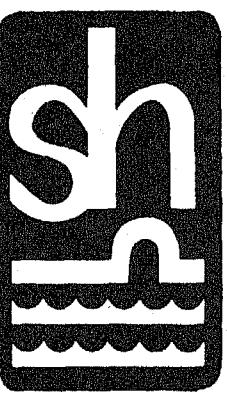


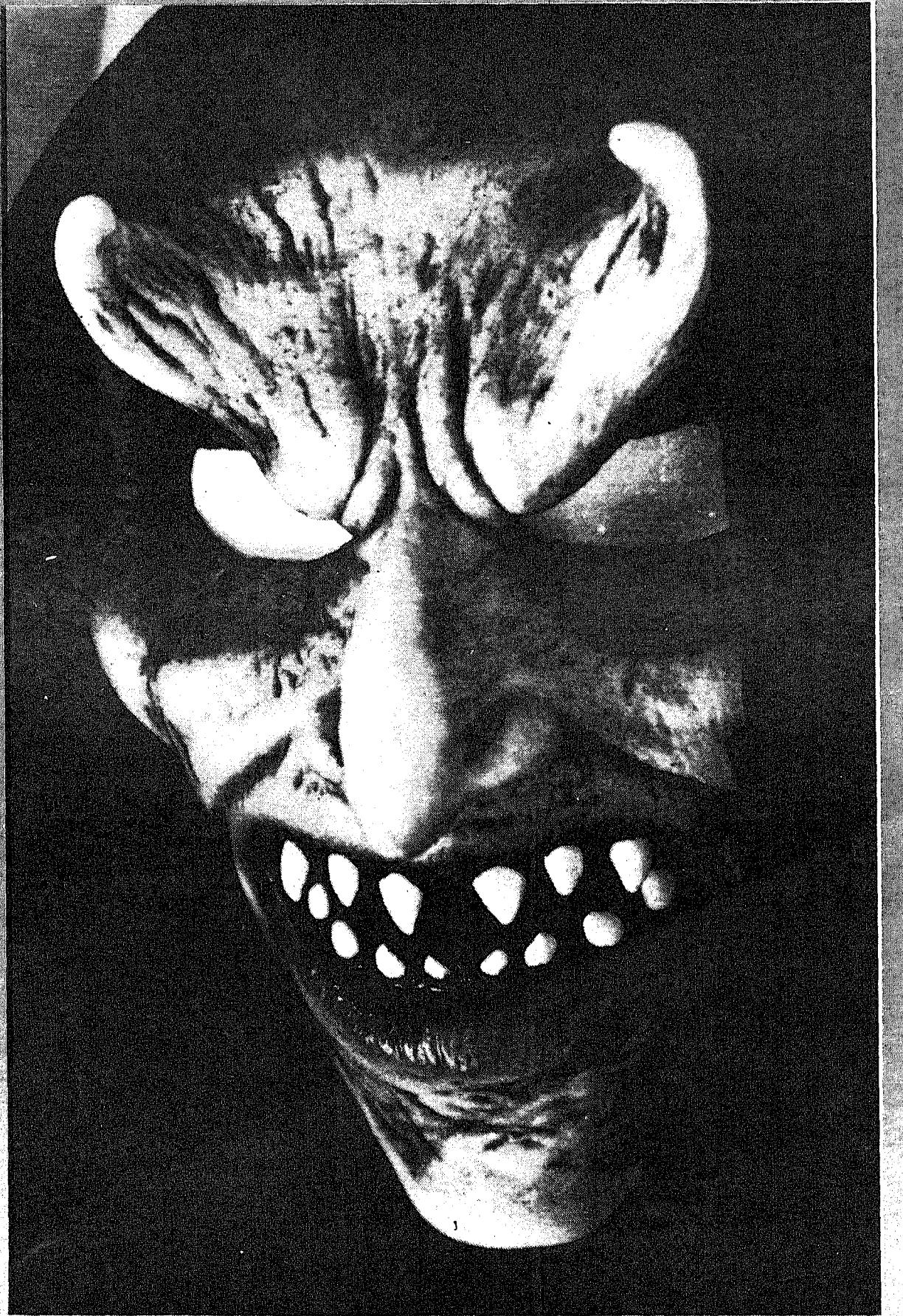
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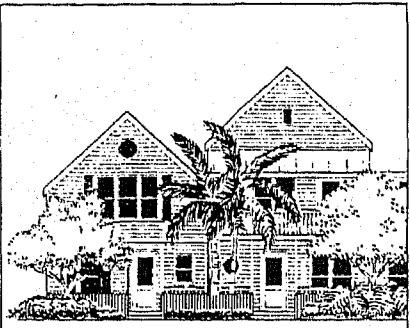


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## OPINION

Of course the City of Key West should buy the Key West Bight. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and Key West would be foolish not to take advantage of it.

Although the investment is substantial, the likelihood that it will pay large dividends both in producing a healthy income stream that will benefit the beleaguered taxpayers and in complementing the city's other attractions. The bight is a winner.

The cynics who fret that the government can't do anything right should look at the proposal more carefully. The city has promised to hire a professional management firm to run the bight as an enterprise. The manager's compensation would be based in part on how much money the bight makes under his or her supervision.

The purpose of the purchase is to preserve the city's working waterfront, and to provide public access to it. Yet a healthy interest in the economics of the waterfront is critical. The economic potential is huge in the long term; managed correctly, it could be a long-term windfall for the entire city. Revitalization could spread from it to other parts of the community.

The advisory committee headed by John Parks that recommended purchase to the city commission is about as blue-ribbon as such groups can get, composed of people from all points on the political spectrum. The committee

was unanimous in its findings. Business people, professionals and just plain folks decided that the city couldn't afford to pass up such a unique opportunity. Their recommendation shouldn't be taken lightly.

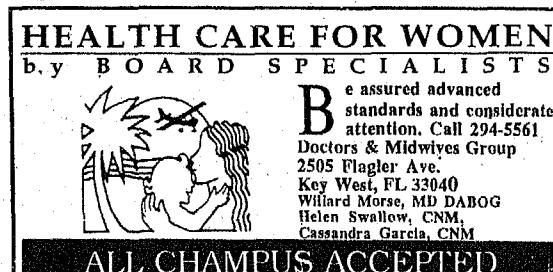
"We all came into it liking the idea of the city buying the bight," said Debbie Horan, "but not having the information. It took us eight or ten months to reach the comfort level where we could recommend it to others."

Many people have said that they will vote for the purchase of the bight because the city should have acquired Truman Annex when it had the chance. In an island so tight in its supply of land, it's hard to imagine any large land acquisition as a bad business idea, especially one which like the bight brings with it immediate cash flow. But it's the unique character of the bight, the fact that there ain't no more where that one came from, that makes the involvement of government, the true monopolist of society, imperative. Like it or not, in this situation there's no other entity that can do the job for Key West.

This isn't a brand-new idea unique to Key West, mind you. Dozens of cities have already turned their waterfronts into assets, most of them successfully. Now it's Key West's turn. An enormous vote of confidence is needed from the people of Key West on November 3, and I hope that the people will give it.

-- Geddy Sveikauskas

Photographer Janet Marcantonio is responsible for this issue's cover. This scary Michael Stark mask, just right for the conjunction of Fantasy Fest and Halloween, was in Fast Buck Freddie's front window.



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Thomas Geyer, President  
Frank E. Taylor, Vice President  
Geddy Sveikauskas, Secretary-Treasurer

Editor Geddy Sveikauskas	Editorial Assistant Alyson Simmons	Sales Manager Michele Grahil Kathy Floam	Accounting Patti Anthony Typesetting Adele Gerbracht Distribution Jim Eldredge
Art Director Suzanne Pereira	City Reporter Lee Irby	Peter Ginsberg	

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## It ain't over even when it's over

### Navy policing at Peary Court stirs community resentment

by Jack Lawson

When the Navy tore the first bucketful of soil and tree roots out of Peary Court three weeks ago, it did more than gouge a bleak wound in the soil of Key West's last open parkland: Before construction begins, the 29-acre recharge field protecting the waters of Garrison Bight from pollution will have been destroyed, replaced by a new area of stormwater runoff.

Instead of allowing rainwater to percolate and filter through grass and layers of rock and soil, development of Peary Court will add more roads, and about eight acres of other paved areas. Between rains, a film of pollution—mostly petrochemicals, fertilizers and pesticides—accumulates. Picked up by stormwater, the noxious soup will be directed into injection wells or sluiced into the boat basin.

It's a simple process, and solving the pollution problem has a simple solution: Don't develop on sensitive recharge areas near fragile waterways.

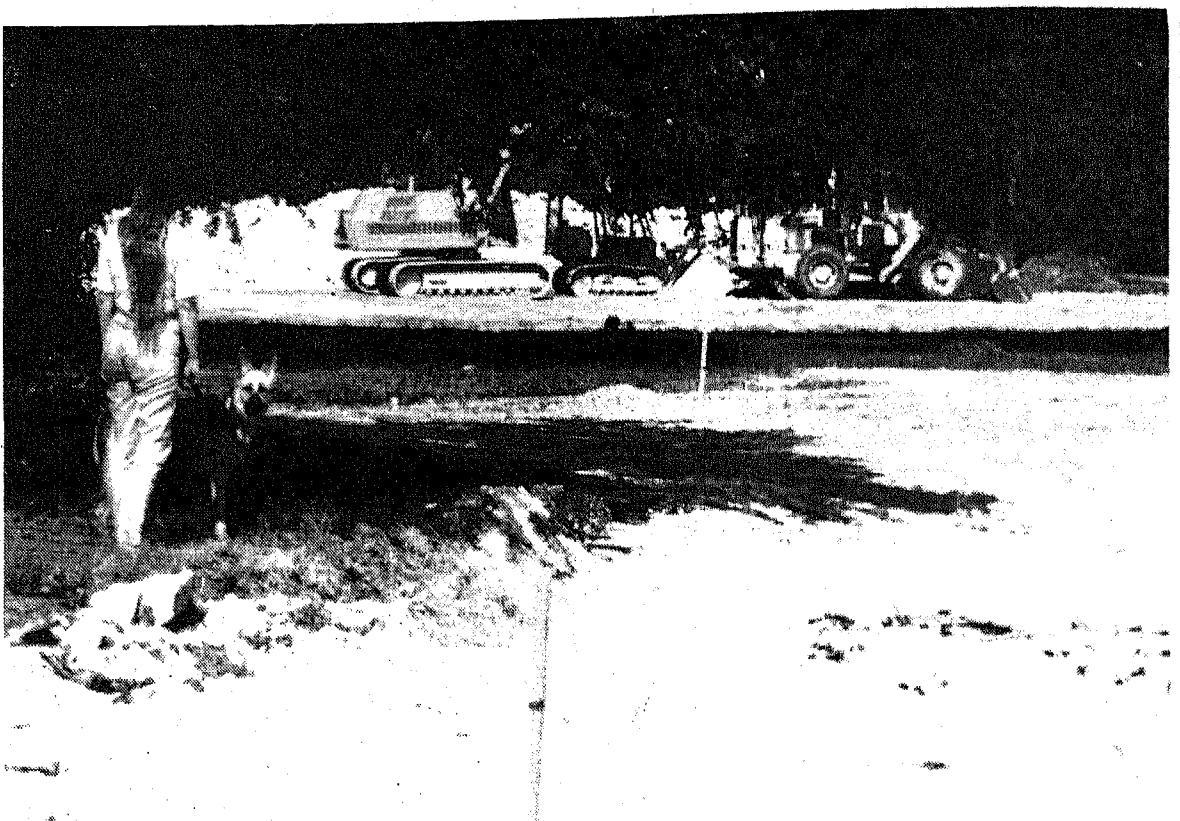
Since 1988, the Key West Naval Air Station, the owner of the land, has claimed it desperately needs housing for junior enlisted men. It borrowed some \$14 million from the Coast Guard to construct the project.

Ex-city commissioner Harry Powell says the Navy is merely engaged in a land grab. To ensure the success of the Peary Court project, Powell contends, officers have violated both federal and state laws, lied to Congress, deceived state agencies, bullied the people of Key West, and engaged in arrogant and criminal behavior. Strong stuff.

Powell says he has no personal axe to grind.

"All I want is to see that the people of Key West are treated fairly," he says. "This [development] is a tremendous waste of tax dollars."

To prove his point, on October 11 Powell attempted to hold a press conference in a corner of Peary Court identified as a Civil-War cemetery. Captain Michael Curry, the base commander, ordered Powell arrested for



ROBERTA BROWN

criminal trespass.

"Harry wanted to make a point," Curry said amiably at a press conference afterwards. "And I had to make mine."

In an interview the following day, Powell said the point he was making was to emphasize the power and influence the Navy has in Key West by exercising his constitutional right to free speech.

"Not too many people know the Navy controls 20% of this island, most of its off-limits to the rest of the community. [They] have luxuries that are only available to an entity that pays no taxes, don't have to deal with the high cost of land, and maintain that they do not have to follow growth management laws."

Powell also asserts that the Navy, after having its first environmental assessment characterized as "wholly inadequate" by federal

district judge James Lawrence King, contrived another "inaccurate and ... more impressive by bulk than content" to avoid a comprehensive environmental impact study. (Florida's Department of Community Affairs requires an exhaustive EIS from developers of property large enough to have a significant environmental or community impact.)

"Just what they're doing now is illegal," said Powell six days after site destruction began at Eaton and White streets. "They have no permits from SWIFTMUD [South Florida Water Management District] for those injection wells. Moreover, it's illegal to pump untreated stormwater into injection wells."

Chuck Emery, a hydrologist with the water board in Fort Myers, indicated that his agency would send inspectors to the site, as well as contacting the Department of Environmental Regulation.

Both the Navy and its contractor,

Caddell Construction (Montgomery, Alabama),

deny improprieties and insist they have proper

licenses for all the work being performed.

But scraping more than ten acres of parkland has, so far, had a more immediate impact on some residents than any threat of long-term pollution.

As parks go, Peary Court really isn't all that special, the Navy says. It wasn't well taken care of.

There was plenty of grass and trees, and enough fire ants to keep people hopping. Even on the hottest day there was a cool evening breeze. The park wasn't sanctioned so it lacked amenities like benches and drinking fountains. Still, a lot of people used it, despite the signs.

After Powell's arrest, however, the Navy instituted a patrol by military police. Many residents were concerned.



ROBERTA BROWN



ROBERTA BROWN

"I don't understand how the Navy can do this," said Mart D., owner of a small but fashionable hotel in Old Town. He customarily walked his dog in the evening. Shortly after the Powell incident, he says, armed Navy police in full combat gear threatened to arrest him and four others for a ten-foot incursion from White Street ... and for refusing to give names and addresses.

Such fear is nothing new to supporters of Peary Court. Jim Farrell, president of Last Stand, the citizens' organization which gathered almost 6000 signatures in 1989, and Herb Walker, the organization's attorney, say many members have encountered social and business pressures; some subtle, some more conspicuous.

Nevertheless, a lot of runners and bicyclists used the park. Most riders cut through from Eisenhower to White Street; some were in a hurry to get downtown, and waited impatiently for the light on Southard to change. Others were parents teaching their children to ride safely away from traffic. Occasionally, an exuberant rider would circle the park at Olympic speeds.

Now they're all chased down by troops in

white Broncos. The woman in her late twenties, perhaps early thirties, was astride a red Conch cruiser, Key West's famous no-name bicycle, a vehicle with fat tires and no gears indigenous to the lower part of America's only tropical archipelago. A child—about two years of age—clung to her as she half-walked and half-rode the bike over the lumpy grass leading out of the park.

Two armed troopers demanded identification. Arriving in a white Bronco, a third joining the fray. A young golden retriever gambled about, oblivious of the fat tires or the tears running down her cheeks.

"It's a goddamn police state," she fumed, angry at herself for giving in to tears. "I can't believe this is America any longer. They can do anything."

Ted R. said he knew her, but that's expected. He's out and about so much he knows everybody in this community. To the rest of the dog-walking society, she was a stranger.

Nevertheless, they gathered around her, a small group of men and women, accompanied by an amiable pack of dogs who had witnessed the pickup chase the woman



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down.

Nobody made a move to help, though. Perhaps no one was sure help was necessary.

The frisbee team from Angela Street and beyond is gone too. They were young, sub-teens mostly.

On any given night there were a dozen or more dogs harmlessly chasing each other around the park, while the owners sat where the fire ants weren't. It was all rather democratic, a kind of social club: a lawyer, a restauranteur, a mechanic and dive captain, a photographer, a secretary—even a Navy pilot. Everybody knew the name and life history of the dogs, and almost nothing about the people.

"We liked it that way," Danny B. said. "We could share what we had in common—we all love dogs—without a big social commitment."

And there was an elderly blind man

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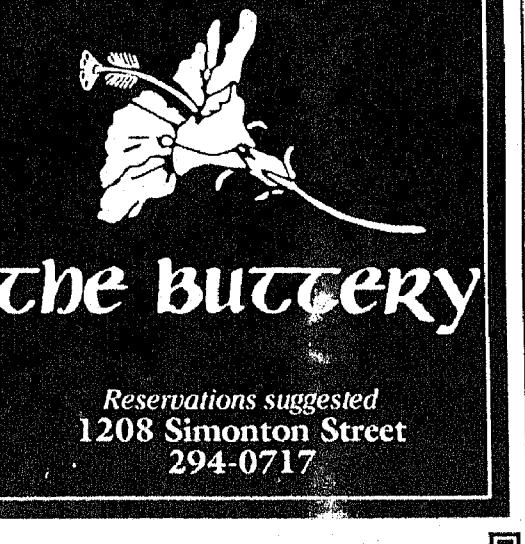
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who, guided by a cane and his wife, strolled into the park to meet the dogs almost every evening. She would hold his cane while he stood stiffly, waiting for a dog to approach.

Stooping slightly, he would feel the dog's face, scratch an ear, smile and wait for the next one. He never spoke, but the smile was bigger than the Mallory Square sunset. No one has seen the blind man since the big yellow construction equipment arrived.

Last May, the Navy diligently prepared a final environmental assessment, carefully listing factual data about the city's economy, demographic spread, infrastructure, threatened or endangered birds and amphibians, water and sewer supply, architecture and archeology.

There was even a section called "Community Impact." It was blank.

Donald A. Kozicki  
President

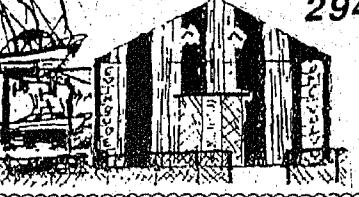
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Perhaps that's where the old blind man and his wife have been consigned.

Despite the plethora of data, the Navy document never mentions the cost of site preparation, construction of the housing units, or the materials to be used. Consequently, there is almost no way to determine if this project is prudent, or the developmental equivalent of the DODs \$800 toilet seat.

Funny how some people insist on knowing how their taxes are spent.

A number of builders contacted said it was important to determine the cost of the individual unit before concluding if this development is warranted.

This could cost \$100,000 or \$150,000 or \$200,000 per unit, one developer said. To determine it precisely, you'd need a fair-market price on the land. He doubted that was possible. The parcel is too unique.

For every answer generated about Peary Court, a dozen new questions come to light. Construction costs and specifications, for example, are almost impossible to find.

Why? Lt. Commander J.A. Bell, head of the planning and real estate department of the Navy's Engineering Command in Charleston, South Carolina has either transferred or retired. They aren't sure. Nor do they know precisely where he left the building plans and estimates. A Freedom of Information Act request has been filed with the Defense Department demanding this information.

How many service personnel are actually housed on the base needing a two-

bedroom house? How many of the 160 units planned for Peary Court will the Navy actually use? How many will be allocated to the Coast Guard? If there is such a tremendous housing shortage, why is the White Street Trailer Park only 60% occupied? One out of every five units in Poinciana is reported vacant.

Then there's the problem of waste.

Records of the only admitted inspection of the site for hazardous waste, toxics, DDT, petrochemical spills or dump sites are in South Carolina. The Charleston facility says a preliminary assessment, required under provisions of the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (commonly called CERCLA) as pre-screening for EPA's National Priorities List (Superfund), was done by the Navy in 1985.

No pollution was found, they said.

But Eric Nuzie, DER's Superfund site-selection officer, doubts that he inspected the Peary Court site. He provided a list of 14 other sites under active investigation or cleanup in Key West, and promised a records search.

A final complication: Despite the Navy's offhand claims that the property has always been its, in actuality it was an Army base, with barracks, parade ground, armory and a distinguished 138-year history.

Army maintenance records have not yet been located. Captain Curry said he would cooperate in completing this story.



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# Still boatless?

A few new ways to skin the nautical cat

by Mike Smith

Getting out on the water, even from an island surrounded by water, can be a tricky task unless you're the proud possessor of something that floats. Of course, almost everyone in the Conch Republic at least knows someone with some kind of boat. Repeatedly asking to be included in someone else's cruising, diving or fishing plans, however, eventually will fray even the most generous benefactor's nerves. Besides, it's impolite. And uncool.

Fortunately for every Key Wester with a love of the water, alternatives exist to get you out there without constantly pestering your boating buddy. Reef and snorkeling trips, dive packages, sunset cruises and an extensive rental fleet are available at fairly reasonable cost.

For example, over a dozen different operations offer sunset cruises, unquestionably the prettiest and most rewarding on-the-water adventure on the island. The popular catamarans *El Gato*, *Fury*, *Sebago* and *Stars & Stripes*, and the schooner *Wolf* all have regularly scheduled sails, departing around 5 p.m. (call first), and featuring complimentary champagne, wine, beer and soft drinks. The pricetag of around \$25 per person is a real bargain for two delightful hours enjoying the best of Key West (after all, our sunsets are world-famous).

Slightly more expensive but considerably more private are the sunset cruises of classics like *Trilby*, *Pilar* and *Constellation*. These boats are Coast Guard-licensed for six passengers, so you'll have the whole boat to yourself and your party. The tab is between \$35 and \$50 per pop, though hors d'oeuvres may be added to the "comp" beverages (*Constellation* has a BYOB clause in its rating, so sunset trips are priced a little lower). And both *Trilby* and *Connie* offer sunset dinner cruises for a slightly higher fee.

Dinner cruises normally run three to four hours and feature a delightful menu prepared right aboard. *Trilby*'s Randy Berkeley typically serves up a combination meat-chicken-shrimp shish-kabob cooked over glowing coals on the bridge deck, while *Constellation*'s Ruth Ann Fremstad offers a full four-course meal with a choice of entree, all skillfully prepared in the full galley aboard this vintage sailing "yacht."

"Lately," reported Skipper Cliff Fremstad, "our dinner guests have been asking for the seafood entree. We've had baked snapper, baked snapper and more baked snapper. The crew is getting pretty tired of baked snapper!"

Then, of course, there are the reef snorkeling trips, and all the big "cats" plus *Wolf*, plus a host of others, offer more or less the same thing, with, incidentally, competitive pricing, about \$35 per person. Departures are twice daily, usually around 9 a.m. and 1 p.m., though you should call to confirm the time(s).

Trips run approximately three hours, with complimentary soft drinks before snorkeling and beer, wine or soda afterward. All gear is

included, as is full instruction, and the crews are well schooled in safety and personal attention.

As with the sunset sails, several other groups offer somewhat different approaches to reef trips. In addition the six-person or six-pack boats mentioned above who do something longer jaunts to the coral and include lunch as part of the package, and there are quite a few others. *Stars & Stripes* features an eco-tour that visits the reef as well as the back country for six hours of "discovery."

And while prices are, well, pricey, at around \$75 a head, *Stars* adds a free sunset sail as part of the bargain (their cost is \$65 per person plus \$6 for the box lunch).

If you don't get out on the water, you could have had just as much fun in Omaha

for rent for a mere \$15 an hour. He also has rental sailboats ranging from 16 to 23 feet. The 16-footer goes for \$70 a half-day or \$130 per day, while other lengths are \$85 to \$175.

Moving up a tad in price, Club Nautico, Key West Boat Rental and U.S. 1 Marina all have a variety of powerboats on hand for fun and sport. Starting downtown, KW Boat Rental offers a choice of 18- to 26- footer for sport fishermen for \$140 for a five-hour half-day to \$325 for a full ten-hour day aboard the top-of-the-line Wellcraft Cuddy Cabin 26. All boats are equipped with Yamaha outboards and feature VHF radios, the full complement of Coast Guard-approved safety equipment and all docking and ground tackle. Fishing gear and snorkeling equipment are available for an additional rental fee.

Club Nautico on Garrison Bight features a fleet of Four Winns outboard models from 20 to 25 feet suitable for fishing, diving, sightseeing or waterskiing. Rates, including insurance, run from \$154 for four hours aboard a 20-footer to \$310 for a full day with the 25-footer. As before, fishing tackle, snorkeling gear and water-skiing equipment is available for an additional charge.

In the rental market, last but certainly not least is U.S. 1 on Stock Island (MM 4.5, just across the Cow Key Channel Bridge). The marina offers a full line of sport boats ranging from a 13-foot Boston Whaler to a 24-foot luxury pontoon boat, depending on the number of people you'd like to take along on your own Key West adventure-on-the-water. Rates run from \$14 an hour for a 14-aluminum skiff to \$200 per day for the 24-footer, though pontoon boats are well worth the price. No more stable, seaworthy vessel is available anywhere on either island. Boats are equipped to all Coast Guard requirements, and a full line of tackle, bait, ice, drinks and snacks are available right at the marina.

One final water-borne excursion well worth mentioning is Conch Boat Tours, located at First Key West Marina, again on Stock Island (MM 5.3). Here you'll have the opportunity to captain your own 12-1/2-foot jet boat on a four-hour guided tour of the back country, including stops in the Mud Keys, pristine Snipe Point's half-mile white sand beach, and beautiful Marvin Key. The trip includes lunch and non-alcoholic beverages, though you may bring your own beer or wine, and runs \$190.

Captain Bill Read also offers a budget-minded, hour-and-a-half afternoon jaunt to Crab Beach, home to literally thousands of tiny hermit crabs (no, they don't bite), for \$80. Departures are 10 a.m. for the morning trip and 3 p.m. for afternoon excursions.

There you have it. Other ways to get out of the water without owning a boat or breaking the bank. Something in there must have caught your fancy, so what are you waiting for?

In the immortal words of Admiral Busby: "If you live on this island or are just visiting and you don't get out on the water, you could have had as much fun in Omaha!"

## FOR THE RECORD

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## 510 GREENE STREET

By Lee Irby

Harry Brecht

The U.S. Navy has cordoned off Peary Court from possible enemy attack. Helicopters flutter overhead. Unauthorized canines are being interrogated by the ruthlessly efficient security personnel who rove the pastoral setting in four-wheel-drive vehicles—you know how rugged the terrain is. And in the last few days pre-construction measures have begun in earnest.

Unverified rumor has it that one team swept the area for plastic explosives disguised as dog dung. When the Navy makes up its mind to fight, the results can be lethal. Don't forget many of those Tailhook Lotharios were trained right here in Key West, where they learned mating rituals at Rick's on Wet T-Shirt Night.

Alas, poor Harry Powell won't be getting invited to Tailhook conventions any time soon. Our former commissioner got singled out and arrested for trespassing, even though about 40 other people, including members of the media, were also illicitly walking through the hallowed grounds.

The security guards and cops on hand went straight for Harry, as though all were part of some Brechtian opus—there were props

(chain and boltcutter), a script (Harry's press release), and applause (when Harry got handcuffed).

Afterwards, this reporter had the following exchange with a member of Captain Michael Currie's staff.

HER: What's the deal with Harry Powell?

ME: Well, he's sincere in his belief that Peary Court should stay green.

HER: Hitler was sincere, too, you know.

ME: You never said this was off the record.

Pity prevents this reporter from mentioning this person's name, but it was Lt.... nah, just checking. No reason to humiliate someone in publicly exposing them as a moron.

That conversation illustrated to me how Navy arrogance has botched the public-relations aspect of the Peary Court project. People are angry with government nationwide, and Peary Court seems to me part of that discontent with bureaucratic business as usual.

Captain Michael Currie denied that the project was hurried along because a Clinton win might force a review of pork-barrel projects. Currie said a Clinton win would in fact have no impact on operations in Key West—he stressed its strategic location not only in terms of military needs but also for the war on drugs. "This is where the rubber meets the road," he said.

They're doing a great job. It takes only about ten seconds to buy crack anywhere in this country.

### Mount Trashmore Revisited

While on the subject of garbage, it's time for a Montenay update, or so decided the city commission on October 6.

That particular albatross reared its ugly head when city attorney Ginny Stones asked city commission approval of a \$150,000 purchase order for legal expenses in the lawsuit against Montenay and its subsidiaries.

Last October the city filed suit against Montenay, claiming that the incinerator which

the firm built and operates isn't meeting the standards Montenay promised. Montenay is seeking to have the case dismissed.

This request drew immediate rebuke from commissioner Harry Bethel and mayor Dennis Wardlow. Bethel professed to have no idea of the status of the case, and wanted to know why the city attorney now needed \$50,000 more than last year's request, which hadn't yet all been spent. Wardlow echoed these sentiments.

"The \$150,000 is the absolute outside amount," Stones explained. "It's to cover legal expenses, and it doesn't all need to be spent. It probably won't be." Famous last words.

Wardlow leveled some rather serious words at Stones. "I don't know what's going on in this case," he fumed. "I've called your office several times but never got a clarification. I don't understand."

Stones told the commission the case was mired in the discovery phase. Montenay, she said, "has been dragging its feet to produce the documents we requested." Judge Sandra Taylor has ordered Montenay to comply with the city's demands.

The levels of hierarchy involved in the city's representation have caused confusion. Initially the city had hired attorney Steven Josias to handle Montenay. Then Josias enlisted the help of Thomas Burke, in effect creating three tiers of accountability. Bethel bristled at that arrangement.

Stones promised the commission that Josias would provide an update in person at the October 20 meeting. But an important hearing is scheduled for October 28.

Why not wait until the first November meeting? Because politicians like to pretend they are doing something.

The confusion could have been averted if the commissioners had bothered to look at the court filings in the case. Perhaps it's more exciting to destroy Houseboat Row than to wade through dreary court records that describe in detail how the city was had for big bucks.

### Eight strategy

Jimmy Weekley scored big for his pet project, the Key West Bight, at the October 6 meeting. The commission voted 4-0 to approve a \$120,000 payment to the Trust for Public Land if the bight referendum passes on November 3.

If the referendum fails, the TPL's Rand Wentworth said the city won't have to pay anything. TPL has covered the city's expenses while the city prepared its plans to buy the Singleton property.

After much handwringing, the city's solution is to float bonds of \$18.5 million to buy the bight. With twelve other referenda on the ballot, supporters know that they must overcome voter confusion as well as skepticism.

Debbie Horan of the newly formed Friends of the Bight said a political campaign in behalf of the bight was under way. "We're circulating petitions," she said, "and providing information and meeting with people to get the word out."

Financing was the biggest concern, Horan said. "People need to know that no ad valorem taxes will be used to buy the property," she said. "It's in the referendum. Taxes won't go up. And the bight will be privately managed."

Bumper stickers are beginning to spring up around town, so the effort is getting somewhere. But the electorate may still be in an ugly mood. Horan, who predicts the bight initiative will pass, fears that some people might be prepared to vote against all the referenda.

## *It may not sound simple . . . but it is.*

On Tuesday, Nov. 3, Key West voters have a historic opportunity to save the Key West Bight for this and future generations.

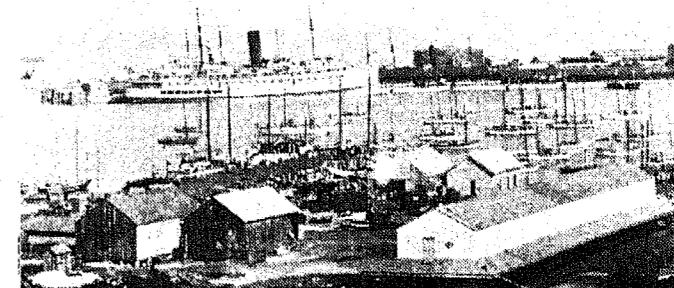
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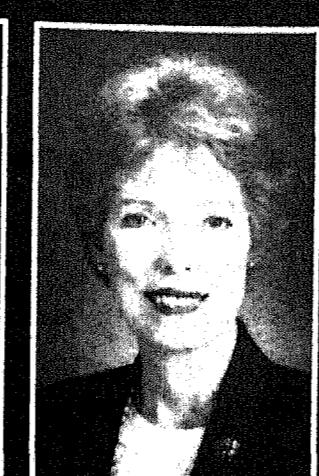
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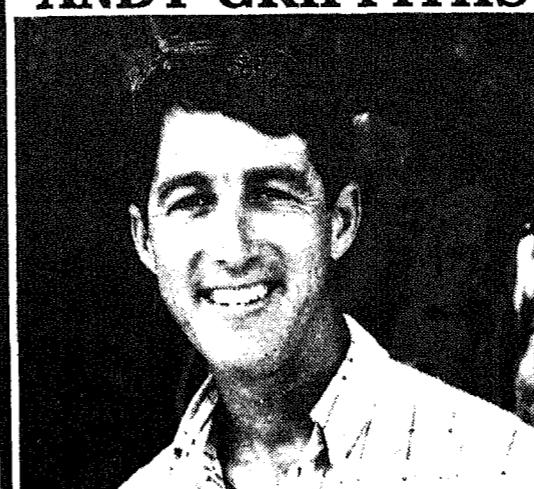
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## COMMUNITY NOTES

### The Democrats Organize

The Key West/Lower Keys Democratic Club recently reorganized and came together last month at a Democratic kickoff rally in Mary Spottswood's garden. Officers include Roger McClelland as president, Jim Rodriguez as vice-president and Mary Box as treasurer. The club's headquarters, located at 517 Truman Avenue, are open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Clinton-Gore bumper stickers, pins and lawn signs are available aplenty. So is campaign literature. For information, call 293-8683.

### A History Lesson at the Bight

The City of Key West was recently awarded a state grant to prepare a National Register nomination for the Turtle Kraals, Turtle Cannery and Thompson Fish House in the Land's End Marina area at Key West Bight. The historic structures, which date to the early 1900s, will be thoroughly researched with the assistance of the Key West Maritime Historical Society (KWMHS) along with historians Edward L. Little and Thomas L. Hambright, marine archaeologists Corey Malcom and David



LOCAL DEMOCRATS: (l to r seated) Ellie Cameron, Mary Kay Reich, Sandra Higgs and Joan Lord. (l to r standing) Peter Deutsch, Ervin Higgs, Robert Walker, Ron Saunders, Andy Griffiths and Don Morell.

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I have really no specific parameters, since the chemistry I am ultimately looking for has no specific formula - it just happens. I would imagine this woman is between 30-55, but she may be younger or older. I would imagine that she is bright, independent, a "free spirit" - the kind of woman that would be attracted to the Keys.

If you are interested, some coffee and some conversation, give me a call. My name is Rick and my number is 745-2618. Leave a message on my machine, and I'll get back to you.



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### Prevention Center Resumes Hours

The AIDS Prevention Center will be resuming regular HIV testing at all three of its locations, including 513 Whitehead Street in Key West. Each center is manned with an HRS-qualified and trained HIV counselor. There is a \$20 fee for testing. However, no one will be refused testing because of inability to pay. The Key West center's hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. For information, call 292-6701.

### Honor Roll of A Hundred

The student recognition subcommittee of the Greater Key West Chamber of Commerce recently created a program called Honor Roll of 100 to recognize exceptional high school students. The committee is looking for 100 businesses interested in donating \$25 apiece to a scholarship fund for Key West High School students. Each year a graduating senior will be awarded a \$2000 scholarship. The other \$500 collected will remain in an interest-bearing bank account so the fund will eventually become self-perpetuating.

Contributing businesses will be named to the Chamber's Honor of 100. For information, contact Mary Vickers at 293-9773.

### New Children's Shelter Opens

The Florida Keys Children's Shelter ribbon-cutting committee is meeting weekly at 7 p.m. at the shelter's new location at 2221 Patterson Avenue to organize a November 21 celebration. FKCS supporters are celebrating the establishment of a Key West shelter for abused, neglected and runaway children. For information, call 294-4202.

### Helpline Helps Dade County

Helpline has agreed to serve as a switchboard for groups and individuals doing volunteer work in the South Dade area. Churches or other organizations seeking volunteers or those that are able to provide transportation may leave current information at 296-HELP or 294-LINE. Individuals seeking to

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Truman Annex from October 28 to 31 and moved to Bayview Park for Children's Day on November 1. For more information, call 296-8259.

### Red Barn Improv Group

The Red Barn Theatre will be holding an improvisational theatre workshop open to all. The group will meet every Sunday from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Red Barn Theatre, 319 Duval Street. There is a \$3 fee. For information, call 292-1199.

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# The gentleman is a lady

He remembers singing along with Judy Garland, using a hairbrush as a mike

by Alma Bond

The darkened ballroom was packed with men twisting and reaching skyward. Red and blue strobe lights blinked on and off, alternating with occasional flashes that lit up the room like lightning. Caught in the sudden strobe, the dancers seemed frozen in their contortions. On stage a gyrating man was singing in a falsetto voice, his hand clutching his crotch.

This was The Copa at midnight, and the Bette Midler revue was about to begin. Wooden bars in the front and along the sides of the room were lined with men and an occasional woman. I sat down against the wall on large carpeted benches padded with huge pillows.

Soon a shapely, graceful blonde woman came onto the stage. Designed to look like a pink Cadillac of the 1960s, she wore a boxy pink square of a gown with black wheels at the bottom and shoulder fins. From under her dress peeked out slender legs in sheer black hose and dainty shoes with four-inch heels. While the audience whistled and hooted, she sang in a sweet high



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ELECTRA

voice and pranced around the stage.

She dropped the pink gown, exposing a black tutu adorned with yellow flowers. The lines of her womanly torso and shapely legs appeared even lovelier. I sat back and enjoyed her impersonation of Midler.

The pretty young woman was Electra, the renowned female impersonator. Other female impersonators I have seen, even some famous ones, seemed caricatures of women. I remember watching a man put powder on his face in the subway once; the exaggerated angle he held the compact and the affected tilt of his wrist seemed a mockery of a woman's gestures.

Not so Electra. She was as naturally feminine, funny and dramatic as Midler. Her rendition of "From a Distance" evoked tears from the rapt audience.

Though Electra's voice was convincing, her art lay not so much in the singing and dancing as in her unique skill at projecting the uncanny illusion that she is a woman.

After the show she joined me for a brief chat. She had changed into a spectacular white sequined gown and high heels. She seemed amazingly tall, and her facial structure looked

coarser up close. The illusions of a delicate woman she created on stage were truly miraculous. We agreed to meet the next day for an interview.

#### Where did it begin?

How different Electra looked this time! I would never have recognized him as the woman I had met the night before. He greeted me wearing jeans, a t-shirt and a baseball cap. A nice-looking man with a friendly, open face, he wasn't nearly as imposing as Electra.

He says he became a female impersonator "on a fluke."

"I went to a bar one night in 1977—a gay bar. It was the first time I ever saw a drag show." Intrigued, he entered a drag talent show the next week. As a costume designer, he knew he could even make all his own clothes.

"Oh yeah, except for the shoes. I have to have them specially engineered, and believe me



it gets to be plenty expensive. A guy six feet tall who weighs 200 pounds and wants to wear six-inch heels had better make pretty sure his shoes have enough support in them. Women's shoes just don't do it. They aren't solid enough to keep me from breaking my ass!"

"Anyway, I dressed up as Carmen Miranda, with a big headpiece and fruit all over, grape earrings and a big taffeta dress. It was really fun and I won the contest. Then the bar would have me do a guest spot every once in a while. Now I do it as much as I can."

Electra began moonlighting in small clubs. Soon he became popular, and was forced to decide between careers. "I thought, why should I struggle away and flounder as a



and impersonate the female characters. Once he was so convinced he was Mary Poppins that he broke his collar bone jumping off a roof with an umbrella held above his head.

"A lot of inner me comes out when I'm in drag," he says. "It is my moment to release everything. That's why I never needed much therapy. Being in drag is my therapy."

Electra prefers to think of himself as an actor who, when the lights go up, puts the role away. "I don't like to go out eating in drag. I'm not comfortable in those clothes. For awhile I might camp and carry on at a bar, but then I think it is time to put on the blue jeans and t-shirt and relax. When the lights go up, the magic is over."

#### Too Many Keys and Not Enough Lox

Unlike some female impersonators, Electra prefers not to spoof the person he imitates. "I have too much respect for them," he says. "I am the person I impersonate when I'm up there on stage. I like to be subtle."

Still, he likes to have fun with his audience. Electra writes all his own material. "I like to joke about life," he says. "I don't do dirty stuff—just innuendos, double meanings. A lot of times, during my act in a sit-down dinner show I go into the audience and mosey up to someone and joke. I might ask, What is your name? Eileen, a woman might answer. I say, I lean too, lady. When I was driving down from Fire Island to Key West I was talking to all these Jewish people. I said Florida has too many keys and not enough lox. That just came out of me because of the play on words."

"There's so much misery in this world. If you can't make people laugh for a few hours... I myself love to have a good time and to laugh. Sometime I just sit there and laugh until I cry." Like too many others in the nineties

Electra often has more cause to cry than to laugh. The man he has shared many years with is dying of AIDS.

"Absolut vodka is the only cure for AIDS," he says. "I'm lucky that I'm okay. By all rights I should be just as sick as anyone else. I think with the lifestyle gays were forced into, it was natural for us to break loose sexually. With all that freedom you do too much of everything. Now it is a dark and ominous time."

But, for a brief time each evening, Electra illuminates midnight at The Copa.

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## ISLAND ECONOMICS

The *Discovery* Glassbottom Boat isn't just another glassbottom boat. It boasts the presence of marine biologist Patricia Ann Donovan-Potts on its crew. Donovan-Potts has taken a leadership role in promoting ecotourism in the Keys. Her experience includes teaching marine biology at FKCC, being a marine scientist for the Nature Conservatory and volunteer diving for the National Underwater Research Center in Key Largo. Her background has helped formulate a voyage aboard the *Discovery*, based in the Lands End Marina, into a two-hour excursion to the reef which pays special attention to educating the



EDUCATIONAL TRIP: Marine biologist Pat Donovan-Potts and Capt. Fred Wheeler of the glassbottom boat *Discovery* give their visitors more than a trip to the reef.

public on the fragile coral reef environment.

Additionally, Donovan-Potts holds classes on the marine ecosystem for *Discovery* employees and school field trips for Keys children interested in marine biology. For information, call 293-0099.

"From flop house to fab house." This unusual slogan is the proud boast of William Wakeley and David Mayne, owners of the William House, previously the Casa Blanca Apartments and Guest Rooms. The newly remodeled guest house has been redecorated in "Key West eclectic," with touches of Italian, Oriental, art deco and Florida tropical styles. The William House invites locals and visitors alike to come take a tour.

The William House is at 317 Duval. The telephone number is 294-8233.

The Key West Business Guild will be holding a candidates' forum at the Caribbean Spa of the Pier House at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 22. The meeting is open to the general public. Already confirmed for appearance are candidates for county commission, sheriff, supervisor of elections and tax assessor. Walter Davenport is chairing the event.

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Beth Harrell, formerly general manager of the Bagatelle, has joined Paul Tripp and his staff as general manager of the Half Shell Raw Bar. Prior to the Bagatelle, Harrell worked for International Multifoods and Marriott. She attended Georgia State University in Atlanta, where she was named Restaurant Student of the Year in 1985. She is currently on the advisory panel for Restaurant Business Magazine as well as being on the board of directors for the Key West Chamber of Commerce.

Pik'n 102.5, the Florida Keys newest FM radio station broadcasting from Cudjoe Key, announces the addition of James R. McGarry as general manager. Keys listeners will remember him as "Jimmy Music" host of several fishing shows, including "The Fish Tales Show," which was on the air for over six years.

"We fully intend to be leaders in community involvement and civic affairs by offering access to our station on several levels including daily bulletin boards," said McGarry. Friends and fans can contact Jimmy at 745-9988 or 1-800-540-WPIK.

The BodyShop at The Reach Resort, Simonton and the ocean, announces a two-for-one Fantasy Fest Special. The offer is good at the BodyShop health spa through November 15. Two people pay just \$75 each and choose one of three membership packages—The Spa Package, The BodyShop Package or The Aerobic Package. For details, call 296-5000, ext. 686.

The AIDS Prevention Center welcomes Cynthia Francisco aboard as a health

service representative. Francisco comes to the organization as a qualified educator who will perform community outreach, counseling and testing for HIV, along with HIV and AIDS educational classes.

Leslie and Marty Miller announce the opening of Leslie Miller Ltd at 419 Duval Street. The store offers a unique selection of gift items including handmade jewelry of gold and silver, precious and semi-precious stones plus collectibles by Hummel, Emmet Kelly, Boehm and Norman Rockwell.

The couple hails from New Jersey, where Leslie still owns a shop in Atlantic City. Marty, an avid fisherman, owned a modular-home building business and vacationed in Key West five times a year. When the stress of his business began to affect his health, Leslie suggested a move to Key West. Now he helps her out in the new store part-time and spends the rest fishing! Call 293-0790.



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## City prepares for \$18.5-million bight vote

by Geddy Sveikauskas

One of the biggest decisions in Key West history, the future of the town's harbor, will be made when local voters cast their ballots on a referendum question November 3. Public acquisition of the Singleton property surrounding the Key West Bight would give the city greater control over the future of that unique resource. The opportunity for Key West to retain its historic working waterfront and to provide public access to it has struck a responsive chord in many residents. An unusual coalition of businesspeople, longtime residents and environmentalists support the city government's initiative.

Nobody pretends that the acquisition is an easy one, however. The \$18.5-million price-tag is a large chunk of money, and offering security for that debt would tie up the city's infrastructure funds for years to come. Although the likely income from an expanded number of slips in the harbor would seem to offer the city the possibility of enormous cash flow, the venture is not risk-free.

Revenues from the so-called "uplands" portion of the Singleton holdings are expected to increase as well. Though the existing tenants are to be offered the chance at longterm leases, what that means has been left fuzzy. Most of the tenants seem to favor city acquisition, perhaps on the grounds they'd be dealing with a devil they know rather than one they don't.

But perhaps the greatest impediment to success is the referendum's place on the ballot, tucked in among ten state constitutional amendments, a county proposition on hurricane shelters and the city's own referendum on single-member districts for city commissioners. "Good referendums have gone down in this city before," says Debbie Horan, an organizer of the newly formed Friends of the Bight.

Two consulting groups have told the city what kind of revenues it can expect from the bight, and the city commission has already committed itself to a longterm contract with a property manager who would among other things set rents and negotiate leases at the bight and surrounding properties. The manager would receive compensation based on a percentage of net operating income.

Rarely has so attractive a concept been presented in so unappetizing a package. Will the less informed members of the electorate be able to fathom a bond proposition which states, "Shall City of Key West issue not exceeding \$18,500,000 Revenue Marina Conservation Bonds, maturing within twenty-five (25) years from issuance, bearing interest not exceeding the legal rate, pledging revenues of such facilities, and if deemed necessary, half-cent sales tax, guaranteed entitlements and other legally available non-ad valorem taxes of the City, to finance the acquisition of Key West Bight, to construct public marina and related facilities, harborwalks and conservation areas?"

An advisory board of businesspeople, bureaucrats and ordinary citizens headed by John Parks worked for several months on the economics of the deal. City commissioner Jimmy Weekley sees that widespread support as critical. "I think there's a strong comfort level in



JANET MARCANTONIO

the community because of the advisory board," he says.

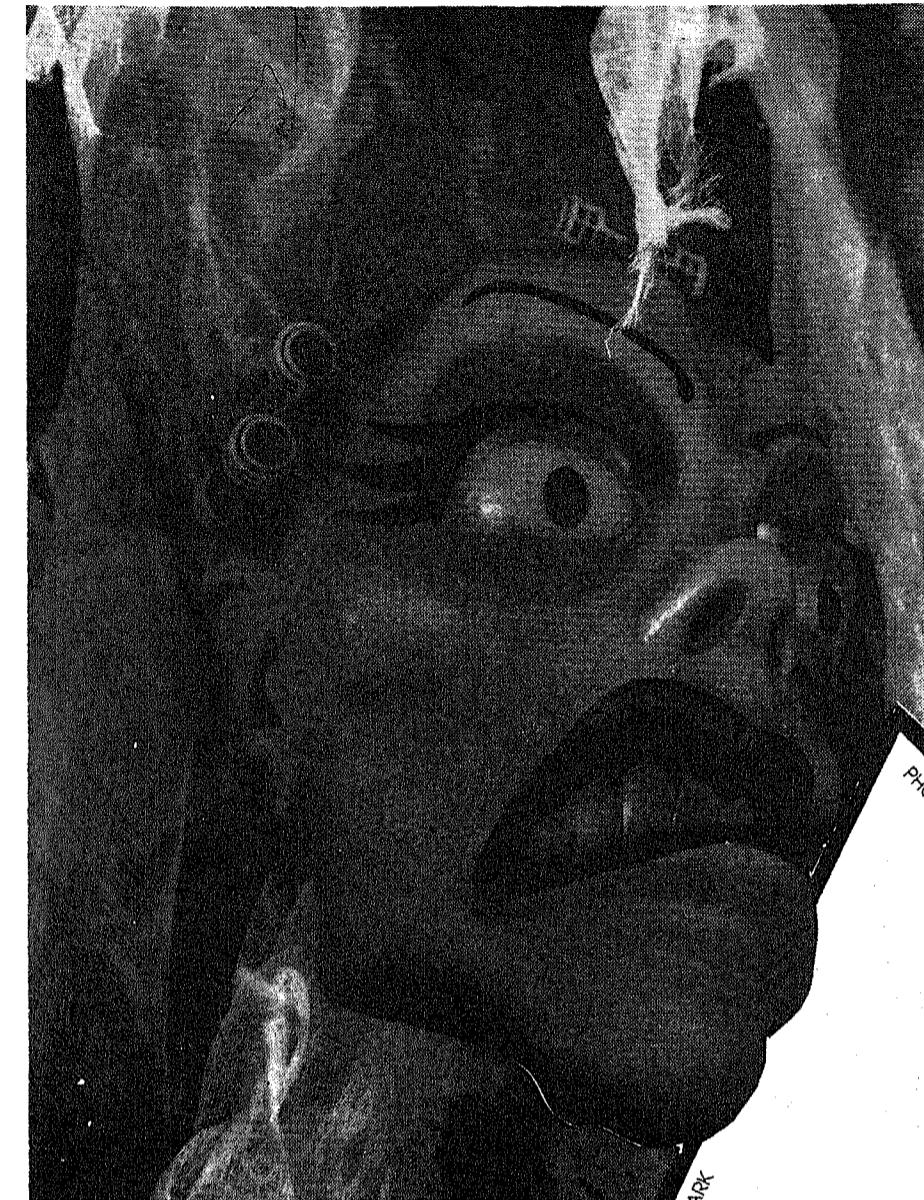
Groups that have endorsed the concept include the Board of Realtors, Chamber of Commerce, Hotel and Motel Association, Jaycees, Last Stand, Old Island Restoration and Duval Street Merchants. Hundreds of petitions have been sent to the city commission. Parks,

Weekley and Horan say that as far as they know no organized groups have yet said they oppose the project.

The Friends of the Bight have been active in the last couple of weeks disseminating

bumper stickers and garden signs, preparing telephone banks for election day, and working the absentee ballots. All the members of the city commission say they'll be supporting the cause. Hotel and Motel Association leaders will be educating their employees on the issue, says Horan.

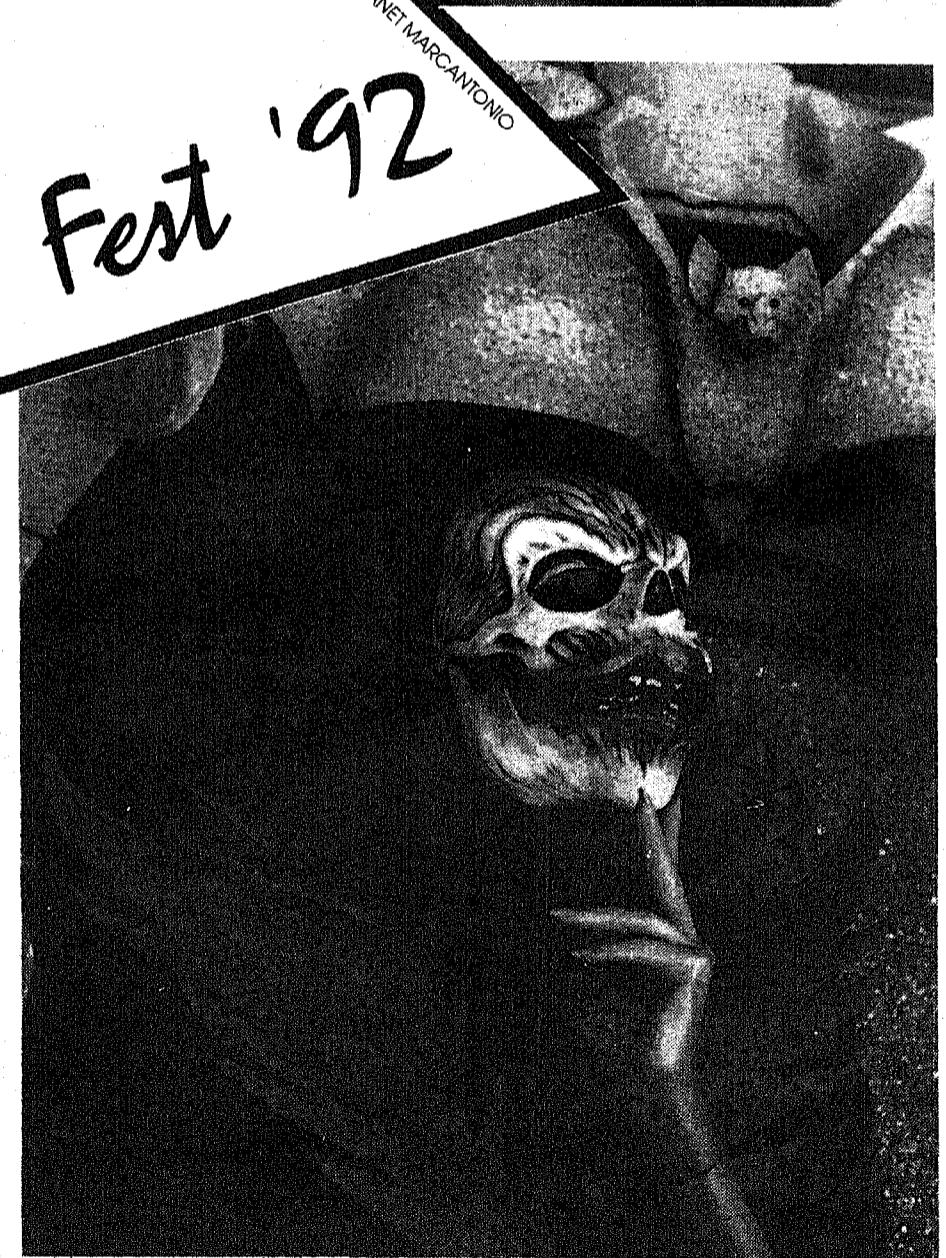
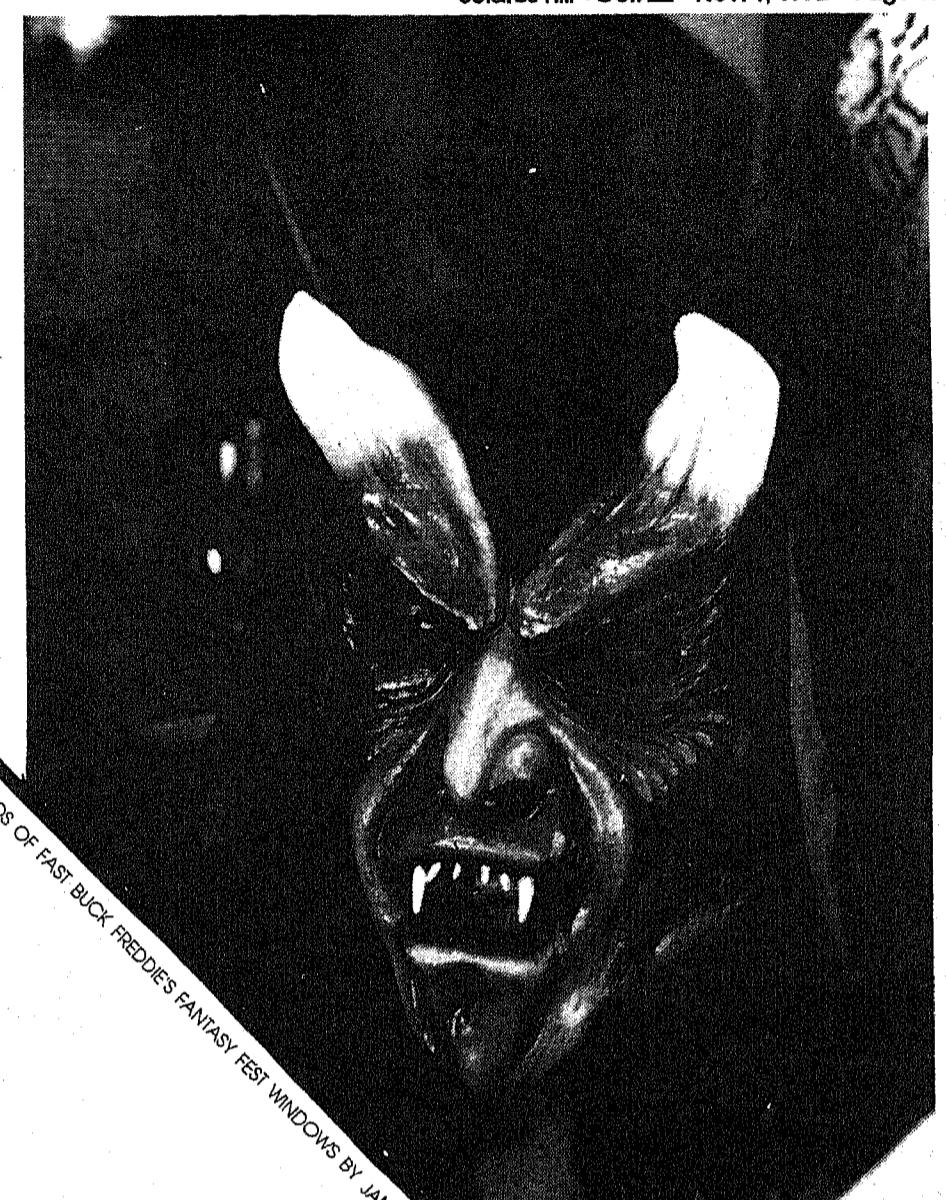
It's obvious that there's no lack of leadership favoring acquisition of the bight. The question is more one of ownership. Ultimately, the fate of the referendum will come down to the degree of trust ordinary Key West voters have in their leaders.



MASK BY MIKE STARK



Fantasy Fest '92





FANTASY FEST CANDIDATES: (l to r) Nidia Borders, Charles Powell, Trish Blanchette, Frank Romano, Vicki Roush and Tom Luna.

## Thirst for the throne

Six characters in search of a dubious immortality

by Lee Irby

As the election nears and the handlers grow more desperate, no blow is too low, no foible too personal. The question on every pundit's mind has been when the campaign would go negative, dissolving into a playground tantrum of distortions and half-truths. The electorate is convinced it already has.

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LEE IRBY

"I don't care," he said, waving his hand dismissively. "I just want to win."

Luna's campaign has hit the streets. Though his high-visibility strategy has included stops at tony restaurants like La Trattoria, he has also been seeking support at watering holes along Front Street. He works at The Rooftop Cafe.

Though he has strong support among the more raffish elements of the local theater community, Luna will be hurt by that target group's lack of disposable income. Luna has attempted to raffle away anything of value—he knows the final days of the fight will be intense.

His bumper sticker, I'm A Luna-tic, should appeal to the functionally paranoid and to Perot supporters. But the polls have yet to establish that segment's voting patterns, and any bounce he gets will be erratic and possibly life-threatening.

Luna will have to write off the fragrance vote, which undoubtedly will go to Frank Romano, CEO of Key West Aloe. Romano will be able to refute charges of halitosis or body odor, leaving opponents little room for hygienic attack upon a candidate who is almost by definition clean. No stinker he.

"I have experience," Romano asserted, sounding a major theme of his campaign. "I know how to be an official official. I know how to officiate at masked balls. I know how to wave wildly at adoring crowds that pelt me with their love offerings."

Romano's formidable money-raising machine has pulled out all the stops. It has even gone so far as to offer a complete royal court: the title of Prince of Wails, heir to the throne, can be bought for a mere \$100.

Charles Powell of A1 Beauty Salon promises to have the most fun. "I'm a wild guy," he explained, "although I'm not of royal blood. I'm going to put forth all the effort."

Powell's desire for kingship was fueled by the incredibly good time he had during the past two fests. "I figured I should go for it," he said.

During the first radio debate on 92.5, Powell fought off a charge that he was "a quiet guy." "Hey, Frank Romano must not know me too well," he laughed. "He sure hasn't looked in my closet. I have some outrageous things in there."

The battle for queen seems just as hotly contested. Trish, a bartender at the 801, has



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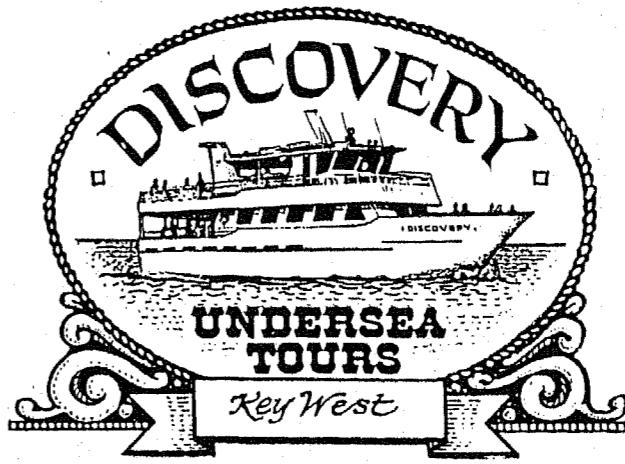
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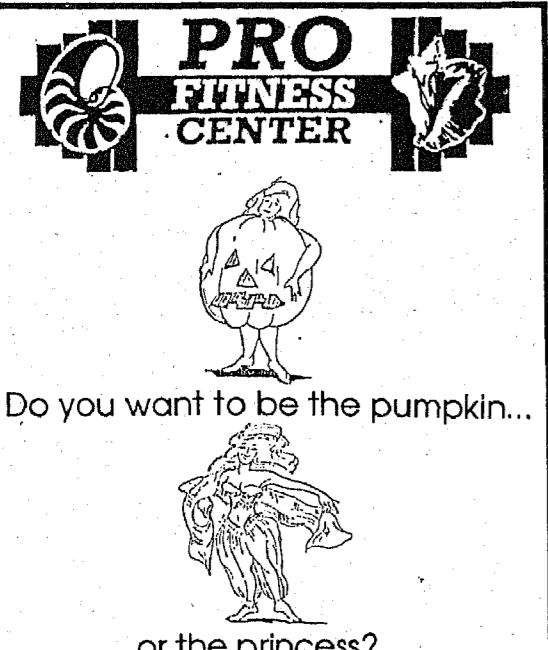
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Page 20 • Oct. 22 - Nov. 1, 1992 • Solares Hill

come up with a catchy slogan: "Get Your Wish, Vote for Trish: The Blonde Leading The Blonde."

The spate of recent blonde jokes can only give increased name recognition to Trish's stretch drive. But Trish is aware she must be careful not to alienate voters of other hair colors.

Trish's goal is to raise \$10,000. "It's a group effort," she explained. "People are helping me out. We're trying for six fundraising parties.



Winning doesn't matter. The point is to have a good time and help people."

Vicki Roush also has a slogan: "Diva Made Me Do It." The local entertainer plans on being the best dressed candidate. Her main handler is Patrick Hayes of Square One.

"I'm the queen of everything else," she confided. "I might as well make it consistent."

Her fundraising agenda is geared toward raffling off a plethora of prizes, topped by a week for two at Hedonism in Negril, Jamaica, all expenses paid.

Potential controversy looms, however: it was Negril where Jeff and Kathy Willets, the notorious Ft. Lauderdale sheriff and hooker couple, often went on vacation. It would seem that Roush might be vulnerable to a strong family-values attack. But who'd do such a mean thing? Either of her opponents, if that's where the votes lie.

Roush is holding the raffle at La Te Da on October 23. For \$10, you can get twelve raffle tickets. "We're also hoping to raffle off Bryan Norcross' tie," she added.

Nidia Borders, the owner of A1 Beauty Salon, claims that her ancestry as a Cuban princess makes her the most qualified person for queen. "I was born in Cuba," she said. "But I've lived here for 22 years."

Reluctant to enter the fray at first, Nidia was persuaded to run by her cohort Powell, and thus she might be this contest's Ross Perot. Nidia got involved because "I wanted to contribute the utmost effort for AIDS Help."

As for winning—"If it's meant to be, it will be," she said.

The voting system is refreshingly corrupt. It is based both on the amount each candidate raises and on the number of individual votes cast for each candidate.

Each \$10 raised equals one vote. So if a candidate raises \$5000 and gets 200 popular votes, the total would be 700. Fundraising and networking are both important.

Past winners George Murphy and Pat Green, who both employed the "Duval Street assault" strategy, shared their wisdom. "I worked the street hard," Green said. "I had a lot of help from Tallulah, my big pink poodle."

"On the night of the voting, I went into every bar I could," Murphy recalled. "I took entire entourage down to vote. It was blast."

The Coronation Ball this year will be on October 24 at the La Concha/Holiday Inn, starting at 9 p.m. Admission is free, and everyone is entitled to one free vote. Additional votes will cost \$10 apiece.

The winners will not only get to lead the Fantasy Fest parade, but will receive gold rings from Sunlion Jewelry, crowns from Tasty Trash, and flowers from A Blooming Affair, among other items.

All the money raised by the candidates will go to AIDS Help, Inc., a community-based, non-profit service whose goal, explained executive director Edward Seebol, "is to see that people with HIV illnesses obtain the support they need to live without fearing homelessness, hunger, or neglect."



## Pets Join Their Masters for Fantasy Fest Fun

Prizes and plaudits await the pets entered in the 6th Annual Fantasy Fest Pet Masquerade and Parade set for Wednesday, October 28, at 4:30 p.m.

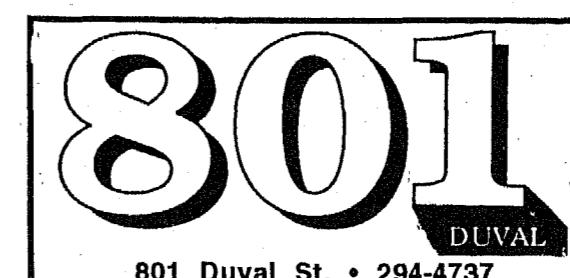
The outrageous competition pits pet against pet, owner versus owner, for prizes ranging from airline trips for two to elaborate hotel stays and cash.

The event is co-sponsored by Marriott's Casa Marina Resort and Key West radio stations WEOW-FM and WKIZ-AM. "This has turned into one of the major family events of Fantasy Fest," said Joe Russo, contest coordinator. "Last year's winners of the owner and pet look-alike division were a dog and its owner who were dressed as clowns and looked like identical twins. It should be even more spectacular this year."

Among other categories, all reflecting the Fantasy Fest '92 theme of Halloween in the Devil's Triangle, are best pet owner, overall costume and best family, including children. An

expanded runway is to be constructed to allow the entrants—be they dogs, cats, birds or humans—to strut their stuff.

Judging for this year's event is slated to begin at 5:30 p.m. at Marriott's Casa Marina Resort. Admission is free for spectators and cash bars are to be available.



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## REEF RELIEF

announces

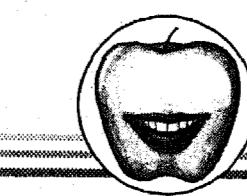
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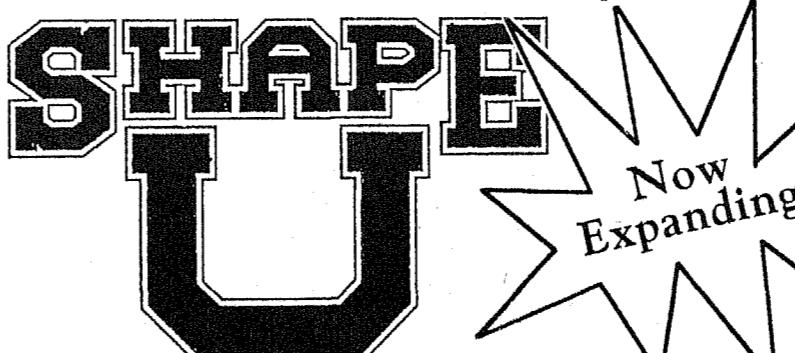
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Sr. Citizen 55 & up  
\$6.39  
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Served with all you care to eat  
Soup, Salad and Fruit Bar  
Some items may vary

### Special Fantasy Fest Hours

Open 11 p.m. til 4 a.m. for Breakfast Buffet only  
\$8.50

Food, Beverage, tax & tip included  
Friday October 30 & Saturday October 31  
Overseas Market • Key West • M.M. 2.5



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## HALLOWEEN IN THE DEVIL'S TRIANGLE

THURSDAY OCT. 29  
A Fantasy Fest '92 Event

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**The King of Reggae**

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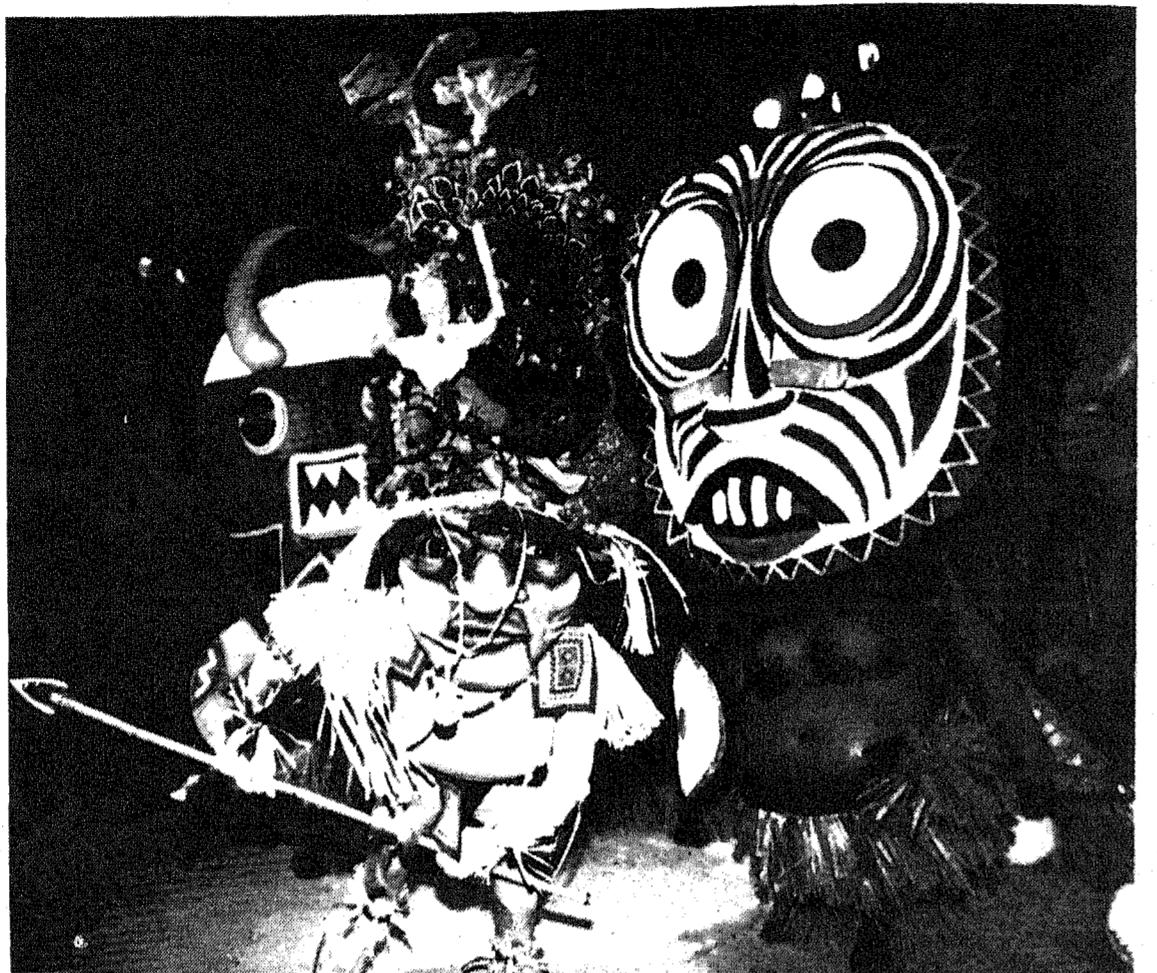
TICKETS: A Little Something Shoppe & Records & Rogues  
Gate opens 6 pm • \$15 Advance • \$18 Same Day • 296-500

## Pretenders in Paradise

"Through the Triangle: An Evening in the Fourth Dimension" is the theme contestants will be trying to depict at the 11th annual Pretenders in Paradise costume competition on Thursday, October 29. The competition is to be staged beginning at 10 p.m. at the Pier House Resort & Caribbean Spa.

Contestants from all around the world are expected to don their most glamorous and gaudiest garb in efforts to win one of the top prizes. First grand prize is \$500 cash and a seven-day cruise for two aboard Norwegian Cruise Line's Norway. Second prize brings \$300 and a trip for two to Venezuela on Avensa Airlines, while the third-place finisher winds up with \$200 and a trip for two to the Bahamas.

An elaborate stage and professional sound and lighting systems are to add to the spectacle for the spectators. Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 the night of the event.



## 801 Bar Takes on Tea Dance

The 801 Bar on Duval Street will present its first Tea Dance in the street on Saturday, October 31 from 2 to 6 p.m.

Coordinated by party guru John "Ma" Evans, the 801 Bar plans to build a 30-foot

stage outdoors for the costume parade and contest scheduled for 4 p.m. Cash and other prizes will be awarded to those with the best costumes. The sound system at the 801 Bar will be set up outdoors for maximum effect.

"We're excited about having Tea Dance in the street this year," comments 801 owner Peter Ryder. "About the only thing you won't find at Tea Dance is tea." What you will find is one of the best parties in town on Halloween.

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- 23rd "The Diva Made Me Do It" Drawing of winning raffle tickets at La Terraza 8:30 p.m.
- 24th Fantasy Fest '92 Coronation Ball Holiday Inn La Concha 9:00 p.m.
- 26th PREMIER of Haunted Hemingway House 8 p.m.
- 31st Fantasy Fest Twilight Grand Parade From the Mel Fisher Museum 7 p.m.

Key 93 Supports  
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our Candidate  
Queen of  
Fantasy Fest  
Vicki Roush

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**Tamarinds**

Presents

**A Joan Crawford Brunch with Vicki Roush**

November 1 - From noon till 3 p.m.  
Duval Square • 294-2809

## "Tropical Triangles" Fantasy Fest T-Shirt

The official Fantasy Fest T-shirt, "Tropical Triangles," is currently for sale in a variety of Key West locations. The artwork was created by well-known local artist Scott Jones, who exhibits at the Lane Gallery and shows his oils and pastels in Florida and the Midwest. The "Tropical Triangles" design incorporates bold geometric patterns blended with elements reflecting the tropics and their mysteries.

A limited number of T-shirts are still available in the "Animal Mask" format created by Susie Gardiner. Gardiner is the creator of several previous years' festival designs, including the tenth anniversary conch shell mask.

Serpent art created by Key West artist Rick Worth has been chosen for festival promotion and is being utilized in print advertising.

Among the Key West businesses selling official Fantasy Fest T-shirts Fast Buck Freddie's, Voila, the Hemingway Home & Museum, Key West Alone, the Pier House, Coco Loco, Classical Rags, Winn Dixie and Sweet Mischief.

## Fantasy Fest Artwork at Fast Buck Freddie's

As part of its month-long homage to Fantasy Fest, Fast Buck Freddie's is featuring the designs submitted by area artists for consideration as the logo to

**VOTE**  
**Nidia Borders & Charles Powell**  
King & Queen of Fantasy Fest  
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**MORRISON  
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294-1003**

represent this year's festival theme, Halloween in the Devil's Triangle.

Artists who are represented in this exhibit include Patricia Bucciero, Joe Bucciero, Marc Caren, John A. Harris, Rick Valdez, Donna Stork, Marko Fields, Kitty Kelly, Tracy Livesey, Robert E. Smith, Anthony Minore, Scott Erdman, Ken Pease, Kat O'Connell, Lori Quinn, Tim Kinney, Dick Moody, Quam. Also included are the original paintings of two of the logos chosen by Susie Gardiner and Rick Worth, and the official Fantasy Fest poster designed by Scott Jones. The Gardiner and Jones designs also appear on the official Fantasy Fest T-shirt, available at Fast Buck Freddie's and other retail locations throughout town. The Worth design has been designated the official promotional logo.

These designs, which hang in the lobby entrance in Fast Buck Freddie's, join the artistic creations of master costumer and maskmaker Michael Stark.

**SHALOM  
KEY WEST**

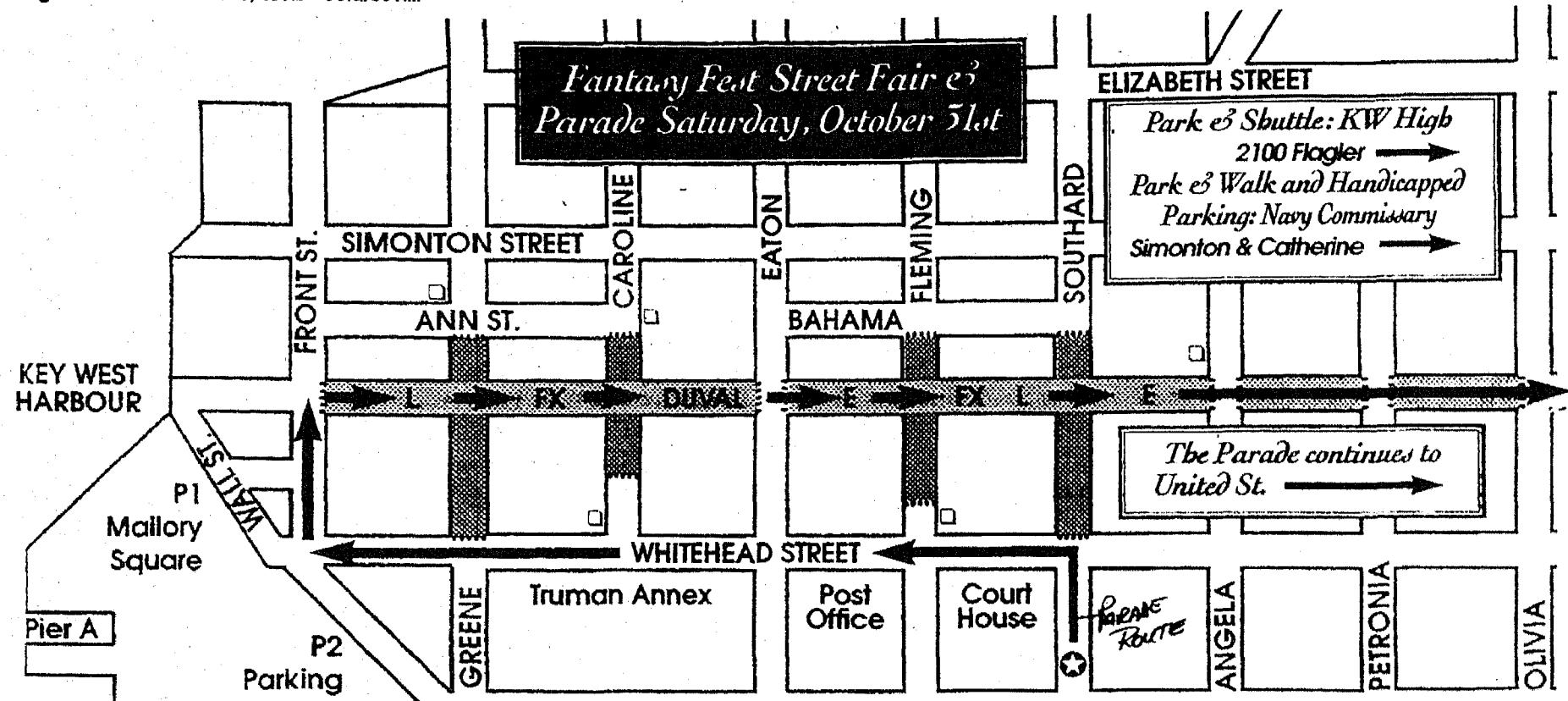
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*October 26-30*





## Fantasy Fest Parade Hits on Halloween

The Twilight Fantasy Parade, highlight of Fantasy Fest '92, falls on Halloween night, Saturday, October 31. Initial indications point to the biggest and best parade yet, according to Fantasy Fest officials.

Dazzling floats, mind-boggling



FF MASTER OF CEREMONY: TV Weatherman Bryan Norcross.

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## Treasures of the Triangle

On July 4, 1502, the ill-fated fleet of Spanish Admiral Bobadilla—sailing in squally weather despite warnings from Columbus himself—became the first documented vessels lost in the Devil's Triangle. Since then, several hundred ships have vanished or sunk in the Triangle region ... among them the Spanish galleons *Nuestra Señora de Atocha* and *Santa Margarita*, the English merchant slaver *Henrietta Marie*, and a vessel recently discovered in Bahamian waters.

Now, during Fantasy Fest 1992, the Mel Fisher Maritime Heritage Society in Key West explores the mysteries surrounding these losses as part of the Treasures of the Triangle exhibition. A multi-media presentation will document significant incidents that took place in the Devil's Triangle. In addition, the exhibit will include artifacts and treasures found on the *Atocha*, *Margarita* and *Henrietta Marie* shipwreck sites.

Also highlighted will be the astonishing artifacts recovered this summer by the Society's archaeological expedition. Museum visitors will be able to watch the archaeologists and historians struggle to uncover the truth about the Bahamas wreck found there, "the oldest, best-preserved shipwreck in the New World."

Our archaeologists are fascinated by this Triangle shipwreck and its implication," reports Dr. Madeleine Burnside, executive director of the Mel Fisher Maritime Heritage Society. "What is her identity? What was her mission? Even today, experts are unsure of how this sturdy little vessel met her demise. Was she



TREASURES OF THE TRIANGLE: An exhibit at the Mel Fisher Maritime Heritage Museum features artifacts recovered from vessel lost at sea.

an unknown victim of the Triangle?"

Beginning with a special premiere party on Sunday, October 25, the Treasures of the Triangle exhibit runs from Monday, October 26, through Sunday, November 8 at the Society's museum at 200 Greene Street. The museum is open from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days a week.

## Mystery Triangle Air Tours

Feel like looking down at it all this Fantasy fest? Chalk's, the largest seaplane airline in the world, has flown above the Devil's Triangle since its beginnings in 1919. . . carrying passengers like Ernest Hemingway, Al Capone, Judy Garland and millionaire Howard Hughes.

For Fantasy Fest, the airline's experienced pilots will fly over the area in colorful 17-passenger turbo-prop seaplanes. A professional narrator will provide a tongue-in-cheek overview of the Triangle's terrors and attractions, and passengers will experience the thrill of a water takeoff and landing on each flight.

Tours will run from October 29 through October 31, several times each day. Reservations are available at the Chalk's veranda, located next to the Pier house at the foot of Duval Street. Call 292-3637 for information.

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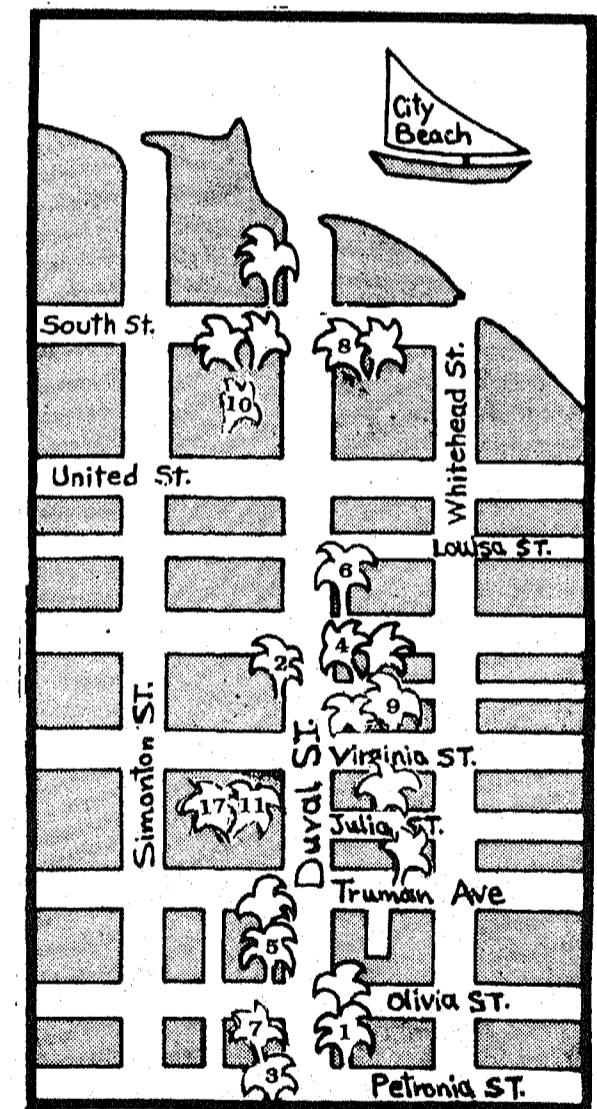
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(Each business is keyed into the map. Check the bottom left corner of each box for the number)

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### The haunting of the Hemingway House

The ghosts may be asking for whom the bells toll when the Hemingway House becomes a haunted house for Fantasy Fest this Halloween. The Hemingway House, an event sponsor for the first time, will be presenting "a Devil's Triangle version of a haunted house," according to director of marketing Sylvia Robards.

The eerie illusions have been created by a joint venture between Teresa Willis of Key West and Laser Productions of Miami.

According to Robards, Laser Productions will use laser simulation for special effects.

Actual lasers can be hazardous if they come into

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contact with the audience, but the simulations will be perfectly safe while "allowing the images to flow right through visitors to the house," says Robards.

In the spirit of Disney's mansion, there will also be holograms haunting Hemingway's hallowed halls.

All the other effects will be the result of the hard work and creative imaginations of Willis and her staff. In addition to creating and drawing the animated characters in the laser production, Willis also produced the sound track, which will be synchronized with each "event" throughout the house.

Guests will be escorted through the five theme rooms by silent specters. Since the groups will be small, Robards says, everyone will be able to enjoy the thrill of the journey through the house.

Robards doesn't want to give away the scary surprises that await Fantasy Fest revelers. She does hint that this year's theme will play a large role in the haunting.

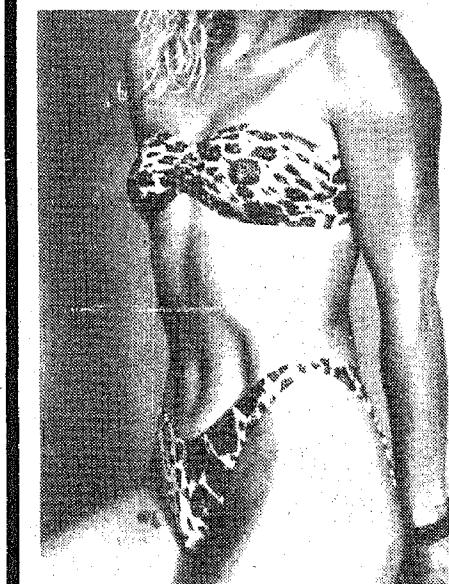
"No detail has been overlooked," she says, "in creating a magical, mystical, haunted world beneath the sea in the Devil's Triangle."

In addition to the underwater theme, Robards hints that Papa's influence may not be far away.

Although the effects promise to bring chills, Robards says the planners have been careful "to avoid phobias." Visitors can expect to be surprised and startled by this first haunting of the Hemingway House.

The creaky gates are scheduled to open for Fantasy Fest attendees from October 26 to October 30 from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. Admission is \$7 per person.

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

Imagine if you will what—to the eye of an innocent observer abroad at about 5 a.m. the morning after Fantasy Fest—may have seemed a great, lost and tragic Queen (no pun intended) making her way alone and tear-stained, toward Betty Bennett's house on Southard Street, a coffin trailing behind. Perhaps not as innocent as my spiritual advisors once hoped, and abroad myself for early morning toothpaste at the Sunbeam We-Never-Close Deli on White Street, I knew it to be my friend Mab, who had attended the Pretenders in Paradise jamboree at the Pier House.

Black, all in black, purple-and-black veil, floor-length black gown (Halston) and black trailing cape, wearing a gold tiara ("Happy New Year 1937"). Mab's purple-and-blue eye makeup was blurred and wretched, the coffin dragging behind on a kid's red Lightning Express wagon.

Perhaps these Shakespearean images came to mind because I sometimes think of Mab as not unlike the Fool in King Lear, another figure in drag whom the world thinks comic but who is not comic, but who is the only one on stage

who tells us the truth for all that.

I asked Mab in what role had he attended the Fantasy Fest Gala.

"Sarah Bernhardt," said he.

"The coffin is part of the costume?"

Sarah Bernhardt had been famous for sleeping in one, Mab said. "She travelled through Europe and America, carrying it with her," he continued, "to remind herself that no matter how loud the applause, at one's back one can ever hear time's winged chariot hurrying near."

Mab wiped his tears with a wisp of black silk.

"It was perhaps for pursuit of every emotion she could pack into one brief life," Mab said, "that Sarah was given the appellation The Divine. Well past fifty, and with a wooden leg, she not only played Ophelia to the tears of all Paris, but later starred as Hamlet himself in a second production at the Comedie Francaise. Like Marlene Dietrich—another Divine—Sarah Bernhardt transcended mere gender. In her infinite humanity, she was both male and female. A role model to us all."

By now we were sitting on Betty Bennett's front porch, where Mab has been living since his job at the bank ended in a merger. Daylight had begun to filter down through the mahogany trees. A police cruiser with a shouting drunk in the back passed. Mab hiked up his long skirts and crossed his ankles on the coffin, which he had brought up on the porch.

"I think most of us would agree on what young is," he began, in the sybilline manner of Shakespeare himself. "Consensus fails when we begin to speak of middle age, and if we try to say

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Solares Hill • Oct. 22 - Nov. 1, 1992 • Page 33  
if someone is old opinions grow wildly subjective."

A window opened behind us. Betty was up. "Coffee, anyone?" We said yes. Mab went on:

"Perhaps the confusion begins in those movies where they dust an actor's hair with talcum at thirty to show a diminishment of sex, and actresses play fifty carrying a cane."

I said to Mab I took it this was a speech begun perhaps last night to someone he met at the masked Fantasy revels?

"Look at Jane Fonda, I said to this rather comely young person," Mab replied. "She's slender, hot and glorious, the Queen of American Exercise and manned out to a billionaire, at what? Fifty-four? Fifty-five?"

"And this relentlessly anonymous—if comely—young person replied, Jane who? Is that why the tears?"

"Bill," Mab said, "I am coming down with a dread disease, one for which there is no cure. I have become invisible."

"Invisible?"

"People under 25 can't see me," Mab said.

"Am I at the age where I have to now buy

back what once I gave away as a kid for love?"

Betty Bennett came out of the house and took Mab in her arms.

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## READERS WRITE

### A fool and his money

Dear Editors:

With the economic slowdown due to Hurricane Andrew and the national recession continuing we are all watching our pennies.

Most people are surviving, and the business community is looking forward to a strong season. A great many of us are currently using credit to get by the slow times and to prepare for the season. I always seem to spend next year's profits last year.

I have recently canceled a number of credit cards that charge 18% to as high as 21.9% interest on unpaid balances plus transaction fees on cash advances of 2% to 2.5%.

As a service to your readers may I suggest you publish some credit cards fees and rates. Many people only read the local newspapers and are not aware of some of the lower rates available.

I realize you depend on local advertising from banks and the credit union and probably would find it unwise to comment on these rates,

but a periodic reporting of credit rates would be helpful to your readers.

Every time I see that television ad for Discover card cash advances I do a slow burn.

They state that there is no interest charge for ATM cash advances, which is true when using their card. There is, however, 12.5% transaction fee!

With interest rates so low, 18% to 22% is outrageous. The credit union is 11.9% on Visa Gold with a \$29 annual fee and no charge for cash advances. Their regular Visa is 13.9% with a \$9 annual fee. Citibank is now 13.9%, but Discover is 19.8%, as is Chase Manhattan. Even American Express has lowered its Optima card rates to 14.9%.

Your readers could save a great deal of money with the right information.

Paul Marston  
Key West

### See you at the grotto

Dear Editor:

Well, here I am once again. Last year about this time my words appeared in the letters column on this same subject.

I wrote then that the emergency evacuation plan for Monroe County could not really be called a plan. I said it might work for the Upper Keys if, as they say where I came from, "the creek don't rise" and if the drawbridges don't fail in the open position.

However, I feel now as I did last year,

that yelling "Run for your lives!" is not a good plan for the Lower Keys. There is only one road and not enough time.

I said then and I say now that we need military assistance. This year, now that the precedent has been set in Homestead, perhaps real thought will be given to the idea. Last year the emergency personnel responded with sarcasm.

A fleet of Army C-150s could make quick work of an evacuation. And they could take us to Missouri or somewhere not also immediately threatened by the storm. We're paying them the same whether they help or not. If they aren't assisting citizens, they will be making practice runs at their home base.

In the meantime, see you at the grotto.

Judi Bradford  
Key West

### They weren't making money off Monkey Tom

Dear Editor:

The author of September's "Monkey Tom" story would like to apologize to Cheryl and Denise of the Rusty Anchor for his misconception that they were making a profit, lovely or otherwise, from Tom's paintings. They were lucky to break even in any transaction, and their only motive was to sustain a hungry artist.

Robin Shanley  
Key West

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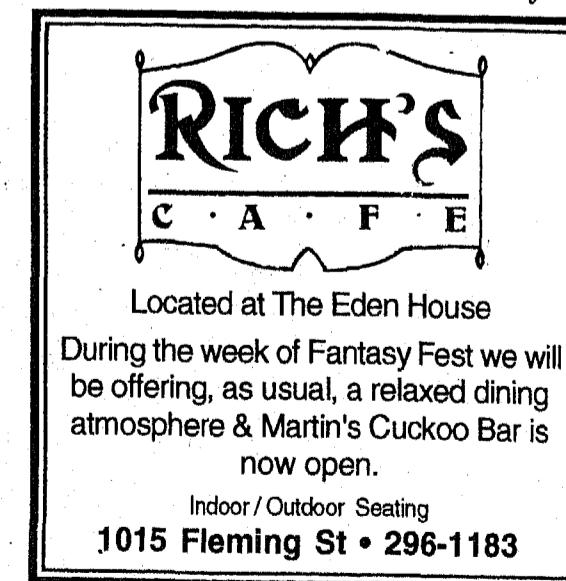


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## Solares Almanac

October 23 -  
November 2

**A**s noted in our last issue, the season's first dry and delicate winds from the northwest did come our way on the first Monday in October. For those of us who have waited since June, those cooler, drier and, yes, short-lived air currents certified the change which all of us knew was coming, but few could believe would truly arrive. There will, you can bet the farm, be more such delights as this month winds down and November arrives. For there is more than Election Day to quicken the pulse arriving with November's cooler winds from the northeast.

Take the temperature. I will, it will be delightful. For as November transits toward the final month of this bizarre election year, temperatures will average a solid ten degrees less than they did in July and August. In Key West latitudes where extremes are avoided in favor of moderation, that's about the most radical meteorological change of the year. You will know it's on the way when you set your clocks back one hour on Sunday (10/25) and step out into the early evening for a look at the new moon that will appear for a moment or two at sunset (5:52).

The moon will bring with it the most extreme tides of recent weeks, tides that will surge from the 23rd through the 28th. Among their considerable benefits, those tides should complete changing the region's salt-water fishing patterns from their summer to their winter configuration. Gray snapper should be back in the bay and soon barracuda will show up to sun themselves on the flats.

Rains will continue to moderate (less lawn mowing), breezes will be fresher and more constant, orchid trees will bloom and the hawks, which began arriving just when we told you they would, will be here in full force. Does it really matter who sits in the White House for the winter? Not much if you live in Key West during this best time of year.

Enough data. Let's have some drama. First, this footnote: You may consider the produce aisles at Wooley's (nee Pantry Pride) a likely spot for bird watching, but as the warbler

migration began gathering momentum earlier this month a Common Yellowthroat (female) was seen hopping from the lettuce to the oranges and from there to the scale. She seemed quite at peace and, I'm certain, has since found her way out those automatic doors, some of which are open most of the time.

As experienced if foolhardy fly-casting angler (who shall remain anonymous) was wading alone on the flats in the back country recently as the tide rose and the sun set. He was looking for bonefish, but spotted a permit and cast to it. The husky fish—about 18 pounds—took the fly and began its run. For a half-hour fish and angler were joined in a battle which took the angler more than half a mile from his anchored skiff. When the fish tired and allowed itself to be reeled in, the angler reached down into the water to remove his fly and release the fish.

At that split second, a large blacktip shark rushed from the channel and clamped on to the permit. The angler's arm shook as the shark's head jerked from side to side, ripping its sawteeth through the permit's midsection. In less than five seconds, the permit was torn in half and its blood clouded the water.

The angler (for reasons you'll have to pry from him) lifted his half of the fish from the water and began the long wade back to his boat. Darkness had all but taken over and the tide had risen so the guy was in water up to his waist. Alerted by the permit's blood, at least five more sharks trailed our man. Never for a minute, how-ever, did he consider giving up his trophy. He held onto it until he reached his skiff and climbed over the side, the sharks still circling around him. I have a photo of the angler and his half.

That same guy, if you can believe it, hooked a tarpon on a fly wading the flats and casting into a channel. As he was about to release the 40-pound fish, a nine-foot bull shark charged out of the channel and began chasing the tarpon. The angler broke off his trophy and turned to run for his skiff. Running, he fell down and the shark turned his way, but cruised by without doing any damage.

And this is the fellow who wants me to

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wade the flats with him when we go fishing!

The Almanac is written for Solares Hill by John Cole, with much help from Capt. Bill Somers of the charter sloop Relevance, author and publisher of the Key West tide tables; flats fishing guides Capt. Gil Drake and Capt. Jeffrey Cardenas; the Florida Key Audubon Society; the meteorologists at the Key West National Weather Service at the Key West Airport; the National Marine Fisheries Service; Thomas J. Wilmers, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service biologist; and others who generously provide insights and information. Any errors, however, are the author's and his alone.

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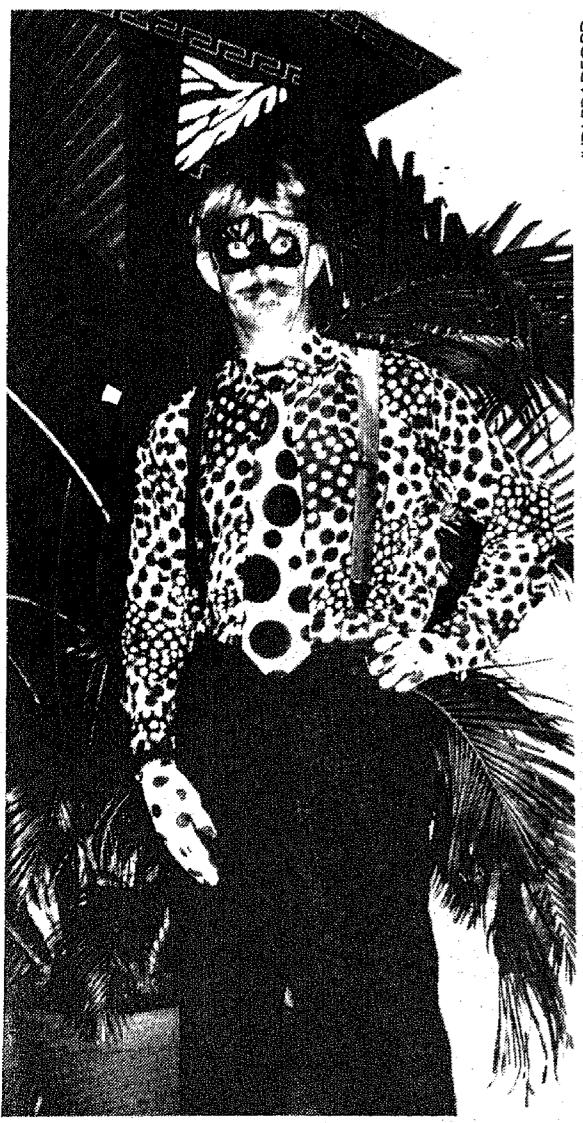
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## ART CIRCLE • BY JUDI BRADFORD



THE GODDESS: Geraldine O. Lloyd surrounded by personal symbolism.



THE DOORMAN: Guards the gate of the Temple.

## Doing the goddess thing

"What have been the shoes she's been walking around in through history?"

by Judi Bradford

**G**oddesses is a new place on Duval Street. Though lots of unusual shops show up on Duval, you haven't seen anything like this before.

Six invitation-only events have been staged, one for each goddess represented by the shop. At one of the openings, while the awed guests tried to figure out what they were immersed in, local artist Jack Baron whispered, "What is this? What does she do here?"

"For those who know," explains proprietress Geraldine O. Lloyd, "I don't have to say anything. And for those who don't know, I won't."

When you enter Goddesses, you will be entranced. Lloyd has transformed the Key West apartment behind Plantation Potters into another reality, a reality that hearkens back to the memory of powerful feminine legends. Recall Josephine Baker dancing in Paris wearing a string of bananas and an aura of wild and earthy womanliness, or barefooted Isadora Duncan dusting the sleep from our eyes with her trailing scarves.

"Woman as God, that's not my focus," says Lloyd, "but that woman has existed forever. And what have been the shoes she's been

walking around in through history? And how was that energy passed on? And how does that energy exist in the collective unconscious?"

Lloyd has created an environment that stimulates the senses, particularly the eye. The entire interior is covered with symbolic elements from the artist's life, and by extension, the life of Everywoman.

### All is tangible in the Temple

**T**he sofa Lloyd grew up with is hung on the wall, occupied by life-size black rag dolls. "The Hera sofa," she calls it.

The ceiling, the walls and the floors of Goddesses constitute the Temple, the stage for Lloyd's organization of life according to the female archetypes inherent in the six goddesses: Hera, Aphrodite, Artemis, Demeter, Athena and Persephone.

Two psychologists, Roger and Jennifer Woolger, wrote a book called "The Goddess Within" which defined female personalities in terms of the characteristics of the ancient Greek goddesses. Lloyd, who had been researching feminine history on her own for some time, came to a blinding realization when she read a phrase



ON SHOW: Lloyd as Hera talks to guests at one of the opening performances. Note the headset microphone for philosophical commentary.

in the Woolgers' book: "Goddesses are tools for all of us."

Now all is tangible in the Temple, described on her card as "The forces of the feminine-manifestation through fashion, music, dance and dialogue."

She'll create an environment for you. Your stuff or hers, it's up to you.

On Friday and Saturday nights, the Temple is available for events for private groups or by reservation. Theatrics are also available. Isadora can visit.

The Garden is a tiny Key-West-sized patio curtained with trailing plants. It is there you can commission "interpretive" sculpture and portraits. During the opening events, the Garden was filled with buffet sculptures made of fruit, chaperoned by two drowsy and completely black kittens. They awakened from their clump in front of the portrait information card (blocking the price), stretched, coiled around each other again and returned to the realm of feline dreams.

### Nothing is completely black or white

**S**hoes are important. Lloyd talks in terms of walking in a woman's shoes, stepping into Hera's shoes. Before entering the Temple, guests must remove their shoes.

There are wallflowers on every wall.

One wall is papered with playing cards fanned out into hands: "We're all dealt a different hand."

Remember the zebra riddles of childhood: "Nothing is completely black or white. There is no one comprehensive explanation."

On Hera night, "Madame Butterfly" was rolling boldly from the remote-controlled music system. On Aphrodite night, it was K. D. Lang's music.

Wander through the altered state, ruffling through the fuzzy carpet in your bare feet, carrying your shoes in a little white bag thoroughly provided by the mime at the door. Encounter the smell of the petit-four corner. Just beyond that Persephone lies dead on the floor in a shimmering peacock-feather skirt.

For your enlightenment, there are quotes from the book about the goddesses. Near each quote is a living woman quietly playing the part of the particular goddess. Perhaps she will

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hand you a candy, rich and luscious white chocolate cream from Hera, or Hershey kisses from Demeter. Or perhaps she will dust you with glitter.

Contemporary interpretations are allowed. Athena wears a tailored suit. A spiked red high heel dangles from Athena's stocking leg.

If things get slow, the music suddenly switches to "You Can Dance." Commentary comes through the sound system from Lloyd's headset microphone.

There are shelves of antiques and kitsch, armoires of elegant clothing from Lloyd's previous life as a jet-set corporate wife who served on the boards of Maryland zoos and charities.

The interior is wrapped cocoon-like in miles of bunched zebra-striped, flowered, gauzy fabric. Overlaid are elements from Lloyd's past and present.

If something strikes your fancy, you may have it. Talk with her. But you'll have to call for a reservation. "This is not retail," Lloyd says.

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## ART & CULTURE NOTES

### Marine Art

An exhibition of marine art, sponsored by the Key West Maritime Historical Society, will open October 23 at the Library Gallery at Florida Keys Community College. Constructions, paintings and photographs by Roland Barker, Michael "White" Bassett, Sandford Birdsey, Herbert Foote, Dan Gallagher, Robert Kennedy, William Muir, Thomas Noeker, William "Doc" Palumbo, Sharon Wells, Jay Wetzel, Kyle Wickware, David Harrison Wright are being shown. The opening reception is from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Catering is by Great Events. Appropriate nautical costumes are welcome.

### Just a Hop Away

Ah, those were the days, when Havana was the place to go. Steamship lines plowed the straits between Cuba and Key West with passengers every day. Family and friends and tourists, all dancing the night away in conga lines. During Prohibition in the U.S., Havana was where locals went for a nightcap. Before Key Westers had cars, they had boats for those little jaunts to our nearest Caribbean neighbor.

See this history of tourism between the islands from 1900 to 1960 through November 22 at East Martello Museum & Gallery. The show is open daily from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$3 for adults. 3501 S. Roosevelt Blvd.

### Tina's Fish Goes to School

Tinafish took her fish printing skills to Mrs. McCorkle's fifth grade class last month and printed angel fish on t-shirts with the kids. Artist Eve Bender, whose daughter Rachel was in the class, assisted. They used the school colors to reproduce the tropical specimen, and each student went home with a new fish t.

"The students were really wonderful," said Tinafish. The kids were impressed as well and asked for the artist's autograph. See Tinafish prints at Island Arts on Duval.

### Kokopelli Opens

"A touch of Santa Fe" is how Jerry and Louise Beesinger describe their new gallery in the 800 block of Duval. Kokopelli was a flute-playing Indian trickster also known for his wild dancing. He is described on the gallery's business card as an unprincipled amoral hunchback who brings change out of chaos. He often gives babies or seeds as gifts of renewal to maidens he seduces. In their seductive shop, the Beesingers present handcrafted jewelry, furniture, pottery and accessories from New Mexico.

### A Hint of Beverly Hills on Big Pine

All the locals who shopped at Bandanas when it was around know that no one can dress you up like Leda can. Now Leda's got the Beverly Hills Thrift Shop next to her LedaBruce Gallery on Big Pine.

Leda and Bruce can find the best of the best. This is a spot to check out while you're waiting for inspiration on that Fantasy outfit.

### AIDS Baby Quilts

The national quilt project of requesting handmade baby quilts to comfort youngsters with AIDS is being sponsored by East Martello in Key West. The quilts from the Florida Keys will be shown at the museum November 25 through January 3.

After their display here, the quilts will be collected and distributed in the South Florida area to children's homes and hospitals for infants born HIV-positive, drug-addicted or abandoned.

For information on donating quilts, call Linda Spangrud at 296-6206, or reach her at Martello, 296-3913.

**Audubon House** • "A Family of Harbor Pilots"—October through January. Admission \$5, children under six free, AAA discount. Daily, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. 205 Whitehead St. 294-2116.

**Bonsai of Key West** • Wood and metal accessories. Wood puzzle jewelry boxes, lamps, ceramic fish, stone and wood fountains, origami mobiles—all by local artisans. Tortugas photos and bonsai sculptures. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturdays; closed Sundays (normally). 310 Duval Street. 294-2921.

**Carambola Gallery** M.E. Ching acrylics. Roger Connally watercolors; masks by Doris Christie; acrylics by Harry Greene; pottery by Tom Woodruff; hand-crocheted jewelry by Aenne McVey; oils and painted furniture by Gay Cunningham; oils on canvas by Mark Hagan. Thursday through Monday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., 814 Fleming St. 296-2545.

**Great Southern Gallery** • Jeff Nancarrow's whimsical sculptures. New Dick Moody trompe l'oeil tile paintings. New works by Carrie Disrule. Daily, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. 910 Duval St. 294-6660.

**Guild Hall Gallery** • Eighteen key artists in a cooperative featuring the island's widest variety of arts and fine crafts. Daily, 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and often later. 614 Duval St. 296-6076.

**Haitian Art Company** • Display of items from our most recent shipment. Spirit flags, paper mache, paintings, wood sculpture, metal cut-outs by Haitian artists. Daily, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 600 Frances St. 296-8932.

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Also Andre Henocque, Alan Tibball, Marc Care and others. Daily, noon to 5:30 p.m. except Sunday and Monday or ring the bell. 825 White St. 294-0609.

**High Tide** • Oil paintings and prints with local flavor and also local artists. Affordable prices from \$5 to \$300. Packing and shipping available. Daily, 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. 826 Duval St. 293-0331.

**Florida Keys Community College Library Gallery** • "Florida Straits—An Exhibition of Marine Art", coordinated by the Key West Maritime Historical Society, October 23 through December 14. Open Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Junior College Rd., Stock Island, 296-9081, ext. 202.

**Gingerbread Square Gal-**

ery • New John Kiraly limited

edition serigraphs. Thursday

through Monday, 11 a.m. to 6

p.m. Closed Tuesday, Wed-

nesday, 1207 Duval St. 296-

8900.

**Goddesses** • An interpretive

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into the ancient forces of the

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sculpture, performance art and

art services. Headresses and

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designed during Fantasy Fest,

Oct. 26-Oct. 29 from 8 to 11

p.m. 717 Duval Street in the

court yard. 292-5058.

**Joy Gallery** • Works of Lucie Bildeau, Jim Warren and local artists. Open daily except Wednesday, 10:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. 429 Caroline at the corner of Duval. 296-3039.

**Kennedy Gallery** • Zbyszek

internationally recognized

mixed media artist. Sculpture

by Tom Joris. Vibrant oil paint-

ings by Michele Kennedy. Watercolor street scenes by Robert Kennedy. Daily, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. 530 Simonton St. 296-7353.

**Grand Collection** • Paint-

ings, Asian antiques, ancient

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Daily, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday

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810 Duval St. 296-1331.

**Great Southern Gallery** • Jeff

Nancarrow's whimsical

sculptures. New Dick Moody

trompe l'oeil tile paintings. New

works by Carrie Disrule. Daily,

11 a.m. to 6 p.m. 910 Duval St.

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**Loebner-Stanton Gallery** •

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jects by New Orleans mask

maker John Flemming. New

series of photographs by Ali.

John Martin's new hurricane

sculpture. New paintings by

women artists. Open Thursday

through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 6

p.m.; Sunday and Monday,

noon to 6 p.m. Closed Wednes-

day. 294-0999.

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up November 22 until Decem-

ber 5. Paintings by member

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Simonton St. 294-9535.

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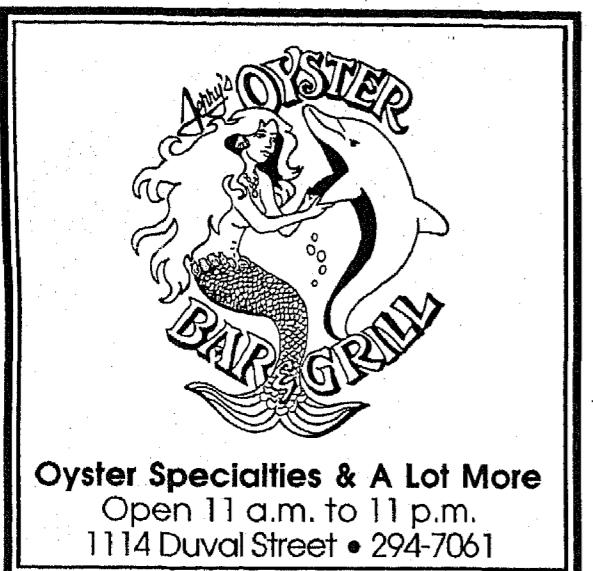
der 7 free. 938 Whitehead St.

294-0012.

**Kokopelli Southwest**

Gallery • A touch of Santa

Fe



*Joel*

by Christine Naughton

## Joel Nelson at the Sun-Sun Pavilion



JANET MARCANTONIO

A wooden pier in the sunset hours creates a singular ambience. Surrounded on three sides by water, it's like a boat that doesn't rock. The sea and sky paint their way leisurely into the night with palettes of pink and orange, red and grey. Little swells lap at the pilings. The natural urge is to relax and reflect. Sunset is a daily transition, touched with a holiness that has nothing to do with religion.

Add a musician who fully appreciates the delicacy of this ambience, sit back and dig it.

Joel Nelson has been resident musician at the Casa Marina's Sun-Sun Pavilion for the past six years. That's probably because, in a town where several singing guitar players get off the Greyhound bus every day, he's the perfect one for this spot.

First of all, as my dear visiting friend Ms. Sheets pointed out the night we went to hear Nelson: "He's gorgeous. Write that down." In addition to this quality of being extremely easy on the eyes, Nelson features a continuously soothing, melodious sound as well.

"Blackbird," Lennon and McCartney's definitive guitar/vocal tune, back-to-back with Eric Clapton's tender Heartbreaker, "No Tears in Heaven," made for a haunting medley. Nelson possesses a versatile right hand, capable of a percussive strumming and intricate

TALENTED AND GORGEOUS: Joel Nelson strums away at the Sun-Sun Pavilion.

fingerpicking that strings notes like bright beads on a thread. He understates everything, but covers it all—rhythm, bass and lead lines on the guitar, and lots of great vocals.

Nelson's voice carries an inherent warmth, reminiscent of Cat Stevens. It is beautifully suited to the repertoire he covers. The sets we heard included hits by Jackson Browne, James Taylor, Van Morrison, John Denver, Dan Fogelberg, Bob Marley, Bonnie Raitt, and Mack MacAnally. Nelson makes minimal use of a drum machine now and then, but for most tunes his voice and guitar are all he needs.

Wonderfully sensitive to mood, Nelson likes to throw in an occasional original composition, or perhaps a lesser-known tune perfect for the moment. He pulled a couple of the latter out of his hat just after sunset, a dreamy confection by Cat Stevens, "Into White," and a lovely ballad from Bonnie Raitt's Nick of Time album, Too Soon To Tell, "Song for Kate," Nelson's own tune about riding out a hurricane on an island, placed some very hip changes over a smooth samba beat.

When a player keeps a gig going six nights a week for six years, chances are he's doing something right. So if you've had enough of the Duval crawl and need to get far from the maddening crowd, take a relaxing sunset break some enchanted evening soon and curl up in the Sun-Sun Pavilion with Joel Nelson.

Joel Nelson appears in the Sun-Sun Pavilion on the Casa Marina pier, Monday through Saturday evening from 6 to 10 p.m.

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**Atlantic X Dinner Cruise**, Casino, at the Key West Seaport Elizabeth and Greene. Key West's best entertainment value. Dinner cruise includes a full buffet featuring salads, entrees, pasta and dessert, catered by a number of the finest local restaurants. Plus a Las Vegas style casino and continuous live entertainment. Sailing times are Sunday through Thursday, boarding at 5 p.m. and cruising from 6 to 11 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, boarding at 6 p.m. and cruising from 7 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. Reservations required. All major credit cards accepted, 292-6124.

**Half Shell Raw Bar**, Land's End Village, foot of Margaret Street. Serving lunch and dinner til 11 p.m. Freshest shrimp, fish and lobster direct from our own fish market at the shrimp docks. Cash only, 294-7496.

**Rich's**, at the Eden House, 920 Caroline Street. Number one locals spot. Large portions and small prices. Grilled dolphin, smoked baby back ribs, chicken, prime rib, salad bar, key lime pie. Where friends meet to eat and drink. All major credit cards accepted, 294-8472.

**Stick & Stein Sports Rock Cafe**, North Roosevelt Blvd. in Key Plaza (next to K-Mart). Featuring an impressive selection of appetizers, salads, sandwiches, pizza and a variety of entrees from T-bone steak to shrimp in a basket at the best prices in town. Open daily for lunch, dinner and late night snacks. Pool and darts from 10 a.m. to 4 a.m. Major credit cards accepted, 296-3352.

**Tamarind's**, at Duval Square, 1021 Duval Street. Key West's newest cafe offers breakfast, lunch and dinner. Our menu features eggs, grilled seafood, fresh salads, sandwiches, burgers, soups and luscious desserts at affordable prices, presented in an innovative manner with a Caribbean flavor. Enjoy dining inside or outside in our relaxing oasis. Breakfast 8 to 11:30 a.m., lunch 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., dinner 6:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. Takeout available, 294-2809.

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

**Viva Zapata**, 903 Duval Street. Traditional Mexican fare. Daily Southwestern specials. Enjoy our poolside dining. Open seven nights until 11:30 p.m. 296-3138.

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

## RESTAURANT DIRECTORY

Flagler's, Marriott's Casa Marina, Reynolds Street. Elegance, nostalgia, romance and an exquisite view of the Atlantic. Beautiful food in beautiful surroundings, blended into an extraordinary American dining experience. Featuring America's traditional recipes, including seafood and chargrilled steak. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. And a new Sunday brunch menu with a local discount. Live entertainment in Flagler's Bar. Reservations suggested, 296-3535.

**Flamingo Crossing**, 1105 Duval Street. The locals' favorite dessert spot features freshly-made-daily ice creams, sorbets, honey yogurts, sundaes and shakes. Also enjoy Florida Keys Finest Key Lime Pie in a tropical garden setting. Open daily from noon to 11 p.m. and midnight Friday and Saturday, 294-6124.

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fast, lunch and dinner daily. All you care to eat breakfast and lunch. Soup, Salad & Fruit Bar. Monday and Tuesday is Locals Country Night from 5 to 9 p.m. All you care to eat for \$6.99. Kids menu starting at 99 cents. Seniors menu. Special Fantasy Fest breakfast buffet from 11 p.m. to 4 a.m. on October 30 and 31, 292-1968.

**South Beach Seafood & Raw Bar**, on the beach at the ocean end of Duval Street. Fresh Key West Seafood, baby-back ribs, chicken, steak, oysters, clams, nighty specials. Serving beer and wine. Dine inside or outside on our beach deck. Open 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, 294-2727.

**Roofstop Cafe**, 310 Front Street, in the heart of Old Town offering rooftop garden setting with outdoor special; serving special German beer and wine. Brunch 8 a.m. until noon; dinner 6 p.m. until 10 p.m. daily, 296-1183.

**Jimmy's Oyster Bar & Grill**, 1114 Duval Street. Serving lunch and dinner daily. Specializing in Oysters Moscow or Rockefeller plus raw or steamed. Much more than an oyster bar, offering chicken, baby back ribs, New York strip steak, combi platters, sampler platters, kabobs, appetizers, salads, soups, sandwiches and desserts. 294-7061.

**Camille's**, 703 1/2 Duval Street. A local restaurant with the casual Key West touch, serving high-quality fare for breakfast and lunch. Daily specials. Entrees are reasonably priced, made of only the finest ingredients and cooked to order. The Sunday Brunch has become tradition for many locals. Open daily, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. 296-4811.

**Casablanca Cafe**, 900-904 Duval Street. A tropical inn serving imaginative Caribbean-style cuisine, fresh local seafood, stone crab claws (in season), shrimp, and such mainstays as prime rib, steaks and pasta. Dine in a lush, tropical setting. Also located on the grounds is **Bogart's Irish Pub**, which boasts the largest selection of imported and domestic beers on draft. Open at 6 p.m., daily, 296-0815.

**Crab Shack**, 908 Caroline Street across from Land's End Village. Fresh seafood served from 11 a.m. to 10:30 p.m., daily. Peel-your-own spicy steamed shrimp every day. Widest variety of crab dishes on the island. We also cook your catch as you like it. For the landlubber, charbroiled steaks and prime rib. Blue plate specials nightly. Dine indoors and out. 294-9658.

**808 Duval**, Recommended by concierges and guest houses as the best "new" restaurant on Duval. Specializing in rack of lamb, Maine lobster, and stuffed swordfish served in an atmosphere of casual elegance where locals and tourists dine. Open seven days from 5 p.m. Air conditioned dining room or tropical court yard. Major credit cards accepted, 293-0006.

**Mangrove Mama's**, mile marker 20 on Sugarloaf Key. Featuring natural and local seafood served in an old-time Keys atmosphere. Dining inside in an old 1919 "Flagler building" or outside under the banana trees. Enjoy the wine bar with a large selection of wines by the glass. Open from 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. For dining reservations and entertainment schedule, call 745-3030.

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## GRITS, GRUNTS &amp; GRUYERE • WITH JEANNE McCLOW

## The Stone Crab — Connoisseur's Choice

Okay, all you fledgling freshwater Conchs out there, what event of international import took place in South Florida just last week? Hint: It happens every year at this time, and is one of the main reasons the region is known to gourmets the world around.

Well, October 15 was the opening of the season for stone crab, of course. Of the 4500 known species of crab, the area from Miami to Key West happens to be home to one of the best known and best tasting. We are blessed.

The adulation that this big, beady-eyed crustacean has won was not awarded on the basis of its good looks. It is probably just as well that most of us have never seen more of the stone crab than its handsome black-tipped claws arranged on a heap of crushed ice. If we were to see the creature in its entirety, scuttling about in its murky environs (this variety belongs to the mud-crab family), we would observe an awkward-looking fellow measuring about five inches between claw tips and two inches in thickness. The shell would be thick and heavy, and the critter would probably be waving about the two formidable claws with which it defends itself. Stone crabs doing battle, which they do frequently, look remarkably like a knights-in-



JEANNE McCLOW

take stone crabs in any other way—they can simply and guiltlessly remove the claws and return the rest to the muck.

All this muck is what makes South Florida so sublime a habitat for the stone crab. Its preference is to burrow right in or hide out under some rocks or mangrove roots. As for weather, the crab loves nothing more than a good rainy season that will really get things riled up. Not surprisingly, trappers like this, too, for then the crabs are out and about and likely to wander into a trap. In fact, the amount and kind of rainfall is pretty much the determining factor in the success or failure of a crab season.

Since stone-crab lovers can satiate themselves until May 15, when the crabs are given five months off to tend to family matters, there is much to look forward to. To this end,



JEANNE McCLOW

JUST A TASTE: The writer treats herself to a still-sizzling crab claw.

armor jousting.

The life of the crab is in less danger than that of the medieval warrior was. The individual stone crab is a renewable resource: Should it begin to lose a fight by having a claw trapped, the crab can merely drop it off its body and skulk off into the slime to grow another.

This process takes about a year and a half, but it is a period during which our crab can go on living a fairly normal crab life. It won't be able to defend itself if both claws are lost, which is the reason most crabbers take only one, but it will be able to eat. When the new appendage(s) finally does emerge, it will be smaller than the original. The crab will be known in the parlance as a "retread." Since a stone crab can live as long as ten years, it could find itself retreaded several times.

While the stone crab's miraculous ability to regenerate its claws is of great importance to its survival, it is of considerable benefit to all us two-legged appreciators of its succulent flesh, too. About 95% of the meat is contained within the claws. When crabbers unload their traps—it has long been illegal to

SALTWATER CONCH: Marty Bass peels claws for her ultra-tropical Coconut Stone Crab.

some simple recipes follow.

Stone crab is really at its best served simply. For one thing, the stone crab one buys will have already been cooked aboard the crabbing vessel to prepare it for freezing. If it is not pre-cooked, the meat will adhere irretrievably to the hard shell. Thus, any further cooking beyond a quick saute or run under the

broiler is bound to be a detriment to its wonderful texture.

The crab's widely-sought-after flavor is a subtle one easily overwhelmed by lustier ingredients. Most aficionados will usually serve it au natural with just a squeeze of Key lime, some melted butter, and/or a tangy dipping sauce. It is also good on cold canapes and in salads, especially in combination with tropical fruits.

## Joe's Stone Crab with Mustard Sauce

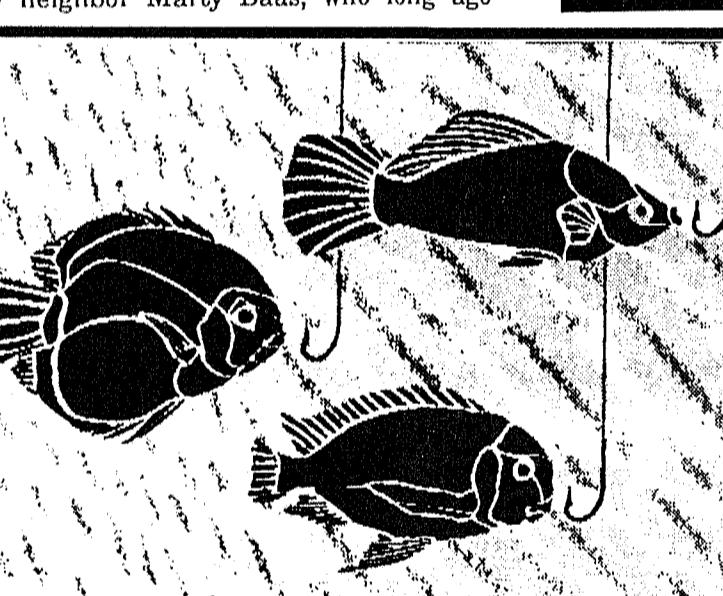
When it comes to "going out" for stone crab, there is probably no more popular a spot for it than Joe's Stone Crab Restaurant in Miami. Now nearly 80 years old, this establishment is said to go through a ton of claws every night. The mustard dipping sauce it serves with the claws is as much an institution as the place itself and the following is a pared-down recipe for it.

About 1 tablespoon dry English mustard  
1 cup mayonnaise  
2 tablespoons half-and-half  
2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce  
1 teaspoon A-1 sauce  
Salt to taste

Beat the mustard with the mayonnaise very well. Then add the remaining ingredients and beat until creamy.

## Coconut Stone-Crab Claws

This delectable recipe was given to me by my neighbor Marty Baas, who long ago



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and the coconut is golden brown. Then transfer the claws to a plate and serve with Key lime wedges and melted butter. (You can also bake them briefly in the oven or under a broiler.)

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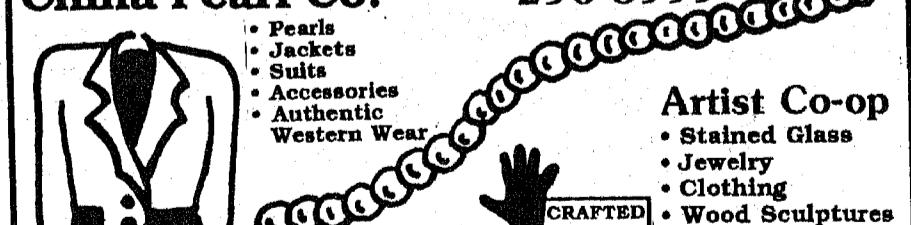
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## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## Events

10/24 • The Mission for Perfection Premier Party 10 p.m. at Conchabamba, 618 Duval Street.

10/24 • Political Rally '92 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the C&S Bank in Marathon. Featuring food and fun for the whole family and a chance to meet the candidates and get educated on the issues.

10/26 • Candidates Night 7:30 p.m. at the Senior Citizens Center (behind the Fire Station) on Key Deer Blvd., Big Pine Key. Featuring various candidates for local government offices in question/answer session.

10/26 • American Red Cross Blood Drive 3 to 6 p.m. at Lower Florida Keys Health System (depot Hospital). Call 296-4033.

10/27 • University Open House 4 to 7 p.m. in the FKCC Student Center. Featuring representatives from nine state universities discussing transfer requirements. Call 296-9081, ext. 305.

## Cultural

10/24-10/30 • The Mission for Perfection featuring Kerry Garrett and the Mission Dancers as well as members of the Key West High School Boys Choir. Shows open 8 p.m. nightly at the Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center. Call 292-9505 or 296-5000, ext. 362.

10/24 • One Night Only, a wonderful combination of musical excerpts from several plays directed by Wendy Noll at the Sombrero Country Club in Marathon. Featuring dinner at 6:30 p.m., the play at 7:30 p.m. followed by dancing until midnight. Presented by the Marathon Community Theatre. Call (305) 743-0129.

10/28 • I Pagliacci by Leoncavallo, a production by the Monroe County Fine Arts Council, 8 p.m. at the Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center. Call 296-5000, ext. 362.

## Entertainment

Beach Club Bar • The Pier House, 1 Duval Street. Call 296-4600.

The Bull & Whistle Bar • Corner of Duval and Caroline Streets. Happy Hour at The Whistle, 5 to 9 p.m. daily.

Captain Hornblower's • 300 Front Street. Call 292-7659.



THE MISSION DANCERS: Onstage at the Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center Oct. 24-30.

Street. Jazz on the patio Thursday through Sunday. Call 294-4922.

Captain Tony's Saloon • 428 Greene Street. Call 294-1838.

Club Havana • The Pier House at 1 Duval Street. Call 296-4600.

Coconuts Comedy Club • The Top at La Concha at 430 Duval Street. Call 296-2991.

Crazy Daizy's at La Concha • 430 Duval Street. Call 296-2991.

Flagler's at The Casa Marina • 1500 Reynolds Street. Call 296-3535.

Full Moon Saloon • 1202 Simonton Street. Call 294-9090.

Green Parrot • 601 Whitehead. Call 296-6133.

Harbour Light's Barrelhead Bar • Garrison Bight Marina. Call 294-9343.

Hog's Breath Saloon • 400 Front Street. Nightly entertainment from sunset until 2 a.m. No cover charge. Call 296-4222.

Islander Restaurant • 528 Front Street. Call 292-7659.

Mango's • 700 Duval Street. VooDoo at Mango's for the month of April: *Insomnia* with deejay *Curtis Lee* Friday nights; *Vision* On sound by *London Loudboy Tony V* Saturday nights; *Meister Lee & phonic phind Utopia* Monday nights; *T.V. Rush into Liz's spaceship playground* Tuesday nights. Call 292-4606.

Mangrove Mama's • MM 20 Sugarloaf Key. *Tim McAlpine and Ron Sommer* jazz dinner every Friday night from 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. *Sam Anderson* on guitar every Saturday from 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. Island dancing with *The Survivors* on the last Sunday of every month. Call 745-3030.

Nightfall • The Reach at Simonton and the Beach. Featuring live entertainment with *Christine Cordone* Wednesday through Sunday nights 5 to 10 p.m. Closed Mondays. Call 296-5000.

Ocean Club Lounge • The Reach at Simonton and the Beach. Oceanside entertainment Wednesday-Saturday evenings with *Larry Smith* on piano, *Phil Sampson* on piano during Sunday Brunch from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Call 296-5000.

Pirate's Den • 300 Front Street. Adult entertainment nightly, 8 p.m. to 4 a.m.

Peek A Boo Lounge • 300 Southard Street. Live adult entertainment nightly, 8 p.m. to 4 a.m. Call 294-0959.

Poinciana Lounge • 3432 Duck Avenue. Call 294-6800.

The Quay • 12 Duval Street. Call 294-4446.

Ramada Inn Top O'Spray • 3420 N. Roosevelt Boulevard. Call 294-5541.

Red's Place • Corner of Duval and Caroline, behind The Bull. The Carl Davis Group plays blues-plus nightly from 9:30 to 10 p.m.

Memory Lane • The Econolodge 2820 N. Roosevelt Boulevard. Call 294-5511.

Nick's Bar and Grill • Hyatt Key West 601 Front Street. Call 296-9900.

Martha's • S. Roosevelt Blvd (A1A). *Barbara Redfern*, Wednesday-Sunday 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. Call 294-3466.

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**KWAMI Share and Care Support Group** for families and friends of people with mental illness meets 7:30 p.m. on the second Monday of each month at the Care Center for Mental Health, 4th Street and Patterson Avenue. Free of charge and open to all. Call Helen at 294-4875 or Mary at 294-9905.

**La Leche League** of Big Pine Key meets the second Monday of every month at 10 a.m. in the Big Pine Baptist Church. Call Joanne at 872-2861 for meeting information.

**La Leche League** of Key West meets second Monday of every month 6 p.m. at 2505 Flagler Avenue. Breastfeeding classes for pregnant moms begin at 5 p.m. Call Joanne at 872-2861 for meeting information.

**Last Resort Codependents Anonymous** meets Mondays at 6:30 p.m. in the rear of Metropolitan Community Church, 1215 Petronia Street. Call 294-8912.

**Literacy Volunteers of America** meets 7 p.m. on the last Monday of each month and offers volunteer training programs as well as workshops. LVA also offers one-to-one tutoring for adults in basic reading and math, GED preparation, or English as a second language. Call 294-4352.

**Literacy Volunteers of Monroe County** is seeking volunteers to help in working with the media and in teaching others to read. Students are also needed. Call

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Call 296-5888 for Other Weekly Activities  
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Lisa Shyder at 294-4352.  
**Lower Keys Friends of Animals** helps animals that are victims of misfortune. Group meets 7 p.m. Tuesday evenings at the Ramada Inn. For membership information call 294-7467 or 296-3926.

**Marine Archaeology Expedition** Third Sunday of the month. Each session focuses on wrecks and the coral reef environment. Membership fee goes forward seminar and monthly newsletter. Call 800-468-3255.

**Meditation and Relaxation Support Group for Oncology Patients** meets the first and third Wednesday of every month from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the South Miami Hospital. Call 662-7146.

**Overeaters Anonymous** meets in the chapel at DePoo Hospital Tuesday and Thursday at 7:30 p.m., Saturday at 11 a.m., and Sundays for a Step Meeting at 8 p.m. in the downstairs conference room. Use emergency room entrance. Call Demi at 745-4355 or Sandy at 293-0368.

**Monroe County Public Library**, Fleming Street, offers preschool story hour on Thursdays at 9:30 a.m.; Saturday movies 10 a.m. 294-8488.  
**Monroe County District School Board Meeting** is held the second Monday of each month in the board room of the Administration Building, 242 White Street. Call 296-6523.

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

**Neighborhood Improvement Association Meeting** last Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. at Martin Luther King

Center on Catherine and Thomas. The public is invited to help discuss ways to guide Bahama Village to a brighter economic future. **Old Island Harmony Barbershop Chorus**, Old Stone Church, Key West, meets Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.

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

**Ovarian Cancer Support Group** meets the first and third Wednesday of every month from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the South Miami Hospital. Call 662-7146.

**St. Mary's Flea Market** every Saturday beginning at 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the ballfield of Mary Immaculate School on Truman and Windsor Lane. Spaces available for \$10. Call 294-1031.

**Stress and Anxiety Management Group** meets every Tuesday 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Mental Health Care Center. Call 292-6843.

**Survivors of Incest Anonymous** meets every Wednesday from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the rear of the Mental Health Center. For details call 296-4357.

**Survivors of Sexual Assault Support Group** meets Mondays at 8:30 p.m. at the holy Innocents Episcopalian Parish Hall, 901 Flagler Avenue. For more information, call Christine Smith at 292-3400.

**Sweet Adelines**, Presbyterian Kirk of the Keys, Marathon, Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. **T'ai Chi Chu'an Exercise Class**, instructed by Will Jones, is a "soft" form of physical conditioning. Classes are at 10 a.m. Tuesday and Thursdays at Island Wellness.

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

**Women's Issues Group** meets Thursdays from noon to 1 p.m. at the Mental Health Care Center. Call 292-6843.

**Quaker Worship Meetings** every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. in the garden in the rear of 618 Grinnell Street. For more information, call Sheridan Crumlish at 294-1523.

**Quality Time-Parenting News for the Keys**, a half-hour television talk show focusing on family issues presented by MOMS Inc. on TCI Channel 5 Wednesday nights at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call 294-4837.

**Recorder Class** for the children of Bahama Village at the Martin Luther King Junior Community Center. Call Lee Thompson

for more information, 292-8248.  
**Recycling Drop Off Center**, located on Stock Island, is open daily. Accepting clean, separated glass, newspaper, aluminum and plastic. Call 292-4433.

**SCORE-Key West** (Service Corps of Retired Executives) offers free business counseling to the public and will assist anyone in furthering their business plans. Call Mike at the Chamber of Commerce for an appointment, 294-2587.

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

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## PALMS & PELICANS • BY FRANCES-ELIZABETH SIGNORELLI

**A** Key West freelance writer, Ida Sue decides to set down in outline, or lists, the occurrences that surround the event of the ficus tree and the Waterfront Theater.

Leading Up To It:

• At Dennis Pharmacy, meet very large lady in lovely, floating summer frock the colors of the French Impressionist painters.

• She looks like a grand airship moored, swaying and billowing at one of the snack tables.

• Both of us pursuing the Christian Science Monitor leads to conversation, to her offering to pick me up in her Infiniti car, to attend one of the musicals, my co-vivant having our Dodge car evenings for his computer class.

(Theater companion: "I want you to go with me because you write the most gorgeous pieces of claptrap.")

Ida Sue animatedly awaits the theater outing. Being normally curious, she asks around. Her new friend is wife of one of our highly-placed, venerated Washington public servants, recently retired. They reside at a socially correct Old Town location, the house built on the order of a crematorium. That is, the "Florida Room" is so hot that if you stay in it, your hair singes.

Ida Sue's Second List: What Happens As We Start Out:

• Three blinks of Infiniti headlights.

• Step into car; we swing off grandly. A two-foot-tall young ficus tree in a big green pot sits between us.

• Theater companion's introduction: "This is my soul mate. I am deeply in love with him. With this ficus tree. Please do not comment. I never have found a love like this. He goes everywhere with me."

Outside the car windows, Ida Sue is aware of a torn's despairing cry. As the three of them cross Duval Street, she tries to run over in her head other foibles that she had run into. She

has read that Ann Boelyn had a sixth finger on one hand, and the prosecuting tribunal said she gave suck to the devil with it. And, fish breathe in the water; a dead bird fell out of the air (heart attack); sunlight takes seven minutes to reach us; there are animals with four legs that eat stones, and one with two legs who once ate an alarm clock.

Ida Sue turns her face to the ficus tree. Her ruby red earrings glow. There's just no way she tries to describe this moment. Theater companion says, "My hubby is a darling chap, but he's so keen on golf that even goes out there to that course nights, and plays wearing a battery light on his cap like a miner. I was lonely until I found my ficus tree true love."

Summation List:

• Theater companion buys the ficus tree an adult ticket. Seated, we're midway of the rather small, rather enchanted playhouse, he cozily in the seat between us.

• During the evening, frequently, Theater companion reaches into a voluminous handbag made of skins of unborn llamas. She pulls out a bottle of wine so old and valuable that the dusty shoulders falls a spider quite dead onto my knee. Her self-confidence is generations-deep in petroleum money. She pours generous dollops of wine onto his roots.

• Upon returning home, my cat-sitter, a school girl, reports one phone call. Later a friend says, "Yes, I called and your cat sitter says, 'She's gone to the theater with a drunk ficus tree."



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Here's what former State Representative Joe Allen has to say about **SANDY HIGGS**:

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Best wishes for success in your new venture ..."



For Information or to offer assistance or contributions, contact: Sandra Higgs Campaign Fund, 1521 Duncan St., Key West, FL 33040 / (305) 296-6227  
Pd. Pol. Adv. Paid for by the Sandra Higgs Campaign Fund, Danny F. Fleming, Treas. • Democrat

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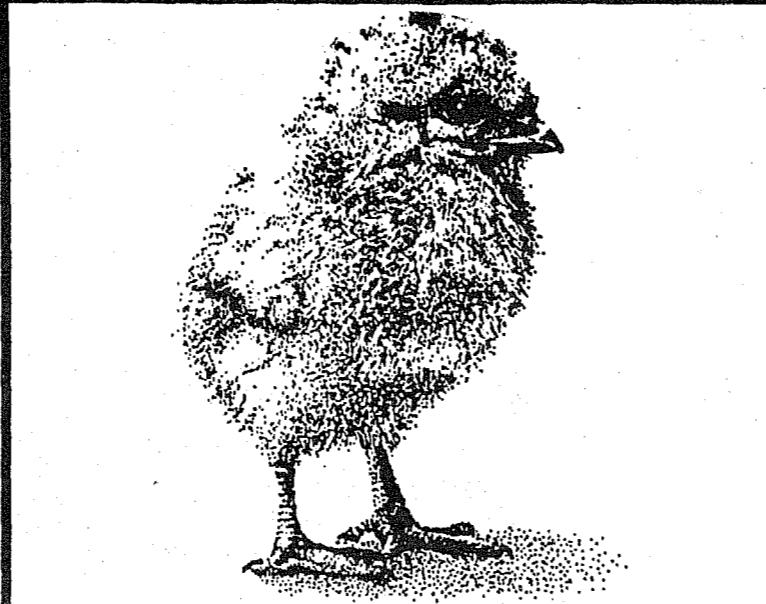
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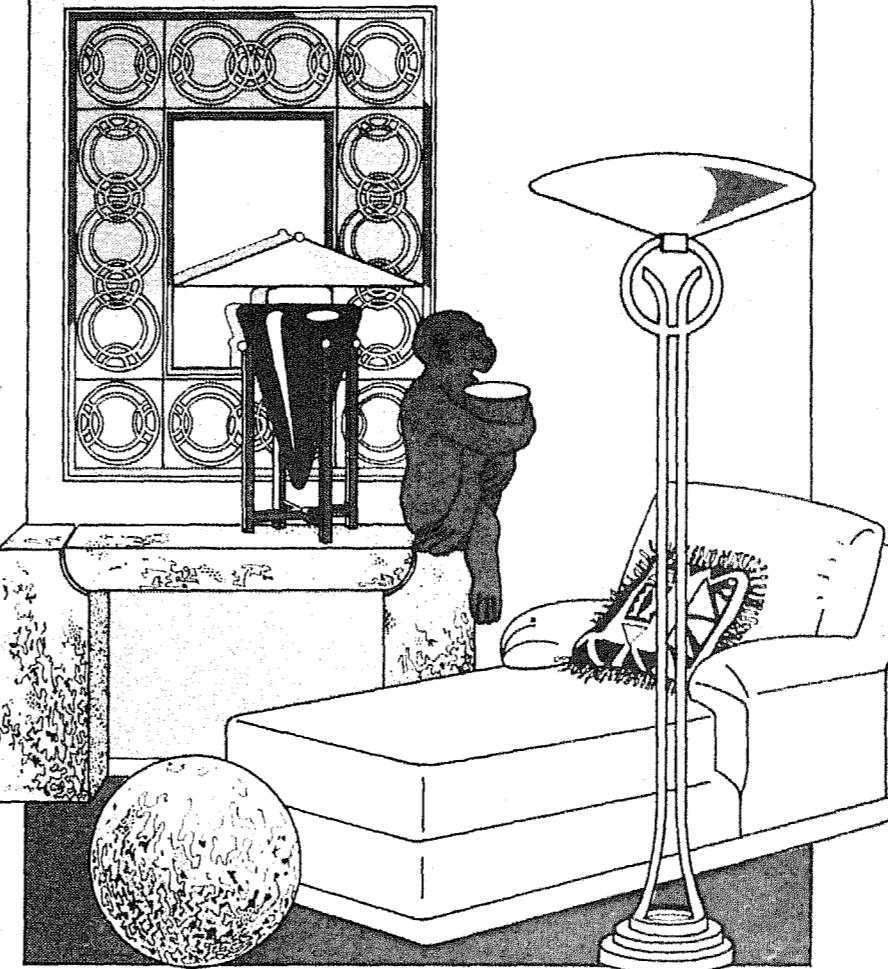
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