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Buy that Bight

Many citizens were disappointed when the City of Key West passed up the opportunity to purchase the Truman Annex property from the Navy in 1987. Because space on our island is limited, they felt, the city should do everything in its power to gain control of the valuable land.

Pritam Singh bought the 102-acre parcel for \$17.25 million. For the first few years, it looked as if Singh's creative and bold plans—which included several classes of living units, a commercial area, marina and boardwalk—would outshine any project the city could have arranged. But now the fate of the project is clouded by financial uncertainty.

In Kip Blevin's article, "Truman Annex: On Shaky Ground" on Page 3, we confirm suspicions that the Annex is skating on thin ice. Singh is losing money and power; some say the players are already positioned to create a new management hierarchy, relegating Singh to a Colonel Sanders-type ceremonial role.

Depending on who actually ends up in control of Truman Annex—be it Singh, the lending institutions or new investors—the details of the project may now be subject to change. The public is no longer necessarily assured even the limited access it had been promised to the waterfront and greenspaces. The city should be prepared to fight to preserve the terms of the original agreement with the Truman Annex Company, or to change them in a way that benefits the city.

These events, combined with the city's likely loss of the use of Peary Court, should goad the city commission toward a more

active role in pursuing public goals. There is, we believe, a vital need for the city to purchase the Key West Bight property, which may come up for sale in January if the current leaseholder, ConAgra, opts not to renew its contract with the Singleton Trust. (Read "Uncertain Future for the Bight" by June Keith on Page 36 for details.)

The bight property, which runs from the old Singleton shrimphouse down to and including Land's End Marina, is a prime parcel of the Key West waterfront. If developed intelligently, it could produce an income for the city at the same time it adds to the supply of attractive public spaces in Key West.

Commissioner Jimmy Weekley, who is pushing to find ways to purchase the property, needs the support of the other commissioners. With Representative Ron Saunders the newly appointed chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, the City of Key West has a better chance than ever to receive state support for its efforts. Weekley's initiative deserves support.

Happy and safe holidays on behalf of the entire staff at Solares Hill.

—Ann Boese

Our cover photograph is one of a series shot at the Key West Bight by Doyle L. Bush in early 1989. He says the series marks the "end of white boots and the beginning of Sperry topsiders." Large black-and-white and color prints are available through Doyle L. Bush Photographers at the Old Harris School, 296-7659.

Truman Annex: On Shaky Ground

by Kip Blevin

"He owes \$100 million," says author John Cole, former confidante and longtime friend of Truman Annex developer Pritam Singh. "Singh owes \$100 million and, at 10 percent a year, is paying \$10 million a year in interest. He can't even make the interest payments."

Whether he owes \$100 million or \$20 million, Pritam Singh's cash flow is vulnerable to the depressed real estate market. Low in cash, he is coping with unpaid bills, employee lawsuits and a crisis of public confidence.

Key West's answer to Donald Trump had been having a bad week when he was interviewed. The Key West Utility Board had announced it would pull the plug on one of his Truman Annex projects because the electric bill, due since May, was not paid.

In a couple of days the matter was "managed," as Singh put it, and the \$123,000 balance was paid.

"Just a misunderstanding," said the peripatetic Singh from behind a desk stacked with papers of varying descriptions. Over there, a sales brochure, memos, marketing data; in another corner, what appear to be legal briefs.

The incident, he said, can be easily explained: he thought he had been given an ex-

tension. "Just as a private homeowner," he said, "I chose not to pay off the bill until I thought it was due."

After a few uncharitable words about the local press and the suggestion, attributed to his attorney, James Hendricks, of potential lawsuits by residents without lights—which he calls "unfortunate, if not stupid"—he stood up. It was the signal that this interviewer's time was up.

Whatever he is, Pritam Singh is no humble homeowner.

The largest developer of Key West property since the U.S. Navy, Singh breezed into the city four years ago with a \$17.25-million loan from a California S&L and, amidst much fanfare, walked away with the deed for the 102-acre Truman Annex, which he expected to parlay into a \$250-million development.

Instantly, the charismatic, turbaned developer was hailed as Key West's savior. His plans could broaden the city's tax base by a quarter, it was said, and his influence could help tip the balance between a tourist haven (that Singh said was getting a little tacky) and an upscale resort.

Even his detractors concede that Singh made a lot of the right moves when he came to Key West. His development scheme included detailed plans for the restoration and

Singh was not at all reluctant to put money into symbolic gestures.

renovation of several historic Truman Annex properties. He envisioned a glamorous residential community which, though decidedly more ritzy than the neighborhood that surrounded it, included a mix of classes of people and seemed very much like Key West in scale and tone.

Perception, Pritam Singh realized, was an important component of value. He took great pains, more than any Key West developer before him, to make sure the perception of what he was doing was positive.

Unlike more tight-fisted developers, Singh was not at all reluctant to put money into symbolic gestures. The elegant little park in front of his headquarters and sales office gave potential buyers a sense of the dream they were buying into.

A perfectionist who insisted on supervising every detail of Truman Annex, Singh would tear something down and build it

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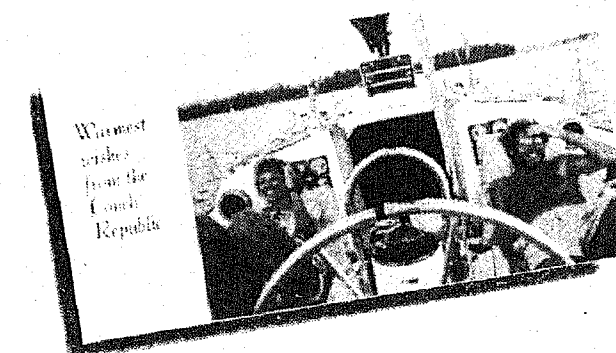
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Singh says he didn't deserve all the praise he got when he first came to Key West. He says he doesn't deserve all the criticism he's getting now. But, as the old folks say, pride goeth before a fall.

The Greeks have a word for it: *hubris*.

There were warning signs. The top-of-the-line single residences sold slowly, and technical problems plagued the projected Ritz-Carlton Hotel on Tank Island.

The most significant impediment, however, came when the commercial units near the harbor, important to the financial success of the overall package, didn't move the way had Singh hoped they would.

Prospective tenants thought the retail units seemed expensive, especially since their ability to draw in tourists off Front Street was untested. Moreover, the contract which Truman Annex wanted tenants to sign was extremely complex—again, a reflection of the developer's strong tastes.

The retail units remained unsold.

Before the real estate slowdown hit, Singh had installed virtually all the expensive project infrastructure, had completed much of the restoration work, and had done the lion's share of the Truman Annex's landscaping.

The message was clear: buy now while units are still available.

Today he's saddled with the interest costs of these elements.

Even when the slowdown in the real estate industry took its bone-shaking hold on the island, Singh continued to voice confidence. Almost weekly throughout last winter, Truman Annex published reports of closings at the project. The message was clear: buy now while units are still available.

Meanwhile, however, the all-important perceptions were gradually beginning to shift. Whispers on the streets of Key West started to tell a new story: Pritam was in financial trouble.

The falling out between Singh and his main contractor, the Texas-based Charter Company, was significant. Each side blamed the other. Charter walked off the job. As a result, work on a number of Truman Annex condos and on restorations of the Customs House and other structures started to run behind schedule.

More stories began circulating around

town about the Truman Annex failing to pay workers and service people on time. At first, these rumors had to be taken with a grain of salt. Few Key West projects are without such disputes, after all. As months passed, however, there were new stories.

Even today, Singh dismisses them. Yes, he says, such things had happened, though not often. Usually they were misunderstandings. Late payments were no big deal during tough economic times. And the money involved was a minute fraction of the value of Truman Annex—certainly not enough to indicate financial distress.

Nonetheless, several former employees have either filed lawsuits or have threatened to file them against the Truman Annex Company.

"I was informed by Pritam in a telephone conversation on August 9, 1990, that partial payment would be sent to me upon initial closings at the Shipyard Development," wrote Steve Surowiecki, a former sales consultant for Singh, on November 12. "There have been closings at the Shipyard, but as of this date, no partial payment has been received by me."

Surowiecki claims Singh owes him \$60,000 in commissions.

"If I receive good faith payment of \$1000 by November 22, 1990, along with a binding agreement whereby payment will be made on a pro-rata basis per each Shipyard

closing, I will not begin legal proceeding," Surowiecki wrote. As of that date, no payment was made.

Public relations expert Ray Biagiotti, who experienced a similar payment problem, fared better. His Boca Raton-based company is "one of the largest public relations firms specializing in major real estate in the country," according to Biagiotti.

Communications Group spearheaded national publicity for the 175-unit Ritz-Carlton Hotel, which is planned for Sunset Island, formerly known as Tank Island. A little over a year ago, Biagiotti says, he "designed and maintained a campaign for local and regional markets to Singh." He sent an invoice for the amount of \$25,000, but settled out of court for \$16,000.

Robert Barnes, Singh's former vice-president of sales and marketing, reportedly helped generate \$100 million in sales for Truman Annex. The financial reward for his efforts? Zero—until he brought suit.

When contractor Mike Kramer of Ft. Myers asked Singh when he was going to get paid, the developer allegedly said, "I will pay when I feel like paying."

Kramer failed to see the humor in the statement, but, according to real estate broker Surowiecki, by resorting to methods just short of physical violence he was able to persuade Singh to find the funds to pay him.

Though Singh now talks more frequently about taking on partners, he struggles indefatigably on. Even in these troubled economic times, he's hoping for enough closings from wintertime residents to improve his debt situation.

A local developer who does not want to be identified by name says that last month Singh borrowed \$250,000 from him. The money, however, did not come without strings attached.

As collateral, the man says, the 38-year-old visionary with the disarming smile and the wispy beard took out a second mortgage at 20 percent interest on his home. If Singh misses two payments, the developer has the option to add the restored home to his own list of properties.

Now he has to field slings and arrows that would not have been cast in his direction only a few months ago. "Might reasonable men conclude that your failure to pay the [utility] bill on time is another indicator of insolvency?" an impertinent reporter asks on his way to the door.

"No!" Singh replies with anger in his voice.

"The lending institutions have too much at stake to let Pritam go down the tubes."

Four years ago, Singh vowed to the people of Key West that he would not restrict access to the annex and the pier area. *No Trespassing* signs recently went up at Pier B, fueling speculation that Union

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"Not so," says Singh, explaining that his insurance company wants him to post signs to prevent access to the public and to insure against liability suits. Once waterfront construction is complete, he says, the signs will come down.

What about Singh's vow to the public? "It was open for four years," he says. "But it's out of my hands."

Repeated calls to officials at the project's financial backers, Union Federal S&L and

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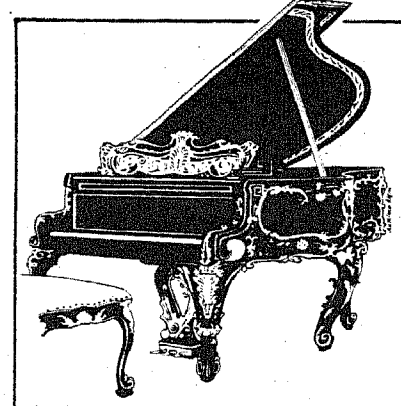
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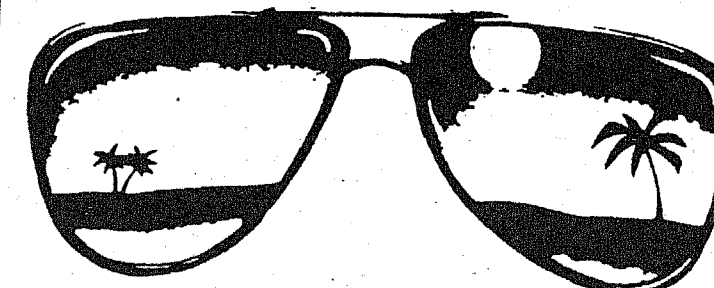
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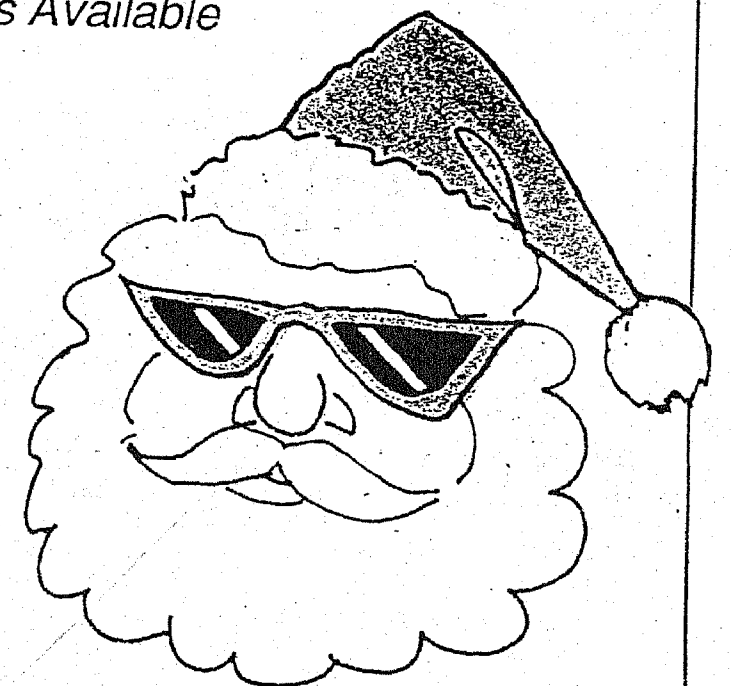


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Barnett Bank, were not returned.

"You're never going to get an admission from the lending institutions," Surowiecki notes. "They have too much at stake to let Pritam go down the tubes."

Singh says that the development plan he and the city government worked out for Truman Annex will be completed. With new players likely to emerge from the wings, however, it is more than possible that the plan will have to be changed. Even if Singh can retain control, important aspects of the original scheme may need to be revised.

Monroe County Administrator Captain Tom Brown accuses Singh of "dragging his feet" on completing a parking lot near

county offices. To buy the property, Singh reportedly received a \$30,000 loan from Barnett Bank, which was to be repaid by the various county offices using the space. To date, no work has been done to pave and upgrade the area.

Brown is not complaining too loudly, however. His employees now have free parking.

Life hasn't always been so white-knuckled for the resilient entrepreneur. When the movers and shakers of Key West first heard Pritam Singh's exotic name, many thought they would be coming face to face with an Eastern mystic. This one had pale blue eyes and good financial connections.

Born Paul Arthur LaBombard, Jr. on December 23, 1952, he changed his name to Pritam Singh—which means God's beloved royal lion—19 years later when he joined the Sikh religion.

His rags-to-riches story was of a kid

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from poor French-Canadian parentage, who transformed himself from a '60s hippie with a flower-child fondness for demonstrating against the Vietnam War into a capitalist with a social conscience and an ability to invest other people's money.

Even to his employees, Pritam Singh is an enigma. Some call his management style and his relations with a dwindling staff tyrannical. Others speak warmly of a man generous to a fault.

"I loved it there," says former Annex receptionist Virginia Vaupel of Sugarloaf. Except for his Ralph Lauren shirts, she says Singh did not flaunt his wealth. "He drove no fancy car or wore no jewelry," she says.

"There was a tremendous turnover in personnel," she says. She doesn't know why. "He was never unpleasant."

Perhaps the best insight into Singh's personality comes from John N. Cole, who has known both the youthful LaBombard and the mature Pritam Singh. Cole, too, is a former employee.

In his outdoorsman's book, *Fishing Came First*, Cole describes the driving force of what has become the Singh creed:

"Nine years old, in the front row of a dusty Fitchburg elementary school third grade class, Paul LaBombard stood and answered his teacher's question about what he would do as a grown man. 'I will never be poor,' said the pale boy with pale, azure eyes, staring relentlessly in near-sighted concentration, his face stiff with rage and determination. 'I will never be poor.'"



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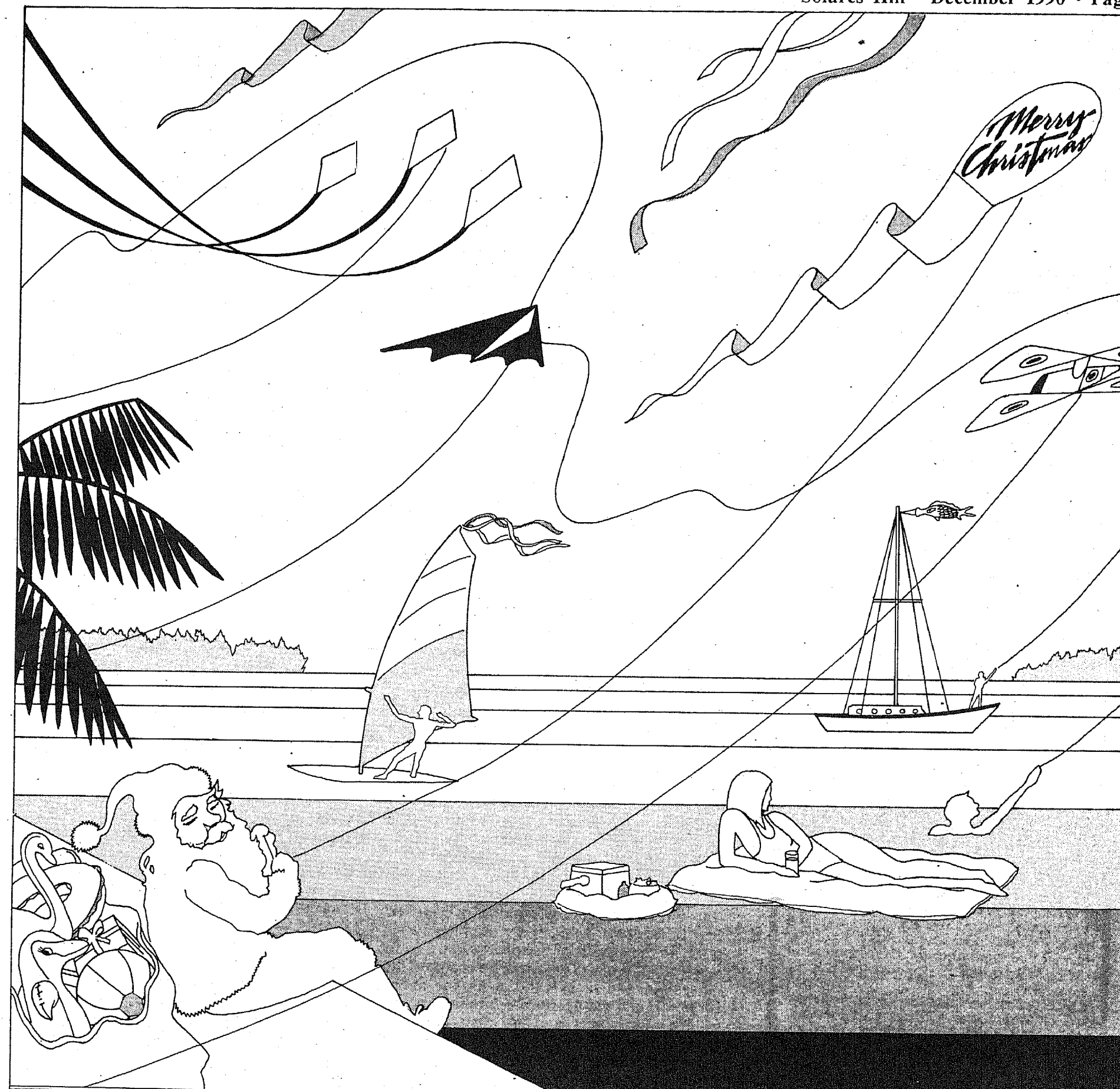
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Sic Transit Pier B

by John N. Cole

In Maine, the sun is still warm during September's first week, and it was shining brightly on the afternoon I got a phone call from Key West. I remember the call the way you remember where you were when John Kennedy was shot; the conversation changed my life.

It was Pritam Singh calling. As I paced our backyard with the walkaround phone on my shoulder, he told me about his high bid for the Truman Annex property. On the day before, the kid had spent \$17.2 million and walked out with the prize. That was 1986; I'd known Pritam for more than 15 years, even since his days in junior high school when our sons were his classmates.

He invited me to see his trophy. I told him I wanted a job in Key West, wanted to move here. He said he'd think about it. A week later, sweating through my Maine long-sleeved shirt and long pants, I stepped off a plane and caught a cab to the Pier House where Pritam and some of his associates were staying.

It was a while before I caught up with him and I spent the time on the furthest end of the Pier House deck, swept away by the vista, imagining all the fish that must be swimming between where I sat and the thin lines Cottrell and Archer Key made on the western horizon. For most of my adult life I

had dreamt of fishing the flats. Winslow Homer's brilliant Caribbean watercolors were part of the permanent collection of my consciousness. And now, here they were, for real.

That incredible day wound down at the Lighthouse Cafe on Duval: a dinner with Pritam, Jane O'Reilly and Liz Lear. When we'd made our goodnights, I was still too giddy to think about sleep. The sub-tropical night wrapped me in its warm, fragrant and for me, a yankee, definitely exotic embrace.

Remembering how to find the Annex, I strolled Duval to Front, talked my way through the gate by the old Customs House and walked through what was then a mini-tank farm to Pier B. Its lights, first installed by the Navy and then cared for by the various agencies that had custody of the pier since the base had been deactivated in 1976, still worked. The world they illuminated with high-up floods was a world I had never seen before and will never forget.

As I watched from the inner edge of the outer finger that cuts south from the main, west facing, pier, I saw my first tarpon ballet. There to feed on the schools of silver splinters drawn by the lights' fatal illumination, the tarpon curved, swirled and pirouetted in their own liquid slow motion, giants afloat on crystal air. And when, every now and then, their dance accelerated and their maws opened, a silver rain danced from below, a cloudburst of sudden terror as tiny fry sought escape a tarpon's bright lightning. For more than an hour, I watched the mobile pageant, knowing as I did that nothing would deter me from returning the next night, and the next, and forever.

Which is a large part of the reason why I went to work for Pritam. Our offices were in the old Administration Building (now Harbour Place) and my window overlooked Pier B. For two years, every morning I rode my bike the length of the pier before I went to my desk. I came to know the snapper, the barracuda, the sharks, the jacks, the Spanish mackerel, the needlefish, the tarpon, the grunts, moray eels, and the great, dark and winged rays, fired like flying projectiles from beneath the channel by explosions of their exuberance.

Once, watching from my office window (I did a great deal of watching) I saw the silver panic of large baitfish, reached for my fly rod on that office wall, ran down the steps and along the concrete to Pier B. In the next hour I hooked, landed and released two jack crevalle, both over 20 pounds. There weren't many offices like mine in the entire world, and it was Pier B that made it so.

And I gave it back my love and my concern. Somewhere in the Annex files are yards of my Pier B memorandums suggesting plans for underwater lights, restaurants with glass floors, whatever it took to introduce the wonders I had discovered to all the people of Key West and its visitors. One day, an underwater illumination specialist came down from Miami and we talked about how lights could work to emblazon that magic world in everyone's memory. But, like so many Annex notions, nothing ever came of that one.

I kept coming to Key West after I quit working at the Annex, and I kept returning to Pier B. Each time I biked to the post office, I took the long way back through the Annex, swung happily onto Pier B, made my pilgrimage, checked in with the fish I had come to know, took in the incomparable vista that spills west to Boca Grande and the Marquesas. And when guests came to visit — sons, daughters, sisters, brothers, nephews and nieces — none escaped my guided tour of Pier B, not even after the lights, one by one, had been allowed to burn themselves out.

Pritam had promised, many times, that the people of Key West would always have access to his waterfront and Pier B. I was one of the people who publicized and recorded those promises; and of the many that were made in those heady days four years ago, the Pier B promise, for me, was by far the greatest gift.

Like the lights, that promise has burned out. Over the November 10 and 11 weekend, all access to Pier B was barred by a high, concentration camp chain-link barrier, its top cut raw to scar anyone desperate enough to try climbing . . . as I almost was.

"The pier doesn't belong to Pritam anymore," I was told by an Annex employee. "It belongs to the bank. They're trying to cut back on their liability insurance costs."

With a Buchenwald fence. One of these days, of course, the fence will be gone. Pier B will still be there. It's solid, reinforced, bomb-proof concrete, top to bottom, built by the Navy, paid for by us. I hope I'm still around to ride its length on my bike, watching to see which of the fish are there to greet their new day.

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Fort Zachary Taylor Goes Indigenous

Compliance with state-park policy means no more Australian pines

by Pamula Mason

With the help of park rangers and volunteers, Fort Zachary Taylor State Park will evolve into a facility that looks much different from the way it does today. The changes are in response to a Florida Park Service policy aimed at restoring park lands to their original arrangements of flora and fauna. Locally, that means the Australian pines at Fort Zachary are coming out—and plants indigenous to the Keys are going in.

Buff Wiley, manager of the park, says the changes will be gradual, allowing new plantings to take hold as the pines are removed. Replacement species include mahogany, buttonwood, coconut palms, ficus and gumbo-limbo, among others.

"No natural habitat is created by the Australian pine," says Wiley. "That's why when you visit the park you see no wild-life." Planting Australian pines has been outlawed in Dade, Broward and Monroe Counties.

According to Wiley, the only native plant compatible with the Australian Pine is the sea grape, with the pine still commanding the greater portion of land—or coral, in this case. "What is created is essentially a monoculture," he says.

In his book *Native Trees & Shrubs of the Florida Keys*, Col. J. Paul Scurlock classifies the Australian pine as a "pestiferous tree."

Wiley concurs: "Pulling up the seedlings growing in the moat around the Fort took a crew of ten a full week just a month ago, and now there are hundreds growing there again already."

The first pines were uprooted while the parking lot was being enlarged and paved. Later, mature trees, which drop the greatest number of limbs, were taken out, creating safer conditions for picnickers on windy days.

Trees on the north side of the parking lot will be removed next, because they are small and easy to uproot. Then trees along the beach will be excised in stages, beginning with those located to the south to help prevent prevailing northerly winds from carrying their seeds.

There are ironies to the situation.

First, the park is not part of original



WAVES OF GRAIN: Buff Wiley, manager at Fort Zachary Taylor State Park, stands surrounded by indigenous sea oats, which are among the species of new plants at the park.

Florida as Fort Zachary Taylor was built out in the water on its own little island. All of the coral connecting it to Key West is fill.

"If we were to completely restore the area to its original state, there wouldn't be a park," Wiley says.

Also, the Australian pine is not a pine tree but a relative of the oak, which accounts for it being a very hard wood.

"When the trees originally began to grow there, the Navy owned the land," says Wiley. "The rapid propagation of the pines at that time was considered advantageous because they proved to be an excellent deterrent to erosion, and they can withstand hurricane-strength winds."

"It was hoped the wood would be good for building housing," he says. "Instead, the wood is hard as rock and warps."

"The only thing I know the wood to be good for is firewood," says Scurlock. "It burns hot and clean." Those interested in fire wood can contact Wiley.

Finally, few agree on which plants can be considered indigenous. "There is no list

of native plants," says assistant park manager Ruby Sieglinger, who has been researching the subject for 15 years.

"As long as it's native to the world and contributes to the balance here it's okay," says plant expert Scurlock. "For instance, the sea hibiscus is not native, but it's beautiful and fits right in here."

"Another tree I would recommend is the royal poinciana, which comes from Madagascar and is known throughout the world as the 'flamboyant.'"

Park officials are using Scurlock's book, among other, as a planning resource.

The park, which operates on an annual budget of about \$40,000, has received no additional money for the project. Park officials are relying on plant donations and volunteers to help with the planting. Donations are tax-deductible.

Companies in Homestead have offered to donate trees.

Wiley says a small nursery has been developed at the Fort, and most of the indigenous plants are being cultivated from

seed. Park service employees credit a volunteer known only as Tommy the Gardener for development of the nursery.

According to Wiley, "Many Key West residents, aware of the plan, are calling on a daily basis to offer plants from their yards. Unfortunately, most of these offers are of exotic plants." Those wishing to donate plants should first speak with Ruby Sieglinger, he says.

"One plant residents could easily provide is the gumbo-limbo, which will grow from a pruning," suggests Sieglinger. "No citrus."

Beach-Lovers Opinion Poll

How does the average person on the beach react to upcoming changes at Fort Zachary Taylor State Park?

• Chris Roberts, who has lived here one year: "I think [the Australian pines] should stay because of the shade, although it could be more beautiful with more native plants."

• Jukka Ahtokivi, who is from Finland and has lived here two-and-a-half years: "It's a shame. Why remove something that's working? I'm not native, and I don't want to be removed."

• Karin Kemmerling and René Bierhut, vacationers from Germany: "Instead of doing this, why don't they improve other areas like the salt flats near the airport to offer people a new useful area? I think the finest thing in the U.S. is the Navy, but it would be nice if the Navy would offer some space for the public."

• Harley of Harley's Hot Dogs, Schooner Wharf Bar: "Australian pines are weeds. They were an expedient just to keep the islands. All that land was dredged up after the Civil War. They did their job preventing erosion and creating mulch. Everything has been imported from somewhere. The only really indigenous plant is our blessed mangrove."

We want Geiger, buttonwood and yellow elder trees, which become shade trees.

"We have already planted 40,000 sea oats, which help prevent erosion and they are protected by law," she says.

According to Wiley, the park service does not import planting soil because five tons cost \$500.

"Instead we use bleached seaweed to plant in," he says. "All of the plants are salt tolerant. We use water from the cistern under the Fort. But this must be gradual,

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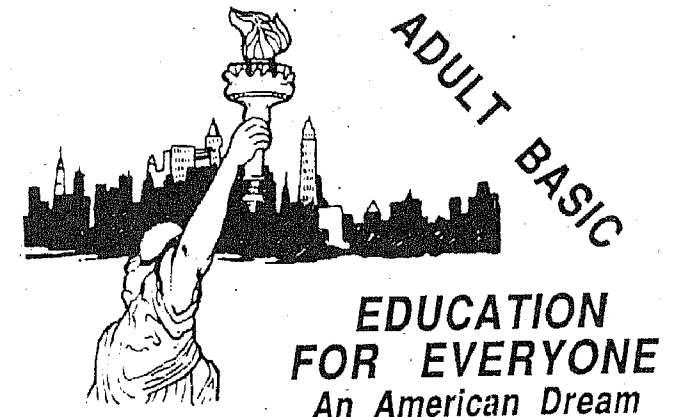


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9900000 Adult Basic/ESL	T/Th	7-10pm	J-27	Suarez/Cobo	0	n/c
9900020 Adult Basic/ESL	M-Fri	9am-12	Harris	Valera	0	n/c
8301600 Employment/Skills/Job Plmmt.	M-Fri	1-3pm	Harris	TBA	0	n/c
9900020 G.E.D. Preparation	M-Fri	9am-12	Harris	Santilli	0	n/c
9900010 Remedial Education	M-Fri	9am-12	Harris	TBA	0	n/c
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9900010 General Ed Promotion	T/Th	7-10pm	J-31	TBA	1	n/c
9900020 G.E.D. Preparation	M/W	7-10pm	J-31	Oakwood	0	n/c
1501340 Beginning Weight Tr.	M/W	7-10pm	Wgt. Room	Freeman	1	\$13
2100310 American Hist./Govt.	M/W	7-10pm	J-31	Puig	1	\$13
0104320 Art Basic Draw/Paint	T/Th	7-10pm	E-8	Hawthurst	1/2	\$13
0708310 Conversational Spanish II	Thurs	7-10pm	J-23	Kelly, E.	1/2	\$6.50
1900300 Drivers Training	M/W	7-10pm	J-35	McKell	1/2	\$13
1001310 English I,II,III,IV	M/W	7-10pm	J-23	Allen	1	\$13
1205340 Beginning Math	T/Th	7-10pm	J-25	Rodger	1	\$13
2002300 Beginning Science	T/Th	7-10pm	J-34	TBA	1	\$13
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The Invisible Revolution: Lesbians in Business

by Anne Carlisle

The 5-foot, 11-inch woman hands a business card across the bar, which she owns and is tending. The card is a light dusty rose color; an egg-shaped graphic shows palm fronds gently sweeping a gateway marked, simply, 416.

Café 416 on Applerouth Lane is a gathering place so discreet only its street number is visible to the passerby. Small, safe—only four police calls in four years of operation—and well kept, the café is Key West's only gay-woman's bar. It is not, however, for women only.

My date and I are put at ease by the long-limbed bar owner, dressed in jeans and spectacles. I read the name scribbled on the back of her business card and ask her what her real name is. "Everyone knows me as Stretch," she says. "That's good enough."

Apparently nicknames are enough for a number of women in the gay community here. "Twigs," for instance, owned a restaurant for a while and now does Frank Sinatra impersonations at Sam's Place. Also, first names coupled with a city of origin or a profession—such as "Graphics Kathi"—may suffice to identify one in this small society.

There are no official figures, but an estimated 500 gay women—as compared to 4200 gay men—now choose to live in Key West. The vast majority has moved here within the last ten years, citing the weather but more often the warm social climate as their reason for staying. "I can work with corporate types," points out one gay freelance public relations woman, "but I don't have to wear pantyhose."

A Left at Tennessee

Thirteen years ago, on a motorcycle trip from Massachusetts to Mexico, Stretch took a left turn at Tennessee—the rest is a love story with Key West. She says the lesbian population back then was very small, "about 15 to 20." Stretch started out slinging eggs at Shorty's Diner and working the Key West-Provincetown circuit. Now, owning her own business "isn't making me rich but it provides a service and has given me the time of my life."

She agrees that though its percentage increase in Key West is sizeable, the gay-woman's community remains largely invisible, as imperceptible to the casual observer as the café she and two partners opened four years ago.

Stretch herself is hard to miss. Wearing a pink evening gown fortified with helium-balloon breasts and black cowboy boots, she appeared at the Casa Marina ballroom as the reigning Miss Gay Key West during Women in Paradise Week in September. The pageant was sponsored by the Key West Business Guild, and promoted by Impressions, an agency for which a number of freelance gay women work. It drew 600 observers during the slow season, largely through press releases sent to women-



HER PLACE: Stretch serves an import at Key West's only women's bar, Café 416, which she owns. Stretch says when she arrived here in 1977 the lesbian population was "about 20."



JILL-OF-ALL-TRADES: Babs Daitch, owned businesses around the country.

Although the business outlook for gay women here is relatively rosy, success stories represent a long uphill struggle. "The interest is there," reports local broker Sharon Smith, a gay woman who is also the outgoing president of the Key West Association of Realtors. "But it's going to be slower because we still have to deal with the fact that we are women, and 99 percent of us were brought up to be worried and

concerned and conservative. We are trained to hold the purse strings tight. It's the risk-taking that isn't there."

Originally from Portland, Oregon, where she counseled juvenile delinquents, Smith visited Key West ten years ago and stayed on. "Every time I think about leaving some new opportunity arises," Smith was first employed here as a property manager for a private owner and is now with Prudential/Knight. In three weeks during October she sold \$1.3 million in real estate. "Not," she hastens to add, "that I can do that well all the time."

Smith takes her responsibilities on the board of realtors very seriously, having held the positions of secretary, education chairman, professional standards chairman prior to that of president. She also admires the group's community activism, particularly the recent recycling campaign.

"It is so unique what is going on here in Key West," she says, "with the people in the grassroots organizations trying to change the minds of the powers that be, rather than the other way around."

Smith is unreserved in her praise of Key West as a place where open lines of communication and shared learning allow a gay woman maximum room for growth and productivity.

"The largest blessing I have received from living here is being able to be myself, a condition I feel is the healthiest for all people," says Smith. "I'm not saying there is no prejudice here; I'm saying it is not vogue to act on it. Especially where I work now. There just aren't any lines drawn."

She values in particular the openness between gay and straight women. "We can

sit around and talk about whatever problems we might be having with our relationships," she says. "The difference between my sexuality and their sexuality is not even thought about."

At work up North, her sexuality was an issue, limiting her effectiveness. "Working in an institution I had to be concerned constantly with it," she explains. "If the girls wanted something they would say, 'Oh, Miss Smith came on to me.' It's a terrible feeling when something that should have nothing to do with your work becomes the overriding issue. Conversely, it is a liberating feeling to have that burden removed. It frees you up to do the work you were intended to do."

Straight people as a rule, she says, have no concept of what it is like to be in the closet, the damage that it does emotionally and mentally. "Most gay people don't realize it themselves until they are set free," she says.

For Smith, the issue of cohesiveness in the gay community here dwindles in the context of the larger value of integration. "I have heard from other people, especially visitors, that they are saddened by the fact they don't see much of a cohesive women's community," she says. "I am heartened by the fact there is so little need for one."

To Smith the invisibility of the culture means there is no "gay ghetto" factor. The overall picture is a healthier one.

This interpretation is reinforced by other gay women who have set themselves up in business to serve not just women but the entire community.

Down from P-Town

One of the most visible success stories is that of Marian Serelis, who once worked as a bartender on the Key West-Provincetown circuit. After going through what she calls an intensive "lifestyle change," she didn't want to be around bars any longer. Securing financial backing, with family assistance, she went into apartment rentals, buying an 18-unit complex on Eaton Street across from a discount beverage retailer, also owned by a gay woman.

Serelis renovated the apartments herself.



BUSINESS SUCCESS: Marian Serelis.

At the same time, she joined a health club and "liked the business so much I bought it [too]."

Fitting none of the stereotypes, she is unusually clear about who she is. "Most people who know me know what my lifestyle is," says Serelis. "But none of my staff is gay and very few of my clientele. So occasionally someone will make a derogatory remark in front of me—use the word faggot, for instance—and I'll say, 'Excuse me but I find that offensive—I'm gay.'"

"They look at me as if to say, 'You're not supposed to be gay. Where are your boots?'"

"That's what I'm not secretive about—who or what I am. Anyone who has guilt about who they are give other people reason to doubt them. If I don't feel good about myself why should anyone else?"

Serelis gives lots of time to Citizens Coalition Against Drugs and keeps track of local politics. At a city commission meeting this fall she stood nose-to-nose with Commissioner Harry Powell, who had walked out on an important vote, and demanded: "If you're going to vacate your seat, then you should let someone else fill it."

Meanwhile, Serelis has filled a void in the women's guesthouse business. When one guesthouse was confiscated by the police and another was sold, Serelis bought Chantilly Place, a house on United Street, and, after renovation, turned it into Rainbow House, a guesthouse for women.

Most gay businesswomen find the topic of women-only housing for visitors important. Realtor Sharon Smith says: "For those who visit it is important to have a place where they can feel instantly safe and comfortable. Where they come from they are used to more intolerance and will not assume they can do what they want wherever."

Smith was part of a group that tried to purchase Chelsea House when it came up for sale in September. The attempt failed, and the guesthouse management was not retained. Today, Serelis' Rainbow House is the only women-only accommodation in town.

Biting the Bullet

Women starting businesses are taking a big risk. Statistics show that 90 percent of all new businesses fail. Bank financing is hard to come by for women, particularly if there is no man behind them to come up with equity.

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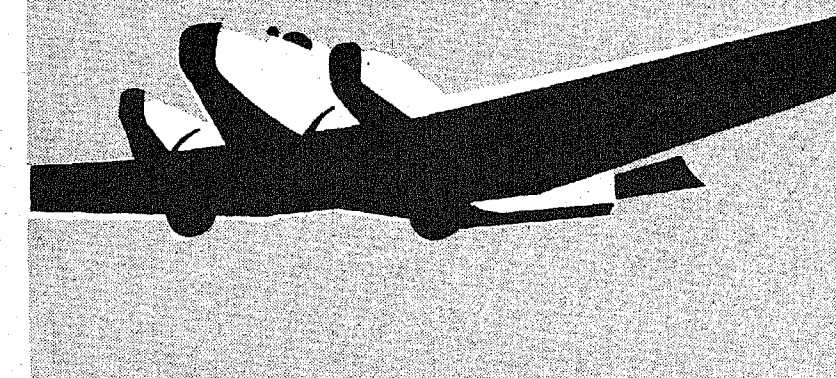
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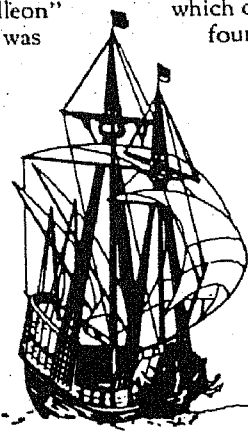
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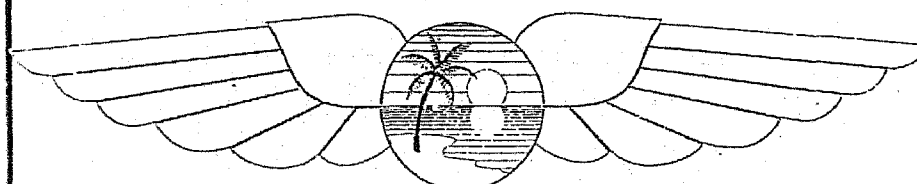
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Pansire.

Pansire went to Berkeley and got a degree in philosophy, while waitressing on the side. When she arrived in Key West in 1985, she signed up for courses in management and wine appreciation at Florida Keys Community College. Then in 1987 she took the plunge, opening Rich's Cafe at the Eden House. It was a success—until last summer when Criss Cross productions, who needed the space for its movie, bought the lease.

Pansire was disheartened but not dismayed. This month, she and partner Michael Stewart plan to open Square One, a Continental-style restaurant in Duval Square.

Pansire, who headed the Women in Paradise Planning Committee, views the opportunities for gay women in business here as open-ended. "You don't have to do just business for women. You can serve the whole community."

She believes the lesbian business community is quietly developing. "Women are much less visible than the men, that is true," she says. "Men in general are into external things, getting their pecking order established. With women things happen more slowly. They establish their network from the inside and no one notices it happening."

Culture-wide, several women point out, the female of the species has less money than the male. Though the scene in Key West is open and the time is ripe, plucking fruit from the money tree is, as Stretch says, "quite a trick."

"Everything is so expensive in Key West, especially property," says Serelis. "So it's very difficult for women to start up what they want if it includes property. On

the other hand, there are many services that go wanting on this island, creating business opportunities for women.

Voids are precisely what Anita Morrell and her partner Liza Conway, Kathi Van Aernum and her partner Carol Frederick, and Christy Bittorf and her former partner Linda Cavalieri saw during their search-for-work-in-Paradise vacations. All came into town within the last four years, all came down as couples, all began their own service businesses and all succeeded.

It's a pattern worth watching. In Provincetown—considered similar to Key West, but smaller and "gayer"—inroads into the market have gone from gay-male dominated to female-gay dominated. Most of the gay guesthouses, for instance, are now owned and managed by women.

Working in a male-dominated field, Anita Morrell sells music equipment at Morrell Music. Last year, she opened a branch of the family business, which is headquartered in Tennessee, and is now as profitable as any of the 11 other stores, all managed by men.

Says Morrell, "My partner and I were attracted to this community for obvious reasons. Upon visiting here several times we realized that the kind of business I was already in was needed down here. Instead of opening another store for the family, I did it myself in a place we liked."

Because their work is time-consuming, Morrell and her partner rarely socialize. However, they enjoy comparing notes with other women-run businesses in town. "The women in business for themselves here, whether gay or straight, come across as successful in what they are doing. It seems that people here are more receptive to seeing all different kinds of people doing all different kinds of jobs."

She says Women in Paradise was a great event. "My partner and I are always amused that it happens during the hottest part of the off-season; and that weekend the bikers were here. I heard a lot of references to bikes and dykes. We got a kick out of it, though."

Designing Women

Kathi Van Aernum and her partner Carol Frederick came to Key West four years ago on vacation from Norfolk, Virginia, where Van Aernum worked for a large ad agency and did videotape production. Frederick had a career in hospitality management, and when she was able to get work here they

made the move. Both work at a local guesthouse; Van Aernum has her own graphics business. This year she designed the posters for Women in Paradise.

Van Aernum finds Key West "radically different from Norfolk, which is so conservative. I feel that people here don't care about your sexual life. Or if they do care it's for the right reasons. I never considered myself in a closet, but in Virginia I had to be much more careful."

Two years ago, Christy Bittorf and Linda Cavalieri started off as partners and business associates in the pool-cleaning business. Since they parted company recently, each has been able to sustain her own client list of about 30 customers. Bittorf's service is Deep Cleaning Pool Service and Cavalieri's is Key West Pool Service. Originally, Bittorf was a dental hygienist and Cavalieri worked at the airport.

"The community was absolutely fantastic when we were building the business," says Bittorf. "We received a lot of help from both the straight and gay segments. Gilda at Key West Chemical was great, for instance."

Bittorf says the couple looked into franchises in Connecticut. "Opening up our business seemed a better way to go here." Overall the experience has been "even better than expected."

After San Francisco and Los Angeles, Babs Daitch of "Thanks, Babs" seems to be more like a team of persons than a single woman of 40 trying Key West on for size.

Of her jill-of-all-trades service business Daitch says, "I'd like to see it as a TV series." Her gofer/public relations/resource work includes tasks as diverse as doing public relations for a psychic, managing a retail shop while its owners go on vacation or driving a socialite to her plastic surgeon's office in Miami. The heart of her business, however, is in-home dogsitting.

A former club owner, Daitch has no qualms about letting the dogs sleep in her bed. "At one time I was sitting for five dogs," she says. "Luckily they lived next door to each other so it worked out. I had three Maggies, a Max and a Mickie. It's a good thing I don't stutter. By the way, do you want me to talk slower? Some people

find my energy level enervating."

Her business card is pink and was designed by Kathi Van Aernum. It reads, "Thanks, Babs: Your Personal Assistant for Home or Office."

Back in the Home

For many of these women, home is the office. And what is also very obvious is that they feel at home in Key West. What they all seem to be saying sounds a lot like—well, the Puritan ethic. (Wasn't that invented by men, for men?)

At any rate, here's Sharon Smith's business advice: "Basically, success has to do with staving off gratification. Instead of going out every night and blowing all your money you start stashing some of it away. Eventually you're buying more house paint than Margaritas."

So I ask Stretch, smiling owlishly from behind the bar at Cafe 416, what the most

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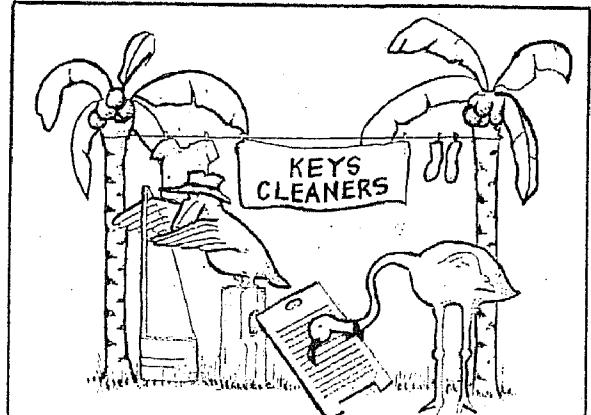
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Christmas Eve 1921: KKK Rode High in Key West

by Bud Jacobson

Christmas Eve is one of the most revered evenings of the whole year, but in Key West in 1921 it was a night of incredible brutality.

The island city, then, had about 10,000 men, women and children living in its wood-frame houses, some of its wealthiest in high stately mansions and an ethnic hodge-podge of Cubans, English, Spanish, Bahamian blacks. Cigar-making was the major industry, followed by fishing and sponging. Rum-running from Havana also contributed heavily to the economy, but its dollar impact and the widespread gambling that went with it were not exactly broadcast by the Chamber of Commerce as part of the leading economic indicators.

With it all, everyone lived in a comfortable and easy fashion, tolerant and respectful of each other's cultures. Under this peaceful society, however, lay an invisible layer of white men who met secretly and saw themselves as guardians of the moral codes in the community. The moral codes, of course, were laid down and aimed at whomever they decided they did not favor. Moral courage, though, was never one of their strong suits.

They were the local bunch of Ku Klux Klansmen.

In 1921, one of the town's citizens was a strapping, handsome, muscular young white man who hailed from the Canary Islands. He was Manolo Cabeza, known around town as "Isleño," the islander.

Cabeza owned a small bar and sporting club, The Red Rooster, at the foot of Thomas Street, near Front—an area in town near the waterfront where most of the commercial action happened during the day and where most of the gaudy, perfumed action

took place at night. Noisy Cuban bands and rollicking nighttime playboys romped till the sun came up.

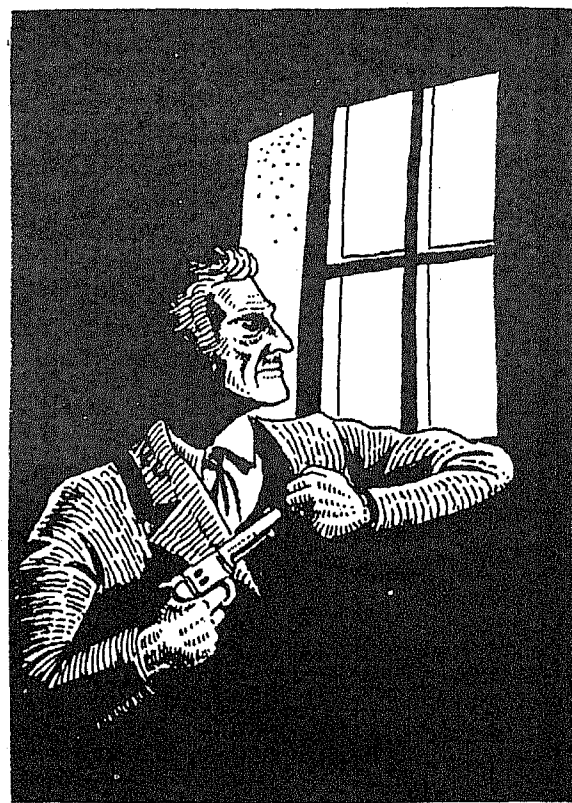
It was known around the street that Cabeza had taken a shine to a particularly beautiful mulatto (called "high yellow" in those days) girl, named Angela—a small, lovely girl with silky smooth café-au-lait skin, jet black hair, a wide and smiling mouth, soulful black eyes. She had been one of the ladies of the evening until Isleño came along and staked out his claim. From then on they lived as man and wife in a small apartment upstairs from Solano's, a general store at the corner of Petronia and Whitehead. It later became Padron's grocery and was burned down in a riot in 1970.

Solano's was a huge old wooden building that stretched back on Petronia and along Whitehead with an entrance on the corner. The top floor, above the lovebirds' nest, was shaped into a cupola with a tinspired turret top that had a couple of small windows.

Cabeza was a tough Spanish guy who had served in the Army in World War I and had been decorated for his derring-do and fighting courage at the front. When he came home to Key West, after the war, old Key Westers like Perucho Sanchez recall that Cabeza "got to be known as the Robin Hood. He took care of some of the poor black families back of Whitehead Street. He'd bust into the gambling rooms, grab the money on the table and give it to the poor—nobody fought him. He was a mean tough hombre."

He and his doxy lived up there in the Solano place until one dark cold night in late December when a gang of hooded men, five or six, quietly slipped up the outside steps. It was after midnight when they crashed through the door and woke up Cabeza and Angela.

The story goes that Cabeza leaped out of bed in a rage and grabbed two of the hooded men, and a third and fourth broke in,



beating Cabeza with baseball bats. The struggle went back and forth across the small room. Cabeza ripped open the masks of two of the men—he knew them!

But by then they had him, his arms pinned, his legs straddled. Strong lines from a fishing boat wound around him as they carried him outside and down Petronia, where they tarred and feathered him. It was a signal that the KKK disapproved of his living openly in sin with a mulatto girl. Some stories had it that one of the men lusted after the light-skinned beauty himself.

Angela, with her mixed African and Cuban blood, knew the death curses of voodoo—curses that sent enemies to cruel, bloody, agonizing deaths. That night as Cabeza recovered from his wounds she made a sacrifice of chickens, mixed blood and bones, and in the candlelight she damned them all, the hooded men and all

who had anything to do with harming her lover. Violent death to all! she cursed.

Cabeza, with his injuries patched up, began his search for the two men he had recognized. One was a baggage handler who worked at the railroad terminal on Trumbo Point. Cabeza went there first, according to Perucho, "But he didn't find the guy. I think his nickname was Washer. The guy was on his day off."

The next day, Cabeza went hunting for William Decker, the second hooded man he had recognized. Decker was a box maker who worked in a cigar factory and lived in a stone building which still stands near Whitehead and South Streets. Cabeza hired a cab and drove around Key West looking for Decker. In his belt was an Army-issue Colt revolver.

It was mid-afternoon. Cabeza was head-

ing south down Duval Street in a taxi. As the taxi drew near the Cuban Club, Decker, in his own car, was heading up Duval in the opposite direction. Cabeza spotted him just as a trolley car pulled into the way, slowing down to pick up passengers in front of the Cuban Club.

Cabeza yelled at the taxi driver, "Turn around fast, he's going to stop by the trolley!"

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"Decker, this is how a man kills a man," Cabeza said, and shot him dead on the spot.

They wheeled around in a U-turn and drew up alongside Decker.

Cabeza leaned out the taxi's window, pointing the pistol, shouting, "Decker, this is how a man kills a man," and then shot him dead on the spot.

In an uproar, the people near the Cuban Club scattered. The taxi driver jammed his foot on the gas pedal, and the old car sped down the street, heading for Whitehead and Petronia. Cabeza jumped out and ran like

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hell into his building, still holding the pistol in his fist.

Darkness had fallen, and there was a chill in the air as a crowd gathered on the sidewalk opposite the Solano building, lit only by feeble street lights. Cabeza now was hiding on the top floor with a clear shot at anyone on the street.

It wasn't long before Sheriff Roland Curry called the Naval Station and officials sent six Marines over to help arrest Cabeza. By now a crowd of men, women and children had gathered, talking loudly and pointing up at Cabeza in the cupola, while Curry tried to persuade Cabeza to surrender and end the violence. Curry promised him safety in custody.

"Only if McGinnis comes for me," shouted the killer from his roost on the top of the building. The man he wanted was A.H. McGinnis, a deputy who had been a federal marshall. Cabeza trusted McGinnis, nobody else. The deputy was called from his home and along with the Marine guard and another deputy, LeRoy Torres, Cabeza was led down the stairs. The crowd broke into cheers and whistles—more for Cabeza, who they liked, than for Curry about whom there were racist suspicions.

Cabeza was taken to a cell in the old county jail (which is still used, a grey stone building, two floors high, with barred windows, behind the new courthouse annex) and locked in. Marines continued to guard him because the KKK attack on Cabeza was well known and feelings were running hot through the black areas, and the white part of town.

The town quieted down gradually. The kids went to bed. Dogs howled now and then, a rooster crowed insanely in the middle of the dark night. The clock at the courthouse showed after 1 a.m.

It was Christmas Eve, 1921.

Sheriff Curry told the Marines he had the "situation under control," and they could leave. Merry Christmas!

After they had left, in the black dark chill of Christmas Eve, five cars with their lights out, came around the corner of Thomas and Fleming Streets, parked and unloaded their cargo of vengeance—15 hooded men who walked silently to the jail. Curry had gone home. The place was open. The door to Cabeza's cell, in some mysterious way, had been left unlocked. In the next cell, an old drunk heard the men coming up the stairs, and he hid under a blanket in a dark corner.

The hooded men walked boldly into Cabeza's cell and swinging lead-weighted blackjacks; they beat the Spaniard to a bloody pulp. Almost dead, he was dragged feet first out of the jail and then roped to the bumper of one of the cars.

With the trussed body of Cabeza bumping on the road, kicking up dust and stones behind one of the cars, they drove out to

Christmas morning, the hanging man was a gift to all the citizens of Key West.

County Road (now Flagler Avenue) and then east where they finally stopped in the vicinity of the East Martello Tower, an area known as the dam. They picked out a strong tree and hoisted the body to the limb. Then the hooded men, courageous as always, fired shotguns and pistols into what was left of Cabeza, the man once known as Isleño.

Christmas morning, the hanging man was a gift to all the citizens of Key West.

A grand jury was summoned under the overview of two prominent businessmen in the town, Benjamin D. Trevor and Eugene L. Albury, and they launched an inquiry into the lynching of Cabeza. After listening to a great amount of testimony, the grand

jury strongly indicated that Cabeza caused the trouble that led to his own hanging.


"He had a very bad reputation," said the grand jury. "His name was a terror to officers of the law . . . and to the citizens in general."

Furthermore, Cabeza's "living with a Negro woman" was an affront to society, they indicated, and in the last place, the grand jury said it had learned that "Cabeza was mistaken when he identified Decker as an assailant (on the night he was tarred and

feathered) because Decker was in the Elks Club." The grand jury concluded, "... we are of the opinion that the lynching of Cabeza was not done by an organized society but by individuals unknown to us." No arrests were ever made.

The deadly curse from Angela, Cabeza's mistress, however, floated invisibly over the town. A few years later, Sheriff Curry went fishing near the Dog Rocks when something happened and he was hurled into the water, the boat overturned on top of him and he drowned under it.

Florida's Governor Sidney Catts had the last word in the affair when he appointed A.H. McGinnis as the interim sheriff of Monroe County. McGinnis had been a strong worker when Catts ran for governor.

Said the governor on making the appointment: "Good cats take care of their kittens." 

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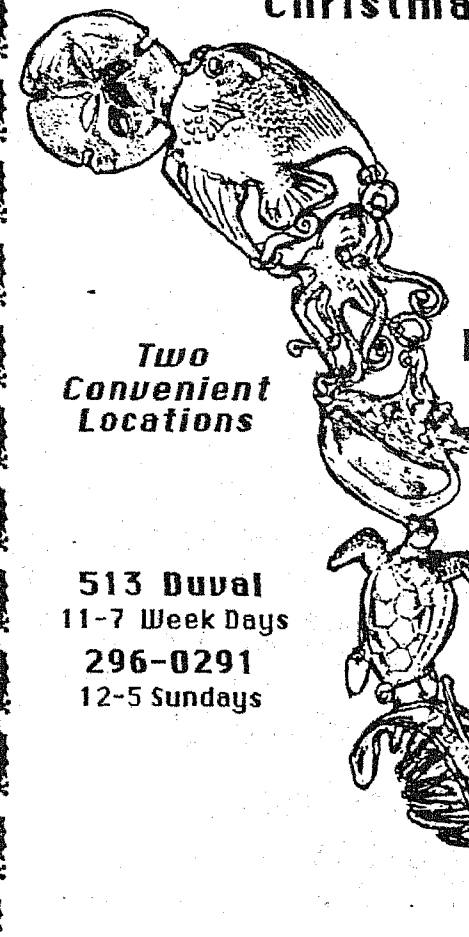
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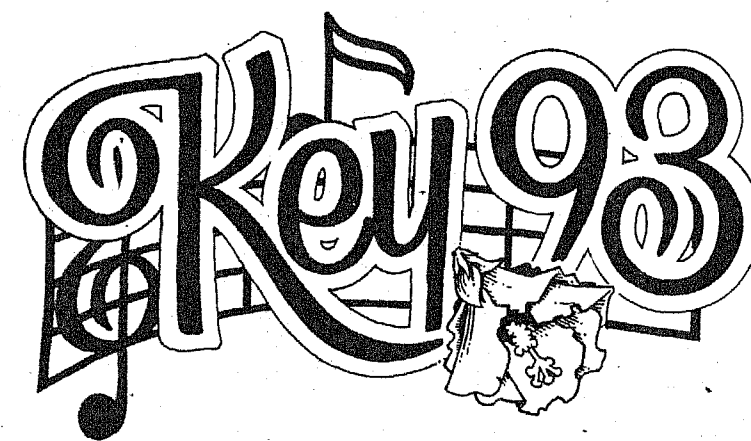


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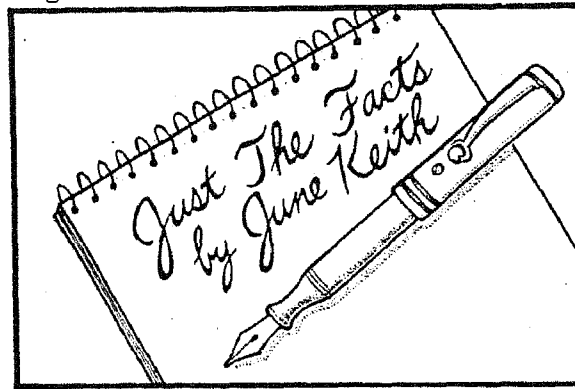
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A Little Gray Matter

Similar to many city contracts approved by the Key West City Commission, former City Attorney Robert Gray's employment agreement, signed in August, 1989, contained the following clause:

"Attorney may voluntarily resign his position at any time, with or without cause.

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Attorney covenants, however, to give ninety (90) days advance notice of his resignation. If attorney fails to work said ninety (90) days, he shall forfeit all accumulated rights and benefits hereunder."

Gray gave the city less than a month's notice when he decided to leave Key West and his job with the City Legal Department. But since he had reportedly done a good job, and since he was having difficulty juggling his financial obligations to two households—his first wife and their children in Ft. Myers, and his newest wife and their baby in Key West—the commission waived the clause, which stated the attorney had forfeited his rights to accumulated vacation and sick leave.

On November 9, Gray's payoff from the City of Key West for accumulated sick leave, annual leave and personal leave was \$6781. He was employed by the city for 15 months.

"The commission voted to waive the 90-day notice clause," says Finance Director David Fernandez. "He was a good guy with a sad story."

"[Gray] was well worth it," says Commissioner Virginia Panico. "[He] didn't give enough notice before he left, but neither did Witker (a former city manager replaced by current City Manager Felix Cooper), and we gave it to him, too. [Gray] didn't give enough notice, but I wasn't going to hold that against him."

When Richard Witker left his position as city manager a year ago, he collected \$8260 in leave pay. He was employed by the city for 24 months.

The vote to pay Gray was 4-1.

Failing to convince fellow commissioners to pay the resigning Gray leave time on a pro-rated basis, or 33 percent for only 30 days notice, Commissioner Harry Powell voiced the solitary vote.

Truman Annex Rentals

Listed under vacation rentals, the advertisement in the *Key West Citizen's* classified section reads: "Truman Annex Realty Office. Luxury waterfront condos. Short and long term."

But for those who can't afford the pricey

waterfront condos or just want a safe place for their college kids for a couple of weeks during Spring Break, units in the Shipyard are available for rent.

Located at the edge of Truman Annex, Shipyard units are sold at "affordable" prices, according to Pritam Singh's development agreement with the City of Key West. Shipyard sales are so successful, says Singh, that he wants the city to grant him permits to build more.

Salesman Mark Orofino says a one-bedroom, one-bath unit in the Shipyard rents for \$2000 a month, or \$850 a week. Two-bedroom units go for \$900 or \$1100 a week. Orofino will send interested individuals a short-term rental agreement, and a request for a signature and a \$500 deposit to cinch the deal.

But do these terms conflict with city codes?

"They're cheating," says Commissioner Harry Powell. "This is what I have been talking about all along. We have said again and again in city commission meetings that these units are not to be transient rentals."

At closing, shipyard condo buyers agree that they may not rent their units by the day.

City codes dictate that renting a unit for less than 28 days makes that unit "transient."

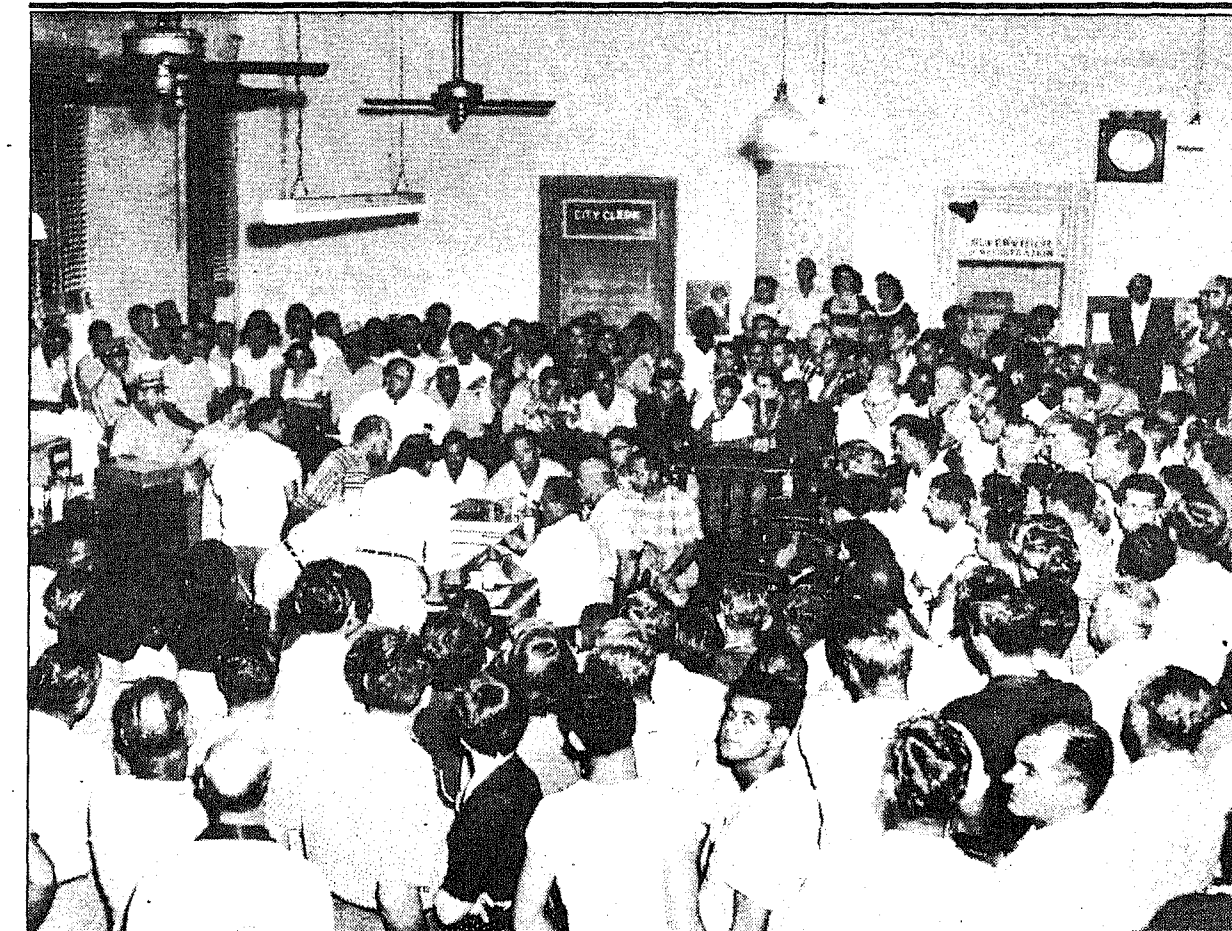
Memo from Felix Cooper

In a recent memo titled "Concerns over Chief [Tom] Webster's contract," City Manager Felix Cooper listed the following points:

Salary: Currently at \$80,308, it is higher than any salary in the city, and exceeds the city manager's salary by \$20,308. Webster's salary has doubled since he was hired in 1987. There is no performance evaluation condition in the contract. Wage increases are automatic, regardless of performance.

Housing Allowance: The contract calls for a housing allowance of \$840 per month, to assist in reimbursing housing costs associated with local residence. Webster lives on Cudjoe Key. He commutes at city expense.

Hours of work: Webster's contract allows for him to set his own hours "as he



POLITICS, 1953: Those were the days when Key West citizens (mostly the men, according to this shot) religiously packed Old City Hall on Greene Street every time the commission met. C.B. Harvey, Wilhelmina's husband, was mayor then.

sees fit." He claims an average of 37 comp-time hours per month, allowing him to take every Monday off. He is on the premises four days a week.

Vacation: While his contract calls for 30 days vacation per year, it also states that he should receive vacation pay at least equal to that of other department heads. Webster uses his comp time for vacation, and his vacation pay accumulates without a cap. Presently, the accumulated vacation, sick and other unused time is valued around \$75,000.

Medical Insurance: All employees except Webster pay for part of their dependents' coverage. This is an additional cost to the city of \$1860, annually.

Retirement: All city employees receiving retirement benefits contribute toward their retirement except Webster. This is an additional cost of the city of \$8834, annually.

Clothing Allowance: Webster's contract provides for uniforms plus a clothing allowance of \$1320, annually.

Automobile: Every three years, the city furnishes the chief with a new car. He uses this car for business, including about a 40-mile-per-day commute at city expense. He may also use the car for pleasure and vacation, when he pays for gas. While driving in Monroe County, the chief has unlimited use of the city car for personal business and costs are unlimited. The city pays for over 80 percent of the cost of his personal use of the city car.

Cash total of these benefits, not including standard employee benefits: \$140,740, annually.

The question of whether Webster's indefinite contract is binding or can be terminated at will has been turned over to a circuit court judge for a declaratory judgment. Officials say the response will come in six to nine months. The city has retained

the services of the law firm of Burke, Bosselman and Weaver of Ft. Lauderdale to prepare documentation for the court.

Until a judgement is made, the chief's contract stays.

Beep, Beep!

In September, Police Chief Tom Webster drove out of Bob Chango's car lot in a 1991 Chevrolet Caprice. The city agreed to lease the car for 36 months at a total cost of \$16,897, which the city will pay at the rate of \$468 a month.

Eye on Crime

When *Island Life* editor/publisher Jerry Montgomery, Commissioner Sally Lewis' appointee to the Citizen's Crime Task Force, resigned from the force because of time constraints, Lewis appointed Christian "Chris" Devereaux to fill the vacancy.

Devereaux is a commentator on local television show "Eye on the Keys," which airs Thursday nights on TCI, Channel 5.

Among his credentials are an M.B.A.

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HOWARD JOHNSON

Key West

from Harvard Business School, Ph.D.s in particle physics and computer science from Stanford University, and two B.S. degrees from the University of Notre Dame.

In 1974, Devereaux was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford's Royal Academy of Science.

No Problem, State Says

After Monroe County voters said yes to a one-cent sales tax increase in the summer of 1989, the Key West Police Department began investigating possible improprieties by then-City Manager Richard Witker, who had asked Police Chief Tom Webster to turn in his resignation earlier that year. In a 15-page report on findings of the investigation, Detective Tom Chapp stated:

"There appears to be strong evidence of city funds being taken and used for a political campaign. It appears that Richard Witker was not only responsible for this spending, but also for initiating the political committee known as CETA (Citizens for an Equitable Tax Alternative)."

Chapp also suggested that Chief Circuit Judge Richard Fowler may have committed an ethics violation when he made the following statement to reporters the day before elections: "You would feel uncomfortable if you knew facts about some of those we have to release [from jail]."

The implication was that Fowler had attempted to convince voters to support the tax, which would be used to help build the county's new jail.

Chapp recommended that the State Board of Elections, the Board of Ethics, and a special prosecutor or similar entity review his report. He said the city should be provided with a response.

The *Miami Herald* reported in October that all of Chapp's allegations have been rejected by Ft. Myers State Attorney Joseph D'Alessandro's office, the special prosecutor.

On November 26, Chapp was promoted from detective to sergeant—a boost in rank and pay.

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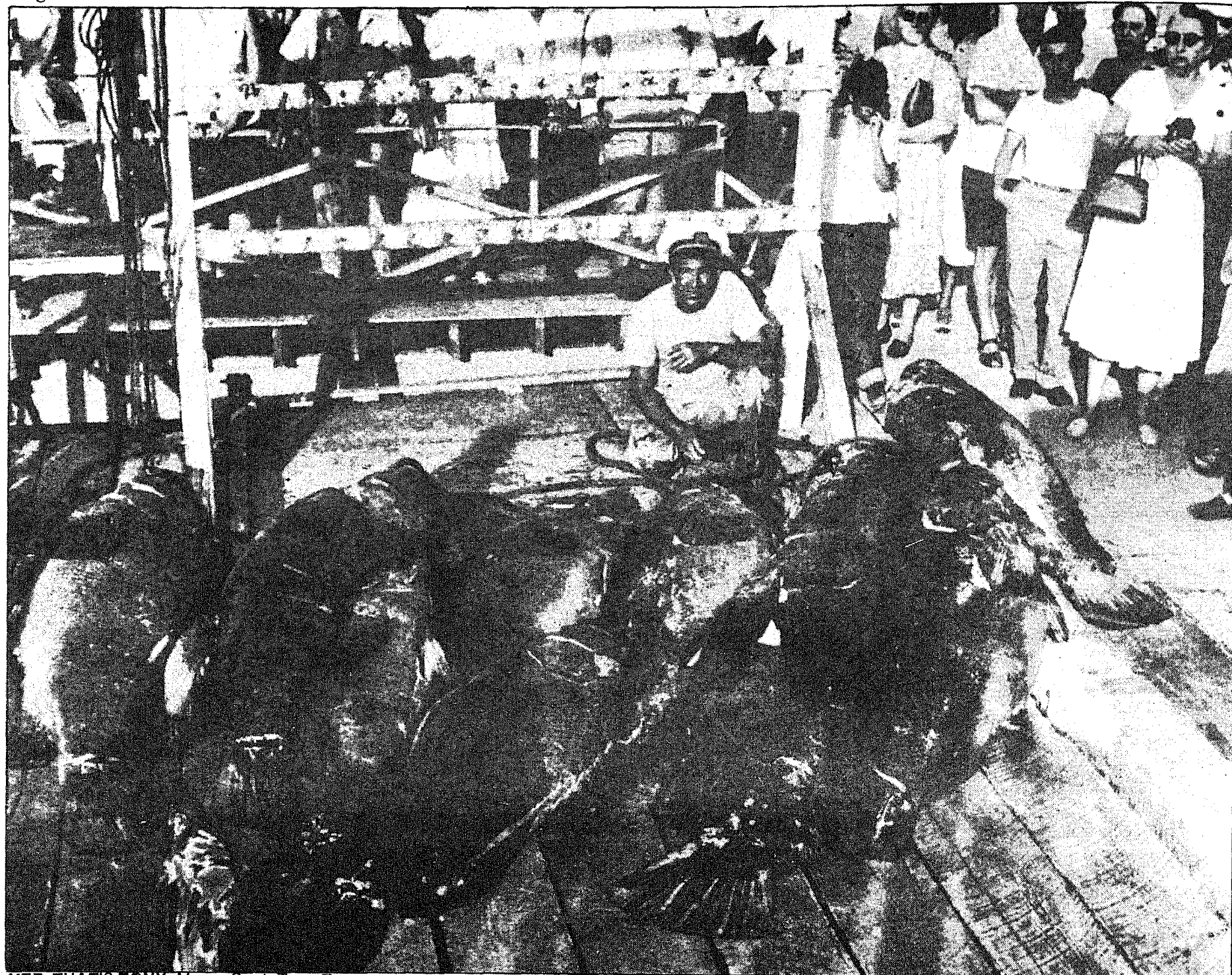


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YEP, THAT'S TONY: Mayor Capt. Tony Tarracino was a fishing-boat captain back in the 1950s when he hauled in this load of jewfish.

The Lost Art of Spearfishing

Depleted waters and low incomes have squeezed this industry dry

by Barbara Bowers

"Like the bullet you don't hear, it's the one you don't see that gets you," says Judy St. Clair. Two summers ago, a ten-foot Tiger shark snatched a Nassau grouper from her speargun—along with her right hand.

Indeed, in the fish-eat-fish world of underwater predators, spearfishermen become prey, too. And while horror stories like St. Clair's and Michael Mortimer's—the spearfishing fireman whose shark-bitten body was recovered this past Labor Day weekend—send chills through warm wetsuits, spearfishing is generally a low anxiety sport: no sharks, no shots and no big fish.

These days spearfishermen are rare as well. The decline of large gamefish (which some attribute to spearfishermen) and the reduction in possible income have whittled this once-popular activity down to nearly nothing.



TIM TAYLOR: Owner of Lookers Dive Charters with a 30-pound black grouper.

In Florida waters, big jewfish, grouper and snapper—the spearfishermen's game of choice for the last four decades—have declined as sharply as black rhinos and elephants have in Africa. In fact, the decline of all types of fish worldwide is drawing attention to methods of commercial and recreational fishing.

Commercial fishing has become so efficient with gill nets and fish traps, and recreational fishing has expanded with its high-paying tournaments and hook-and-line fishing, that more fingers are pointing than fish are biting.

Many, however, say the comparatively small sector of spearfishermen is responsible for nearly depleting Florida waters of jewfish. Puppy dogs of the deep, 200- and 300-pound jewfish once populated shipwrecks and coral reefs. Because of their enormous sizes, jewfish weren't afraid of scuba divers.

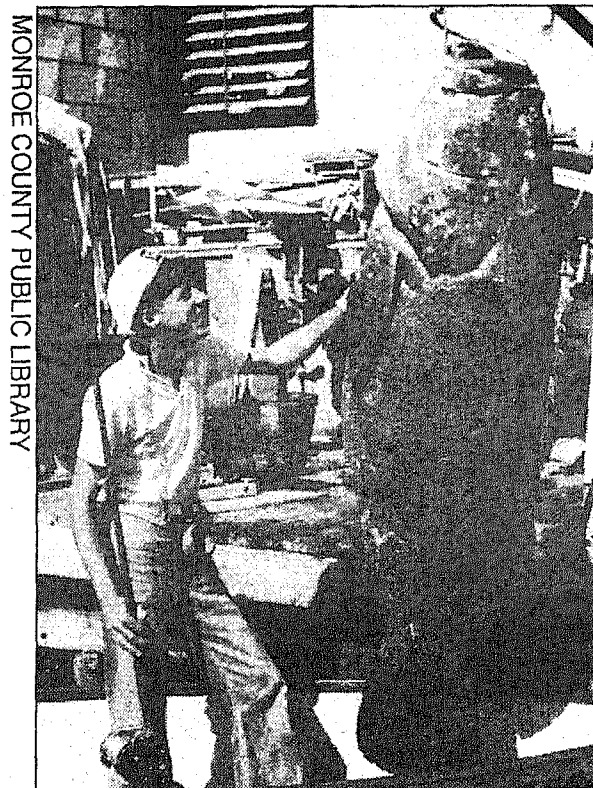
"They made up about 90 percent of my income, until a few years ago," says Don DeMaria, who paid his way through college by spearfishing commercially. "Even when I found dozens on a wreck, I'd only spear a few—it took a couple to make a great day."

DeMaria says he didn't want to wipe the fish out. "Back then, I was one of the few fishermen using a loran to find wrecks," he says. "When I started spearing them, there wasn't even a market for jewfish outside of Key West. But they were easy game for everyone, and over the years, I found fewer and fewer."

Leading a crusade to save the jewfish, DeMaria and a number of other conservation-minded locals convinced the State of Florida and the Federal government that these gentle giants should be off limits to all fishermen.

A case of somebody eating his cake then deciding he's full? Hardly. Says DeMaria, "I spearfished all over the Caribbean and saw a pattern developing. First there were hook-and-line fishermen and a small community of divers, some spearfishing. Then people started using electric reels and nets to catch more fish. Sink nets, which are the equivalent of gill nets, started showing up in the mangroves. Next came fishtraps. Bigger, better, more efficient—it's the American Way."

What was an occupation for a handful of people until the 1980s has dwindled. Today, virtually no one spearfishes commercially on a full-time basis because there are few fish large enough to make it financially worth the time and effort. Additionally, sophisticated electronics help ama-



GENTLE GIANT: A young angler poses with a monster jewfish. In the 1950s, when this shot was taken, fish of this size were common.

teurs locate shipwrecks and remote coral reefs, thus depleting resources that, at one time, only experienced local divers could find.

It Doesn't Pay the Rent

"When I was in grad school, a three-day spearfishing weekend in Bimini netted 200 to 300 pounds of fish that paid for the boat, gas, and my rent for a month," says Dr.

The Greenpeace Store of Key West
Announces the Publication of a new Poster
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Second in a Series by artist Joe Petro III, who will be present in the store for a signing
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Sam Gruber, director of the University of Miami's Shark Institute. "I don't know anyone doing that now."

Judy St. Clair quit spearfishing as a way of making money six years before the shark attacked her in the Bahamas. "It got harder and harder to make a living at it—or maybe I got older and needed a steady income."

In fact, only a few people were ever good enough, first as divers, then as hunters, to reap an income from spearfishing—even during decades when fish were plentiful.

Like DeMaria, Billy Deans paid his way through college by spearfishing and selling them his catch commercially. Deans, however, switched to the dive-charter business, and DeMaria spears fish for dollars only occasionally. Even Bob Elkins, a highly respected Key West spearfisherman who claims spearfishing as his occupation, is lobstering these days.

Aside from the locals who spear fish for dinner, spearfishing today is first and foremost a recreational sport. Taking sportsmen out of their natural environment, spearfishing takes time and practice to master.

Spearfishing targets the particular fish a sportsman wants to catch. Except in the

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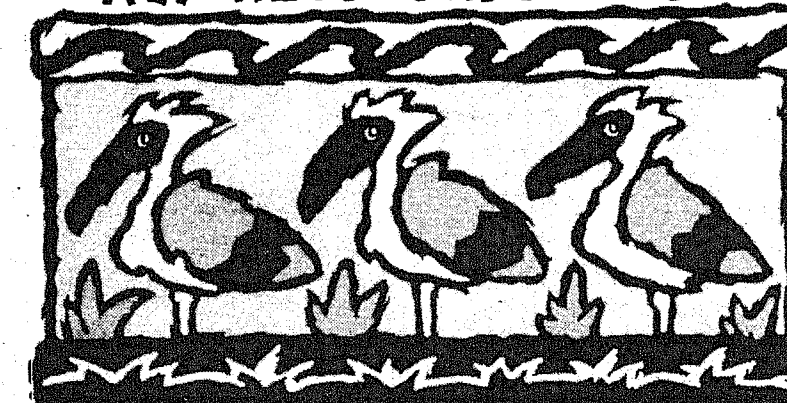


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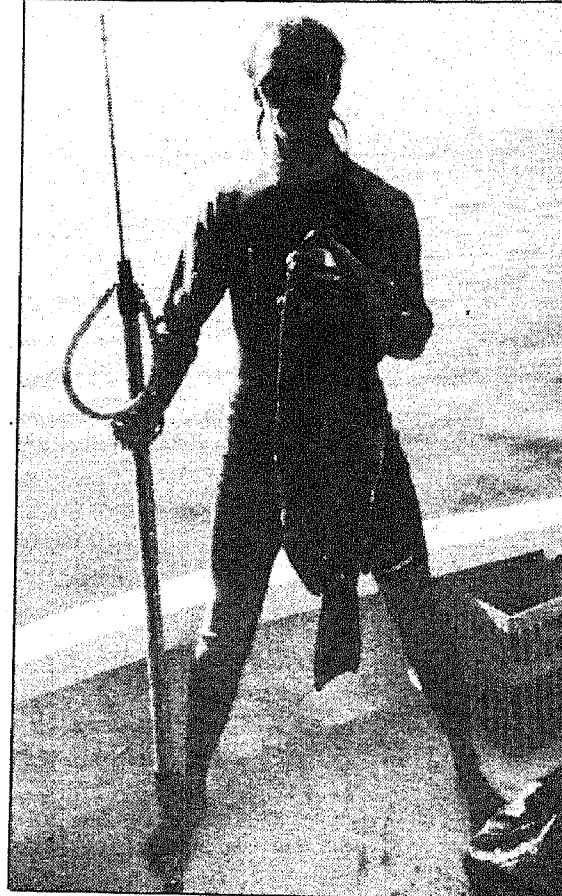
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stories of dive boats chartered for massacres — in which schools of fish are speared and only the big ones brought up for photographs—there's no waste.

Veteran diver and spearfisherman, Don Kincaid says, "Regular fishermen see things one-dimensionally. From the surface of the water they can't tell what they're catching



BARBARA BOWERS

CRAIG EUBANK: A captain and dive instructor for Looker Dive Charters holds up dinner, until it's caught, and if they don't want it, they can't see the destruction they're causing."

A Difficult Feat

Tim Taylor, owner of Looker Dive Charters, one of the few dive operations in Key West that takes individuals to spearfish with other sport divers, says, "Most people don't even see fish, let alone hit them.

"They're like spotting a deer in the woods," he says. "And because sound travels four times faster underwater, most divers spook fish right away. First you have to be a good diver, then you develop good spearing skills."

Silty water conditions on a reef near Woman Key resulted in "no-catch" during what Taylor called a "typical spearfishing dive." Although he saw schools of yellow-

Shark!

"Three weeks ago, a nurse shark tried to take a four-pound hog-snapper from me," says Lee Starling, a dive instructor at Lost Reef Adventures in Key West. "I was snorkeling in 15 feet of water, shot the fish, it got away, and I found it under a coral head. The shark joined me, pulled the fish away, and I had to hit the shark with the blunt end of my pole spear."

Although nurse sharks are generally docile, they react to wounded, wiggling fish like other, more threatening sharks.

Only about 100 shark attacks—world-wide—are recorded annually, with 70 percent of the attacks on bathers. Nonetheless, Dr. Sam Gruber of the University of Miami's Shark Institute considers sharks a "menace to spearfishermen, because sharks are perfectly attuned to the underwater environment and divers aren't. Spearfishermen set themselves up as bait."

Gruber notes that many countries do not keep accurate count of shark attacks, if they compile statistics at all. There are more shark attacks. But even if the U.S. were the only country recording shark attacks, with only a hundred per year, you still have a better chance of winning the lottery than of being attacked by a shark—with or without live bait in your hand.

tail, some small grouper and an occasional rockhound, Taylor was after grey grouper—at least 15 pounds worth.

Since spearfishing is a solo sport, it didn't help Taylor to be tailed by a journalist who cringed at every potential victim. The key to a catch, experts say, is to stay cool, calm and collected.

Underwater, the proper mental attitude is critical because the environment is stacked in the prey's favor: vision is diffused and confined to what's directly in front of you. Targets can appear above you, below you, beside you, behind you—or, least likely, in front of you. Plus you're limited by the amount of air in your scuba tank. While your motion is slowed drastically, a fish can disappear in an eyeblink.

The Old Second Shot

There are no spearfishing stories about the "one that got away." There is, however, a plethora of "second-shot" stories, and most spearfishermen feel a moral obligation to stalk a wounded fish. Thus, the tales of

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hand-to-hand combat: the 50-pound black grouper that, after being speared, smashed the spear into coral, bent it in half, then ducked into a cave. Only because of the hunter's tenacity, and the fish's curiosity, was the second, deadly shaft plugged into the fish.

Another spearfisherman hurled his 190-pound frame on top of a 25-pound grey grouper to keep it from getting away. In fact, many people find themselves dangerously wrestling fish to the surface, which is why expert marksmanship is the goal.

"I'm going to quit spearfishing. I'm only wounding fish these days," says a Miami veterinarian who spearfished regularly when she lived in Key West and worked for Mel Fisher. "I really don't want to kill them anymore, and my shots show it."

Ditmar Biller, a principal in A.B. Biller, a Chicago-based company that sells spearguns, claims that sales are decreasing.

Key West dive shops such as Lost Reef Adventures and Captain Busby's rarely service spearfishing charters. Captain Billy's Key West Diver and Reef Raiders don't charter them at all. And Tim Taylor of Looker Dive Charters, the company that takes individuals to spearfish with their regular divers, says "it's a judgement call, depending on the place we're going."

According to Taylor, however, "We won't lose much business if the entire Keys are made a sanctuary and spearfishing is outlawed."

Congress passed the Sanctuary Bill last month. How it will affect the sport of spearfishing and the jewfish population is yet to be seen. ☐

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On The Town with Jane Phillips

Painter Donna Hayes, who now lives in Michigan, visited Key West recently. Reminiscing about breakfast at Shorty's Diner and its strict "no sharing" policy, she said: "They watched you like a hawk—you couldn't even give your cousin a fork-full of grits." Does she miss Key West? "Of course I do," she said. "Who wouldn't miss Paradise." She and her husband, writer Ralph Hayes, hope to become winter residents in the near future.

Grumpy Bill, who presides over the laundromat on the corner of Margaret and Fleming Streets, is one of our more colorful characters. He became pals with Goldie Hawn during the filming of "Criss Cross," and his put down of Timothy "License

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to Kill" Dalton is a classic. Bill recently had a T-shirt made for Police Chief Tom Webster. It says, "Virginia, you're beginning to piss me off." Webster promised to wear it to city commission meetings.

Art imitates life . . . Sculptor Helen Harrison had a piece in the Library Gallery Art Show called "The Juggler," which hits close to home as she manages to care for musician husband Ben Harrison, a son, new baby, and her own gallery—and still finds time to sculpt wood.

Another sculptor, John Martini, who tortures metal into striking primitive shapes, was moving one of the larger pieces at his Lucky Street Gallery when it tilted, banging him in the nose. The wound required six stitches.

Nice work if you can get it . . . A beach-boy buddy of mine, David Lindsay told me about his first job in Key West. During Spring Break, he squirted co-eds with Panama Jack suntan oil for a dollar a spray. An expert at the job, he got to places the lovelies couldn't reach, drawing a clientele of repeat customers. If you saw David, you'd know why.

If you think your utility costs are high, Pritam Singh just paid off a whopping \$123,000 electric bill. Rumor has it that the jewel in Pritam's turban, the Ritz-Carlton, will be built on land, saving us locals the proposed \$12 ferry fee, should we care to go there for tea.

If you have a yen to go to the Hyatt, that just may be the currency you'll need. The word around town is that it will be purchased by Japanese businesspeople.

A sign of the times . . . Astrologer/writer

Carol Hemingway, who recently came out of the closet and revealed her identity as Ernest Hemingway's daughter, commented, "Illegitimacy is nothing to be ashamed of anymore, I'm proud of my heritage."

Score one for our side . . . Jim Bailey, who travels the globe with his Judy Garland/Barbra Streisand illusion act, makes his home in L.A. About Key West he says, "I love it here. Unlike the coast, you can breathe clean air."

After dark . . . Just prior to his election to the county commission, Jack London and wife Elaine were being ushered around the Reef Relief Cayo Carnival by Jim McLernan, president of Last Stand. Elaine, who was passing out campaign material, was heard to say: "I vowed I'd never do this. After all, I don't ask Jack to go to work with me. But he was working so hard I just had to pitch in."

Reef Relief administrator DeeVon Quirolo said profits from the fundraiser were the best yet, topping \$32,000. Organizers were delighted with Jimmy Buffett's surprise guest appearance.

Key West is a place where a queen can be elected king—but this year's Fantasy Fest King George Murphy is seen around town with Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center publicity head, Anne Carlisle. The two recently did a reading together at the center from Bill Manville's book, *Saloon Society*.

Bill, who wrote for *The Village Voice* in the '60s, was there for the performance—even in "sweats" he looks elegant. Asked what he misses most about New York, he shot back, "I miss being 28 again—and that's all I miss!"

Fight fire with fire . . . Attorney Michael Halpern, known around town as a land-use lawyers in town, surprised Last Stand's Jim McLernan with the news he'd be willing to serve on their board of directors.

Literary hosts David and Lynn Kaufelt recently had a party of their own with lots of writers present. The main topic of conversation: Peary Court.

This year's Fantasy Fest Awards party was held at La Te Da's Crystal Café. Queen Pat Green and French poodle Tallulah shared a table; she didn't wolf down her food, have an accident or make a nuisance of herself—and Pat didn't either. It was great to see Bill Konkle receiving the Fast Buck Freddie's trophy for Best Float. But the category that is the most fun—Cheap 'n Easy—was won by the Conch Republic Blues Strut Band.

That's "easy" not "sleazy" and refers to the costuming—not the lifestyles of the musicians. An impromptu band concert was provided for denizens of the park near Higgs Beach, when the group staged a rehearsal there to a most appreciative audience.

The Casa Gato Impromptu Chamber Music series kicks off with the Gables Trio. Grant Spradling told me that when the late musical genius Leonard Bernstein was visiting the island last year he was invited to attend one of the concerts. Bernstein declined saying, "I come to Key West to have fun!"

Singer Vicki Roush will be known as

Biondi, who died earlier this year.

'Tis the season to be jolly—also generous. Christmas trees and decorations are available at the Harris School to benefit MARC House. Something new has been added: Susan Hawken and a number of elves have been decorating lovely miniature trees which are now ready for sale.

If you don't think there's Christmas spirit in Key West, attend the benefit at St. Paul's Church on December 23. Last year's was splendid. Talented individuals turned out from throughout the entire community, truly reflecting the uniqueness of this island. I used to miss Christmas in Maine, but the glow from this group outshines anything.

Happy Holidays . . . ☺

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Key West Days & Nights

by Bill Manville

"Did you see on TV in the World Series," said Mab, "that the Reds and the Oaklanders sewed American flags on their uniforms to show how fervently they 'back our boys in Iraq?' Honk if you love Jesus, turn on your headlights if you hate Jimmy Carter, tie a yellow ribbon around the old oak tree and it will get our hostages freed in Iraq. Just Say No To Drugs and it's done."

"Even if we're going to war over oil, President Bush up there in Maine last summer said that's no reason for him to stop running around in his cigarette speed boat. 'Don't Worry, Be Happy,' is our new national song. I never heard a politician who talked sense to the American people who did not lose the election."

It was the morning after Fantasy Fest. Mab, Betty Bennett and I were having breakfast at one of the serenest (now that new management is in) and most beautiful places in town, the oceanfront dining deck at The Reach. Wolfgang came by to ask if we would like more strawberries and a glass of champagne.

Mab was still in parade costume of the night before: opera-length gold lamé and glitter, elbow-length crushed silver lamé opera gloves and a Marilyn Monroe wig with this little silver-paper-mache-and-rhinestone tiara that says *Happy New Year 1937*.

Mab discontinued his discourse on the state of current affairs which had led him to sell short and get out of the stock market. "No more champagne, thank you," he said to Wolfgang, looking into a hand mirror and repairing the streaks where tears of previous laughter had damaged mascara and peach blusher. "I have to go to the Men's Room first." Have you heard that Europeans have savior-faire? Wolfgang has savor-faire. He did not blink. "Very good, sir," he said.

"I'll have some bubbles, please," Betty sighed to Wolfgang, "while waiting for my hangover to end." Wolfgang poured her Mumm's. I stood up with Mab.

The prurient may ask how someone like Mab goes to the Men's Room, wearing as he did that morning, high heels, floor-length bouffant skirt, garter-belt and open opera-mesh hose. I'll give you a hint. He wears no pants.

Mab hiked the skirt up above his hips and continued his lament as we stood side-by-side. "What I dislike most is the politicians' hot air that even if we do go to war in Iraq, it's a pushover, no new taxes and nobody dies. The whole world is one free lunch for Americans, right? My father was a lifelong Republican and I have been a banker all my life. The one thing a Republican learns in the cradle is there is no free lunch. Who are those guys in

Washington, anyway?"

Another man came in. He stopped and turned pale at the sight of Mab, who gave him an over-the-shoulder look. "Oh, dear, sweetie," Mab said, "never seen one of these before? Eat your Wheaties and you'll grow one yourself."

The newcomer fled.

Betty was buttering pieces of croissant back at our table and throwing them to the sea birds. A drunk tourist with a camera came over and took Mab's picture. "Do you dress like that because you hate women?" he asked Mab.


"Go back to your table, dear," Mab said, "before your wife finds out how we met."

"Mab," said Betty, "on this one, vast, eternal morning of aspirin and regret, give us some last word of hope."

Mab set the tiara more firmly on his head but his voice softened, as it does when he speaks to Betty. (And why not? As diligent readers may remember, there was that one legendary night back in Amarillo, when they fathered and mothered—respectively—a daughter between them.)

"I give you, dear Betty," Mab said, raising his glass, "The world of early evening, where the good guys win non-stop. Miami Vice confiscates the dope, Kojak and Lacey get a lock on crime and Roseanne is living testimony to what fun marriage is even if you're fat."

"Why 'early evening?'" said Betty. "And then the eleven o'clock news comes on?"

Mab smiled and gave her his tiara to wear. 

A Christmas Cookie Portfolio

by Jeanne McCLOW



America's early Dutch settlers called their miniaturized versions of the Old World cakes *koekjes* or cookies. Although they probably didn't become popular until after the heat-collecting, wood- or coal-fueled kitchen range replaced the cooking grate, cookies have become an American institution, and at no time is this more fragrantly evident than during the Christmas holiday.

Making cookies is one of the most creative, fun, rewarding and inexpensive ways to partake of the holiday spirit. Because there are so few rules, it is an activity that begs for experimentation. So indulge, be playful, spontaneous. There is no model for the "ideal" cookie.

One custom that has sprung up along with the ever-increasing demands of the holiday season is the "cookie exchange." Four cookie bakers, for example, may each decide to make large batches of three varieties. They will then trade one-quarter of their cookies with each of the other participants, reserving the last quarter for themselves. Everyone winds up with a dozen kinds of cookies.

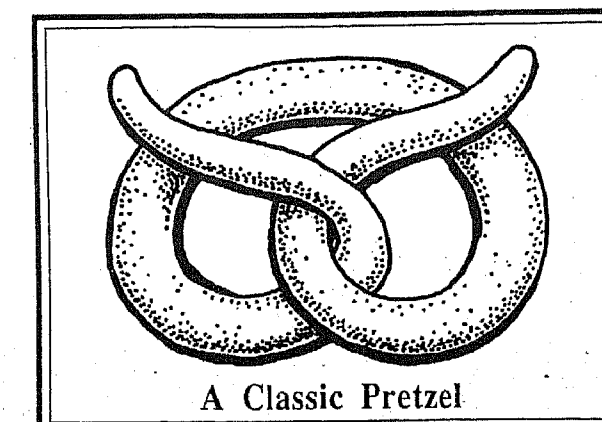
Serious cookie-exchange partiers might want to do their cookie decorating as a group as well.

To get started, here are a dozen recipes that include a variety of shapes, textures, colors and flavors. Some were inspired by the old recipes of Northern Europe, where holiday baking is often the sole bright spot on a dreary winter canvas. Where possible, the recipes have been given a tropical twist in keeping with our enviable climate.

Among them are the little anise cakes often embossed with the elaborate pictures on a *Springerle* rolling pin or with metal or wooden stamps; darkly rich *pfefferneuse* balls spiked with black pepper and rolled in confectioners' sugar; filled, walnut-coated Tropical Thumbprints; pale green meringue kisses infused with Key lime; our version of the 1950s Dream Bars—Island Pleasure Bars, made with moist, dried fruits, macadamian nuts and dark chocolate; rich Scottish shortbread punched with colorful "cross-stitch" designs; sprawling Southern pecan lace cookies and Caribbean Christmas Macaroons; decorated cutouts of gingerbread and pink peppermint doughs; spiced *spritz* cookies pushed from a cookie-press or inset with candy cutouts to make "stained-glass" ornaments; and sugared chocolate rum pretzels, the shape of which originally symbolized hands crossed over the heart.

Like anything else that requires time and effort, cookies deserve the best ingredients—fresh spices and sweet, unsalted butter, high-quality chocolate. Use them at room temperature, creaming and beating butter to a light, fluffy consistency and allowing egg whites to reach at least 65° F. before whipping into airy meringues.

Sift flour and remeasure it; you'll have extra; if you are combining it with other dry ingredients, sift again. To mix with butter, use a pastry blender or work between your fingers.



A Classic Pretzel

Unless otherwise specified, bake on cookie sheets covered with heavy-duty foil, which can be quickly slid off the hot traps to prevent further cooking. Space cookies about one inch apart, fill each tray, bake only one tray at a time, and make sure that it is centered in the oven.

Checking oven temperature regularly,



DREAM PLATTER: "Muckl" Fairbank patiently poses with a wonderland of cookies.

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Although you can use cookie cutters to create shapes, a handcut Christmas tree that is lopsided will have more charm than a perfectly symmetrical one.

Let your imagination take over as you trace your design onto the dough with a toothpick before cutting. Draw angels, bells, wreaths, candy canes, stars and crowns; plump Santas and gingerbread men; rocking horses, reindeer, and giraffes; cuddly puppies, kittens and teddy bears; fat fish, whales and fantastic dinosaurs; flowers and holly wreaths; old-time carriages, sleighs and railroad cars; kites, balloons, and puffy clouds; cottages with chimneys or castles with turrets; Christmas trees and palm trees; "rag" dolls, clowns and top-hatted snowmen.

Cut letters to spell "Merry Christmas" or cut head shapes on which to paint portraits. You can even tackle a Black Forest gingerbread house.

Decorate to your heart's content—it's almost impossible to overdo. Cover whole areas with stripes, polka dots, stars or rosettes. For contrast, dip plain cookies halfway into chocolate and then in finely chopped nuts or candy confetti. Attach wat-

erproof ribbons and bows.

Now on to the recipes below. The first six cookie doughs—numbered 1 through 6—were especially designed for molding and/or cutting as well as decorating. The secret is the butter, which acts like clay, softening and hardening according to how it is treated.

The butter should be as firm as possible when you start, for it will soften quickly, especially if you have used margarine, and may become too sticky to handle. At this point, either refrigerate it or work in more flour. If it becomes too stiff, add a few drops of milk.

After you have mixed the dough, shape it into a flattened round, wrap it tightly, and refrigerate until firm. When ready to work, break off a chunk and let it rest at room temperature for about 10 minutes, kneading it a bit to make it workable.

Before you start cutting, generously flour your work surface, both sides of the dough and your tools. (Keep a bowl of flour handy so you can regularly re-dust.)

Roll out the dough to an even 1/8-inch thickness and then cut, pulling or pushing scraps away to be re-rolled. With a floured spatula, transfer shapes to a cold cookie sheet covered with heavy-duty foil, unless otherwise specified.

Now make holes for hanging ornaments, string together cookies for garlands, punch in "needlework" designs, add "stained-glass" areas and other decorations, unless you are planning to frost the cookies first.

Bake just until firm, carefully remove foil and cookies, set aside to cool for a few minutes, and then transfer cookies to racks.

Frost cookies (use confectioners' sugar mixed with a bit of water; tint with food coloring if desired) just before you plan to use them—they'll look better.

Quantities depend, of course, on the sizes of the designs you cut.

The remaining six cookie varieties—numbered 7 through 12—were chosen to round out the "portfolio."

1. Gingerbread Cutouts

These crisp, deep-colored cookies make good backgrounds for designs stenciled with confectioners' sugar as well as for general decorating.

- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) butter
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1/3 cup molasses
- 3 cups flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon powdered ginger

Cream butter with sugar; beat in egg and molasses. Sift remaining ingredients together and beat in. Shape dough into flat round, wrap and refrigerate until firm. Preheat oven to 325° F. Roll out and cut as described previously. Bake about 12 minutes.

2. Pink Peppermint Cutouts

These pale pink cookies look pretty when stenciled with powdered cocoa; you can also do frosting decorations or simply sprinkle the tops with crushed peppermint candy before baking.

- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter
- 1 cup sifted confectioners' sugar
- 4 drops peppermint extract
- 2 to 3 drops red food coloring
- 2 1/4 cups flour
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar


Cream butter with confectioners' sugar; beat in peppermint and food coloring. Sift flour with baking soda and cream of tartar and blend in. Shape into flat round, wrap and refrigerate until firm. Preheat oven to 350° F. Roll out dough and cut as previously described. Bake about 12 minutes.

3. "Stained-Glass" Spritz Cookies

This old Scandinavian recipe is the classic one for cookie-press doughs, but you can shape it and decorate as you please. Because the cookies bake to a very pale yellow, we used it to make cookies with colorful "stained-glass" cutouts.

- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 3/4 cups flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground allspice
- 3/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- Life Savers, crushed and separated by color, for decorations

Cream butter with sugar; beat in eggs. Sift flour with dry ingredients and blend in. Shape into flat-



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tened round, wrap and refrigerate until firm. Preheat oven to 350° F. Roll out and cut shapes as described previously; transfer to foil-lined cookie sheets. Cut out and remove small designs and mound holes with crushed candy of one color; make "hanging" holes. Bake 8 to 10 minutes, or until candy has melted. Cool until candy has hardened; then peel away foil and transfer cookies to racks. Thread ribbon or cord through holes.

4. Chocolate Rum Pretzels

Besides pretzels, you can make many designs, such as bows, with ropes of butter-cookie dough. Because the shapes are intricate, they are best decorated with granulated sugar or coarsely crushed nuts sprinkled over a glaze. Of course, you can use the dough for cutouts, too.

- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese
- 2 teaspoons rum
- 1 cup sugar
- Pinch of salt
- 3 tablespoons cocoa powder
- 3 1/2 cups flour

Egg white lightly beaten with 1/2 teaspoon water. Granulated sugar or crushed nuts for decorating.

Beat butter with cream cheese and rum; sift sugar, salt and cocoa together, and blend in flour. Shape into flat round, wrap and refrigerate until firm. Preheat oven to 350° F. Pull off a chunk of dough, roll it to the diameter of a pencil about 10 inches long, and form on ungreased cookie sheet into a pretzel (see illustration); repeat with remaining dough. Brush with egg white and sprinkle with sugar or crushed nuts. Bake about 15 minutes.


5. Little Anise Cakes (Springerle)

If you decide to emboss these Scandinavian-

inspired cookies with commercially made metal or wooden stamps, sprinkle the anise seed over the cookie sheet and place the unbaked cookies on top instead of incorporating it into the dough; omit the almonds. Chill the dough first until firm.

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 teaspoon finely grated lemon peel
- 1/8 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon anise seed, lightly crushed
- 3 cups flour
- 1/2 cup sliced, blanched almonds for decorating (optional)

Preheat oven to 350° F. Cream butter with sugar and beat in eggs, peel, vanilla and anise seed, if not molding. Gradually add flour. Place teaspoon-size mounds on cookie sheets, sprinkle with almonds, and bake about 10 minutes. Makes about 3 dozen.



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6. Needlepoint Shortbread

Old-fashioned cookies such as these deserve old-fashioned designs—use a skewer, toothpick or awl dipped into food coloring to make X's for "cross-stitched" houses, hearts, flowers, lettering, etc.

- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
- 2 cups flour
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

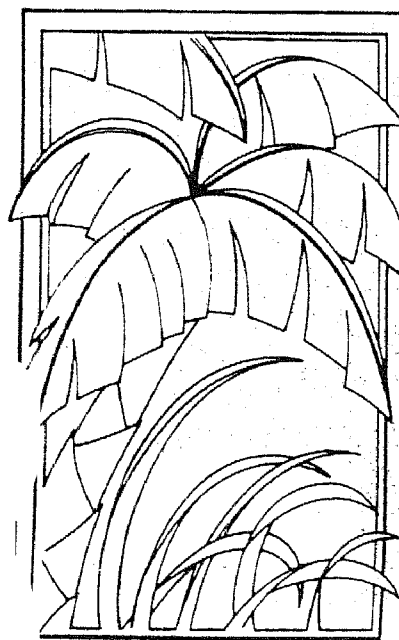
Cream butter with sugar; flour with dry ingredients and blend in. Shape into flattened round, wrap and refrigerate until firm. Preheat oven to 350° F. Cut into diamond shapes and, if desired, make designs. Bake about 10 minutes, or until firm but not brown. Makes about 2 1/2 dozen.

7. Pfefferneuse Balls

These spicy, rich cookies are traditional holiday treats in Germany.

- 1 cup unsifted flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- Pinch baking soda
- Pinch salt
- 1/4 teaspoon each of freshly ground black pepper, nutmeg and ground allspice
- 3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 3/4 teaspoon lightly crushed cardamom seed
- 4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) butter
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 egg, well-beaten
- 2 tablespoons chopped almonds or other nuts
- 3 tablespoons chopped mixed fruit glacé, lightly floured
- 2 tablespoons dark molasses
- 2 teaspoons corn syrup
- 2 tablespoons rum or brandy (or use extract)
- 1 teaspoon grated orange peel
- 1 tablespoon orange juice
- Confectioners' sugar for decorating

Sift flour with next seven, dry ingredients; stir in cardamom. Cream butter with sugar and then beat in remaining ingredients except confectioners' sugar. Cover and let rest overnight to "ripen." Preheat oven to 350° F. Roll into 1-inch balls, place on greased



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cookie sheets, and bake 10 or more minutes. While still warm, roll in confectioners' sugar. Makes about 2 1/2 dozen.

8. Island Pleasure Bars

These golden-hued bars are made with fresh orange juice and stuffed with pieces of dried papaya, pineapple, coconut, raisins, crunchy banana chips and macadamian nuts, and shot through with dark chocolate.

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter
- 1 1/4 cups confectioners' sugar
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons fresh orange juice
- 3/4 cup chopped, dried tropical fruit (we used a 3-ounce package of Grandpa Carl's Aloha mix), pineapple or citron
- 1/4 cup semisweet chocolate drops
- 1/4 cup chopped macadamian nuts

Melted chocolate for drizzling (optional)
Preheat oven to 350° F. Cream butter with confectioners' sugar and then work in 1 cup of the flour. Using your fingers, spread over the bottom of a greased 8-inch square baking pan. Bake about 15 minutes, or just until firm; cool. Meanwhile, mix sugar with the remaining flour and all other ingredients. Spread over the baked crust and bake about 30 minutes, or until firm in the center; cool. Let rest a day at room temperature and then cut into 1-by 2-inch bars. Drizzle with melted chocolate if desired. Makes about 2 dozen.

9. Southern Pecan Lace

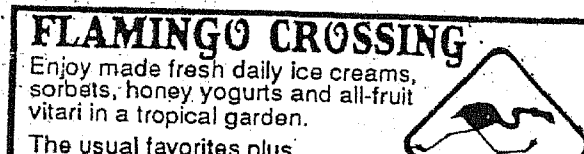
You can use any sort of nut for this recipe; we used black walnuts. If you work with the cookies while they are still warm, you can roll them into cones—cut them in half first and then form them with the tip of a spatula. If they get too hard, reheat for about 30 seconds.

- 1/2 cup flour, divided
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- Pinch salt
- 4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) butter
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups coarsely chopped pecans

Preheat oven to 400° F. Sift flour with baking powder and salt; work in butter. Stir in remaining ingredients. Drop by teaspoonfuls on a greased, floured cookie sheet, spacing them at least 3 inches apart. Watching carefully, bake about 5 minutes. Let cool briefly, and then transfer carefully to racks. Makes about 2 dozen.



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10. Tropical Thumbprints

The world knows these classic cookies by many names—jelly tots, Tom Thumbs, thimble cookies, and Hussar balls, among them; in France, they are known as "pits of love." In any event, all are indented in some way before baking to form depressions for later filling with a spot of guava or mango jelly, minciment, red or green maraschino cherries, glacé, nutmeats, etc.

- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter
- 1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs, separated
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups finely chopped walnuts or shredded coconut
- A variety of fillings

Preheat oven to 350° F. Cream butter with brown sugar. In another bowl, mix egg yolks, vanilla, flour and salt; blend into butter-sugar mixture. Beat egg whites slightly, pinch off small pieces of dough, roll into 1-inch balls, dip in egg whites, roll in nuts or coconut, and place about 2 inches apart on ungreased cookie sheets. Flatten each slightly and bake about 5 minutes. Then press ball of thumb or a thimble into the center of each to make a deep well. Bake another 10 minutes or so; cool and fill. Makes about 3 dozen.

11. Key Lime Kisses

These airy meringue puffs are based on the traditional Portuguese *suapiros* and can be flavored in many ways. Use Persian limes or lemons if Key limes are not available.

- 3 egg whites, at room temperature
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon fresh Key or Persian lime juice
- 1 1/2 teaspoons grated lime peel
- 1 cup coarsely chopped, slivered, blanched almonds

Preheat oven to 250° F. Whisk or beat egg whites until frothy; then whisk or beat in sugar and vanilla until peaks form. Gently fold in remaining ingredients with a rubber spatula. Drop by teaspoonfuls on greased cookie sheets and bake about 40 minutes; carefully transfer to racks. Makes about 3 dozen.

12. Caribbean Christmas Macaroons

No collection of tropical holiday cookies would be complete without these sweet, toasted morsels flecked with red and green cherries.

- 1 package (7 ounces) sweetened, shredded coconut
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 2 pinches salt
- 3/4 cup sweetened condensed milk (not "evaporated")
- 1/2 cup chopped red and green cherry glacé, lightly floured
- 2 egg whites, stiffly beaten

Preheat oven to 350° F. Mix first five ingredients well; gently fold in egg whites. Form into teaspoon-size mounds on a greased, floured baking sheet, and bake about 10 minutes, or until just beginning to color. Makes about 3 dozen.



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Community Notes

Ho, Ho, Help

AIDS Help, Inc. is selling Christmas cards. The sets of 10 cards are reproductions of the work of local artists, including Craig Biondi, George Carey, John Kiraly, Jim Salem, and Wendy Turner. The card sets sell for \$12, and are available at Lane Gallery, Goldsmith Jewelers, Gingerbread Square Gallery, Santa Fe Gallery, Duval Square Yogurt, Key West Art Center, Key West Aloe, MCC Church Bookstore, and the AIDS Help office, as well as outside local grocery stores. Proceeds benefit AIDS Help, Inc., Monroe County's leading provider of services for HIV-spectrum disease.

Crime Stoppers

The Citizen's Coalition Against Drugs is developing a Crime Stopper's program in Key West. This international program awards cash to anonymous tipsters in an effort to help law enforcement officials solve crimes. A public presentation by Sgt. John Roper of the Dade County Crime Stoppers will be held at Old City Hall on Greene Street on December 7 at 5:30 p.m.

Critical Care Week

Nurses in the Intensive Care Unit at Health System East were honored during National Critical Care Week, November 11 through 17. "They have a very demanding job," said Carol Rogers, vice president of patient care services. "Our critical nurses aren't only highly trained—they're dedicated to their patients and to working as a team with each other, the physicians and the patients' families."

Save the Manatee

The Save the Manatee Club reports that human activity accounts for about 52 percent of manatee mortality where cause of death can be determined. Over 80 percent is from collisions with watercraft. Some manatees, the group says, are killed outright, some linger in pain before dying, and some are able to live with their injuries, which may negatively affect their lives. The nation's manatee population, about 1200 animals, is concentrated primarily in Florida. For information, contact Save the Manatee Club, 500 N. Maitland Avenue, Maitland, FL 32751. Or call 1-800-432-JOIN.



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Cayo Carnival Results

Reef Relief's annual Cayo Carnival fundraiser last month produced over \$47,000 to be used toward preserving and protecting the living coral reef of the Florida Keys. "This was the smoothest party yet," noted organizer DeeVon Quirolo. The group's ongoing programs include maintenance of 83 reef mooring buoys at six Key West-area reef tracts and operation of a public awareness campaign at the Reef Relief Environmental Education Center.

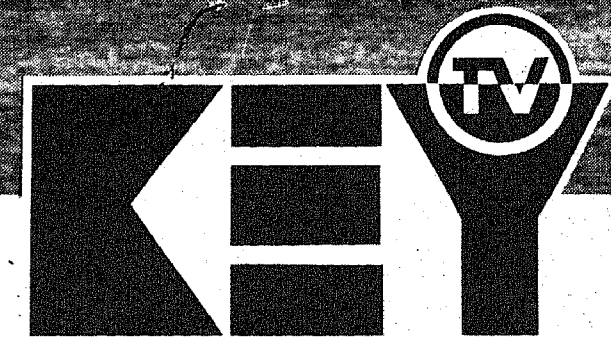
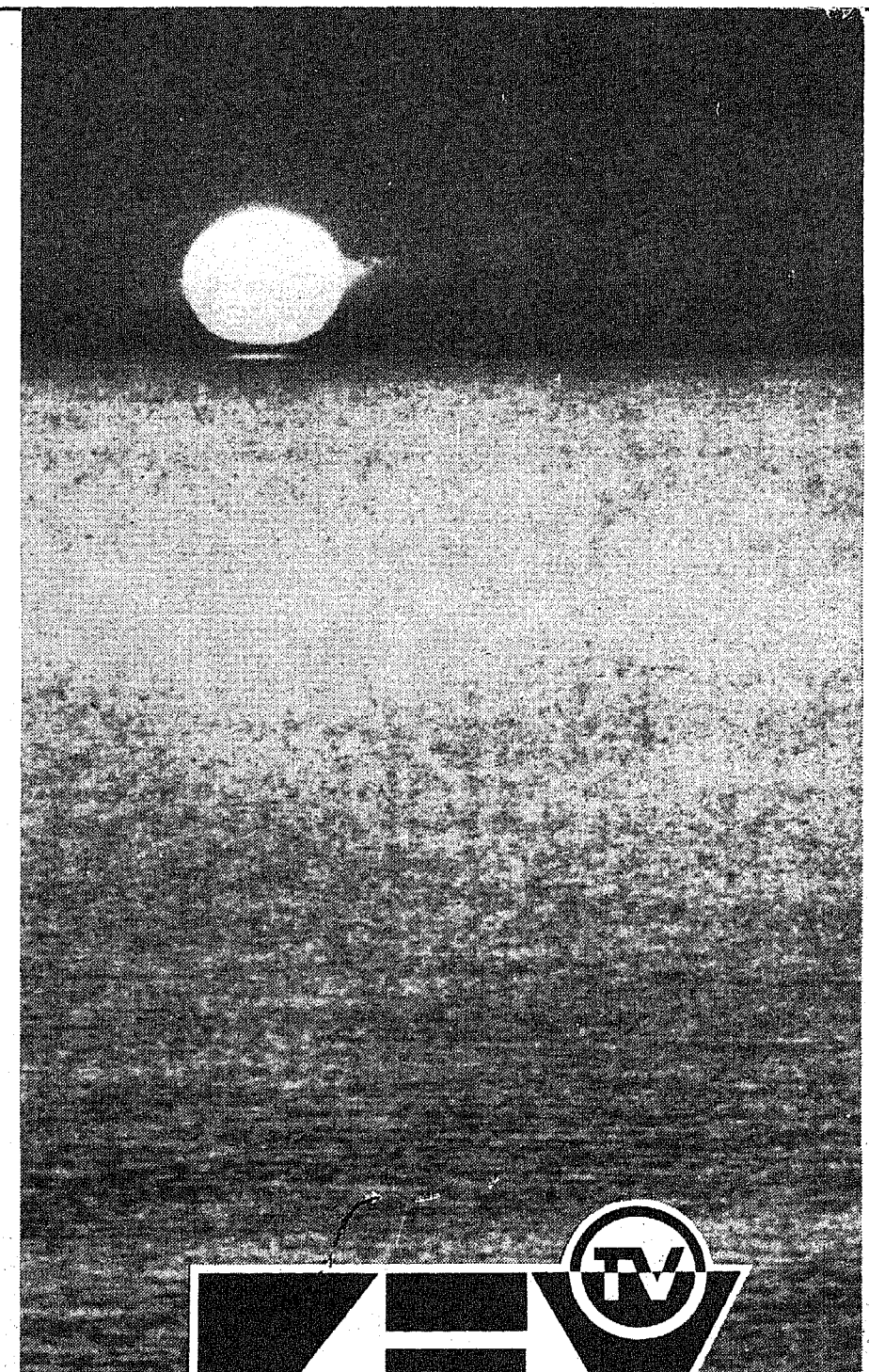
Hold the Line

The Utility Board recently questioned the placement of holes on the poles supporting telephone and cable lines along Flagler Ave-



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ISLAND ECONOMICS



Business Tides

To help reduce solid waste, Fausto's Food Palace has stopped using plastic grocery bags and is encouraging people to reuse paper bags, says Scott Simons, assistant manager at the Fleming Street store. Fausto's is also selling Earth Bags, reusable canvas shopping bags with nylon handles. "On a small island, the whole idea is conservation," says Simons, pointing out that the Fleming Street store serves 1200 to 2000 customers daily, and the White Street store serves close to 1000.

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Located at 415 Greene Street, Temptations recently celebrated its first year in business. Owners Diane Disgdiert and Dale Rozman specialize in custom-crafted jewelry and jewelry repairs. They say they pass the rent savings from their off-Duval location onto customers. Between them, they have over 22 years experience in the jewelry business. The shop is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily.

Ocean Footwear and Accessories, a specialty shop that offers a complete selection of aqua-sock footwear, has moved to 703 Duval Street. Owners Jack Dinetz and Kenneth Weschler are further expanding their selection with new daily arrivals. Ocean Footwear also offers an extended accessory line, featuring hats, bags, watches, sunglasses and other beach necessities. The shop is open daily.

Co-owners David Meelheim and Linda Joy of the Red Balloon have just returned from Tokyo where they exhibited kaleidoscopes crafted by American artists. Many of these same kaleidoscopes are available at the 512 Duval Street shop, which the owners say carries the largest kaleidoscope selection in Florida. In preparation for Christmas, the Red Balloon is filling up with toys and stocking stuffers for everyone from infants to grandparents.

Last month dentists and staff members at Island Dental Associates, 1721 Flagler Avenue, opened their office to provide free

dental care to disadvantaged persons of the Lower Keys. Four dentists, two hygienists and six support-staff members treated patients suffering from chronic pain, infection and other dental conditions. As members of Doctors with a Heart, an international philanthropic organization, the company has provided over \$2000 of free care over the last three years.

Robbie, a women's apparel shop with classic, casual clothing made from only natural fabrics, will be opening this month. Owner Robbie Pfeffer says the shop will feature tropical dresses, sundresses, jackets, skirts, pants, city shorts and short shorts. It will also carry jewelry for the young—and the young at heart. Watch for the opening at 1102-C Duval Street, in the Cuban Club building.

The eight Circle K convenience stores in Monroe County have joined the business Crime Watches in Monroe County. Crime prevention specialist Sgt. Lee Pinder organizes and runs the various business Crime Watch programs. Employees in the Circle K stores have been trained in the program. Call Sgt. Pinder at 852-3211 for information.

Recipients of the Sunshine Auxiliary's student nurse scholarships recently met with auxiliary president Ellen Morser, Florida Keys Community College president William A. Seeker and FKCC nursing program director Coleen Dooley.



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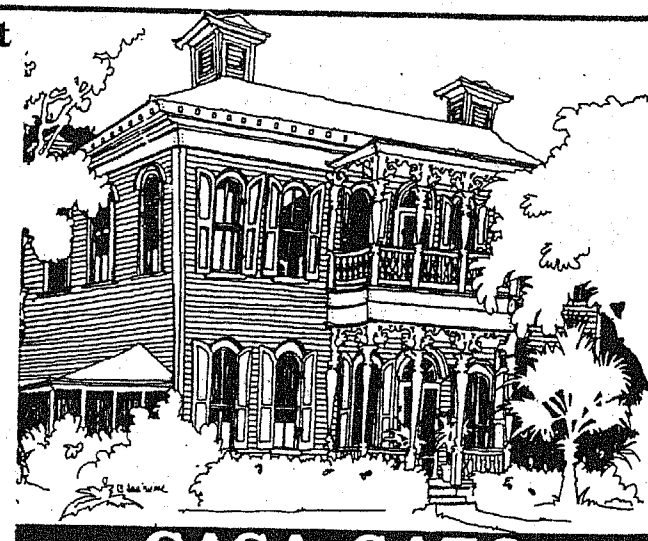
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NURSING SCHOLARS: Recipients of the Sunshine Auxiliary's student-nurse scholarships with Auxiliary President Ellen Morser (center), Florida Keys Community College President William A. Seeker and FKCC Nursing Program Director Coleen Dooley (right rear). Recipients are (from left): Christine Strickland, Karen Tiggleman, Ute Prado, Gwen Gallagher and Jody Klaassens.

Recipients are Christie Strickland, Karen Tiggleman, Ute Prado, Gwen Gallagher and Jody Klaassens.

Dr. William Schlicht will be leading a personal growth group at Island Wellness, announces owner Gary Young. Schlicht has over 30 years experience as a clinical psychologist. His group will meet every Monday from 7 to 9 p.m. at the center, located at the corner of Simonton and Southard Streets. Call 296-7353 for more information.

David J. Humphrys, chairman of the Travel Industry Association of America, recently presented Sandra Higgs, administrative director of the Monroe County Tourist Development Coun-

cil, with the association's National Travel Marketing Award for the TDC's "Just Let Go" advertising campaign. The campaign was designed to heighten national awareness of the Keys' laid-back lifestyle and to lure upscale visitors.

The American Express Philanthropic Foundation recently pledged \$8000 to support "Literature in Travel: A Sense of Place," the Ninth Annual Key West Literary Seminar, January 10 to 13. The seminar will investigate contemporary travel writing with Peter Mattheisen, Jan Morris, William Styron and other writers, editors and critics. A writers' workshop will follow the seminar at the Pier House on January 13 and 14.

Joe Petro, III, an artist who specializes in detailed silkscreens, will be signing copies of his posters at the Greenpeace Store on Saturday, December 8. Petro has created two posters for Greenpeace: one depicting the environmental organization's flagship, the *SV Rainbow Warrior*, and the other exploring a colorful reef scene. The store is located at 719 Duval Street. Call 296-4442 for information.

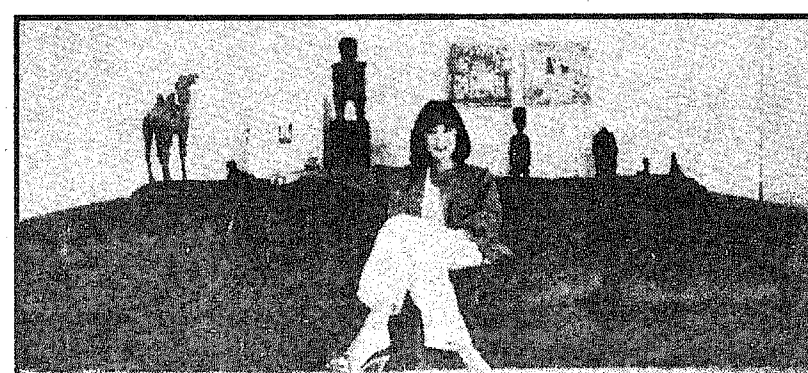
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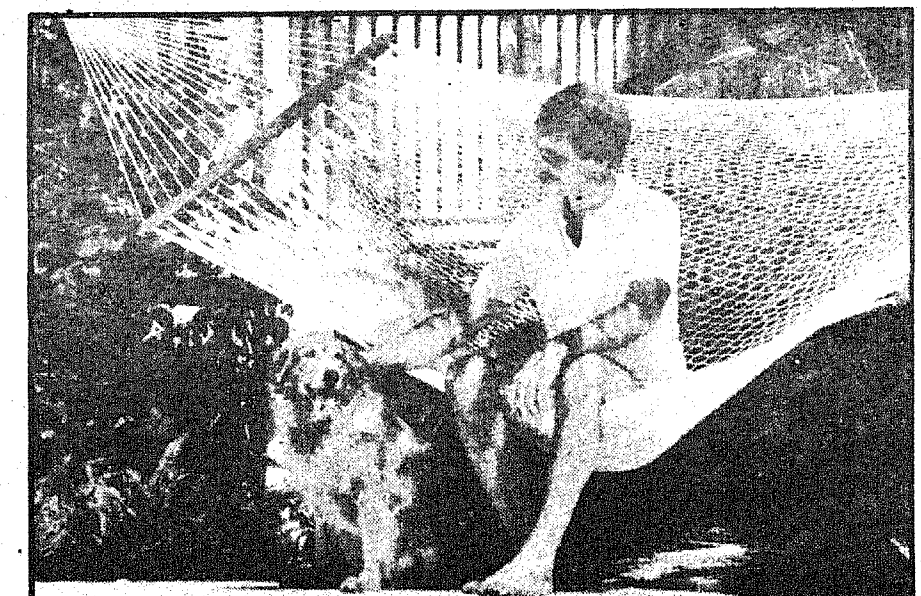
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ISLAND ECONOMICS



Uncertain Future for the Bight

by June Keith

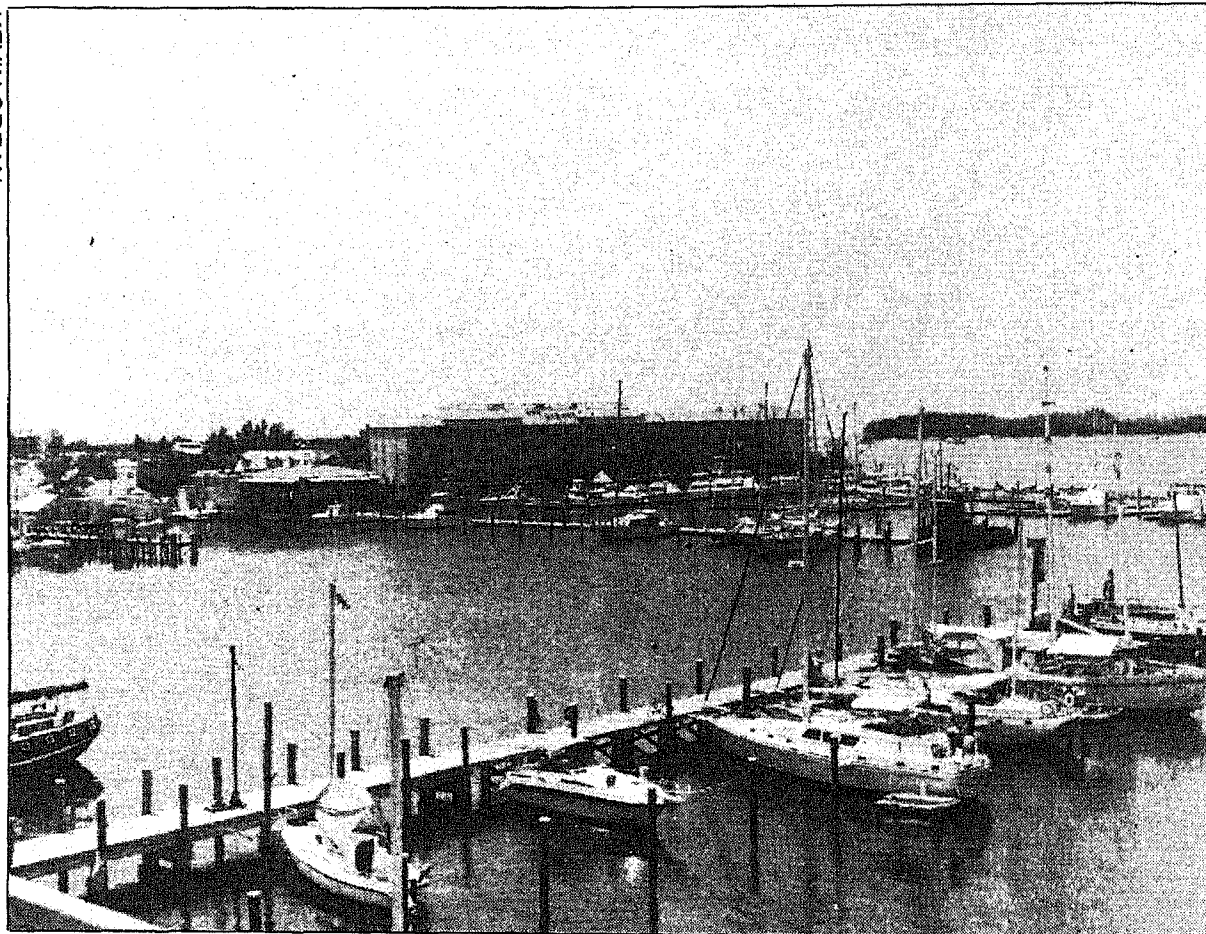
When the food conglomerate ConAgra leased 8.8 acres of waterfront property from the Singleton Trust ten years ago, shrimping was still a bustling business in Key West. Feisty shrimpers, immortalized in song and lore, spent alternating stints at sea casting shrimp nets, and on land wandering from one notorious Caroline Street bar to the next—living, loving, drinking and brawling like characters out of a Steinbeck novel.

Back then, huge catches of shrimp were harvested from the waters that surround Key West. Shrimpers and ConAgra shareholders alike cashed in on the mining of the local vein of pink gold, and for a while the harvest was very sweet.

Today, all that has changed. The shrimping industry has virtually abandoned the once-crowded shrimp docks of the Key West Bight. The shrimpers, who contributed so much local color to the waterfront, are scarce. While a few still shrimp out of Stock Island ports, the majority have left for shrimp-rich waters off Central and South America.

Lining the waterfront now are tiny bars and shops, selling beer and hammocks, and docks of private boats offering day cruises into the shrimped-out and nutrient-laden waters of the Gulf. All of the businesses, including those at Land's End Marina, hold leases with ConAgra, which will expire January 1, 1991. At that time, ConAgra will announce whether it will renew its lease

KEVIN CREAM



TOWER VIEW: Shot from the lookout tower at Turtle Kraals restaurant, this photo shows the Key West Bight, which was once home to fleets of working shrimp boats.

with Singleton. If it doesn't, Singleton may sell the property.

ConAgra is a massive corporation re-

porting revenues for 1989 of \$15.5 billion, and a net income of \$231 million. The company owns Armour Meats and Mrs. Paul's Seafoods, among others. Beatrice Foods, valued at \$1.34 billion, was its latest acquisition.

Like everyone else, the corporation pays the high price of business on the island. The rents ConAgra collects do not begin to cover the cost of its monthly payment to Singleton, says Key West City Planner Ted Strader. During the next period of the lease, if there is one, it's likely the rents in the area will be increased. With the real estate market as depressed as it is now, however, landlords are not in a strong position.

ConAgra had until November 1 to decide whether or not to buy the bight property from the Singleton Trust.

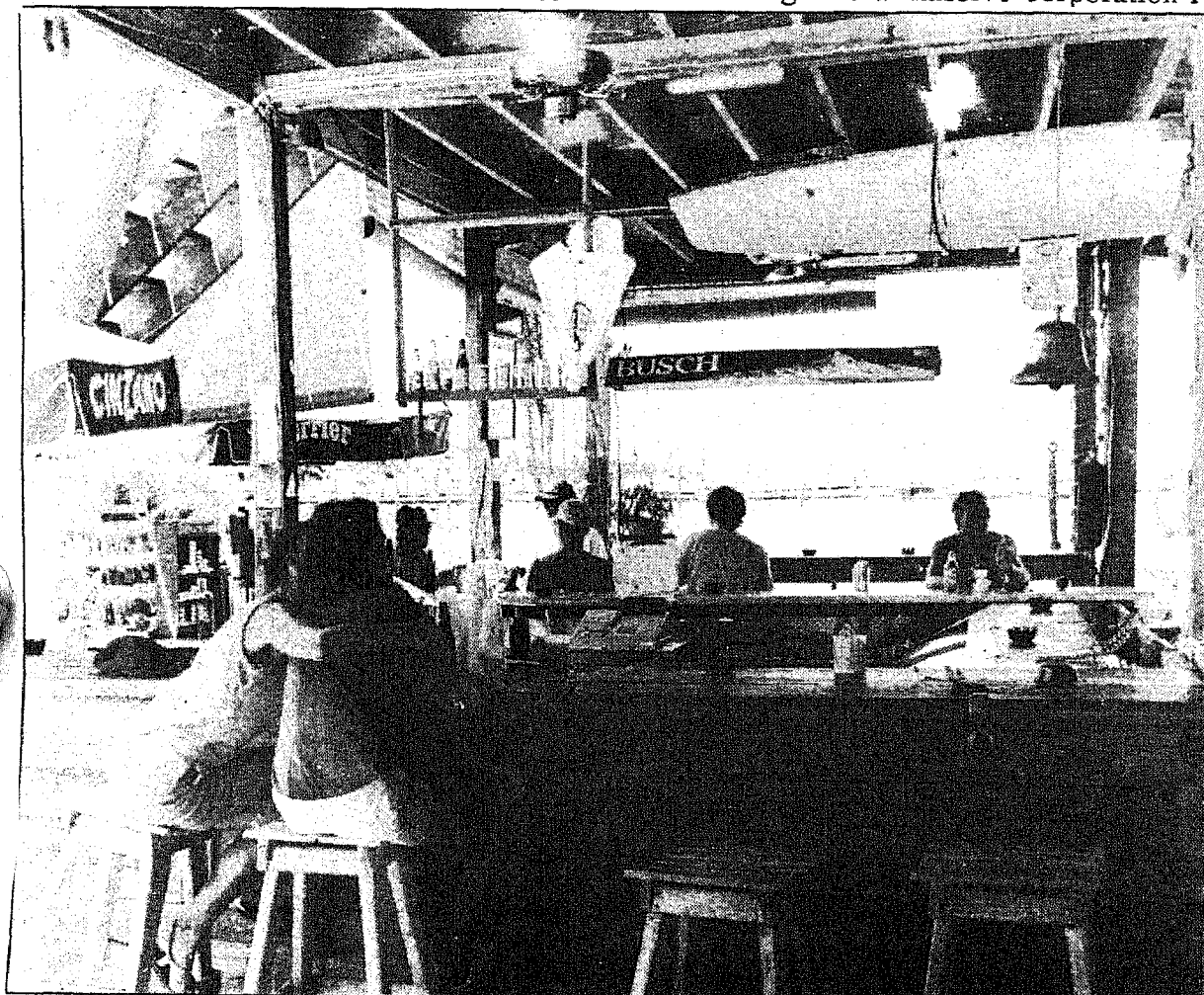
"I know for a fact that ConAgra is not buying the property [now]," says lessee Paul Tripp, owner of the Half Shell Raw Bar, located at Land's End Marina.

Should ConAgra remain the leaseholder for ten more years, it would have an option to purchase the property in the year 2000.

Although the land is no longer viable as part of ConAgra's food operation, it is a very valuable chunk of waterfront property. According to ConAgra's local attorney, Jim Hendricks, the food company is not interested in developing and/or managing it.

If the prime and unique Key West property is put on the market block, many believe that the city will have a good shot of

KEVIN CREAM



SCHOONER WHARF: This sleepy local bar, overlooking the bight, is located on Singleton property.



ISLAND ECONOMICS



obtaining it. In July, the Key West City Commission passed a resolution sponsored by Commissioner Jimmy Weekley encouraging the Trust for Public Land (TPL) to negotiate on its behalf with the Singleton Trust for city acquisition.

TPL, a non-profit national organization, is often involved in the purchase of environmentally and culturally sensitive land packages. Weekley says that TPL, which usually folds its own fees into the development packages it assembles, will also offer suggestions for ways that the city might finance such a purchase.

Meanwhile, Mayor Tony Tarracino and Commissioner Virginia Panico have vowed that not a penny of ad valorem taxes will be used to buy the bight, appraised by Monroe County Tax Collector Ervin Higgs at \$13 million.

Attorney Hendricks, however, says "it's worth \$5 or \$6 million."

"We've kicked around a lot of ideas on how to pay for the bight," says Mayor Tarracino. "When you're desperate, every idea sounds good. But I promise, we won't ask the taxpayers to buy this land. They can't afford it!"

Weekley names several possible sources for purchase money. Most likely is the Monroe County Tourist Development Council fourth-cent fund, the bed tax split between city and county. The city uses its share for the acquisition of public lands.

There is now about \$850,000 in the account. Weekley says about a third of it will be used to purchase a strip of land known as the Bridle Path across the street from Smathers Beach. The city is awaiting the

results of an appraisal on the property.

The Local Community Trust Fund, established a year ago by the Florida Legislature, had \$30 million in the till at the beginning of the 1991 fiscal year on October 1. While guidelines for applying for the funding have not yet been set up, distribution guidelines are expected in January or February.

"We have no idea at all whether or not we'll qualify," Weekley says.

Weekley has hopes for support from local state Representative Ron Saunders, who was named chairman of the House Appropriations Committee late last month.

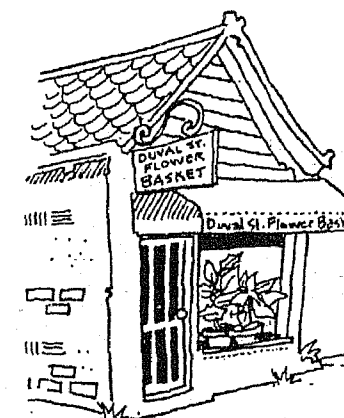
"Chairman of the Appropriations Committee is one of the most powerful positions in Tallahassee," notes Weekley.

The commissioner has one more idea. "Say the property is appraised at \$20 mil-

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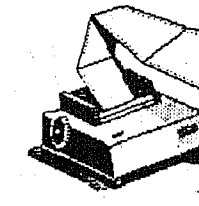
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ISLAND ECONOMICS



lion," he says. "Maybe Singleton will give it to us for \$10 million, and then write off \$10 million for taxes."

Developer Hank Mastenbroek, who is interested in purchasing the Singleton property, considers Weekley's ideas wishful thinking.

Mastenbroek says he is being viewed as the "bad guy" in this situation because he has built two mammoth waterfront projects on the island, and many citizens believe he'll erect another one on the bight property if he gets it.

Current zoning and building restrictions prohibit Mastenbroek from building anything remotely resembling his other projects: the Galleon and the Hyatt Hotel. Nonetheless, suspicion lingers over the funky neighborhood surrounding the bight.

"I think what will happen is that the property will be appraised and sold by the Singleton Estate at fair market value," predicts Mastenbroek. "The Singleton Estate owes money. They need to pay off some debts."

Until the property is appraised, Mastenbroek says, it is impossible to say whether the investment will be a good one—for him or for anyone else. He says, however, that any developer would be crazy to do away with a popular business like the Waterfront Market. "It would be bad business sense," he says.

If the city commission finds a way to finance the purchase, the city charter may mandate a referendum. In that case, the taxpayers would have to approve the bonding.

"Yes, the voters would have to approve a bond to buy the property," Commissioner Weekley explained last month during a meeting of the Old Island Restoration Foundation (OIRF) Board of Directors. "But I think that a bond would pass. I think the community would be willing to dig a little deeper into their pockets to preserve this

KEVIN GREEN



AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE: Turtle Kraals restaurant (in front), the Half-Shell Raw Bar and other businesses at Land's End Marina won't know until January 1 who their landlord will be.

important piece of property."

Other players may be casting covetous glances at the Key West Bight as well. "There are all sorts of people looking at the property at this time," confirms City Planner Strader. "Lots of meetings going on behind the scenes."

"I would certainly never stand in the way of the city obtaining this property if they can come up with the money," says Mastenbroek. "I mean I wouldn't resort to trickery or anything sinister. But if they don't have the money, they shouldn't be making asinine noises about buying it."

Strader's budget for the 1991 fiscal year includes \$100,000 for a special study of the bight area. Requests for Proposals are going out soon. Choosing and building a consulting team of planners and designers will take at least a month, Strader says. Preparing the study will take from four to six months.

"We'll take a look at it and see what's

really happening with the property," says Strader. "In the mandatory Land Use Plan and Comprehensive Plan we recently submitted to the state we have committed to performing this special study because we think that this area is so important, and we suspect that zoning pressure is going to be very strong in the future. Approval of this document by the state will authorize us to perform this study."

Recently, the state returned the Comprehensive Plan to the city with the message that it needed more work.

Key Wester Carole Heinlein, president of the Key West Maritime Society, has been researching the history and possibilities for the future of the bight. She will present her findings in a lecture on December 3 at 7 p.m. at the Monroe County Public Library on Fleming Street.

"Up until the 1950s, much of that prop-



ISLAND ECONOMICS



erty on the bight was under water," Heinlein says. "Many people in the area are saying that they want to save the historic district, but I think their concern is really that they don't want their rent to double."

Heinlein says that emotionalism and anti-development sentiments are being instigated to cloud what is really happening at the bight.

"People in the area are saying that all this

development is coming," Heinlein says. "But that's not what the city has planned."

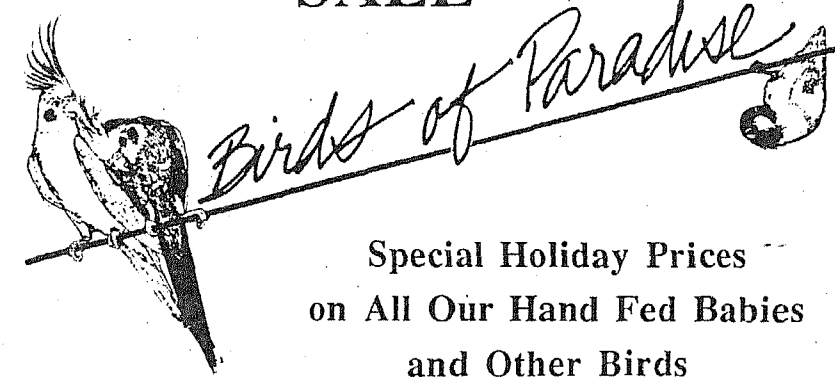
In his presentation to the OIRF, Weekley advocated low-density development and a series of waterfront parks. He spoke of a harbor walk that would skirt the waterfront, allowing people to walk from a public parking lot at the site of the defunct City Electric System transformers at the end of Caroline Street to the downtown area.

City Manager Felix Cooper says that development of the Key West Bight will be a cooperative effort between public and private concerns.

Right now, only ConAgra knows what will happen next, and apparently it is holding out until the January 1 deadline before showing its hand.

"I don't know who my landlord will be in 1991," says Paul Tripp. ☐

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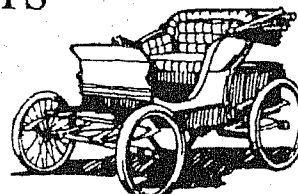
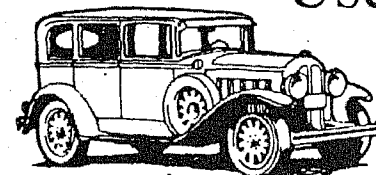
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blacks decide they want to do something about their problems.

A good example is, again, in New York City. There are many jobs for elevator operators (passenger and service), for building maintenance personnel, etc. Blacks will *not* apply for these jobs as it is a sign of "waiting on whitey"—menial, subservient, etc.

Harlem and the adjoining areas are loaded with unemployed black people, male and female, yet they are unwilling to take these jobs. As a result, immigrants from Poland and other Eastern European nations are taking them, learning English and moving on to bigger and better things. This same example carries over to maids. These jobs, by the way, pay good money!

Prior to retirement, I was a manufacturer's representative in New England. Before the outflow of industry from the six-state area, many plants tried to hire blacks. Since it was an issue, and since I am naturally curious, I asked people in management when I was making sales calls, why so few blacks?

The answer was always the same: "We tried hiring blacks and were willing to try to train them. Unfortunately, the attitude was that they really weren't eager to learn, took too many days off and, in many instances, worked to turn existing black employees against the system."

In my generation (I am 65), many blacks worked in the foundries—hot, dirty work but steady and paid better than most. A good customer of mine in Bridgeport, Connecticut—one of the worst cities for racial unrest in New England—had his

foundry just down the street from a job training program facility. He would call and ask them to send him a couple of people, and invariably they would take one look at the foundry and offer excuses as to why they weren't suited for the job. Now it's too late, and most of the old foundries are closed down and the newer ones are automated.

Back to Rowan. I do not think blacks are born with a slave mentality. I think that their peers teach them to rebel against the establishment.

Most black women and their small children try to do what is right. They may live in poor quarters, but they are clean. They attend church. They go to school. Sometime after the beginning of their school years they learn bad habits. Those who are strong-willed enough to overcome this peer pressure make it out; the others become pregnant, high school dropouts, drug users and pushers, etc.

I firmly believe that no matter how we may try, we will not succeed until their attitudes change. Money and social programs won't change it.

Also, I disagree with minority programs for anybody. It is a crutch! In our universities we have counselors for the females, for the blacks, but not for the whites as such. Over the years a sense of resentment as been instilled into the white student population—an attitude of *why*?

Why should females have special counselors, special classes, special facilities? Why should we have black history when it should be incorporated into World History,

American History, etc.? Why should we have black meeting rooms?

If, indeed, this is a free society then we should all be equal, at least in terms of what is offered. What we elect to do with these offerings is up to the individual. There are whites in ghettos, white drug users, white drug pushers, prematurely pregnant white women; etc.

As the cost of living continues to rise in Key West your problems will increase with them. Blacks will sell their land and, once gone, will never be landowners again. Whites will do the same. Developers sit back and wait for these poor people to become wedged into an area where they are uncomfortable and are forced to sell way below market price.

While in Key West I read that it takes \$30,000 per year to live in the area. It will soon be \$35,000, as the building is outpacing the raw land and the developers will look more to getting houses in the old section to renovate and resell to retirees from the North.

I think the one solution is education, not just in the school but family by family. Make these people realize that a job is a job, regardless of who you serve. Also, your land is sacred and should not be sold no matter what the profit unless you immediately buy more land. And, in order to survive you must fit in! Good luck to you and your lovely community.

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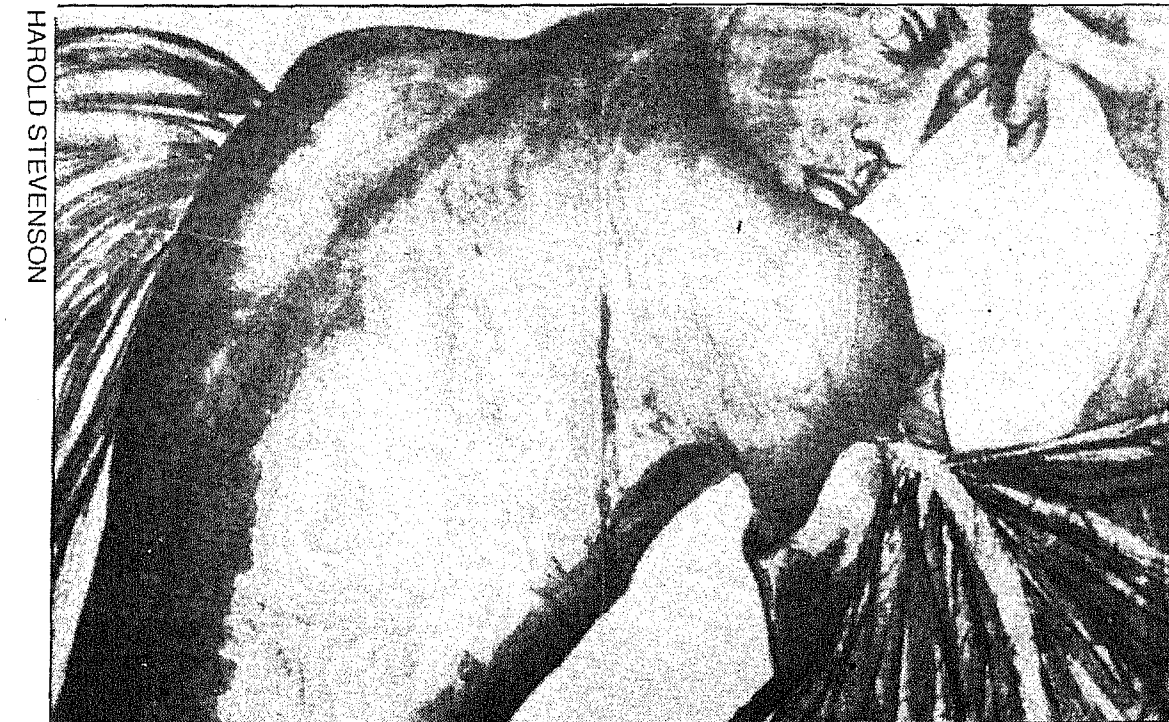
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Harold Stevenson: Larger Than Life



CLASSIC: A detail from "Palm Angel," painted by Stevenson in 1989.

by Jane Phillips

*"The work of a great artist is himself,"
George Moore, 1914*

You might say I was the father of erotica, years ahead of Robert Mapplethorpe," says painter Harold Stevenson, his greyhound Amber sitting at his side. "The critics in this country thought that if they ignored my work it would go away."

But it didn't. Harold Stevenson, who lives in Key West part-time, has received acclaim in major cities, including those in

England, Belgium, Germany, Sweden and Greece. In April, his series "The Fourteen Stations of the Cross" was presented at The Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City.

Stevenson's shows have been as far reaching as "The Great Society" series, which premiered in Idabel, Oklahoma to his portrait of Francois de Menil in "La Famille des Portraits," which hung in the Louvre.

Critics have labeled his work *homoerotic religious art*, but Stevenson disagrees. "I don't categorize my work. That is for others to do. Art, for me, is about life, and that's what I paint. I love plants and flowers, but I wouldn't paint them. I make no apologies, no explanations. I don't even care how my work is framed—that is of no concern to me."

Stevenson, his long-time living companion Lloyd Tugwell and I are seated in the artist's eclectic Key West home. The men enjoy the easy-going camaraderie that comes with a 25-year association. We settle down for our interview, but questions are rarely



FRIENDS: The artist with Amber.

necessary. Conversation flows from Stevenson like water from a mountain stream.

"I love this house with its tile and marble," Stevenson says. "I was in Istanbul when it came on the market, and bought it over the phone."

An understandable purchase. Throughout the house are wonderful seating areas, comfortable places to reflect. Each artifact and piece of furniture reflects a cherished segment of Stevenson's life and is arranged for composition and beauty.

In his work, Stevenson explores the limitless complexity of the human condition—its strengths, frailties and eccentricities. His appreciation for the human form emerges in the classical tradition. His technique is flawless. Flesh tones and textures of the skin and muscles are a glorious celebration of the physical body.

Intellect plays a major role in his work as well. In his series, "Death in Key West," skulls float across the canvas, which is punctured by dildos. It is a dramatic statement about the AIDS epidemic.

Stevenson is also a master of size. Admiring slides of his work through a tiny viewfinder, I find the paintings loom large. In reality they are huge—sometimes as long

as a football field, with faces 35 times larger than life.

To create such colossal works, Stevenson paints on dozens of canvases, which are then connected as the series is installed. The group that spanned a hundred yards covered four walls of an enormous gallery, overwhelming the viewer with its effect.

*"El Cordobes,"
his 48-foot painting,
hung from the Eiffel Tower.*

As a collection, Stevenson's paintings, which are done in oil, trigger emotional, intellectual and visual responses simultaneously—rare, to be sure.

"I was a revolutionary, way ahead of my time," says Stevenson, explaining that he has not been influenced by other painters. "I was violently opposed to the abstract expressionism movement. I got drunk with [those artists], but I never wanted to paint like them. My inspiration always came from within."

Says Stevenson: "I wanted to be tall, but instead was born short and inspired. However, that is a great gift."

Europe—Paris, in particular—embraced Stevenson's work from the beginning. In 1964, his 48-foot painting "El Cordobes," depicting the Spanish bullfighter by that name, was hung from the Eiffel Tower. That same year other paintings exhibited in Venice were confiscated by the Italian police

because of their homoerotic nature. Two lawsuits followed, and the paintings were returned in 1966.

"Paris is the only real city in the world," says Stevenson, who established residence there in 1959. There he fell "madly in love. It was a scandal at the time and still is for those who remember." The love affair ended in tragedy, but he's reserved the details of that notorious era for his autobiography.

The book is a work-in-progress titled *The World According to Harold*. Film rights have already been registered with the Writers' Guild in Hollywood. If produced, it will mark the second film about Stevenson. In 1964, Andy Warhol, no slouch himself when it comes originality, produced a full-length film titled "Harold."

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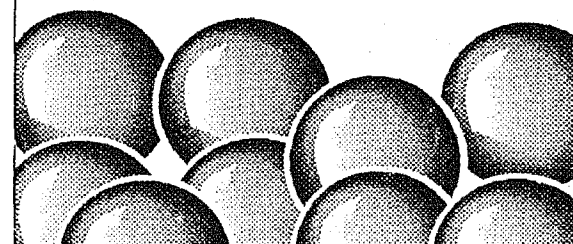
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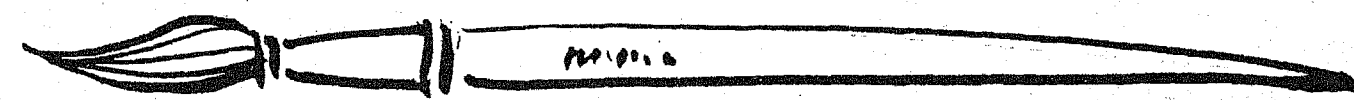
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Stevenson says the movie was great fun. "Andy filmed me doing my own thing—floating around my various haunts, kissing people, changing clothes. It was wonderful."

Over 20 years later, Stevenson romps in Key West—a place which has had a profound effect on the artist. He's completed his most prolific body of work here—45 paintings in one year called "Death in Key West."

He also discovered a renewed sense of life here in 1989. "I've been everywhere and I've known everybody, but coming here changed my life," he explains. "I felt old and tired, ready for the elephant graveyard. Key West changed all that. I love the hot, humid weather, although I'm at home in any climate."

"Oklahoma can be as cold as a well digger's ass in the winter, but it doesn't bother me."

Stevenson was born in Idabel, Oklahoma in 1929. He radiates the good looks of his youth. A sparkle in his blue eyes defies the years. His rosy complexion, a gift from his Scottish ancestry, is to be coveted.

No matter where his travels take him, he always returns to Idabel. "Going back to

Tara" is how he puts it. "It's not just the land, it's the very dirt itself."

After his parents' deaths a few years ago, Stevenson moved back into the house where he grew up, and donated his own home, an impressive Victorian lady, to the Historical Society as a museum.

Stevenson's parents bequeathed a wonderful sense of place upon him. After the first moon landing, his father commented: "Sure it was interesting, but not as interesting as when Will Rogers landed his plane on Main Street in Idabel."

The artist carries this perspective to this day. His Key West bedroom is a reflection of Idabel with its high brass bed, colorful quilts and rag rugs.

Stevenson also raised four children in Idabel following the untimely death of his brother and sister-in-law, creating another unbreakable link to his beloved home town.

The earthiness of Stevenson's Oklahoma is in enchanting juxtaposition to his sophistication. Although his artistic genius catapulted him from the Bible belt to the international art world, Idabel remains the center of his universe.

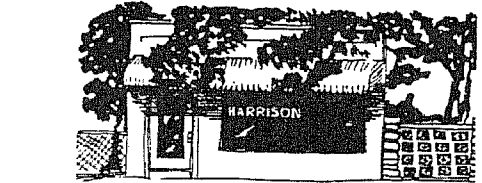
"What is the most fun you can have with your clothes on?" I ask.

"Oh, I love that question," he replies. "I've never been asked that before."

He thinks a moment, then says, "I would have to say dressing up. I dress for myself, my own amusement—I become my own canvas. Why I'll get dressed up just to have a martini at home!"

"It's practically a sport in Key West,"

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calls Lloyd, who has moved to another room.

"Yes," agrees Stevenson. "One can wear caftans, sarongs and lots of jewelry." Today Stevenson is wearing a beige caftan and a bracelet made from the hair of an elephant's tail.

"The social life is here when you want it and yet one has privacy also," he says. "Although psychologically I'm a hermit, I'm very much drawn to people."

Stevenson could be titled the Darling of Hostesses.

"He certainly is," Lloyd confirms from afar. "When we're in New York he's never home. He's out all the time with the 'bat people'—they put on their capes and go out at night."

"Are you the entertainment at these engagements?" I ask, realizing that Stevenson could be titled the Darling of Hostesses.

Stevenson laughs. "I recently turned down an invitation for a yacht cruise," he says. "After checking the guest list I decided I didn't really want to entertain these people."

When not in Paradise, he could be almost anywhere in the world. He qualifies that by saying, "I love to travel, but Honey, I wouldn't go any place where I didn't know someone who lived there." Recently, he turned down an invitation to visit Russia for that very reason.

Stevenson invites me to view the garden. The grounds, spacious by Key West standards, are dominated by a large sea-grape tree growing center stage. There are a number of conversation areas sprinkled about, providing either sun or shade. Off to one side is a swimming pool.

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"I have all I want within these walls and leave only when I choose," says Stevenson, obviously enjoying the surroundings.

These mornings you might find Stevenson perusing *The New York Times*—just to keep up with what his friends are doing. His other reading materials include books on archeology, philosophy and religion. On fiction he replies, "Oh darling, I don't read any fiction. Poetry, yes. I read mostly Walt Whitman and Edgar Allen Poe"—the "Yankee poets," as he calls them.

That this man is a serious artist there is no doubt. He slides right into his own definition for that genre: "A serious artist is one who can't be controlled."

"I've always painted, even before I could write my name. I never had another job. My brother, an attorney, was just aghast that some years my earnings put me below the poverty line—in fact, some years I earned nothing at all."

Now his paintings command a princely sum. But for Stevenson, it is in the process itself that the real rewards are found. The primal urge is to paint—the money is secondary.

"I didn't want to die before I could say all I needed to say," he says.

If he had to choose another era in which to have been born, it would be the Age of Pericles in Greece, with its great intellectual and artistic achievement. Stevenson says, however, "I've never had the desire to be anybody but myself and that's a great luxury."

When he was very young, his father asked him what he would do if, for some reason, he couldn't paint.

"I would be a poet," he replied.

While poets use pens, Stevenson finds his expression with a brush.

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DECEMBER ART CALENDAR

Art Collections Key West

National and local artists in a variety of styles and themes. Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Friday, 8 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. 600 Front St. in the Bottling Court, 296-5956.

Audubon House • "Butterflies—Fantasyflies," a unique collection of butterfly specimens from the collection of Robert A. Belmont through January. \$5 admission, children under six free, AAA discount. Daily, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. 205 Whitehead St. 294-2116.

Banana Boat Batik • Hand-painted silk and cotton by Key West Artists. New ceramic work by Walt Hyla—animals, fish, lidded vessels, functional ware and hanging fish sculptures. Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. 419B Duval St. 296-2380.

Lee Dodez Showroom • Handbuilt clay pieces by Lee Dodez and Jay Gogin raku work. Classes in handbuilding slab work. Also ceramic supplies: clay, glazes, equipment and tools for the potter. Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. 901 Duval St., rear. 296-5901.

East Martello Museum & Gallery • "Key West Collects," opens December 18. Fine art, antiques and oddities. Key Westers have developed. Also collections of Stanley Papio folk art, battleship Maine memorabilia. Daily, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. \$3 admission for non-members. 3501 S. Roosevelt Blvd. 296-3913.

Farrington Gallery 711 • See our regular group of artists this month. Also, new watercolors by Sylvia and "Funky Flamingo" shirts. Daily, except Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. and by appointment. 711 Duval St. 294-6911.

Florida Keys Community College Library Gallery • "All Wood" exhibit of Key West woodcarvers through December 7. Opening December 14. Student Show through January 18. Gallery will be closed for the holidays December 22 through January 2. Open Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Junior College Rd., Stock Island, 296-9081, ext. 202.

Is It Art? • Hand-painted art-wear, prints and wall-hangings. Daily, except Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 913 Duval St. 294-0411.

Island Arts • A unique selection of local arts, crafts and painted objects. Wednesday through Monday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 1128 Duval St. 292-9909.

Kennedy Studios • Visit our new gallery at 1130 Duval, showing all original works by Florida and Northern artists in a variety of media. Daily, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. 294-5997. In our two other locations, see graphics, limited edition prints. Daily 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. 133 Duval St. 294-5850; 511 Duval St. 294-8564.

Whitehead Street Pottery • Stoneware, porcelain, Raku vessels. White, functional stoneware by guest artist Janet Albert. Daily, except Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 1011 Whitehead St. 294-5067.

Nancy Forrester Gallery

Closed until January. 518 Elizabeth St. 294-0015.
Galerie Moderne • Abstract expressionist works by Gilberte Sweeney. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. 516 Amelia St. off Duval St. 296-3156.

Gingerbread Square Gallery • Annual Incredible Christmas Sale from December 10 through 17. Daily, except Tuesday, Wednesday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. 901 Duval St. 296-8900.

Great Southern Gallery • All original artworks from Key West and Florida artists, featuring Harry Greene, Gay Cunningham and Dick Moody. Art classes continue, call us. Daily, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. 910 Duval St. 294-6660.

Guild Hall Gallery • Annual Christmas party December 7, 7 to 9 p.m. Drawings, paintings, prints, soft sculpture, cartoons, printed and hand-painted cards, ceramics, T-shirts, leather bags, photography, stained glass and ironwork by 16 Key West artists. Daily, 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Evenings sometimes. 614 Duval St. 296-6076.

Haitian Art Company • Hanging all new pieces from a big shipment of recent paintings. Paintings, wood sculpture, papier mache, metal cut-outs by Haitian artists. Daily, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 600 Frances St. 296-8932.

Harrison Gallery • Paintings, photographs, sculpture and crafts by local artists. Daily, noon to 5:30 p.m. except Sunday and Monday. 825 White St. 294-0609.

Is It Art? • Hand-painted art-wear, prints and wall-hangings. Daily, except Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 913 Duval St. 294-0411.

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Key West Art Center

Work by members. Daily, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. 301 Front St. 294-1241.

Key West Lighthouse Museum • History of Keys lighthouses and technology of lighthouses. Also, life of a lighthouse keeper. 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., daily. Admission \$3 adults, \$1 children 7 to 15, under 7 free. 938 Whitehead St. 294-0012.

Kudu Gallery of Tribal Art • Formerly International Folk Art at Adam Peck. Celebrating our new location at 1200 Duval sometime in December. International folk art, ethnic musical instruments, tapestries, toys, oriental rugs and kilims and African art. Daily, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. See us at 534 Fleming St. until we move. 294-3771.

Lane Gallery • "Craig Biondi Retrospective," December 16 to 24, plus our regular artists. Daily, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. 1000 Duval St. 294-0067.

Lucky Street Gallery • "New Artists/New Works," December 5 through January 5, including work by Dalva Duarte, Lena Allen, Martha Cook. Daily, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. 919 Duval St. 294-3973.

Mosquito Coast Island Outfitters • New paintings from South America. Metal sculpture by Tom Joris. Back country paintings and prints by Michael Shannon. Bird prints by Marianna Bauerlein. Daily, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. 1107 Duval St. 296-6124.

Plantation Pottery • Stoneware and porcelain vessels, lamps. Handblown glass, wooden utensils. All made in USA. Daily, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 717 Duval St. 294-3143.

Rose Lane Antiquities • Pre-Columbian art. Flexible hours or by appointment. 524 Rose Lane. 294-1873, 294-2270.

Santa Fe • Southwestern art, jewelry and furniture. Daily, except Wednesday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. 219 Whitehead St. 294-0397.

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Music Review

Toni Bishop Trio Graces Flagler's Lounge

by Christine Naughton

Once in a musical blue moon, comes a singer who takes established styles to new places. Jazz, pop, rock, Latin and country soar beyond their categories upon the voice of such a singer. They become freer sounds—exciting and fresh.

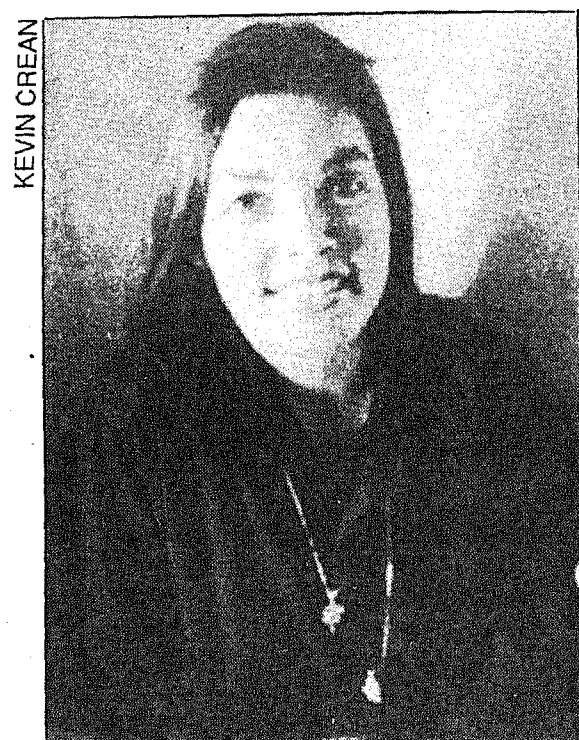
When Toni Bishop took a break from a hectic life in Ft. Lauderdale and returned to her hometown, Key West added one of those singers to its musical roster. At 27, Bishop is fast becoming a master of the essence of jazz: improvisation. Seemingly unafraid of making mistakes, she gracefully accepts the risks inherent in vocal improvisation, giving a great gift in return.

Currently appearing at Casa Marina's newly renovated Flagler's Lounge, Bishop has chosen two of the finest musicians in town to complete her Toni Bishop Trio: Phil Sampson on piano and synthesizer, and Woody Allen on guitar and tenor saxophone. On a recent evening, attentive listeners were rewarded with new interpretations of songs from the band's expansive repertoire.

With the soothing yet seductive whisper quality of her voice, Bishop can go anywhere her musician's heart desires. Her cool, rich alto-to-soprano range is fluid, dexterous. With impeccable pitch and rhythm, she executes a remarkable variety of sounds. Bishop also vocalizes bird calls and jungle sounds—tiger, monkey, snake—tastefully enhancing the texture of selected pieces.

In the trio's arrangement of Cindy Lauper's gorgeous tune, "Time After Time," Allen played a beautifully flowing guitar solo through the opening changes; Bishop sang the surreal lyrics with tender-hearted honesty. Hearing her sing this story of love doomed, we remember we've all been there—at least once.

Caressing the lyrics of one of Jobim's most beautiful compositions, "Dindi," Bishop evoked images of wind, sand and sea, and the feeling of being head-over-heels in love. In the standard, "Girl from Ipanema," Bishop interjected her jungle sounds, transporting us a little further North in Brazil, to the Amazon rainforest.



OFF STAGE: Singer Toni Bishop.

This poor song has suffered horribly in the hands of club musicians the world over. (Arguably, it is the most often played piece at this level of the industry.) Still, Bishop's rendition made it a showcase jewel. A highlight of the set was her solo chorus of this tune, wherein she whistled improvisational lines that any horn player would be proud to produce.

Among other numbers, the group performed Billie Holiday's "Fine and Mellow," Stevie Wonder's "Golden Lady" and Van Morrison's "Moondance."

In addition to comping keyboards and bass behind Bishop's singing, Sampson took several commendable solos, most notably on "A Train" and "Dindi." His style is capable of both gentleness and boldness, and his left hand produces some of the best bass lines on the island.

Allen brightened the trio's arrangements with reliable, percussive comping and articulate solos. His approach to guitar is laid-back and confident, and he possesses a certain genius for tasteful chord choices. His work is competent during the rare moments he picks up his tenor saxophone.

Occasionally, Bishop steps behind her

array of percussion instruments, energizing the rhythm and supporting Sampson or Allen during solos. She may also switch on her wireless microphone and stroll through the audience, singing all the while.

Scat, the jazz vocal technique of improvising with nonsensical syllables, is a lot like mustard, if you will. Some people prefer Dijon, some savor wasabi, some think a little tastes best, others slather it on. The vocalist who chooses to scat risks receiving both poison darts and roses from the same audience.

Most absorbing about Bishop's scatting technique is the syllables she chooses. Dispensing with classic bebop syllables—doo, wop, bop, be, bo, ba—she sets a new language to music, which sounds like she's singing lyrics in a foreign tongue.

The only drawback to this evening spent in Flagler's Lounge was the room itself, which seems to have been renovated with little forethought concerning live music.

There is no stage, so instruments were set up behind pillars, obstructing the view of the entire band from almost any seat in the house. "Good tables" were the few set up in the immediate proximity of the trio. And on this particular evening, service at the bar was sluggish and chilly. At those prices, folks, there's no excuse for service that is anything short of excellent.

But no matter. A trip to the Casa Marina to see the Toni Bishop Trio is absolutely recommended. The group appears Wednesdays through Saturdays beginning at 9 p.m.; Sampson and Allen play alone on Tuesdays.

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Reels & Tangerines

by Joe Silva

When the Beatles shrugged off touring for good in '66—also cutting down on shrieking females and free drinks, mind you—to perform before tape machines and technicians, recording studios found themselves draped with a new allure.

Any musician who plucked, banged or blew three interesting notes soon realized he could take them into a studio and twiddle them into a record—maybe even a hit. So recording took off, creating an artistic outlet and new possibilities for musicians of all levels of talent.

While MTV-league musicians are not jetting into Key West International Airport to make demo tapes, the island does support a relatively healthy recording market. Local musicians say they're pleased with the quality of the tapes they've made at Private Ear or Island Ad-itudes, the island's only commercial studios. And the studios' owners seem to relish the idiosyncrasies of their businesses.

At his Private Ear Studio, Danny Simpson sits in the hush of the control room. The walls are soundproofed with panels of orange carpet, giving the impression that Simpson's been swallowed by a huge, mechanized tangerine. A small dog named Samba walks comfortably around the tangle of cables, tape reels and gadgets that crowd



KEVIN CREAM

REEL PEOPLE: Danny Simpson and Melody Cooper at their Private Ear studio.

Simpson opened his studio in 1982. With partner Melody Cooper, who is also a member of the Fabulous Spectrals singing group, he has recorded most of the island's enduring talents, including Shel Silverstein and MTV Basement Tapes winner Cathy Grier.

He has worked with one-shot obscurities from outside the tight circle of local musicians as well.

"One guy," Simpson remembers, "came in and, in the middle of the song he was recording, started to roll around on the studio

Local Picks

After listening to more than a dozen local tapes, most of them recorded by Danny Simpson at Private Ear, I've taken a shine to those listed below. All the tapes were graciously loaned to me by the merchants at Records and Rogues.

—Joe Silva

- Bill Blue & the Nervous Guys, "Live on the Moon": Good, rollicking bar-room blues recorded at one of Bill's regular venues. Danny Simpson, then an official "Nervous Guy," remembers the evening as a nightmare. "I'd set all the levels on board hours before the show, but when I checked it just before the show, someone had turned all of them back to zero." Of all the live tapes I sampled, this had the best sound.
- Leanna Collins, "Big Trouble": Not recorded locally, this tape is made up of four songs featured in her live show, "Presence of Me," which should be checked out.
- Ben Harrison, "Par for the Course": Harrison's latest project features "The Ballad of Maria Eleña Hoyos and Karl Von Cossel," a bizarre yarn based on a true story. The song may be featured on an upcoming installment of Dr. Demento's L.A.-based radio show.
- "The Key West Christmas Album": Put together by Simpson and members of The Survivors, this tape reworks yuletide standards with palm tree sensibilities. It was picked up for distribution in Europe.
- Bert Lee, "Living in the Stream": With none of the excesses of a classic rock opera, this work is more of a thematically glued set of pop songs with a techno slant. The tape has some of the crispest production I've heard from the Simpson lab. The lead track, "This Poor Boy Wandering," features nice harmony between Lee and Leanna Collins.

floor and literally foam at the mouth. When he finished, he just sort of lay there for a while. Then got up, said 'Thanks,' and left."

But most of Simpson's clients are "low foam."

Falling into this category, Ben Harrison has recorded with Simpson about twice a year since the studio's inception as Simpson Sound. "We've sort of grown up together," says Simpson.

Visually, Harrison is the quintessential Conch folk guitarist. Grizzled and tanned, he creates the image tourists mentally pack in their Samsonites before heading home. Like many local performers, he sells tapes to pad the amount of money he makes performing.

"I sell a fair amount," says Harrison, "but it depends on the audience, really." He says small, intimate groups buy the most tapes.

Harrison has veered away from the cost and hassle of "banging on doors in Nashville" and other places to sell his music. Tourists, like the lady in Rhode Island who wrote to tell him of the Ben Harrison Nights she sponsors at her yacht club, are unwittingly the primary distributors of his tapes.

In town some specialty shops carry cas-

ettes by local artists. Even Specs in Key Plaza, the island's chain record store, encourages local musicians to bring in tapes to be sold on consignment.

And they sell.

"Which is testimony to the kind of quality work that Danny does," Harrison continues. "No matter who you are, if your tape doesn't sound good, people won't play it on their stereos. So Danny's producing stuff on a low budget that is competing with recordings made for much, much more."

"Danny has great ears," Leanna Collins says between sets of her Saturday night gig at the Rooftop Café. Her audience consists of small groups of tourists. (There's even a couple of huge Norwegian guys who grunt a few notes of a request, because they can't seem to pronounce its title.)

Listeners who are spilling onto the street have been drawing more people into the club for hours. Collins hasn't sold any tapes tonight, but she says she sold 12 the night before. Not bad at five bucks a pop.

Her second tape is now under production at Private Ear. "Danny hears everything," she says, smiling broadly. "And I'm very comfortable working in there with him and Melody."

Comfort is something Simpson strives to achieve. "My job is to get what people do clearly on tape and to make them comfortable, because I know what it's like to be on the other side of that glass and go to shit."

Down the way at Island Ad-itudes recording studio Bill Blue sits behind 18 inches of concrete, which is surrounded by large bolts of Neato angular sound foam. "Some-

times I have to nurse people through [a session]," he says.

Blue is the terse, mustachioed singer/guitarist who stomps out hard-edged blues around town with his band, the Nervous Guys. About five months ago, he shifted his studio from its original Duval Street location to Greene Street.

The building, previously headquarters to Pritam Singh's Truman Annex company, was once the old telegraph office where the Navy first received word that the U.S.S. Maine had been sunk in Havana Harbor.

Today the space is nicely carpeted and upscale. If it weren't for the glass booth with the large amplifier in it, the place could pass for a Century 21 office.

For about \$1000, Blue says, a musician can log 20 hours of studio time, and have 500 tapes manufactured—200 the next day, if necessary. "Shrink rap and the whole deal," he says.

While Simpson runs eight tracks out of his studio, Blue has the only 16-track setup on the island.

"But some people, once they realize all the things you can do in the studio, tend to overdo it," Blue says, adding that the line between recording engineer and producer

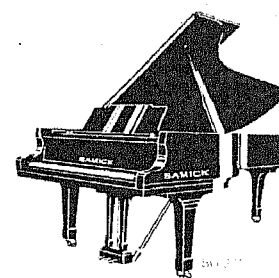
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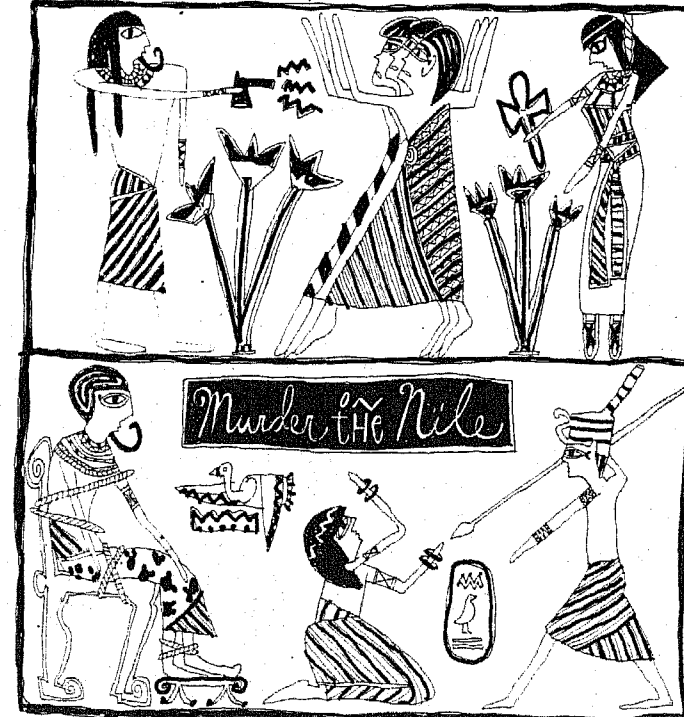
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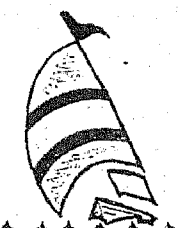
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blurs. "Usually, I can separate myself from the music."

"It's hard," Simpson agrees, "to hold back when you see people wrestling with ideas and you think you can help. Everyone likes to think their opinions about music are the best." But he's also learned not to influence to the degree where a project might be thrown off kilter.

"Danny is also the kind of person who will work with you," says musician/composer Bert Lee. "If you get stuck on something, he'll take it home with him and work it in his head until it's solved."

Lee and Simpson recently finished up what is probably the island's first rock opera, "Living In The Stream." It's a piece Lee wrote in response to the plight of the manatee in today's powerboat-clogged seas.

Lee came to Key West in 1983, having recorded and toured with many Midwestern bands. He says Simpson helped him to bridge the acoustic aspects of the project with the techno side. So far he's had 50 tapes made for promotion, but he's afraid that the limited support—from radio stations to clubs—for original local music will cause the piece to fade.

While manatees have fallen under the post-Earth Day umbrella of environmental interest, Lee says, "the truly endangered

species is the individual artist in this town."

Like local clubs, Key West radio stations pay their bills by keeping predictable formats and cash-proven formulas at the core of their businesses. Both of the pop/rock stations, WAIL 99 FM and WEOW 92.5 FM, play essentially Top 40. One WAIL employee, however, maintains it's not a question of local artists not fitting a format so much as them "having made it." Hmmm.

WEOW disc jockey Kim Alexander says her station has occasionally played local artists, and that policy is "if it's pressed and sounds decent we'll consider playing it." The broadcast booth inside 92.5, however, has four tape machines spinning precomposed tapes throughout the day. Chances of hearing an original seem slim.

So while everyone who's cared to look says there's a deep well of musical talent in Key West, it may take a while for more of it to shimmy its way up to the light of success. Logically, Simpson and Blue have, therefore, expanded the scope of their businesses.

Both donate services to create Public Service Announcements for local environmental protection efforts, and Blue's studio is ripe to do on-site video production.

Danny Simpson also creates sound effects for local stage productions. "Last year was the year of the helicopter," he says after fabricating chopper sounds from assorted objects and synthesizing gurgles and whirrs.

And while the film industry is developing in Orlando, film scores are gestating in Simpson's head. "I constantly hear orchestras," he says.

The scores eventually may be the catalyst to cause Simpson to pull up his roots from this high-priced island. In recent years, Simpson's rent has almost tripled.


But while the music scene here is not making him a millionaire, Simpson seems genuinely tickled to be one of its focal points.

"Besides, it's nice to think that a guy can still grab his guitar, and ride over to the studio on his bike to make a tape," he says. ☐



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Community Notes

Sailfish Tournament

A catch-and-release billfish tournament, the World Class Angler Sailfish Classic, is planned in the Florida Keys from December 4 to 9. The contest, which is limited to 50 boats, features four days of fishing and numerous social events—all based at World Class Angler Tackle Shop and Charter, located at Faro Blanco Marine Resort at Mile Marker 48 in Marathon. Entry fee is \$500 per angler, \$350 for each subsequent fishermen on the same boat, with social entrants required to pay a \$125 fee. For more details and entry forms, call (305) 743-6139.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS: Amanda Kirkman, a MARC client, displays a decorated Norfolk pine—one of over 2000 pines, firs and spruces on sale at the Harris School to benefit Monroe Association for Retarded Citizens. Open daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., the sale begins December 16 with the Southernmost Christmas Tree Celebration, featuring food and entertainment, and continues until all trees are sold.

Hot Off the Press: Wetlands

Application of Wetland Valuation Theory to Florida Fisheries, a new publication produced by the Sea Grant Advisory Program, is now available. The text provides an economic evaluation of the value of estuarine wetlands to marine fisheries in Florida. By using the marginal productivity theory, the report establishes a monetary value for these lands based on their contribution to Florida's fisheries and helps create a rationale for government purchase or intervention in preserving wetlands. To receive a \$3 copy, contact the Florida Cooperative Extension Service, P.O. Box 2545, Key West, 33040.



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Coral Reef Management

A proposed rule that would implement Amendment 1 to the fishery management plan for coral and coral reefs of the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic was recently filed with the Federal Register, announced Andrew J. Kemmerer, director of the National Marine Fisheries Service, southeast region. The rule is intended to conserve and manage coral resources by limiting harvests and requiring permits to take corals. For information contact Michael E. Justen at (813) 893-3722.

Hospitals Recycle

Health Systems recently began to recycle the hospitals' primary waste—cardboard. "Over 60 percent of our non-hazardous waste stream is cardboard and paper," says Richard Farkas, director of plant operation. "Health System must get rid of nine cubic yards of boxes each day. The best way to do that is to compact the cardboard into bales for recycling." A new compactor

has been installed near the loading dock, which crushes boxes into bales weighing up to 1000 pounds each. The bales are collected by a Ft. Lauderdale recycling company, which transports them out of the Keys.

Rin Tin Tin

Two Monroe County Sheriff's Office canine teams have proven themselves to be among the best in the nation in a competition in Duneiden, Florida. Sgt. Mitch Horn and Deputy Donnie Fanelli and his dog Velcro took their dogs to the competition to compete in such areas as officer protection, obedience, confidence, bite work and search techniques. Fanelli placed in the top 50 of more than 200 teams. Horn placed in the top 75. The dogs are used to search buildings, detect drugs and track fleeing suspects.




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Naturalized Plants

by A. d'Rianne

In the world of plants, the word *naturalized* applies to plants that have adapted to their new environment to the extent that they, for lack of a better description, grow like weeds.

Bananas and Norfolk pine are naturalized throughout the Keys, while coconut palms are considered naturalized only along the coast because they require the salty, sandy conditions. Hibiscus, however, remains an exotic—or *not naturalized*—because it requires care even after it's been established.

Thanks to the human, bird, fish, wind or water current that was so generous as to transport tropical and subtropical plants to South Florida, the Keys boasts a wonderful collection of exotic and naturalized plants from around the world.

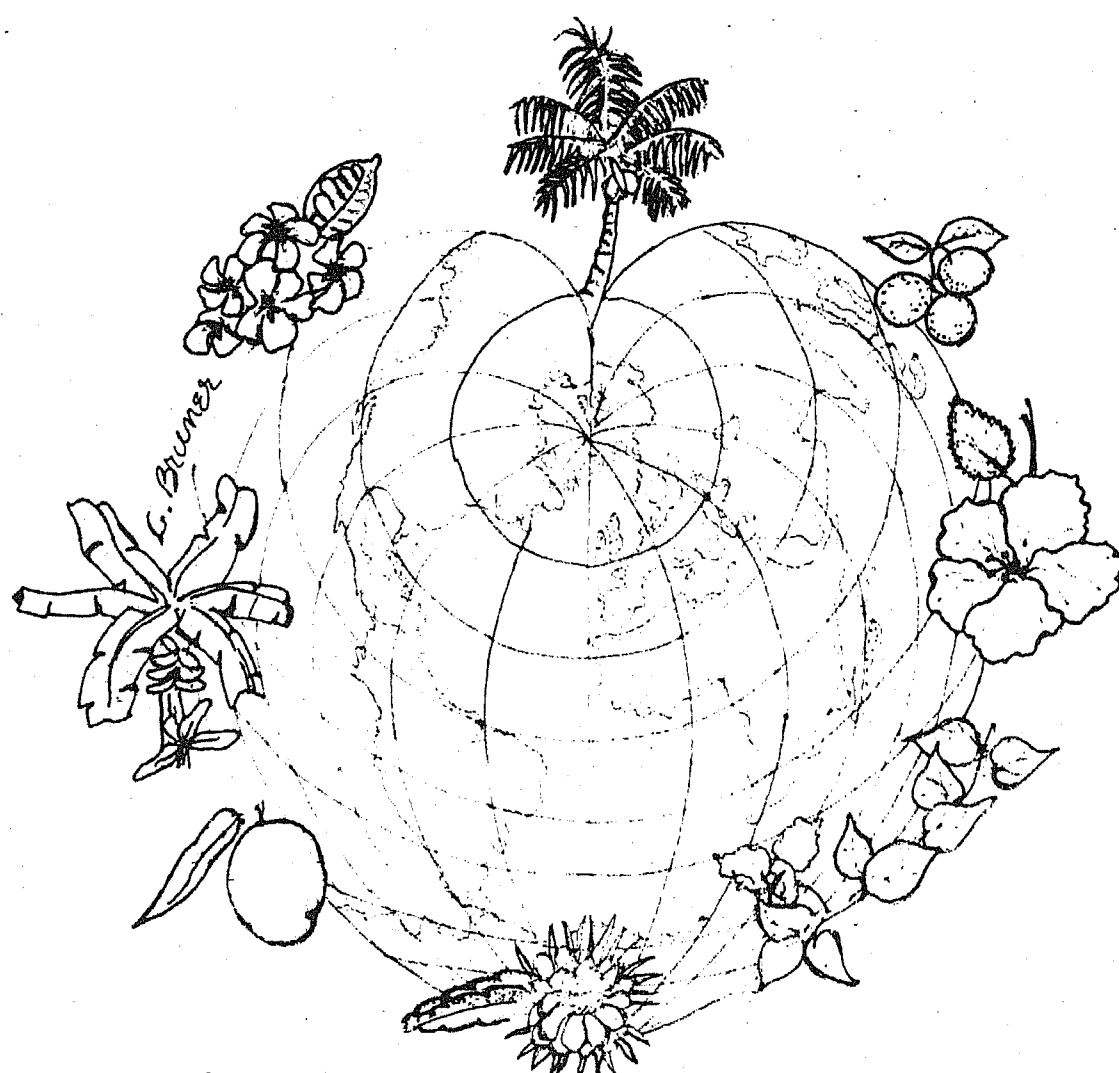
Let's zero in on the possible history of the naturalized banana. Research shows that originally only a few varieties of banana existed on an island or two in Indomalaya. Here's my scenario, as corny as it may be, as to how the banana became as widespread as it is today:

... *lights up* ... Two men in loincloths made of pounded tree bark are carving masks. "Listen, Tupo-Tupo, you know those long yellow things we've been using for fertility rites at the Full Moon ever since

our ancestors rose from the sea? Well, my son Bohto-Bohto took a big bite out of one when my back was turned and he didn't drop over dead. I thought our head guy said they were poisonous. Anyway, I ate two of them and they're great, really sweet. And I got this idea ..."

... *lights down gradually*,
... *lights up gradually*, to a faintly glowing dawn.

Tupo-Tupo and his buddy are pushing off from shore in their canoe, which is heavily loaded not only with stalks of ripening bananas, but with the pups stolen from their head guy's stands of bananas.



Later, after landing on a nearby island, the two conspirators trade a couple of feathers and four dried chicken feet for their complete knowledge of bananas. The neighbors hadn't an inkling about this special fruit.

One trade led to another and soon the entire archipelago was filled with bananas.

Historically speaking, however, no one knows how knowledge of bananas were shared, but we're pretty sure that Arab traders got to those islands and took bananas to Africa, and then about the year 1510, Portuguese seafarers took the fruit to the Canary Islands.

From there, bananas were brought to the Dominican Republic, and shortly thereafter they arrived in South America, where they spread rapidly via European conquistadores, who were chasing South Americans.

Today there are over 300 varieties of bananas from all the hybridizing—enough, in fact to fill an entire issue of *Solares Hill*, at least.

How did coconut palms get here? No one really knows, but it seems likely that a few coconuts floated over on ocean current. It makes sense, considering that a coconut can float several thousand miles on the salt water and still sprout.

Here is a list of familiar plants found in the Keys which are not native, and their probable origins:

• Banana, origin Indomalaya. No need to grab your atlas—Indomalaya is a bunch

of islands, including Borneo, located south to southeast of Thailand and Cambodia.

• Hibiscus, origin Tropical Asia, according to some books, or tropical China according to others.

• Schefflera, origin Australia.

• Bougainvillea, origin Brazil.

• Coconut palm, origin the Indian Archipelago, according to some, or Polynesia, according to others.

• Key lime, origin probably northeast India. Most citrus is believed to be native to Asia or India. Key limes were probably introduced to the Americas by Spanish explorers in the 16th century.

• Mango, origin North India, Burma and Malaysia.

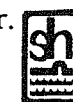
• Frangipani, origin Cuba and Central and South Americas.

• Norfolk Island Pine, origin Norfolk Island, located about 900 miles northeast of

Sydney, Australia

• Royal Poinciana, origin southeastern South America.

• *Dracena marginata*, *Stephanotis* vine, *Areca* palm, screw pine, crown-of-thorns, triangle palm, traveler's palm, periwinkle, and baobab, all these come from Madagascar.



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Antonia's Restaurant, 615 Duval Street. Excellent Italian cuisine in friendly, elegant atmosphere. Dinner served from 6 to 11 p.m., nightly. Visa, Mastercard. 294-6565.

Aunt Rose's, 1900 Flagler Avenue. Key West's most popular Italian restaurant. Fine Italian dining at family prices. Special entrees served daily. Open Tuesday through Sunday, 5:30 to 10 p.m.; seven days, Christmas through Easter. Reservations suggested. 294-6214.

Benihana, at S. Roosevelt Boulevard (A1A) and the Atlantic Ocean. Voted America's most popular full-service restaurant. Ori chefs artistically prepare the finest steaks, shrimp, lobster and chicken to please your eyes. Full bar. Complimentary mimosas from 12:05. Open nightly, 296-6400.

Bill's Key West Fish Market and Restaurant, 2502 N. Roosevelt Boulevard. Serving the finest local seafood from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., daily. A local favorite. 296-5891.

The Buttery, 1208 Simonton Street. Praised by *Gourmet*, *New York Times* and *Bon Appetit* as one of the great restaurants in South Florida. The Buttery is truly a must-stop for the gourmand in Key West. A complete bar and wine list complement the distinctive Buttery menu, with nightly specials. Open for dinner, nightly; reservations are suggested. 294-0717.

Dim Sum, 613 1/2 Duval Street in Key Lime Square. Open 6 p.m. to 11:00 p.m., closed Mondays and Tuesdays. A gourmet Asian restaurant serving exotic Chinese stir-fries, Indian cur-

ries and Thai, Indonesian and Burmese specialties. Wine and sake bar. Phone 294-6230.

Duval Square Yogurt, located in the center of Duval Square. Offers the ultimate in "sinless indulgence," featuring no-fat, no-cholesterol yogurt. Daily special flavors, including non-dairy fruit twist. Also serving gyros. Open 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday; noon to 10 p.m. Sunday. 296-2900.

El Loro Verde, 404 Southard Street. More than a Mexican restaurant, El Loro Verde presents innovative yet authentic variations of both Mexican and Caribbean dishes. Popular for its cafe atmosphere, El Loro Verde now features a full liquor bar in its new dining room. 296-7298.

Emma's Seafare at The Reach, Simonton Street on the Ocean. Open 7 days a week for breakfast, lunch and dinner; Sunday brunch. This is a room that radiates the sun and sea. Dine indoors or on a terrace that overlooks the Atlantic. The menu features fish and more fish, prepared 105 different ways. 296-5000.

Fisherman's Café and Crab House, 832 Caroline Street. Featuring steamed blue crabs (call for availability, market price), an array of nightly dinner specials, beef, chops, Southern-style cooking. Also Baltimore-style crab cakes made fresh daily. Maryland crab soup and sautéed soft-shell crabs. All you can eat fish fry for \$7.95, Monday through Friday 5 to 7 p.m. Lunch/dinner noon to 11:30 p.m. Breakfast midnight to 11:30 a.m. Open 24 hours. 294-7705.

Flamingo Crossing, 1105 Duval Street. The local's favorite dessert spot features fresh-made-daily ice creams, sorbets, honey yogurts, sundaes, shakes and all-fruit *vitari*. Also enjoy Florida Keys finest Key Lime pie, all in a tropical garden setting. Open daily from noon to 11 p.m., and midnight,

Friday and Saturday. 296-6124.

Full Moon Saloon, 1220 Simonton Street. "Where locals always visit, and visitors always feel local." Serving 11 a.m. to 4 a.m., daily. Lunch, dinner and late-night specials. Featuring a moderately-priced American menu, including fresh seafood, meats, pastas, salads and sandwiches. Phone 294-9090.

Howard Johnson's Restaurant, 3041 N. Roosevelt Boulevard. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, daily. Offering breakfast specials and a daily All-You-Can-Eat \$7.95 Seafood Feast. 294-4342.

Jimmy Buffett's Margarita-ville Café, 500 Duval Street. Good food, good drinks, and good music. Open 11 a.m. to 2 a.m., daily; til 4 a.m. weekends. 292-1435.

La Bodega, 829 Simonton Street. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Delicious sandwiches, burgers, soups, salads, pastries, baked goods and dinner entrees. Dine in or delivery. 294-6544.

La Lechonera, 3100 Flagler Avenue. One of the oldest restaurants in Key West, serving Spanish and Cuban cuisine with a full liquor bar. Daily specials. Happy Hour 4 to 7 p.m. Take-out available. 296-7881.

La Trattoria Venezia, 524 Duval Street. Featuring Italian and French cuisine. Dine in an elegant European atmosphere complete with Italian music and friendly, warm service. Open daily. 296-1075.

Lighthouse Café, 917 Duval Street. Specializing in wonderful Southern Italian and seafood dishes, served in a beautiful garden setting or cozy indoor dining room. Open for dinner 6 to 11 p.m. Reservations suggested. Diner's Club, Visa. 296-7837.

Louie's Backyard, 700 Waddell on the Atlantic Ocean. Featuring international cuisine in a restaurant ranked among South Florida's best. Dining inside or outdoors on the water. Enjoy cocktails on the Afterdeck Bar. Open from 11:30 a.m. to 2 a.m. 294-1061 for dining reservations.

Martha's, at South Roosevelt Boulevard (A1A) and the Atlantic Ocean. Steaks and seafood. Exotic island drinks and soft live piano music set a refreshing mood to complement

Martha's famous menu of steaks, prime rib and fresh native seafood. Open nightly from 5:30 p.m. Major credit cards. 294-3466.

Nick's Coastal Café, located in the Hyatt Key West at 601 Front Street. For waterfront dining and the best Italian cuisine. Open daily, serving lunch and dinner. Reservations 296-9900.

Palm Grill, on the corner of Francese and Southard Streets. American island cooking using fresh herbs, native seafood and the finest produce. Grilled meats, fish and vegetarian selections. Creative and affordable. Dinner 6 to 10:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Visa/Mastercard. 296-1744.

Pier House Restaurant, One Duval Street. *Travel & Leisure* said the Scampi in Amaretto was well worth the trip. *The New York Times* called it "Key West's premier restaurant." Reserve a table with a waterfront view. 296-4600.

Rich's Café at the Eden House, 1015 Fleming Street. The most seductive café in the Florida Keys. A relaxed tropical garden setting with outdoor dining. Daily breakfast and lunch specialties include classic eggs benedict, omelettes and french toast. Breakfast, Monday thru Saturday, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday Brunch 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lunch menu also available. Beer, wine, champagne and a variety of mimosas. Ten-percent local discount. 296-2961.

Stephen's Bayside Café, 1970 N. Roosevelt Boulevard. Bay view. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, 24 hours, daily. Bar open til 3 a.m. Live entertainment nightly. Close to Old Town. 294-5066.

Turtle Kraals, Land's End Village, foot of Margaret Street. Harbor view dining for lunch and dinner. Great hamburgers, seafood—check out the music. Visa/Mastercard. 294-2640.

Yo Sake, 722 Duval Street. Neo-Japanese inside or torchlit garden dining; traditional Japanese and original island creations. Full sushi bar. Lunch, Monday through Saturday, noon to 2:30 p.m. Dinner nightly, 6 to 11:30 p.m. 294-2288.

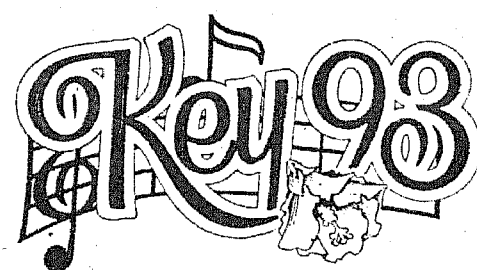


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1990-1991 Texaco-Metropolitan Opera Radio Broadcast Schedule

1990	
MET MARATHON	December 1
LA TRAVIATA (Verdi)	December 8
SALOME (R. Strauss)	December 15
ANDREA CHENIER (Giordano)	December 22
SEMI-RAMIDE (Rossini)	December 29
1991	
FAUST (Gounod)	January 5
RIGOLETTO (Verdi)	January 12
BORIS GODUNOV (Mussorgsky)	January 19
UN BALLO IN MASCHERA (Verdi)	January 26
DON GIOVANNI (Mozart)	February 2
DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE (Mozart)	February 9
FIDELIO (Beethoven)	February 16
LA BOHÈME (Puccini)	February 23
LAISSEZ-ALLES (Verdi)	March 2
DER ROSENKAVALLIER (R. Strauss)	March 9
KATA Kabanova (Janacek)	March 16
LE NOZZE DI FIGARO (Mozart)	March 23
I PURITANI (Bellini)	March 30
PARSIFAL (Wagner)	April 6
TOSCA (Puccini)	April 13
LA CLEMENZA DI TITO (Mozart)	April 20

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DECEMBER CALENDAR

Cultural Events

11/28-12/31 • **Last of the Red Hot Lovers** at the Red Barn Theatre, 319 Duval Street. Curtain at 8 p.m. Call 296-9911.

11/28-12/30 • **Applications accepted** for FKCC's Poetry Anthology. The publication will feature the work of Monroe County residents. Poets may submit 3 to 5 typewritten poems. Brief bio and SASE is requested. Send to: Poetry Workshop, c/o Larry Berk, Library/LRC, Florida Keys Community College, Key West, FL 33040 or call 296-9081 ext. 322.

11/29-11/30, 12/1, 12/7, 12/8 • **Cabaret** at Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center. Founder's Society event at 7:30 p.m. on Nov. 29. Public performances begin at 8 p.m., Call 296-9081 ext. 326 for reservations.

12/1 • **Artist and Model's Ball** hosted jointly by Great Southern Gallery, Les Bisoux de France and Viva Zapata. All proceeds benefit AIDS Help. Features Bob Mackie designs. \$25 per couple, \$15 per person. Call Great Southern Gallery at 294-6660, Les Bisoux de France at 294-6194 or AIDS Help at 296-6196.

12/2 • **Handel's "Messiah"** will be performed at Old Stone Methodist Church on the corner of Eaton and Simonton Streets at 3 p.m. Free.

12/2 • **Gables Trio Impromptu Concert** at Casa Gato at 8 p.m. followed by a buffet in the gardens. Season tickets are \$55. Single performance tickets are \$12.50. Call 296-7744.

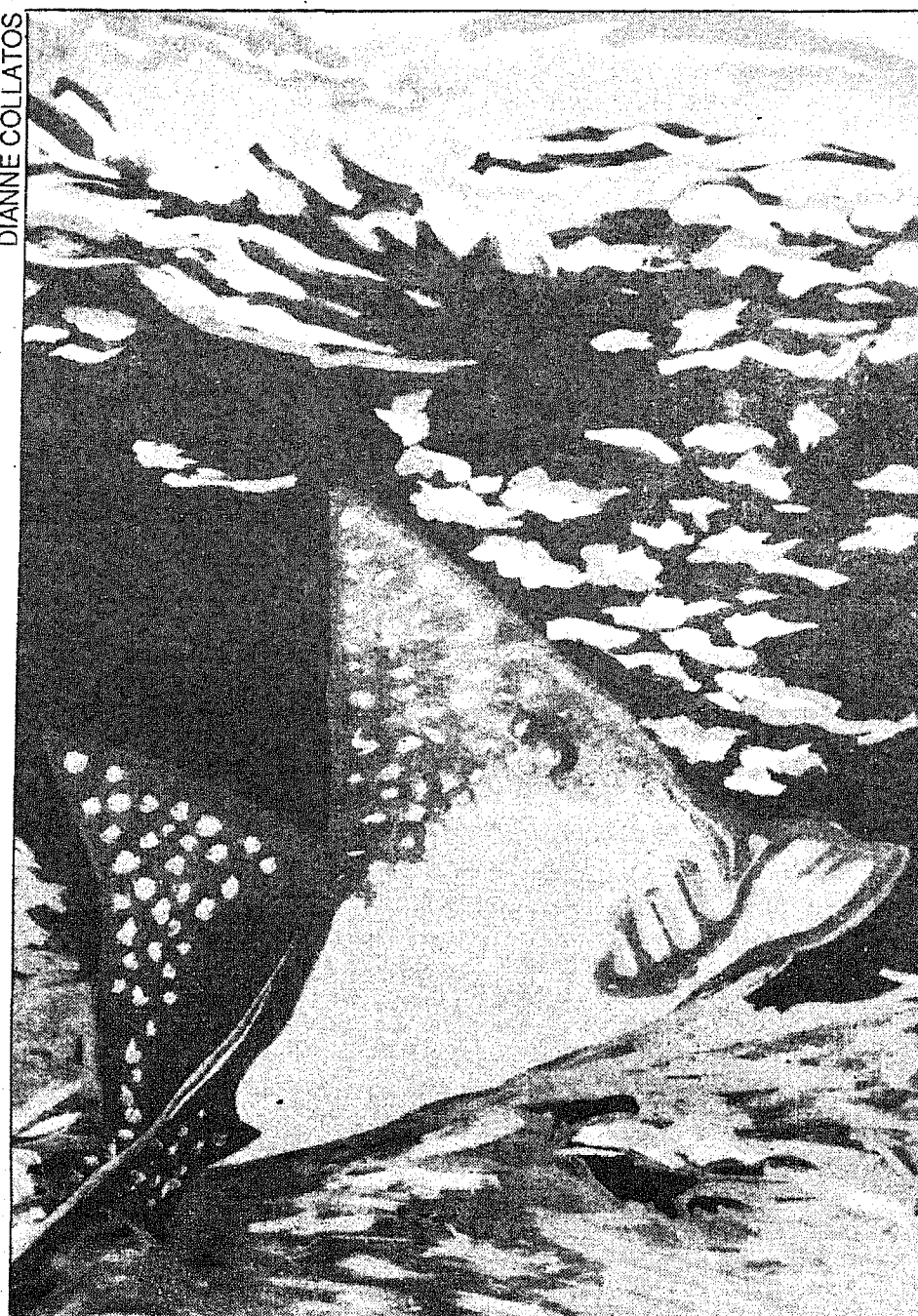
12/3 • **"Historic Key West Waterfront,"** a lecture presented by the Key West Maritime Historical Society will be held at the Monroe County Public Library at 700 Fleming Street at 7 p.m. Call 292-7903 or 294-3180.

12/5 • **"The Golden Age of Comedy"** will be shown at the Monroe County Library at 700 Fleming Street. Show time for this free film is 7 p.m. Call 294-8488.

12/5-1/5 • **Dianne Collatos Art Exhibit** at Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center. The artist specializes in marine life, set designs and backdrops. Call 296-9081 or 292-7262.

12/6, 12/7 • **Ceramic Workshop** at Florida Keys Community College conducted by Robert Carlson. The two-day event will be preceded by a reception Wednesday, December 5 at 7 p.m. at Plantation Pottery, 717

DIANNE COLLATOS



DIANNE COLLATOS EXHIBIT: Collatos' banners, which feature images of marine life, will hang at Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center this month.

Duval Street. Call 296-9081 ext. 223 for registration and information.

12/7 • **Guild Hall Gallery Christmas Party** will be held at 614 Duval Street from 7 to 9 p.m. Sixteen participating artists will display their works, and one item by each artist will be awarded as door prizes. Call 296-6076.

12/8 • **Lighted Boat Parade.** Parade will pass Land's End Marina, the Galleon, the Hyatt, the Pier House, Ocean Key House, Mallory

Dock, Truman Annex and the Navy Base. Prizes awarded to boats. Call 296-4608.

12/9 • **Handel's Messiah** will be performed at Old Stone Methodist Church on the corner of Eaton and Simonton Streets at 3 p.m. Free.

12/9 • **Sacred Concert** at Peace Covenant Presbyterian Church at 7 p.m. Featuring Anton Dissekoen. Call 294-1223.

12/9 • **Damascus Program** at St. Peter

Catholic Church from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m. Call 872-2537.

12/10-12/15 • **Woman's Club Christmas House Tour** from 1 to 6 p.m. \$2. Call 294-2039.

12/12 • **"Little Shop of Horrors"** will be shown at the Monroe County Library at 700 Fleming Street. Show time for this free film is 7 p.m. Call 294-8488.

12/14 • **"Earthlings,"** an ecological musical presented by the Key West School of the Performing Arts will be held at 8 p.m. at the Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center on Stock Island. KWSPA is a children's theater group. Call 296-9081.

12/14 • **Student Art Show** opening reception from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Library Gallery of Florida Keys Community College. The media show will run through January 18. The Library Gallery will be closed December 22 through January 3.

12/14, 12/15 • **Holiday House Tours** from 5 to 8 p.m. Five private homes and one guesthouse. \$10 tickets can be purchased at the Hospitality House, Fast Buck Freddie's and the Cook's Bazaar.

12/15 • **Kingston Trio** will perform old favorites such as "Tom Dooley" at the Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center at 8 p.m. Call 296-9081, ext. 326.

12/17, 12/18 • **A Christmas Carol**, the heart-warming Christmas classic. Curtain time 8 p.m. Call 296-9081 ext. 326 for reservations.

12/18 • **Christmas Program** at Poinciana Elementary School. Kindergarten through second grade. Call 294-5111.

12/19 • **"Singing in the Rain"** and **"Coral Reef"** will be shown at the Monroe County Library at 700 Fleming Street. Show time for these free films is 6:30 p.m. Call 294-8488.

12/19 • **Christmas Program** at Poinciana Elementary School. Third through sixth grades. Call 294-5111.

12/20 • **High School Holiday Concert** at Key West High School. Call 294-5212.

12/21-12/23 • **Live Nativity** at Old Stone Methodist Church. Call 296-2392.

12/22 • **Youth Play** at Ley Memorial United Methodist Church. Call 296-3313.

12/23 • **Christmas Concert** at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Duval and Eaton Streets at 7 p.m. Call 296-5112.

12/26 • **"Arsenic and Old Lace"** will be shown at the Monroe County Library at 700 Fleming Street. Show time for this free film is

6:30 p.m. Call 294-8488.

12/26-12/31 and 1/2-1/6 • **Murder on the Nile**, an Agatha Christie classic, will be presented at the Waterfront Playhouse, 8:00 p.m. curtain. Call 294-5015 for reservations.

1/4 • **Warsaw Wind Quintet** will perform at the Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15. Call 296-9081 ext. 326.

1/10-1/13 • **Key West Literary Seminar** provides writers from all over the country the opportunity to exchange ideas. Call 745-3640.

1/13-1/14 • **Writers' Workshop** to follow the Literary Seminar. Manuscripts may be submitted for evaluation. Speakers include Peter Matthiessen and Thurston Clarke. A 7 p.m. reception will be held Sunday night at Key West Island Bookstore. Manuscripts must be submitted by December 15. Tuition is \$133.75. Call 745-3640.

RICHARD WATHERWAX



RED HOT: Joe DeLuca attempts to reason with Carole MacCartee, whose character in *Last of the Red Hot Lovers* "wakes up in gloom and goes to sleep in despair."

Common Good

12/1-12/23 • **MARC Christmas Tree Sale.** Sales to benefit Monroe Association for Retarded Citizens are daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the Harris School, 812 Southard St.

12/1 • **Christmas Craft Show** at Sugarloaf Elementary School. Featuring hand-made crafts from local artisans. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Crane Blvd., MM 19.5 on Sugarloaf. Call 745-3282.

12/1 • **Christmas Carnival** sponsored by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

TWIFAC



WARSAW WIND QUINTET: (From left) Miroslaw Pokrzywinski, Grzegorz Cimoszko, Tytus Wojnowicz, Michiko Otaki, Wieslaw Grochowski and Zbigniew Pluzek will perform at Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center on January 1.

will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the church, 3424 Northside Drive. Handmade crafts, plant sale and bake sale. Call 296-7174.

12/1 • **Florida Keys Audubon Society** fundraising event. A backwater dolphin search aboard the *Miss Key West*. Lunch and drinks available. Call 294-4927 or 296-7410.

12/4 • **AIDS Informational Seminar** at the Activities Center, 2700 Flagler Avenue, 7 p.m. "Psychosocial Needs of People with HIV Infection." Call 296-6196.

12/4, 12/5 • **Guardian Ad Litem Orientation and Training.** Volunteers rep-

resent abused and neglected children in court proceedings. The training sessions are from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Guardian Ad Litem Office, 323 Fleming Street in Key West. Call 296-7518.

12/4-12/9 • **World Classic Angler Sailfish Release Classic.** Faro Blanco Marine Resort in Marathon. Call 743-6139.

12/6 • **"World Largest Office Party"** at the Hyatt in Key West to benefit the Wesley House from 5 to 8:30 p.m. Call 296-9900.

12/7 • **Crime Stoppers Public Presentation** will be held at City Hall on Greene Street at 5:30 p.m. Featured speaker is Sgt.

John Roper from Dad County Crime Stoppers. Sponsored by the Citizens Coalition Against Drugs.

12/9 • **Woman's Club Annual Christmas Party** at 319 Duval Street starting at 6 p.m. Call 294-2039.

12/8 • **Real Estate Auction** at 10 a.m. on Big Pine Key. Three-bedroom conch home - previews on 12/1, 12/2, 12/5. Call Land & Sea Auctions at 743-6466 or 800-654-1889.

12/8 • **Deadline for Vizcaya Gardens Tour** sponsored by the Key West Garden Club. The tour will be held January 9, 1991. Pick-ups at Boca Chica Road, Sugarloaf Lodge and Barnett Bank in Big Pine. Call 296-7426 or 294-3168 for reservations.

12/12 • **Constitutional Bicentennial Observance Commission meeting** at 6:30 p.m. in the conference room of the Monroe County Public Library in Key West, 700 Fleming Street.

12/14 • **Woman's Club Christmas Bazaar and Party** at 6:30 p.m. at 319 Duval Street. Call 294-2039.

12/15 • **Christmas Party for Underprivileged Children** in Tavernier. Benefits over 175 needy children in the Keys. Send contributions to *Free Press*, P.O. Box 469, Islamorada, FL 33036 or call 664-2266 to have toys, gifts, canned goods, etc. picked up.

12/15 • **Tea Dance** at La Te Da at 1125 Duval Street. \$2 cover to benefit AIDS Help, Inc. From 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.

12/15 • **"Tea by the Sea"** at Atlantic Shores, 510 South Street. \$2 cover to benefit PWA Coalition. From 8 to 10:30 p.m.

12/16 • **MARC Southernmost Christmas Tree Celebration.** This annual event will begin at 3 p.m. at the Harris School on Southard Street with a conch chowder feast. Then board the Conch train and go caroling, ending up at the Southernmost Point, where the Southernmost Tree will be decorated. Christmas tree sales to benefit MARC are daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. at 812 Southard Street.

12/17-12/21 • **Basic Research Diving class** will be held from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. each day at the Florida Keys Community College. The four-credit course is \$179 for state residents and \$271 for non-residents. Call 296-9081 ext. 214.

12/22 • **Inter-Agency Council meeting** features Stefan M. Rosenzweig speaking on legal services available to eligible people in the Florida Keys. The meeting will be held at Island Wellness, corner of Simonton and Southard Streets. Inter-Agency is a forum for human ser-



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Adult Children of Alcoholics meets at Holy Innocents Church, 901 Flagler Avenue Mondays at 7 p.m., Tuesdays 5:30 p.m. and Thursdays 8:30 p.m. Call 294-8912.

AIDS Help needs volunteers to assist in the office, as well as to be buddies to people with AIDS. Call Steve Smith, director of volunteers, at 296-6196.

AIDS Help Support Group Meetings for PWAs, ARC, HIV +, families, friends and lovers are held each Thursday at 6 p.m. at 2700 Flagler Street in Key West. Call AIDS Help 296-6196.

Anchors Aweigh Club, Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous meetings daily at 404 Virginia Street. Call 296-7888.

Bahama Village Straw Market • First Saturday of every month. Located on Petronia Street between Whitehead and Thomas in Bahama Village from noon to sunset. Food, street performers and handmade crafts.

Breezeswept Beach Estates Civic Association holds meetings at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month in the Youth Center of Big Pine Key Methodist Church. Call 872-2861.

Card & Game Night, Senior Citizens Center, Big Pine Key. Call 745-3698.

Community Learning Center at Harris School offers Adult Basic Education, Job Preparation and Placement, English as a Second Language, GED Preparation, Vocational Evaluation and Counseling, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Free to eligi-

ble applicants. Call 292-6762.

Florida Right to Life meets the first Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. at the Key West Baptist Temple, 5727 Second Avenue, Stock Island. Call Patti Baldwin at 296-7337.

Guardianship of Monroe County helps disabled adults and elderly residents in decision-making. To volunteer or for more information call Elizabeth Covino at HRS; 292-6728, Betty Campbell at Florida Keys Memorial Hospital, 294-5531; or Liz Kern at Hospice, 294-8812.

Island Wellness, at 530 Simonton Street, offers a variety of regularly scheduled courses and activities. Mondays: Integral Yoga at 10:30 a.m.; Group Rebirth at 1 p.m.; Tai Chi Chuan at 6:30 p.m.; Personal Growth at 7 p.m.; Audio/Visual Night at 8 p.m. Tuesdays: Tai Chi Chuan at 10:30 a.m.; Group Rebirth at 5:30 p.m.; Centering Workshop at 7 p.m.; Let's Talk Metaphysics at 7 p.m. Wednesdays: Integral Yoga at 10:30 a.m.; Group Rebirth at 1 p.m.; Integral Yoga at 5:30 p.m.; Healing Circle at 7 p.m. Thursdays: Tai Chi Chuan at 10:30 a.m.; Living From Freedom at 6:30 p.m. Fridays: Integral Yoga at 10:30 a.m.; Meditation Class at 7:30 p.m. Saturdays: Children's Playshop at 10 a.m. Saturdays and Sundays: Special workshops and presentations including massage therapy, reflexology, rebirthing hypnosis, psychic awareness. Call 296-7353 for details.

Island Wellness Teenage Wellness Party is held Thursday evenings at 7:30 for teens 13 through 19. There will be a one-hour discussion on elements of self-care, followed by a dance. For more information, call Gary at 296-7353.

Just Say No supper club meets Mondays from 4 to 6 p.m. 292-8248.

Key West Garden Club holds lectures the second Wednesday of the month. On the third Wednesday of each month, the Club will give practical demonstrations in gardening. Open to members and guests. Call 294-3210.

Key West Worship Group holds two meetings each Sunday at 8:45 a.m. and 3 p.m. The Quaker form of worship is held in silent meditation waiting upon the Lord. Meetings are held in various friends' homes and gardens around Key West. Call 294-1523.

La Leche League of Big Pine Key meets at Big Pine Methodist Church 9:30 Monday mornings. Call 872-2148.

"The Law and You with Attorney Fred Butner, Live from Key West." Wednesdays from 8 to 9 a.m. Radio debates. Guests include judges, attorneys, law enforcement officers and lawmakers. News analysis of law-related issues by co-host A.C. Weinstein. Broadcast on AM 1600 WKWF Talk Radio. Number to call in during broadcast: 294-1600.

Lighthouse Program, 5825 Jr. College Road, Key West offers drug and alcohol rehabilitative services for adolescents (age 13 to 17)—individual and group counseling, education, prevention, tutoring, vocational, day treatment and outpatient services. Call 294-5237.

Literacy Volunteers of Monroe County is seeking volunteers to help in working with the media and in teaching others to read. Call Bill Clift at 294-4352.

La Te Da's Crystal Cafe presents Bruce Kirle Wednesday through Sunday nights from 9:30 to 12:30. Wednesday night is Doris Day night. Sunday night is heartbreaker night. 1125 Duval Street. Call 294-8435.

Lower Keys Friends of Animals helps animals that are victims of misfortune. For membership information call 296-8682 or 296-3926.

Marine Archaeology Expedition. Third Sunday of the month. Each session focuses on wrecks and the coral reef environment. Membership fee goes toward seminar and monthly newsletter. Call 800-468-3255. **Monroe County Public Library**, Fleming Street, offers preschool story hour on Thursdays at 9:30 a.m.; Saturday movies 10 a.m. 294-8488.

Mulch for Gardening is free to anyone who wants it. Provided by City Electric System, the mulch pile is located on Atlantic Boulevard at the intersection with Stevens Avenue.

Native American study and participation group meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at 1700 Flagler Avenue, upstairs. There is no charge.

Old Island Harmony Barbershop Chorus, Old Stone Church, Key West, meets Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.

Open Poetry Reading meets the first Sunday of the month. Bring original work only. Also prose, music, dance; listen or perform. Free, refreshments served. 296-0785 or 294-1848.

Pool & Dart Tournament, Big Pine Moose Lodge, Wednesdays. Call 872-9313. **PWA's Living Room**, a support group for PWA's, HIV +, friends and family, is held every Monday night at 5:30 p.m. at 816 Fleming Street, Suite 2. Call 294-5332.

Recycling Drop Off Center, located in Peary Court off White Street, is open daily. Accepting clean, separated glass, newspaper, aluminum and plastic. Call 292-4433.

Small Business Counseling third Friday of each month at Barnett Bank of the Keys, Tavernier. To make an appointment, call 352-2661. Counselors are members of SCORE.

Sweet Adelines, Presbyterian Kirk of the Keys, Marathon, Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. **Tai Chi Chuan Exercise Class** • Will Jones instructs this "soft" form of physical conditioning. Classes are at 11:00 a.m. Saturday mornings on the marina dock of Ocean Key West, Zero Duval Street. Free of charge.

Transportation Program, available to those over 60 years old; weekdays 8:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. In Key West call 294-8468; Middle Keys call 743-9089; Upper Keys call 852-3204.

Viva Zapata presents Matthew Jam-pot, classical guitarist, every Friday and Saturday night, poolside.

Writers' Walk, about one mile, takes place every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. The cost is \$10. Meet at Ocean Key House, 0 Duval Street. Make reservations. Call 745-3640.



Aries

The Sun moves through your travel sector until the 21st, but plans may be delayed. Mastering a craft, product or service, you may reap rewards. An old debt may be repaid or you may earn money from a past source. Jupiter widens romantic options and inspires creativity. After the 21st, you'll commit to professional goals.

Taurus

The focus on Capricorn, an earth sign, is good news. Capricorn symbolizes widened life experience, including travel, philosophy, religion and faith. You may become more enterprising, financially, or more willing to take a risk. A project proposed in the last six months may resurface. Define goals. Planets favor self-centering.

Gemini

Relationships are emphasized and you may find your partner quite demanding. Work on finances with more finesse—trim expenses and focus on financial choices. Behind-the-scenes situations, which were not adequately dealt with in the past, resurface. Trust may be involved.

Cancer

Emphasize work or health. Refine diet or commit to a professional goal. The need for quality relationships is felt. In those existing relationships, your needs may alter. If you are not involved in a primary relationship, that vacuum will cause you to reflect. Expand interests, perhaps in the form of volunteer work.

Leo

Love calls, but obligations and paper work also speak. Hone organizational skills to leave time for love, pleasure, children and recreation. Health matter may call for a dietary change. Realize that hard work takes a toll on nerves and give your body what it needs.

Virgo

Spruce up your living environment. Venus, planet of social occasions, increases your skills as a host or hostess. Love feels good now. Love life grows by leaps and bounds, opening the door to a new lifestyle.

Libra

Communications play an important role and you may find yourself involved with letter-writing, calls or promotions. Capricorn symbolizes changes in the home. Does your location support long-term goals? Attend to family issues. You may need to contend with money problems.

Scorpio

Money is in the air, and you'll feel free to use it. You'll be engaged in sales, writing, teaching, advertising, promotion and communications. Think twice about what you say, write or promote. Travel may come up suddenly or be delayed. Mars

returns to your marital angle and may cause lovers to debate. Passion is highlighted.

Sagittarius

Optimism is revived. Financial matters are important, and may involve a written agreement from the past or financial misunderstanding. Learn lessons about what values constitute your life base, including uses for money. Jupiter in Leo helps with travel matters. You may study a new subject.

Capricorn

Observe, take stock of your life and review major goals and priorities. Indulge in relaxation, pleasure and comfort. Mars returns to earthy Taurus and rouses your passions and creative flair. Financial

prospects are favored; others help move efforts along.

Aquarius

Commune with your intuition to make sense out of life. Saturn will trim the fat off your existence and possibly alter your present course. You're due for a major change. Partying will seem dishonest now. Celebrate solitude, instead.

Pisces

The holidays draw out your organizational skills. Line up others to help with tasks. You'll be busy with social engagements. Separate dreams and goals from whimsy. A new social web is forming around you. You'll feel fulfilled.

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Sunday, December 2 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 J.D. Kurrantt	Monday, December 3 Noon-4 Chris Case 5-9 Tom Grose Band 10-2 Out A Hand	Tuesday, December 4 Noon-4 Chris Case 5-9 Tom Grose Band 10-2 Out A Hand	Wednesday, Dec 5 Noon-4 Leanna 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 Out A	Thursday, December 6 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 Out A Hand	Friday, December 7 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 Out A Hand	Saturday, December 8 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 Out A Hand
Sunday, December 9 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 J.D. Kurrantt	Monday, December 10 Noon-4 Chris Case 5-9 Tom Grose Band 10-2 Out A Hand	Tuesday, December 11 Noon-4 Chris Case 5-9 Tom Grose Band 10-2 Out A Hand	Wednesday, Dec 12 Noon-4 Leanna Collins 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 Out A Hand	Thursday, December 13 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 Out A Hand	Friday, December 14 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 Out A Hand	Saturday, December 15 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 Out A Hand
Sunday, December 16 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Tom Grose Band 10-2 Out A Hand	Monday, December 17 Noon-4 Chris Case 5-9 Tom Grose Band 10-2 Out A Hand	Tuesday, December 18 Noon-4 Chris Case 5-9 Tom Grose Band 10-2 Dynasoars	Wednesday, Dec 19 Noon-4 Leanna Collins 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 Dynasoars	Thursday, December 20 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 Dynasoars	Friday, December 21 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 Dynasoars	Saturday, December 22 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 Dynasoars
Sunday, December 23 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Tom Grose Band 10-2 Dynasoars	Monday, December 24 Noon-4 Chris Case 5-9 Tom Grose Band 10-2 Out A Hand	Tuesday, December 25 Noon-4 Chris Case 5-9 Out A Hand (Trio) 10-2 Out A Hand	Wednesday, Dec 26 Noon-4 Leanna Collins 5-9 Out A Hand 10-2 Road Ducks	Thursday, December 27 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Out A Hand 10-2 Road Ducks	Friday, December 28 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Out A Hand 10-2 Road Ducks	Saturday, December 29 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Out A Hand 10-2 Road Ducks