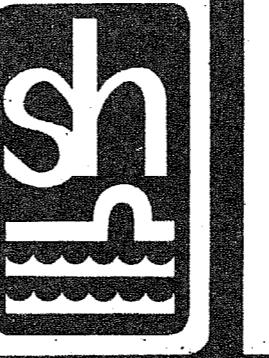


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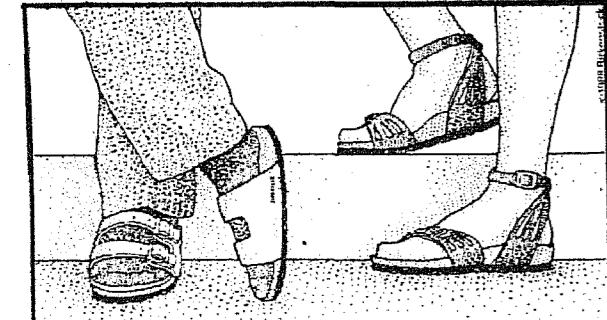
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EDITORIAL

Decisions we're not quite sure about often come back to haunt us later. And although Monroe County Commissioners say their choice of Wackenhet Corrections Corporation to run the county jail over Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) is final, taxpayers might not want to -- and don't have to -- let this one drop.

The way it looks today, Wackenhet will be managing the county's existing 220-bed jail facility. It will also consult contractors on the planned \$28-million jail facility, offering input on design, financing and construction. Eventually the firm could have total responsibility for operating and managing additional beds, which could grow to be 770. Do we really want to hand all that responsibility to a company that has never run a county jail and will cost us more in the long run?

Key factors to keep in mind are: the members of the Citizens Jail Advisory Committee unanimously recommended CCA; CCA runs county jails, Wackenhet's experience is in security and prisons; Wackenhet's presentation to the commission hung heavily on ideas for new jail design -- an element that was *optional*, according to proposal guidelines, and one which ultimately will be handled by architects, not jail management.

Then the biggie: Originally submitting the higher bid cost per diem, Wackenhet, in the final moments prior to the vote, resubmitted a cost lower than CCA's -- *for the first two years*. But then in the third year

-- the year during which we will have our new, more efficient facility -- Wackenhet's per diem jumps to \$1.5 million *more* than CCA would have charged.

Why the commission voted three-to-two for Wackenhet remains a mystery. But there are ways of either changing that decision or at least finding out the reason behind it. The decision was made based on responses to the request for proposals (RFP), which is a competitive sealed document. The RFP route allows for flexibility in decision making. More commonly used is a sealed bid process in which the lowest responsible bidder wins the contract; in an RFP process, the commission may weigh matters subjectively.

Using the RFP method, the commission is required to explain the basis on which the award was made. And this is what everybody wants to know. The commission owes it to the citizens of Monroe County to do so in a complete and comprehensible fashion.

It's possible, too, that the commission will be found in violation of state statute because it allowed Wackenhet to change its proposal *after* the deadline for submissions.

The commission will probably try to wrap up this contract with Wackenhet at its January 9 and 10 meetings. Before the contract is closed, the commission can rescind its decision, though this would probably happen only through pressure by petition. Somebody's going to have to take the initiative to make that happen.

If the decision is not reversed, Wackenhet will be "learning on Monroe County," in the words of jail advisory committee chairperson Thomas Stevens. Just what we need, right?

Ann Boese

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Why Did Commissioners Select Wackenhet? The dynamics behind the county's choice of jail management

by June Keith

It doesn't add up. When the Monroe County Commission selected the firm of Wackenhet over Corrections Corporation of America in a three-to-two vote on November 27, people were stunned. Local newspapers called the decision "shocking" and "a surprise." One editorialist called upon county commissioners to provide the public with an explanation to eliminate "a lingering odor of suspicion." But in the four weeks since the commission's dubious decision, no such explanations have been offered. Meanwhile, hard questions remain.

• Why did the Monroe County Commission go against the recommendations of their own jail advisory committee, which strongly supported CCA, of the two competing firms, to run the county's jails?

• Why did the commission vote for Wackenhet despite the protests of Monroe County jail employees who actually visited facilities run by both firms and unanimously preferred CCA as their prospective employer?

• Why did commissioners vote for Wackenhet after that firm presented, in the final hour, an all-new per diem dollar figure for running the jail, with a cost projection chart that showed Wackenhet costing over \$1.5 million more than CCA in 1992?

Commissioner Mike Puto, concerned

about what he calls "a bad smell," brought up the idea of requesting a ruling from the state attorney general on whether or not the commission acted legally in accepting a major change in the Wackenhet proposal -- a change that gravely undermined CCA's -- on the day the commission voted.

At a county commission meeting in early December, County Attorney Randy Ludacer stated that the commission had not broken any law. Puto's request for clarification from higher-ups was overruled by several commissioners.

"I had concrete reasons for my vote," stated indignant County Mayor John Stormont. "If any reporters want to know why I voted the way I did, they should call me and ask me. I will tell them." When called, Stormont gave no reasons, concrete or otherwise, for his decision.

Why didn't he simply state his reasons at the meeting and help clear the air? "I was ready to blow the whistle at that meeting, but I wasn't about to add more coal to the fire for Peter Ilchuk and Lucien Proby and Virginia Panico," Stormont says about that day. "It would have been inappropriate to open all that up again since we were very well into negotiations with Wackenhet."

Commissioner Wilhelmina Harvey, another who voted for Wackenhet, said that day she felt that the current county commission was the most objective and



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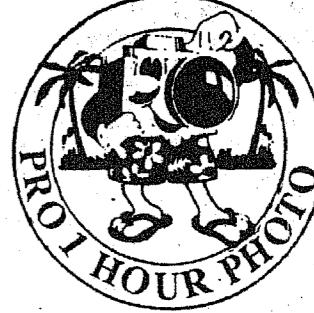
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And Commissioner Doug Jones said that "until government is run by committee," people would have to accept his decision and his right to reject the advice of his own appointees on the jail committee on this matter, just as they had to accept it when he ignored the advice of the county's financial committee last fall at tax time.

The time to do something about it, he said, was at election time.

This sort of logic doesn't make the 23 members of the jail advisory committee very happy. The committee includes representatives from the sheriff's department, including the sheriff himself. Other members are County Administrator Capt. Tom Brown, County Commissioner Gene Lytton -- who voted for CCA -- City Commissioner Virginia Panico, businessman Tommy Stevens and Dr. Marshall Wolf of the Lower Keys Mental Health Association.

For the past 18 months the committee has worked at developing a master plan for Monroe County's correctional facilities. The committee recommended privatization -- that is, the hiring of a private firm to run the jail in Key West as well as several other planned satellite facilities in the Upper Keys. The county commission voted for privatization four-to-one, with Wilhelmina Harvey being the only one to vote against it.

The jail committee was directed to review each applicant's proposal, to hear oral presentations, and then to report back to the commission. Major concerns shared by Sheriff Allison DeFoer, whose department currently runs the jail, and county commissioners, who ultimately had to choose an outside management team, were that jail employees' benefits would not be hindered by privatization. A second concern was ascertaining which firm had the most experience. And, as always, commissioners claimed an overriding concern for the taxpayers' dollars.

On November 15 the jail advisory committee reported back to the commission, overwhelmingly in support of CCA.

"The bottom line is this," says Panico, "CCA has the experience and the ability to run the county's jails and give the taxpayers the best deal for their money."

"I'm the only one on that committee who saw all the facilities," Panico says. "CCA is the only one that runs jails. I saw them. I talked to the employees there. Ask the other

"I said, 'Hold it -- this is wrong,'" Commissioner Mike Puto recalls.

people who saw the facilities. Ask them what they thought."

Representatives selected from the ranks of the jail employees also viewed facilities operated by both CCA and Wackenbut. They thought CCA was the best choice. And that's what they reported back to the county commission on November 27, just before the commission voted for Wackenbut.

Both CCA and Wackenbut made final presentations before the commission on November 27. This was by no means the first time the commissioners heard from the firms, however. They had been kept well informed of progress being made in finding the right firm to manage the jail. They had all received written proposals from both firms, and also been contacted by representatives from each firm for informal meetings.

CCA presented in the morning. After a break for lunch, it was Wackenbut's turn. That's when Wackenbut representatives dropped a bomb. While their original figure for maintaining one prisoner for one day in the Monroe County Jail had been \$46.88, as compared to CCA's original figure of \$38.25 for the same service, at this final presentation an all-new figure was introduced. It was \$37.

"I said, 'Hold it -- this is wrong,'" Commissioner Mike Puto recalls. "I felt that it was unfair. They changed right in midstream. So I said, 'Okay, let's go to it, then. Let's have a bidding war; let's auction then.'"

County Administrator Tom Brown got "excited and upset," according to Puto. But County Attorney Ludacer didn't react to what was going on.

"I considered it to be a last-minute tactic to get the attention of the commission," says Commissioner Gene Lytton. "I thought that no items could be changed after submission."

In the County's Request for Proposals (RFP), a 16-page document that specifically outlines exactly what prospective management firms are to cover in their proposals to the commission, it is stated:

No proposal may be changed, amended or modified, by telegram or otherwise, after the same has been submitted or filed in response to this RFP.

"At [the November 27] meeting I indicated to them that I could not find the new \$37 figure in their executive summary that was handed out," recalls Lytton, a former Coast Guard officer and a Certified Lifetime Public Purchasing Officer. "I couldn't locate the \$37."

"I asked Wackenbut to show me that figure explicitly in their response, and they could not do it," Lytton continues. "I considered it to be an irregularity of some degree, all other things being equal, and, in some ways, CCA being better."

Lytton joined Puto in voting for CCA.

"My main concern is based on the proposal that three years down the contract, there's over a million dollars' difference between Wackenbut and CCA," Lytton adds. "In the trade that's sometimes called a buy-in."

Commissioner Doug Jones says there were other things to consider besides cost. "We could go with the higher price if it was the best company," Jones said. "I looked at the qualifications of both companies and I felt that Wackenbut was most qualified to do the job on a long-term basis."

Wackenbut, Jones points out, has been in business for 35 years. That's true. But Wackenbut has never run a jail. Wackenbut is a security service corporation, with a less-than-two-year-old corrections division.

Jones says Wackenbut does \$400-million in gross revenues a year, as compared to CCA's \$40 million. CCA is a six-year-old corporation that does nothing but manage jails.

Wackenbut manages some prisons. But it is primarily provides security for customs warehouses, nuclear power plants, factories and armored trucks.

Wackenbut has offices in Miami, Jones says; while CCA's main office is in Nashville.

As for the jail advisory committee's recommendation of CCA, Jones says, "The key word here is *advisory*."

And what about Monroe County jail employees who specifically requested, in a written report, and then in an oral appeal before the commission, that CCA be the firm to manage the jail?

"I had some employees come up to me after the vote and say, 'Hey, you messed up something for me!' I don't know what they've been promised," Jones says. "I was interested that all employees would be retained, and would keep their benefits. Either company met that specification."

There was something else, too.

"CCA lobbied the employees and the old-time politicians. I've never seen such a lobbying effort in my life!" Jones says. "I don't know why they thought they had to call in the big guns like Peter Ilchuk. I don't care who your lobbyist is, I'm going to base my vote on the company that's most best qualified."

What questions?

"You'll have to glean for yourself what

Former Monroe County Attorney Lucien Proby also represented CCA locally.

Wackenbut hired the services of Marathon law firm Cunningham, Albritton, Lenzi, Warner, Bragg & Miller. Their Yellow Pages ad notes "Ron Saunders of Counsel." That's State Representative Ron Saunders. A few days before the vote, Key West attorney John Bigler was retained.

Commissioner Puto says he met with "Daddy Wackenbut himself."

But Commissioner Wilhelmina Harvey offered the same complaint against CCA as did Jones: They lobbied too much.

"I've never seen such an array of people, such an array of politicians, as was at that meeting, when we voted on this," says Harvey. "If anybody lobbys me a great deal about doing something for some one firm or some one person, I have a lot of questions."

What questions?

"You'll have to glean for yourself what

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those questions are," Harvey says.

"I'll make this shocking statement," she adds. "CCA seemed very regimented and the other company was not. And that's the meat of the cocoanut."

Commissioner Puto says he's received many phone calls from angry taxpayers since November 27.

"I can understand that," Puto says. "But put yourself in my seat on November 27. It's CCA all the way. Everybody is pro-CCA, and these are jailers, deputies; these are people who work in the jails; they're the ones who work out there in the trenches. And they all want CCA."

"Only one or two people even came close to supporting Wackenut. In looking everything over, I felt CCA was the better firm. And nobody pressured me into that. The lobbying effort was not much. In fact, Wackenut lobbied me a whole lot more than CCA," Puto continues.

"I hate to think that this thing was decided based on personalities, but --" Puto says.

"Mike Puto is the most useable commissioner on the board," says Mayor Stormont.

Stormont was so outraged by CCA's lobbying efforts that he says he will introduce a new ordinance regarding procurement ethics for the county that will prohibit commissioners from being lobbied by former elected or appointed officials in matters affecting the selection of goods and services for the county.

Writing in response to the commission's decision to go with Wackenut, an editorialist in the *Key West Citizen* mistakenly attributed a statement about "washed up" politicians to Commissioner Doug Jones. In fact, it was Stormont who made the derogatory statement about politicians lobbying on behalf of CCA on a local radio talk show a few days after the bizarre vote.

But there's a lot more to it than that, Stormont says. The mayor says he spent the entire Thanksgiving weekend pouring over proposals from CCA and Wackenut. One of CCA's major shortcomings is that they did not provide a facility design for a new jail in their proposal, even though, Stormont insists, facility design was "explicitly called for" in the county's RFP.

In fact, the call for facility design was noted in the RFP as optional. Wackenut chose to propose a jail design concept as well as a proposal for managing the construction of new facilities.

"Who answered that RFP?" Stormont says. "Wackenut did."

Without those facility designs, how could CCA possibly say what their *per diem*

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What about jail employees?

by Barbara Bowers

Change makes people nervous.

"A correctional officer's main goal is to become a police officer," says Captain George Simpson, chief correctional officer of Monroe County Jails. "When the jail system converts from county management to Wackenut, the disassociation with the sheriff's office will affect the deputies."

This odd, but not unusual, corporate takeover of a governmental institution by a private company goes into effect February 1, 1990. When it does, it will alter the law enforcement aspirations of 39 correctional officers now employed by Monroe County. In short, they won't be working for the sheriff any longer. They'll be Wackenut employees.

Sheriff Allison DeFoor is conscious of the unwritten policy, practiced by former sheriff Billy Freeman, Jr., that encouraged people to begin a career at the jail, after which Freeman would eventually "put them on the road."

"I am committed to getting the 30 people who want to be on the road there," says DeFoor. "More than that, I've given my word."

Nonetheless, the general attitude of the correctional officers is that the sheriff abandoned them. Morale is low because additional training is required -- there's a six-week crossover training program for law enforcement -- and openings on the highway patrol are rare and frequently filled by men and women transferring to the Florida Keys.

It could take years to move 39 to the road. DeFoor may, or may not, be around. Similarly, Wackenut may, or may not, want to retain all the correctional officers.

In almost any management shift there are position casualties. And while benefits and seniority, plus increased salary in some cases, will transfer with the correctional officers to Wackenut, pride in service and mutual respect may not.

A new Monroe County jail, and the new management of the entire system, is the last step in the judicial reform begun by Freeman in 1976. A report by Howard R. Messing, professor of law at Nova University, commends the Monroe County criminal justice system as "one of the most efficient I have had the opportunity to visit

costs would be in 1992, once the new facilities were built, Stormont wants to know.

"Where does CCA get their criteria for price?" Stormont says. "How do you drive

in almost 10 years of on-site inspections."

However, it goes on to say, "I have visited almost 100 jails and this is one of the worst that I have seen... It is a dark, dank, overcrowded, noisy and essentially unmanageable institution."

But Captain Simpson points out that when it was constructed in 1966, the jail's 220-bed capacity "was pretty farsighted. Until the early '80s, 85 people were the most you'd find here at any one time." This influx of people to the Keys has brought an influx of crime. And 70 percent of the inmates today are from out of town.

The unanswered question in the minds of many of the correctional officers is why, when everything else is beginning to come together, turn the jail over to a private company? Says one of the officers: "We have the people to do the job -- we've been doing it under the worst conditions -- so now that a new facility is underway, why change?"

"I'm product oriented, not turf oriented. And we need the best, cheapest way," says Sheriff DeFoor. "We could get there with what we have, but we can't do it as quickly as a good management company can. With more than \$25 million at stake, plus operating costs, we have to do it right."

"I tried to hire three jail administrators to come in here and help me, but I couldn't meet the pay requirements."

When Captain Simpson began administration at the jail four months ago, he knew privatization was on the agenda. "It's been proposed and voted down by the county commissioners for various reasons, for years," he says. Simpson's law enforcement career has come full circle: he started as a correctional officer at the jail 12 years ago, went "on to the road," and now directs Monroe County's three holding facilities.

Simpson can choose between staying with the sheriff's office or going with Wackenut's administration. Despite an increased salary if he joins ranks with Wackenut, his identification with a badge is at stake, even though he has less visibility in the community as an administrator than he had when he was "on the road."

"I know where the men are coming from," says the captain. "I guess I just have a little more choice than some of the others."

a car without tires?"

What about the \$1.5 million difference in 1992, as indicated in Wackenut's surprise Executive Summary?

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"There is no \$1.5 million," Stormont says. "That's not what it says. In fact, if you look at it, it says Wackenut is less expensive in the third year."

What about Commissioners Lytton and Puto? Both commissioners pointed out the mammoth cost difference scheduled for 1992, as outlined in that report.

"I don't know about that," Stormont says. "We all had the same materials. I read mine. And I studied it, line by line."

Wackenut's Executive Summary -- the new and improved proposal presented to commissioners on the day of the vote -- contains this statement:

CCA's third year (new facility) per diem rate does not appear to reflect staffing and operating costs for sub-stations and two 50-bed modules.

"A low blow," says Puto.

CCA's proposal, which has remained unaltered since it was admitted in October, clearly acknowledges and addresses new facilities. The proposed figure for all facilities -- old and new -- is the same:

\$38.25.

Stormont says there have been many "irregularities" in all this. He does not think that jail management firms ought to be selected by "being carted all over the place to visit facilities." He says four members of the jail advisory committee were placed on the committee by someone other than county commissioners. They simply appeared there! Several committee members, he says, voted for a firm though they weren't even there for the oral presentation.

Finally, Stormont referred to an old scandal that went on in Bay County, where CCA has been successfully managing a county jail facility since 1985. Officials

from Bay County have given CCA high praise and recommendations.

"That's the county where they had Sheriff Lavon Pitts, who was removed from office by Governor Graham for fooling around with the female county employees!" Stormont says. "They've got CCA running their jail up there, but anybody would be better than Pitts!"

"People elect officials to protect their interests," says Commissioner Lytton. "Most of the time, that works, but every once in a while something like this comes up. It's difficult. But once we make the decision, it's done."

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Affordable Housing at the Annex

Some people are more equal than others

by Geddy Sveikauskas

For those interested in applying for one of the 85 so-called affordable units offered in the first phase of the Truman Annex project -- forget it. They're history, all sold or spoken for. The window of opportunity is still open, however, on some of the 78 affordable units to be built in the project's second phase.

Hurry, though. These units are going fast, and that's not just real estate hype. According to Barbara Seaman, handling the sales for Truman Annex, deposits were taken on a dozen affordable units during the abbreviated work week between Christmas and New Year's.

At least 20 of the first-phase homes are under contract to Annex employees, who got first shot at them. Many others went to people who knew about the opportunity -- accounts vary as to how many were friends or acquaintances of insiders -- and took early advantage of their knowledge.

Developer Pritam Singh says that 42 of the 85 first-phase units were spoken for by the time he opened up sales to the public toward the end of October. Since that time,

deposits have been taken for practically all the other units in the first phase of The Shipyard, as this section of Truman Annex is known, and on a rapidly increasing number of the second-phase units.

Though Truman Annex representatives say the first section is entirely committed, an internal document provided by Singh indicates 13 units remained to be sold on December 26; in all probability, these are somewhere in the sales pipeline.

Singh said on December 28 that sales for the affordable section of The Shipyard had that week exceeded a hundred units. The remaining second-phase units are being offered on a first-come, first-served basis to the general public. Anyone interested in obtaining one should call Barbara Seaman's office (296-7078) as soon as they can. Mention The Shipyard, specifically.

Terms of the contract between the City of Key West and the Truman Annex Company set the market price for these affordable-housing units. That price is below market rate, which means it is less than what the developer thinks he could get if he didn't have a restrictive contract. The city, however, has no control over who

rents or buys. It does not establish the financial, or other, qualifications of prospective buyers. Finally, there is nothing in the city contract requiring an announcement of availability for these units.

These arrangements are not news to the members of the city commission who ratified them when Truman Annex received city approval. In negotiations just prior to adoption of the Growth Management Ordinance, Singh offered to accept an affordable-housing quota if he could give first preference on purchase or rental to his own employees. Anxious to nail down the Truman Annex deal, the city commission accepted that stipulation.

According to former City Planner Art Moseley, the city was not interested in becoming involved in setting income limits for the recipients of below-market-rate housing; after discussion it left accessibility to these units solely to the developer.

The Truman Annex offering is similar to offerings at other developments where housing has been made available in Key West at prices that are based in part on median household income in Key West.

Singh says he has favored local people getting the next opportunity after his own employees and a handful of other insiders to obtain below-market-rate units at Truman Annex. "I don't want to advertise or promote these until the season starts," he said in October. Citing one of his familiar themes, Singh said that he wanted to create a neighborhood in which people would live among their friends.

Since October, Truman Annex has used full-page advertisements in the *Key West Citizen* in the format of a front-page newspaper to get its message across.

The Presidential Gazette, containing "all the news we see fit to print," debuted with big news about affordable housing. Barbara Seaman was quoted as saying that half of the first 85 townhouses had been sold prior to the beginning of construction. That article also said Singh was offering units to employees of Truman Annex before throwing the remainder open to the public.

A month earlier, Singh had offered the affordable units to staff and, through them,



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Ground floor • two bedrooms • \$108,632 Ground floor • two bedrooms • \$108,632

encouraged their friends to buy in.

One of those to buy in as a result of this offer was Robert Stone, a successful novelist. Writer and former Key West resident, Jane O'Reilly, was another "friend" contacted about the affordable

"I want to sell them as fast as possible," said Singh.

housing. Her notes of the conversation included the fact that she had been told that Pritam Singh might soon have to announce the availability of these units to the public.

"I felt conflicted," O'Reilly said. She considered buying, but she said she had been unable to come up with the financing.

According to Annex employee John Young, there was a general understanding among the staff going back two years that the affordable housing units would be offered first to staff and to Pritam's friends. Young objects to the term *affordable housing*, saying it was an abstract term that suggests housing for the poor -- which this isn't. It is merely "less expensive housing in accordance with the city's Growth Management Ordinance," he explained.

A late-November visitor to the Truman Annex office at 417 Greene Street did not find much encouragement in the search for low-cost housing. A salesperson with the name Pat Griffin Moore on his lapel said that the lowest-priced unit he had available cost \$266,000. He pointed out the availability of Unit 3 at Porter Court at that price. He was asked if he had anything available at a lower price. He responded that he did not.

On December 10 *The Presidential Gazette* announced that public response to the condominium section of Truman Annex, The Shipyard, had been enthusiastic. "Because the project meets the guidelines of a city ordinance that encourages a percentage of affordable units in a new development, very favorable financing plans

"Everything is available to everyone," said Barbara Seaman.

through this minimalist approach.

Anyone can now secure a unit, Truman Annex officials say, by putting down a deposit of five percent and signing a sales contract. Maintenance fees (condominium association dues, office and administration costs, management fees, maintenance and repair, insurance on the structure, security, common utilities and a reserve fund) will cost buyers \$135 a month. Bank financing is available to qualified buyers at nine and a quarter to nine and a half percent, and closing is expected in mid-1990.

The units are small. The smallest one-bedroom measures 19.5 feet by 27.5 feet, plus an additional 200 square feet of balcony space. Singh says he closely examined the sizes of Key West's Conch houses before settling on a size for the units he intended to offer at The Shipyard.

Singh says that there hasn't been as much local interest in The Shipyard units as he would have expected. He wishes there were more, he says. Each sale helps his business's cash flow. But that's not all. "I'm making a profit on each of these

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Page 10 -- January 1990 -- Solares Hill units," he says. "I'm a businessman. That's why I did it."

Singh is now ready to advertise the availability of The Shipyard units. "Next week we'll start advertising," he said the last week of December. He may not need to advertise for long.

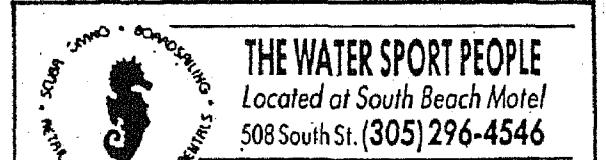
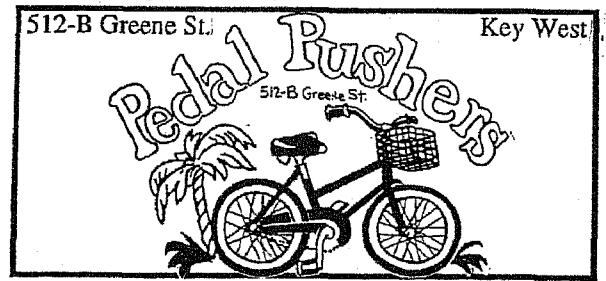
The GMO, adopted by the city a month before Singh concluded purchase of the Annex, states that three residential units must be built for every transient unit constructed, with 40 percent of the residential units being affordable.

In exchange for providing public amenities, Singh received bonus points which allowed him to trim approximately 40 affordable units from what was called for in the GMO guidelines. The amenities required opening the streets to the public during daylight hours, putting in parks and creating a harbor walk -- major benefits to the public, Singh said.

Affordability is based upon the county's median income index. For 1989 the median household income for Key West, based upon 2.2 people to a household, is \$23,731. Affordable housing prices must be consistent with that median income.

Prices for affordable housing, to be located on the southernmost section of the Annex, are broken down into one-, two- and three-bedroom units. Roughly speaking, one-bedroom units cost \$74,600; two-bedroom units cost \$108,000; and three-bedroom units go for \$143,000. All prices include \$6000 for a parking place.

These prices may be below market, but



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they're not necessarily affordable in the literal sense to families whose income is at the median level. Assuming a two-bedroom unit, a modest down payment and a fully amortized mortgage at the prevailing rate, plus provision for taxes and the condo association fee of \$135 a month, a buyer would end up with a monthly housing charge somewhere in the neighborhood of \$1000. Try carrying that on a gross income of \$2000 a month.

Affordable? Pritam Singh would prefer to call it *middle-income housing*, agreeing that the term *affordable* is a misnomer. "I've never thought it was affordable," he said. "But it is below the open-market price and it's the legal term used by the city."

Art Moseley says that *affordable housing* is a term widely used in the housing industry for housing that may not be within reach of many people. Affordability through the GMO was meant to be a ceiling; so far each development has come in right at that ceiling, indicating that these units were priced either at market value or lower.

Even in the present slow real estate market, the units built under the GMO provisions for affordable housing have been moving well. At Las Salinas condominiums near the airport, for instance, salesperson Sarah Kypriss says that about 170 of the 216 units, including all the one-bedrooms and all but two of the two-bedrooms, have been sold.

Given its downtown location, attractive ambience and extensive amenities, Truman Annex's Shipyard would seem at least as attractive an offering.

The procedure in the GMO under which Truman Annex was able to deal with its affordable units remains as it was when Singh received approval. Developers decide how to dispose of their own below-market units. Most Key West developers have offered their affordable units on a first-come, first-served basis.

These circumstances -- first-come, first-served with no ground rules -- do not, in fact, allow equal access. That's the underlying reason the GMO needs so badly to be amended.

Ours is a society which prides itself in offering equal opportunity. Yet in situation after situation those with a privileged background and privileged knowledge end up more advantaged than those with similar resources from less privileged backgrounds.

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"I never thought it was affordable," said Singh.

Why is this? One important reason is differential access to information. People in the know have a leg up in almost any situation. A network of friends and acquaintances tell them what's going on. Their activities bring them more easily in contact with potential opportunities.

Pritam Singh expresses disappointment that more Key West folks haven't come forth to apply for Truman Annex's affordable units. After all, he said, he announced its availability in his *Presidential Gazette*. Assuming that was indeed his intent, his approach just wasn't good enough to provide for equal opportunity.

Another advantage privileged people have is their ability to act. Not everyone is willing to commit to an expenditure of \$75,000 or \$150,000 on the basis of a couple of blueprints and a thick contract handed to them in an upstairs real estate office. Indeed, it's difficult to imagine people for whom this may be the biggest financial transaction of their lives proceeding on this basis. But the privileged are more comfortable. These situations are more familiar to them, and in a real sense they have less to lose.

Like Tantalus, those who can almost but not quite afford to participate -- the ones whose incomes are used to determine a formula in which they can have no further involvement -- feel aggrieved. It is explained to them once more, ever patiently, that *affordable* means a lot of things, but it's an error to think that it means *affordable to them*. The GMO does not provide housing for those with service jobs; instead it creates more options for those who feel they should be compensated for their sufferance of another hotel in Key West.

Fortunately, these last couple of years have seen a respite in the desperate housing market that characterized the Keys through most of the 1980s. Though the housing situation has been freed up for buyers, there still remains in Key West a critical shortage of housing for the service industries, whose needs the affordable-housing issue may originally have been designed to meet.

The middle-income housing situation in Key West has become less acute, according to Singh, and he may be right.

Presently 129 rental units are available on Duck Avenue, with another 32 units in the works; 296 rentals and 216 condos will soon to be for sale at Ocean Walk. To serve

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this market, Truman Annex has 162 units slated for construction.

Moseley says that the demand for middle-income housing has been met for at least the next two years. The planner says he believes in trickle-down housing -- that poorer people move up as middle-class people vacate their own units to move up to fancier digs.

With so much new housing coming on line in a soft real estate market, the Key West housing situation favors renters for the first time in years. Yet it remains impossible to find housing for much less than \$600 a month. With first and last month's rent and a security deposit, it can cost \$2000 to move into an apartment. That's before utilities are hooked up.

So how do you solve the affordable housing problem?

City commissioner Sally Lewis is doubtful the problem will be solved. "No strides are being taken for low-income housing," she says, "mainly because the federal funding has dried up due to the HUD scandal." None of the above projects meets the definition of low-income housing.

Commissioner Harry Powell feels too many hotels have been built on limited land and that wages are going to have to go up if

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the affordable housing problem is going to be solved. "Housing in Key West is only affordable if you're making \$10 to \$15 per hour," says Powell. "People are still being paid in sunshine."

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On December 29, Geddy Sveikauskas filled out an application for and made a deposit on one of the affordable housing units at Truman Annex.

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TUE: Stuffed Chicken

WED: Lasagna

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SAT: Fried Chicken



GROWING OLD IN KEY WEST

PHOTO OF GOMEZ
BY KEVIN CREAM

by Sandra Russell

My companion and I had just spent three days with Herb, a witty, spry, dignified gentleman of 84. Herb and his wife had moved to the Tampa-Clearwater retirement community of Down Yonder Village 15 years ago, from Washington, D.C. It was my first look at a community of this nature and I was impressed. The senior park concept, I thought, was brilliantly conceived and developed to meet the needs of older citizens. It was, to all appearances, somewhat lacking in the day-to-day drama of more heterogeneous societies, but provided a simplicity these seniors seem to feel they earned.

Now we were heading back to contrastingly voluptuous Key West. Yellow wetlands, sugarcane, banked us on our left for 86 miles across Alligator Alley. Ahead, centered over the highway, bloomed a full arch -- a double arch -- of rainbow, brighter closer to the ground. I began to wonder what lifestyle counterpart or advantages Key

West has to offer its elder residents.

Conversations with Key West senior citizens were enlightening. Despite sometimes lengthy lists of the island's shortcomings, the conclusion was unanimous: these folks are here because they choose to be. While homogeneous communities such as Down Yonder Village offer easy living, seasoned Key Westers overwhelmingly opt for the freedom and variety provided by their favorite island, here at the end of the rainbow.

The only thing missing, they seem to agree, is the pot of gold needed to comfortably enjoy it. This would include such ingredients as affordable housing, adequate medical care, responsible government, decent employment opportunity, sufficient social and recreational services, and sometimes even religious options. These issues were outspokenly addressed by those interviewed.

Island Versus Mainland
One woman over 65 requested that her

name be withheld, not only because she objects to being classified as a *senior citizen*, but because she felt that publication of her age might affect her job possibilities. She pointed out, however, that older people have more work opportunities in Key West than they do on the mainland. "The unemployment here is two percent, and only because they can't find people to fill the jobs. But on the mainland, the unemployment rate is five to six percent. Here, older citizens fill the gap. We make good employees. We're reliable, and we work for less money."

She has never had trouble finding work in Key West through word-of-mouth, and like many people -- young and old -- who are planning a trip "off the rock," she was at the time working three jobs in an effort to raise money to go to California, where she spends time each year.

Among the problems experienced here by senior citizens, she cited the lack of perks. "In most areas of the country, for example, there are discounts offered to

senior citizens for courses at community colleges," she explained. "They used to offer them here as well, but no longer do."

A more serious problem relates to the quality and cost of medical and dental care. "People don't have much faith in doctors anywhere, I've found, but here you especially get the feeling that doctors are not dedicated to medicine." A pamphlet published by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), lists comparative costs of medical treatment in Florida -- Monroe County's was the priciest in the state. Dental clinics in Miami offer treatment for half the cost of Key West dentists.

Why, then, does she live in Key West? "Because I love it. But like many others, regardless of age, I am thinking of leaving. The cost of housing is a problem, as you know, having nothing to do with age. I've almost always lived on islands -- Majorca, Mykonos, islands in Spain, Montreal. All islands have problems. Islands are naturally more expensive than mainland. But what you get is freedom. No dress codes, little regulation."

Could she live in a senior community such as the one I visited in Tampa? "No. It is too organized. I don't think this has anything to do with age, either. Community activities sound dreadful to me. I prefer having my support system scattered, as I do in Key West. As with my membership in the Women's Coalition [a political group formed to protest proposed changes to women's rights to reproductive freedom] I am a part of the whole."

We discussed the difference between references to and attitudes toward the elderly in America as opposed to in Europe. "It's not the age reference, particularly," she defended. "It's the categorization. And the fact that older citizens in this culture are not respected. Look, you wouldn't call Barbara Hutton a senior citizen, or Cary Grant, who was a vital, robust man up until his death."

She helpfully suggested that I also speak to a friend of hers, a "very contented woman," which has something to do, she suspected, with "owning her own home, having financial security."

"Are you a very contented woman?" I asked. The answer came after a slight pause. "No, but only because of the economic [pressure]. It comes from not living right the first 60 years." Does she recommend a more structured lifestyle the first 60 years, for the sake of contentment later? "No. Only if it comes naturally."

To Be or Not To Be

The high cost of living in Key West is no secret to its residents. Retired actor Bill King lives in the Kennedy Boulevard Senior Citizen apartments, a HUD project. Bill, who receives a government pension from Kern County, California, was asked whether he prefers his current housing to the private accommodations he had previously enjoyed in Old Town. The answer was a resounding "No."

"But it's the only way I could afford to remain in Key West," said Bill. The average wait for an apartment in the senior citizen complex, he says, is between two and three years. The minimum-age requirement is 62; the rent is 30 percent of monthly income, including utilities (except air conditioning

and cable television, which is \$8). Bill has neither air conditioning nor television.

He says he lives in Key West because it's a good walking town. "I like Tucson, but you can't walk there. Paris is a lovely place to walk, as are New York City and San Francisco. But in Key West, I can walk anywhere."

At 68, Bill is a strapping, robust picture of health, a striking figure in white mane and beard. His gestures are broad, Shakespearean. Two-inch strands of seed pearls dangle from an ear.

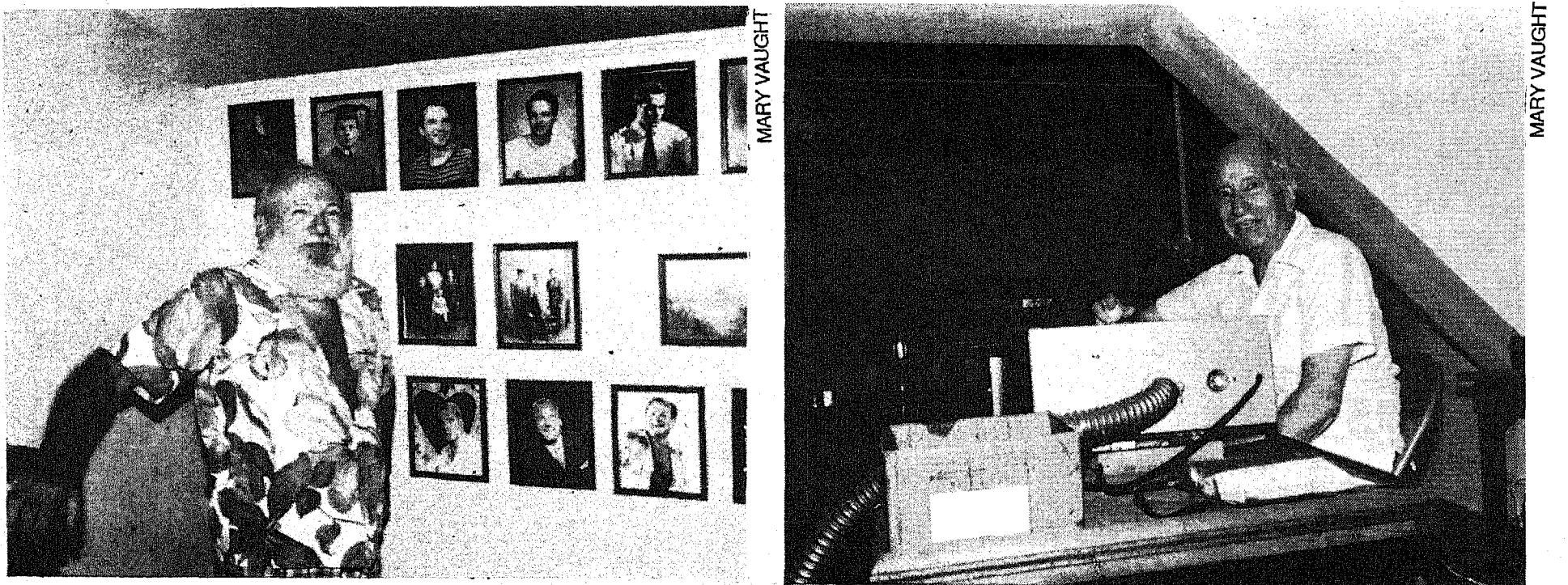
Asked whether he would enjoy living in a senior citizen community, his response was vehement. "I couldn't stand to live in a place like that! When I retired, I retired from all dressing up. I believe that since this is a

Solares Hill -- January 1990 -- Page 13
subtropical resort, one should dress accordingly. A piece of cloth wrapped around the middle, flapping in the breeze, is all I can bear." Not so long ago, Bill was a nudist.

He has no faith in the medical profession and speaks a great deal about death. "There needs to be more openness about death," he claims. "People are not prepared when it comes. There are people in their 70s and 80s here who won't even discuss it. They are in denial of the inevitable."

He sees fear of death as a failure of faith. "Part of the problem is that most people don't really believe in an afterlife. I look forward to death because I see it as a passage into something better."

He blames America's lack of faith on organized religion. "The church has failed



Retired actor: Bill King, 68, poses with headshots.

B-52: Mike Meitz calling numbers on bingo night.



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He says he has already paid for his cremation -- \$1,063, plus \$65 for an urn so that his ashes can be sprinkled into the ocean. "This includes \$150 for transport of my body to a crematorium in Miami. However," Bill adds devilishly, "if they build a crematorium in Key West in the meantime, after my death I'll get a refund."

"If I live until next June, I'd like to get a television. The Met is going to be broadcasting the Ring Cycle."

Then and Now

Most of the senior citizens interviewed are retired. This does not mean that they are retired from life, but that they now have leisure time for considering life's quirks and cycles. Oddly, no one mentioned cycles at all. All made linear observations, viewing issues, at least for the purposes of this article, within the terms of a lifespan, often in even smaller increments.

The most in-depth interview occurred with Ed and Stella Ciesinski. Ed and Stella are an active, vital couple. He is 81; she is 76.

Ed, a pioneer in underwater technology, is the inventor of the spear gun and diving mask. He was the chief underwater photographer for Disney's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, and was underwater consultant for Twentieth Century Fox. Ed came to Key West for the first time in 1931.

For 10 years, he and Stella spent winters in Key West and summers in Chicago, their home, until Ed finally persuaded her to settle here in 1941. Stella opened a beauty shop, from which she retired just two years ago, and Ed, a tool and diemakeman by trade, at first worked for the Navy yard, pursuing his underwater interests on the side.

Stella, a city girl, was not happy with Key West in those days. "It was primitive. Few people had running water. Eddie would go to the icehouse and drain the water. The mosquitoes ate me alive. I would buy oil of citronella by the gallon. I had never seen a place like this. I said, 'This is



Vitality: Stella and Ed Ciesinski, a people pair. not living. It's not even on the map.'

"But Eddie promised me it would improve, and it did. I must say, though, that it was extremely safe here in those days. You would call on somebody, and their doors would be wide open. It was like that everywhere. Now I have three locks on my door, plus bars."

When the Ciesinskis came to Key West, their son -- now a teacher considering retirement from Key West High School -- was one year old. Their daughter was born in Key West. Eventually, the couple acquired property here.

Stella says that they are fortunate at their age to have income from rentals and mortgages. Otherwise, they would no longer be able to afford to live here. "The natives are

leaving," she noted. "When you go out to a restaurant, you rarely see a native."

Second only to the cost of housing in Key West, medical care is what Stella sees as the major problem confronting senior citizens. She offered an example. "I had a bad throat and decided to go to a clinic on Flagler. They gave me medicine which did not agree with me, so a few weeks later I went back. I waited there for two hours, though there was not a person in the waiting room, or a car in the parking lot.

"All the time I had thought the doctor I'd first seen was a throat specialist because when I called, I had told them I was having throat problems. So this time, they got a throat specialist for me. He put a mirror down my throat.

"In a couple of weeks I got a bill for this visit -- \$455! If I was the fainting type, I would have fainted. But I got mad instead and picked up the phone. They also had surgery on the bill, which I had never had. They knew Medicare would pay."

Ed does not believe it's easier for older people than it was in earlier times, in spite of the communication and technology advances cited by Stella. He blames current conditions on big government and people relinquishing their rights and freedoms.

He pointed out that in one lifetime, the cost of food has increased five to six times, medical care 16 times, comparing the 1930's \$3 house call to today's \$50 doctor's office visit.

"As far as the cost of living versus wages goes," he elaborated, "it is not easier now. Most of us saved a little, saved a little. A container of oatmeal used to cost 35 cents. Now it's \$1.65. This isn't something I was looking forward to when I was saving my money. I thought I'd get old and take it easy. How can a person exist who saved honestly all his life? If it wasn't for Social Security, there would be a revolt in this country. And there's nothing can be done to make it better, with the way capitalism is now."

Stella interjects that she did best under the Roosevelt administration. "My hours were cut, I got more money, and I saved

money. Who saved money during the Depression? But today, couples get married and they both have to work -- hard -- to make ends meet."

"My son's property taxes went up \$4,000 this year," Ed points out. "It's just a little cottage, with a 100- by 100-foot lot. That's \$12 a square foot. I wonder how much Pritam Singh pays in taxes for Truman Annex."

Within previous centuries, he feels, such a rate of inflation did not occur. But he and his wife make the best of it. Stella plays bridge at the Senior Center, housed in the old armory on White Street, and volunteers about nine hours a week to hospital work. She sews, she paints. Ed still swims, dives and fishes, but spends most of his time in his well-equipped workshop.

Asked about the secret of their health and vitality, Ed and Stella Ciesinski answer as one: "Diet."

"We were eating a high-fiber diet 50 years ago," Ed explains. "Dr. McFadden's diet -- whole grains, fresh fruits, fresh vegetables. Most Americans," he laughs, "live on a putty diet."

"Grease and starch," Stella clarifies.

What improvements can be made in Key West to help senior citizens?

"City officials should step in and do something about rents for poor people." Stella sees this as a top priority. Her other recommendations deal with activities for senior citizens. Herself a member of AARP, she and Ed participate in the monthly meetings and some of the social activities.

"But there isn't enough," she insists.

"Healthy old people love to do anything. They're fun people, they have time on their hands, some of them have a little money. They should teach crafts at the armory. You need things to do when you get old, to occupy your time."

"At one time they offered Spanish lessons. That's an essential language here, and a nice pastime because you have things to do at home to prepare for your lessons. And it's good for the brain."

When I suggested a daycare program provided by senior citizens for working parents, her response was enthusiastic. "I believe that would work in Key West. Look at all the people who need it! Senior citizens should be encouraged to provide this kind of service."

She and Ed seldom travel. "At my age, I have traveled so much, I have been most places. But it would be nice if AARP would take us to Cutler Ridge for the day. I don't like to drive to Miami anymore. Those roads are not safe. Do you think I'm too demanding? Expecting too much?"

Now and Then

Sylvia Shelly is a third-generation Conch. "I don't talk about anyone," Sylvia jokes, "because I'm related to nine-tenths of the people here. I found incest twice in the family tree, and I wasn't even looking for it. There's a lot of it here. After all, we didn't even have a train -- just an occasional shipwreck to bring in new people."

A musician, she spent most of her childhood listening to the gramophone. "In those days, they didn't record anyone with an

Solares Hill -- January 1990 -- Page 15
accent, so I learned perfect English. You'll notice I don't have a Conch accent."

"That's also how I learned to play the piano. I don't read music. The only radio we got until 1944 or 1945 was Cuba. Everyone had a piano. You made your own entertainment. It was a simpler life. Everyone kept their windows and doors open. You knew everyone. Now you might live next door to someone for 10 years and

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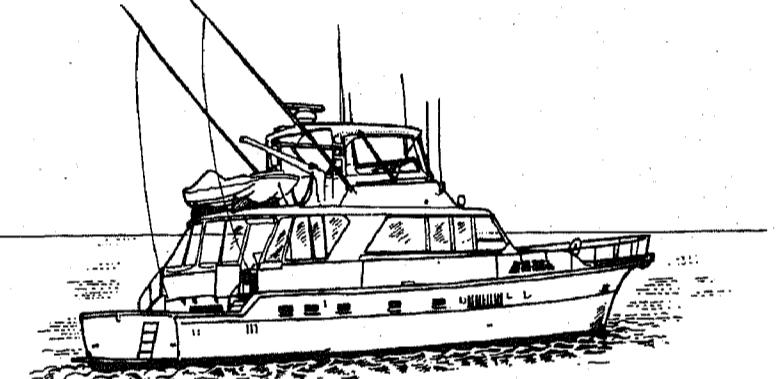
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Sylvia sees taxation as the greatest problem for senior citizens in Key West. "Even if you are working, your salary doesn't go up proportionately with the taxes. Our city government has not put the tax burden where it belongs. These big hotels have come in and have not picked up their share of the infrastructure. They haven't been charged proportionately."

"Tourists come down and have no conception of limited water supplies or sewerage limitations," she explains. "In the old days, there were two types of water: well water, which was too salty to drink; and cistern water. When you ran out of water, you ran out. You couldn't buy water." She tells about being taught to brush her teeth as a child: she was allotted one teaspoon of water for the job. Showers were non-existent. Dishes were washed once a day, with two basins.

"People now think water is going to last forever. But the water tables are getting low, and it's all polluted. When they run low on water in Miami, we're the ones who are going to suffer. They're not going to be pumping water to Key West when they don't have enough for themselves."

She says she's not opposed to tourism in Key West. "It's just that a lot of people don't realize the problems we have down here living on an island."

Sylvia believes things are getting better for senior citizens. She cites the activities at the armory and the existence of a nursing-home in Key West. She does not participate in AARP activities herself and does not even



Ivories: Sylvia Shelly playing at LaTeDa.

Senior Citizens Directory of Services

AARP
294-4641
Florida Abuse Registry Hotline
1-800-96-ABUSE
Food Stamps
292-6732
Health Care Consumer Hotline
1-800-342-0828
Home Health Care
294-2591
Hospital Cost Comparisons
1-800-342-0828
HRS, Aging and Adult Division
292-6727 or 473-2137
Key West Port and Transit Authority
292-8161
Medicaid
292-6757
Monroe County Employment Program
294-8468 or 294-4641
Ext. 506, 507, 516 or 517
Monroe County Nutrition Program
294-8468
Monroe County Transportation Program
294-8468 (Key West)
743-9089 (Marathon)

clerical workers. Funding for these employees is provided by the National Council of Agencies and the Monroe County Board of Commissioners.

Sylvia owns rental property and plays piano at La Te Da for a living. She walks her dogs for exercise and is not interested in group fitness activities such as the Tai Chi classes offered by AARP on Thursday evenings. "I'm a clumsy broad from the word 'go.' A lousy cook, a lousy housekeeper, never learned to skate, never learned to ride a bicycle, never made a lot of money." She was married twice, once to a man 20 years her senior; once to a younger man. She bowed out both times. "You can't make people stop drinking."

But enough of that. She turns and begins to play an elegant rendition of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow."

Support Systems

So what are the benefits of seniority for local citizens? Henry Hughes is president of the local chapter of AARP. We met at the Senior Center, a beautiful building at 600 White Street provided by the county and maintained by AARP. It is serviced by a staff of four -- two maintenance and two

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Burying Raul

Life in the fast lane comes to a screeching halt

by June Keith

Raul Llanes was 80 years old when he had his first brush with the law. He was arrested for selling cocaine, given a suspended sentence and placed on probation for 10 years. "I'm going to have to take it easy for a while," Raul liked to boast. "Then, when I'm off of probation, I'm going to raise hell again."

Several months ago, Raul was arrested for a second time for failing to report regularly to his probation officer. Reluctant to part with the money it would take to post bail, Raul spent the night in the county jail, hoping for mercy from the courts. After all, he was 83 years old, and his crime a minor one. Finally, though, he did post bail.

Lately, friends said, Raul had been moody and depressed. No one knew why. But for his roommate, Juan, life with Raul in the two-bedroom trailer they shared became unbearable, and so Juan moved out.

Three days after Juan left, Raul was out driving around with his friend, Ramon. It was Saturday evening and a brilliant full moon was rising over the eastern side of the island.

"Let's go out tonight and have a few drinks," Ramon suggested. "You need to have some fun and to cheer up."

"No," Raul said. "Take me home. I have a decision to make, and I have to make it tonight."

Raul's body was found the next afternoon in the bushes near St. Bede's Catholic Church on Flagler Avenue. He'd put a gun in his mouth and pulled the trigger. In his left hand he held a lighter and a Virginia Slims cigarette. He wore his signature Panama hat, its brim pulled down over his right eye.

For those who knew him best, Raul's suicide was not a complete surprise.



Mr. and Mrs. Raul Llanes hugs his bride.

"Recently we drove past one of those old, crazy, homeless men who carry all their possessions around with them in a box," Raul's nephew, Mike Perez, remembers.

"Raul saw the guy and he said that before he would allow himself to get like that he would blow his brains out."

Raul Llanes came to Key West from Cuba as an orphan around 1916. During the depression, he joined the Conservation Corps and helped to build the Overseas Highway. He was also employed at stacking and burning the bodies of victims of the hurricane of 1935.

Raul returned from World War II, decorated and outwardly proud but with profound mental scars. For many years he worked as a civil servant, a fireman, at Trumbo Point. Around Key West he was known as a thoughtful, gregarious and dapper young man. Although he was forced to drop out of school after seventh grade to help support his family, his ability to converse intelligently on a variety of

the general public.

Though not officially an AARP activity, the Happy Wanderers, an offshoot group, organizes trips. "They go to Nassau, Disneyworld, the Metro Zoo, etc.," Henry said.

Henry and his wife do volunteer work at the hospital. "I put in around 200 hours a month," he says. "My wife gives manicures to the patients. We also help out with activities at the convalescent center. But it's hard to get volunteers." Another familiar Key West refrain.

Henry, a retired railroad metalworker, says he's never run into age discrimination in Key West. "But I've never associated exclusively with people my own age. I always hung around with younger people. My wife and I live in a trailer park with babies, young people, middle-aged. I couldn't live in a place where everybody was the same age. If you associate only with old people, you become set in your ways."

The Hughes' return to the Keys was not completely motivated by retirement. "I tried to come here back in 1936, but the bridge

subjects belied his lack of a formal education.

Even during the best of times, Raul was never entirely free from the demons of war, and from time to time, the struggle became overwhelming. Ultimately he was given a series of shock treatments and medication that for a period reduced the former *bon vivant* to a placid, aging man.

Unable to work, he lived on disabled veteran's checks. Doctors prescribed a series of mind-numbing drugs, which Raul dutifully swallowed each day. He lived modestly, sitting on his front porch and reading an endless stream of dime-store paperback novels.

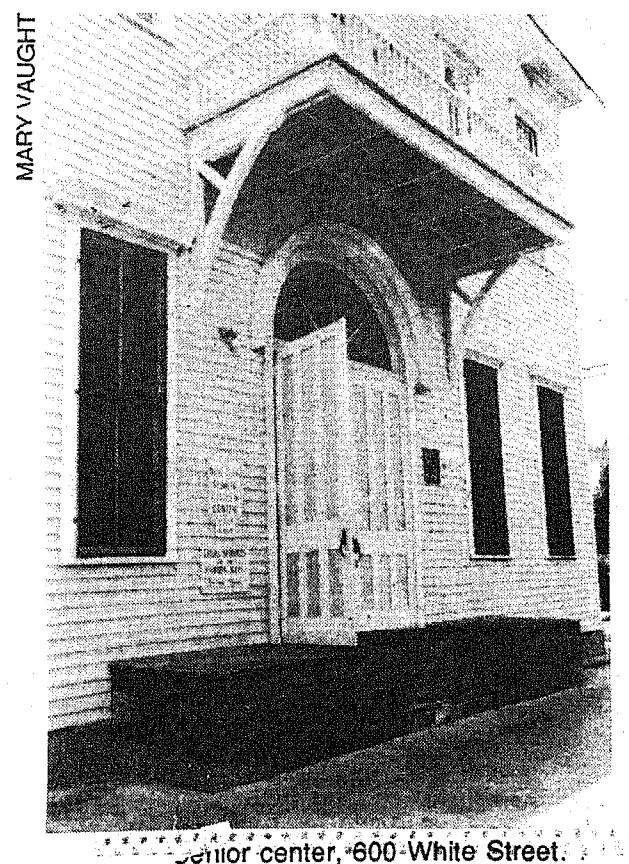
Then, Mike Perez recalls, about eight years ago the old man decided to throw away his pills. The change was dramatic and swift. He bought a stereo, and a color TV. He painted his house. He romanced young women.

Suddenly, Raul was everywhere, just like he'd been in happier days -- at the theater, at the beach, at parties and in bars, reciting the fascinating tales from his Key West past.

To augment his new image, he bought an old Mercedes-Benz, but he could never pass the driving test. He tried four times, and failed just as many. He never drove the car. Instead, he rode his bike, or walked, to wherever he needed to go. On the last day of his life, he pedaled to St. Bede's.

Days later, family members gathered to settle Raul's estate. Based on the old man's lifestyle, they thought he had millions of dollars, tucked away in a bank account or hidden in the trailer. But Raul was penniless; he had lived his final days in financial anxiety, hounded by creditors.

In the end, it cost the family \$700 to cremate Raul.



Senior center, 600 White Street.



Buddies: AARP president Henry Hughes, with secretary Virginia Gedmin.

was down from the hurricane. So I didn't get back until 15 years ago. When I retired, we came for a trip, got to meet a lot of people, became interested."

As president of the local chapter of AARP, Henry pointed out the numerous privileges of membership in this national senior citizen organization. For \$5 a year, plus \$2 a year for local membership, members (anyone over age 50) receive a

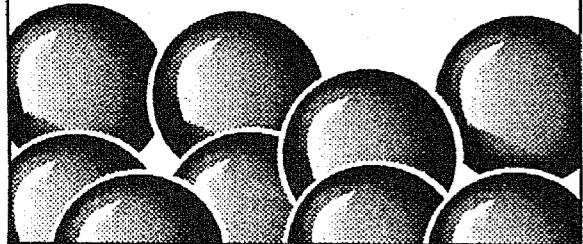
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subscription to *Modern Maturity* magazine, plus a monthly newsletter with updates on such relevant matters as money management, careers, fitness, business, travel, Medicare, energy conservation and crime prevention. AARP also offers individual tax assistance, insurance and prescription discounts, purchase privileges, travel discounts, participation in the Scudder Investment Program and legislative representation.

Debbie Frederick, of the County Nutrition Program, indicated that meals are provided for any senior citizens of the county 60 years of age or older, five days a week, through a grant from HRS. These meals are served at the Senior Center on White Street and temporarily at the community pool. They are also provided on Big Pine Key, in Marathon and on Plantation Key. Home-delivered meals are provided for the housebound. Donations are accepted.

The county has also initiated a comprehensive transportation program for seniors. Appointments must be made 24 hours in advance for local transport Mondays through Fridays. Medical appointments receive top priority, followed by life-sustaining activities such as grocery shopping and bill paying. If there is space available, social activities can also be accommodated.

Joyce Sanders of the County Transportation Program said trips to Miami medical facilities are provided every other week at no charge to local seniors, though donations are welcome, as well as special trips to points of interest.

The Key West Port and Transit Authority, not to be outdone, offers two different types of bus passes to citizens 60 years of age and older. One costs a flat \$12 a month; the other, good for life, involves an initial processing fee of \$2 and requires a 35-cent fare for each ride.

Other services available to senior citizens are part of HRS' Social Services Division. According to Elena Herrera, Supervisor of Aging and Adult Services, these fall into two categories: protective and supportive. The first is to prevent abuse, neglect or exploitation of people 60 or over, as well as disabled adults, and are based on referrals from the Florida Abuse Registry's 800-number.

Under the *supportive* category, daily living activities of the elderly are coordinated and financed to prevent placement in institutions, to help keep the citizens in the community. Among the services provided for both of the above categories are financial, nutritional, transportation, home-making and medical.

The Key West Convalescent Center accommodates up to 120 people, providing rehabilitation programs, feeding programs and all forms of physical therapy. According to Director Joan Flack, most patients are Key West Conchs and most of their medical costs are paid for by Medicaid. When possible and desirable, arrangements are made to accommodate husbands and wives together in the same bedroom. The facility is not exclusively for the elderly, however. The minimum age is 16, and, Ms. Flack adds, "the patient cannot be pregnant."

Dr. Sandy Islands, M.S., M.A., PhD.

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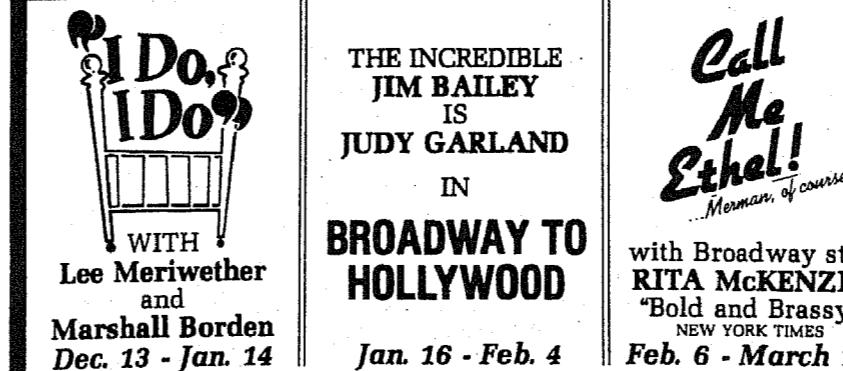
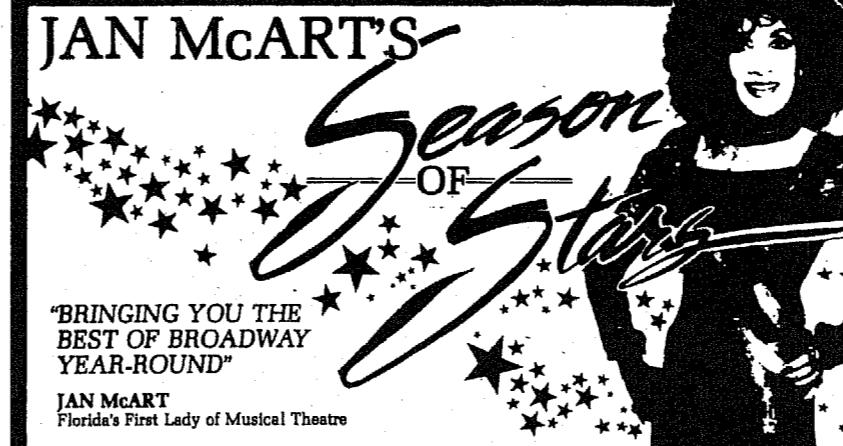


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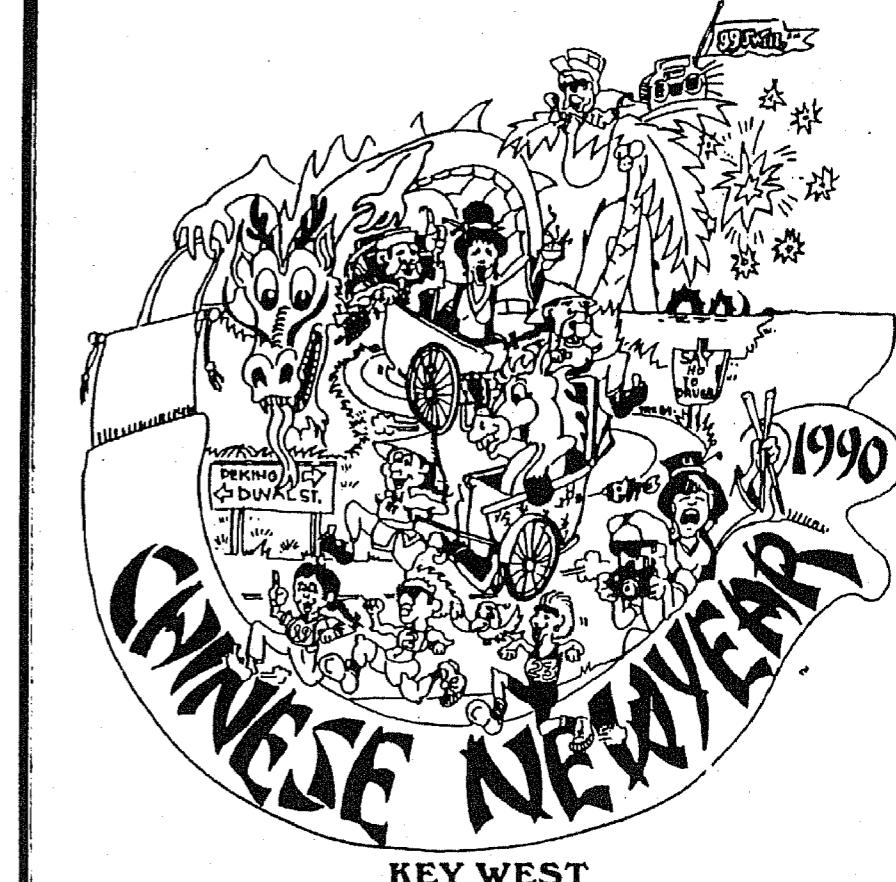
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Political Whispers from the Birdcage

The New Bubbas: A Force To Reckon With

by Bud Jacobson

The old bubbas around the courthouse, city hall and City Electric System refer to them with a sneer as *the new bubbas*. But it's the same old ham sandwich in a different wrapping.

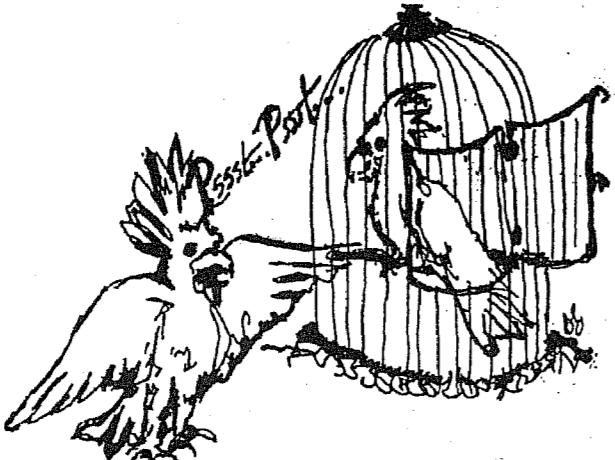
The so-called *bubba system* is the age-old method of taking care of your friends and relatives when it comes to political jobs, work, a certain favoritism. There's nothing new about it; it's not evil or criminal. It simply exists.

And it exists today with the new bubbas.

There is no formal organization or political machine, like there used to be back in the days of the big, strong party machines -- Boss Crump, in Memphis; Curly in Boston; Kelly in Chicago; Pendegast in Kansas City; et al. Today's bubbas in Monroe County are a formless bunch of politicians and officeholders, Democrats and Republicans (party ideology has absolutely no meaning anymore in this county), but they seem to be the power group -- the leaders of the pack.

If there's any center to the new bubba group it might be the county commission, because they control the lion's share of all tax funds, jobs and contracts generated in this county.

Commissioner John Stormont is now the chairman of the board and honorary mayor,



a title created in the 1960s by then-state Senator John Spotswood for then-Commissioner Gerald Saunders. Stormont is perceived by officials as the foremost man among the new bubbas. He is one of three county commissioners in the last 16 years who has been re-elected to the second successive term in office. He's a power figure in the Upper Keys with strong backing from the GOP (his party) and the Democrats as well.

Stormont, in the past, has declared himself opposed to the old bubba system, and in a few cases where so-called bubbas who are county employees get snagged in the machinery and have to be rapped on the knuckles, Stormont can be a tough teacher.

But he can participate in the bubba game,

Stormont has been for years a leading backer of County Administrator Capt. Tom Brown, including his new contract and nifty salary raise. Stormont sat back silently recently when one of Brown's high-priced assistants, Don Craig, landed in trouble with Commissioners Doug Jones and Wilhelmina Harvey over an alleged conflict-of-interest misstep.

Craig, on his own hook -- which is okay under the contract-awarding law -- gave his former employer, BRW Inc., three nice contracts and then, with commission approval, secured a \$305,000 contract extension to BRW for completion of the comprehensive plan of development.

Jones and Harvey wanted the previous action canceled; they were voted down by Stormont and Commissioners Mike Puto and Gene Lytton.

More recently, Stormont lashed out at Charley Aguero, head of the municipal service district, for Aguero's negotiating with banks for the lowest interest rate on a loan to buy county equipment. Aguero is an old bubba.

Last summer, Louie LaTorre, another old bubba, landed in the soup with Tom Brown when he made a few wise remarks in a memo to Peter Horton, Brown's favorite assistant. Horton, according to LaTorre, "doesn't have much of a sense of humor."

Back to Craig, for a moment. Jones is trying to get a state opinion from Tallahassee about the alleged conflict of interest, after trying to get a little movement from the state attorney's office about the incident. What movement there was from that office was described by Jones as "zilch."

This, dear voters, is another election year, so you might want to say a few words, or at least express how you feel about the incumbents before you hit the polls next summer.

Commissioners Puto and Lytton will be on the firing line. The early sightings by observers of the two men are not overly favorable. Puto has not lived down his plea to a judge, written on county letterhead, asking for leniency to a couple of young men convicted of drug possession with

intent. Puto and Lytton, new bubbas according to which way they lean when they vote on the commission, are solidly with Stormont.

State Representative Ron Saunders will be up for re-election to his fourth term, only this time, veteran courthouse watchers predict trouble for Saunders. "He's vulnerable and he knows it," noted one of the old hands in politics.

Saunders, according to this source, has not done enough positive things for Monroe County's battered taxpayers and when he should be out there taking a stand on a local issue, "he's not around."

One such incident, said the veteran in the courthouse, came up when Key West Mayor Tony Tarracino recently made a stab at boosting police funds for additional work with the money coming out of the budget of the Tourist Development Council, specifically the bed tax dollars. Within 24 hours of making the statement about tourist promotion dollars, Tarracino felt the whip from the TDC and its big business backers.

Where was Saunders? Last summer he told the Key West Chamber of Commerce the huge revenues generated by the bed tax could (if the law were amended, and Saunders is, after all, the state representative) be channeled into other worthwhile areas -- law enforcement and even (miracles will never cease) into a way to lower property taxes.

After Tarracino was gleefully scorned by the big bucks guys, Saunders never said a word.

Roving around in this amorphous group described as the new bubbas are a few more prominent politicians, courthouse sources point out -- like, possibly, Sheriff Allison DeFoor, maybe Police Chief Tom Webster and two dominant lawyers in political ranks, State Attorney Kirk Zuelch and Public Defender Rand Winter. Both attorneys, however, stay well clear of the fray, if they can.

Election fever (if it can be called that) might also eventually reach to the upper levels of the legal trade when Circuit Judge Richard Fowler comes up for his second six-year term. County Judges Sandra Taylor and William Ptomey, in Tavernier, will also be up for another round of four-year terms.

The school board will field three members for re-election and so will the mosquito control district.

As a friend in Detroit likes to say: "I have

plus 15 years probation; Carlos Rivera, two counts of conspiracy to deliver cocaine, five years in prison; Frank Espildora, case continued until mid-January; Manuel Perez, racketeering-influenced corrupt organization charges, 15 years in prison; Wayne Tuckus, RICO charges, five years in prison; and William Guinta, five years probation and community service.

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a nodding acquaintance with politicians: they say nodding to me, and I say nodding to them."

Six men were sentenced by County Judge William Ptomey, on Plantation Key, in late December, as the result of felony guilty pleas in the dope-smuggling conspiracy case that went to trial in October in Key West before Circuit Judge Helio Gomez.

Following up on last month's column: the six men who testified in the trial against their fellow conspirators, were all found guilty by a jury and sentenced by Judge Ptomey. Timothy Hampson, guilty on two counts of conspiracy to deliver cocaine, sentenced two years community control

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The 747 screeches to a halt. Its front wheel climbs up onto the curb where I am standing on the cracked Fleming Street sidewalk. The 747 is a midnight blue Lamborghini car driven by Ned Fast. He is an old acquaintance and God's gift to the world of island entrepreneurs.

The point about Fast is that enterprise is what drives him. It's inseparable from his nature. There is something of the spirit of battle and triumph in these entrepreneurs of the '80s.

Fast leaps out of the The 747. I can't take my eyes off his ostrich-and-eel belt. He takes my arm and we steer toward a little hole-in-the-wall sandwich place. He always has a sack of peanuts he eats from, but he will spring for a white coffee for me. I know that he figures my judgment to be capricious, so he must have a hard need to talk to someone about a new aspiration to change the face of Key West.

No one capable of altering the life course of anyone or anything will be found in here. There is a girl at one table. Her long,

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coarse, auburn hair falls down her shoulders and is cinched by a cut-out piece of inner tube. She smiles at us with royal disdain. We settle in an understanding, screened-off back booth. Fast snaps his fingers for service. A ravishing-looking, blasphemous woman bangs down a tray bearing my coffee.

I regard Fast narrowly. He is onto something big, he thinks, and he is going to precariously organize. He never got one of his flightier projects of two years ago off the ground -- a home testing apparatus to ascertain the presence of AIDS. At home, one could assay whether or not by some kind of probe of ear wax, tears and fingernail gook.

Fast says, throwing four peanuts back to his throat, "I am putting in a dwarf-tossing competition in Key West." (Take me now, Lord, I've heard everything.)

Fast goes on. "Yes, I've applied for a federal grant. Seven dwarfs have evidenced interest. I'll bring them in on the Greyhound bus. Five will room at the Tilton Hilton. Two are rich and only do it for the exercise. They will stay at the Hyatt. The way I have it planned, the dwarfs will be thrown instead of a bowling ball at the bowling alley."

"But isn't the force of gravity stronger for short people?" I ask weakly, sadly glancing down at my own little length. But I listen. Oh, I listen to his freaky scheme. I

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admit that, too often, I am anxious to find merit in undiscovered areas. I hate myself for this.

Fast warms to his subject. "Now, now, we don't mean in any way to deride little people. I am going to solicit sponsors." He refers to a list he has made on the back of a dry cleaner's bill. He has put down as prospects Porter-Allen Insurance, Dean-Lopez Funeral Home, Barnett Bank, Duncan Ford Lincoln Mercury.

"Seems you might include a hospital and a hotel," I say, in spite of myself. Fast now adds DePoo Hospital and the Pier House.

The girl with inner tube in her hair rises and leaves, her espadrilles flip-flopping.

Fast says, "We don't want this to be precariously organized." He never got one of his flightier projects of two years ago off the ground -- a home testing apparatus to ascertain the presence of AIDS. At home, one could assay whether or not by some kind of probe of ear wax, tears and fingernail gook.

Life for him in Key West since he was a kid always has been a sustained creative financial escapade. He sees life through the gauze of economic possibilities. I recall he had an interest in a cock-fighting performance near Key West. Only once did I venture out there to satisfy my wretched curiosity. Then, for weeks, I dreamed at night of one bird's two-and-a-half-inch spurs, his cruel, pointed beak. This is the Cuban bird that walks about the pit in a patriarchal way, hunching his strong wings. Another bird of a lesser breed from Mexican stock receives the assault. Warm blood spews, sprays the crowd. One eye is gouged out and swings from a thread from the socket, its other eye craven, feathers drooping.

Now, Fast is back in the telephone booth phoning to order T-shirts for his dwarfs. Dwarfs today. A troupe of Soviet dancing girls tomorrow. I wave and go out and about my own pursuits, headed along the cracked Fleming Street sidewalk.

**Key West
Days & Nights**
by Bill Manville

Weekend up the Keys. Dawn, Monday morning, the road rushing beneath the front wheels in the car's headlights like a black ribbon winding backward on a spool. *Mi vida, mi alma, mi corazon* on Radio Havana, *Cadena Nacional*. Key West one hundred miles ahead.

The Gulf on my right, ocean to the left, moonlight on water all around. Islamorada, Hawk's Cay Hotel, Grassy Key. A trucker's lonely horn as he pulls out of an all-night Tom Thumb. Vaca cut. Marathon Airport. The sun coming up from behind my left shoulder, turning the clouds pink and gold. Headlights off. *Whoosh* -- Seven Mile Bridge.

The astonishing fact I am not used to, even after a dozen years: I am not a tourist passing through; I live here. When I get to town, I stop at the M&M Laundromat and Cuban Coffee Cafe on White Street. The poet Jim Palm is there, sinking *bucci* bullets into his *cafe con leche*. He has the red-eyed look and vodka on his breath.

"Up all night?" I said.

"Daisy left me again," he said. "Some kind of charter boat guy, I hear."

"You want her back?"

"I understand her," he said. "I'm not a saint myself."

"You think she'll come back?"

"That's the one thing I'm sure of in our big R," Jim said. "In the end, she *always* tires of them. She always comes back."

I wondered if that were good or bad.

Jim said he'd have another caffeine bullet and another *con leche*. I said make that two. Martin Felix came out of Fausto's Gulfstream Market across the street and got into his carpenter's go-to-work car. He waved a hammer in salute as he went by. Bill Flagg stopped by on his way to opening Bargain Books on Truman. He had his coffee straight, no milk. He knew all about Jim and Daisy. He shook his head. "Sometimes," he said, "life resembles a giant, busted candy machine, where you can't even get what you *don't* want."

"I want her," Jim said. "She'll come back."

Susan Craig and Lori Richards came out of the M&M laundry. They own a catering business, and had been washing tablecloths. They were thinking of re-naming their company.

"We want something classy," Lori said. "Understated, and throwaway."

"You know how the unconscious is ironically organized?" Susan said. "What ever you brag about, that's what you're not? People who tell you how wonderful they are, they don't have a big ego. Beneath all that inflated megalomania, they're afraid

they're just a piece of shit."

"But people who have it all going for them," Lori said, "they play it down. We want a name to let them know we're laid back and cool too."

"Try The Low Self-Esteem Catering Company," Jim Palm said, "and pull all the closet millionaires in." The two catering women finished their coffees and left.

Charley Stoner came by on a bike, on his way to clerking at the Casa Marina Hotel. He and Jim have never gotten along. "I hear Daisy's run off again," Charley yelled, almost before the wheels had stopped turning. You could see he liked blaring out the news.

Jim looked at the guy as if he were studying a hemorrhoid. Turned away without a word. "Make it another *con leche* for me," he said to Julia behind the counter. "And see what Bill will have."

I said I'd have another *con leche*.

Charley Stoner took Jim by the sleeve to get his attention. "You don't understand," he said to the poet. "Daisy didn't just run away for a little action on the side like all the other times with you two. She's gone for good. I was with them. They found a midnight notary public. They're on his 60-foot charter catamaran, going to Bimini for their honeymoon. *Daisy married the guy!*"

Jim finished his coffee as if he were alone in the world.

"Next time you see her," he said to the pest, speaking over his shoulder, going away, "tell her she has any children, we're through."

Three blocks, and, *mi vida, mi alma, mi corazon*, I was home. 

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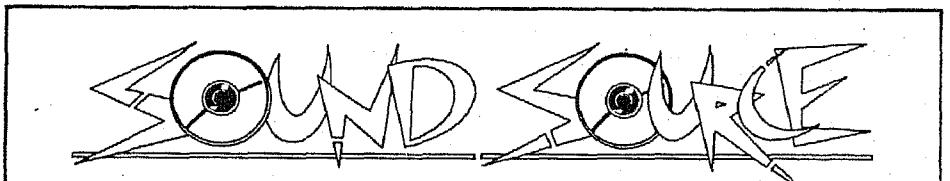
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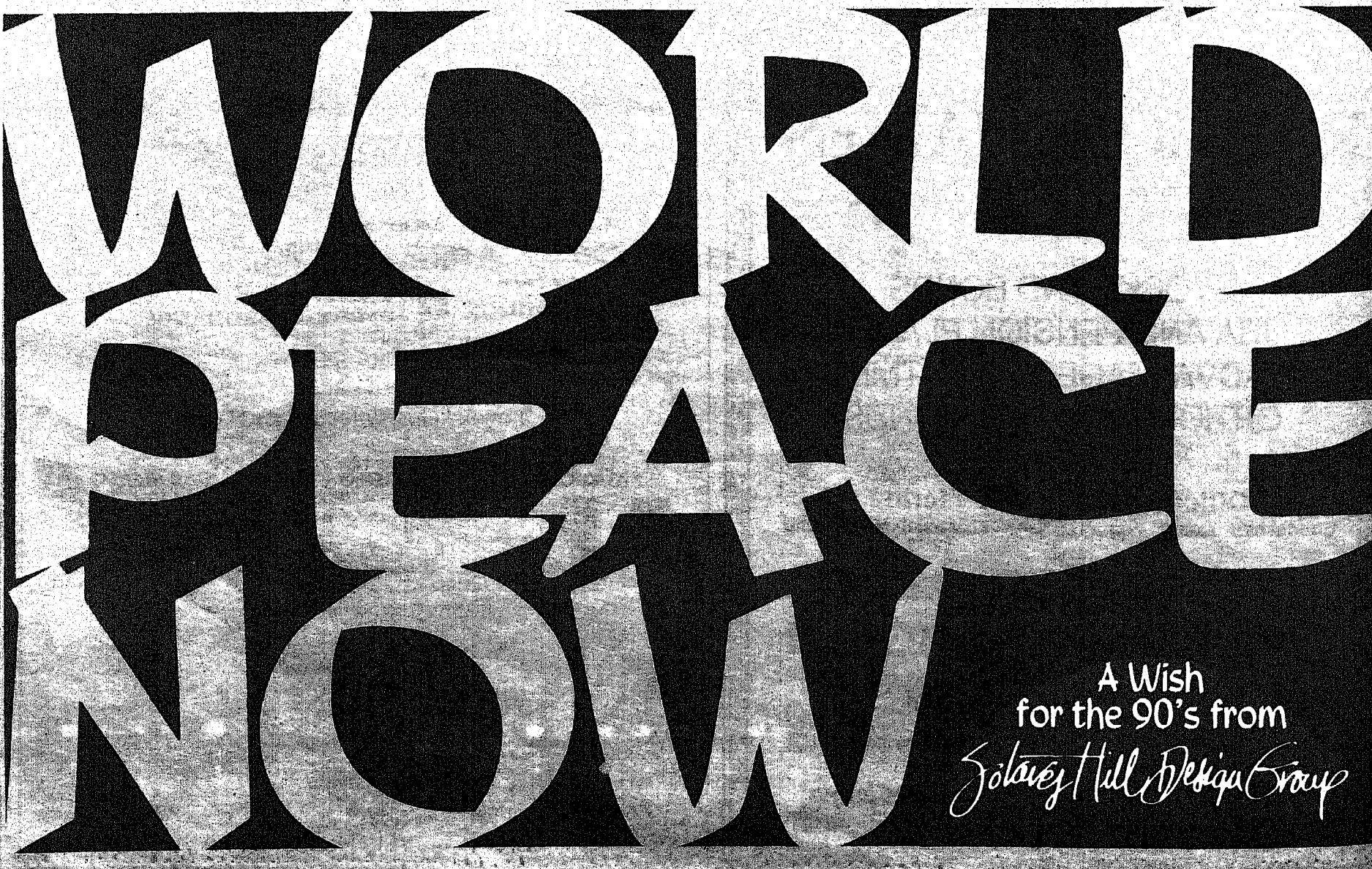
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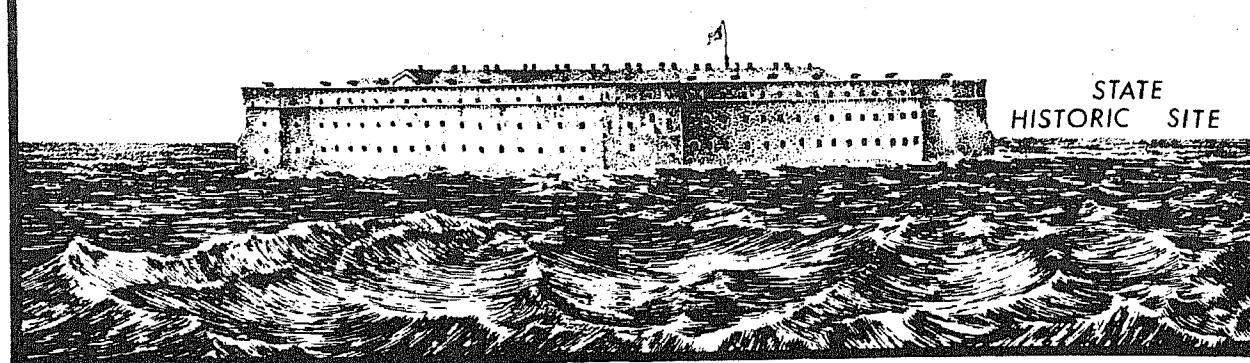
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Community Notes

Dear Mr. Congressman. Three bills recently introduced in Congress share the potential to protect Florida's coral reefs from offshore oil drilling. Each will face its first Congressional vote in January. Project Reefkeeper is offering free copies of these bills, and House Subcommittee rosters listing member representatives, their states and their Washington addresses. Write Project Reefkeeper at 16345 W. Dixie Highway, Suite 1121, Miami, FL 33160.



FORT ZACHARY TAYLOR



Southernmost Northern post: On January 27 and 28 Fort Zachary Taylor will be swarming with Union troops as they re-enact Civil War history. During this living history weekend, troops will again occupy the fort as they did in 1861 and throughout the war. The soldiers, complete with authentic uniforms and ammunition, will be at work. Cannons on display include Columbiads, Rodmans and howitzers. Activities are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, and from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday. There will be a lantern-light tour of the fort for all visitors from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. Saturday.

They've got a lovely bunch of cocoanuts. The Monroe County Sheriff's Office reports that people posing as cocoanut pickers from Miami are actually members of a burglary ring. The sheriff suggests that if you are approached by a stranger who wishes to pick cocoanuts in your yard, you should refuse the offer and attempt to get a license number or a vehicle description to the police.

TDC committee appointments. In a meeting on December 6, TDC Chairman Samuel Feiner announced new TDC

committee appointments. Tim Greene will head public relations and advertising; John O'Brien, treasurer, will handle budgets. Neil Boyce will represent the contract committee, and TDC Vice Chairman Captain Bill Wickers continues as events representative. Marge Van Natta will represent sales and marketing and Stan Becker will maintain the TDC operations manual and act as spokesman.

Don't shoot. Attorney General Bob Butterworth, the Fraternal Order of Police and the Key West Police Department have

launched a city-wide effort to promote handgun safety and control. The campaign will include dissemination of educational materials. Police strongly recommend that everyone read the brochure *Hndgu Safety Guidelines*. Contact Officer Greg Buck, 294-2511, if you would like to participate.

It's tax time again. The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) is currently seeking volunteers to help the elderly in Monroe County file their 1989 tax returns. The Tax-Aide program, co-sponsored by AARP and the IRS, includes volunteer training sessions at the Sugarloaf Key Fire Station beginning January 10. Call Jug Fleming 872-2445 to volunteer.

Artsy. The Fifth Annual Arts Expo Craft Show will adorn Whitehead and Greene Streets for two days, January 27 and 28, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Crafts artists from



all over the country participate in this event, displaying jewelry, toys, furniture, clothing, stained glass and more. The show is juried, with ribbons and prize money awarded. It is sponsored by the Key West Players, Inc., a group which this year celebrates its 50-year anniversary as a producer of plays, musicals and concerts.

Power to the people. Maximo Maintenance System is here. This computerized preventive maintenance program promises to increase the life expectancy of equipment and to reduce service interruptions at City Electric System's Stock Island plant. The program monitors equipment and issues specific work orders. Begun about a year ago, it is expected to be fully operational by March.

Recycling education. Calling the recent series of compost workshops "a great beginning," Florida Keys Recycling Programs is planning another series of

workshops and seminars for late January. This series will be held in the evening to make it convenient for more people to attend. For information call program coordinator Connie Grabis at 294-9641.

They went that-a-way. Southern Bell recently joined forces with the Monroe County Sheriff's Office's Mobile Crime Watch Program. The 87 Southern Bell drivers in the Keys have been trained in mobile crime watch techniques and can now act as additional "eyes and ears" for the police, reporting any suspicious activity observed during travels.

Mulch a tree. This year, return your Christmas tree to the good earth. Florida Keys Recycling Program will collect trees at four recycling sites in the Keys from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., daily through January 6. Remove ornaments and tinsel and bring your tree to one of these sites: next to Wickers Field on Flagler Boulevard; on US1 and Industrial Road on Big Pine Key; on Aviation Boulevard in Marathon; and at MM 99 on Key Largo.



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Chinese Festival

Proceeds to fund coalition's anti-drug efforts in Key West

by Wendy Tucker

Key West will combat drug abuse with fun during a two-day Chinese New Year Celebration on January 19 and 20.

WAIL 99.5 FM Radio and a number of co-sponsors are organizing the 1990 Conch Republic Chinese New Year. All entry fees will benefit the nonprofit, local Citizen's Coalition Against Drugs.

Events will include a costume party, Imperial Procession, a Chinese Fire Drill foot race and a Rickshaw Against Drugs. The project, says WAIL 99.5 coordinator Chris Stone, "is intended to be beneficial to the residents of Key West and the business community, to raise community awareness and to encourage business and individual involvement and commitment in the vital anti-drug campaign here."

Cosponsors for the first Conch Republic Chinese New Year celebration are: Bender-Tanis ERA Real Estate, Crazy Daizy's, Duval Square, Marriott's Casa Marina Calabash Lounge, Pepsi-Cola, Pier House, WAIL 99.5 and the Citizen's Coalition Against Drugs.

To encourage community participation, \$500 first prizes will be given in two of the events. There will be \$9.95 entry fee for the Chinese Fire Drill; and a \$99.50 entry fee for the Rickshaw Race Against Drugs. All entry fees will be donated to the Citizen's Coalition Against Drugs. The deadline for entering these events is January 15. Entry forms will be available from sponsors or WAIL 99.5. Festival staff can be reached at 296-7575.

Chinese New Year

Schedule of Events

Friday, January 19, 9 PM

- The Chinese Connection Costume Party will be sponsored by Pier House and held at Havana Docks. WAIL 99.5 will award a \$500 first prize for best costume.

Saturday, January 20, Beginning at 1 PM

- The Imperial Procession along Duval Street. An authentic Chinese dragon is expected to appear.

- Immediately following the procession will be the invitational Rickshaw Race Against Drugs, on Duval Street between Front and Fleming Streets. Pedi-cabs are being donated by Coconut and Paradise Cab companies for competition. In addition to local businesspeople, media participants from Dade and Broward Counties have been invited to share the action.

- The final event will be the Chinese Foot Drill, a Rube Goldberg-type footrace in which entrants must perform simple feats of skill as they dash from Front to Fleming Streets. A \$500 first prize is provided by WAIL 99.5.

- Awards for all events will be presented at the awards party at 5 PM, at Marriott's Casa Marina Calabash Lounge.

Happy Lunar New Year

by Wendy Tucker, with Adelaide Lin

The Chinese New Year year is based on the lunar calendar, which is mainly used by agricultural people, explains Adelaide Lin, a Key West resident of Chinese descent. She thinks that the Babylonians and most other people who planted by the moon used a lunar calendar.

Lin teaches tai chi, a sophisticated Chinese form of spiritually based exercises for people of all ages. The emphasis of her discipline is on integrating body and mind.

Lin, who was born in the Fukien Province and whose family's large ancestral home is in Taiwan, says that a traditional Chinese New Year focuses on personal heritage. Families prepare special foods and exchange money.

"It is a family celebration in the sense that, for a week or even two weeks before the actual New Year, everybody goes home," says Lin. "People who have come into towns or cities to work in factories or people's homes leave. It's the one time that they are given freedom to go home."

"People gathered together, gossiped and drank tea," she recalls. "Though the agricultural people, which we were not, were probably much heavier into the gods --



the kitchen gods, the hearth god, prosperity, going to the ancestral tombs.

"Remember, the whole of the New Year feast was about ancestors. There would be pictures with their names, and an altar laden with food. If you had a huge tribe, which was considered very prestigious because you were fulfilling propagation, you were showing this to the ancestors."

The Chinese put great emphasis on preparation of the New Year celebration's meal, or banquet. "There is a tradition of foods," Lin explains.

"You always have chicken and pig. But during the New Year's celebration you come up with special foods," says Lin. "There are rice cakes, for example. Rice cakes are made by powdering rice and then making a kind of pate out of it. Soup is then

made from these pates. You can also combine vegetables with the rice cake. One of them is a kind of radish. White radish combined with rice cake is a real popular thing."

Chinese New Year observances involve the whole human pecking order. "You always go [to visit] your superiors," she says. "For example, the younger brother will go to the older brother. Of course, everybody goes to the patriarch. The banquet is given at the home of the oldest representative, the patriarch. In our house there were 25 tables of eight people each for all of the family. Usually, we had it catered."

The concept of money was incorporated into the celebration. "Money was given for New Year's. You went to see your elder, to *kowtow*. This was the thing to do, though less and less of it is done over the years. It involved getting on your knees and bowing three times, each time touching the forehead to the floor."

Kowtow translates to *hit the head*. It's a sign of respect. "Traditionally, with the emperor, the idea was to bang the head on the floor loud enough to hear it. But that's not really done that much any more. I dare say it's not done at all any more."

The younger children or grandchildren always went to pay respects for the New Year to the elder. And, in return, the elder gave the children red envelopes full of money. The understanding was that a superior always had to give more.

Lin says street vendors peddled in the marketplaces around New Year's. "And the martial arts school would put on a dragon dance, or some kind of demonstration. I am sure that in its heyday, while China was still very much agricultural, that there was far more. But by the time I came around, about 1960, things had changed. In some ways, the people who live on farms, who may not be that affluent, take the celebration far more seriously than the people who don't live off the land. But it is still very much respected."

Lin fears that in another generation her people might adopt the solar calendar

because it's more relevant. "International commerce, international trade, industries -- these form the economic base," she says. The lunar calendar only persisted in China, she believes, because that country retained a feudal agricultural economical base far longer than Europe did. Even in medieval Europe they planted by a lunar calendar, she believes. "It's just that people don't remember because it's so far back."

At least one tradition of the Chinese New Year is likely to persist, Lin says. "There are firecrackers all over the place!"

Old House Handbook: Gingerbread

Comments on the Components of a Key West Historic House

by Sharon Wells

Old Town's National Register District is an environment built of plain and fanciful houses, which heroically have survived the ravages of hurricanes and fires, time and neglect. Original wooden filigree and decorations, hand carved by carpenters during the Victorian era -- a period marked by fancy decorations and color -- still adorn the wood-frame structures, sunbleached by the tropical sun. These decorative patterns are commonly called gingerbread.

John Maass, author of *The Gingerbread Age*, notes the historical antecedents of gingerbread patterns. He writes:

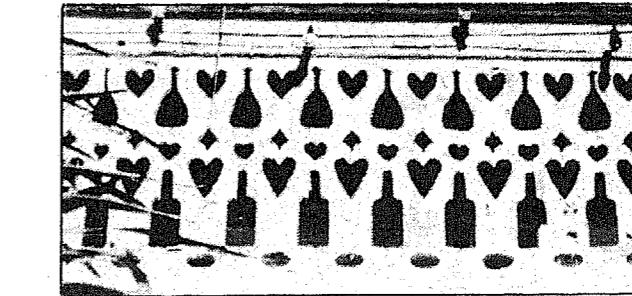
When Gothic style architecture is translated in Carpenter Gothic, the stone tracery became wooden gingerbread. The word is not of recent coinage or American origin. It goes back to the Medieval French, Gingimbrat, which meant "preserved ginger." The last syllable was mistakenly translated into English as "bread." English gingerbread was a sort of cake, flavored with ginger and cut into fancy shapes. The word was then applied to the carved and gilded decorations of a sailing ship and finally to gaudy architectural ornament. It was first used in this sense in 18th-century England.

"Gingerbread is part of the universal design language of the 19th century," asserts Maass. During that period, Key West experienced a building boom. Local carpenters and wood turners at local lumber mills worked out their own fanciful gingerbread designs. Advertisements for scroll sawing and wood turning ran in the local newspapers. Local motifs, a reflection of the Victorian era, were part of the international architectural language of that century.

Often, however, the fretwork cut for Key West homes was derived from national pattern books. Maass writes: "The pattern books filled a real need at a time when there were few trained designers and no architectural magazines in the United States." Elsewhere, designs were evident in Spencerian handwriting, needlework, ironwork and lettering.

Gingerbread in Key West took on a fanciful display. Individual examples of traditional scrollwork abound, from

metal crestlike finial atop the Marquesa Hotel to the formerly dentilled cornice and paired wooden brackets lining the roof eave



of the George Carey House at 410 Caroline Street.

The oft-called Gingerbread House at 615 Elizabeth Street -- said to be built by "a Mr. Baker as a wedding present to his daughter when she became Mrs. Illingsworth in 1885" -- features scroll brackets beneath the eaves and circular decorations affixed to the pillars above their capitals on two floors. Both the Otto House at 534 Eaton Street and the Mercedes Hospital at 1209 Virginia have graceful jigsaw circular gingerbread, vaguely reminiscent of a shell motif, which is perhaps Key West's most typical design.

William Kerr's Carpenter Gothic cottage at 410 Simonton is the most elaborate house in town with its jerkin head roof, intricately carved vergeboard and porch ornaments such as double brackets and scrollwork where the columns meet the roof. The 19th-century facades at 1017 Southard and the Julius Otto House at 414 Simonton feature the atypical wooden spindlework, which runs like a frieze between the columns below the porch roof.

At 410 Fleming Street, the Francisco Marrero House shows an unusual, solid, semicircular, wood pattern with a carved droplike piece between the posts. The buildings at 517 Eaton and 305 Whitehead Streets have identical gingerbread patterns. The facade of the Frederick Filer Home at 724 Eaton is defined by crossed braces attached to the porch posts, which are mirrored on a smaller scale on the second level. The earmark of the Maloney House, which once stood on the present site of Harris School and was later moved to the corner of Southard and William, is a wooden bargeboard with three stars

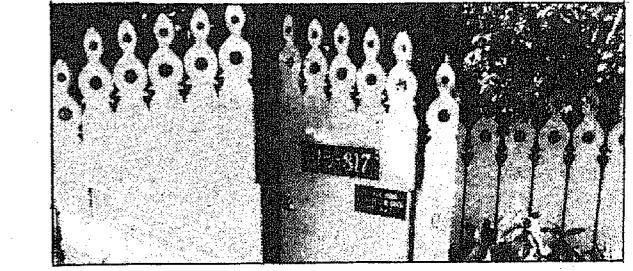


outlined. In years past, gingerbread decorated buildings such as the Cortez Cigar factory and the old Jefferson Hotel on lower Duval Street.

Homeowners involved in rehabilitation or restoration projects should investigate as thoroughly as possible the documentation that exists for their buildings. Historic photographs at the Monroe County Public Library or local books containing vintage views often help the homeowner ascertain the elements of a house which are original and those which are additions.

Scrollwork is not typical to all styles of houses. In fact, most Key West houses are plain, simple, classic revival buildings. One of the most important rules of restoration is not to add gingerbread to a structure which originally had none.

It is appropriate to first, restore original



gingerbread elements, or, secondly, to replace original gingerbread with new pieces patterned after the originals. The new pieces should match the old in terms of thickness of the wood and pattern. New designs of gingerbread cut from thin plywood are neither appropriate nor authentic; they only cheapen the look of an historic house.

In Key West, several dozen gingerbread patterns can be seen. The tracery elements, cut by either a scroll or jigsaw or by hand, lend a touch of individuality and beauty to the Conch houses they grace. These specimens of craftsmanship by local carpenters and woodworkers survive as examples of handcrafted local folk art.

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MAYOR CAPT. TONY TARRACINO WILL REFUSE ONE MILLION DOLLARS TO MARRY ACTRESS ELIZABETH TAYLOR. SHE WILL BE ABDUCTED BY ALIENS FROM THE SIRIUS COLONIES AND FORCED TO MARRY ELVIS, WHO WAS ABDUCTED YEARS AGO (REMEMBER?) AND THEY WILL PRODUCE A SUPER RACE THAT WILL EVENTUALLY TAKE OVER HOLLYWOOD AND HALF OF DES MOINES.

MERLIN CURRY IS REVEALED TO BE AN ALIEN FROM URANUS. HIS PROPOSAL TO ROSEANNE BARR IS REJECTED.

AUTHOR BILL MANVILLE WILL GET MARRIED AGAIN, THIS TIME TO AN HEIRESS WHO WRITES A BEST SELLER, "THE DIET THAT CAN CURE ARTHRITIS FOREVER." THE FACT THAT IT CALLS FOR POWDERED PALMETTO BUGS TURNS THE WHOLE WORK INTO SPECULATIVE FICTION, SINCE NO ONE IS WILLING TO FOLLOW THE DIET. THE UNION WILL NOT LAST, BUT THIS TIME MANVILLE SETTLES FOR A COOL 1.3 MILLION A YEAR. SHE IS ABDUCTED BY ALIENS.

THE KEY WEST CITIZEN IS SOLD TO "PEOPLE" MAGAZINE WHEN IT ACHIEVES FAME IN THE GUINNESS BOOK OF WORLD RECORDS" FOR THE MOST TYRIS IN A SINGLE ISSUE.

DEVELOPER PARMAL SINGH IS SPOTTED HOVERING OVER TRUMAN ANNEX IN A TRANSCENDENTAL TROPICAL TRANCE. **WITNESS** REPORT THAT HE WAS ABDUCTED BY ALIENS, BUT RETURNED ABRUPTLY WITH NO EXPLANATION OFFERED BY SINGH OR THE ALIENS. RUMOURS WILL ABOUND THAT HE HAS WORKED OUT A DEAL TO DEVELOP ONE OF THE 16 SATELLITES OF JUPITER. "AFFORDABLE, BUT FAROUT!" *

COMMISSIONER VIRGINIA PANICO BECOMES ANCHOR WOMAN FOR THE DISNEY CHANNEL WHEN VOICEPRINTS REVEAL HER TO BE MICKEY MOUSE IN DRAG.

*THANKS TO ANN BOESE FOR THAT LINE!



Solares Hill Publications
1217 White Street
Key West
294-3602

YIELDS '90

Readers Write

Stable Conditions

Dear Editor:

In response to your December editorial, I'd like to contend that a horse's life in the Keys is not all bad. The horses I attend on Cudjoe, Sugarloaf, Big Pine and Little Torch Keys are more pampered than the majority of horses I worked on in Montana, South Dakota, Alabama and Kentucky. People have horses in the Keys because they love them. It is not their goal to torture horses with an inhospitable environment.

Citing the lack of an equine veterinarian and large animal facilities is a moot point. Over the years, five of us small animal veterinarians from Marathon to Key West have answered calls covering founder, colic, dystocia, lacerations, preventive medicine, obstetrics, etc. When needed, our horse owners have gone to great expense to send their animals to Miami or bring specialists to the Keys. They even pay a blacksmith to come down here every eight weeks. On the human side, Keys physicians also refer patients to Miami facilities. If a trip to Miami is good enough for a person, it

is good enough for a horse.

Another moot point is the expense and condition of feed. The horses here receive excellent nutrition in spite of its cost. Horse owners just won't feed moldy hay (a bigger problem in Kentucky, where humidity is higher than in the Keys).

The stable on Little Torch Key might not be a "working stable," but, then again, Gerry and Inge Krause do not present it as such. They have a well constructed, well maintained facility which is far more than adequate for keeping a horse. Granted, a large, lush pasture would be nice, but that is impossible in the Keys.

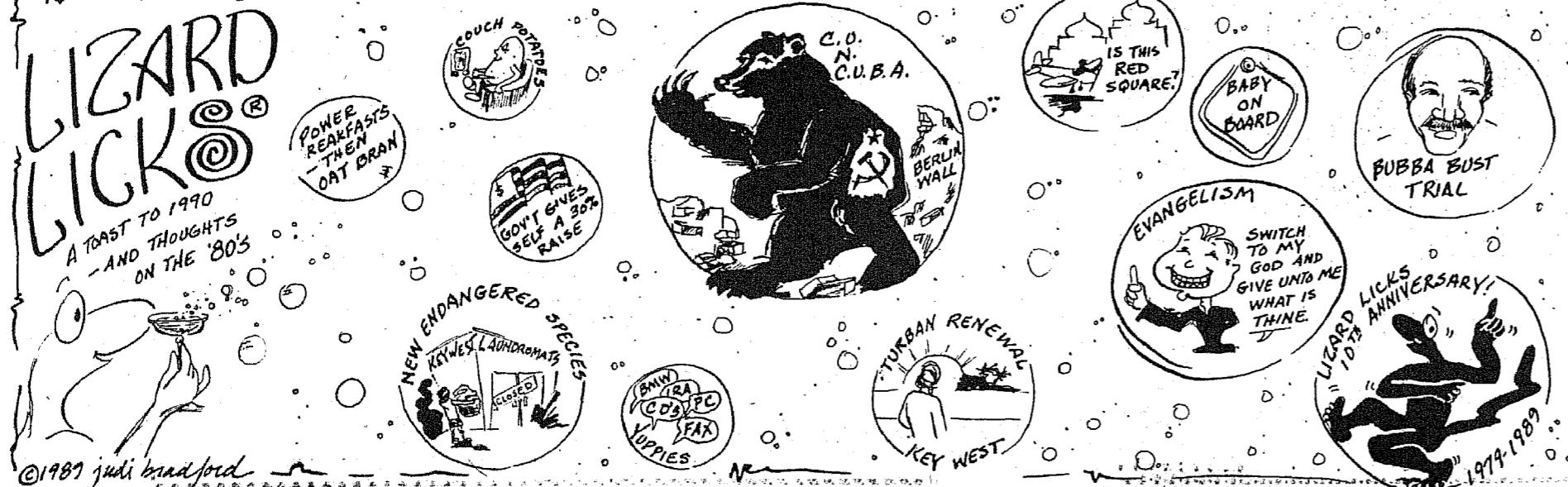
Steve Harris, DVM
Big Pine Key

Horse Sense

Dear Editor:

I was interested in your editorial about horses; I got on my first one when I was about four. Later it was the only way to get to school.

As you intimated, Key West is no place for horses. Some years ago, I conducted a census for the Humane Society, covering all the back roads between here and the Seven-Mile Bridge, about 280 miles. I found more horses than you would think, many of them needing better care. In addition to the



troubles you cite, some were up to their heels in water. One guy here in town was acting macho with a young stallion, seemingly about half Percheron, who was immured in a box stall which his master (rightly) did not dare enter. Some fun for everybody.

In our damp summer heat, horses must never be sentenced to stand out in the sun, though a western horse accustomed to dry heat will make out alright.

We've had these buggies before. They didn't last. Let's hope they don't this time.

Colin Jameson
Key West

Judgment Call

Dear Editor:

In response to your December article, "Wow! What a Contract," I believe writer June Keith shows a lack of good judgment.

To criticize what is certainly a sweetheart contract for Police Chief Tom Webster is one thing; to suggest how he can be terminated simply because of perks in that contract and the fact that he lives outside the city limits quite another.

Frankly, I am more alarmed that the guiding light of *Solares Hill* is attempting to shape this newspaper from the city limits of Woodstock, New York.

John Leslie
Key West

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Collector Regulation

Dear Editor:

I am writing in response to Barbara Bowers' article "Tropical Fish Collecting: A multimillion-dollar industry makes waves," which ran in the November *Solares Hill*.

I am a tropical fish collector. I derive my income solely from this line of work. In the wake of many problems -- the dying of the reef and the claim that some people in my profession are responsible for this -- I write to give you a picture of what I do.

On a given reef pile such as Sand Key, there are about 25 families of fish: grouper, snapper, grunts, angelfish and so on. Each family consists of about 5 to ten or more species. There are about 175 to 200 different species on a pile.

Though I have no degree for giving these numbers, I have talked to Forest Young, who has a master's degree in marine biology and works in the saltwater products business, and Bob Cerkleski, director of the Key West Municipal Aquarium. They both tend to agree with these numbers.

Of the 200 species, a collector can sell about 20 species -- just 10 percent of all the fish on a reef pile. He would be lucky actually to see any more than half of this 10 percent. And of those he saw, he would be a good collector if he captured 75 percent, making his entire catch just 3 percent of all

the fish on this coral pile.

Now the clincher: this number refers to a whole pile, such as Sand Key, and a diver might cover 10 to 20 percent of this area. That makes the number of fish taken .25 to .50 percent of all the fish that are saleable off just one pile.

Rock piles are very important to the collector. Certain species cannot be found anywhere else. What's more, all species are not found on all piles -- at least not in numbers. Therefore, on one pile I might find this fish, and on the next, that one. I go pile to pile and that .25 to .50 percent is even smaller. I have not even talked about invertebrates, which are collected on the

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Now look at the *whole* reef and its 100 families of fish, making 750 to 1,000 species. Half these species are saleable. A diver can cover only a minute portion of any given reef area. At best we see a total of .25 percent of what we are looking for. And we are generating \$10 to 20 million, annually. Is this raping the reef?

As in all industries, there are fly-by-nights, jerks, dilberts, giving us all a bad name. I cannot apologize to you for these, nor can I make up for what they have done. But I am here for the long haul, and that reef is my farm. If I don't harvest the crops properly then I am out of a job, and I have been doing this for the past six years. My dive partner has been at it for 12.

Like I said, I can't right any wrongs and really don't want to. Rather, I want to be licensed and to help regulate and make laws for our industry. I believe we must stop pointing the finger at others. We must accept them, good points and bad, and then work our problems out together.

Personally, I take time to turn back over rocks flipped by anchors and what-not. To work with the Coast Guard, Marine Patrol and DEA, I report lost nets, retrieve lost anchors, break open old or lost traps. As I said, I am here for the long haul.

I say these things about my industry only because I am out there five and six days a week, six hours a day, hot or cold water, calm or windy, clear or dirty. There is so much more to tell and teach, so much to see



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that people just swim by because they don't realize it's there. I wish I could explain more but I can't because I would give away trade secrets. Sorry. If, however, you truly open your eyes, you will be surprised at what you see. Happy diving to you all.

Mike Grodzinski
Key West

Audit the Chamber

Dear Editor:

The Monroe County Commission has allowed the Key West Chamber of Commerce to avoid a certified audit review process for the expenditure of our tourist tax dollars. On the heels of last year's Grand Jury Report, which was highly critical of exactly such behavior, the commission and the chamber are failing to provide taxpayers with a complete disclosure of how and where public money is being spent. Page 14 of the Grand Jury Report recommended:

... an annual audit be conducted of all funds provided to the [independent contractor]. The cost of this audit shall be paid out of Tourist Development Council funds. We further recommend that this annual audit provision be made a part of all the major contracts the TDC has negotiated with independent contractors. The public clearly has the right to know how these funds are expended and not to simply see these funds disappear into the 'black hole' of a private business's account.

For instance, the county commission has just given the Key West Chamber \$102,000

in tourist tax revenue free from any certified audit, adding that the press and the public just don't understand. The press and public, however, are quite aware that any private organization receiving large sums of tax dollars should submit to a certified audit in order to deserve the public trust.

In another recent example, the commission approved \$142,000 in tourist tax revenue for the Festival of the Continents. The commission could have just as easily approved \$142,000 in tourist tax revenue for Duval Street foot patrols. We have to ask whether the Festival of the Continents enhances tourism more than safer streets would, particularly in an area where downtown businessmen have been crying for foot patrols.

Determining such funding priorities is an important corollary to accountability. It would be wonderful if Key West could afford both the festival and the foot patrols, but its tourist tax dollars are limited. It is high time we call for a county referendum to set public priority on tourist tax funding for Duval Street foot patrols.

Because tourist tax dollars are not inexhaustible, it is now more essential than ever that they are not wasted but, rather, spent to the public's best advantage. It is imperative that whatever tax dollars we do have are accountable through certified audits. By instituting a careful review process for expenditure of our tax dollars, the county commission would be assuring the public of maximum benefit.

A.C. Weinstein
Key West

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Nature Notebook

Return of the Broadwing Hawk

by Capt. Gaff McKetchum

Some of my best friends are broadwing hawks, or so it seems.

For many years a broadwing has shared winters in Key West with me. From a limb of the poinciana tree in the front yard, my friend the hawk has surveyed, with dignity and aplomb, the daily comings and goings of friends, family, cats and dogs.

Broadwings do not flit about like lesser birds. When they choose a favored perch, they are all but imperturbable. While not quite approachable, they do make their presence felt, as does a neighborhood cat who allows you to feed him a choice morsel -- just so long as no petting or purring is expected.

The broadwing hawk (*Buteo platypterus*) is a member of the order Falconiformes, the birds of prey. Its family, Accipitridae, includes the eagles, hawks and ospreys. In its subfamily are other buteos and eagles.

Field guides describe the broadwing as a small, chunky buteo the size of a crow (14 to 18 1/2 inches) with a wingspan of 32 to 39 inches. When seen in flight it appears to be all wings; hence, its name. The best identification mark is the banding on the wide tail -- the white bands are about as wide as the black. Its voice is distinctive -- a high-pitched, shrill whistle: *p-wee-e*.

Broadwings arrive in Key West for their seasonal stay during the first two weeks of October. My notes over the years show my friend the hawk arriving between the first and 13th of October, the exception being an early arrival in 1979, on September 22.

The newly arrived broadwings put on a first-rate aerial show, circling wildly about in flocks. I have counted 50 to 300 birds as

they ride the thermals formed by solar heating of the Keys landmass. This activity is known as *kettling* to ornithologists, who compare the rising sun-heated "bubbles" of air to the bubbles that form in the bottom of a kettle of water just before it boils. Of all the hawks, only the broadwings rely on thermal soaring as their primary aid to migration. The hawks we see kettling here are no doubt on their way to northwestern South America for the winter.

Not all our visiting broadwings migrate further. Some, such as my acquaintance, spend the winter here, dining well on abundant populations of lizards (anoles), frogs, palmetto bugs, an occasional snake, the fall warblers and roof rats. The latter two entrees are often second-hand kills, courtesy of the neighborhood cats.

After many years of observing its comings and goings, I suspected that the same hawk was returning to my yard, though there was no way to be certain. It was a large broadwing, meaning that it was a female; but under all those feathers who could be sure it was she?

A conversation with Audubon House guide Steve Boyden convinced me it was. At the historic museum he had, one year, with great patience, trained a broadwing to to be the same bird. For many years this act continued, to the amazement of tourists.

By the end of April, the hawks, my friend included, will have left Key West for their migration north, going as far as Quebec and New Brunswick. Their perches and their places in the hierarchy of birds in the yard will be snatched by mockingbirds, noisy buggers all. At least the imposters' reign will be temporary -- until the northerns blow and the broadwings again return.



take a palmetto bug tied to a thread which he whirled around from the patio. The next year, when the hawk returned, Steve tried the palmetto trick again. The bird instantly seized the bug, no training necessary. It had to be the same bird. For many years this act continued, to the amazement of tourists.

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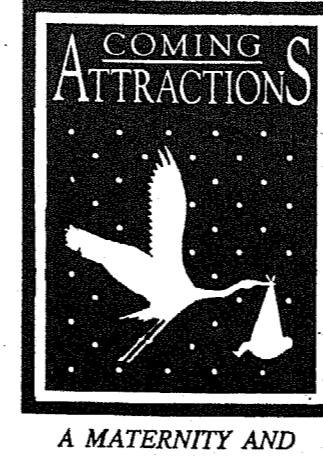
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Stranded in the Spotlight

An interview with theater's Wendy Wasserstein and Joanne Akalaitis

by Anne Carlisle

Author of the best play of the 1988 to '89 season, 38-year-old Wendy Wasserstein is, in theatrical circles, the toast of the town. The first woman ever to win a Tony Award, she has also scooped up a Pulitzer for *The Heidi Chronicles*, her third play.

Wasserstein was called by one reviewer the "chronicler of frayed feminism." And it's true that this playwright is an astute student of women, whose predicaments and peccadilloes she probes with a compassionate eye and tongue-in-cheek wit for *New Woman* magazine, in her column "The Meaning of Life." Her book, *Bachelor Girls*, published by Knopf, is out.

Director, performer and designer JoAnne Akalaitis is a founding member of Mabou Mines, a 20-year-old production company in which everyone gets an equal say and salary. She has received four Obies (Off-Broadway awards) for distinguished direction and production, as well as a number of fellowships for work presented all over the world.

Her current endeavor, a Joseph Papp production of *Cymbeline* at the Public Theater, has received flak from New York critics. This fresh look at Shakespeare is colorblind -- she cast a black man in the role of a white queen's son. It's also a gender-

bender, with two women playing male fighters.

Akalaitis' upcoming projects are typically diverse: a Jacobean play at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago, and a history of Mormonism. Mother of a 21-year-old daughter, the playwright says she doesn't go to Broadway because she "can't afford to."

Both Wasserstein and Akalaitis are on the lineup for Key West's Literary Seminar, *New Directions in American Theater*, from January 11 to 14. While each has a distinctive perspective about the status of women in theater and society, what they had to say in their separately conducted interviews with *Solares Hill* was notably similar, poignant and intensely felt.

The essence of the conversations is best summed up by quoting from Wasserstein's *Chronicles*. The main character, Heidi Holland, is about to deliver a speech before a group of women at the Plaza Hotel for which she finds herself suddenly unprepared. The subject is: "Women -- Where Are We Going?" and her artfully rambling soliloquy ends with this haunting admission: "I don't blame any of us. We're all good, intelligent women." (Pause.) "It's just that I feel stranded. And I thought that the whole point was that we wouldn't feel stranded. I thought the point was that we were all in this together."

The fact that the majority of the population in America is going to be non-white and female is profound. But that statistic is not represented by a corresponding statistic of power. Women will be taken seriously when they're heads of major institutions. It's the same as it is anywhere.

WW: I think women get an even break in

COURTESY LITERARY SEMINAR



Wendy Wasserstein. Joanne Akalaitis.

SH: Are women taken seriously in American theater?

JA: In the workings of the theater, day to day, one on one, there is remarkably little sexism. Yet, if you look at the profile of American theater, including not only artistic directors but Broadway producers and not-for-profit institutions, the boards are highly populated by women but the presidents are usually men. Women and non-whites are what I'm talking about.

The fact that the majority of the population in America is going to be non-white and female is profound. But that statistic is not represented by a corresponding statistic of power. Women will be taken seriously when they're heads of major institutions. It's the same as it is anywhere.

WW: I think women get an even break in

the theater -- or more and more so. But certainly theaters still think, Oh, we'll do a woman's play. (Laughs.) Or, that's a woman's play.

SH: Do you think the direction in theater might be different if women had more say?

JA: On a certain level it could be. Also, because women have less to lose, they can afford to be more open, have that kind of voice.

In *Cymbeline*, I had women play men as fighters, because there weren't enough men.

So I said, the women can be the men, and they can fight like men, and I thought that was fun. I think it was fun for the women, too. The atmosphere: when you get a bunch of guys together and there's physical action, the testosterone level is something else. When I'd call a halt to what I called the *macho hijinks*, it was very interesting because I'd see two fighters up there who were quiet and who listened. It was always the two women; they shut up, they listened.

Women learn by listening and I never thought of it before. Men are talking and

There's a daunting and very violent sexism still lurking...

women are listening. (Pause.) That's a brutal generalization; it's probably not even true.

SH: Do you consider yourself a voice for feminism?

WW: When it comes to being a feminist I always think, Well, yes, I am. I believe in rights for women, how could you not? If one is a humanist one has to be a feminist. Especially when things come up like the abortion issue. The culture is probably basically sexist, still, and so you have to keep holding that up. You can't relax, I don't think. So far as being disillusioned about feminism, I don't think that's where I was coming from with *The Heidi Chron-*

icles. It was more a question of, What do we do now? Where's the men? (Laughs.)

JA: I consider myself a political human being as I hope most human beings do, and I tend to do work that has social context. I have male assistants, I'm conscious of men and women in choosing a team. I do think that women should not be overly secure in whatever gains have been achieved.

There is a daunting and very violent sexism that is still lurking and that is manifested in violence toward women. Violence toward women is on the front page of the *New York Times* these days, and there is this deep expressed hostility on the part of the anti-abortion movements.

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Institutions like the *New York Times* reflect a deep and growing racism, whether it's overt or not. Journalists now feel a power to express racism in the form of an aesthetic evaluation or criticism. They said, in the case of *Cymbeline*, a white woman can't have a black son. If you look around the world, white women *do* have black sons.

SH: *The Heidi Chronicles* begins with a woman standing up and admitting to others how unhappy she is. Does it seem to you that women are unhappy?

WW: Yes, that's sort of why I wrote the play. I kept hearing this and I thought, well, this must be going on.

JA: My daughter went to one of those Outward Bound hikes and she came in first in the two-mile hike in the backpack. Some guy's response was, "Oh, that's because you're a pushy bitch." I said, "Men are going to be telling you that all your life." The difference is, she was born a feminist whereas, like one of my friends said to me last night, we *became* feminists.

SH: So do you think that under the surface tensions between the sexes are rising, not lessening?

JA: Oh, I think there's more. All these demons have been sitting under the surface, and when they burst out it's very negative. Very, very negative. I also am sometimes shocked, and it's subtle, too. But I think that a lot of men are angry at women and they haven't figured out how to deal with it.

WW: I think it's absolutely true, and the problem is, women can find multiple reasons to feel guilty -- many more reasons,

I think, than men can. It's funny, I just spoke at Harvard and all these girls were talking about having balanced lives. (*Rich chuckle.*) You know, a young man really doesn't sit around thinking about whether [he has] a balanced life.

SH: Is the so-called *yuppie drama* useful? All this *Big Chill* nostalgia?

WW: It's hard to make sweeping statements about a generation. I really liked *The Big Chill*. I thought the music and the actors were wonderful. It's hard because when you get into *thirtysomething* it's this massive generational thing. At Harvard kids were telling me, Well, we watch *thirtysomething* to see what our lives will be like.

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WW: I think it's absolutely true, and the problem is, women can find multiple reasons to feel guilty -- many more reasons,

made these choices about living alone and this and that -- the sorts of personal choices that people make. People thought it was a funny play, which it was. But I always thought it was serious.

SH: At the end, Janie's dancing around her apartment in a man's hat. Is that related to a choice she's made, that she's decided to be the star of her own life instead of someone else's?

WW: Yes, yes. And then suddenly it went away. You never understand how these ideas come and then they go.

SH: What ideas are you referring to, the ones that come and go?

WW: Oh, just the ideas of, I guess, self-fulfillment, living for myself ...

SH: Is the essential nature of theater an idea that comes and goes before one's eyes?

JA: Well, it is, and sometimes that's very poignant. Theater is a very moving thing, literally moving. The script even keeps changing, where there is a stage used in a sculptural, plastic way. It's the last thing left in the society that does disappear, that changes every night. It's about communication, it's utterly public and human. Unfortunately, the form of it is subverted by the politics of it.

SH: Is there a parallel between the collaboration that goes on in the theater and the individual actor's craft?

JA: I always say that the actor should be able to see himself on stage as part of a composition. He or she is always making the composition more perfect, so it's a very painterly art, being in a performance. Basically the actor commits to do something

SH: I love the line in *Isn't It Romantic* that goes, "I made choices in my life based on an idea that doesn't even exist anymore."

WW: That's funny, because I always thought that line was sort of the key to the play and people didn't pick up on it. Janie

New Directions in American Theater Eighth Annual Key West Literary Seminar

the last-minute local discount: one hour before each panel, any available tickets will be sold for \$5. To register, send \$214 to Key West Literary Seminar, P.O. Box 391-SH, Sugarloaf Shores, FL 33044.

Thursday, January 11
12, 1:30 and 3 PM -- Literary Walking Tours

Meet outside the Hemingway House, 907 Whitehead Street. By reservation, 745-3640.

7 PM -- Meet the Playwrights Reception
Key West Art and Historical Museum, South Roosevelt Boulevard

Friday, January 12
9 AM -- Coffee
9:30 AM -- Keynote Speaker, Joseph V. Melillo
10 AM -- Panel 1: *Money, Money, Money: The Moral Dilemma*

Join Wendy Wasserstein, Emily Mann, Christine Arnold Dolan, John Guare and moderator John Bradley in a discussion about society's values as reflected in contemporary theater. Suggested readings: *Other People's Money* by Jerry Steiner; *Speed the Plow* by David Mamet; *Emily* by Stephan Metcalf; *Real Estate* by Louise Page.

12 PM -- Lunch break
2 PM -- Panel 2: *Identity in the Melting Pot: Ingredients of Political Theater*

Moderator Donn Murphy, Vinnette Carroll, Constance Congdon and Maria Irene Fornes discuss how playwrights maintain their cultural heritage in a society which acts to co-opt differences. Readings: *Execution of Justice* by Emily Mann; *When Hell Freezes Over, I'll Skate or Don't Bother Me, I Can't Cope* by Vinnette

Registration is \$200 plus tax. Ask about

from the inside, working totally, not just from the neck up -- totally commits to the body as well. I encourage the kind of performance that watches the performance, so the actors see themselves inside and outside, see themselves in the whole.

SH: Outside New York, is there a healthier environment for new ideas and new talent?

JA: The audiences outside New York are for the most part more interesting. They listen. In the *New York Times* the other day the big organizers, the big producers, got together and said they're going to try and keep a certain number of theaters separate, to do serious theater. We'll see, I don't think that's so important, though. Theaters will survive. What I'm proudest of at Mabou Mines is that we survived, that we exist.

SH: As a playwright, do you have to detach yourself from your work when it goes into production?

WW: Well, I always think a play starts with the playwright and then you give it to the director and the director gives it to the actors and the actors give it to the audience. I hang around at all the rehearsals. When you write a play there's a reason to leave the house, there's somewhere to go. I love going.

SH: That would be fun, having your work go out the door and following it around.

WW: Yes! That's the difference between fiction and plays. I wouldn't really want to

write a novel, that doesn't interest me. I think in terms of dialogue; I think in terms of, then I said, and then he said. And sometimes that's a good thing and a bad thing. I'll remember what someone said to me 15 years ago. (*Imitates an accusing tone.*) "And then you said ..."

SH: Has getting that kind of attention been what you had expected?

WW: I like having my play running. I love going to the Plymouth Theater -- that's heaven. It's funny, you don't think about it as it's happening. It's like you don't stop and watch moments of your life.

Carroll, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* by August Wilson; *El Salvador* by Rafael Lima.

8:30 PM -- David Cale in performance
Post-performance champagne and coffee

Saturday, January 13

9:30 AM -- Coffee
10 AM -- Panel 3: *New Voices in the American Theater: Testing the Limits of Language*

Moderator Jane Crum, JoAnne Akalaitis, Mac Wellman, Eric Overmyer and Bonnie Marranca talk about the playwright's search for a new dramatic language in a predominantly visual culture. Readings: *On the Verge* by Eric Overmyer; *The Bad Infinity* by Mac Wellman; *No Mercy* by Connie Congdon.

2 PM -- Panel 4: *Artistic Visions -- Production Realities*

Moderator Joseph V. Melillo, Len Jenkin, Julia Miles and Lanford Wilson talk about the nuts and bolts of production. Readings: *The Director's Voice* and *In Their Own Words*, TCG Publications.

8:30 PM -- Performance artist Paul Zaloom at the Waterfront Playhouse

Post-performance reception at the Rooftop Cafe

Sunday, January 14

10:30 AM -- Coffee, Monroe County Public Library, 700 Fleming Street
9:30 AM, 10:30 AM and 12 PM -- Literary Walking Tours

Meet outside the Hemingway House, 907 Whitehead Street. By reservation, 745-3640.

1 PM -- Seminar ends

SH: These kids at Harvard, what should they be watching if not *thirtysomething*?

WW: Gosh, I don't know. I think the stuff that's going on in Eastern Europe is great. That's why I want to write about romance, in terms of social issues that have to be dealt with. One thinks more and more about America -- the excitement of Eastern Europe as opposed to what's happening here. If the social issues could be addressed, that would be good.

SH: What would you like audiences to bring to your theater?

JA: Themselves. Openness.

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11:00			AQUA	AQUA		ILIA
12:15	LIA	WALK	LIA	WALK	LIA	
5:30	AQUA	AQUA	LIA	AQUA	LIA	
6:00			LIA			
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AQUA - Aquathics Class held in the Reach Pool

INT - Interval Aerobics

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Art Circle

T-Shirts: Art for All Sizes

by Judi Bradford

Consider the number of T-shirts for sale on Duval Street. Almost every shop sells some; some shops sell nothing else. Can there actually be a market for every Fruit of the Loom and Hanes all-cotton displayed in storefront windows?

Impressions Magazine, the trade vehicle for the *imprinted sportswear* market, keeps track of T-shirts. According to its 1989 consumer survey, the average shopper in the southeastern United States buys 5.7 T-shirts a year. This is 1.8 shirts less than consumers buy in the top-selling south central, or deep south, region. Most of these are mass-produced decal designs or silkscreened shirts distributed from hives of capitalism in the industrial centers of the nation.

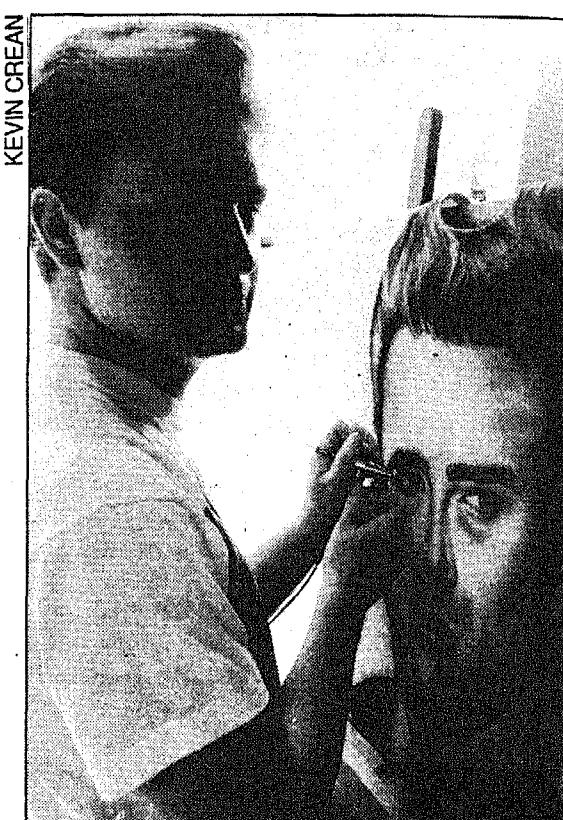
Although fantastically popular today, the lowly T-shirt, which started out as underwear, has slowly risen through the fashion ranks. Now it is, in its highest form,

wearable art -- a derivation of the hippies' individualization of mass-produced items. Wearable art includes printed signature designs and one-of-a-kind garments. Prices for embellished T-shirts range from \$6 to well over \$100.

With prices like those, how can a shopowner stay in business? Overhead costs on Duval Street are not cheap. Say a shop's rent is \$3000 and its average T-shirt sells for \$12 at a standard markup: that shop must sell 500 shirts each month to survive. To meet this quota, a shop which is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., seven days a week, must sell one shirt every 30 minutes.

Fred Gros ran an art gallery on Duval but found he needed a cash crop of affordable merchandise to keep things running smoothly. He started painting T-shirts. Now that's all he does. Selling wholesale to a signature shop on Duval that carries only his designs, Fred also receives royalties from sales of original shirts and shop silkscreen designs. The shop is named Cody after Fred's 18-year-old cat and his best-selling design -- a cat sleeping with a mouse.

"Not everyone understands how much art they are getting for their money," says Fred. "Foreign appreciation is deeper. European and, especially, Japanese buyers recognize the handpainted things." He tells the story of a middle-aged Japanese woman



Ohhh, that look: Phil Rote airbrushing James Dean on an all-cotton, extra-large T-shirt.

who very, very carefully selected a shirt of his. Then, at the moment of sale, she pulled some postcards from her purse. They were photos of antique Japanese prints. "This is

our art," she said.

Fred supports the popularization of art. "The more there is, the better," he says. Once he began selling painted shirts, he found he enjoyed the enthusiasm of the buyers. "It's a distinctly different pleasure than that of the more serious buyer of paintings or sculpture. You rarely see someone rush in to buy a painting saying, 'Oh, I love that!'"

Cydall Cochran ran Bahama Mama's for years and printed thousands of T-shirts. "I've been printing T-shirts since the Last Supper. I'm sure I printed that shirt in another lifetime," she says. "You'd think I'd be sick of them by now, but still, when I see a good design go by on someone, it's 'Oh, look at that shirt!'"

Cydall started with artsy drawings of Key West and tropical designs that sprang from the handpainted clothing she carried in the store. She has seen the T-shirt go from being a Florida souvenir to its present status as designer wear. "It's merging into the fashion industry." Advising an artist friend of hers who asked whether she should go into T-shirt design, Cydall's answer was, "You'd be nuts not to!"

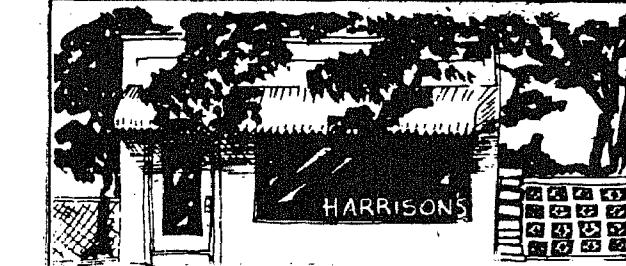
In the 1970s, Cydall and her friends were the classic starving artists. "Nobody knew if you painted it on 100-percent cotton, it would sell!" she says. Her business depended on the national T-shirt manufacturers for a steady supply of shirts. But during the Reagan years, the orders backed up at domestic manufacturers. A spokesperson on Hanes Printables in North Carolina confirmed that "when demand

overwhelms production, we go to allocations. We only allow people to get so much."

"We're there now," she added.

Many artists sell their designs to production shops which then handle printing and selling. Sundancer in Key West buys from artists all over the country. The company runs an advertisement in *Artists Magazine*, soliciting designs; it works with local talent as well. Key West's Will Dougherty has created five of Sundancer's currently best-selling shirts and three of their all-time most popular ones.

Sundancer maintains its retail shop on Simonton Street, but only one-quarter of the company's sales are retail. The major part of its trade comes through a wholesale agent with a showroom in the Miami Merchandise Mart and road representatives in Florida and

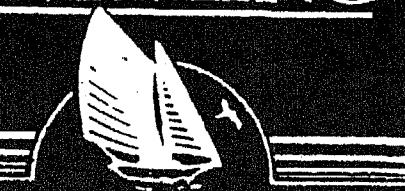


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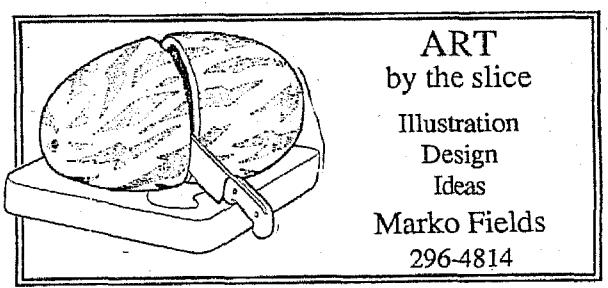
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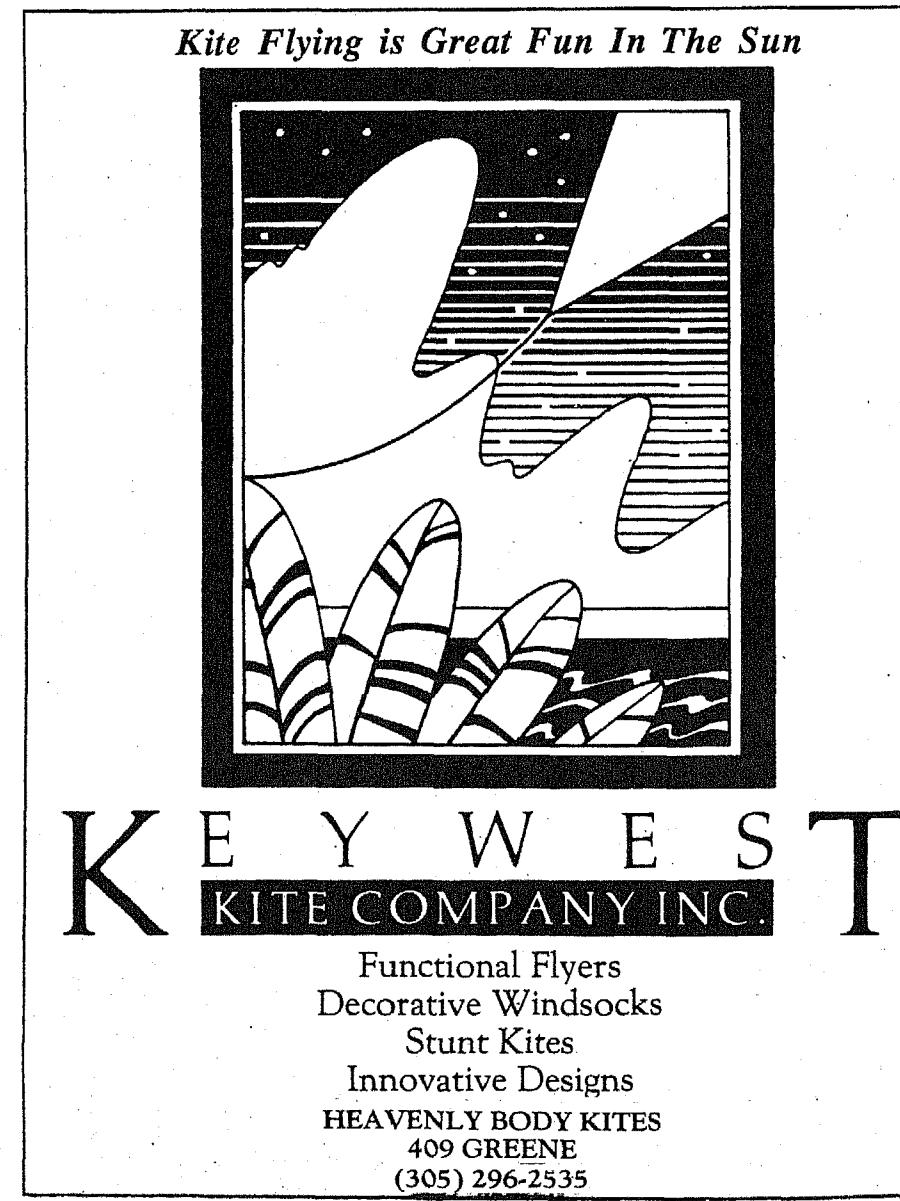
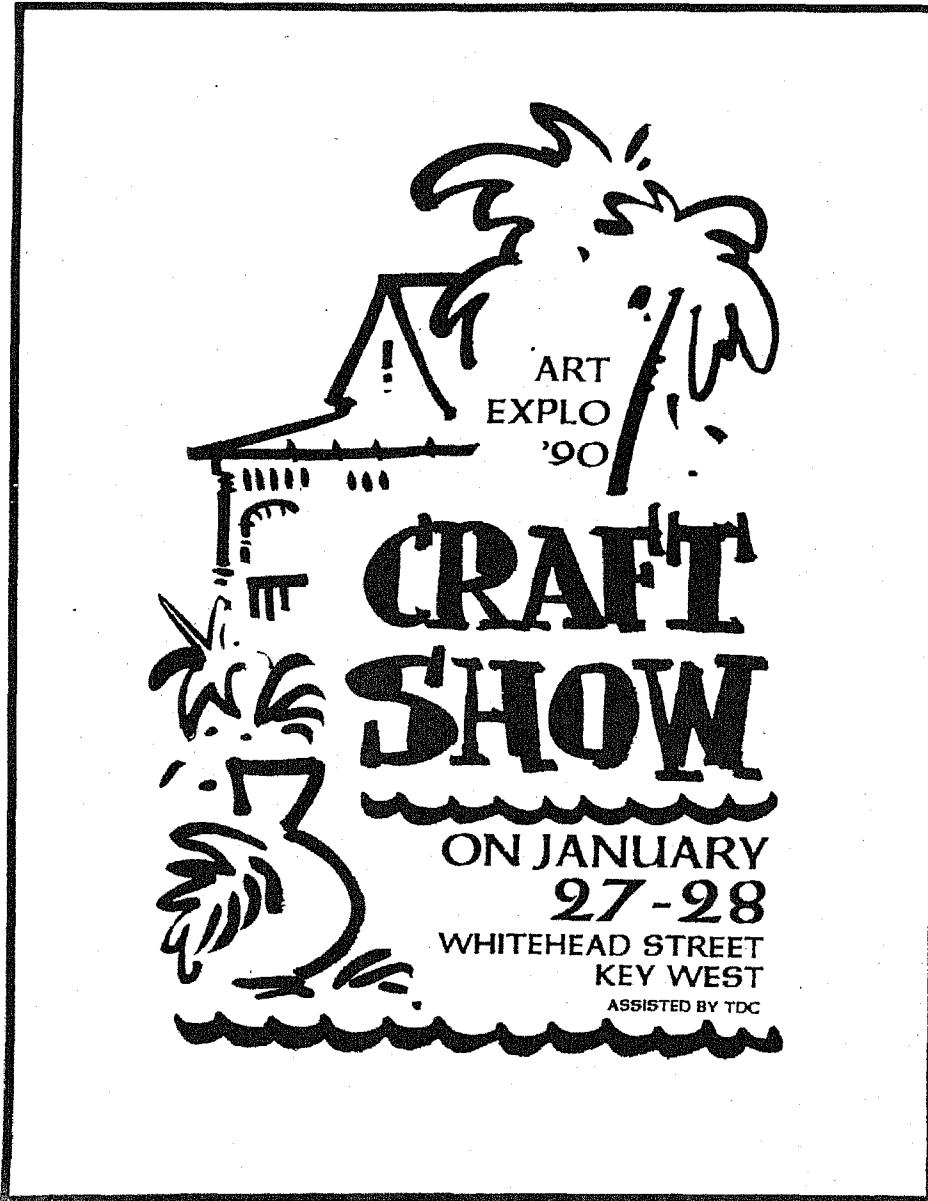
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Tony Gregory has produced a hefty percentage of Key West's Ts. He's been airbrushing since a pivotal vacation in 1975, when he came to Key West and needed a T-shirt. He saw one he liked but it cost \$22. "For \$22 I can paint it myself," he said. The shopkeeper answered, "If you can do that, you have a job." Tony went back to Annapolis, handed in his resignation at the middle school where he taught and took the offer in Key West. It wasn't long before he had his own shop: first, Gregory's Fantasy, then Art Attack.

Tony creates airbrush and splatter designs; he also produces a few silkscreened images. He calls his style *airbrush expressionistic*. "I have lots of fun with it," he says. "I don't do as much T-shirt painting as I used to. The neatest thing for me now is face and body painting at festivals and parties."

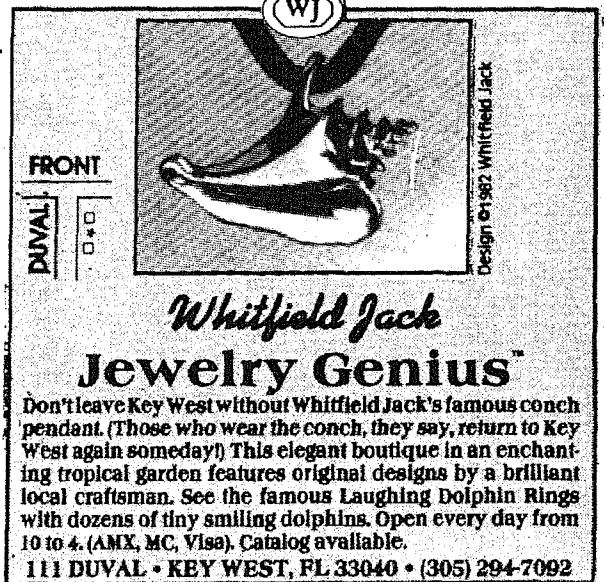
Tony's Duval Street shop carries his own work as well as Anne Tazewell's handpainted baby shirts and some tie-dyes.

A half-block away, Phil Rote sets up an easel and begins airbrushing portraits of the stars. "Marilyn Monroe is by far the most popular," he claims. He has a prime sidewalk location in Ed Swift's new Duval Square Market in the 600 block of Duval. In minutes a crowd has gathered to watch him skillfully reproduce a face from a photograph. He says experience is the key: "I've been doing this 12 hours a day for 10 years. I'm obsessed with it."

Originally, Phil airbrushed vans and Corvettes in Ohio. Then he contracted to supply what he calls *air art* for the Daffy Dan franchise T-shirt shops in and around Cleveland. He was airbrushing for six Daffy Dans and three auto accounts when burnout raised its smoldering head. Phil and his partner escaped to Fort Walton Beach for one season; then they headed to Key West.

At first, Phil was disappointed at the volume of discount decal T-shirt shops. But once he got set up, he said, the response to his work was "overwhelming."

There are more ways to turn T-shirts into art than just painting and silkscreening. Sue Handman embellishes them with lace, pearls, rhinestones and chintz appliques in a Victorian theme. After eight years, she's concentrating her new designs on little girls'



wear. "It is less limiting than adult garments," she says.

Sue takes her work to trade shows and then hires people on a piecework basis to produce her designs for wholesale orders.

T-shirts have been in style for over 20 years. Everyone marvels at their longevity.

JANUARY ARTS CALENDAR

()* This symbol designates a reception that is open to the public.

Art Collections Key West • Mixed media on rice paper and limited-edition graphics by internationally acclaimed Yamin Young. The artist will be in the gallery January 20 and 21. Keys work by Matson, Shannon and others. Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Sunday 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. 600 Front Street in the Bottling Court, 296-5956.

Art Unlimited • Oldest private art gallery in Key West. First to carry Haitian art. "I go in after it." Daily, noon to 5 p.m. and by appointment. 217 Duval St., 296-5625.

Banana Boat Batik • Handpainted clothing by Jennifer Green, Janice Childs, Amy DePoo and Gay. New ceramic work by Walt Hyla: animals, fish, lidded vessels, functional ware, flying fish (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.

Carole Gallery • Key West primitives by the owner. Daily, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. 1100 Whitehead St., 294-5496.

East Martello Museum & Gallery • "Our Fragile Environment," an invitational show coordinated by Helen Harrison featuring 75 local artists' interpretations of our environment. January 9 through February 4. Daily, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. 3501 S. Roosevelt Blvd. 296-3913.

Farrington Art Gallery • The watercolors of Errol Etienne, Royal Canadian Academy, January 13, from 6 to 9 p.m. Open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday 12 to 6 p.m. Gallery and framing by appointment also 711 Duval St. 294-6911.

Florida Keys Community College Library Gallery • Paintings by Tennessee Williams, January 5 through February 2. Coordinated by George Brashears. Also, monthly literary readings by local poets and authors continues through spring. Open Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.; Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Junior College Road, Stock Island, 296-9081, ext. 202.

Is It Art • Hand-painted artwear, prints and wall-hangings. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 913 Duval St., 294-0411.

Kennedy Studios • Graphics and limited-edition prints. Daily, 9 a.m. to 10 p.m., 133 Duval St., 294-5850; daily, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., 716 Duval St., 296-7251; and a new store at 511 Duval St., 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Key West Art Center • Outdoor Craft

Show in downtown Key West January 27 to 28.

Members' work in gallery. Daily, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. 301 Front St., 294-1241.

Lane Gallery • Super realism by Tony Chimento, highlighting a fabric series; and Eric Hopkins watercolors and wood sculptures, January 15 through February 3. Daily, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. 1000 Duval St., 294-0067.

Lucky Street Gallery • New paintings and constructions by Roberta Marks. New ceramics by Anne Goldman and Tim Mather. Daily, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; open until 9 p.m. Thursday through Saturday. 919 Duval St., 294-3973.

Mosquito Coast Island Outfitters • Showing works by Key West artists; sculpture by Tom Joris, back-country paintings and prints by Michael Shannon, and works by others. Daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. 1107 Duval St., 296-6124.

Rose Lane Antiquities • Pre-Columbian art. Daily, noon to 5 p.m. and by appointment. 524 Rose Lane, 294-2270.

Whitehead Street Pottery • Stoneware,

porcelain, and Raku vessels. Daily except Tues-

day, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 1011 Whitehead St., 294-5067.

They are a vehicle for a wide range of thoughts and images; a must for many social occasions. Perhaps it is the T-shirts' versatility that keeps them young. They've been changing with the times, and wearable art is yet another mutation.

Community Notes

Shape up. Many opportunities exist in Key West to get in shape. Hatha Yoga classes with Ronnie and Nancy Dubinsky happen daily at 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. at Harris School on Southard Street. Integral Yoga with Roslyn LoPinto is ongoing on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday at 10:30 a.m., as is Iyengar Yoga with Carol Christine, Tuesday and Thursday at 7 p.m., at Island Wellness on Simonton Street. Island Wellness also offers Tai-Chi Ch'uan with Will Jones on Tuesday and Thursday at 5:30 p.m. Aerobics, dance and karate classes are offered at the Coffee Mill Cultural Center on Ashe Street. Call 296-9982 for the Coffee Mill's schedule.

Take some credit. Florida Keys Community College offers a selection of credit

courses for their winter semester. Included are "Prejudice, Stereotypes and Values," and "Children and Grief," both taught by Carol Alver; "Basic Archeology Weekend Workshop," taught by Duncan Mathewson III (certified basic scuba required); a "Weekend Workshop Shipboard Operations Dry Tortugas Trip," taught by Bill Trantham; and "Post Licensing for Real Estate Persons," taught by Greg O'Berry.

Better living for seniors. New central access phone numbers are in place for Monroe County's in-home service for elderly residents. They are: 852-7246 in the Upper Keys; 289-1520 in the Middle Keys; and 296-3110 in the Lower Keys. A line in each area ensures that senior citizens have improved access to the many local programs and services available to them. All in-home services offices are open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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Music Review

Michael McCloud: A Blue-Collar Musician

by Christine Naughton

Key West, Florida, is my home
I know I'll never want to roam
'Cause the ladies are lovely
And the drinkin's considered a sport.
And I'd rather be here
Drinkin' a beer
Than freezin' my ass in the North.

Michael McCloud
"Conch Republic Song," 1982

"Here's one I wrote about two marriages ago," said Michael McCloud. He began to pick a pretty theme on his guitar, singing in his laid-back, drawling baritone after a few bars of introduction. The song is "Missing You," and it's a nice tune, reminiscent of Michael Franks' style, with major-seventh chord progressions, a hint of Brazil in the rhythm and whimsical humor in the lyrics: *When baby's not around / I'm just like a rhinoceros / Big old ugly dude / Missing his wife so much it's preposterous.*

Currently appearing at Crazy Daizy's, the Holiday Inn La Concha's downstairs bar, Michael is accompanied by Bob Boyd on synthesizer. Their collaborative effort on a seldom-heard old favorite, "Scotch and Soda," was really a treat. Bob put in some soft, synthesized strings behind Michael's competent guitar playing and tender rendition of the lovely lyrics. They utilized a

drum machine to complete their sound. "This is the best musical combination I've ever had," Michael said enthusiastically. "Bob is great to work with."

Michael is one of the musicians in Key West who seems always to have a job. The reason for this is probably that, rather than striving for a loud and showy, spotlit presentation, Michael opts for medium volume and a relaxed, personal delivery. With his controlled, easy-going style, Michael has a way of making his audience feel comfortably at home.

"I'm a blue-collar musician," he said. "I took my shot at stardom a long time ago, and decided that, rather than waste energy all my life pursuing some vague dream of fame and glory, I would just do what I do best -- sing, play, write songs and entertain folks. I'm proud to say that in 32 years of playing music I have never missed a job, or even so much as shown up late."

"My father was an actor, so I guess that's where I got my ability to feel totally at ease as a front-man on stage."

Michael guesses he has written about 300 songs. His personal favorite is a poignant ballad called "Closin' the Bars." Each verse tells the story of a different person caught in the exhausting treadmill of alcoholism. It's a subject all too familiar to Michael, who stopped drinking a year ago after years of alcohol abuse.



Michael McCloud: Mirror, mirror on Duval...

He credits his wife, Rosie, and their one-year-old daughter, Aja Rose, with providing the incentive he needed to kick the bottle. "I knew when I met Rose that she was too good for me and I kept begging her to please stay around and give me a chance to change my ways and become worthy of her love. Thank God she did," he said quietly.

A native of Beckley, a small town in southern West Virginia, Michael bounced all over the country before landing in Key West nine years ago. "I love it here," he said. "Even with all the changes that have taken place since I've come down, I think the island will always retain its magic, I'll never leave."

Michael is extremely good at what he does, knows hundreds of songs, and is able to handle any request that may come in. "If I don't know it, I can fake it," he says.

What inhibits total appreciation of Michael and Bob's music at Crazy Daizy's has nothing to do with them. The room's cavernous interior and choppy layout of bars, partitions, mirrors, tables and chairs, together with the lousy placement of the stage, make it difficult to concentrate on the music. The acoustics are terrible no matter how the sound system is adjusted. This is a problem that has plagued Crazy Daizy's since it opened.

Nonetheless, a visit to Crazy Daizy's to catch Michael McCloud and Bob Boyd is definitely recommended. They appear in the evenings from 5 to 9, Monday through Friday. Michael also plays solo at Sloppy Joe's three or four afternoons a week.

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Theater Review

Nunsense: Weird sisters, good show

by Ann Boese

Sister Mary Regina sits on a bale of hay and examines the mysterious bottle found in the convent bathroom. R, u, s, h, she reads aloud from the label. She unscrews the cap and inhales, deeply. Her face scrunches, her eyes cross. "Now let's get back to *Nundance*, I mean *Flashnun*, no, I mean *Butch Cassidy and the Nundance Kid*," she garbles, clearing her throat. "Now let's get back and watch a couple of butch nuns dance." The Mother Superior howls ecstatically; she claps her hands like she's swatting at flies.

Hardly holy behavior, unless the holy one is a member of the Order of the Little Sisters of Hoboken. Last month in Key West five of these "little hobos," as they affectionately call themselves, starred in *Nunsense*, a song-and-dance show at the Red Barn Theatre, to raise funds.

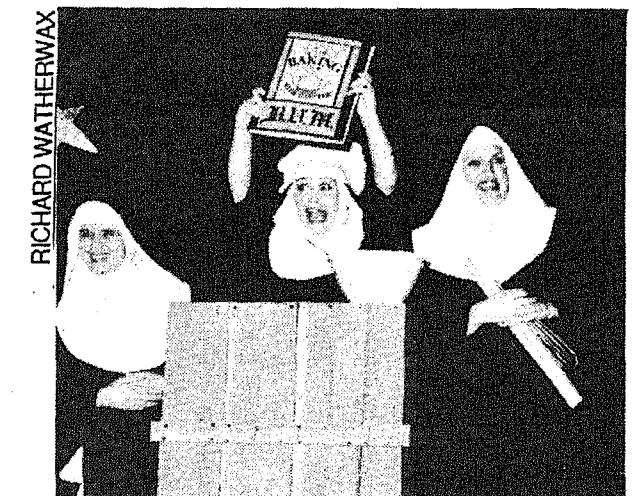
Sounds innocent, except that proceeds from the show were slated to bury four sisters who lie dead in the convent freezer. The nuns claim they don't have enough cash to bury the sisters, who died from botulism. Recently, however, these same nuns purchased a Beta-Max. Odd priorities, weird nuns.

Almost subliminally, death and selfishness secure one end of the tightwire of perversity on which playwright Dan Goggin balances his vivacious musical. On the other end, sex, drugs and, well, country-and-western music shift the characters just enough to entice theatergoers along the detailed but inconsequential storyline, told primarily through 31 songs.

Unfortunately Goggin never seriously explores the dark side of Catholic convention; his treatment is no more than a linear device which manifests as superficial jabs at the religion. What's left are cleverness and characterization. And, to the delight of the audience (and the relief of this critic), these work fairly well. *Nunsense* is a funny show.

Paramount to *Nunsense*'s success are the gags, fast ones and one-liners tangled within the script and lyrics. Sister Mary Amnesia (Victoria Roush) remembers her schedule with this cute little saying: "When the big hand is on the John and the little hand is on the Peter," she explains, referring to a clock marked with disciples, "I know it's time for the sisters to go down on their knees." These devices, fired with Uzi swiftness, hit the mark; an attentive listener won't get a break.

"This show is foolproof," said one actor after a mid-run performance. Granted it's tight. There's slim space for actors to spill out on the sides. But direction by Susan Hawken made this round of *Nunsense* -- the Barn produced the show three seasons back -- straightpin sharp. Hawken assembled an experienced well-rehearsed cast, musical director (Nancy Bauer) and choreographer (Penny Mollot-Jampol). Each actor pulled her own weight, creating



The Big Book: Nuns peddle their recipes.

overall uniformity of character, smooth and impenetrable.

Victoria Roush's Sister Mary Amnesia was the most intriguing character. With profound insight into how an adult without memory would behave, Roush projected touching innocence, openness and eagerness to please. Roush -- who possesses one of the island's most accomplished voices -- is also a fantastically strong soprano; she sang sensitively in "Lilacs Bring Back Memories," and courageously in "I Could've Gone to Nashville."

In her leading role, Marjorie Paul-Shook oozed Sister Mary Regina's firm but faulty authority out into the audience, establishing energetic rapport. Hamming it up less than she often does on stage, Paul-Shook was sensational in creating a Mother Superior who was part Mae West, part Miss Jean Brodie and part high school sophomore. In her bump-and-grind number "Turn Up the Spotlight," Paul-Shook was killer.

When she danced on her toes, Neo-nun Sister Mary Leo, played by Mimi McDonald, added a touch of the classical. Goggin did not develop this character as fully as the others, but McDonald achieved an identity and maintained it through steadiness. She was acting solidly when she resolved an internal problem on the phone, hilariously interpreting signals from Mother Superior.

McDonald played the young puppy, easily influenced by Sister Robert Anne, a rough-and-tumble gal from Brooklyn. Penny Mollot-Jampol was originally cast in that role and received favorable review, but mid-run she had to fly home due to illness in the family. Filling in, Susan Hawken was excellent. She was spunky, relaxed and seemed to enjoy a wonderful time on stage.

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Solares Hill -- January 1990 -- Page 41

In the first four cases, characters' personality components were laid out to the audience at the beginning of the show. But Christine Naughton's Sister Mary Hubert, right-hand nun to the Mother Superior, evolved. Hers was a multi-layered character who struggled with an awkward position midway between upper echelon and underling. An anxious straddler, she suffered from a kind of middle-child syndrome, not certain of which way to turn. Naughton achieved this conflict nicely.

Conversely, this actor's alto voice carries a distinct, confident, jazz sound. At the end of Act 2 she belted out a nitty-gritty "Holier Than Thou" with the heat and throatiness of a Pentecostal gospel singer. Naughton was the pinch hitter. Nice strategy.

Conductor and pianist Nancy Bauer was a solid musical, as well as visual, element of the show. Her timing was impeccable; the instrumental rhythms and sounds, precise. Being able to see the conductor signal drums, organ and woodwinds added depth to the production.

Only one or two songs from this musical were memorable, but the professional quality of musical execution stuck.

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Grits, Grunts and Gruyere

Banana Lore: Tales of the Great Golden Fruit

by Jeanne McClow

I ate one golden afternoon a few weeks back, one of my tender, young banana trees crashed to the ground. No longer was it able to support its 19-pound bundle of 46 sweeter-than-heaven Cuban bananas.

I wondered what I was going to do with this vegetative gift, which had come at an inconvenient time. One friend offered to lend me his food dehydrator. But baking away the bananas' fragrant, dewy moisture and withering their superbly smooth, creamy flesh seemed a downright sacrilege. I decided to bake muffins, instead.

People expect greatness from a food writer's kitchen, and these muffins were going to be Caribbean-style -- rich, dense, moist, filled with sweet tropical flavors. I planned to bake them in a cast-iron replica of a harvest mold. These precoated pans have become so popular, they can be purchased in seashell or heart shapes, too.

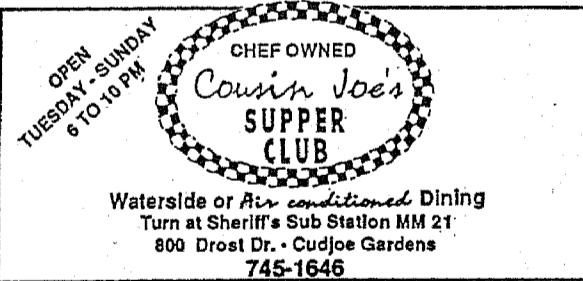
Muffins freeze well, so you can make them weeks, even months, in advance. I started chopping, adding ingredients as I went along. Since each batch took only three or four bananas, I baked extra batches and sent them to friends up North.

Incidentally, bananas are very "in" these days, mainly because of our enthusiasm for cuisines that use them as staples -- Cajun and Creole, Mexican and Caribbean, South American. Americans have always savored banana cream pies, custards and souffles, the famous New Orleans bananas Foster, fried bananas and fritters with sugar and spice, banana cakes of every description, banana ice cream and banana splits, even banana pancakes.

Bananas are good for you. Only 85 calories each, they are loaded with Vitamin B6, potassium and fiber. And they're cheap, too. Eating a banana a day seems a deliciously sensible way to go through life. In fact, the word *banana* itself supposedly translates into "fruit of the wise."

Recently, I consumed a banana dessert that surely was whipped up by angels and sent scudding to earth on a cloud. Actually, it quietly crept from the superb kitchen at Rich's Cafe.

Tucked behind the graceful Eden House guest house on Fleming Street, far from the Duval Street din, Rich's has -- for breakfast or lunch and, especially, Sunday brunch -- become a favorite of those who have discovered it. Partly inside a formal, French-windowed room, the dining area consists primarily of a secluded patio,



Tropical Banana Muffins

The following recipe, adapted from Caribbean Cooking by Judith Bastyra, made 16 muffins and two mini-loaves. According to the original, it should make two regular-size loaves.

2 tbsp unsalted butter, softened
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup dark brown sugar, firmly packed
2 eggs, lightly beaten
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp ground cinnamon
Pinch of salt
4 to 5 Cuban bananas, mashed but not pureed (if using the store-bought variety, use only 3)
1/3 cup milk mixed with 1 tsp fresh lemon juice
1 tsp vanilla extract
1/2 cup chopped dates
1/2 cup golden raisins
1/2 cup shredded, sweetened coconut (if using fresh, increase sugar)
2 tsp minced tangerine peel
1 cup pecans, roughly chopped

Preheat oven to 300 degrees and oil the baking pans. With a hand-held mixer, beat the butter, two sugars and eggs in a large bowl until light and creamy. In another bowl, sift together the dry ingredients and then gradually beat into the sugar mixture. Stir in the remaining ingredients, spoon into the prepared pans and place in the center of the oven. Bake about 1 to 1 1/4 hours, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. The tops will not brown, but will remain golden. Remove from the oven, loosen the edges with a sharp knife and invert onto a rack. Serve warm.

Dinner is served Monday and Wednesday through Saturday, from 6 to 10 p.m. Wine and beer are available. Reservations are not required. Prices are moderate; the restaurant accepts major credit cards and offers a local discount.

Mira, Norman van Aken and Proal Perry's 1988-to-1989 foray into dining which was too new and too expensive for the town, is now gone. But the dusky velvet Italian chairs, the beautiful wood accents and the famous country French kitchen *trompe l'oeil* mural remain. On December 4, the elegant room reopened as the Marquesa Cafe.

I spoke with executive chef and manager Dennis O'Hara, a Culinary Institute of America graduate who spent the last five years at La Te Da, about the *New World* cuisine the cafe is featuring. He explained that, though the term is a catch-all, many of

the dishes are native to South America -- Brazil, Argentina, Peru. Other regional cuisines, such as American Cajun and Creole, Indian and Southern are also well represented.

The menu is most intriguing, and I look forward to trying it once the kitchen is comfortable. Here are just a few of its exotic offerings: Cajun-spiced calamari with green mango salsa; grilled red-onion soup topped with house-baked Navaho bread and *queso blanco*; roasted *poisson* with a bourbon, pecan-and-lime sauce; a flaming sword of pork tenderloin done Brazilian-style; and a South African sesame seed-encrusted barbecued rack of lamb.

The Marquesa Cafe, 600 Fleming Street at the corner of Simonton, is open daily from 6 p.m. to 1 a.m., except Tuesdays. There is a full bar and reservations are recommended. The phone number is 292-1244. Prices are on the low side of expensive; major credit cards are accepted.

New on the culinary scene this year are pie pans with perforated bottoms. The design lets moisture escape while allowing heat to enter. Now any cook can bake a crust that's crisp all over. This comes not a minute too soon since we'll all cook dishes grandma did if the trend-watchers prove prophetic. Two pans from Williams-Sonoma in San Francisco will cost \$6, or you can perforate your own.

Lite water, too? Sure enough. Sashaying into the intensely competitive bottled-water market is this newcomer. What makes it lite? Simply the removal of the minerals,

which means that it has no aftertaste because nothing remains to taste. It also can be pitched as being *pure*. Ironically, the mineral content and taste are exactly what Europeans, who regard their waters as seriously as their wines, revere. But to Americans, less is evidently more, even when it comes to price -- a 1 1/2-liter bottle runs upwards of a dollar.

Coming next month: Kit Carson's wife's turkey-leg soup. It costs about \$3.50 to make and is splendid -- hearty but with refreshingly offbeat flavor combinations for those of us who live east of the Mississippi. This lady must have been one of the most whiz-bang cooks in the Old West. She probably even wore moccasins. ☐



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JANUARY CALENDAR

Cultural Events

1/5 • **Jimmy Buffett** autographs his book, *Tales From Margaritaville*, at the Key West Island Bookstore, 513 Fleming Street, from 6 to 8 p.m. Advance phone orders are accepted; call 294-2904 early to reserve your copy.

1/6 • **Penderecki String Quartet** returns to the Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center for one concert only, at 8 p.m., as part of this year's Chamber Music Series. Call 294-6232.

1/10 to 2/4 • **Steel Magnolias** opens at the Red Barn Theatre. This play, written by Robert Harling and directed by Joy Hawkins, is a hilarious visit with the regulars at Truvy's Hair Salon. Curtain is at 8 p.m., Wednesday through Sunday. Call 296-9911.

1/13 • **Paul Zaloom** will present an evening of satire and humor at the Waterfront Playhouse on Mallory Square. Curtain is 8 p.m.; tickets are \$12. Call 294-5015.

Through 1/14 • **I Do, I Do** at Jan McArt's Cabaret Theatre on Mallory Square, starring Lee Meriwether and Marshall Borden. Curtain is 8 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday. Call 296-2120.

1/16 • **Broadway to Hollywood**, starring female impersonator Jim Bailey as Judy Garland, opens at Jan McArt's Cabaret Theatre. Curtain is at 8 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday. Call 296-2120.

1/25 • **Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo** performs at 8 p.m. at Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center. This world-famous ballet troupe is in Key West for one performance only, at 8 p.m. Call 294-6232.

1/26, 27 & 28 • **John Waters and Andy Warhol Film Festival** at the Waterfront Playhouse on Mallory Square. Tickets are \$5, show times to be announced. Call 294-5015.

1/27 & 28 • **Fifth Annual Arts Expo Craft Show** on Whitehead and Greene Streets, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free.

Beauties all: Les Ballets de Trockadero de Monte Carlo will perform on January 25 at 8 p.m. at the Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center on Stock Island.



2/2 • **Jazz luminary Taj Mahal** visits the Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center for one performance only, at 8 p.m. Early reservations are suggested. Call 294-6232.

Common Good

1/2 • **City Commission Meeting**, Key West City Hall, City Commission Chambers, 525 Angela Street, 6 p.m. Always open to the public and televised on Channel 5. Call 292-8200.

1/3 • **Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council** will hold a public hearing on plans to ban fishing of jewfish from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the American Legion Hall, 5610 Junior College Rd., Stock Island. Call (813) 228-2815 for more information.

1/3 • **The National Organization for Women** will meet at 7:30 p.m. in Room 1E at the Coral Shores High School. Non-sexist language will be the discussion topic. Call Maria Richardson at 451-3466.

1/5 • **Museum of Natural History of the Florida Keys** officially opens at 10:30 a.m. Visitors can experience the natural beauty of the 63.5-acre Crane Point Hammock wilderness area, located at MM 50.

1/9 & 10 • **County Commission Meeting**

1/15 • **City Commission Meeting**, Key West City Hall, City Commission Chambers, 525 Angela Street, 6 p.m. Always open to the public and televised on Channel 5. Call 292-8200.

1/18 • **Public Hearing** at 10 a.m. at the Marathon Junior Chamber of Commerce building by the **Monroe County Planning Commission**. The commission will be sitting as the local planning agency to consider proposed amendments to the county land development regulations and to make recommendations concerning the same to the county commissioners.

1/18 • **The Foundation for SHARE** (Self-Healing AIDS-Related Experience) presents a special evening with its founding director, Niro Asistant, from 6 to 8 p.m., at the Metropolitan Community Church, 1215 Petronia Street. Niro will tell the story of her healing from AIDS-Related Complex and answer audience questions. Her book, *The Healing Yes*, will be published later this year by Simon & Schuster.

1/19, 20, 21 • **The Healing Yes**, a weekend seminar for self-healing and personal growth, with Niro Asistant and Paul Duffy, will take place at AIDS Help, Inc., 2700 Flagler Ave. Tuition is \$100 in advance; \$125 after January 15. Scholarships are available for people with AIDS with financial limitations. Call 292-1985.

1/27 & 28 • **Civil War Days** at Fort Zachary Taylor. During this living history weekend, Union troops will once again

occupy the fort as they did throughout the Civil War. Activities are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, and 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday. Saturday from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m., there will be a lantern-light tour of the fort for all visitors.

Fun For Funds

1/17 • **Antonia's Restaurant** holds its fourth annual dinner to benefit AIDS Help, Inc. at 8 p.m. Owners Antonia Berto, Philip Smith and Claudia Salvadore have donated dinner for 100. The entire ticket price of \$125 per person will go to AIDS Help, Inc. Call 296-6196 for reservations.

1/19 • **Ruth Guttman Memorial Benefit Concert to Save the Whales** takes place at 8 p.m. at Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center. Local musicians gather to pay tribute to Ruth Guttman, who died in May of 1985, and to raise money for the "Save the Whales" programs of Greenpeace. Tickets are \$15, available at TWFAC, Greenpeace, Prudential-Knight Realty, Pier House Market, Fast Buck Freddie's, Key West Deli & Gourmet, and Tasty Trash.

RESTAURANT DIRECTORY

Antonia's Restaurant, 615 Duval Street. Excellent Northern Italian cuisine in friendly, elegant atmosphere. Dinner served from 7 to 11 p.m. nighty nighty. Visa, Mastercard. Phone 294-6565.

Bubba's Beijing, at The Reach, Simonton Street on the Ocean. Open 7 days a week for breakfast, lunch and dinner. 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. Phone 296-5000.

Flamingo Crossing, 1105 Duval Street. The locals' favorite dessert spot features fresh-made ice creams, sorbets, honey yogurts and all-fruit vitari. Open Sunday through Thursday from noon to 11 p.m.; noon to midnight Friday and Saturday. Phone 296-6124.

Gringo's, 509 1/2 Duval Street, open seven days, noon to midnight. Authentic Mexican cuisine and cocktails. Open for dinner nightly; reservations are suggested. 294-0717.

Cafe Exile, 700 Duval at Angela Street. Open 24 hours. A European streetside cafe known for its eggs, burgers and alfresco ambience. Experience fine dining in Sinbad's Garden, enjoy good company in Streetside from 4 to 9 p.m., Disco in Backstreet -- The Dance Alternative. Phone 296-0991.

El Loro Verde, 404 Southard Street, is more than a Mexican restaurant. El Loro Verde presents innovative yet authentic variations of both Mexican and Caribbean dishes. Popular for

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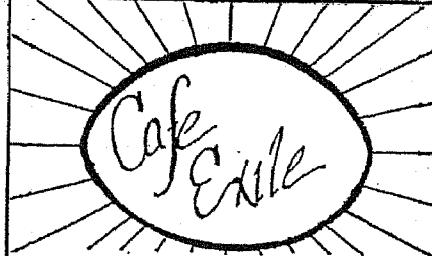
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Louie's Backyard, 700 Waddell on the Atlantic Ocean, open from 11:30 a.m. to 2 a.m. Featuring international cuisine in a restaurant ranked among South Florida's best. Dining inside or outdoors on the water. Enjoy cocktails on the Afterdeck Bar. Phone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

Nick's Coastal Cafe, located in the Hyatt Key West at 601 Front Street, open daily, serving lunch and dinner. For waterfront dining and the best Italian cuisine, call 296-9900 for reservations.

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.



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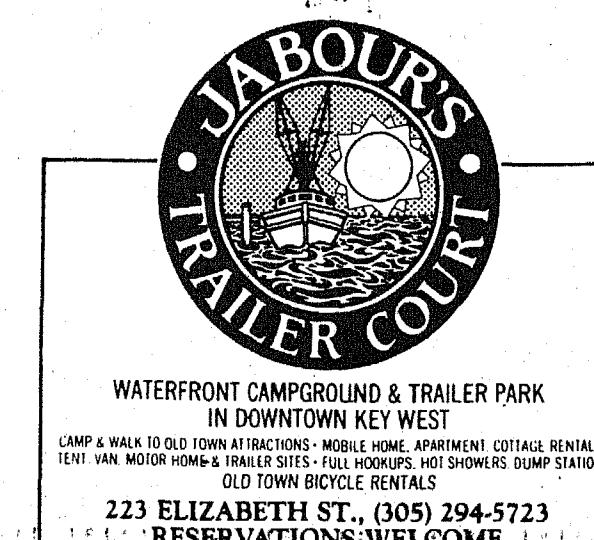
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Guy VanOrt was named resident manager of Marriott's 314-room **Casa Marina Resort**. VanOrt, 30, has been with Marriott hotels for nine years, most recently at the 400-room Marriott Greenspoint in Houston where he was rooms division manager. He received his associate's degree in hotel and restaurant management from the State University of New York at Delhi.

Southwestern United States.

Sunglass specialists Regis and Brian Yoest of **Just Ray Bans and Just Hats**, located at 423 Front Street at the Harbor House Market, stocks over 200 styles of Bausch and Lomb Ray Bans and over 50 styles of hats, including Panamas, ladies' fashion and Key West Caps. The shop is open seven days a week from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; call 294-0225. The Yoests also own **Shades of Key West**.

John Santiago and Hair People is the first beauty salon to add therapeutic massage to its list of services. Fully clothed, a client may relax in a special chair, while licensed massage therapist Michael Lackey applies his techniques to the back, neck and shoulders. Treatments are 10 to 30 minutes and cost from \$10 to \$25. Call 296-2040 for a sample or appointment.

Louise McCart opened **Off Duval**, a new men's and women's Coton boutique in Luani Plaza. In addition to clothing, the shop carries hand-made gifts and oil paintings. It is open Monday through Friday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 296-3317.

Director Gary Young announces the opening of the **Island Wellness Salon**, which features the massage expertise of Kathy DesRoches. The facility at 530 Simonton is also the place to go for fresh-squeezed juices, yoga and wellness classes, self-help books or tapes, haircuts, permanent waves, leg waxing and facials. Call 296-SELF or stop by for class schedule and information.

Recently opened **T.L. Marble**, owned by David Dresie and Cathee Marble, is a gift emporium that specializes in unique gifts and non-essentials for the home at reasonable prices. Silk throws, lamps, jewelry boxes and marbles are among the inventory. The shop is decorated in *trompe l'oeil*, and is located at 1102 Duval Street in the Cuban Club. It is open seven days a week; call 296-5075.

Solares Hill -- January 1990 -- Page 47
It's also time to redefine your closer relationships. You may need to explore your roots in order to get a better idea of goals. Soul searching seems appropriate now.

SCORPIO

Your powers of persuasion are unbelievable now. Make sure your product or service is something *you* would want to purchase. Retrograde Mercury can teach karmic lessons if you push some idea, product or service on someone else and know it's not worth its salt. Writing, publishing, tutoring, sales, teaching, advertising and promotion are best highlighted now.

SAGITTARIUS

Finances are emphasized during January. You may redefine spending habits, look differently at worldly wealth and how it bears on personal satisfaction, or redefine price structuring at your place of business. Don't lump everything onto the limiting scales of dollars and cents in ascertaining relative worth of intangibles.

CAPRICORN

Planetary energy brings you public approbation and a need to redefine personal priorities. Retrograde Mercury cautions you to think twice -- or thrice -- about anything you say or put into writing. Venus re-enters your sign on January 17 and adds to your personal charisma and magnetism -- not bad for love! Mars comes to your aid on January 24, ushering in two months of energetic efforts and great personal stamina.

AQUARIUS

After the holiday season, you need to get off by yourself and tune your own strings! This is your most introspective phase of the year. Prior to your birthday, you need to contact your inner soul in order to get centered and prepare for the new year ahead. Now is the time to review life's possibilities, and not the time to make long-range commitments.

PISCES

You'll be in demand to chair every committee, host every function and run around with friends. But separate duty from pleasure and allow yourself time to do things you wish to do. This month highlights "wish power" for you. If all your time is dedicated to others, your own identity may suffer. Give time to yourself by taking a trip or a painting class; get a beauty make-over or a massage.

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corn planets in your house of mutual monies or joint finance. You will face some lessons in fund management. Eliminate unnecessary expenses. Elements of an old way of life are no longer relevant. Let go of life's appendages. New things lie ahead!

CANCER

The new decade begins under the numerical vibration of *one*, which, of course, intensifies independent decision-making. Add to that the emphasis on the karmic sign of Capricorn and we all become symbolic goats, in solitary pursuit of our mountain goal. Mercury will be in its tricky retrograde mode until January 20; our choices will be subject to reflection. As Venus retrograde re-enters Capricorn, many of us look at romantic love in terms of goals: the starry-eyed version passes out the window now. There's a profoundly serious note in the air when the Sun aligns with Saturn/Neptune from January 2 through 9. Some phases in life force each of us to answer to a higher power; this is a heavily karmic time.

LEO

Intense focus on work. Life may seem like a tour of duty. The planets demand career excellence of you, and there are opportunities to go beyond the call of duty and do a job well. But consider the Biblical law of moderation: Even work must be tempered with rest and rejuvenation. Your body will warn you when it needs certain foods, sunlight, fresh air or exercise; or when it is time to drop debilitating habits like drugs, smoking or drinking.

VIRGO

You're lucky this month! Everyone may envy you. The stars bring five influences to your romance sector. But don't turn love into ambition (like marriage) and forget the process of loving. Ideas find practical outlets, and money and talent go hand-in-hand. With Mercury, your ruler, in retrograde, you may have difficulty keeping track of all your creative commitments. Be gentle with errors of others in order to know love more fully.

LIBRA

Have you moved yet? Changed roommates, redecorated or conducted major home improvements? If not, Mars will get improvements going by month's end when it enters your sector of residential issues.

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Monday, Jan. 1 Noon-4 Barry Cuda 5-9 Mel & Tracy 10-2 Bill Blue & The Nervous Guys	Tuesday, Jan. 2 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mel & Tracy 10-2 The Road Ducks	Wednesday, Jan. 3 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mel & Tracy 10-2 The Road Ducks	Thursday, Jan. 4 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 The Road Ducks	Friday, Jan. 5 Noon-4 Barry Cuda 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 The Road Ducks	Saturday, Jan. 6 Noon-4 Barry Cuda 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 The Road Ducks
Sunday, Jan. 7 Noon-4 Barry Cuda 5-9 Mel & Tracy 10-2 Bill Blue & The Nervous Guys	Monday, Jan. 8 Noon-4 Barry Cuda 5-9 Mel & Tracy 10-2 Bill Blue & The Nervous Guys	Tuesday, Jan. 9 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mel & Tracy 10-2 Tino Gonzalas	Wednesday, Jan. 10 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 Tino Gonzalas	Thursday, Jan. 11 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 Tino Gonzalas	Friday, Jan. 12 Noon-4 Barry Cuda 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 Tino Gonzalas
Sunday, Jan. 14 Noon-4 Barry Cuda 5-9 Mel & Tracy 10-2 Tino Gonzalas	Monday, Jan. 15 Noon-4 Barry Cuda 5-9 Mel & Tracy 10-2 Bill Blue & The Nervous Guys	Tuesday, Jan. 16 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mel & Tracy 10-2 The Heat & The Cold Sweat Horns	Wednesday, Jan. 17 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 The Heat & The Cold Sweat Horns	Thursday, Jan. 18 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 The Heat & The Cold Sweat Horns	Friday, Jan. 19 Noon-4 Barry Cuda 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 The Heat & The Cold Sweat Horns
Sunday, Jan. 21 Noon-4 Barry Cuda 5-9 Mel & Tracy 10-2 The Heat & The Cold Sweat Horns	Monday, Jan. 22 Noon-4 Barry Cuda 5-9 Mel & Tracy 10-2 Bill Blue & The Nervous Guys	Tuesday, Jan. 23 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mel & Tracy 10-2 The Heat & The Cold Sweat Horns	Wednesday, Jan. 24 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 The Heat & The Cold Sweat Horns	Thursday, Jan. 25 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 The Heat & The Cold Sweat Horns	Friday, Jan. 26 Noon-4 Barry Cuda 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 The Heat & The Cold Sweat Horns
Sunday, Jan. 28 Noon-4 Barry Cuda 5-9 Mel & Tracy 10-2 The Heat & The Cold Sweat Horns	Monday, Jan. 29 Noon-4 Barry Cuda 5-9 Mel & Tracy 10-2 Bill Blue & The Nervous Guys	Tuesday, Jan. 30 Noon-4 Barry Cuda 5-9 Mel & Tracy 10-2 Calabash	Wednesday, Jan. 31 Noon-4 Mike McCloud 5-9 Mike & John 10-2 Calabash		