indeed, Mexico, one of Guerrero's supporters was a different kind of hero. Or knave, depending on how you look at it. His name was Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna. Santa Anna

later served as president of his country, its dictator, its supreme army commander. In 1829 he repulsed a last desperate Spanish invasion. When you "Remember the Alamo," you should remember Santa Anna; he annihilated the defenders of that historic structure.

Colonel Santa Anna, as he was at that time, hated all gringos, especially Commodore Porter, whom he regarded, perhaps with reason, as a carpetbagger and too honest. When Porter journeyed from Veracruz to Mexico City (200 miles as the crow does it) to repair his political fences, it is said that Santa Anna decided to cut off this Yankee interloper at the pass. The "General of Marine" was ambushed by four mounted men. The Commodore was short on temper and stature but not on courage and weapons. It is recorded that he killed two of his assailants with his pistols, then grabbed a shotgun from his Mexican companion and put to flight the surviving assassins.

The Loss of the *Guerrero*

Porter's forces afloat were not so fortunate. On the morning of February 1, 1828, the newly commissioned brig *Guerrero*, under command of the Commodore's nephew, David H. Porter, 21, ran up on the Spanish brig-of-war *Marte*, accompanied by the smaller *Amelia*,



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with 25 coastal vessels in convoy. Young Porter attacked, dispersing the merchant ships, which fell back under the protection of land forts, then pinned the Spanish naval vessels against a sandbar and inflicted heavy damage.

The Mexican historian Lerdo asserts that this action took place off the town of Banes, and that Spanish units from the capital reached the area that afternoon. If so, it was the fastest sea voyage known to man, since Banes is 400 miles east of Havana.

Actually the engagement occurred off Mariel, a town perhaps too well known in South Florida. So it was easy to rush the news to Havana, only 25 miles away, in time for the mighty super-frigate *Lealtad* to recall her crew from liberty and get under way by 2:00 PM.

The *Guerrero* sighted the *Lealtad* at 5:00. David H. Porter, seriously outgunned, tried to make a run for it to the Dry Tortugas. But the larger ship lay to windward and could easily contain him. Porter kept trying through the night. Occasional shots were exchanged. *Lealtad* kept contact. At dawn both vessels opened fire.

The unequal duel continued for two and a half hours. Both ships were shot up, but the *Guerrero* suffered two masts carried away, and only the mainsail still functioned.

Captain Porter assembled his officers on the poopdeck. If ammunition had not run so low, there was still a chance for the *Guerrero*, whose marksmanship was demonstrably superior. But after discussion it was decided to strike the flag. While shouting orders to the crew, the Captain

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was killed instantly by a 24-pound cannonball, the only "Mexican" officer lost in the battle.

The Mexican Navy went into mourning for 30 days in honor of the pride of the Navy and her gallant commander. The damaged vessels were towed to Havana and reconstructed in the shipyard which had built the treasure ship *Santa Maria de Atocha* 200 years before. The *Guerrero* joined the Spanish fleet under the appropriate name of *The Captive*.

The Mexican Congress voted to pay the debts of those lost on that fatal February 2. A drive was launched to fund a *Guerrero II*. The government did not rally to the second endeavor. The modest amounts collected, mostly in Mexico City and Veracruz, were "otherwise expended."

Retreat From Key West

The Key West-based war on Spanish trade continued, but in desultory fashion. It was finally blown away by the winds of politics. As Commodore Porter himself remarked, "For political intrigue, Mexico compared to Washington is as Mt. Orizaba compared to a level plain."

Porter never moved back to Key West. He was becoming discouraged with the dwindling support received from the Mexican government. Everyone had ears for only one subject, the presidential election of 1828.

Bravo, who had been Scottish Rite vice-president under Yorkist Guadalupe Victoria, Porter's patron, realized that he could not win the election, with hero Guerrero as opposition. He attempted an uprising. Iturbide, one-time would-be

emperor, hastened back from Italy in time to be seized and executed. The Yorkists, backed by Santa Anna and Poinsett, the American minister, forcibly installed Guerrero as acting president.

In his nowhere position as appointee of a previous regime with people like Santa Anna against him, Commodore Porter cannot have been wholly surprised when Jose Ignacio Estava, Minister of the Treasury, refused to pay the Congressional pension awarded to nephew David H. Porter's estate. Surprised or not, he was understandably furious. He was further aggravated by another attempt on his life by night in his bedroom.

He cleaved the skull of one knife-wielder with his sword, and the other escaped only by diving through a glass door. Porter's damage was a bloodless slash through his nightshirt, but his notorious short fuse burned bright. He interpreted the attack as a fresh reading on his popularity with the Guerrero government. He probably was privately relieved when informed that the new President of the United States, Andrew Jackson, wanted him to come home. Taking his time about it, he resigned his commission as "General de la Marina Mexicana."

When Key West got the news, there was no dancing in the streets. Porter had been a nuisance, but there weren't any more pirates to worry about. No more pirates, that is, now that Commodore Porter, their one-time scourge, had ceased his own wheeling and dealing in the neighborhood.

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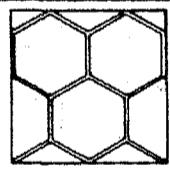
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Pearon Lane, in the foothills of Solares Hill, runs downhill for one short block from Eaton to Caroline Street. Unlike most of this pancake-flat island, it has a measurable

In 1974 when we bought our 130-year-old Peacon Lane Conch house, we were warned about our next-door neighbor, the eccentric artist, Henry Faulkner. Henry was notorious for, among other oddities, owning a small menagerie of animals, at least six dogs, countless cats and, at one time, a goat named Alice.

As it turned out, Henry was a thoughtful neighbor. He put his noisy animals indoors at night so they wouldn't disturb the neighbors, and he kept them inside until the reasonable morning hour of 8 AM. Alice, the goat, was long dead when we moved to Grunt Bone Alley, but a painting of her

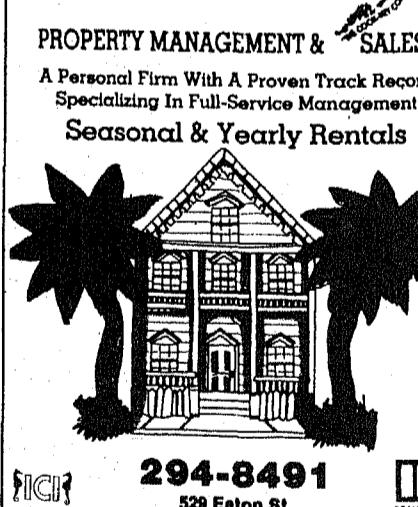


slope. During a heavy rainstorm, water rushes down it in a torrent to form a small lake at Caroline.

hangs in our house, a gift from Henry for the use of our phone. Henry once had himself listed in the Key West phone book as Alice Faulkner, but when Alice died he cancelled his listing and was phoneless. The Faulkner painting we received as a result is entitled "Alice in Her Celestial Garden". Henry's titles were as poetic as his paintings.

Henry is now gone, killed in a car accident in Kentucky, but he willed his Peacon Lane home to Stefan Brecht, son of Berthold Brecht of *Three-Penny Opera* fame. Though he is not often in Key West, Stefan has succeeded in keeping his house looking as funky as it did when it was owned by Henry. He rents it to a group of pleasant "Sunset People" with casual housekeeping habits and an unconventional outlook on life. Henry would be delighted to know that they practice elaborate

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acrobatic routines in the middle of the Alley on moonlit nights.

When Sarah's and Dorothy's houses were bought and stylishly renovated, we were afraid that Grunt Bone Alley might lose its offbeat personality to gentrification, but it didn't succumb. It is still a rich Old Town mixture of Conch and Cuban families, an artist, an author, an actor/director, a flight stewardess who lives in a house that for two years had no back wall on the first floor (until finally glass doors were installed) and, near Caroline Street, an old man who makes his home in a broken-down car permanently parked on flat tires beside his son's cottage. Both cottage and car are exuberantly decorated at Christmastime.

Except for her forays into the Alley to fight with Henry, Sarah kept to herself. She read her evening paper, sitting in solitary dignity in a garden chair under a street lamp at the corner of our driveway. After she died, money was found hoarded all over her tiny house, stuffed in mattresses and behind dresser drawers.

The Conch house two doors down from Sarah's belonged to Dorothy Raymer, journalist of note and creator of the Key West gossip column, "Conch Chowder". She was a good natured gadabout and she, too, was noisy, partly because of her increasing deafness. She never carried on a conversation in a normal tone of voice and when she was angry with her dog, El Fuzz, her vociferous swearing could be heard over half of Conchtown. Dorothy, too, is now dead and buried in the Key West City Cemetery as she wished to be. I don't know what happened to El Fuzz, but if he isn't near her, then the cemetery is decently quiet as it should be.

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During our first years in the Alley, Sarah Russell lived across from Henry and theirs was a casual but stormy relationship, resulting in a great deal of noise. Sarah ("I'm not a Conch, I'm a Cracker!") was well into her late, but feisty, seventies. Her battles with Henry were mainly about garbage. In addition to freeing himself from the expense of a phone, Henry chose to ignore both the convenience and the cost of the city's garbage disposal service. He owned no garbage cans and Sarah accused him, often rightly, of using hers.

We have recently sold our Peacon Lane house and will have to re-adjust to our other home in sane, sensible, predictable Toronto.

We'll miss our beloved Conch house, so imaginatively restored by designer and friend, Tom Szuter, who has an artist's eye for space and form. We'll miss our Key West friends who came to parties in our garden, an Old Town garden with a wealth of tropical plants and a poverty of grass. It was planted by Frank Fontis who, before he was murdered in robbery at his Coffee Mill Museum, was the caretaker of Tennessee Williams' house. Williams professed to believe that there was something supernaturally evil about Frank, but we've seen no sign of it in our garden, except for dark, silent shapes that move through a rocky corner filled with cactus plants. We tell ourselves that these shadowy prowlers are just Grunt Bone Alley cats. We will miss them, too.

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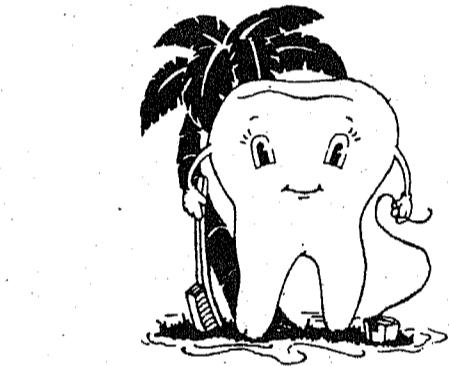
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Cancel the Countdown Rally — Cape Canaveral Florida, January 17, 1987

A national demonstration and nonviolent actions protesting the first flight testing of the Trident II missile.

On January 15, 1987, at Cape Canaveral, the Navy began flight testing the Trident II (D-5) missile; the Pentagon's



Part of the 5,500 demonstrators at the fence of the Cape Canaveral Air Force Base, Jan. 17, 4 PM.

newest and most dangerous first-strike nuclear weapon. The launch had been delayed three times by demonstrators

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of the mass of people who watched as Dr. Spock led a civil disobedience group over the A.F.B. fence.

Cheers and applause went up as each new peace worker went over the fence into the waiting arms of the Brevard County Police. Of the 195 arrested for trespassing on federal property, 120 refused to give their names. This form of noncooperation has a stronger impact than individual action. These Jane and John Does are rejecting the bail system as economic discrimination and intend to appear in court as a group. A March trial date is expected.

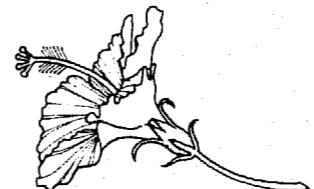
A group of local activists traveled to Cape Canaveral. Among them were Jamie Clarkson and Mally Weaver. Mally reports:

"We were part of the group of local activists who traveled to the Cape. We were driving through Melbourne at 10 AM when the missile was fired. We heard from a Great Peace Marcher that many Cape Canaveral citizens thought that the Trident II missile was one of NASA's, not a nuclear missile. She also said that Titusville was the most intimidating city that she had walked through from L.A. to D.C., and from Georgia to the Cape, and the midwest was the most positive.

"On Friday, January 16, we walked 18 miles from Titusville to Port Canaveral's Jetty Park, an oceanside campground. That evening a busload of marchers drove to Orlando for a benefit concert for the Trident II demonstration. We were treated to a night of music by Peter Yarrow (of Peter, Paul & Mary), Jim Scott and Jim Chapin.

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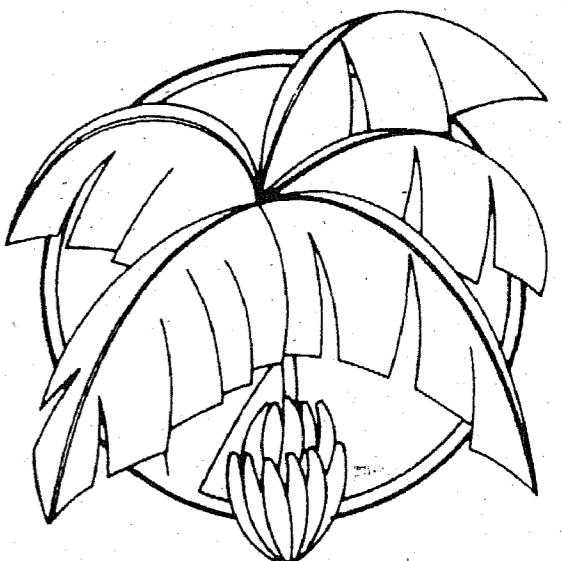
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The drawing will be at the United Way Annual Meeting in early April. If tickets are sold out at the above locations, you can call the United Way office, 296-3464, and make arrangements to purchase your ticket.

There's rumor of perfection...

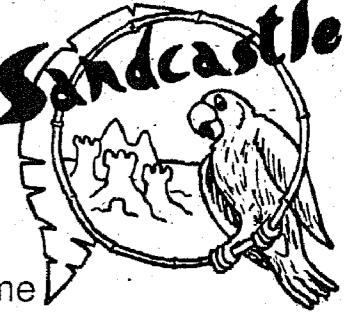


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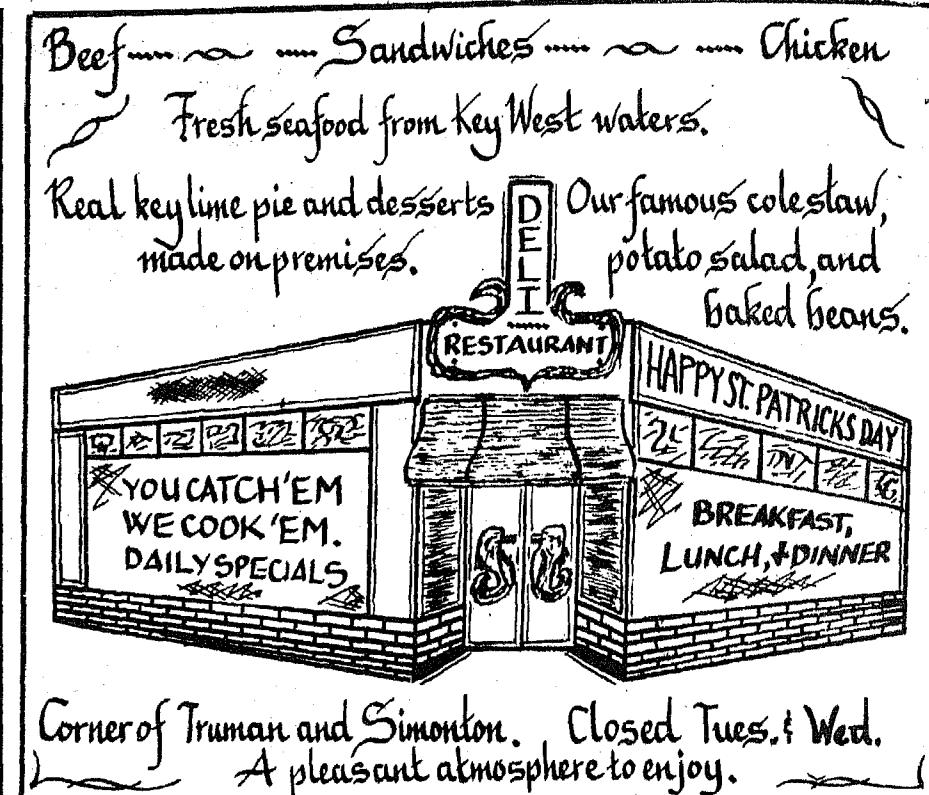
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**Friends of the Library
Endowment Fund**

by Ellen Sugarman

The Friends of the Library, that ultraworthy service organization, has been around quite a long time — nearly fifteen years. Everyone in Key West knows The Friends, particularly their excellent Monday morning Lectures-at-the-Library series. Monday after Monday during the winter season, year after year, The Friends has managed to come up with a varied program of fascinating speakers and has packed the library with an enthusiastic audience.

Another less manifest, but certainly crucial, function of The Friends is the financial support the group has been able to offer The Library over the years. Particularly at this time, cities are turning more and more to donations from the private sector to augment tax money that once supported their libraries, and Key West is no exception to this national trend. Friends of the Library gives quite a bit of money to the Mae Hill Russell Public Library; over any given year, the amount usually falls in

the \$6000-\$8000 range. Whereas tax dollars are earmarked for salaries and book budget, The Friends' gifts can cover many of the Library's peripheral needs, as they are identified by the Library staff. This year, for example, The Friends donated a state-of-the-art microform reader printer, a cabinet to store the Library's growing collection of video cassettes, a refrigerator for the staff, some individual titles for the special collections, *The New York Times* on microfilm, and additions to the periodical collection.

Last year The Friends of the Library Board of Directors decided to establish an Endowment Fund to better facilitate permanent contributions to the Library from members of the community. The Endowment Fund started out with a modest sum of \$5000 which is expected to increase each year. The Fund has been placed with one of Key West's major banks where it will be professionally managed. An Endowment Fund makes it possible for people to make contributions that will continue in perpetuity, since only the earnings are spent. Right now the income is still small, but as time goes by and additional monies are contributed, the amount of help that can be given the Library could become significant.

Individuals can also set up a separate memorial fund that will still come under the umbrella of the general Endowment Fund.

Jay Alden Manley, a member of the Board, was treasurer of The Friends when it was determined to set up the Endowment Fund and he is now the person in charge of it. Mr. Manley is also Membership Chairman. Having been the librarian of St. Paul's School in Concord, N.H., when Mr. Manley retired and moved to Key West six years ago, one of the first things he did was go over to the Library. He remembers, "You heard about The Friends immediately, they had such an active program ... I became interested and joined them. I have enjoyed working with The Friends; they're a very pleasant group. Each Board member contributes something different and they all work very hard."

To make a contribution, send your tax-deductible check to: Friends of the Library Endowment Fund, 700 Fleming St., Key West, 33040.

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The Hunter

by Philip Burton

His name was Ladislaus Paray. I met him in Mexico City in July, 1939. As his name suggests, he was a Hungarian. His chief occupation at the time was as an official hunter for the government. His English was good and, as a side-line, he acted as an occasional guide for American Tourists, and it was in that capacity that I first met him. He proved to be a devoted Anglophile, and, when he heard my British accent, he wanted to spend as much time with me as he could. He was a great admirer of Bernard Shaw. I was too, and still am. I had met Shaw a few times. Ladislaus was so impressed by this that our mutual liking grew into a very pleasant friendship, albeit a temporary one, but it enriched my first visit to Mexico City.

As I gradually learned about it, his background was incredibly colorful. In his late teens he had become a religious novice in his native land, but he soon discovered that the monastic life was not for him. Then he decided to see something of the world, and he had, in fact, gone all around it, sustaining himself by "photoshopping." Back home again, he and a friend decided to join the Foreign Legion. They didn't take long to find that that was a mistake and they carefully planned to escape together. Ladislaus succeeded but his friend was shot to death.

While I waited I walked around with a permanent smile. I noticed that many of the villagers, men, women and children, had double scars on their faces. I assumed they were some tribal or religious markings.

When Ladislaus returned I asked him about

them. They were bites from green tree-snakes, caused by walking into them, unseen as they hung from trees.

"Are they poisonous?"

"Very, but the Indians have a good antidote in some herbs."

"Have you been bitten?"

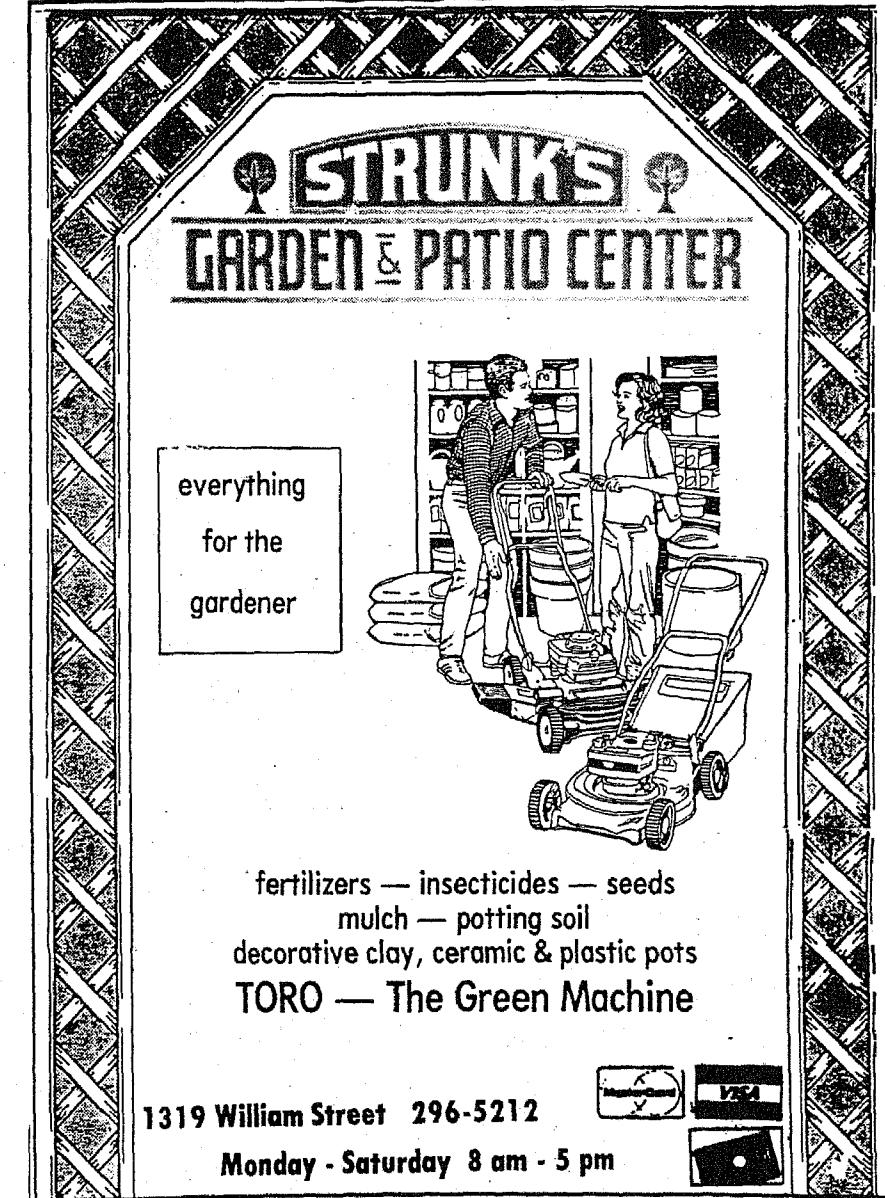
"Several times, by tarantulas and snakes."

"Seriously?"

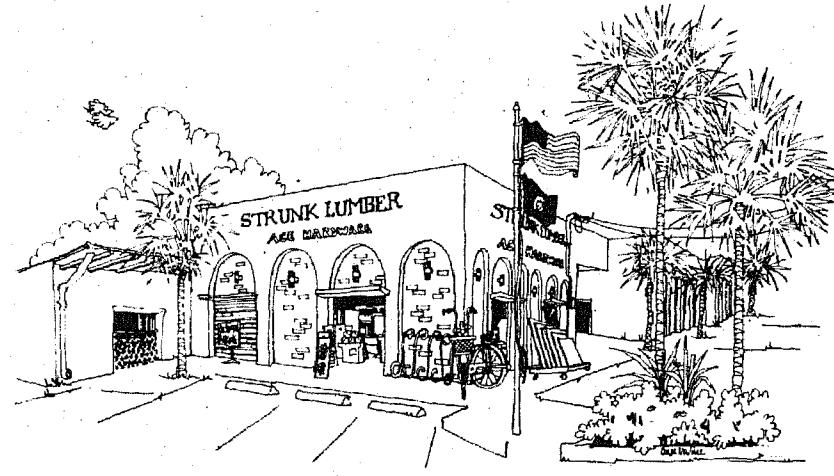
"Near to death a few times." He said that as nonchalantly as if we were talking about bad weather.

Then it struck me that I had to walk back along that jungle path! I expressed my fear to Ladislaus. He laughed and told me to follow close behind him and then the snake would get him, not me. I begged him to go slowly. If the foliage had caused me almost to crawl coming in, the possibility of tree-snakes made me go out permanently doubled up, much to the amusement of my guide, but to my painful discomfort.

On our way back in the car he told me a remarkable story, perhaps in an attempt to ease my mind after my frightening experience of the jungle path. It happened in Yucatan where he had been on one of his hunting expeditions. He had made the journey by train, and on the return a violent hurricane had stranded the train on a man-made embankment. They were there for a night and a day, and during that time the wildlife of the jungle, to escape the rising floods, took refuge on the embankment and gradually invaded the train. No one suffered harm from them; humans, beasts and reptiles were joined in a



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common fear which transcended their mutual hostility. When the storm ceased, the wildlife returned to its habitat, and the train continued on its way to Mexico City.

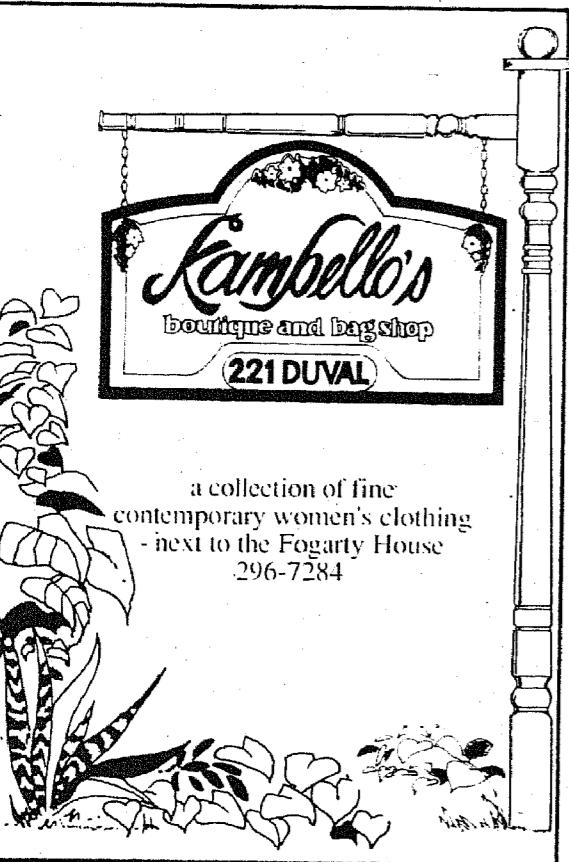
My second adventure with Ladislaus was very different and had nothing to do with his hunting skills. He had told me much about pulque-shops. Pulque is a cheap and powerful alcoholic drink, so powerful that its distillation and sale were forbidden by the government, but that didn't stop the traffic, any more than Prohibition succeeded in the U.S.A. In the poorer quarters of the city, Ladislaus told me, there were numerous shops. "The poorer men couldn't stand their life without it." He also told me that it could actually be lethal, and next to

some pulque-shops there was an undertaker's.

Naturally, I wanted to see a pulque-shop but Ladislaus didn't think it would be wise for me to be seen in or near one; I would be regarded with such suspicion that it might be dangerous.

But then he had an alternative and a very exciting idea. He knew a place some miles out of the city, in a jungle-clearing, where were grown the plants from which pulque was made and where the drink was distilled. Of course, the illicit place was highly secret, but Ladislaus, who knew the owner, thought he might get me permission to see it.

Again we set out in the car. The road was quite good, but gradually the houses



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along it thinned out until there were none, and there was very little traffic. We were in jungle country. I was left in the car while Ladislaus disappeared to the pulque farm. Saying that he might be some time, he left so quickly that I didn't have a chance to ask him about curious phenomenon. In this houseless district, right opposite to where Ladislaus had disappeared, there was a strange construction, and apparently a fairly new one. It was a large, solidly-walled enclosure, and facing the road were two heavy closed doors with two big metal handle-knockers on them. There was no indication of the nature or purpose of the place, and there was no sound or sign of life. Alone as I was, the silence became eerie. I longed for some traffic on the road; there was none. Gradually my curiosity overcame my uneasiness and I crossed the road and listened for some sound of life inside the walls; there was none. Almost without meaning to do so I tentatively used the knocker. The doors began to open, but without any apparent human agency. Inside there was a beautiful, tiled yard in the center of which a lovely fountain played. Beyond the yard were several one-story houses and huts, but no sign of life. I began to make a timorous entrance to look for some when I was startled by a shout behind me. It was Ladislaus beckoning me wildly. I hurried back to him as the doors slowly closed behind me. I had been entering the Leper Colony.

As we drove back to the city — Ladislaus had failed to get permission for his English friend to see the pulque farm — he told me the story of the leper colony. It used to be housed in a large building in the heart of the city, but that had been thought to be bad for the tourist trade and so the new one had been built in an isolated area. The irony was that the original building had been given, in a gesture of gratitude and admiration, to Diego Rivera, the noted muralist, and he had turned it into hotel.

Mention of Rivera reminded me that it was he who had persuaded the government to allow Trotsky to find shelter in Mexico, and I had the idea of trying to get an interview with him for the BBC — Ladislaus, of course, knew where he stayed — but he was so strongly protected that my out-of-the-blue request was firmly denied. His loyal guardians couldn't prevent his assassination the following year.

Ladislaus Paray did much to make my July, 1939, visit to Mexico City memorable. When I returned there in February, 1969, to give a lecture, I failed to find him. It was his 68th year. Perhaps the jungle had finally claimed the hunter.

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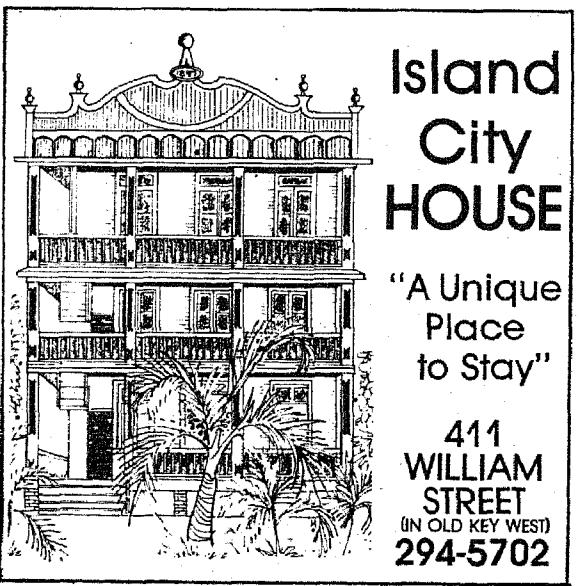
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Mask Force

by Helen R. Chapman

A few days after Christmas, I read in the newspaper that a man in Maine dressed as Santa Claus was discovered to be a probation violator when a policeman stopped him for a traffic violation. How unimaginative can someone be? First of all, Santa Claus shouldn't be driving a car. It's out of character. If this guy had been keeping up with the times, he'd have known that the State of Maine has started bringing back the caribou. Even if there were no snow, this dope could have hitched a few (I doubt eight) caribou to a sleigh on wheels, driven down the main drag, and everyone would have loved him — even the cops.

This caper opens up all sorts of avenues of suspicion for police departments. Think of all the car dealers who have an employee dressed as some sort of animal running around the lot, barking or clucking out the low prices. Is it really an employee masquerading as Big Bird, or is it a fugitive from a charge of Grand Theft Auto? Is that an employee dressed as a floppy-eared dog sliding down the hoods of cars waving price tags with his paws, or is it someone who just purchased a car with a bad check?

I can see disaster at a children's Easter party when a cop suddenly rushes in to check the ID of the big Bunny, who turns out to be the wife of the police chief. And what about the Fourth of July with a

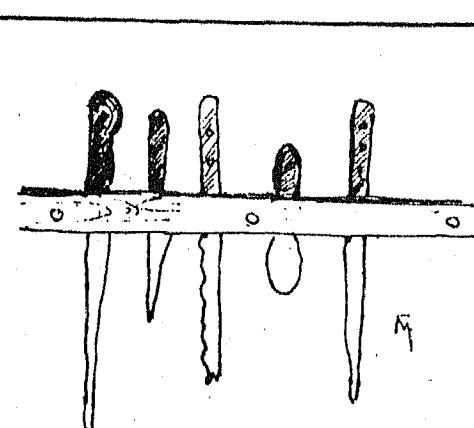
plethora of Uncle Sams appearing in parades? How many of them are KGB men?

Of course the Muppets would have to be investigated. They could, in reality, be midget shoplifters. And what would happen to Mardi Gras if every costumed person was checked out?

Halloween ghosts would tremble in their ectoplasm whenever a member of the constabulary appeared; skeletons would be shaking their bones.

Then the end of the year comes, and it is discovered that the man dressed as the Grim Reaper is really the notorious Scythe Murderer who for fifty years has escaped detection. He's now 95 years old, but they give him a life term without parole anyway.

This nincompoop in Maine has spoiled it for everyone. Not only do we have to give up our masquerades — he's taken all the fun out of being a crook.

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West artist John Kiraly, is already on sale at both of these arts groups, and detailed information and the first painted brochure will be released shortly on the spectacular events due to be performed at Fort Taylor and nearby facilities.

**Arts Explo Finale
Great Success**

Across the Keys, the last weekend in January was celebrated with a variety of events underlining the success of the 1986-1987 Arts Explo, the Monroe County Fine Arts Council's mounting of the largest and best attended series of exhibitions and performances in its history.

In Key West, the Council's joint sponsorship of the *Concerto For 10 Pianos* with the Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center brought standing room only to the performance and the largest audience ever in attendance at that facility.

Speaking at intermission, Mayor Tom Sawyer, Fine Arts Chairman Sandra T. Fowler, President William A. Seeker of the Florida Keys Community College and Parvan Bakardjiev in the dual role of MCFAC General Director and TWFAC Artistic Director, all spoke of the great success of this year's Arts Explo and its preparation for the coming Festival of the Arts.

Beginning last summer with the Great Performance Series, Arts Council Director Bakardjiev had brought a variety of programs in theatre, opera and dance all across Monroe County as Step One of the plans for the Festival of the Continents. Arts Explo was considered Step Two, and Step Three will be the Festival itself, sponsored again by MCFAC.

The official Festival Poster, by Key

Retrospective

by Kirby Congdon

If things were different than they are now,
I'd count the money!
(— or trudge behind a muddy plow!)

If things were now as they were then,
would I thank the stars
— or damn each sun's rise again?

Perhaps the gloss
of each scattered dream
is less a loss
than it would seem.

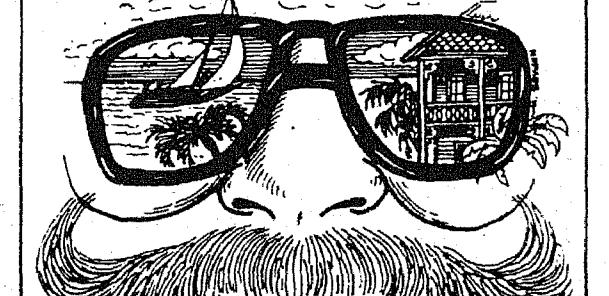
For the big regrets -- we pine.
For all the wrongs -- we curse.
If fate's choice were mine,
I, for one -- all said and done --
would have made things worse!

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Chicago Tribune; a number of stringers from London and French newspapers.

The Army, meanwhile, had spread out; guards were posted at radio stations, the electric plant, and the water storage tanks (a few of them managed to sock a few golf balls for practice).

For the locals, this was like a holiday.

Stores were counting on racking up some good sales; the few restaurants added exotic items to the menus and prices increased by 50¢ (you could tell where the old prices were erased). The saloons, to say the least, were overjoyed.

Sloppy's and the Midget, at the corner of Greene and Simonton, held to their 25¢ Stein of suds and a half-buck for a bottle; on Duval and Front, the owners were standing outside the doors of the barrooms, smiling for the first time in months.

In the upper echelons of the AP, as it was told to the local reporters, a decision had been made to open a specially staffed "listening post," geared to Havana radio and TV for the purpose of "scooping" the UPI and Reuters with fast-breaking news from the closest point to Fidel Castro, Key West.

The Navy and the government's soft-moving (at that time) intelligence services were all in favor of the AP's action and smiled on it; they, too, could benefit.

The first of the AP staff arrived and radios and the telex tie-up with Miami were moved into a cottage at Charlie Helberg's Key Wester Motel. Charlie, a Chicagoan, loved the notoriety.

Top man in the "listening post" was a bright, smartly educated, AP newsman,

Missiles in Cuba: Key West in the World's Headlines

by Bud Jacobson

There was a night in Key West in October, 1962, when the townies and the tourists spent the usual time enjoying the evening breezes. It was a little cooler now than in September.

Kids played stickball in the streets, dogs and cats cavorted in their special fashion, small groups of Cuban men sat around the corner cafes gossiping, some of the oldtime gamblers checked out the bolita numbers. It was the end of another ordinary day on the island.

That night on TV, as there had been in wire service reports lately, there was talk about the Russians and what they were doing in Cuba.

The town closed down around 10 or 11, and, except for the late night ramblers, the good citizens slept.

When they woke up the next day it was to a whole different world.

The Russians had indeed been up to something. They'd been secretly planting Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM) on the island of Cuba, clearing out launching fields and pads. They were a mere 90 miles from South Beach at the end of Duval.

Overnight, President John F. Kennedy



Photo by Don Pinder

No swimming today!

ordered a red alert for South Florida's military installations, and many more along the Gulf Coast. Intelligence photos confirmed the worst. The big Army trucks began rolling through Florida and down US-1 into Monroe County, the Florida Keys.

At around 2 AM, the few Key Westers who were still bar hopping, the few who

were still working on late shifts, the few milkmen and newspaper carriers who were gearing up for the new sunrise, were jarred from their normal routines when the low growl of many huge engines, heard in the distance, gradually gained in volume — something like the siren on a fire truck, gaining on you from a distance.

At the Boca Chica Bar and Weaver's, a

couple of late-night watering holes just outside the city, some of the beered-up denizens looked outside the door and were stunned to see a convoy of 30 to 40 camouflaged Army trucks moving swiftly toward Key West. Rocket carriers, machine-gun mounts, mobile gun platforms, personnel carriers and trailer rigs with tarpaulin-covered radar equipment trundled past.

Truck after truck after truck. Soldiers were armed and leaned out of the sides of the carriers, waving to the playboys of Stock Island. Battle fatigues. Guns and cannons. The deadly menacing panoply of war, racing through the triangle at the Holiday Inn, down North Roosevelt toward town, doing an easy 50 to 60 mph.

"That don't look like routine maneuvers to me, bubba," muttered Dinky Lowe, at Weaver's.

The long, noisy convoy hit Peary Court, then part of the Navy's property inside the city, and dropped off some of their men and equipment. Then they headed up Southard toward the Main Gate.

By now, the locals were up and awake, sort of; the phones were ringing all over town as families called back and forth telling the news.

That first convoy was followed by more, loaded with tons of barbed wire, guns and ammo.

Part of the group split off at the triangle and veered down A1A to South Roosevelt, rolling past Raul's, a favored late night joint, now the site of a wing of the Key Ambassador Motel. The old nightclub was

owned then by the Toppings brothers, Bill Chappell, and a small part by Bill Provost, a pianist of note who looked and played like Hoagy Carmichael. A crowd of the revelers came out and watched the convoy roll past, heading for Smathers Beach. The green-black camouflage became a dull blur of color.

The Army men jumped out at the beach and ran off a few of the late-night sleepers before they set up tangled, coiled rolls of barbed wire all along the sidewalk and in the sand, covering their dugouts where gun emplacements were quickly being assembled.

By sunrise, Smathers Beach, instead of being loaded with sun-worshippers doused in suntan oil, with hawking hot dog peddlers wandering down the road, looked like the front line in a Remarque novel — except more tropical with the ocean out there, sparkling in the sun, rather than the mud and mire of Flanders Field.

At the *Key West Citizen*, around 6 AM, the early birds were straggling in, hitting typewriters, drinking Cuban coffee from Pepe's and slipping over for a cold beer at Sloppy's, while trying to cope with the impending limelight from the world's press. The newspaper, then, was a subscriber to the AP wire service and had close, friendly links with the news staff in Miami. The *Miami Herald* was sending down a special team, so was the *News*; in came the prestigious *New York Times*, smooth and worldly; then a few guys from the *Detroit Free Press*, a little more rough cut than the *Times* bunch; a couple of writers from the

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Photo by Don Pinder

Luis De La Haba, adept in a number of languages, humorous and a marvelous teller of long, intricate, bawdy stories.

With him, and easily as fast in the language department, was a quiet, witty lady from Canada, Chris McGill. Chris, wearing glasses and taking the stance, at times, of a schoolmarm, was a prize reporter for the AP for many years.

They were joined by novice writers, new in the Miami AP fold, and a few seasoned veterans who stood in when Luis or Chris were out of the city.

Sloppy's bar, and places like the old Gate Bar (now the Plantation) and the Brown Derby (now the Green Parrot), where servicemen liked to cop a beer and a smoke and cruise the passing parade, were favored places for the news-gathering

hawks. Gossip and rumor, and even some "hard news" leaked copiously from the beery innards of the saloons.

"You have to keep in touch with the enlisted," Luis used to say; "they're on the line, not the officers."

Between the AP, the UPI, the major newspapers who'd sent writers and photographers here, it was a glorious few weeks as Key West basked in the intense glare of worldwide publicity. This little defenseless island faced, only 90 miles from its sun and sand, the Russian bear's ICBMs that could mount nuclear warheads. Ah, what brave souls on that small spit of an island, they said.

After Kennedy had eyeballed the Russians and made them blink, the offending missiles were soon packed in cotton and nailed into their long, bulky

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Key West — Real Estate Boomtown

Blessing For Some, No Room At The End For Others

by Bill Anderson

(The author is Key West Correspondent for the *New York Times*, in which portions of this article recently appeared.)

KEY WEST — This 12 square mile subtropical island of 28,000 inhabitants, whose laid-back lifestyles help it attract two million visitors a year, has become one of the country's hottest real estate markets.

The quiet of this one-time backwater of bicycle traffic in small lanes and narrow streets and the offshore swishing sound of sailboats is pierced these days by the din of construction cranes and trucks, backhoes, chain saws and hammers as developers, builders, construction workers, renovators, and architects have become the money-making force of this tiny island that once was dominated by ship salvagers, cigar makers, fishermen, and the U.S. Navy.

A commercial builder from oil-depressed Houston, Texas, who recently visited Key West, waxed enthusiastic about the welcome sight of building cranes, which he lamented had become an extinct construction species back home in Texas.

Real estate values here have soared to an all time high for those who are affluent enough to buy. And buy they do. The Monroe County Recording Office reports that recordings of sales and other real estate transactions have climbed to more than

1,000 a week.

Recent ones include the September 1986 purchase of almost 100 acres of the U.S. Navy's historic Truman Annex including President Harry Truman's "Little White House" by Maine-and-Massachusetts developer Pritam Singh for \$17.25 million (Singh now confides he believes the value is closer to \$70 million); the sale of designer Calvin Klein's house for more than \$400,000; one of Broadway composer-lyricist Jerry Herman's houses bringing \$435,000, with another price tagged at \$585,000; the famous old La Concha Hotel built in 1925 undergoing a \$20 million renovation to join Key West's other premier hotels of The Pier House, Casa Marina, and The Reach with winter rates of \$200 and upwards a night.

In recent years real estate values have become so gentrified that some Key Westers fear the island may have passed into a period when only the privileged few can afford to buy a house or even rent one.

It wasn't always that way on this coral island that's the southernmost point in the continental U.S. and only 90 miles from Havana.

When Ernest Hemingway stepped off the P&O ferry from Havana in 1928 to take up residence and finish his novel *A Farewell to Arms*, he easily rented an apartment, then a house and three years later bought a Creole mansion built in the 1870's on Whitehead Street for \$8,000. After his death it went to the highest bidder in 1963 for \$80,000 and today would handily bring in excess of \$1 million.

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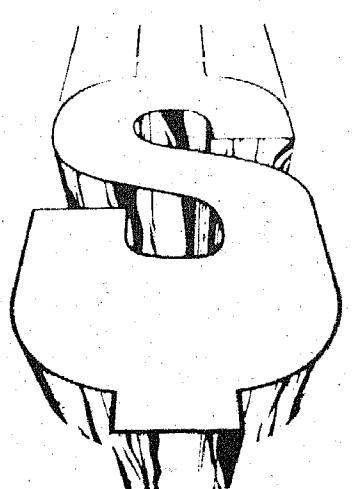
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purchased his Duncan Street house in 1950, two years after he first visited the island, and paid \$27,500. Today it is listed for \$205,000.

Wilhelmina Harvey, a fourth generation Conch or native Key Wester who recently served six years as a commissioner and Mayor of Monroe County, recalls buying two houses in the city's Old Town or historic district in 1939 — one small, doll-like house for \$500 and the other for \$5,000. Two years ago the \$500 one sold for \$62,500 and in 1986 the \$5,000 went for \$197,500.

While in office Harvey endeavored unsuccessfully to obtain government grants and loans for affordable housing for all the Keys. She still believes it should be a top priority for Key West.

"If we don't get affordable housing, Key West is going to be a spot only for the wealthy and the indigent. There will be no in-between," she predicts.

Of the almost 3,000 acres zoned as developable by the city of Key West, it's estimated that five-sixths are already built

on. The remaining 573 acres include the ecologically sensitive salt ponds and the recently purchased Truman Annex.

Small unimproved residential lots here can cost up to \$50,000. The cost of renovation or new construction in Key West is between \$80 and \$100 a square foot, compared with about \$60 on the Florida mainland. These costs are high because of a shortage of expert labor, plus building materials that can run 30 to 40 percent more than on the mainland.

From 1875 until after the turn of the century, Key West was the most populous and affluent city in Florida. Cigar manufacturing was employing 8,000 persons, and employers were buying entire blocks on which to build homes for their workers, a practice that soon may have to be emulated by today's larger employers.

Simultaneously, sponge diving was at an all time high. Henry Flagler was building his Overseas Railroad he hoped would make Key West the terminus of shipping with the newly built Panama Canal, with other Caribbean and South American shipping

ending up here, as well as passengers ferried by ship between Havana and the Key West terminal.

Pineapple growing had become a cash crop for the Keys.

But soon labor problems beset the cigar industry and most of it moved to Tampa; the manufacture of salt from the island's salt ponds proved unfeasible; sponging was taken over by the Greeks in Tarpon Springs who were using advanced diving equipment for harvests; cheap Cuban pineapples decimated the Keys' production; and the 1935 hurricane that hit the Upper Keys finished off Flagler's already bankrupt railroad.

So, in 1934, while Ernest Hemingway was making more money writing in Key West than he ever had, the city went bankrupt and most Key Westers were on the Federal dole.

Then, in the 1960's and 1970's, tourism began to take off. Today, there are some two million visitors a year. During the first quarter of 1986 more than \$17 million was generated by Key West hotel rooms alone.

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Today 25 percent of the island's total work force is employed in the tourist industry where typical wages are between \$5 and \$6 an hour.

Until the 1980's these young seasonal workers would spend their winters here and go north for the summer. They could rent unrenovated, reasonably priced apartments and houses in the convenient Old Town area. But slowly most of these dwellings have been bought up, restored and renovated and little affordable is left in an area where workers could walk or bicycle to work while enjoying the area's ambience.

In 1974 New York realtor Clay McDaniel moved to Key West to sell property. "It was the year the real estate explosion started," he says. "I sold 50 houses in the first twelve months as the New York invasion began," adding that most of the houses were then in the \$25,000 to \$50,000 range.

Today these are the houses which can demand hundreds of thousands of dollars and make up a treasure of 19th Century frame structures probably unmatched in any other American city. They vary from mansions to cottages and include Greek and Roman Classic Revival, Victorian, Queen Anne, Creole, and shotgun architectures. Together they comprise what has come to be known as "Conch houses."

But treasures of architecture do not result in affordable housing, particularly for most workers in the tourist industry.

Although prime winter seasonal rates can bring rentals for furnished houses with all amenities including swimming pool up to \$2,000 a week, year-round rentals for unfurnished houses can be obtained for \$600 to \$700 a month. However, advance rent for the first and last months, a half-month's rent as security and deposits on utilities can bring the move-in cost to about \$2,000. In addition, most seasonal workers prefer to summer on Cape Cod, in the Long Island Hamptons, or in Maine.

Some businessmen who make their livelihoods here from the tourist industry are worried about the lack of affordable housing. So is Tom Wilson, Key West's assistant city planning director. "Everything is in chaos," Wilson says. "If we have severe labor shortages, the service for instance at hotels and restaurants might get poor because we're not able to house enough labor force. And of course this could affect the tourist industry."

Wilson notes that some hotels are planning to provide affordable housing in the future but points out that most of it will be for higher paid personnel such as chefs, management and accountants.

Pritam Singh, the developer who bought the Truman Annex and was expected to close on the property in mid-January, has taken advantage of the city's new inclusionary zoning and agreed to build 95 affordable housing units along with 175 hotel units and 255 more expensive residential accommodations on the Annex. He expects to complete the \$250 million development in five to six years.

According to Tom Wilson one thing that sold Singh on affordable housing was to give himself a competitive advantage by having his own housing for personnel.

Wilson points out that Singh could probably lease some of it out to the nearby Pier House and La Concha hotels. "Having your own housing will definitely be an advantage in the future," Wilson says.

Wilson concludes that some innovative, even dramatic, solutions to affordable housing for workers is going to be necessary. Among his suggestions are a work-study winter season here for college students interested in the hotel-and-restaurant field, or the use of a work force of immigrants now living in the Miami area and looking for jobs who could move to nearby but less costly Stock Island.

But for some Key Westers who happily sold their houses originally costing below \$10,000 for perhaps five times that amount

a few years ago and relocated elsewhere, such as in Ocala or Tampa, and now want to return to the island, it's a different matter. Today their original homes in Key West could cost upwards of \$200,000. For most such Conchs homesick for their native Key West, the new-found wealth was one way out but today is no way back.

Barring a dramatic solution to the affordable housing shortfall, however, City Commissioner George Halloran, himself a builder, sees no end in sight to the booming real estate market here. "Key West seems to be recession-proof," he says. "Here in the 1980's people are still willing to come and invest in real estate. There are only so many houses left, and it's still very profitable to build here."

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Alec Guinness Film Festival by The Friends of the Library, Key West

by Betsy Johns

The Friends of the Library, Key West, are sponsoring an Alec Guinness Film Festival at the May Hill Russell Monroe County Library, 700 Fleming St. on six consecutive Wednesday evenings beginning March 11.

With the publication recently of the new Guinness autobiography, *Blessings in Disguise*, much new enthusiasm has been stirred up in reading about this remarkable actor, and in the many recent showings of his old films on TV. We now discover he not only is a great actor but an enormously charming raconteur as well. This is a trip in nostalgia for those of us who grew up on his many hilarious pictures, and will be a delightful introduction for younger people to really clever, witty movies and to a warm, engaging actor.

On the first Wednesday evening, March 11, Arnold Sungaard will review the autobiography, *Blessings in Disguise*. Sungaard is a noted playwright and librettist. He is a great admirer of Alec Guinness and will review this book with enthusiasm. There will then be shown a 28 minute documentary, *The Many Roles of Alec Guinness* from "The Art of Film Series" with scenes from various films. Together this should prove a splendid introduction.



Courtesy: The Guardian

Alec Guinness

On the following Wednesday evenings will be shown five feature-length Guinness films. Following is the schedule for the six evenings and all will begin at 7 PM.

* * * * *

MARCH 11: Review of *Blessings in Disguise* by Arnold Sungaard; the documentary *The Many Roles of Alec Guinness*.

MARCH 18: *The Man in the White Suit* (1952) - A young laboratory assistant invents an indestructible stain-resistant fabric and antagonizes both management and labor when he tries to put it on the market. Ruthlessly funny.

MARCH 25: *Our Man in Havana* (1960) - Guileless political innocent is recruited by

British Intelligence. A nimble spoof of spy networks.

APRIL 1: *Kind Hearts and Coronets* (1949) - A draper's assistant with rare ingenuity kills the dozen relatives standing between him and dukedom. Guinness plays 8 different parts in this comedy.

APRIL 8: *The Horse's Mouth* (1958) - Circumstances force Gully Jimson, the down-and-out artist hero, to fight for his soul. A classic eccentric and serious painter, Jimson cajoles, coerces, and hoodwinks for the one thing he really believes in — his art.

APRIL 15: *The Lavender Hill Mob* (1951) - A meek, bowler-hatted bank clerk robs his employer of a million pounds' worth of gold bullion. The scheming for the deed with his unlikely cohorts is half the fun.

* * * * *

After a long and distinguished career including Academy Awards for both acting and screenplay writing, and a knighthood, Sir Alec Guinness, now 72 years old, will be honored at this year's tribute of the Film Society of Lincoln Center, a benefit scheduled for this April 27 at Avery Fisher Hall. Perhaps a film festival at Key West's pink library will be our way of honoring this modest, self-effacing actor (an attitude so unusual among actors as to be almost unique) who has given us so much splendid entertainment through the years.

These programs are free and open to the public, and the Friends invite all to come and enjoy these light-hearted evenings.

Key West High School

ADULT EDUCATION COURSE OFFERINGS TERM III - REGISTRATION - MARCH 9, 10, 11, 12, 1987

COURSE CODE	ADULT BASIC EDUCATION	DATE	FEES	ROOM #	INSTRUCTOR	TIME
9900000	Adult Basic/ESL	T/Th	N/C	J-27	Davis/Walker	7-10 PM
9900010	General Ed. Promotion	T/Th	N/C	J-31	TBA	7-10 PM
9900020	G.E.D. Prep.	M/W	N/C	J-31	Scollo	7-10 PM

ADULT GENERAL EDUCATION

1501330	Aerobics	M/W/F	\$13	Douglas	W/ebster	6-8 PM
2106310	American Government	M/W	\$13	J-25	Batties	7-10 PM
2100310	American History	M/W	\$13	J-25	Batties	7-10 PM
0104320	Art	T/Th	\$13	E-6	Batties	7-10 PM
0201300	Computer Programming	T/Th	\$13	J-5	Spencer	7-10 PM
0708300	Conversational Spanish	T/Th	\$13	J-23	Kelly	7-10 PM
0708310	Conv. Spanish II	Wed.	\$13	J-23	Kelly	7-10 PM
0708310	Conv. Spanish I & II	Thurs.	\$13	J-13	Puig	3:30-6:30 PM
1900300	Drivers Training	M/W	\$13	J-35	McKell	7-10 PM
1001310	English I-IV	M/W	\$13	D-3	Lilly	7-10 PM
1205340	General Math/Algebra	T/Th	\$13	J-32	Rodger	7-10 PM
2002310	General Science	M/W	\$13	J-26	TBA	7-10 PM

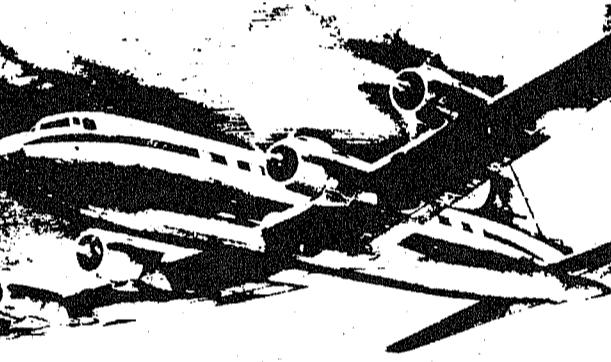
ADULT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

ARRO900	Auto Body Repair	M/W	\$13	V-103	Aulozzi	7-10 PM
AERO990	Auto Mechanics	M/W	\$13	V-102	Higgs	7-10 PM
AC00001	Basic Bookkeeping	M/W	\$13	J-13	Sandler	7-10 PM
EERO000	Electrical Tech.	M-F	\$13	Truman	Turner	8-11 AM
EERO000	Electrical Tech.	M-Th	\$13	Truman	Turner	7-10 PM
COEO990	Office Skills Training	M-Th	\$13	Truman	Freeman, F.	1-4 PM
HCP0992	Nursing Assisting	M/W/Sat	\$18	J-30	Mills	7-10 PM
HEVO210	Sewing	M/W	\$13	B-7	Cooper	7-10 PM
OPT0105	Typing	M/W	\$13	J-16	Freeman, B.	7-10 PM
MTR0100	Welding	M/W	\$13	Welding	Carey	7-10 PM
BCT0200	Woodworking	M/W	\$13	E-7	Stern	7-10 PM

COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Karate	T/F	\$20	Truman	Fairbanks	6:30-9:30 PM
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Term III Registration will be March 9, 10, 11, & 12, 1987, from 7 to 9 PM nightly in the J-Wing Auditorium at Key West High School. Most classes will begin March 16, 1987 and end June 2, 1987. All students working towards a high school diploma are registered FREE. ALL PROGRAMS ARE OPEN TO STUDENTS WITHOUT REGARD TO RACE, COLOR, SEX, RELIGION, NATIONAL ORIGIN, OR HANDICAP. For information call 294-5212, Ext. 263 or 264, Key West High School, 2100 Flagler Avenue, Key West, 33040.



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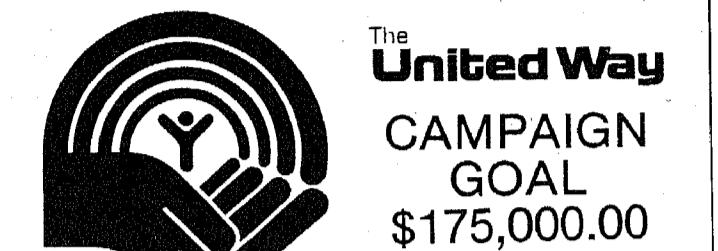
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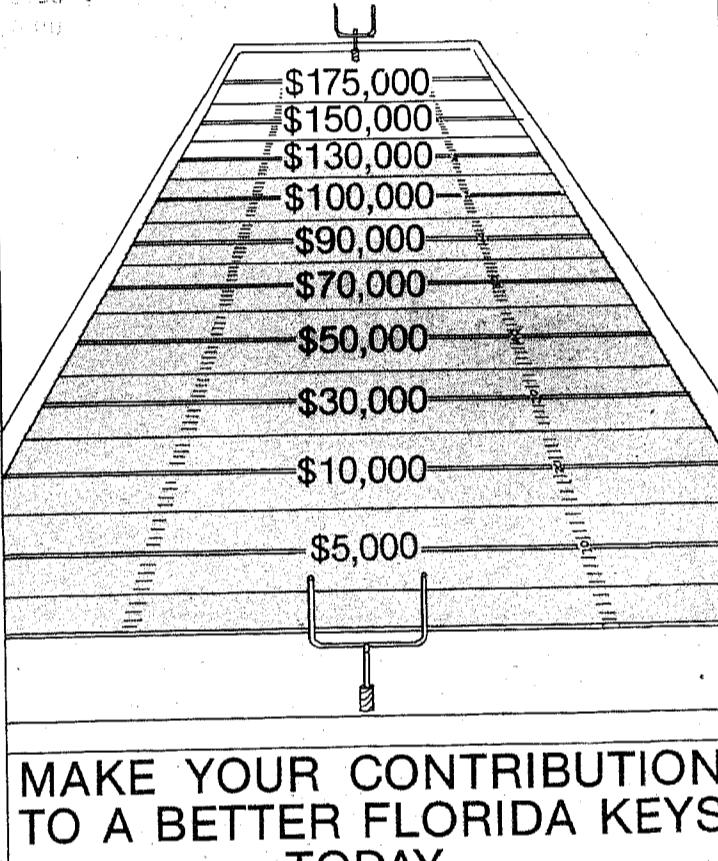
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- Shelter and counseling for children from homes where they are being physically or sexually abused;
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- Emergency services to the entire community in the event of personal or natural disaster;
- Crisis services for the hungry or distressed;
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- Counseling, shelter and guidance to physically abused adult victims of domestic violence and their children;
- Referral services in any emergency through a twenty-four hour, seven days a week, county-wide Helpline;
- County-wide scouting for boys and girls 5-17.

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Executive Director

A Plea for the Pier

by Paul Cherry

At the present time only pelicans and seagulls are enjoying the old Reynolds Street Swimming Pier, one of the most used facilities at Clarence S. Higgs Memorial Beach. The pier, built originally by Monroe County in the mid-1940's, has been closed to the public since January 1987 because "its present condition constitutes a safety hazard and thus a liability problem for the County," as stated by the Monroe County Consulting Engineers (Post, Buckley, Schuh & Jernigan, Inc.) report on January 30, 1987.

The original pier was made from railroad rails used as pier columns with steel plate and angles welded to these columns to serve as a frame. Nailers were then added to the frame and a wood deck was placed over the nailers. Steel piling was driven into the bottom seaward of the pier to act as a sand barrier and to prevent the accumulation of seaweed in the swimming area.

The pier in the mid-40's curved approximately 1000 feet plus in the Atlantic Ocean. Saltwater corrosion on the steel frame and storm damage have reduced man's usage to about 400 feet, yet the remnants of unusable pilings do not go to waste. Hundreds of sea and migratory birds use the pilings to roost and snorkelers



Photo by Richard Wetherwax

Hopefully, the sign will read "Pier Open, Welcome" soon.

can enjoy seeing many varieties of colorful tropical fish that swim in and around the shallow waters. The remaining 400 foot length with its seven foot width and attached entry ladders into the water allows enough room for diving, sunbathing and strolling but one of its primary purposes is for the elderly and the disabled individuals who need a convenient and easy accessibility into the ocean.

Higgs Beach is considered the "town beach" by locals who feel a deep sense of pride in being able to use it and a dedicated responsibility for its upkeep and

maintenance. Tourists also enjoy it because it is unique and beautiful. Swimming, unlike other beaches, is allowed before 10 AM or after 4 PM. The joys of standing on the pier at sunrise or at sunset, or of watching the smooth sea or the wind and waves are truly some of the memorable experiences that classify Key West as "visiting or living in paradise."

In the mid-summer of 1982, approximately 70 feet of the original pier was washed out by a storm. In October, a group of concerned citizens, led by Manfred Ibel, an architect and resident, formed an



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organization called the Pier Repair and Restoration Council to preserve and to gradually reconstruct the pier. A petition was posted at the end of the dock and 400 signatures with a letter dated October 18, 1982, was sent to the Board of the Monroe County Commission. Mrs. Jane Samuels, one of the founding members of the Council, stated to the Commission that thousands of names could have been solicited had the Council posted the petition in August after the storm. The Council's letter proposed a three part

recommendation. "We ask the County Commission to take three steps to preserve it: 1. Immediately arrange for a County engineer to assess the condition of the pier and get recommendations for its repair and preservation; 2. Establish a yearly program of maintenance and repair; and 3. Establish a program for gradual reconstruction of the derelict portions of the pier. If this were done, one section a year, over the next few years, the cost should be manageable."

The Commission requested the then-Monroe County Public Works Director,

Edward L. Stickney, to make an assessment of the pier's condition. A report prepared on November 12, 1982, by the Monroe County Consulting Engineers, was presented to the Board of Monroe County Commissioners. The engineers concluded that the price to remove the existing pier and to construct a 600 linear foot new pier would be \$172,800. This price was based on the average of three alternative plans.

In early March of 1983, gale-force winds and high seas ravaged about 75 more feet of the deteriorating pier. "All the wind and

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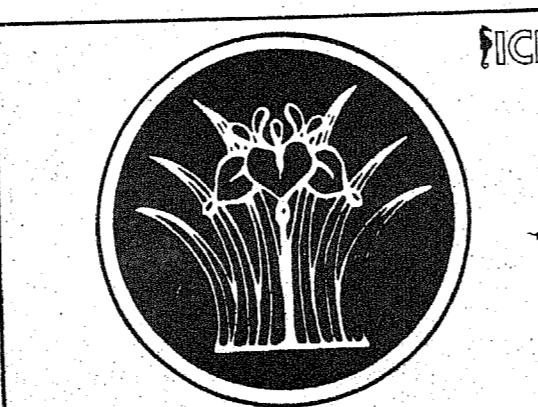


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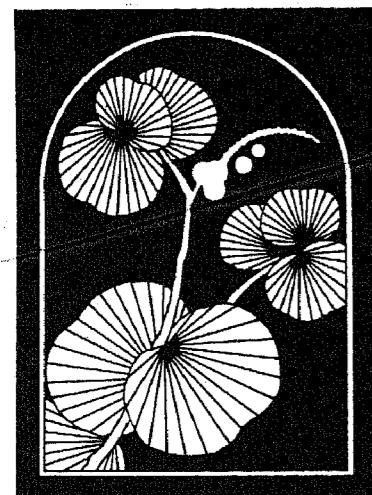
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waves just kept pounding it and knocked (the foundation) loose," stated Mr. Stickney. "It just ripped it all up." Therefore, the pier was closed.

During the interim of the Monroe County Consulting Engineers' report of 1982 and the early storm of 1983, the County had begun to remove deteriorated wooden planks and replace them. After the storm, Mr. Stickney promised to reinforce the foundation and continue to repair the planks, and did so. The work was completed and the pier was open again to the public. Based on the realization of the tenuous condition of the pier, Mr. Stickney began working on a plan to re-design the pier and to find the necessary funds to replace the existing structure.

As reported by *Solares Hill* in April of

incorporated into a tax exempt organization and became Friends of the Pier, Inc. The basic theory behind the fund raising was that the more support from the public, the more support from the legislators who appropriate funds.

The fund raising began in May of 1983. Various fund raising events were made possible by the generosity of local restaurants, bars, guest houses, and local citizens who donated food, drink, money, and time. By 1986, the Friends of the Pier, Inc. had raised \$4000. On July 17, 1986, Manfred Ibel and Louis Pfau presented Monroe County Mayor Wilhelmina Harvey with a check payable to the County of Monroe. Though the check was believed to be deposited in a separate account, an official with the County Finance Department has stated that the \$4000 is in the Capital Project Construction Monroe County Fund deposited at the Barnett Bank since August 1, 1986, earning 5% interest. The reason no special account was designated was not neglect or oversight. The County receives numerous sources of revenue and if each source were to be given a separate account, the Finance County's work force would have to be increased considerably. Instead, the Finance Department keeps a Fund County Book Separate Account under the name of Friends of the Pier, Inc. The monies in the County Book can only be used for the specified projects that each account represents. (The Friends of the Pier, Inc. was dissolved after their donation to the County.)

In 1984, while attempts were made to raise funds to restore the Reynolds Street Pier, some City and County Commissioners began to take a broader view than just restoration. The result was the Higgs-Rest Beach Park Trust. The pier was not the primary concern, but the 20 acre piece of poorly utilized recreational area was. The plan included re-routing traffic, four more tennis courts, two handball courts, a jogging path, a pedestrian mall on the White Street Pier and a 50-slip marina next to the White Street Pier with a "sail-in" restaurant. The three page proposal did give some attention to the pier. "The Reynolds Street Pier can be rebuilt through public and some private funds, now being raised." The Higgs-Rest Beach Park Trust plan reads like the City and the County had decided to go into business to attract more tourism and revenue and the Reynolds Street Pier appears like an afterthought.

Though the entire plan did not succeed, tennis courts, a handball court and a picnic area did. While the pier was totally ignored, the County had secured a \$120,000 matching state grant for the Higgs-Rest Beach Park Trust project.

Since 1983, though no attempt has been made by the County to restore the pier, in August of 1986, the County leased a segment of Higgs Beach to Sunset Water Sports so they could create a parasailing concession. Ironically, the use of parasailing logically requires the use of the pier. The lease originally was for five years at \$400 a month or 8% of the gross intake, but the lease was later changed by ex-Commissioner Ed Swift's suggestion for a ten year lease with an increase to \$600 a

month for the last five years. Occupational licenses were issued to Sunset Water Sports by the City and by the County in September 1986.

Though licenses were issued to build a booth on the County beach, there are no records on file with the Department of Environmental Regulation, the Florida Department of Natural Resources, and the United States Army Corps of Engineers. All three must approve before any commercial use of the pier can be made.

The pier comes under the jurisdiction of Public Submerged Lands and any commercial uses require a Submerged Land Lease Permit from the FDNR. No such document has been applied for. If a floating pier is placed in the water and is anchored or attached to the pier, a permit from the DER is required. No such document has been applied for. Before Sunset Water Sports applies for both permits, it must first place a Public Notice in the local newspaper soliciting comments.

The booth still remains and the Sunset Water Sports continues to pay rent to the County though the fate of the pier is uncertain. The parasailing problems will surface more clearly once the County decides what to do about the pier, yet it baffles the mind to think of a commercial venture being started with knowledge of the prevailing conditions.

The major issue is still the closing of the pier for the second time in four years. On January 12, 1987, Vernon C. Page, Acting County Engineer, sent a letter to Mr. C.

Dent Pierce, Director of the Monroe County Public Works, recommending to "take the structure out of service." Render it inaccessible by such means as removing a span as soon as possible." On January 30, 1987, the Monroe County Consulting Engineers re-inspected the pier for the second time and found that "it should remain closed to public use and additional signage stating, 'UNSAFE STRUCTURE — KEEP OFF' posted in highly visible places."

On February 17, 1987 concerned members of the community attended the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners meeting to voice their anger at being deprived of the use of the pier. Mr. Bob Harris, of the County Consulting Engineers, provided data that stated that five years since the first estimate, the cost has now escalated to between \$200,000 and \$300,000 to build a new pier. Local citizens at the meeting did not ask for a new pier but access into the water. The Commissioners, both City and County, agreed to hold public hearings beginning April 7, 1987, and to await a report from Mr. Harris on the "safety of limited use of the pier" for the Commissioner's March 17 meeting.

On February 24, 1987, 40 to 50 young, elderly, and disabled citizens met impromptu at the pier while Mr. H.A.V. Parker, of the County Engineers, and Mr. C. Dent Pierce inspected the pier. Mr. Fred Johnston, acting as spokesman for the group, suggested that the ladder could be

moved 25 feet closer to the shore, making a useable distance of 175 feet instead of 200 feet and then blocking off all of the remaining pier. Mr. Johnston also asked Mr. Pierce if a sign could be posted absolving the County of any risk taken by using the first 175 feet. Mr. Pierce willingly agreed to inquire if County Attorney Lucien Proby believed it was lawful to permit such a sign. The group felt the \$4000 collected by the Friends of the Pier, Inc. should be used to make temporary repair and use of the pier.

It is time for the County Commissioners to address the needs of the many elderly, arthritic, and disabled who need the pier to get their access to the water. There have been many unfortunate and misguided statements from some officials who view the pier as the gathering place for only one set of our citizens and, hence, not a priority to rebuild. Even if this were so — and what difference would it make, anyway? — the truth is that the pier handsomely serves the needs of many, many diverse members of our community and has successfully done so for years. How long will the County Commissioners continue to ignore the voices of their constituents crying out for help?

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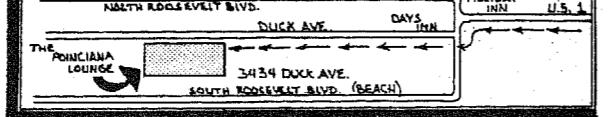
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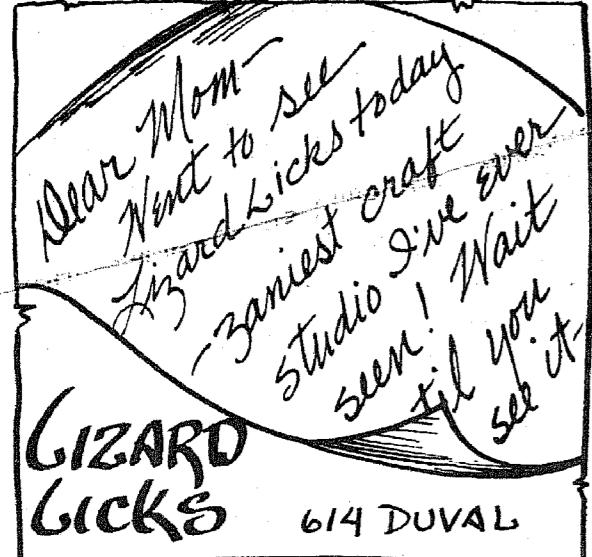
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GALLERY HOPPING

by Gordon Lacy

The unimaginable sneaked up on me this last month and I became sixty. This day of personal mourning and utter dejection was turned about by the arrival of the Henocque family and a birthday cake which, because of our marvelous electric company's many outages, was unbakeable in the form intended. My pal Claude at Croissants de France covered it with a white topping of almond paste with a painting in hot orange and intense blues of a palm-treed isle and a happy-go-lucky looking swimmer (me) with arm raised in greeting. This masterpiece was eminently perishable and I was at a loss as to its preservation until the next morning when I solved the problem and became the only Key West collector with a naive painting, vegetable-dye-on-almond-paste, on view in his freezer.

The annual watercolor show at the East Martello as an art experience left me feeling not the least bit enriched, uplifted or even amused. If the school of Sunday painting has a legitimate place in the world, it should be the artist's living room and not the walls of an up and coming young museum. I blush at the idea of thousands of tourists who pass through and go home to hear that Key West is touting itself as a viable center for the Arts. I hasten to add that Susan Olesen is doing splendidly and simply inherited this botch. She is responsible for half the Mario Sanchez permanent collection and twenty Papio pieces going on tour in April to the new Fort Lauderdale Museum, Valencia College and Florida State



University, and returning in October. I like the idea of Key West touting its riches. On the 28th there will be a party to honor Sanchez and remember Margo Golan. One of the season's happier events will be Jack Baron's show, "A Birthday Party." His "Wedding" last year was a sellout, so I expect that March 3rd there will be a scramble to get there first.

Richard Heyman at the Gingerbread informs that Jay Gogins' show of ceramic pots was highly successful and the opulent Jim Salem show got half sold at a preview. Craig Biondi will be showing on the 9th of the month and Richard promises growth and some surprises. I don't suppose that anyone will miss this show or the following Kiraly show on the 23rd, entitled "Blame it on Brazil," inspired by his recent trip there under the rain.

We have missed the annual Outdoor Art Show for the last two years for reasons beyond our control and much to our regret. There was no fidgeting around with Best-in-show, simply red and blue ribbons in each category and there seem to be no locals represented so I will forego a list. What happened to the locals was a great many of them won purchase prizes and though there is no list, money talks. Ned Gardener tells me that the quality of this show gets better every year and that must make nice news for the organizer, Florence Recher.

Farrington's is featuring limited editions of silk screens by new artist, Marcel, from Virginia who does the torrid tropics, marines and florals, and Ned, again, reports "intense, very juicy." Also, off-the-street parking.

The Key West Art Center on Front St. will be showing the watercolors of newcomer Tony Van Hasselt, views of Key West and in the last two weeks of the month, watercolors and oils by Irma Quigley.

Jane Doxey's clay faces and sculptures will be gracing the Guild Gallery's special-of-the-month walls as will Sonia Robinson's new hand colored paper collages. This is a change of pace from Sonia's usual high quality leather goods, but she is clinging to her special soft pinks and lavenders. A go-see is in order here.

The Haitian Art Company is in full season swing and at the moment of writing has a new shipment from Haiti waiting for pick-up in Miami, so I can safely say that when you read this there will be lots of new goodies to see. There is a good mix here of quality and prices.

Karen at the Artist Warehouse has finished her renovations and says, "tell everyone to come on over and have a look." It's her busiest season ever and in the refurbished gallery she is showing the wood sculpture of Rudi Prazen, Sandford's masterly renderings of the north coast of Spain from last summer's working tour and Karen's own acrylics and watercolors of Key West from last summer.

Helen and Ben of Harrison's on White Street have Diallo (Norma Sohl) calabashes. Norma asked me one time if I thought that calabashes could legitimately be classified as Art and when I admitted that I had not many feelings on the subject she attacked head on, producing samples of her work thereupon and the upshot was that I had to admit that they were in effect very attractive and touchable. Helen has been selling her own very smooth wood sculptures. The latest are trompe l'oeil sections of melons with very stylish spoons, and if this sounds awful it is my fault; they are fine. They are also showing a man named Mike Arias' work, Japanese-like studies of bamboo which, due to Lou Gerig's disease, he does with brush held in mouth.

Jim Moseley's Rose Lane Antiquities specializing in affordable pre-Columbian things, from jewelry to pots and back, is always worth the trip, especially the Peru collection.

I was taken to task the other day by a dear person who complained that I don't give enough space to the White Street Gallery. Well, Alice Terry's very fine watercolor show knocked everybody's eyes out and sold well, to no one's surprise. Henocque's oils, mainly of Key West this year, made us so proud to such a point that I have commissioned a portrait by him. We are squeezing in three one man shows this month; on the 9th of March, the brightly colored, brim-full of movement oils and acrylics by Nick Lawrence of Boston. On the 20th, a new aspect in the latest work by Michael Haykin whose style has done a 180 degree turn around and whose mastery of

the techniques of his art is of extraordinary quality. The 31st of the month, Vaughn Gibson, ever controversial, will present an all portrait show and the portrait of Colette would be worth the price of admission if there were one.

Barbara Cooper of Aristos throws a very good party and for Henri LaChapelle's opening, there was a delightful band got up by a guy named Skipper Kripitz and his friends, which provided an up ambiance, an extra plus on top of the work on view. On the 4th, Michael Cannon of Kentucky will be showing his latest oils. He is basically self-taught but has served an apprenticeship with Henry Faulkner. On the 18th, Helen Birtles, who is well known here, will be showing her latest watercolors. She seems for the moment to be lost in Bermuda, so Barbara was a bit fuzzy on details, but it will be all right on the night.

Joe Pais, the new kid on the block, at the Lane Gallery in Jordon's Cafe's patio, is very excited at having firmed up a show of the Pascale Maugerez and Olivier Cattei, a young couple who paint together and frequently on the same canvas. They have just closed a back-to-back show in Toulouse. Joe will be showing 30 of their pieces which he finds have gained in maturity. Their last show was big and splashy and irresistible. Joe recently dared to do an all nude show for two days only and I gather it was a smash in all ways. He confesses to having a few left which can be seen with his stable of six painters until the 28th when he opens the Cattei show.

The Lucky Street Gallery's move to Duval has turned out to be a blessing, Melissa tells me. They get the swanky clientele from the four surrounding restaurants. The Reverend Finster's show continues through the 9th of the month and has been very popular. On the 18th the French painter, Jean Louis LeBrun will show in tandem with John Martini. Jean

Louis' paintings have gotten larger and larger and he reports that one, thirteen feet long, is steamy and lurid. Something we surely will not miss, and John will show his sculpture, large and small, in steel, raw and painted.

Jordon and John (Meinster and Burgess) called recently from St. Thomas to report that all is well with them, they are in the midst of re-doing their house-studio. That is all very well, but we miss them utterly; SoMo is no longer the same without them.

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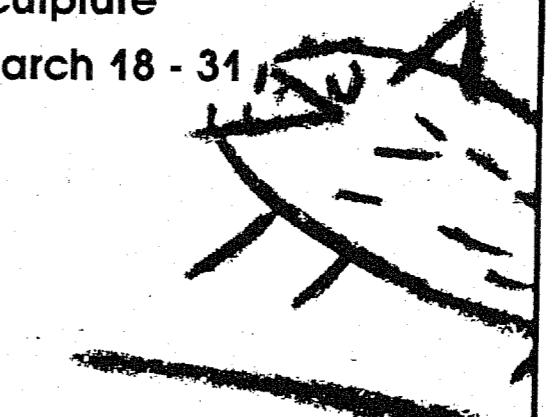
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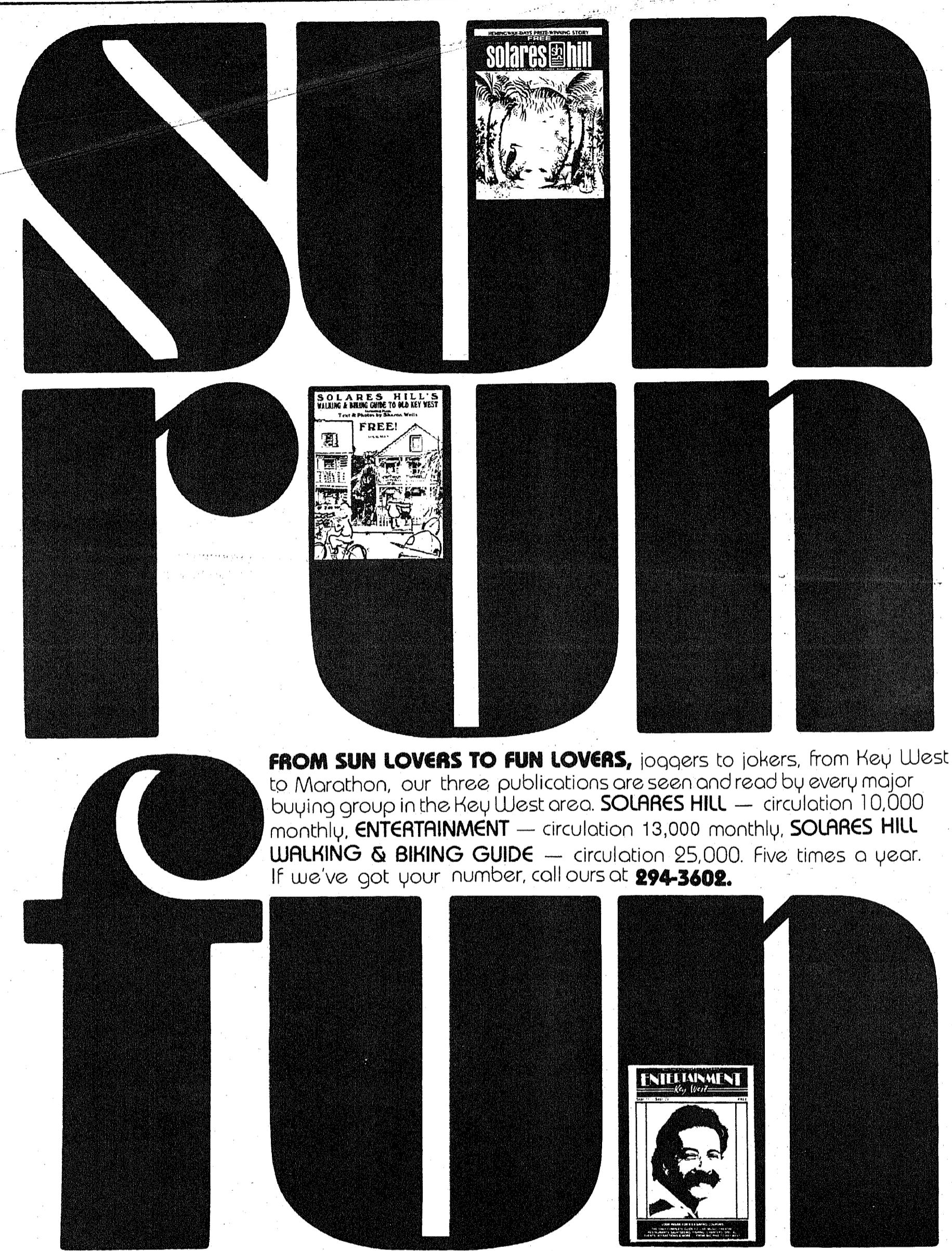
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Searching for the Pearle

Raw sewage, hard drugs and heroics in our most infamous trailer park

by Frank Kaiser

Mike Grodzinski doesn't look like a hero. His grey suit coat and sky blue tie don't go well with the too-short brown pants. And those shoes. There are small blotches of white paint all over them.

But the 33-year-old Pearle Trailer Park resident isn't standing here in front of half a hundred Stock Island residents to win a beauty contest. He's organizing against drugs.

"Remember. Call the sheriff with the dope buyer's license plate number. If you see the driver of a company truck buying, call the company. Red stickers mean Navy. Get the plate number and call the base. Together, we can stop this!" This man means business.

Grodzinski is a portrait in righteous indignation. He has been shot at. His cats have been killed. His three kids can't play in their own neighborhood, what with the prostitutes and drug pushers and all — not to mention the rats and raw sewage. And, to top it off, just yesterday someone tossed yet another rock through a window in his family's mobile home. So many of his windows have been broken he now replaces them with unbreakable Plexiglass.

Crack cocaine has touched off a dirty little war out there and Grodzinski's home is directly on the front line.

PIG HEAVEN

The first five years the Grodzinski family lived at Pearle were relatively peaceful. His three children played with their pets in the back yard and biked the trailer park streets, safe and carefree. Neighbors, mostly Cuban *Marielitos*, were quiet but friendly. And, although the land belonged to the park, the mobile homes were resident-owned; folks put pride into them.

Then, two years ago, Mike Grodzinski's world went to hell.

First, the trailer park manager, Billy Harper, quit. One of the owners, Michael A. Padron, Jr., took over as manager and, according to Grodzinski, all maintenance and services stopped dead. Soon raw sewage dried under the sun as broken and aged sewer pipes were left open and unrepaired. Untended streets took on the look of a battle zone with axle-breaking ruts and bathtub-sized holes. Trash and debris piled up. Within weeks, Pearle was the local Club Med of Ratsdom.

To cocaine dealers, however, Pearle must have looked like pig heaven. The trailer park's convenient location just off Route 1 and its obvious lack of services provided Miami drug distributors with a new hassle-free and efficient retail outlet for their newest and deadliest product: crack cocaine. Pearle soon became the southernmost drive-in drug market where "rocks" of the then new super-addictive drug could be had for \$10. Sex with young

female addicts was blatantly available for only a few dollars more.

As the dealers moved in, some trailer owners grew frightened and left, selling their units for as little as \$1,000. Other mobile homes simply were abandoned when the owners fell behind in land rent, unable to see any point in keeping up. As these people left, pushers and prostitutes replaced them.

THE LEAP INTO HELL

To hear Jack Lacombe tell it, Pearle Trailer Park went from heaven to hell in a matter of months. Lacombe, 79, has lived in Pearle Trailer Park since 1970. "It was a lovely place back then," the retired Great Lakes pilot recalls. "The roads were graded, repairs were taken care of immediately. And if anyone did anything illegal, they were out. Like that!"

Today Lacombe sleeps with a pistol close by his bed. "Most of the people here now are drug pushers or thieves or pimps or prostitutes," he says matter-of-factly. "Padron makes no effort to clean the place up. Call him about the crime here and he tells you to call the sheriff, then hangs up. I believe he'd like to see this place burn down."

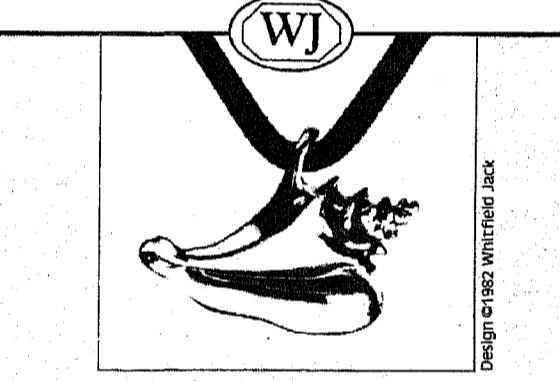
Grodzinski agrees. "Marieta Capps (the former owner/manager of Pearle, now Marieta Kaszyk) ran a good park. I think when Padron bought the place he planned to get rid of the trailers any way he could. With the mobile homes gone, he'd make big money building condos here in conjunction with the development of the golf course across the street."

(Michael Padron chose not to be interviewed for this article; nor would he or any other officer of Cayo Investments, the corporation which owns Pearle Trailer Park, appear when invited to meet with US 1 Homeowners Association, a group representing Pearle homeowners.)

Grodzinski continues, "He could have done it, too. But no one counted on Florida Statute 723."

Chapter 723 of Florida Statutes — known as the Florida Mobile Home Act — recognizes that mobile home ownership on rented land is a kind of hybrid tenancy. Since mobile homes are often anything but mobile, the law protects the home owners from being evicted for no legal reason without time and compensation. Says Harry McCluskey, owner of a barber shop located within Pearle, "Most of these trailers are 40 years old. There's no way they can be moved without falling apart." The Act stops any park owner wishing arbitrarily to close down his park from evicting anyone for 12 months after notice is served. If the park owner wants revised zoning, there must be a finding that appropriate space is available within a 50 mile radius to which the tenants can move.

By spring of 1986, drugs and cocaine dominated the park. Long-time Pearle residents felt helpless as their neighborhood deteriorated. Then, one night last March while Grodzinski was sitting reading by his front window, a man stepped out of the shadows, drew a pistol and fired it six times into the air. "It was at that time I realized I could be killed," Grodzinski recalls. "That's when I got mad!" With park



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services non-existent and drug dealers corrupting the area, Grodzinski convinced a majority of residents to sign a petition demanding that the management remove the growing piles of trash and debris and put the place right again.

Getting signatures was no small task. Most residents are Cuban refugees who, fresh from Castro's communism, view authority and paperwork with equal suspicion. But by this time gun shots were heard nightly, perhaps fired by disgruntled drug buyers to inhibit dealers' business. Residents were finding bullet holes in their homes and cars.

The petition demanded the establishment of a 24-hour emergency number, speed bumps, posted speed signs and the removal of trash and debris. When Padron failed to act, Grodzinski started and, with the aid of Erol Vural of Legal Services of the Florida Keys, incorporated the homeowners association.

PEARL'S "POLICE PROBLEM"

Across the park, Jack Lacombe would look out his window and see drugs being sold over the hood of his car. Night after night he'd chase the dealers away only to see them return moments later.

Occasionally, in frustration, he'd call manager/owner Michael Padron but,

according to Lacombe, Padron would do nothing to stop the criminals. Lacombe, whose trailer has been broken into three times within the year, recalls being told by park management that it's a police problem and that he should call the sheriff. "Trouble is," Lacombe says now, "when the sheriff's people come, the dealers scatter and disappear."

Pearle's streets are ill-lit and hidden from public road surveillance. Multiple exits provide easy escape from authorities.

Grodzinski recalls a mass arrest at Pearle in November. "Two abandoned trailers were busted. Maybe 20 people. Those people weren't paying rent, had no electricity or water. Yet Padron never once came in to kick those people out. He never called the sheriff's department and told them, 'I want those people out of here!' He took no action, none at all."

Now, Mike Grodzinski is a mild enough guy. A born-again Christian, he's a member of Stock Island's Baptist Temple. His children, John, George, and Allicia, attend school there. In contrast to the park outside, the Grodzinski home is clean, well-kept. Colorful stunt kites cover the living room ceiling, reminders of the days when Grodzinski flew kites at Smathers Beach for Heavenly Bodies Kite Store. Finances were tough for the family in those days so, when the wind softened, he'd fish from a small skiff, catching anything he could to keep the family in food.

Today he's in the tropical fish business, sometimes diving on a huki rig to depths of 130 feet for brightly colored esoterics such as angels, rock beauties, bluehead wrasse, sponge crabs and small sharks which are sent, live, to collectors up north. Sherrie, his wife, is part American Indian. "I may be part Indian," she laughs, "but Mike is a full Polack." They've lived in this mobile

home at Pearle for seven years and like Stock Island. "It's a good thing," says Sherrie. "No one will buy our trailer the way this park is right now."

After the first gun incident Grodzinski "got ticked and decided that something had to be done." He called the county code enforcement people, the electric department, plumbing department, the health department, the building department — citing appropriate violations to each. "The sewer system here is totally inadequate. Drain fields are clogged. They're not maintained so when they crack, salt water seeps in and, next thing you know, raw sewage is all over the ground." For months Grodzinski hounded the county bureaucrats every chance he had. "The County Code Enforcement people were our biggest help," he remembers. "They really cared, but even they got frustrated by Padron's lack of response."

Last election day Grodzinski spoke with Kirk Zuelch, whose job it is as State Attorney to enforce the Florida Mobile Home Act. "Was it possible," Grodzinski asked, "to bring nuisance charges, criminal negligence and other actions against Pearle management?"

When I repeated the question to the State Attorney recently, he replied that his office had indeed filed a nuisance action two years ago against Pearle because of the existing poor health and sanitary conditions. The action was dropped when the Health Department declared that the place had been cleaned up.

Zuelch is sympathetic, but realistic. "The difficulty is that you come in and say this park is a mess and the owner says, 'Fine! I don't have the money to clean it up so I'll close the park down.' That's not the answer. Not everyone there is a criminal. There's a law against shutting down the park when there's no place else for the residents to go. The drug dealers? They'd just move somewhere else close anyway."

ANOTHER MIKE HEARD FROM

Maybe Grodzinski is overreacting. Mike Schuster, 50, a house painter and Pearle resident of four years, thinks so. Schuster's home, too, has been burglarized; he too owned a gun for a while. But he sees his residential future at Pearle, and he has backed up his convictions by building a deck and otherwise spending money to make long-term improvements to his home.

"Get rid of the drugs and everything will be fine," Schuster says. He feels that the drug problem is indeed a police problem. "A community problem, too. These girls around here aren't hookers. They're coke whores earning \$200-\$300 a day yet they don't have enough money for even a donut." Citing his \$120 a month rent and free cable TV, Schuster says, "Padron is fair. Mike Grodzinski is antagonistic. He won't negotiate on anything. Padron's got problems, too."

Detective Ben Lowe of the sheriff's office agrees. "I think the park owner is concerned. He has problems, trailers there that belong to phantoms. You can't haul a trailer out when no one knows who the owner is. You can't do much of anything."

The fact remains that drugs and prostitution continue to run riot at Pearle.

Throughout the summer and fall, Grodzinski shakes the bureaucratic bushes looking for help. In the meantime, he and his family witness drug deals day and night. They see and attempt to help young runaways from getting hooked and turning to prostitution. Two commit suicide, another dies by drug overdose. Sherrie is constantly propositioned by unknown Johns, dealers cut crack cocaine on the Grodzinski's car, prostitutes even have sex on its hood. Strangers urinate on his house, break his sewer and water pipes, yet calls to park management get only the response that "it's your problem."

Across the park, Harry McCluskey's customers have difficulty getting through a babble of prostitutes and crack dealers to get a haircut. McCluskey's business drops dramatically. Jack Lacombe's daughter is frightened even to enter the park to pick up her dad for dinner. In the meantime retail stores on Stock Island and Key West post signs stating: NO CHECKS CASHED FOR PEARLE TRAILER PARK RESIDENTS. The situation is grim.

"Everyone now has a gun here," claims Grodzinski. "Even the little old black lady across the street has a .38. She's almost 70, and on at least one night she came out with gun in hand to shield her grandson from about 20 dope dealers hanging around in front."

Fear pushes Grodzinski to completely change the rooms around in his home. Today anyone breaking in must go through his bedroom before they can reach his children. "I always sleep with a shotgun beside the bed now," he says. "On any given night I could get a knife in my back or get blown away. That would be the end of it. God is really my protection."

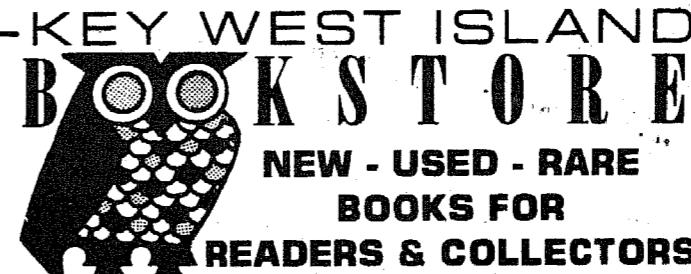
LOCAL GLITTERATI INVOLVED

By December, the J.A.I.L. Unit alone had made some 40 drug arrests within Pearle Trailer Park. It seems to Grodzinski that the minute one pusher is arrested another fills his place; nothing even dents the problem.

Exasperated, he calls a town meeting for December 7th. About 60 Stock Island residents show up at the Baptist Temple, all there to let off steam. And on the dais are Sheriff Billy Freeman, County Commissioner Gene Lytton and County Mayor Jerry Hernandez, State Attorney Zuelch, and State Representative Ron Saunders. Other law enforcement officers and prosecutors listen intently from the audience as Mike Grodzinski tells everyone that he's fed up, and why.

Other Stock Island residents speak out, complaining about the crack cocaine problem in their trailer parks. But everyone knows that Pearle is the focus of this problem. In a fiery speech, Legal Services' Erol Vural states that Pearle is a "human cesspool which degrades people. The owners of Pearle Trailer Park know what's going on at their park. We've told them. I propose that we do everything we can within the law to make them responsive."

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Afterwards Grodzinski is despondent. Only three Pearle residents had attended the meeting; none of the Cuban community was there. Notably absent, too, are Padron or any of the park owners. And although each of the public officials there recognized the problems and spoke of reform, Grodzinski has heard it all before. Another meeting is set, this for January 12.

Although Sheriff Freeman couldn't comment at the time, he already had instigated Operation Bell and, since November 26, Ben Lowe and his men had been working undercover within the park. In the week following Grodzinski's town meeting, 26 drug arrests were made by the sheriff's department.

On December 22, Mike and Sherrie, along with Harry McCluskey and two other Pearle residents filed a public nuisance law suit against Cayo Investments and its officers. Among the allegations put before Judge Gomez' court: "Numerous conditions exist at Pearle Trailer Court and have been permitted to exist at the park since January 1, 1982 by the defendants, which are injurious to public health and morals." After a short delay, Gomez issued an injunction to Pearle's owners and management to clean up the park.

By the January 12th town meeting, bright lights and No Parking signs are up all along the McDonald Avenue side of Pearle Trailer Park. Inside the Baptist Temple, Stock Island residents now complain that the Pearle drug pushers are now moving to trailer parks all over the island. But no one can deny the many improvements made by county officials since that first meeting in December. "There are so many of the sheriff's police around," says one man, "that when I reported two suspicious characters yesterday, they turned out to be undercover officers!"

Mike Grodzinski and I walk around Pearle about midnight the following Saturday evening. Seven of the abandoned trailers already have been removed. Others, their windows and doors nailed shut with 1

x 2s, seem destined for the same fate. Piles of trash which just one month before had attracted large rats are now gone. But the place is still a mess.

We witness prostitution solicitations under the new lights as cars park in the middle of McDonald Avenue to negotiate. But for a Saturday night the drug trafficking is quiet. Real quiet for Pearle. This isn't the open and raucous drug market of two months ago, perhaps because most of the arrested drug dealers are now in jail, awaiting bail, trial, or sentencing. (See "Portrait of a Pearle Junkie," *Solares Hill*, February, 1987.)

Grodzinski is still angry. He carries a large, inch-thick stick. And as we walk the still-rutted and dark interior streets of Pearle he muses on what will happen when the *narcotraficantes* get out from behind bars. Where will they go but back to Pearle? He feels trapped and sees Michael Padron as his jailer. Grodzinski has a lot of money

invested in his trailer, yet it's worth maybe \$1,000 as it sits now. He's stuck. Just as Jack Lacombe's stuck and Harry McCluskey and a whole lot of others are stuck here where mobile homes aren't mobile and people sleep uneasily with guns beside their beds.

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Writers & Key West, 1987

by Dianne Donovan, Book Editor of The Chicago Tribune

(The Writers & Key West Literary Seminar was sponsored by The Friends of the Monroe County Library, Key West, and funded in part by the Florida Endowment for the Humanities (a state program of the National Endowment for the Humanities), Monroe County Tourist Development Council, The Miami Herald, the Ruffner Foundation, and Sunshine-Jr. Stores.)

Key West: That particular pairing of words conjures for almost every American images based on fiction, fantasy, and film. For some it is Papa Hemingway, a fishing rod in one fist and a drink in the other, straddling this tropical paradise with one foot firmly planted in the Gulf Stream and the other hooked over a chair rung at Sloppy Joe's. For others it is the humid, palm-fringed, vaguely slow-motion world of Tennessee Williams, of lazy ceiling fans and white suits. But for those 500 persons who gathered on the island January 15-18 for the fifth annual Key West Literary Seminar & Tour, perhaps Helen Vendler best summed up the prevailing image when she referred, in a letter to project director Lynn Kaufelt, to "this uttermost shore as the site of symbolic imagination, where the American land mass tapers off to meet the sea and the sound of waves meets the syllables of words."

Vendler, professor of English at Harvard University and poetry critic of *The New Yorker* magazine, was one of many distinguished critics, authors, poets, and scholars who came to dissect the island, its writers — past and present — and its mystique in a forum on "Writers & Key West." In the two-and-a-half-day period packed with panel discussions, parties, and literary tours, a certain element emerged — a clue, of sorts, to the writing community of Key West. Paradoxically, that unifying element was disparity. Not in the sense of dissension, but rather in the sense of innate differences, evidence perhaps that it was no accident that this gathering was called "Writers & Key West" rather than the more cohesive, even scholarly "The Writer & Key West"; for there is no "Key West writer," and one sensed, as participants talked about their work and their locale, that the friendly, talented people who make Key West their home — or home away from home — are the happier for that distinction.

Columnist and critic Jane O'Reilly, who divides her time between New York and Key West, said that, while writers do get together in Key West, there is no longer a central gathering place. "We gather in small random groups," she said while participating in a panel titled "Key West Observed." She added, "What we have now in Key West is a critical mass — writers bringing writers." In so saying, O'Reilly touched on an issue close to the hearts of many panelists — overcrowding

on the island and the proliferation of writers. As Philip Caputo, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and best-selling author, said in his address, "Writer in Residence": "Termites, ants and other insects may

wrote his friend Ernest Hemingway, saying, "It's a vacation paradise like no other in Florida. You ought to try it."

And try it Hemingway did. By 1928 it was Hemingway who was urging Dos



Photo by Lawson Little

Philip Burton greets Jim McLernan as Sebastian Cabrera looks on.

flourish in colonies, but writers suffer if they spend too much time in each others' company ... If writers surround themselves with too many other writers, inevitably they will begin writing for the other writers and not for their audience."

Be that as it may, this "uttermost shore" has appealed to writers for more than a century, and much of the days' discussions revolved around the importance of "place" in the creative process and, more specifically, the importance of Key West for those who chose to live there. Bill Robertson, book editor of the *Miami Herald*, opened this year's seminar by drawing a metaphoric line from the Athens of Aeschylus to the Key West of Caputo. Athens, he said, was the first literary gathering place, the birthplace of dramatic tragedy and, thus, the ancestral home of modern literature. From the coffeehouses of 18th century London to the Farm of the Transcendentalists in 19th century New England, from Paris in the 1930s to San Francisco in the '50s, the importance of writers gathering together to share ideas and provide artistic support has been apparent, Robertson said.

Indeed, Key West itself is not a new discovery of the literati; the seminar's first panel, moderated by biographer William Wright and titled "The Idea of Key West in the American Literary Imagination," discussed the local appeal to those who came before — the writers, now dead, who helped establish the island's literary reputation. From Anne Rowe, author of *The Idea of Florida in the American Literary Imagination*, came an impressive list of authors who visited the state, if not the island specifically, and later wrote about it: Ralph Waldo Emerson, Sidney Lanier, Ring Lardner, Stephen Crane, Henry James. But it was John Dos Passos, among modern writers, who really "discovered" Key West, according to Virginia Spencer Carr, who has written biographies of Dos Passos and Carson McCullers and is working on a life of Tennessee Williams. "It was Dos Passos who came first," she said. He had come to the Keys in 1924 after a hiking trip down the peninsula. He suffered from rheumatoid arthritis and found the sun good for his health; he also found the island a good place to walk, one of his favorite pastimes. He

Passos to join him in Key West, praising the fishing. Indeed, fishing the Gulf Stream was a primary reason that Hemingway stayed in Key West, according to Scott Donaldson, who has written biographies of Hemingway and Fitzgerald. But there was more: Donaldson said Hemingway had long been fascinated by "the pull of the furthest outpost. He was always trying to escape from civilization." Key West was, in a sense, a new beginning for him; he came with a new wife (who was pregnant), and "a new wife commanded a new venue." By the 1930s, Hemingway's house was a stop on the landmarks tour and, in 1938, the Overseas Highway was completed, bringing even more tourists. Donaldson said the island was getting too crowded for Hemingway's taste, and there was yet another reason for moving on: "In December of 1936 a beautiful blonde in a black dress walked into Sloppy Joe's and engaged Hemingway in conversation." That was the beginning of the end of his marriage to Pauline and the beginning of an affair and, ultimately, another marriage. Indeed, time for another move.

As David Kaufelt, whose most recent novel, *American Tropic*, is a multi-generational epic set in Florida, pointed out in his historical overview of Key West, it was Hemingway who really established Key West as a "writer's paradise" by attracting the national media to what had been an out-of-the-way island. Key West in the '30s was the ~~forest~~ city in the country, Kaufelt said. But writers still came, and many who came stayed. Stetson Kennedy, a native Floridian author who headed the Works Progress Administrative projects in Key West during the Depression, regaled the seminar audience with reminiscences about his early days in Key West. He came as an aspiring young writer in 1935, and chose Key West as his destination because, as he told the audience, he had resolved to hitch hike to the Southernmost point he could hitch hike to, and that — with a ferry ride thrown in — was Key West. Kennedy came in the wake of the "big blow" of 1935, a hurricane so bad, he said, it's still talked about by black folks in these parts who say, "It blew so hard it blew the well up out of the ground, blew the crooked road

Con't on pg. 67

A Letter From Bill Westray

(Bill is away for a few weeks. The following is a very interesting letter he sent me . . . ed.)

Dear Bill,

During our trip north in February, we stopped overnight between Panama City and Fort Walton Beach. This stretch of the Florida Gulf Coast is now heavily built with high rise hotels and resort motels situated on the dunes between U.S. Highway 90 and the beaches. We wondered about the propriety of so much building so close to the water. We could still see residual damage from Hurricane Frederick in November 1985; but that's another subject.

I took the occasion this time to visit Eglin Air Force Base which is the large military complex just north of the beach areas. Former Governor Bob Graham had mentioned to us during his visit to Key West last November that the Air Force had allowed sharing its airfield facilities with the civilian airlines serving Fort Walton Beach and Panama City.

Eglin is the home of the 322nd Fighter Wing as well as a development and test facility for various types of Air Force weapons, armaments and facility systems. It is a very large active base, with bombing and gunnery ranges and other activities. We observed a number of modern jet fighters operating from the runways as well as other fighter-bomber, transport and utility type aircraft.

We found the compact Okaloosa County air terminal facility at the northwest side of Eglin Air Force Base. You reach it from the same state highway 85 from which you reach the main base, but it has separate access and parking a little north of the main base entrance. The terminal building is about the same size as the terminal building at Key West International Airport. It serves four airlines with 47 flights a day. There are counters for Eastern, Continental, Northwest, and a Delta subsidiary called ASA. They operate a combination of commercial jet, turboprop, and conventional prop aircraft. I saw a DC-9 and a DeHavilland DH-7 (4-engined turboprop) loading passengers at the ramp. The facility has a separate parking apron that could accommodate 4 or 5 medium airliners. It has a connecting taxiway to the two main runways and taxiways of Eglin AFB. The terminal has all the usual amenities, including a snack bar, car rental and limousine service to town.

All aircraft control, ground control, tower, etc., is handled by the Air Force. When I asked whether the civilian operations caused problems with military operations, those whom I talked to were surprised that I even raised the question.

The distance from Fort Walton Beach to the air terminal is about 7 miles — somewhat further to Panama City. General aviation is not served at Eglin, but is served

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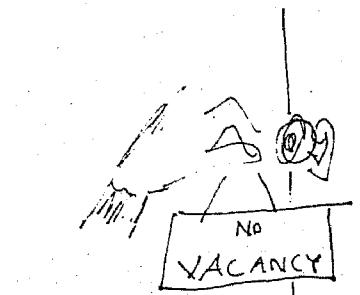
Once again I have reached the conclusion that a similar operation would serve the long term needs of Key West, and that there is no other viable solution. Those who would try to squeeze commercial jets into Meecham Field are condemning Key West to second class air transportation forever. The 4800-foot runway at KWIA has room left to expand only a few hundred feet, and that would provide only a token improvement in safety or capacity. Boca Chica has one 10,000-foot and two 7,000-foot runways that already accommodate the largest jet transport aircraft such as C-135, C-5, and C-141's.

In my opinion, limited shared use of Boca Chica, at least by the airlines using jets, is the best permanent solution to the city's needs. We need to persuade the

Defense Department and the Navy Department, as well as our legislative representatives, that we need to seek ways to help meet the city's needs, not find reasons and excuses not to accommodate the city.

I'm in Atlanta this week. See you in a few weeks.

Bill Westray



benetton

626 Duval Street

Citizens' Survey #1 "Our Constitutional Future"

Article 5 of the U.S. Constitution provides for amending the constitution by application of 2/3 of the state legislatures to congress to call a *Constitutional Convention (ConCon)*. 32 states have passed such legislation. Passage in two more states would require the convening of a ConCon. A ConCon may be held in the next 10 years.

Do you want to be represented in the decisions of a ConCon?

Please check one:

Yes No

Reasons: _____

Please send your reply to:
Citizens' Constitutional Observance
P.O. Box 1972
Key West, FL 33041

Include name, address & phone. Survey results will be made public at the mid-April Citizens' Observance Assembly.

Key West Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

by Jolene Talarico

Here in Key West the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship was founded one year ago this month. The principles and philosophies of this liberal denomination, which teaches a positive faith of affirmation in man and confidence in the universe, has grown out of a long history, going back to as early as 250 A.D.

Unitarian Universalism grew out of the reactions to the stringent limitations of religious orthodoxy. A movement known as the "Enlightenment" arose at the end of the eighteenth century. Among the many great thinkers and philosophers of that period, representing a new path of liberal feeling influencing the re-thinking of orthodoxy, were Ben Franklin and Thomas Jefferson. Their words helped lead people from orthodox religion into the liberal religious movement.

The heart of Unitarian Universalism is a positive faith in *working principles* rather than doctrines. Beliefs are centered in a method or process of religious life. There is neither creed nor creedal statements. Members are expected to follow the dictates of reason, conscience and experience on matters normally frozen into doctrine. The churches make no official pronouncements on God, the Bible, Jesus, immortality, or

any of the other theological questions generally answered by more traditional religious groups. To the Unitarian Universalists, a religious way of life is an individual creation. Their singularly binding principle is *individual freedom of religious belief* — the principle of the free mind.

This premise is what makes this church different from virtually all other forms of religious philosophies.

To the Unitarian Universalist, the most vital fact about man is this: in order to advance, man must be free. There is no area of life in which it is more important to be free than religion. Additionally, it is their contention that a church which claims authority to dictate beliefs is a human institution (and, by virtue of humanness, is not infallible), and its "final truths" are simply conclusions arrived at by earlier human leaders. Since churches, Bibles and creeds are creations of people who exercised their freedom to create, is there any reason why others should expect to do less?

The Key West Unitarian Universalist Fellowship offers weekly meetings on Sunday mornings at 10:00 at the Woman's Club at 319 Duval Street. The weekly service incorporates music, readings and speakers whose talks cover a wide range of topics and offers the opportunity for discussion. The public is welcomed and encouraged to discover the Key West Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL
Bethel A.M.E. Church, 223 Truman Ave., 294-9951. Sunday worship 11 am, Sunday School 9:30 am, prayer meeting Tuesday evenings at 7:30.

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD
Glad Tidings Tabernacle, 1209 United St., 296-5773. Charles C. Elliott, pastor. Sunday worship 10:30 am and 6:30 pm, Sunday Children's Church 10:30 am, Wednesday night youth service 7:00 pm, Thursday mid-week service 7:00 pm. Nursery available for all services. Helping Hands child care center for ages 1 thru 4.

BAHA'I
Baha'i Faith, 718 Duval, 294-2060.

BAPTIST
Greater Keys Baptist Church, Fifth & Seidenberg, 296-3648. Dennis Clark, pastor. Sunday school 9:45 am, Sunday services 11:00 am and 7:00 pm, Thursday service 7:00 pm.

St. James Missionary Baptist Church, 312 Olivia, 296-5593. Fred L. Carter, DD, pastor. Sunday worship 11:00 am and 6:00 pm, Sunday school 9:30 am.

Big Coppitt First Baptist Church, Ave. F, MM 10, 294-4118. Randy Kitchens, Pastor. Sunday worship 1:00 am and 7:30 pm, Sunday school 9:45 am, prayer meeting Wed. evenings at 7:30.

Fifth St. Baptist Church, 2318 Fogarty Ave., 294-2255. Rev. R. Hetherington, Sunday worship 11:00 am and 7:00 pm, Sunday school 9:45 am.

First Baptist Church, 524 Eaton St., 296-8544. Charles Teagle Jr., Pastor. Sunday worship 11:00 am and 7:00 pm, Sunday school 9:30 am, Wednesday evening service 7:00.

Key West Baptist Temple, 5727 Second Ave., Stock Island. Morris Wright, pastor. Sunday worship 10:50 am and 6:30 pm, Sunday school 9:45 am, senior citizen Sunday service 2:30 pm, Wednesday evening prayer service 7:00.

Sugarloaf Baptist Mission, meeting at Sugarloaf Elementary School, 45-2204. Rev. Mark Beasley, pastor. Sunday school 9:45 am, worship service 11:00 am. Vacation bible school for children ages 3 thru 12 July 14-25. Mon. thru Fri. 9:00 am to 12 noon, at Sugarloaf Elementary School.

CATHOLIC
St. Bede's Catholic Church, 2700 Flagler Ave., 294-2984. Rev. Thomas F. Mullane, pastor. Mass Monday 10:30 am at Senior Citizen Plaza; Tuesday thru Friday 9:00 am in the church; Sunday 9:00 am, 11:15 am, 7:00 pm in the church; Vigil Mass Saturday 7:00 pm.

St. Mary Star of the Sea, Truman Ave. & 1010 Windsor Lane, 294-1018. Sunday Mass 10:30 am, Spanish service 294-2350. Dr. F. Isaac Lowe. Sunday worship 11:00, Sunday school 9:30 am.

CHURCH OF CHRIST
First Congregational, 527 William St., 296-8633. Rev. V. K. Reiley. Sunday services 11:00 am and 7:00 pm. Sunday school 9:45 am.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE
First Church of Christ Scientist, 327 Elizabeth St., 296-8215. Sunday services 10:00 am and 7:00 pm, Sunday school 10:00 am. Reading room open Tuesday and Thursday.

CHURCH OF CHRIST
Church of Christ, 1710 Von Phister St., 296-3331 or 294-2202.

Lower Keys Church of Christ, 1609 Patricia St., 294-3042, 82-9721. Sunday Bible study 10:00 am, Sunday worship 11:00 am, Wednesday worship service at 7:00 pm.

CHURCH OF GOD
Church of God, 1419 White St., 296-8844. R.W. Turnmond, pastor. Sunday worship 11:00 am and 7:00 pm, Sunday school 9:45 am, family night Thursday at 7:30.

CHURCH OF GOD
Holy Innocents Episcopal Church, 901 Flagler Ave., 296-3286. Rev. Neal H. Brown. Sunday services 7:30 and 10:00 am, Sunday school 9:15 am, Holy Communion Wednesday evening at 7:30.

St. Paul's, 401 Duval St., 296-5142. Rev. Jack B. Meyer. Sunday worship 7:30, 9:00 and 11:00 am; Sunday school 9:00 am, Wednesday services 7:00 and 9:00 am.

St. Pete's, 800 Center St., 296-2346. Rev. Norbert M. Cooper. Sunday services 11:00 am, Sunday school 10:00 am; Mass on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday at 7:00 am.

EPISCOPAL
Peace Covenant Presbyterian Church, 2610 Flagler, 294-1223. Sunday service 11:00 am, Sunday school 9:15 am. Trinity Presbyterian USA, 717 Simonton St., 296-3318. Rev. Albert W. Moses. Sunday service 11:00 am, Sunday school 9:30 am.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES
Jehovah's Witnesses Kingdom Hall, 1117 White St., 294-0462.

LATTER DAY SAINTS
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 3424 Northside Dr., 294-9400. Sunday services 9:30 am, Sunday school 10:50 am.

LUTHERAN
Grace Lutheran, 294-5161. Rev. Paul N. Rauscher, pastor. Sunday worship services 9:00 am, Sunday school and adult Bible class 10:15 am.

Elementary school for three-year-olds thru sixth grade.

Holy Trinity, 3424 N. Roosevelt Blvd., 294-1305. Donald Johnson, pastor. Sunday worship 11:00 am.

METHODIST
Cornish Memorial AME Zion, 702 Whitehead St., 294-2350. Dr. F. Isaac Lowe. Sunday worship 11:00, Sunday school 9:30 am.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
First Congregational, 527 William St., 296-8633. Rev. V. K. Reiley. Sunday services 11:00 am and 7:00 pm. Sunday school 9:45 am.

UNITY
Unity of the Keys, 3424 Duck Ave., 296-5888. Sunday 11:00 am, Tuesday evening course in miracles 7:00 pm, Thursday 11 am basic Unity principles.

WESLEYAN METHODIST
Holiness Wesleyan Methodist, 800 Eisenhower Dr., 294-4742. Raymond Shreve, pastor. Sunday worship 11:00 and 7:30 pm; Sunday school 9:45 am, Wednesday prayer meeting 7:30, Thursday evening service at 7:00.

First United Methodist, 600 Eaton St., 296-2392. Rev. David H. Schants, Jr. Sunday worship services 8:30 and 11:00 am, Sunday school 9:45 am.

Fleming Street United Methodist, 729 Fleming St., 296-2812. Rev. Charles H. Ketchum.

Ley Memorial United Methodist, 1304 Truman Ave., 296-3313. Walter R. Matthews, Jr. Sunday school 9:45 am, Sunday worship 11:00 am. Bible studies: short term at various times.

NON-DENOMINATIONAL
Cosmic Lightbearers, 720 Waddell Ave., 294-0294.

Rev. Jeanette Bottoms. "We are a small group of New Age seekers who currently use the natural settings of Key West as our place of worship. Thursday 7:30 pm, Higgs Beach gazebo."

Gospel Chapel, 720 Southard St., 294-4351.

Metropolitan Community Church, Universal Fellowship, 1215 Petronia Street, 294-8112.

Movement of Spiritual Inner Awareness, 1005 Seminary St., 294-6739. Rev. Sheri Flyk. Taped seminars by John-Roger, Tues. evenings 7:30 pm.

PRESBYTERIAN
Peace Covenant Presbyterian Church, 2610 Flagler, 294-1223. Sunday service 11:00 am, Sunday school 9:15 am.

Trinity Presbyterian USA, 717 Simonton St., 296-3318. Rev. Albert W. Moses. Sunday service 11:00 am, Sunday school 9:30 am.

QUAKERS
Quakers, Sunday 10:30 am. Information 294-1523.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
Seventh-Day Adventist, 1006 Thomas St., 294-4077.

SYNAGOGUE
Congregation B'Nai Zion, 750 United St., 296-5739.

Rabbi Sol Landau. Services on Fri. evenings at 8:00.

UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST
Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship of Key West, at the Women's Club, 319 Duval Street, 294-3529; 296-4522. Sunday Services 10:00 AM.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
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Church Directory

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

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Craig Biondi: The Examined Life

by V.K. Gibson

I pass down a narrow lane, walking towards the house where Biondi lives. A small, black dog rushes out. This is Olive, who wants to bite me. (Perhaps she reads my column.) Biondi appears and restrains Olive, and we go inside. The place is an old Conch house, once a dump, which Craig and his life-partner, Greg Forsyth, have

restored together. They've done a beautiful job, and —

But enough of the domestic scene.



Space is limited. I'm given a Coke, and then Craig and I go off to his nearby studio. It's another Conch structure, but not

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restored, and purely a work space. Its character is derived from its rustic appearance and from the dominance of the artist: paintings in various stages of completion, an easel, fingered tubes paints, a thicket of brushes.

We sit together and I place my tape recorder on the back of the couch. As always, I suffer a momentary fear that the machine will fail to work and that I won't notice until it's too late. It doesn't matter that I enjoy almost total recall when I'm writing.

Biondi: "I was born in San Francisco and lived in the city until I was in grade school and we moved to the country. So I grew up in the Sacramento Valley. I thought I'd be there forever."

Now, here, I would usually go on at length about the subject's educational credits. Some artists have resumes the size of a Key West telephone directory and they whip them out at the slightest provocation. Biondi sits patiently and waits for questions. Let's deal with this quickly:

Stanford University, San Francisco School of Design.

It may surprise some readers to learn that Biondi majored in creative writing in college. He also took a hefty load of art courses. During the interview he observes, laughing, that fine art is more marketable than short stories.

"If you're desperate to eat, you get a faster return with a painting."

How very true!

Today Biondi resembles the young Hemingway, and it will further surprise many to hear that he was once part of the Hippy culture of the 1960's and '70's.

"I dropped out of the establishment society and lived in a hole of an apartment with other people. It was a very confusing time for me. The one constant was that I painted almost every day. I enjoyed the art classes at Stanford, but there were pressures to major in something more 'substantial.'"

This was English, with the possibility of a teaching career. Eventually he decided to concentrate upon painting, and enrolled in the Academy of Art in San Francisco.

He views his writing and painting as expressions of the same impulse. Earlier in his life he was also very musical, and played "all the reed instruments."

During his school days, in conjunction with a Stanford program, he went to Europe and visited many of the great museums. In 1975 he worked on mural commissions in England, with another artist, done in a manor house in Oxfordshire. The project took a year to complete.

"Oddly enough, one of the murals was of a tropical scene."

This trip afforded more opportunities to see great art. The use of light and dark in the paintings of the Spanish School had a great impact upon his own artistic vision. And he went to Vienna just to see the works of Klimt and Schiele.

"The most moving experience was in the Prado when I saw Goya's personal 'dining room' paintings. Not the court paintings of pretty little girls but the ones he did for himself. Murals of wretched people, the poor and the hungry."

I find this comment particularly interesting when contrasted with another:

"I'm not drawn to ugly images."

But he admits to having done certain portraits "to purge something from my system."

It's amusing to imagine a hidden collection of portraits which caricature some of Key West's more annoying citizens. Biondi seems to sense my pleasure; he tells me little about the works, and so I visualize things which are probably far 'worse' than they actually are. Delicious.

In the course of knowing Biondi I've become aware that he is well-read, and that he enjoys conversation which rises above the level of the Reeboks Revolution. He keeps a journal which has grown to thirty-five books since 1968.

"A lot of times if you write things down you understand them for the first time."

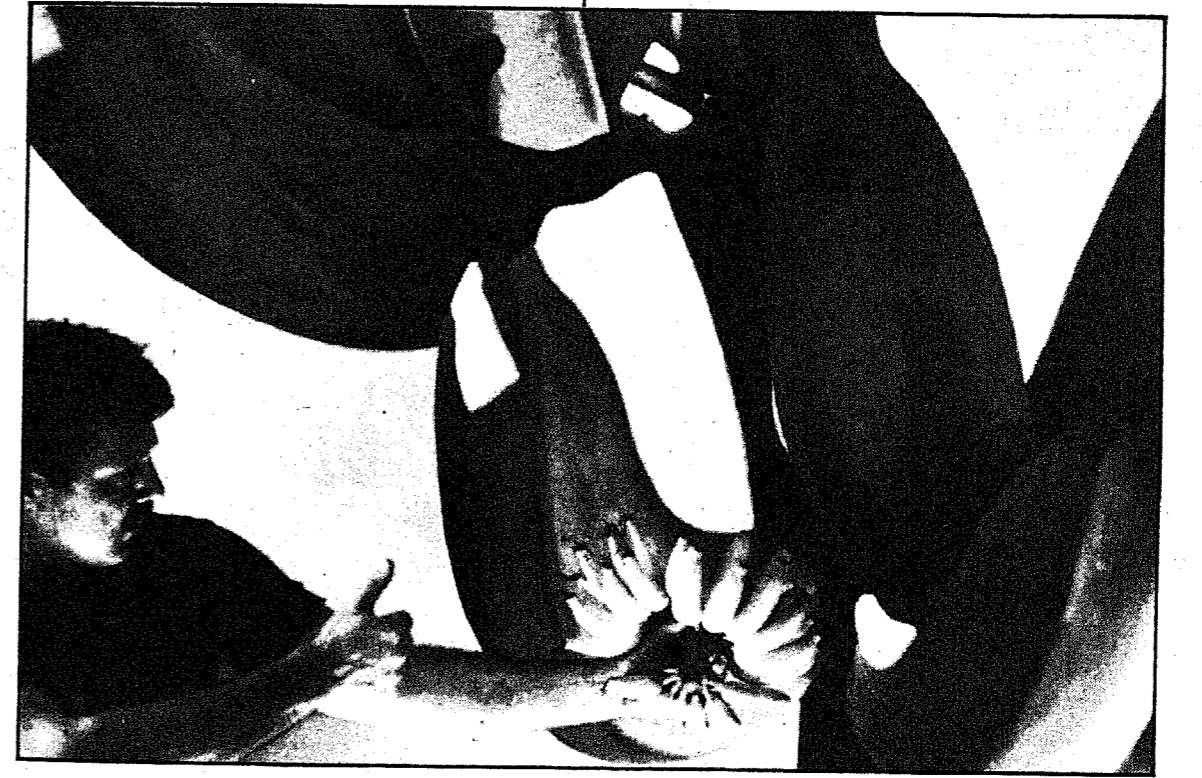
He leads, therefore, the examined life. But, is he an intellectual, one for whom the world of ideas is at least as 'real' as the

men frozen in the summer of their complacency are direct in their statements.

"If you can paint the human figure you can paint anything. But there's no market for that here. I don't understand it."

(It's simple, Craig. Most people are wimps when it comes to the kind of art they allow themselves to live with.) Even more prosaic subjects, the still-lifes, are charged with an almost tactile appreciation of the senses. Rich colors are laid atop one another, in lavish designs, with the grain of the canvas lending surface character without recourse to impasto.

The artist's series of mango paintings are well-known. He painted them on a monumental scale, celebrating the curvaceous, exotic fruits. When I look at them I receive the impression that he has not only painted the mangos — he's enjoyed an intimate relationship with them. (I've told him of my own practice of placing a bowlful of ripe mangos next to my bed, so that the decadent aroma will influence my dreams.)



Artist with new work. Delayed action photo by Biondi.

material world?

Biondi: "I don't know how to compare myself with others. A lot of people accuse me of being an intellectual but I don't really think of myself as one."

He doesn't talk about it — he does it. And, although Biondi may create works inspired by literary ideas, (Gabriel Garcia Marquez's novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is an example), he doesn't skim great books for phrases to use in his press releases. As for his art, that must speak for itself.

"I don't like reading about what other people think of their own work. That's what critics are for."

So we arrive at the work.

A certain painting comes to mind. It depicts the crouching artist, from behind, nude, working on a large canvas. I believe that, for Biondi, painting is a very physical act. He confirms this during our conversation:

"I paint with my arm, my whole body."

Much of his painting is sensual, sexy, even erotic. The images of indolent young

work, of a swimmer, taken from a tape of the Olympic games. The video source allows for various distortions in color and form which the artist finds interesting.

"This is a new way to look at all the familiar objects. How many times are you going to paint a palm tree the same way?"

Art for art's sake aside, professionals also have to consider their careers. This is business, something with which many artists are never comfortable. Biondi makes a point of visiting galleries when he travels, and he tries to be informed about what is going on in the art world.

"I work at it. I can't really depend on a gallery to take care of my future."

I grin, and ask, "Do you want that in the article?"

Biondi (also grinning): "Sure, you can print that. A gallery has to take care of too many people. I have me to look out for."

Does he want to be famous, to have a reputation which will last beyond his career in Key West?

"Sure, I think about New York. But that's the only reason for going there. But I don't think you make much money there. The galleries take sixty percent, and the artist pays for the reception, the liquor, the invitations. I'm not a greedy person."

Most of his work sells and he feels no great pressure to woo additional markets. I remember the old adage of not putting one's eggs all in one basket; it may have a hole in it. An approach to a good New York gallery will very likely require a rise in prices, which will somewhat offset the cruel 60% cut the gallery would take. Also, in Biondi's case, he may wish to stretch for some of those qualities which he admired in Goya's non-pretty paintings. I'm sure that Biondi has a more profound sensitivity to exploit. Otherwise, he would have never related to the 'ugly' Goyas.

He wouldn't want to paint all the time even if he continued to sell almost everything.

"I'd be content to work three or four months out of the year, and then travel."

I asked Biondi about the importance of stability in his life, mentioning such things as his long-term relationship with Greg, the home they have created, and so forth.

"It must be important to me. I did quit painting once, for six years. I was a bartender, twenty-eight, and I saw thirty coming — and I didn't have anything. I thought I was fairly bright and talented and I had nothing to show for it. A rented apartment, a rusty old car . . ."

Today it is impossible to imagine Craig Biondi as anything but what he is, whether this creative impulse is expressed in painting, writing, or in the examined life. He does not "make art," he is an *artist*.

Family and Health Services

EMERGENCIES

Ambulance 296-2401 or 911
Fire 296-2828 or 911
HELPLINE/Latch Key Program 296-HELP, 294-LINE
Missing Children 1-800-342-0821
Poison Control (24 hours) 1-800-282-3171
Police 911 or 294-2511
Rape Victim Advocacy Program 294-5531 x4766
Sheriff 296-2424

EDUCATION

Adult Education 294-5212
Child Find (FDLRS) 296-7541
Downtown Center, FKCC 294-8481
Exceptional Student Education 296-7543
Florida Keys Community College 296-9081
Monroe County Schools 296-6523
Parenting Skills Classes 296-5911

RECREATION

Boy Scouts 745-3987
City of Key West Recreation Dept. 294-3721
Girl Scouts 745-3737
Monroe County Public Library 294-8488

CHILD ABUSE

Child Abuse Office, FKM 294-5531
Child Protective Services, HRS 294-9513
Child Protection Team, FKM 294-5531
Coalition Against Child Abuse 294-5531
Guardian Ad-Litem 296-7518
Parenting Classes, FKM 294-5531
Parents Anonymous 296-HELP, 294-LINE
Puppet Show 294-5531
Reporting, HRS 1-800-342-9152, 294-1050
Volunteer Child Advocacy Team 294-5531

NAVY

Counseling & Assistance Center 292-2533
Family Advocacy 296-2461
Navy Alcohol Safety Action Program 292-2555
Navy Family Service Center 292-3152
Navy Relief 292-2196

DAY CARE

See Yellow Pages listing for day nurseries and child care.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Big Brothers & Big Sisters 294-9891
Commodity Food Bank 294-8468
Community Control 294-1059
Developmental Services 294-1059
Domestic Abuse Shelter 296-HELP, 294-LINE
Juvenile Alternative Services Program 296-7465
Monroe County Food Bank 294-8468
Monroe County Social Services 294-8468

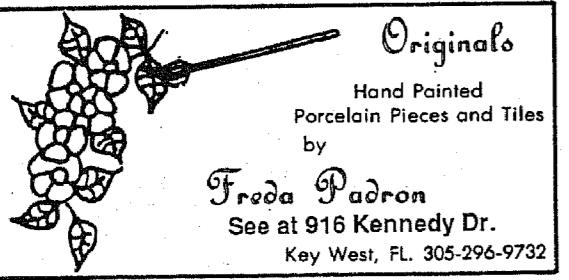
HEALTH

Al-Anon 296-6616, 294-5531
Ala-Teen 296-6616
Alcoholics Anonymous 296-8654
Alliance for the Mentally Ill 294-5237
Blind Services 1-800-342-1828
Chemical Dependency Unit, Delphos 294-5531
Childbirth Educ/Midwifery 294-4536
Easter Seal 294-1089
Family Planning 294-1021
Hello Baby 294-5531
Helping Hand Stroke Club 294-5531
Hospice 294-8812

Improved Pregnancy Outcome 294-1021
LaLeche Foundation 745-2274
LaMaze 294-1068, 294-4218
MARC House - Detox 743-6551
Mental Health Care Center 294-5237
Monroe County Health Dept 294-1021
Narcotics Anonymous 296-7999
Nutrition Program 294-1021
Ostomy Support Classes 296-8659
Overeaters Anonymous 294-5183
Pregnancy Aid & Counseling 296-7337
Up Front/Drug Information 1-800-432-8255
Well Baby/Medicaid Clinic 294-1021
W.I.C. (Women, Infants & Children) 294-1021

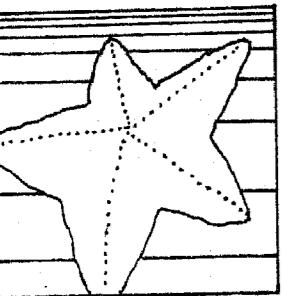
MISCELLANEOUS

Adoptions 294-9513
Birth Certificates 294-1021
Family Resource Center, FKM 294-5531
Foster Homes: Information & Licensing 294-9513
Legal Services 294-4641 x358
National Switchboard for Runaways 1-800-621-4000
Red Cross 296-3651
Salvation Army 294-5611
Single Parent Hotline 1-800-638-9675
Victim Witness Assistance Program 294-5165
Welcome Home Ministries 296-2366
Zonta 296-4357
Vietnam Vets of Key West 294-9802
AIDS Education Project 294-8302

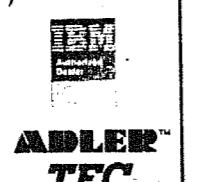


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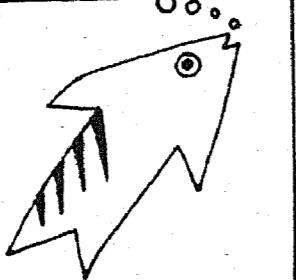
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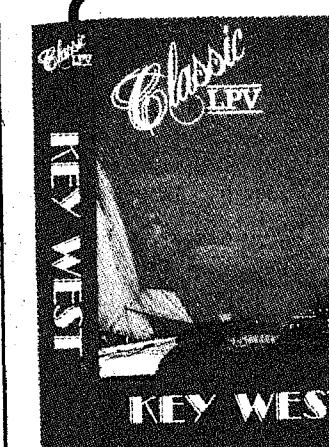
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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE LOWER KEYS

Just My Opinion

by Gil Ryder

This column in the February issue had to be cut off for lack of space and continued in this issue.

Just in case you missed or have forgotten the subject, the last paragraph published concerned the approximate 50,000 traffic fatalities each year, half of which are determined to be caused by drunken drivers, and the effort being made to save the 25,000 lives lost each year due to drunken driving. Now, let's go on:

Let's look at the other side of the coin. What about the 25,000 lives lost in traffic accidents caused by sober drivers? In order to save those 25,000 lives we'd have to do the unthinkable: create a test that would establish whether or not each individual had the mental and emotional stability required to drive safely under any and all road and traffic conditions. No — that solution wouldn't be accepted either. So many drivers would lose the privilege that the auto industry would collapse.

Since we can't cure the automotive ills of the nation, why not just settle down and try to alleviate the traffic problems of the Keys? Bill Becker pointed out in his January column what was being done to ease the

traffic situation on Big Pine Key. Now, if the powers that be can just move those ideas from paper to paving, at least Big Pine will be over the hump.

In order to alleviate traffic problems in the Keys, we must recognize that a large number of tourists are not interested in the Keys but rather in Key West. The rest of the Keys are just (to them) an obstacle to be overcome in order to get to their destination.



Why not build another road leading more directly to Key West? If I recall correctly, there were plans for another highway over Florida Bay from somewhere around Cape Sable to No Name Key. That was possibly 10 years ago and the plan seems to have just faded away. Why not revive and revise that plan? Bringing the traffic to No Name Key would not be good enough to relieve today's congestion. Bringing that highway to Big Coppitt would get the tourist traffic nearer to their destination, and do it a lot quicker.

Along the Lower Keys

by Bill Becker

Continuing our discussion of the prop dredging problem ... sixteen commercial fishermen who utilize Niles Channel (between Ramrod and Summerland Keys) remain under threat of \$25,000 fines and a year in jail if they are discovered running their boats through shallow grass flats -- essentially prop dredging without a permit.

Monroe County Marine Extension Agent Jeff Fisher administers the county's share of Florida Boating Improvement Fund monies, revenue collected from recreational boat registrations. With the help of a citizen advisory committee Fisher advises the County Commission on expenditures for projects such as public boat ramps and channel markers. In the seven years he has been affiliated with the Fund, Fisher says that the bulk of the money has been spent on channel marking projects. "We have a goal of hopefully marking every reasonable channel that runs from the island to the offshore areas to make it convenient and easier for local boaters to get in and out."

Fisher says he can't control who uses a particular channel. "We assume skipper intelligence. We assume that if a channel happens to be two and a half feet deep, it's more or less a small boater's channel. We don't mark channels and then promulgate lots of rules on who can use them."

Fisher feels that a trade-off -- an

"accommodation" -- is in order. "Can we tolerate some minor destruction of a particular portion of a grass flat by marking a channel versus the total grassflat, the big picture? If we have a 3000-acre shallow bay, are we doing substantial damage by permitting some damage to 12 of those acres by marking a channel? What have we done to the other 2988 acres? We are literally



Bill Becker is
News Director
for US-1 Radio
(104.7 FM)

keeping the boats out of them. We are making a small concession. Is the alternative 'Stop the boating traffic'? I don't think so ... not in the Florida Keys. The alternative has to be to mark reasonable channels and let the boating public use good boater knowledge to decide whether that is the channel for them. If there is going to be some damage it's a trade-off against all the damage we're avoiding. By not marking the channel we're having every boat go hither, thither and yon in the bay, destroying the broad base of the grassflat. And that's the bottom line."

Curtis Kruer is the Florida Keys field representative for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. A hard-nosed biologist, he is a veteran of the state and federal permitting battleground.

Most tourists would be happy to pay a ten dollar toll (one way) to avoid the congestion of US-1. This new highway would solve some other problems also. For instance, evacuation preceding a major hurricane. Such a road going to Big Coppitt might ultimately solve the problems of political disparity between the Upper Keys and Key West. Many people in the Upper Keys believe that county tax money is being used unfairly to the benefit of Key West. Whether that is so or not is not as important as the fact that some (many?) people believe it, and such belief causes bitterness and disharmony — something we'd all be better off without.

A road leading into Big Coppitt would create a dividing point and probably establish the area from Big Coppitt to Key West as "metropolitan Key West."

That condition in turn might well lead to the partitioning of Monroe County: one county from Big Coppitt to Key West and the other county the rest of the Keys. Both such counties should be able to operate efficiently. No one would have to go from Key Largo to Key West (or vice versa) to attend a Commission meeting. Big Pine residents wouldn't have to go to Key West to serve as jurors. Traffic problems would be alleviated (except in Key West, where the

Con't on pg. 62

Kruer has spent six years documenting the Niles Channel situation. It was his data which sealed the government's case against Michaels Construction Company for the destruction of twenty-seven acres of seagrasses by prop dredging through Niles Channel. MCC built the new Niles Channel Bridge, bringing pre-cast segments to the site by barge and tugboat from the bayside through more than two miles of very shallow water. With twin, five-foot diameter propellers, those tugboats cut huge swaths through the grassflats.

Kruer says that Fisher's trade-off proposal is permitting question. "If we are creating a situation which everyone acknowledges will result in dredging of seagrass, someone then should be required to submit a permit application. Maybe it's the Extension Service or the Organized Fishermen of Florida. If the desire is to mark a shallow water channel -- and two and a half feet is a shallow water channel -- someone should be and will be required to submit a permit application to dredge up what's between the channel markers. It then gets subjected to the federal public interest review process. Then a determination is made: Is it reasonable to sacrifice these twelve acres so we can better manage the other 2988? Federal Judge Edward Davis has determined that willful and deliberate prop dredging -- what Fisher is talking about -- requires state and federal permits. Done without permits, day after day, it becomes unauthorized dredging.

Con't on pg. 62

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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE LOWER KEYS

Con't from pg. 59

problem would probably become worse and the finances better.

Both counties would be just as livable as the same area today. I'd be happy to live in either one, and so would several million other people.

Would the real estate taxes be any worse? Probably — unless people start moving out of the Keys faster than they are moving in, and that's not likely to happen any time soon.

The residents of any area must expect taxes to rise as the area becomes more popular. When the area becomes less popular, the taxes will go down again — but not right away.

The existing Land Use Plan won't solve all the problems either, although it will probably work reasonably well (don't expect miracles) after it is amended.

The problems of the Keys differ only in degree from the problems of the state, the nation and, probably, the world.

Con't from pg. 59

And that's what we're regulating in Niles Channel and other areas. Off the top of my head I'd say it's doubtful that permits would be granted to sacrifice twelve acres of seagrass in a place like this. Obviously, there has been enough sacrificed already, and the programs are trying to maintain what currently exists with no more degradation.

"Channel marking projects should be limited to deep water channels. Public monies, in my opinion, should not be used to mark channels through two and a half feet of water. Niles Channel to the north can never be construed as a deep water channel."

This issue has a high volatility potential. There are determined, strong-willed personalities involved, along with some major environmental issues. One should expect nothing less here in the Keys.

* * * * *

The Big Pine Athletic Association is busily preparing for another major event later this month: The Torch Trek Biathlons — running and bicycling along the scenic Big Torch Key and Middle Torch Key Roads. Officially sanctioned by the Tri-Federation/USA, this first-time event will be held the afternoon of Sunday, March 29.

Biathletes may choose the Short Course (one-mile run and three-mile bike) or the more rigorous Long Course) five-mile run and twenty-five mile bike), with several age divisions in both. Top male and female finishers in the short course will win \$50 each, and in the long course, \$100 each. All entrants must join the Tri-Federation for an annual membership fee of \$15. Membership for youngsters 7-14 years old will be sponsored locally. Entry fee in the short course will be \$5 for ages 7-14, and \$10 for ages 15 and up. Long course entry

Too many individuals want to gain more money (and, thus, more power), but they do not want to part with sufficient money to prevent degradation of the environment or to suppress crime. Each individual believes that someone else ought to pay for those activities, in our case, preferably Tallahassee or Washington, D.C.

Oddly enough, while we want others to pay the bills, we insist on maintaining our autonomy, even though such complete autonomy doesn't exist and never did.

I sometimes think that we must be a nation made up largely of hypocrites. We like to see the flag flying at various meetings. We like to have meetings start with a salute to the flag and the Pledge of Allegiance — but we only mouth the words and have no intention of conforming to the pledge, even those who know what it means.

We pledge (in words) to sustain ourselves as "one nation, *indivisible*," and then scream for "Home Rule" (County

sovereignty) without even realizing that according to the pledge we just mouthed our actions are unAmerican. We mouth, "with liberty and justice for all," and far too many interpret that patriotic phrase to mean "with liberty and license for myself," and regard it as part of some imaginary property-right guarantee that permits the owner or agent of owner to use or abuse the property for the greatest financial profit, regardless of the damage inflicted on neighbors, community, or even the nation.

Instead of debating the subject of prayer in the schools, we would be wiser to demand that our children be taught the meaning of the Pledge of Allegiance and the U.S. Constitution, rather than have them learn by rote, words and phrases that have no meaning to them.

Perhaps then we could have a generation grow up without the idea that the Pledge of Allegiance and the Constitution granted all Americans, as a right, the Privilege of Plunder.

A Conversation

by Gordon Lacy

We are at Strunk's, Simone our Belgian painter and I, looking for screws to mount her canvases into frames, and I am doing my best translating. This conversation is verbatim.

"She wants them long and thin."
"These are 3/4."

"They're too thick. And not long enough," I add for good measure.

"You want flat or rounded heads?"
"Uh, rounded, I guess."

"Phillips or slot?"
"Not Phillips," I say, avoiding pitfalls.

"They are all too thick or too thin or not long enough," sighs Simone, looking ravishing. I do not translate.

"We'll think about screws later." I am perspiring. "What we need now is a gimlet."

"Across the street to the left."
"Ha ha," I say and if looks could kill ...
"Gimlet's a drink, that's all."

"Yes. It also happens to be a long screw with a little handle for starting the screw."

"Vrille, vrille," insists Simone. Vrille means gimlet but if you ask for it in a Belgian bar you get sent to the hardware store.

My friend Richard, who is in construction professionally, enters.

"Richard, what is a gimlet in this country?"

"Well, ice and vodka shaken with ..."

"No, I mean a thing with a screw on one end and a handle, for, well, to make a hole to start a screw ..."

"Oh, do you want my awl?"

"What I do not need this minute is your all, but thanks ..."

He is helpful and we take what is called a screw-hole starter to our salesman.

"I thought that was what you wanted."

I do not swear. "Why didn't you ..."

"I guess, just too embarrassed to say it."

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What is offered in the catalog? Everything! You want 14k Gold jewelry, it's there; you want Nellie & Joe's Key West Lime Juice, they have it. What about art prints? They have a variety to select from. Artists who are known up and down the Keys are John Kiraly, Maxine McMullen, Mario Sanchez, Irma Quigley, Rachel Kaufman, Barbara Hodgens, and Robert E. Kennedy. Clothes, books, honey, and even a Video Tape of Key West.

Founders of this ingenious idea are Berne Teeple and Larry Szuch. They created the "Made in Key West" catalog in 1986. The response to that catalog grew into expanding up the Keys. Thus, "The Florida Keys Catalog 1987" was published.

Copies of the catalog can be obtained by sending \$1.00 (postage and handling) to: The Florida Keys Catalog, P.O. Box 622-PR, Key West, FL, 33041.

Roof rats by Judith Kazantzis

Roof rats also nest in palms. When the coconuts are ready, to the annoyance of the owner who has sat in his apartment below with the TV and a crate of Milwaukee all these months, the rats drill into the shaggy heads to suck the thin milk. Over the husks they twine, sucking. They spread eagle their pink hands.

For other food or for the moonlight they cruise below. They have over the downlands of silver gables tiled in aluminum. They jump down by disordered hair, the wiry plait and hanks of ficus branches bell pulls passing upper veranda to lower veranda, home of a white turrett the boudoir of Mrs. Carrasco; or the crazy cottage next door, its gate of hen wire, its propped car — This car is not abandoned its plastic pelican, its Milwaukee man. And so to the windy pavement where the green coconuts blow down.

They bang, now and then, in the night. They roll in among the seamed brown ones piling the dry, blossom filled gutters.

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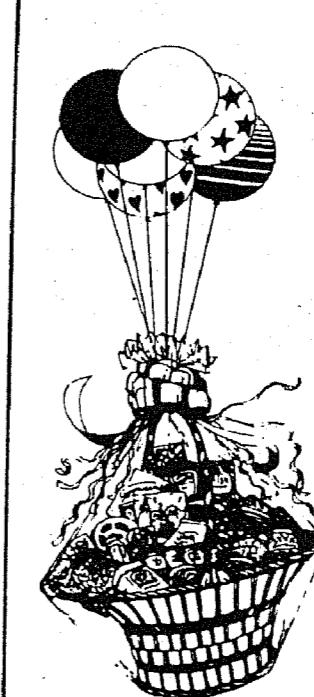
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Nature's Way -- March Musings

by Alice Terry

This column has evolved into a sort of calendar control, spacing my year into neat segments that appear to be crowding one another now. Winter seems to have come and gone, although the calendar shouts that it is only the beginning of March.

Here are some garden reminders for this month. Winter annuals should be replaced with hot-weather varieties. Gladiolus must be sprayed for thrips, and roses for leaf spot. Fertilize all garden plants and take cuttings of all but the very tender kinds. Transplant evergreen trees and shrubs not in tender flush. Divide and replant herbaceous perennials that bloom in late summer or fall. Now is the time to plant seeds of ageratum, sweet alyssum, China-aster, balsam, begonia, cypress-vine, gaillardia, globe-amaranth, hollyhock, French-marigold, morning-glory, portulaca, torenia and zinnia. Bulbs to plant are caladium, gloriosa, haemanthus, montbretia, tuberose and zephyranthes. If dormant bulbs can be found, add amaryllis, crinum and eucharis.

Young trees need feeding at this time. Start now and feed every six weeks through June. Remember to feed your citrus, too, if you didn't feed them in January or February.

It is a good time to air-layer crotons and dracenas not only to get new plants, but to prevent them from becoming leggy. Air-layer plants whose top portion is symmetrical, or moss-off a number of the larger branches that have well-formed tops. After rooting and severing from the parent plant, the lower parts will put out new growth and assume better shape.

Bougainvilles are flamboyantly advertising their wares all over town. Strangely enough, they thrive on neglect. There are many varieties that flower at different times of the year, and some are nearly ever-blooming. If you are having problems with the health and productivity of a bougainvillea, do not prune it for a whole year. This will allow new branches to grow and increase the plant's size and bloom potential. Don't water the plant, unless it wilts, and stop feeding it. Keep the soil dry from fall through spring, but make sure it receives full sun so that it can flower abundantly.

I am very aware of the spring season in terms of the light. This means not only longer daylight hours, but the changes in quality of the light received and perceived. I have been a full-time Florida resident since 1963, and my yearly watch for spring concerns the goings and comings of birds, reappearance of blossoms and fruits and the rejoicing, usually, in low humidity. This is considered the dry period, yet there are surprise showers. The temperature hovers in the sixties for a few days, then will shoot up again into the comfortable seventies,

even timidly approaching eighty on some fine, sunny days. It's that time of year when anything goes, weatherwise.

Nature's way in the garden is a bit confused, too, for the frangipani is still blooming blissfully away, accompanied by a gorgeous pink and orange cattleya orchid, some brilliant orange jatropha blossoms, ever-blooming periwinkles, and a crown of thorns, still in a pot, that is more immense every year. A friend's gift of a datura is seductively displaying exotic hanging bell-like blooms, and there is a brand-new flower spike on the eucharis lily, a survivor of the Peggy Mill's Garden.

March will witness two events of interest to local plant-collectors and gardeners. The Biennial Orchid Show will take place once again at the Joe Allen Garden Center, also known as West Martello Towers. All orchid fanciers are welcome to enter their prize specimens to be judged by the American Orchid Society judges. Entries are due on March 16 and 17, and judging takes place on March 19. The show will be open to the public March 20 and 21. There will be plenty to "oh" and "ah" over, with seedlings and mature plants available for purchase. Save your pennies until then.

On March 26, at 9:30 AM, the public is welcome to hear visiting expert Dr. Donselman discuss "Heliconias" at the Joe Allen Garden Center. The lecture is sponsored by the Key West Garden Club, and is free of charge.

Art Kara, Sculptor

by Maggie Finn

"Speaking of the expression of a figure, more and more I come to the conclusion that it is not so much in features as in the whole attitude."

-- Van Gogh

Fine art in Key West. A rare occurrence, perhaps, but when the two come together, an experience worth savoring.

The sculptor is Art Kara and his human figures are fabricated in gleaming bronze. Fortunate were the viewers of his recent East Martello Museum and Gallery exhibit in January, as will be those viewing his upcoming April opening at the State Capitol in Tallahassee. Superior in concept and craftsmanship, his work is spiritually uplifting.

Slim, angular, and elegant, Art and his bronze pieces share a striking resemblance. Self-effacing in his role as artist, Art, trained as an engineer, is adamant that he is secondary to his work and consistently shifts the credit for his inspiration to "a Higher Being . . . I am a vehicle."

With periods of life already spent in Paris, Montreal and New York City, Art knew on his first day in Key West that this was home . . . "the sea and the sky inspire me enormously . . . through them I feel at one with God. The spirit of artistic freedom keeps me here . . . I am truly grateful for this island refuge." A Key Wester since 1971, Art spent years developing his technique and style before bringing his sculpture into public view.

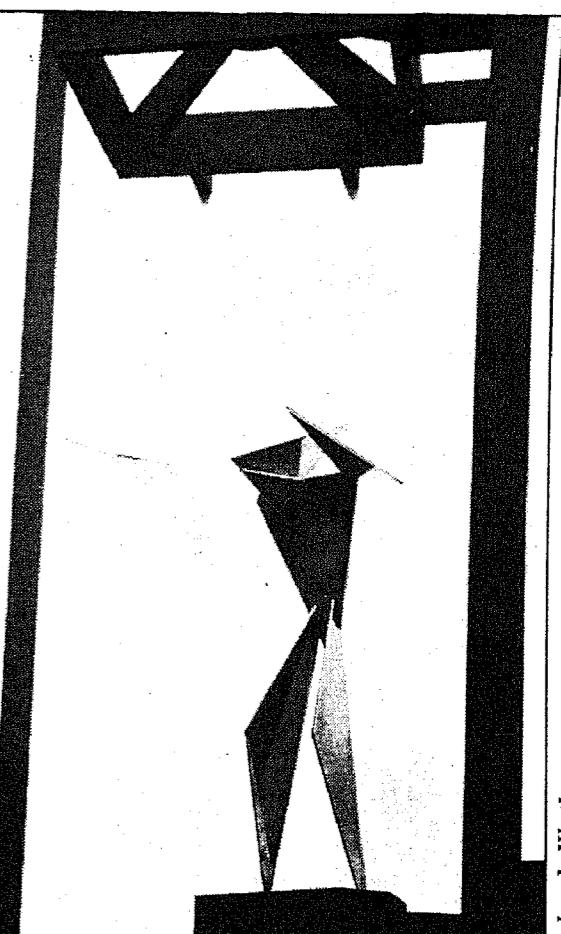
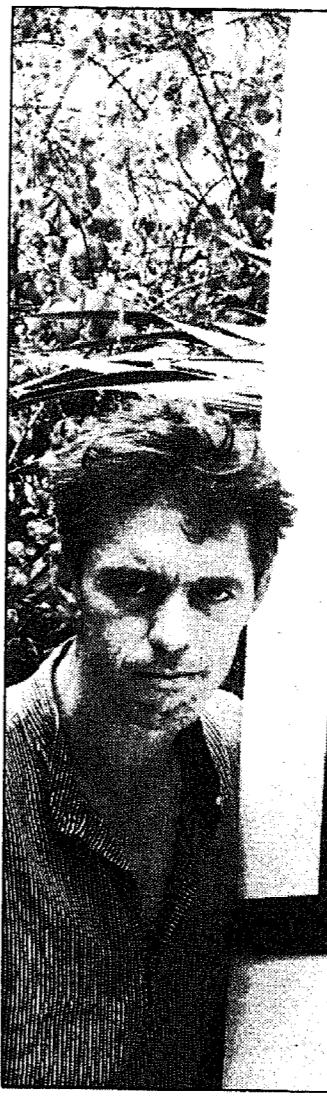


Photo by Richard Watherwax

The sculptor with "The Conductor," as proposed for Southeast Financial Center, Miami.

INFLUENCE

Influenced also by Julio Gonzales, Medardo Rosso and Alexander Calder, Art

Art

by Art Kara

Art is energy.

The potential extends from the Creation;

the presence manifests in mind as Light.

Artists quantize the Radiance to ideals, works —

Infinity, in virtual finitudes, associative —

aesthetic, Truth viewed.

gives most credit to Michaelangelo's unfinished "Slaves" and Rodin's "The Thinker." "My entire line [of sculptural

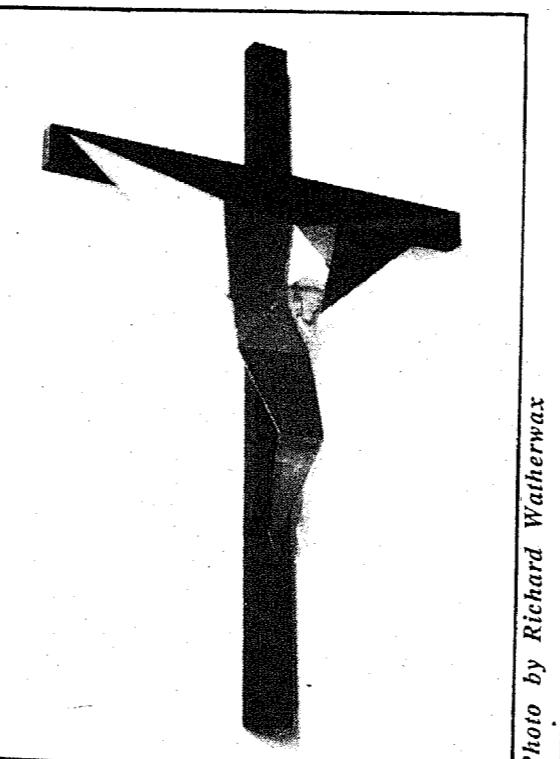


Photo by Richard Watherwax

"Crucifix"

The precise renderings of his figures impact on the viewer with their striking universality. Powerful and classic, the sculptured planes of body and pose succeed in conveying activity as well as attitude.

These feelings led Art to his choice of materials. "Bronze is classical and as in Ancient Greek sculpture . . . highly polished bronze has so much life." An artistic irony was Art's ex-post-facto discovery that the Greeks also polished their sculptures, that only time and submersion in the ocean had patinated them moss green.

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South Florida Arts Community "Pleased As Punch" Over Noguchi

by Ellen Sugarman

Last week a committee of Founders who have been working on the proposed Isamu Noguchi sculpture garden project at FKCC made a trip to Miami to meet with members of the South Florida Consortium of the Arts and heads of the Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Arts Councils, to explore sources of funding for the project. (\$40,000 has already been raised from private donors in Key West, New York, Paris, Miami, and other cities.) They were received with great enthusiasm and came back assured that "the fact that it's a Noguchi design makes the project eminently fundable," in the words of William Benson, one of the members of the committee.

"We got the sense that Indian mounds are what is going on in contemporary art right now. They loved the mound and they loved the idea that it's natural," Benson explained. "The sense I had of the meeting was so exciting. We got overwhelming responses from everyone there. It said to me that the earth sculpture was appropriate to South Florida's cultural heritage -- they immediately saw that."

The other counties were amazed that Key West had this opportunity to receive a Noguchi earth sculpture. Neither Palm Beach nor Broward have been offered one (William Ray, head of the Palm Beach Arts Council, said his community would be "thrilled" if they had gotten it, then added, "I'm intrigued with the idea and excited by the setting; from the drawing it looks like a winner"), and Miami is paying for a Noguchi design as part of its \$25 million Bayfront Park project.

The Noguchi design sparked such interest that Kenneth Kahn, Director of the Consortium, suggested they adopt it as the focal point for their Gateway-to-Florida design competition. In a telephone interview, Kahn said, "It looks like a wonderful project, another instance of Noguchi's genius at work. I think his solution is going to be very dramatic and I'd like to see it go forward on the FKCC site. I hope it can be implemented quickly . . . We are proposing a design arts' competition where money from a \$70,000 NEA grant we received last year could go to establish a chain of earthworks, or mounds, from Key West north to other counties." The idea would be for each county to pick an appropriate site (one suggested was the new airport in Palm Beach) and create a mound reflecting the original Key West Noguchi design. The Consortium instructed

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[The form] was inspired by that one piece [The Thinker]. Viewing it for the first time at the Musee Rodin in Paris, "I realized in a flash of light how it had been composed. I quickly sketched it, then returned the following day with a camera and tape measure. I came back to Key West and spent the next eight months working out my own piece." Through this singular catalyst, he felt he understood that through the harmony of the planes of a pose, body language is communicated and, if held to that, there are no limiting factors implied and body language in itself becomes an unspoken universal.

ENDORSEMENT

Rollie McKenna, renowned photographer of literary figures, including poets Dylan Thomas, Robert Graves, and Robert Frost, co-exhibited with Art in January at Martello. She remarked:

"Art Kara's bronze sculptures are skillfully executed and sensitively conceived, suggesting rather than describing human forms and aspirations. They cry out to become full-scale, even monumental, but at small size still they soar. He has an unusual blend of hand, head, and heart. Art's one of the most exciting young artists I've encountered."

SELECTED WORKS

"Challenger": [Not Pictured] A sculpture of a figure reaching toward the stars. Strong local support on Art's behalf comes from former State Representative Joe Allen, Senator Larry Plummer, former Key West mayor Richard Heyman, and most recently Mayor Tom Sawyer, for his entry in the



Photo by Richard Watherwax

upcoming National Design Contest being sponsored by the Astronauts Memorial Foundation in Orlando, a competition for a memorial to honor and commemorate all lives lost in the United States' space program. With its strength and forward movement, I noted that this model brought considerable response at Martello, as its forcefulness elicits both sentiment and pride.

"Testing the Waters": [Pictured] Inspired

in New York City. In momentary balance, it isolates the singular, exploratory toe in the water, as the arched elbows and expectant body await the outcome of the temperature test. Leo Rossandler, former Director of the Musee des Beaux Arts in Montreal, in a private viewing and after several minutes of silent, multi-positioned study, slowly moved away from this piece and quietly declared, "You're going to go very far ..."

Rossandler, over lunch, introduced Art to Dana Friis-Hanson, Acting Curator of the M.I.T. Collection at Cambridge, Massachusetts. Friis-Hanson encouraged Art to submit his portfolio to *LEONARDO* (Journal of the International Society for Arts, Sciences and Technology). Following

TO BE

by Art Kara

I, a poet man,
delve Light
then cadence
my diffractive sight.

Obedient
to the Father of suns,
I verse to be,
for He
and we,
our souls One.

(First published in *Solares Hill*, December 1982.)

through, Art received a request from *LEONARDO* to develop an article on art through the perspective of quantum theory.

"Pianist's Hand": [Not Pictured] A microscopic perspective of music. Balance and symmetry merge in suspended motion, as an angular middle finger, poised just a breath above the ivory, is about to strike.

"The Conductor": [Pictured] Music on a grander scale, as the magnitude of an orchestral leader's wielded power, impact and intensity are captured and magically juxtaposed to his itty-bitty baton.

"Couple": [Not Pictured] Inspired in Key West, this depicts a common sleeping position with the affectionate posturing of lovers as they parallel their body lines in snuggled embrace. In a juried exhibition, in 1986, at Martello, this maquette was awarded "Outstanding Sculpture" by William Lieberman, Curator of the 20th Century Art Department, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

"En Pointe": [Pictured] Preceded by extensive visits to L'Ecole de Ballet Jazz in Montreal, to observe and sketch, and repeated trips to the library for research, the theme of this piece is "line." Very important to classical dance, it's what the dancer strives for. A woman on her toes, *En Pointe* achieves the perfect, classical line.

"Coquette": [Not Pictured] Some critics

might say, "We all know and love her." Few can resist the coy one as she lies on her stomach in the grass, resting on her elbows with arms outstretched and clasped in front, head turned over her shoulder, and legs bent in the air behind her. The nuance is captivating.

"Crucifix": [Pictured] Inspired while at the Louvre, Art did his first model in paper while still in Paris. Not only does it show

the corpse on the cross, but Christ ascending toward his destination, at the very moment of earthly death. His mortal weight is seen in the sag of the body, but his spirit in the winged arms is taking flight toward heaven.

"The Earthlings -- One People": [Not Pictured] This work-in-progress is mounted

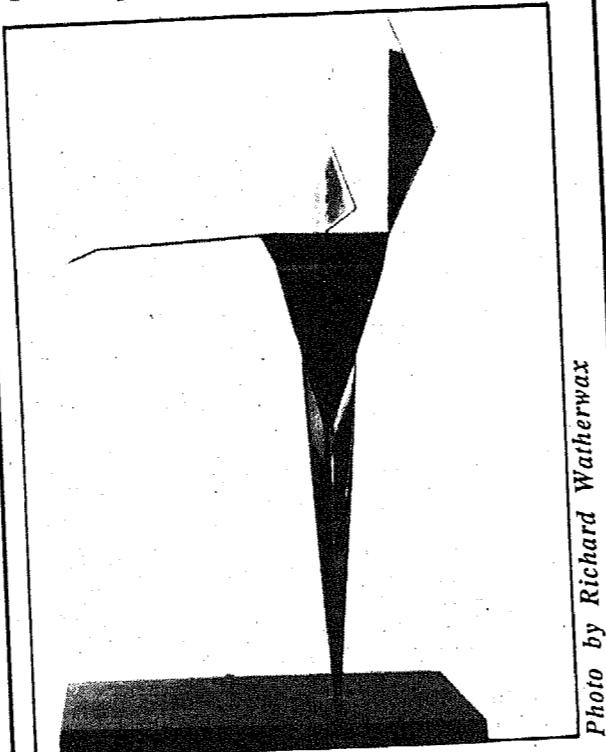


Photo by Richard Watherwax

Con't from pg. 50
straight, and scattered the days of the week so bad that Sunday didn't get around till late Thursday morning."

It was an exciting time to be in Key West; not only because of the writers, artists, and musicians who called it home, but because of the nature of the island.



Photo by Lawson Little

Phil Caputo (right) greets Randy Akers of the Florida Endowment for the Humanities.

great writers are great because God, and not their addresses, has made them so." Caputo argued that Key West "does not possess some magic that makes it more convenient for the creative act than, say, Seattle or Cedar Rapids."

Why then, do writers congregate in Key West instead of Cedar Rapids? The answer to that must have been as obvious to the seminar-goers — decked out in shorts and cotton shirts for comfort in those 80-degree January days, eager to soak up some of the late afternoon sun and perhaps get in a swim before heading for a fresh seafood dinner — as it was to Wallace Stevens when he wrote to a friend after his first visit to Key West in 1922: "The place is a paradise. Midsummer weather, the skies brilliant and clear and intensely blue, the sea blue and green."

Bonnie Costello, who teaches English at Boston University and has written extensively on contemporary poetry, quoted from that letter in her comments on Stevens and Bishop and their years in Key West.

Both Wallace and Stevens and Elizabeth Bishop used aspects of Key West as metaphors in their poetry. Stevens, Costello said, referred to the area's "venereal soil," suggesting both Venus and love as well as disease. For Stevens, this was a place to "experience pure being," and to see Florida as "floozy and goddess both." Ultimately, she said, Stevens saw in Key West a context for the creative spirit rather than an overwhelming natural phenomenon. Elizabeth Bishop, Costello said, was closer to what one might call a "regional poet" in that she filled her poetry with the flora and fauna that seemed to battle the island's inhabitants for control. For her, though, it was not a postcard paradise, Costello said, and she saw it as a place haunted by things long dead: She wrote, "The state with the prettiest name turns out to be tied together with mangled roots and bespattered skeletons and traces of dead vegetation."

Indeed, Bishop found the tension between the paradise and the decay, as she put it, "awful but cheerful."

It is appropriate that portraits of both Bishop and Stevens were among those in the exhibition of photographs by Rollie McKenna featured at the East Martello Museum during the seminar. The exhibit, which featured McKenna's photographic portraits of distinguished American writers, included many who had made Key West their home.

In his introduction to his reading the Key West poetry of Wallace Stevens, poet Richard Wilbur elaborated on the meaning of this place in Stevens' poetry. "The tropical South is the place that answers desire, the place that prompts imagination," he said. "It's also a place of vivid color; a place of physical beauty and sexuality." As for Bishop, poet James Merrill, before reading from her poems, quoted from a letter she wrote to Robert Lowell around 1947 in which she humorously described the penchant for poetry among the natives of a very particular sort: "The only intellectual life here, I gather, is taking place belowstairs at the Casa Marina," she wrote, going on to discuss the "modern poetry addicts" among the dishwashers, maids, the newspaper concession girls of the island. The readings by Merrill and Wilbur were high points of Friday's program, providing quiet yet emotion-charged moments from another time but, curiously, not another place. Also moving was Helen Vendler's introduction of the two. She praised Merrill for his "gifts of social observation" and his ability to preserve "a tone of lightness and discretion and a texture of charm and ease even while touching the most serious possible subjects." She later spoke of the "verve and eloquence and wit" of Wilbur's poetry, and compared his "lyric melody" to that of Poe, his "harsh metaphysics" to the poetry of Emily Dickinson.

Saturday's schedule also included a poetry reading, one done so deftly, with a sure balance of wry humor and deep feeling, that after reading a selection of the poems of his late friend and neighbor John Ciardi, Philip Burton was called back by the audience for a second bow. The distinguished Shakespearean scholar, author, and lecturer gave less a reading than a performance of such Ciardi poems as "Suburbia," "Alec," and excerpts from "A Knothole in Spent Time."

Just as much of Friday's panel discussions were concerned with the Key West of the past, much time was spent Saturday looking at the Key West writers of today, and, spurred by that opening salvo from Philip Caputo, discussing the importance of the island in the contemporary world of literature. Alison Lurie, who has a special interest in the subject of "places" and the people who go there because it is one of the themes of her Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *Foreign Affairs*, suggested that Key West represents for the writers and artists who go there an opportunity to start over, echoing the lure that Scott Donaldson had said the island held for Hemingway. This is true not just of Key West but of all "new places," Lurie said. "A move to a different city, a different state, a different country"

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offers "another chance at life," an opportunity to become a different person. This kind of move, she said, is an adventure, an exploration of one's self as well as of the world. Key West, she said, might well "make a writer more laid back," might ultimately make one's writing more sensual and more colorful.

Lurie said there are three ways in which "place" can affect a writer: "The place can affect the writing directly (the writer can decide to set the story in that place); it can become a metaphor for a writer's ideas, state of mind and emotions; and a place can get into writing in a subtle way — it can affect your style and the way you look at the world." That distinction, so succinctly put, provided a way of delineating the importance of Key West in the works of the many writers mentioned during the course of the seminar.

Novelists Thomas Sanchez, on the same panel — titled "Contemporary Key West

Writers" and moderated by *Shenandoah* editor James Boatwright, who eloquently praised the natural amenities of Key West — told the audience that the island had affected his writing in a very concrete way. After his move to Key West, the setting of a novel he had been working on for years suddenly became clear to him — it was to be set in, among other places, Key West. A major attraction for the modern writer, he said, is the continual ebb and flow, culturally and politically, of the island. He enjoys the company of what fiction editor Rust Hills, moderator of the panel on "Key West Observed," called the island's "mixed bag of literati: some distinguished poet, some schlock hack writers, popular novelists, literary novelists."

For decades, this "mixed bag" has inhabited the island, just "so many species of literary waterfowl," in Caputo's words. Why Key West? Ultimately, after the listening than Key West.

and the thoughtful replies, the answer appeared to be "Why not?" Indeed, the themes and subtexts of the panel discussion, the undercurrents of meaning gleaned from living and writing in an "island paradise," seemed to escape codification, to change as quickly as the speakers and scud through the auditorium as easily as the occasional cloud in the blazing blue sky outside. In the waning moments of the closing panel, Joy Williams, novelist, short-story writer, and part-time Key West resident, reminded the assembly of Marcel Proust's comment that "real books are written in darkness," from the soul and the heart. She added: "The writer goes into a room, puts the blank page in the typewriter — a page that may not want to be written upon at all — and listens to his own mind." There are, simply, few better places in the country to do the listening than Key West.

Novelists Thomas Sanchez, on the same panel — titled "Contemporary Key West

Book Review:

Fast Guys, Rich Guys and Idiots: A Racing Odessey On The Border Of Obsession, by Sam Moses; September Press; 337 pp; \$17.95

by John N. Cole

Resident writer Colin Jameson has once observed: "Key West is not like other places. Strictly speaking, Key West is not a place at all. It is a high-tension connection between the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. High tension because here the distance between these bodies of water is less than a mile instead of hundreds of miles. The result is that there's enough electricity in the air to recharge everybody every day, which keeps the unexpected happening with monotonous regularity."

Perhaps if Sam Moses had read Colin Jameson before he moved to Key West, he might have anticipated the electric turmoil that would overtake his life for two turbulent years. This is a book about those years: an honest, often gut-wrenching first-person account of a man struggling to succeed as a race car driver, and trying even harder to make some sense of a Key West love affair with a mysterious and mercurial woman named DD, a fifth-generation Conch who grew up next door to Tennessee Williams. Moses met her "one steamy October afternoon during the World Series," in an unnamed dark cocktail lounge where she was a waitress taking a break from life. "I was a flower in that dive," she told him, and within weeks she was his roommate in his "Southernmost Condo," a room with an ocean view.

DD would later move out (they were down to their last lamp, he reports), but the relationship continued. It becomes one of the book's two narratives: In an autobiographical tour de force, the author interweaves details of their emotional storm with his two-year saga on the racing circuit. Moses and DD are a pair of lovers as star-crossed as any in recent fact or fiction:

I'd been back in town about three days when she called from the pay phone across

the street one night. I could see her as we talked, standing on the sidewalk in the headlight beams of her Mustang, but she couldn't see me, behind the screen in the window of the dark bedroom. It was a familiar little game of ours; we had these conversations often.

She promised to be nice, and came up. We had a soft talk on the balcony, watching a soundless electrical storm over the horizon. Golden slivers of lightning split the clear black sky. Gigantic sparks. Attraction between charged opposites. I wondered what it would be like to be in a rowboat out there in the middle of it.

We agreed on almost everything this night. We loved each other, we wanted to be with each other. But we didn't know how. She said that she'd had nuclear-bomb nightmares since childhood, and now her worst fear was that when the cloud came over the horizon we wouldn't be together when it hit. "Sometimes I feel like a stranger in a strange land," she said, "and you're the only one on my planet." Flattery got DD everywhere.

We spread out some cushions and slept there that night, as the gigantic sparks silently broke over us.

Make no mistake, however; *Fast Guys, Rich Guys and Idiots* is more of a racing story than a love story (which is not to say that it's more about racing than it is about life). The book began when Moses, a senior writer for *Sports Illustrated* who had written stories on things such as climbing mountains with cannibals in New Guinea and hunting bobcats on snowshoes in the North Maine woods, was assigned to write a major behind-the-wheel account of the sport he regularly covered. But he was too true to it: He got hooked. Then he got hooked on the volatile DD, and the magazine article exploded into a memoir, covering two years of racing, fighting, crashing, and other assorted passions. Much of the story is set in Key West, the rest at big-time auto races, often at 150 miles an hour and sometimes with no brakes.

Moses writes the way he drove, and the way he loved DD: all-out, pedal to the

metal, "WFO," as he says in the book (the "W" stands for Wide and the "O" for Open). The book's raw energy makes a reader relieved he was not on the track when Sam Moses made up his mind he wanted to pass. And he always wanted to: at Daytona, Sebring, Charlotte, Road Atlanta, Riverside and other circuits.

Moses' desire to win reflected the desperation he so often endured with DD; the reader wonders if his unhappy racing endings would have been as frequent if his love life had been less chaotic. But even if they hadn't, this would not have been a book to glamorize the events. Since its release last April, *Fast Guys* has been acclaimed in reviews for its brutal honesty (there's also been a movie offer, which is being considered). It's candid about cheating and gritty about commercialization in a sport where the bottom line is that success, spelled s-p-e-e-d, must be bought. By the end of the book, Moses is a Skoal Bandit driver, using his sponsor's snuff — "dippin'." All to go fast, to feed the driver's addiction, which is what the story is really about, he says.

The book was published by September Press, which the author formed with his mother, former proprietor of Grandma Moses' Bookstore in Altoona, Pa. Son worked in Key West and Mom in Rhode Island — "a little old lady in a coastal cottage with a PO box and a party line," he says. He ultimately was the book's protagonist, author, designer, publisher, distributor, marketer, publicist and salesman. Five thousand of the 338-page hardbound copies were printed, and about 4,500 of them have been sold in nine months, mostly mail order. In Key West, signed copies of *Fast Guys, Rich Guys and Idiots* are available at Key West Island Bookstore on Fleming Street.

Sam Moses has always been a reporter; ever since he began, he's been chasing the greasy pig called truth. In *Fast Guys, Rich Guys and Idiots* he comes closer than most of us to catching it, and not only about auto racers and their world, but about his world, DD, Key West, and the human condition.

Nit-Picking & Dreaming: A Conversational Profile of City Commissioner George Halloran

by George Murphy

Author's Note:

There's probably no one in public life in Key West subject to more diverse and highly opinionated comment than City Commissioner George Halloran. I've heard him called an "intolerable impediment to progress," a "political anachronism," and a "pain-in-the-ass 'nit-picker."

I've heard others refer to him as a "white knight" and the rarest of creatures: "an honest politician."

I recently asked Halloran if he'd be willing to sit and talk about these perceptions of his performance, about his current term in office, about his political attitudes, and about his possible future as a commissioner.

He accepted the invitation willingly and responded, in my opinion, openly and unhesitatingly to hours of inquiry.

I am obliged as a journalist to acknowledge that, in the end, though I am often critical of Halloran's "tactics" and public demeanor, I find myself extremely close to the Commissioner's attitudes toward the city and to his political philosophies.

That is not to say that I necessarily agree with his attitudes — expressed, understood, or implied — regarding any specific issues.

Beyond having acknowledged that and for that reason (as well as the fact that this is an election- and/or re-election - year), the profile that follows is one from which I have attempted to remove myself and which I have constructed from Commissioner Halloran's own words.

S.O.S.: The Beginning

"Before I came to Key West, I used to be pretty active, not in government, but in neighborhood groups, that sort of thing. When I moved here, I pretty much gave that up. Then I started seeing things in local government I didn't like.

I remember going to a City Commission meeting back in '80 to speak about plans being formulated for Garrison Bight which would have affected me and some other boat owners. I remember standing up as a citizen and voicing my disagreement with some plans being put forth. I spoke my piece and when I finished, Sonny McCoy, who was mayor at the time, leaned forward and said, 'We don't care about your views.'

And it was true. They didn't. That was the attitude at the time. Indifference, arrogance.

But I guess the real start came one day while I was putting windows at home and listening to the radio. This fellow Bob Anderson was being interviewed about the

Simonton Street Beach, about how the Pier House had plans to take away the only public waterfront on that whole side of the island. I agreed with what he was saying and I called him on the phone and talked

thought Key West was a lot more open than it really is.

The City Charter allows me to go out and investigate things so I talk a lot to different city employees to try and get a sense of what's going on. And it's good to do.

You learn a lot.

In the past, there have been instances of commissioners going down to personnel and saying, "I want this guy hired and if you don't hire him, I'm going to have your job." So someone gets hired.

If someone wasn't liked, if a favor didn't get done, if someone didn't do the 'right' thing, or keep their mouths shut, they'd get fired or asked to resign.

But that's really changed since the early eighties. I hear employees say, 'We've got a fair shot now. If we're honest and work hard, we'll get a fair shake. They'll see it. We'll get a raise. It isn't all friendships.'

I really think that the majority of people are very happy with the way things have been going the past few years.

The city used to be lurching from one emergency to the next. Our collection rate on garbage and sewer bills was 65%. Why the other 35% didn't have to pay was beyond the rest of us. We're now collecting at about 96%.

Back in the early eighties, we were declared an 'Area of Critical Concern' and the State said, 'You've got to make a Plan.' So, there was this Master Plan drawn up. The State liked it and said OK. Then it was ignored.

There was an incredible void in the City Planner's office. Nobody was looking ahead.

That's changed.

There's been some pretty good long-term planning. We've hired experts and consultants when we needed to. We've hired good people for the city. We've raised salaries while we've held the millage rate.

The Incinerator, the Sewer Plant, the sewer repairs downtown, the collection system, were all major problems that are now being solved.

And this week bids are going out for the Simonton Street Beach project. The city didn't lose it.

But don't get me wrong. I do not want to sound like I'm 'tooting my own horn.' Both of the past two elections have resulted in a lot of changes and both Commissions, I think, have done a lot of positive things.

I've tried to do what I thought was the right thing for my 20% of it but I know that I have always been only 20% of any vote.

Nit-Picking

"Of course I've heard myself called a nit-picker and a pain in the neck. So what?

I can't say how many times I'd open my agenda and go through it item by item and find, for example, a \$36,000 payment to 'John Smith' for, something like, say, a 'light fixture,' then calling downtown and saying, 'Didn't we already pay this?' or 'Isn't this a bit steep?' and then finding it off the agenda. Then, six months later, seeing it re-appear for \$4,000.

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Now don't take this as me trying to run down our staff. We've got a great staff, but mistakes happen. But somebody's got to be looking, doing that grinding page-by-page work. I agreed to do this job and put the time into it. I get satisfaction from it.

I'll admit there have been meetings when I was trying to hold up a developer for two more weeks until a new law would be in effect. You bet!

I did everything: sought out every little 't' that wasn't crossed, every little 'i' that wasn't dotted, and did whatever I could to hold some things past a certain date, to lay on the table all the things I thought might be wrong with a certain project.

It seemed to me we didn't have to give in to anything less than excellence. And why should we?

I remember a hearing we sat through where some other commissioners were saying 'We want to fast-track this incinerator project and get the fastest unit we can build.'

I knew what that meant. There was this little consortium and they wanted them to build it - the way they'd built the county units that are falling apart. And they didn't want a power plant with the capability for producing electricity. They wanted the quickest and cheapest.

We kept fighting over how costly it would be.

I remember going up to look at the Long Key plant and remember going into the building and the tremendous blast of heat coming out of those furnaces and all that heat going up the chimneys.

Even the guy who was running the plant, operating it, said it was the biggest waste of energy on earth: 'look at those BTU's going up that stack.' And there was no way on earth I wanted to do that.

Eventually, it turned around and we were going to get the best people we could to build it. We got Montenay, who has a good track record with these sort of projects, and now we've built a first-class plant, a power plant, using garbage for fuel.

The city has built that plant without raising residential garbage rates. We'll take the electricity from this plant and plug it into the electric lines, and pay City Electric about a half-cent to wheel it for us over to Fleming Key to power the new Sewer plant.

Basically, we'll get 'free' electricity. We'll get it for whatever it costs us to produce it with garbage for fuel. That's the sort of long-term planning that I think will really benefit the city.

I've always felt that, as far as land-developers are concerned, we didn't have to give in to them. We could demand excellence. We've got a very limited number of prime acres and I always felt that they should be coming to us and telling us what they were going to do to benefit the city - not that we needed to please them.

Now we've finally got a Growth Management Ordinance that really pays attention to that. If you have a project with less density, more 'green space,' solar water heating, and other 'goodies,' you get ranked at the top.

That's our new system. If the ideal is government for the people, I want to keep asking, 'Is this what the people want?' and 'What do we get if we grant your wishes?'

Listen, a 'nit' is a louse egg and, if you've ever had a child come home from school infected with lice, you know that, if you miss even one of them, seven days later, the problem is back.

The most gratifying thing about this job is having someone tap your shoulder in line at the grocery and say, "Good work. Stick with it. Stay in there."

"The Conch Revival"

"I hear - through the usual grapevines - that some members of the Chamber of Commerce and of other groups who are unhappy about the ways things have changed are banding together to run a campaign called 'The Conch Revival' and try to undo what the Commission has done over the past few years.

What I hear is that they want to run me out, they want to run the mayor out, and according to whose version you hear, the vote is split on Emma Cates, depending on whether she decides to run for mayor.

Remember, all that's needed is three out of five votes, that majority.

It's a catchy phrase and has built-in emotional hooks but, you know, I think most people in town, everybody from Conchs to last week's newcomers, do not want to go back to the way things used to be.

The city's never been in better shape. We've got money coming in. Anybody who gets a service from the city has got to pay for it - or they get nothing.

This is directly due to what I call 'The Paperwork Laws.' You no longer get a piece of paper from the city - a building permit, an occupational license, a variance ... anything - until you've paid your sewer and garbage bills — which to me is just normal. You're supposed to pay your bills. For years a lot of people didn't and now it's working.

We're going to actually wind up this year with enough money to last us from when the budget year closes to the time taxes start coming in. We'll actually have transitional money.

This has never happened before. The city, in the past, has had to operate hand-to-mouth, not knowing if it could make payroll. We were almost bankrupt in '83. Right now, we're in good financial shape.

You know, some overdue credit is due to Bill Overfelt, our assistant City Manager. He's good at whipping things into shape and, last year, he won a National Award for Key West. It was the first time it's ever happened. We actually won an award for having our finances and annual statement in such good condition.

The city is getting less and less attention from the state because we've instituted a set of controls. We've set up impact fees. We're collecting what's owed to us. We're treating this small piece of earth with respect. The commissioners have done

basically what should have been done years ago.

I hope enough people have been paying enough attention to what's really been going on over the past few years that they've seen the upward trend that's been taking place. I think we're on the right road and I'd hate to see these accomplishments reversed, whether I stay in office or not.

You know, if the right person came along and said, 'I want to run. Will you step aside?', I would. There are hundreds of people in this town who could do the job and do what's right. But when I hear word of who may be running this year - with the intent of reversing what the commission has accomplished over the past few years - I say I'll never quit. Never.

1987

So, yes, right now, I'm planning to run again. It's a critical time and I couldn't stand to see the forward movement slowed or halted. And I don't think it's going to happen.

The continuing issue will be the management and control of growth. Also, the new sewer and garbage plants seem to be in place, but those projects have got to be watched carefully.

If I run, I want to run on my record, on speaking my mind on the issues and sticking to what I promise.

I see a continual uplift to this city to where we could become the little gem of a town we should be. It should be a place where - five or ten years from now - the people who come here ask, 'How did you do it? This town is wonderful! It has everything you need. It has the best climate in the world.' And it's our home.

You know, this town is really an amazing place. We're hooked on to the U.S. but we really are the 'Conch Republic.' The Conchs always knew what they had and so many of the rest of us came and stayed out of love ... for the independent spirit of the place and the neighborliness we found here.

Let's get back to the basics of doing things for a good time - not just for money.

And let's pay attention to keeping the quality of our lives the way we want it.

There's too much street crime - muggings, car breaks, burglaries. Let's give our new Police Chief a chance.

We need to find new sources of income for the city: ad valorum taxes ... maybe even cutting the millage rate. I'll keep after the tourist impact fee. Let's shoot for parking facilities with top rates for tourists and cheap rates for locals. Let's shift the weight off of locals. It's tough enough to get by.

There's money coming into the city. As we become more solvent, let's get back to public works - the streets and sidewalks. Let's get Smathers Beach regenerated. Let's plant trees.

Let's keep planning. And let's hope for the best - for us all. What more can I say?

Full Schedule of Events During March at The Sanctuary

Weekly Open Classes

Mondays	Personal Growth	7-9	\$5
Mondays	Course in Miracles	6-7	Donation
Tuesdays	Beginning Yoga	7-8	\$5
Wednesdays	Intermediate Yoga	7-8	\$5
Wednesdays	Guided Imagery & Meditation	8:30-9:30	Donation
Thursdays	Videos on Spiritual Life	7:30	Donation
Fridays	Introduction to Rebirthing	7:00	Donation
Saturdays	Meditation on Peace	Noon	Free

Special Events & Workshops

Friday Nights	Live Music ~ 8 PM-10PM ~ Free
	David Lightman, Keith Ricks, Maggie Becker, Matthew Jampol, Tina & Philip, and others

March 20 ~ Poetry Reading ~ Judith Kazantzis ~ 8 PM

Saturday Morning Workshops ~ 9-12 Noon ~ \$50 for 3 or \$20 each session

March 14 Self Esteem: Learning to Love Ourselves

March 21 Intimacy: Learning to Let Others Love Us

March 28 Putting It All Together: Letting Go of Past Patterns

and Moving on to Better Relationships

With Judy McGregor, M.S.

Saturday Afternoon and Evening Workshops ~

March 14 Card Reading Workshop, with Joseph Farrar, 6:30-11 PM, \$44

March 14 Transformational Masks, with Doris Martin, 2-6 PM, \$35

March 28 Connective Tissue Workshop, with Dale Alexander, PhD, 10-6 PM

Sundays ~

March 8 Sunday Forum, Discussion Group with Joseph Farrar, 4-8 PM

March 15 Introductory Relaxation Workshop, 2-6 PM, \$35

March 15 Channeling Meditation, 9 PM, Free

March 22 Working with Others, with Fred Lewton, M.S., 9 AM-4 PM

March 29 Sunday Forum, Discussion Group with Joseph Farrar, 4-8 PM

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