

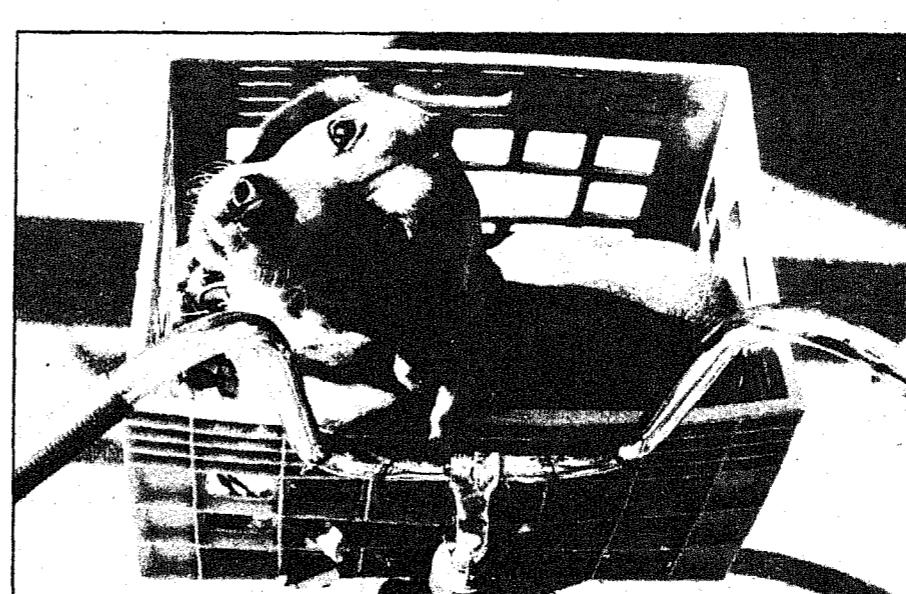
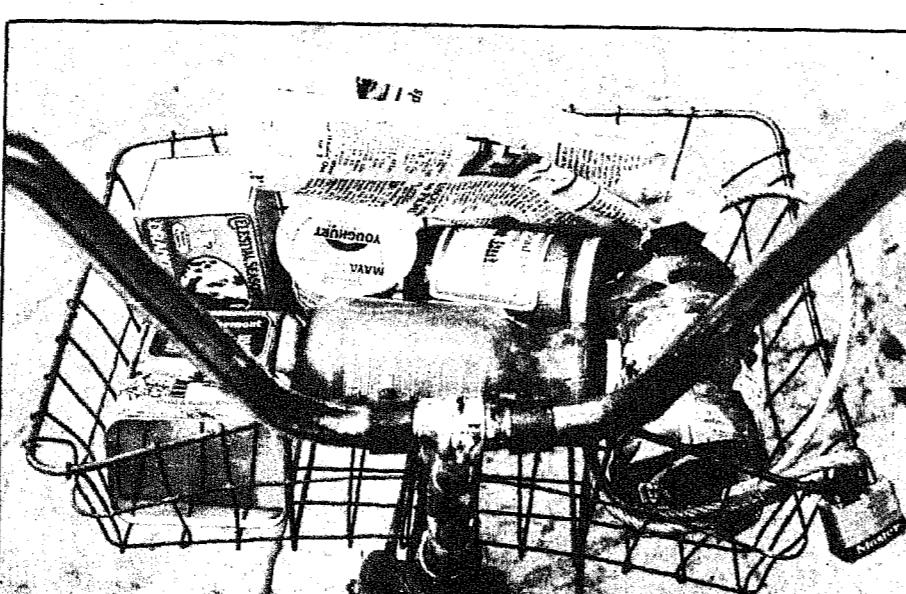
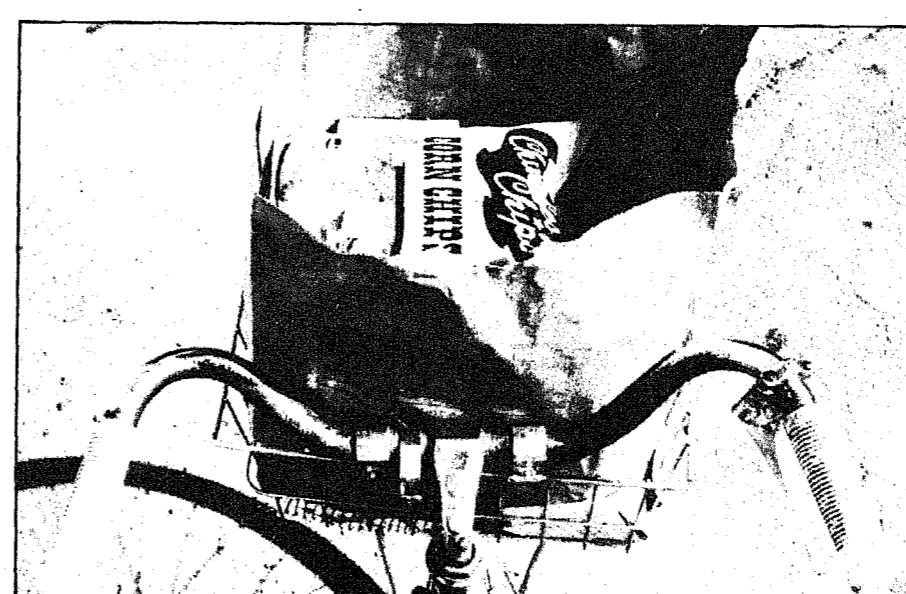
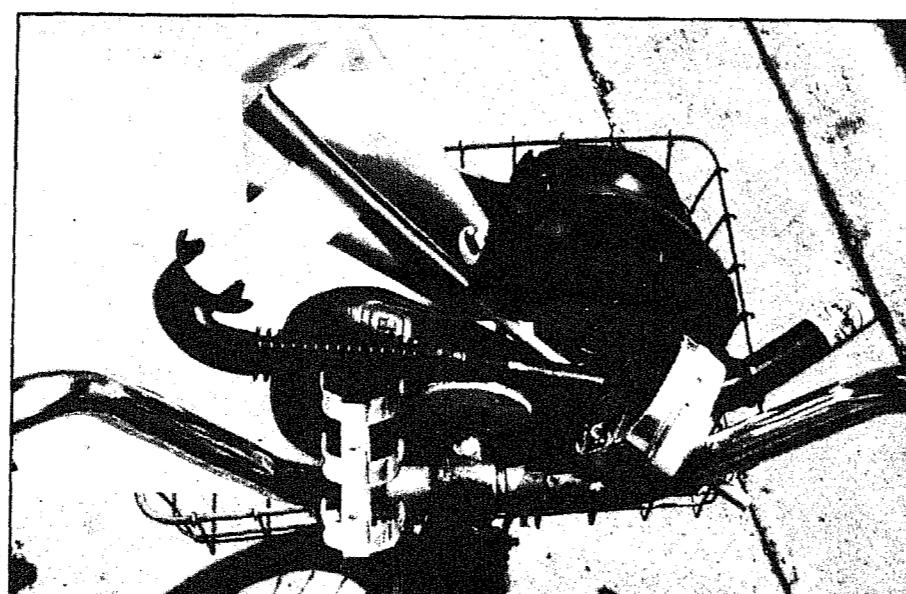
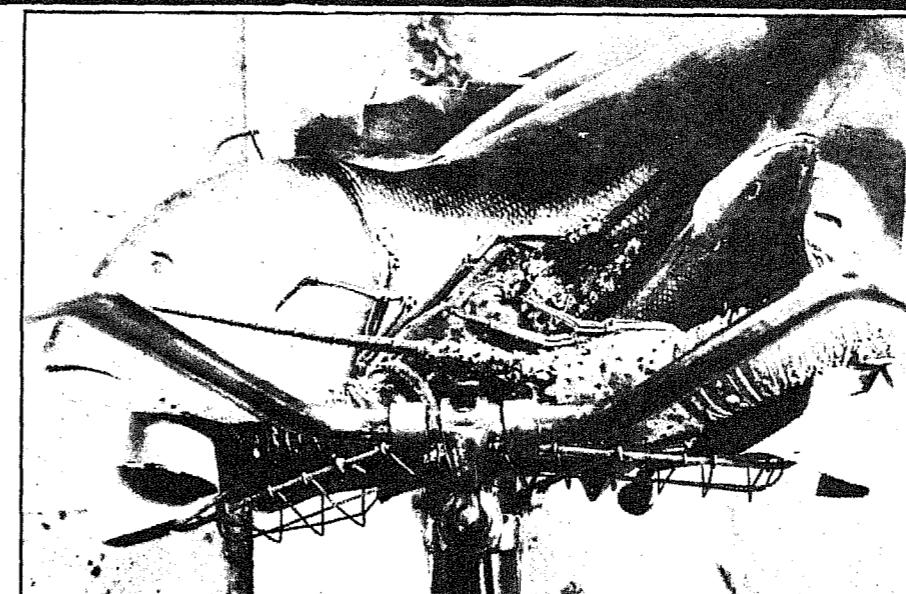
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VOL. IX, NO. 11

KEY WEST, FL

DECEMBER, 1982



Solares Hill Design Group

How about giving a pair?

Chris Lane has written a longish piece on Fantasy Fest '82 which appears in this issue. Certain truths emerge from reading it. Among them are these:

1. The Fest was too long. Four or, at the most, five days would be sufficient.
2. The carnival atmosphere at Mallory Square was a total mistake. Return Mallory during the party days to the people.
3. The handling of monies was too loose. An audit should tell us where to tighten up.
4. Some events were an incredible success. Notably the Rambunkshus Raftin' Regatta (cheers to Chris and Armando of LodeStone Productions and the people at FM 107 for masterminding this) and the Children's Day at Bayview Park (here we cheer Sandra Higgs for overseeing its preparation and Burger King and Old Town Trolley for their backing of Children's Day) which were actually events outside the official Fantasy Fest control.
5. It would be a good idea to have police reserves along the parade route. Peaceful as it was, some rowdyism was observed which could have gotten out of hand.
6. Townsend Kieffer should be replaced as the Fantasy Fest director. Townsend accomplished many things and the job was (and is) a horrendous undertaking, but too many people had too many complaints about abrasive and inconsiderate treatment from him. We need more of a diplomat for this job.

THE LOSS OF County Planner Alan Lessler is a heavy setback for Monroe County's troubled Building, Planning and Zoning Department. Certain County Commissioners including Commissioner Jerry Hernandez, who once threatened to fire Lessler (according to the Miami Herald), are to blame for this situation. They ignored Lessler's recommendations and wouldn't grant him a contract. The problem in having a

continued on page 10

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FROM THE EDITOR

Hello -

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qualified professional like Lessler as director of the County's Building, Planning and Zoning Department is that he would blow the whistle on the outrageous building excesses in this county and this doesn't sit well with some people. I hope the new man will be as qualified as Lessler was, but if he is, it is difficult to see how he would be permitted to remain in his job.

THE HARDWORKING SAVE Our Shoreline (S.O.S.) group has plans to come before the City Commission with a scale model for a public park at the foot of Simonton Street. Response has been good from calls for donated materials and manpower for this project which is still at the drawing board stage. S.O.S. plans to incorporate soon so they should be with us for quite a while which is very good news for the town.

I HAD A note from Larry Davis recently. He pointed out that a recent advertisement promoting the sale of condominiums in the Upper Keys began: "THE SHOCKER OF THE YEAR. Discounts up to \$83,500..." and continues, "Shocking" is the only word for such discounts..." Larry checked his dictionary and found:

shocking: adj. Causing to shake or to recoil with horror or disgust; offensive. Syn. See **fearful**.

LARRY OBSERVES, "At least one real estate developer is practicing Truth in Advertising!"

LARRY'S REMARK (WHICH, of course, doesn't hold true for all developers) is timely, unfortunately, as we watch Port Bougainville lumber toward acceptance. The Monroe County Commission by a 3-2 vote upheld the Monroe County Zoning Board's 3-2 endorsement of this project. Commissioners Harvey and Fahrer voted against it; Commissioners Swift, Hernandez, and Sorensen for it. The project still has to get approval from state and regional agencies. I ask our readers to look at the excellent editorials from the Miami Herald and the Miami News that we have been given permission to reprint. The wrongness of this project has not escaped those two newspapers.

continued on page 10

COVER ARTIST THIS month is J. T. Thompson of Solares Hill Design Group.



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EDITOR.....BILL HUCKEL
EDITORIAL CONSULTANT.....BILL WESTRAY
ART DIRECTION.....SOLARES HILL DESIGN GROUP

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JOE ALLEN

BY COLIN G. JAMESON

A DOCTOR IS a professional; a lawyer is a professional; in a broader sense, a businessman is a professional. But a politician adds a dimension: he is also an artist.

Like a lawyer or a doctor, a politician learns to produce technical results. But an accomplished politician intuitively anticipates the human effects of his craftsmanship. So he is an artist.

JOE ALLEN, OUR representative in Tallahassee, is a political artist. Call him on the phone. Who answers? Why, Joe Allen. This may qualify as a technique. But its human effect carries farther.

When Joe says hello, you ask when you can see him. The usual answer is "any time." "Any time, unless I have to go back to Tallahassee tomorrow, you know-what-I-mean."

THAT'S A STANDARD phrase with Joe, but you do know what he means. As far as Tallahassee goes, you're both on the same side. You know that Joe wants you to understand that you're part of the process and the reason for it.

This makes it easier for you to help with him. You know he'll try to help you buck the Powers. You feel he's human and sincere.

BY NATURE, AN artist must be like that and a successful politician must be that way, especially when opposing views force the almost inevitable compromise.

Joe Allen didn't originally aim himself at being a politician, a fact that bolsters his credibility. He arrived there because something just had to be done, you-know-what-I-mean. He got into politics because he wanted people to be able to get to the airport without first touring the entire north side of Key West. Stay tuned.

Where Is He From?

HISTORICALLY AND PHILOSOPHICALLY, where does Representative Joseph Bernad Allen, 120th District of Florida, come from?

In 1647 a group of English political and religious dissenters reached Bermuda. They called themselves the Eleutheran Adventurers (from the Greek word for "free"). Two years later, when King Charles I was beheaded, they decided to move on to the Bahamas, where they gave their name to the island of Eleuthera.

ALLEN'S ANCESTORS SETTLED on Harbour Island. There they remained for a century and a half, a deeply religious, moral people who struggled with a deceptively benign environment to win a living from marginal land and unpredictable seas.

The increasing traffic on the same seas led some Eleutherans farther west, where the salvage of wrecked ships was becoming profitable. Eventually in the early 1800's, they reached Key West, then believed by many to be an outpost of the Bahama chain.

newspaper was a modest enterprise, often printing only four pages. If one of the handful of employees wanted to get ahead, he had to learn every job, from sweeping up after the editor or business manager to taking that officer's place, or writing a news story while setting it in type.

IN HIS DAYS at the Citizen Joe Allen held down practically every position except that of publisher L.P. Art-



PRESIDENT HARRY TRUMAN presides at meeting of Monroe County Commission on one of his visits to Key West. Shown are County Commissioners Gerald Saunders, Joe Allen, President Truman and Harry Harris. Standing, Sheriff's Deputy Rene' Riaole.

ers and most of their shipmates held to the religious and ethical beliefs they had imported from England so long before.

This strong reliance on religion can be seen today in Key West's many churches and the important place they occupy in the lives of old-time Key Westers, including Joe Allen and his family.

How Did He Learn?

ALLEN IS A graduate of Key West High School, but his true education began at The Key West Citizen in 1925, when he was 11. For many months the boy had been yearning for a newspaper route. On Christmas Eve he landed one when an established carrier sacrificed his job to partake more fully of seasonal joys.

Joe stayed at the Citizen a good deal longer than his predecessor, in fact, 17 years. During this period, the

man. This upbringing was what used to be called Valuable Experience in the days before computers evicted most real people from the newspaper business. It stood Joe in good stead, both as a professional newsman and in outside contacts.

Visiting reporters and impudent writers, like the early Hemingway, tended to stop off at the Citizen, which was one place in town where you didn't have to buy drinks or play roulette to be social. Allen got to know them and the way they worked. Now and then he would join them at the bowling alley next door to the Jefferson Hotel on Duval Street.

Came War

NATURALLY JOE ALLEN was also acquainted with practically every native

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Key West. In 1942, when German U-boats became active in the Florida Straits, it seemed only natural for the U.S. Navy to select Allen to help with recruiting. Thus it came about that he signed himself up as a Yeoman, First Class. Everything went so well that when his earlier application for the V-6 officers' training program came through, he sent it back.

In January of 1943 Allen helped launch the Navy newspaper, *The Outpost*, which flourished till well after the war was over. When it became well established, Joe was detached and sent to the Pacific.

IT WAS AT this juncture that an episode occurred that is revealing of Allen's character and religious background. Like many people in those days, and quite a few today, he had never been in an airplane. The mere mention of flight gave him the wobbles, and he was determined to maintain his close friendship with the ground underfoot. Yet here was the Navy, threatening to ship him to the South Seas by any means handy, presumably including planes.

Allen did not think that his resolve to stay on the surface of something, either land or sea, would affect the outcome of hostilities. And at first he had no problem. He traveled to Miami by bus and to Chicago by train--might as well have been a tourist. After a stop-over in Chicago, the Navy cooperated by shipping him to San Francisco by train and shoving him aboard a troopship bound for Hawaii. It all seemed too, too easy.

WHICH WAS WHAT it was. One night at Pearl Harbor Joe and a friend were passing through the gate of the barracks compound, on their way to Waikiki, when a loudspeaker erupted with Allen's name and serial number. It was suggested that he check with the duty officer. He did so on the double, only to discover that he was under orders to leave for the

South Pacific at 3:30 the following morning, via "flying boxcar!"

"NO WAY!" Joe muttered, interrupting himself muttering the same words.

"Airplanes are for the birds."

BUT WHAT TO DO? The idea of winging off into the empty night was terrifying, even without anybody shooting at you. What to do?

On the outside chance that he could switch his orders to surface transport, he got on the phone. He labored till midnight, trying to locate any one of the friends he had made during his Navy-newspaper career who might now be stationed at Pearl Harbor.

RESULTS: ZERO. Desperate, Allen wandered into a pineapple field flanking the barracks. There seemed nothing to do but pray. So he prayed. As he did so, his fears miraculously lifted. He seemed to hear a voice telling him that everything was going to sort out just fine. He became convinced that something was going to keep him off that dreaded plane. He grimmed his way back to his bunk and slept peacefully till it was time for takeoff.

Even at the hatchway of the "boxcar" Joe didn't panic. Something was going to happen to save him. Perhaps it had already started, he felt so calm.

THE MEN IN front of him, however, seemed a touch nervous. He noticed that seats had been ripped out of the aircraft to make room for a cargo of wooden crates. The containers were labeled "Danger! High explosives!" He didn't care; everything was going to be just fine.

The petty officer in charge gave Allen a quizzical glance and said, "Hey man, you look calm as a clam. I bet you done a lot of this kind of stuff."

"All my life," Joe told him. "Only way to go."

SUDDENLY THE TRUTH hit him. He had already been saved. The flight was still a fact, but the fear was gone.

The flying boxcar journeyed first to Johnson Island, where the gooney birds bothered the fresh aviation enthusiast much more than his mode of travel. Later, during a typhoon and some shoot-'em-up episodes on Okinawa, Allen found that it wasn't just fear of airplanes that had been exorcised. He says today that never since his experience in the pineapple patch, never under any circumstances, has he suffered from the gut fear that the idea of flying used to excite.

Politics on the Rock

WAR OVER, JOE returned to Key West (mostly by air) and established a printing business. Out of it grew a weekly newspaper, the *Coral Tribune*. But Allen's principal priority was a trip to Kentucky to propose to a young lady whom he had met when she was a WAVE in Key West.

He was just in time, for the soon-to-be-former Marjorie Holladay was all packed and ready to leave home to pursue her college studies. Joe managed to dissuade her. They were married in Key West June 27, 1946, Joe then being 32. The Allens have four sons, one of whom, Joe III, is Key West's city attorney.

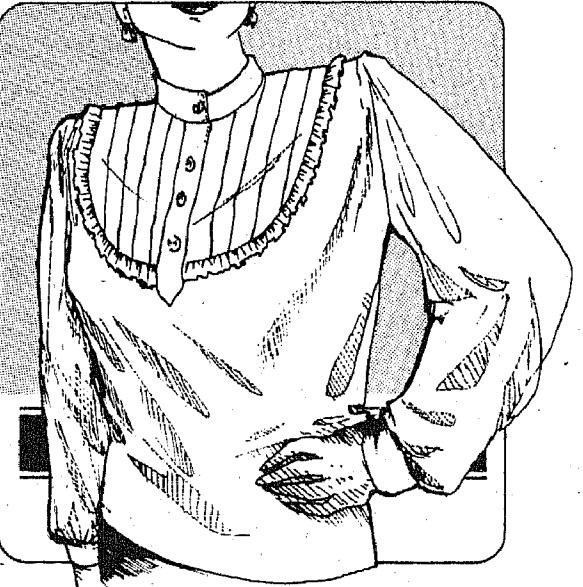
IN RETROSPECT IT might seem that Joe Allen had enough to do, what with getting re-oriented in his home town, tying the knot, and starting his own business. But something had bothered him ever since he got back. For the good of Key West, something had to be done about it, too, you-know-what-I-mean.

In 1944 a severe storm had picked up sections of the seawall protecting South Roosevelt Boulevard and dumped them on the right-of-way. Access to the airport was possible only from the northeast. Many people had become accustomed

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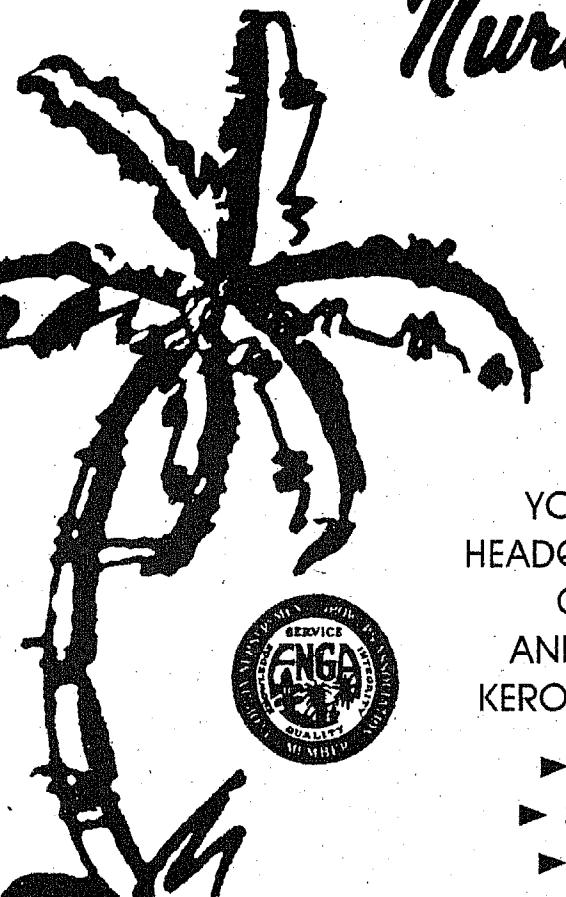


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Look . . .*



*That exotic
look
We design our own
in Bali.*



501

Duval

to the primitive state of affairs, particularly as it was estimated that more than a million dollars would be required to tack the boulevard back together again.

THIS KIND OF public money was even scarcer in City and County coffers than it is today, if you can imagine such a bizarre situation.

But the mere sight of the ex-boulevard gave the newly returned Joe Allen a pain. He decided that the only way to take care of things was to dive into politics and push. In the interval before the November elections, he perfected an approach to the project that could be swung financially, especially if monitored by Allen himself who, even in those early days, had "often been accused of being honest."

ALLEN RAN FOR the County Commission and defeated two former city commissioners. In less than a year the boulevard was back in business, at an expense of only a fraction of the estimated million dollars. The cost-saving gimmick was to replace the destroyed sections of seawall with ramps, letting storm seas wash over the roadway. If other portions of the wall were later damaged, it would be relatively inexpensive to keep replacing them in the same way.

Fortunately this has not been necessary. But the method's success sparked a similar plan when the highway's northeast curve was rebuilt.

Saving History

LAUNCHED IN GOVERNMENT as of the first Tuesday in January of 1947, Allen faced up to another problem which, at his request, had been postponed till the day he took office.

Monroe County had taken over the property now known as Higgs (County) Beach. Workers had been demolishing West Martello Tower's iron citadel staircase and jackhammering away at the rest of the fort. It had become plain that portions of the historic ruins were in dangerous condition. Citizens had long been using them as a source of free building bricks, vandals enjoyed frolicking there, and the remnants had become a sort of combination point of assignation and outhouse.

BUT ALLEN WAS CONVINCED there was a way to return the old bastion to beauty and usefulness.

He had gone to Clarence Higgs, in charge of the beach, and had urged him to slack off on demolition till the new



Commission took office. Higgs, anxious to get on with improving the pet beach project that later bore his name, and Allen's fellow commissioners-elect thought Allen was a "nut," but they deferred to his pleas.

ing an impressive 25¢ admission fee.

WEST MARTELLO WAS soon outgrown. The Navy offered a day-to-day lease on East Martello, West Martello's almost intact if overgrown twin. It was joyfully accepted. To extend it indefinitely,

society duly received its lease on East Martello from the County. Many new volunteers entered the fold; most were newcomers in town, since unfamiliar initiates are not quickly embraced by Key Westers. But the perseverance of Joe and his helpers and successors have made the Society a public institution with wide local support.

No Airport Any More?

SHORTLY AFTER HIS election to the Commission, Allen became entwined in what he considers to have been the hottest political battle of his career to date.

At that time approximately one-third of the island of Key West was owned by William Porter. The County

Commission favored a condemnation of the portion of Porter's property occupied by the Meacham Field airstrip, to provide for enlargement and improvement. At

that time the air terminal consisted of a shack anchored to blocks of concrete by two massive steel cables, a facility which did little for the reputation of local weather.

THE COMMISSION OFFERED \$100,000 but actually was prepared to go as high as \$150,000. A consortium composed of Vincent Conly, Abe Golan and Charles Helberg, which objected to the condemnation, paid Porter \$200,000 for the land. They planned to eliminate the airport and add the area to their several other projected developments.

Allen believed that the condemnation of the airport was essential not only to the future of Key West but to its present. He thought that the hoary arguments about "getting the land onto the tax rolls" were meaningless when stacked up against the fact that if the airport were moved the Navy would not



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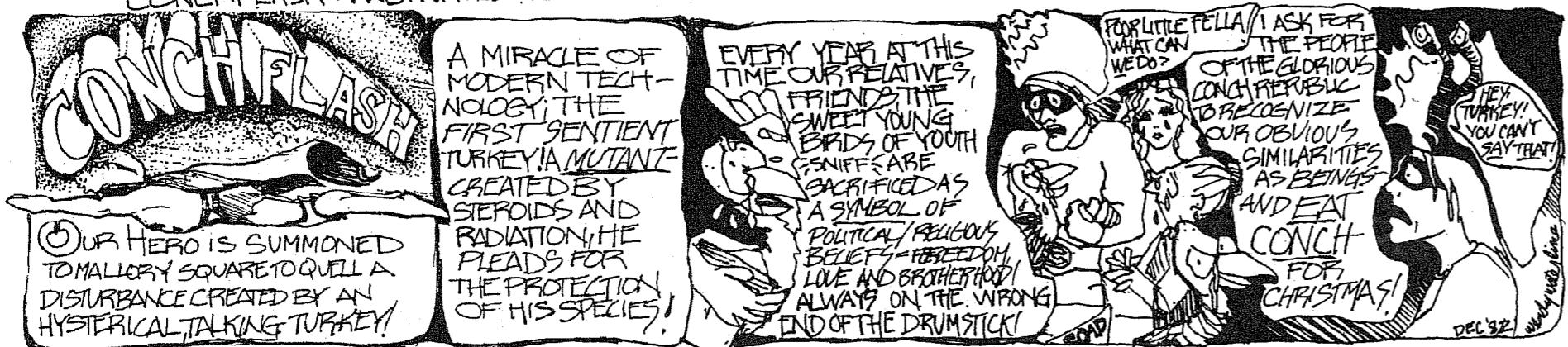


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THE NAVY'S UNALTERABLE position was that the present site of the airport, while a thorn in the side of its traffic patterns, was far and away the least objectionable location available in the area. If anyone entertained the idea that civilian air operations could be permitted to foul up the national defense mission of Boca Chica, present or future, forget it.

Marathon would probably be the only alternative, though there was a slim chance that something could be done with Big Pine Key; in any case, Key West's air umbilicals would be permanently snipped. With them would go its foreign contacts, numerous in those days with six flights to Cuba and, to be hoped, in the future. More than that, the emerging tourist industry would be seriously crippled, no matter how many people lived on the ex-airstrip.

THERE WERE EFFORTS to "reason" with Joe about his undeveloped attitude. He likens them to the Devil's golden propositions "on the high mountain, you-know-what-I-mean." He began to receive heavy-breathing phone calls about the uncomfortable things that might happen to him and his. His car's steering gear was tampered with. At his printing business the ink dried on type idled by a partial boycott.

In the end, a compromise was reached. The airport was purchased by the County, but included in the deed was a reverter clause that would return the property in the event that the land should cease to be used for its present purpose.

Fair enough--and a point of focus when the inevitable future proposals to

move or "develop" the airport are evaluated.

The Lighthouse and Its Submarine

WHEN THE U.S. Coast Guard declared the Key West Light surplus, Joe Allen and others thought the keeper's quarters ideal for the establishment of a military museum to supplement the increasingly successful East Martello. A transfer of the Lighthouse property to Monroe County seemed uncomplicated in theory, but few deals with Washington are ever simple.

Enter an important congressman who had concluded that the lighthouse structure itself could be developed into a rewarding personal investment. This statesman succeeded in eliminating the definitive area chart sent to Washington along with the County's proposed conveyance. But behold! When the deed came back from the capital, Joe Allen and the lawyer for the County observed to their delighted astonishment that the Lighthouse tower had by some magic been included in the Federal conveyance.

THEY KEPT STILL. Years later, when the General Services Administration, under the impression that the Federal Government still owned the Lighthouse, considered putting it up for sale, the GSA officials discovered the discrepancy. They threatened to rescind the deed.

Joe Allen phoned Congressman Dante Fascell and Florida's two senators. Between them they managed to persuade the GSA that such an Indian gift could "prove very embarrassing."

WHEN THE KEY West Art & Historical Society, spearheaded by Col. J. Hall Stokes, took possession of the keeper's

house, they found they didn't have much to put in it. Col. Stokes came up with a collection of pictures, while Allen contributed a few artifacts that he had brought back from the wars. These he housed in display cases once used in his father's store.

To flesh out the inventory, and attract noteworthy exhibits, some spectacular item was needed, something that could be located outdoors to call attention to the fledgling museum.

AT CHURCH SERVICES one Sunday, Allen buttonholed Rear Admiral Louis J. Kirn, USN, then commanding officer of the Naval Base. During the war, the Navy had transported to Key West a Japanese midget submarine captured at Pearl Harbor, hoping to generate war bond sales.

The sub was still on the Naval Base. Allen wanted to know if there would be any way of latching onto it for a major outdoor exhibit.

The Admiral laughed heartily. "Joe, that would take a hundred and four years of constant labor, followed by a joint act of Congress," he said.

Then, after frowning a moment, he added, "But there may be other ways."

SOON THEREAFTER, THE biggest crane available to the Navy dumped the sub beside the Lighthouse.

"We'll lend it to you," the Admiral told Allen. "If we need it, we'll come and get it."

To this day, the Navy seems to have cruised along satisfactorily without sending for that baby sub.

Other Blows for Historic Key West

AS ANYONE CAN plainly see, Joe Allen has a thing about keeping history

alive. Thus he was instrumental in securing State support for restoring the National Guard Armory, Southard and White streets, now an indispensable senior citizens center.

On a much broader basis, he sparked the legislative establishment of the Historic Key West Preservation Board and the designation of this city as one of the State's four historic cities eligible for State and Federal funds.

EARLIER ON, IN his most compulsive promotion of historical values, Joe started a museum of his own. In 1957, when he left the County Commission to become Tax Assessor, he gave up the weekly *Coral Tribune* and his printing business. His Simonton Street building thus became vacant. A Miami friend, Irvin Donnin, suggested that the two pool their collections of antiquities and subjects of historical interest and display them. In the event, the attraction turned out to be pirate-oriented. Allen ran it for more than 20 years before presenting most of the contents to Key West's main museum, East Martello. When the East Martello citadel is satisfactorily dehumidified for display purposes, Joe's pirates will rise again in this suitably somber setting.

Water: Everywhere and Nowhere

WHEN JOE ALLEN considers his achievements as a four-term member of the Florida Legislature, one triumph stands out, even if necessarily accomplished as part of a group effort. He thinks the importance of the negotiations that led to the new Keys bridges, the new pipeline and certain significant

U.S. 1 improvements, involving a total State and Federal expense of \$380,000,000, is so vast that there is plenty of room for pride all around.

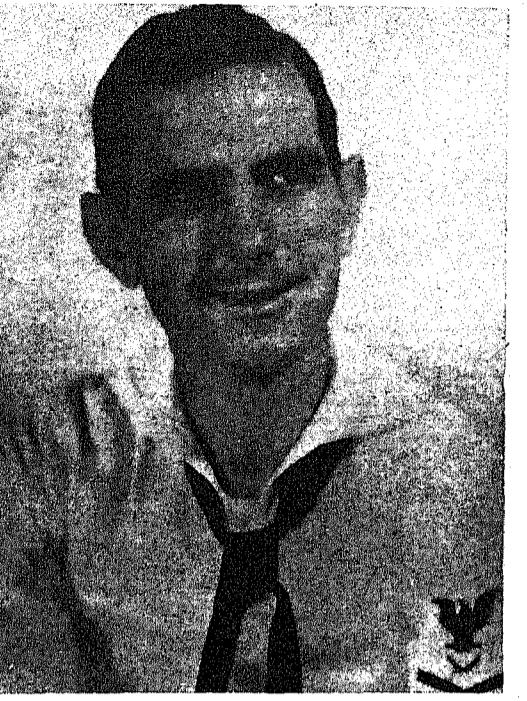
of schedule without either overruns or scandal, a record at which any government agency might be awed.

AS REGARDS THE new pipeline, Allen was instrumental in saving the project when the FHA decided that the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority could not justify the loan it was trying to negotiate. If control over the FKA had not been transferred to the South Florida Water Management District, it would have been next to impossible to borrow the needed \$80,000,000.

Even if the loan had been successful, the much higher rate of interest would have made life difficult when the cost was spread among the relatively sparse population of the entire Florida Keys area. As a result of the transfer, Allen says, the Keys are in better shape, waterwise, than many areas of the State where greater population explosion is multiplying such worries.

JOE ALLEN HAS, of course, belonged to numerous civic organizations, having been president of some, a founder of others and honored by all. An accolade was recently delivered by the Florida League of Cities. Singled out as "the prominent personality of the month," he was particularly praised as a supporter of home rule for local political subdivisions.

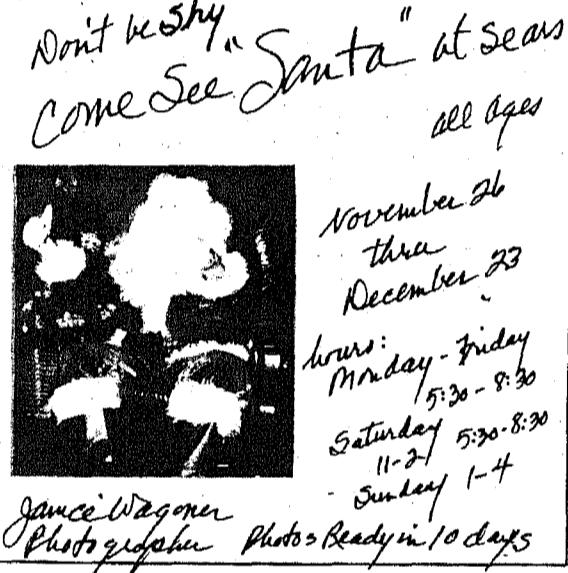
JOE'S WIDELY RECOGNIZED success in the Legislature is, of course, questioned by a few who believe that they or someone else could have done better. Not many of them deny the political artistry mentioned earlier. The success Allen has achieved is written on the wall for



Joe in his Navy days.

Allen points out that it required the continuing efforts of his team and two successive Florida governors to keep the bridge project alive, since the State appropriation of 25% of the cost had to be renewed by annual vote.

Not only was this achieved, but the enterprise was wrapped up well ahead



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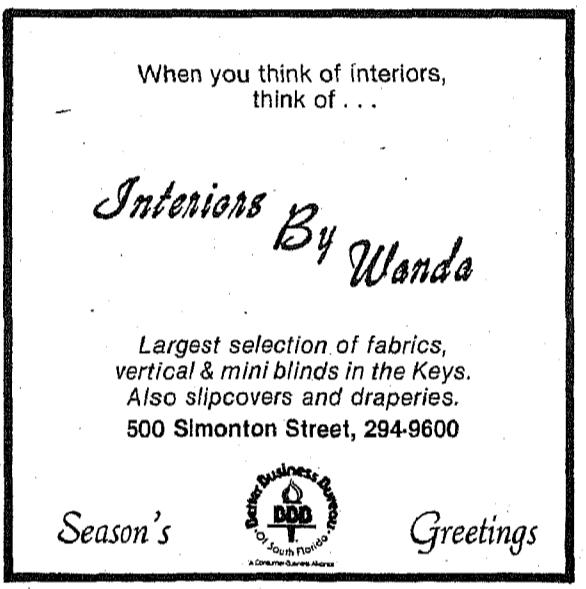
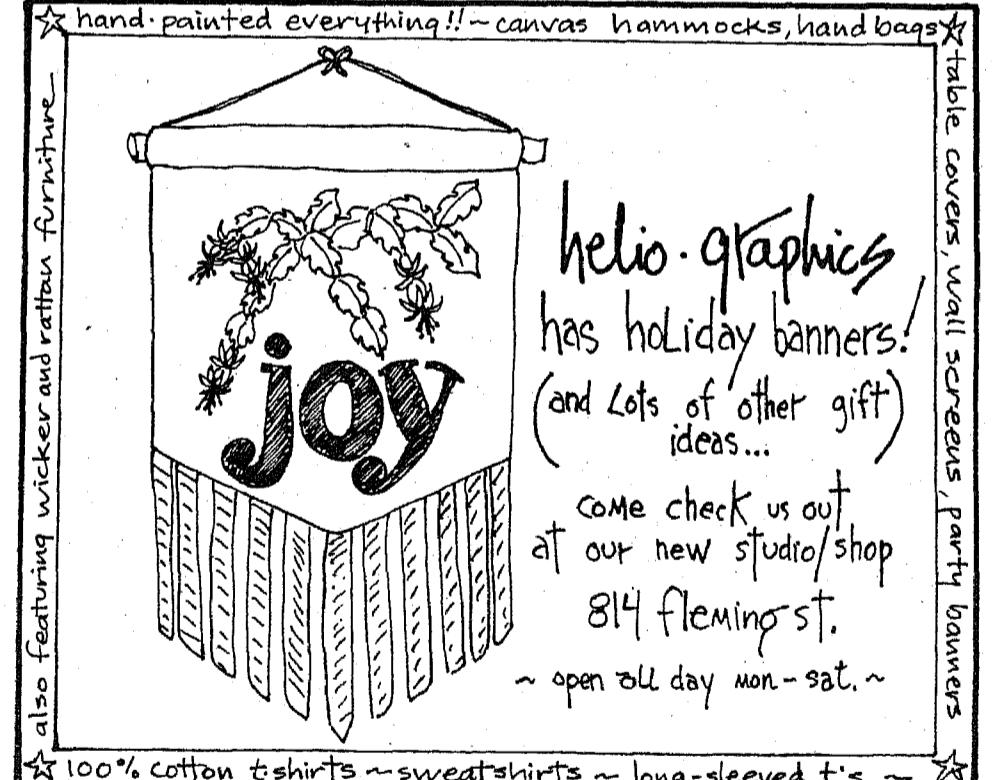
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continued from page 2

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all to see. It derives from the fact that he is genuinely interested in the fortunes of everybody, the people he sees every day, the individual citizens who are sometimes victimized or put in fear by government or each other and need an advocate who feels close enough to them to answer his own phone.

If Joe Allen can help his constituents, he's happy. If they reciprocate by making his job easier, well, so much the better--"you-know-what-I-mean."

SOMEONE STOLE THE "free box" at the corner of Fleming and Margaret Streets. This is a bit untoward, as the British would say, and I hope that it will be returned.

SOLARES HILL WAS fighting with Norman Wood and Toby Arnheim over the golf course property for a long time. While we remain unconvinced that this was a good deal for the city, the Casa Marina project in which these two men played such a large role, is a great credit to the city. I had family visiting here and they were very impressed with the setting, the restoration of the old building, and the gorgeous grounds. It is always a pleasure to visit at the Casa Marina - good work, Norman and Toby.

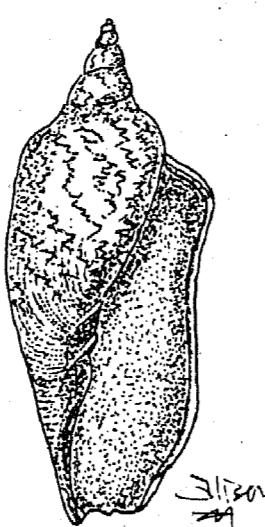
CITY COMMISSIONER JIMMY Mira feels that a selection process for a new Police Chief should be set-up like the process that screened candidates for the job of City Manager. Sounds like a good idea.

YESTERDAY'S FLORIDA KEYS by Wright Langley and the late Stan Windhorn will be reprinted and for sale in time for Christmas. Wright has purchased the rights to reprint this popular pictorial history of the area. Next year he hopes to have Yesterday's Key West available, also.

SEE YOU NEXT month.

WT

Because of last minute press requirements, Solares Hill's page length had to go from 60 to 64 pages. To fill 4 extra pages Solares Hill reprinted 4 covers which form the centerfold insert.

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ONE SINGULAR SENSATION.

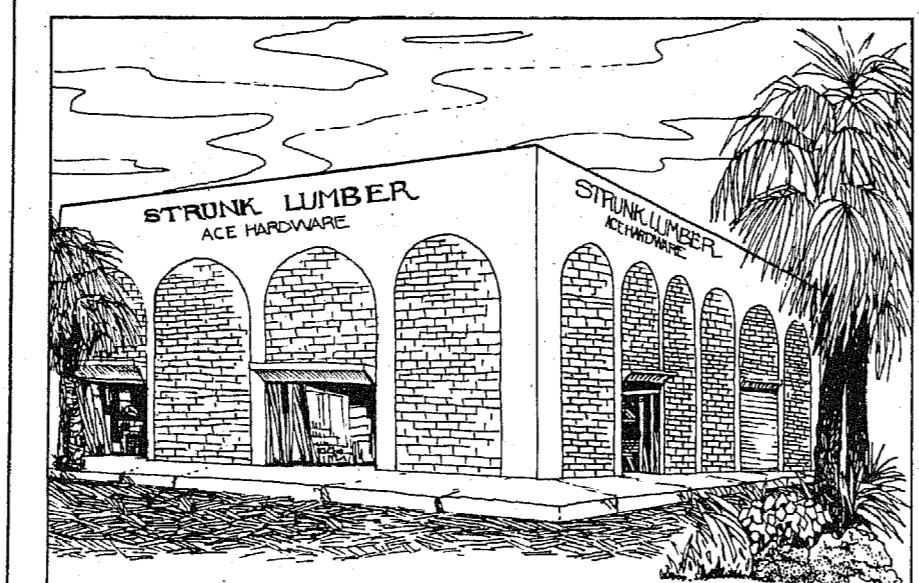
"The Pier House is considered Key West's premier restaurant." - The New York Times, January 10, 1982.

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With a water view. Reservations suggested.
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120 Simonton St.
120 Simonton St.

the frail, lovely sheer delight of that lady statue languishing there in St. Paul's gardens. When your eyes lift to McCrory's across the street. That durable, rather scrumby dime store. You recall long ago going down with your offspring and standing around to keep warm in McCrory's during a cold snap. You cross over. An echo persists about that old store, a resonance. Now, you out there, I can see, believe that McCrory's is out of touch. Just shows what you don't know! You out there should drop that idea that McCrory's is lying around down there like an abandoned army tank from World War II.



THIS IS THE part of the year when you are going to forsake other climes and come right back to Key West. You would come right back even if you were held up by a seven-foot masked man at the Stock Island light. You would come back even if you were lead car in a five-car pileup passing Big Coppitt. You would come back even if Russia attacks and you must take temporary shelter under the Bahia Honda Bridge.

YOU ARE TOSSING around downtown seeking column material, peering in at

the frail, lovely sheer delight of that lady statue languishing there in St. Paul's gardens. When your eyes lift to McCrory's across the street. That durable, rather scrumby dime store. You recall long ago going down with your offspring and standing around to keep warm in McCrory's during a cold snap. You cross over. An echo persists about that old store, a resonance. Now, you out there, I can see, believe that McCrory's is out of touch. Just shows what you don't know! You out there should drop that idea that McCrory's is lying around down there like an abandoned army tank from World War II.

THERE IS A moment when you enter the red doors and stand there biting off a piece of your little fingernail. You don't suddenly get an idea for a poem, exactly. When you are not looking at something like Hazel Bishop's nail polish,

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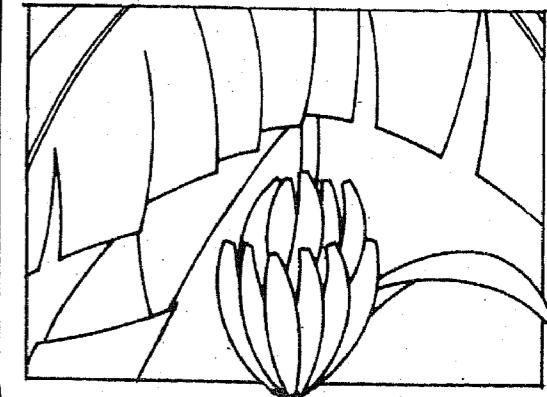
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The finest in seafood,
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you are looking at Pond's dry skin cream or Castile soap bars or you are looking at "Soul" seasoning.

SITTING THERE AT the red plastic booth, waiting, Go over your daily prayer... "Thy kingdom come." David Siegenfelder, the nice, young whiskerified manager arrives. His whiskers are red, and he points proudly at the aisles which are rather like after a riot on the subway. This is cruise ship day, Thursday, always a wild, mad commercial triumph. Says David, the Jamaican crew goes for McCrory's Pampers, \$4 here, \$12 in Jamaica; and Greek sailors adore McCrory's toothpaste, carrying out cases of it. \$5 a tube in Greece; \$1.67 at McCrory's.

ACCORDING TO DAVID, the brotherhood of dime stores was hit by a dark cloud. Kress faded. Woolworth's nearby moved. Woolco is going out of business. Grant's is gone. In Key West, McCrory's patiently has practiced hang-in-thereness getting towards 30 years. Canny John McCrory set up McCrory's chain 100

years ago, and he was so close with his outgo that he dropped the "e" in his name to save on lettering signs. In 1960, an Israeli, Meshulam Riklis, became president, and he's as smart as a treeful of little owls. He asserts, "Get it in, put it out, sell it out." Order things in four weeks' supply. Stock has got to turn four times yearly. No borrowing. No 20% interest rate. All over US of A, McCrory's has conferred itself upon troubled downtown spots. Other variety stores founder, and pull out, and guess who caters to all these downtown working people and the tourists who forget to pack some items.

ONE OF McCrory's strategic considerations is that they open right on the heels of Shorty's diner, mornings. Folks presume that they keep a couple good-cooking Conch ladies locked in the stockroom to offer up 7:15 a.m. breakfasts for \$1.11, just the thing after a night out in Key West's tenderloin district.

McCrory's simply has let the winds of opinion blow in one ear and out an-

other. An organic, no-nonsense dime store. They're staying!

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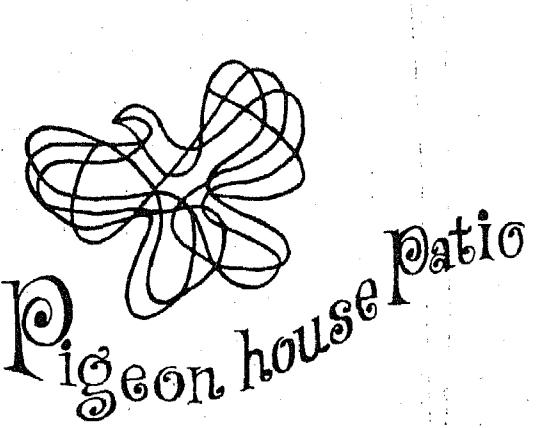
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A pleasant drive to Marathon can be most rewarding this Christmas Season.

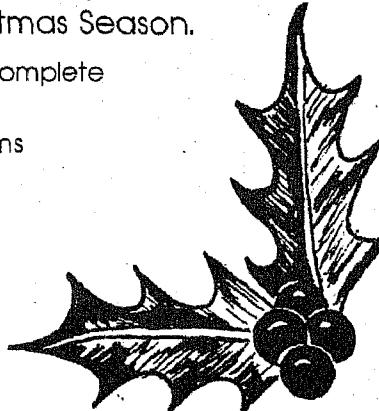
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THE ICONOCLAST

BY JIM KOGAN

SO LOCAL DECISION-MAKERS decided on a bit of hype for the last week in October. No complaint about that, of itself. A little hype that time of year might lure in a few more tourists and rush the season a little. Can't hurt and may help.

Keep our town green, bring money says the old cliche. Of course it did not do all that the more optimistic hoped--there were quite a few vacancy signs around town--but that's par for the course, too.

BUT SOME THINGS should be re-examined if they go again next year. One was the carnival at Mallory dock. It's one thing to eliminate the parking and let a travelling tent show set up its rides and such for a piece of the action--hype is hype and it takes all kinds and let them sell what they sell.

BUT IT WAS TACKY--bush league to charge admission to the park. To be more exact, it was a mistake to use that site if it was decided that an admission charge was necessary. If park admission was essential to the case, it would have been better to rent the nearby parking lot--or some other site downtown.

It is one thing to offer visitors all the opportunities to spend their money--get what you can. But to take a traditional public gathering place, one already known to local people and visitors and fence it off with an admission charge--that is tacky.

NOT TO MENTION that it interfered with the livelihoods of a number of established, traditional performers at the "sunset pier." These people, or

many of them, are Key Westers and the travelling carnival is not. And the "Hospitality House" was blocked off but I've never seen it without a "closed" sign so it was likely not missed.

Some locals got unhappy and petitioned and the show's head honcho called them "baby weasels." At least they are not on the taxpayer-financed payroll. Just who was the operation run for?

THE ONLY BAND in the parade was a foreign import. Wherever I've lived there have been many clubs of people who make music for fun and organize marching bands because it is fun. And miss no chance to show off their talent. But in Key West's parade, the only real band was imported from some other country.

This is not entirely new--when I was renovating my little condo not so long ago I had to ship in common hardware items unknown in Key West and do myself (unskillfully) things I'd buy already done in New York.

So the "bring it all with you, there is nothing here" is not all new but this is a new dimension. Is it really true that no one in Key West makes music just because he likes to?

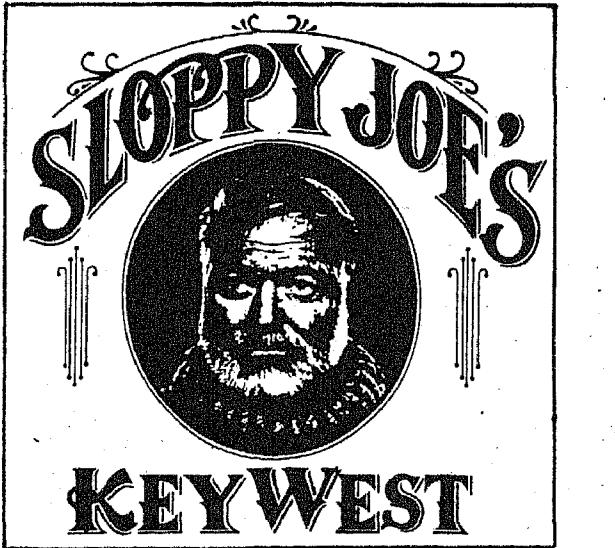
HOWEVER, BACK TO the carnival. The idea is good and I suppose that some errors are inevitable from inexperienced organizers and planners. And there is a certain tourist attractiveness about a quaint little hick backwater. So the costume is useful.

But it can't help to look bush league and look tacky--even here.

(The opinions of the writer are his own, and are not necessarily those of Solares Hill or its staff.)

The Lizards have packed their little bags & moved to "Key Lime Square. Come see them & all their pals."

LIZARD LICKS
#4 KEY LIME SQUARE - OFF SOUTHERN ST.

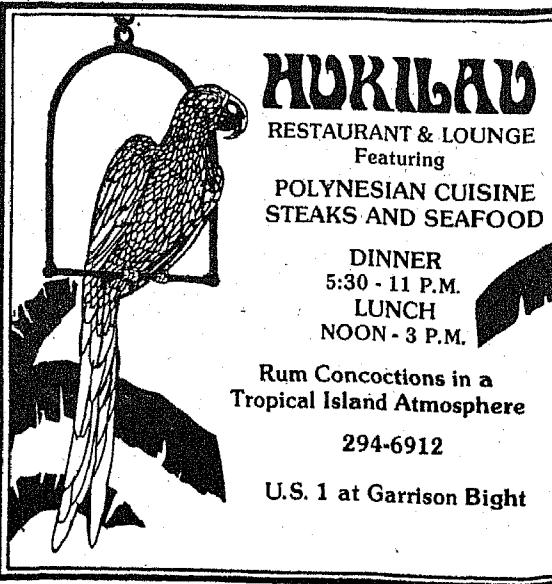
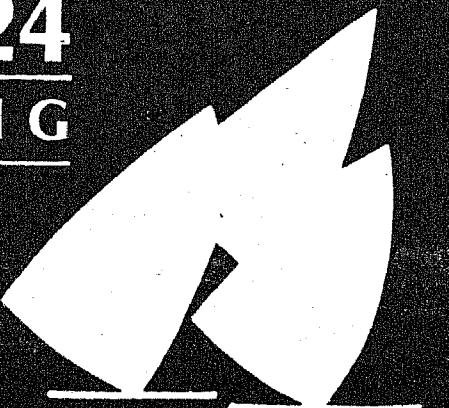


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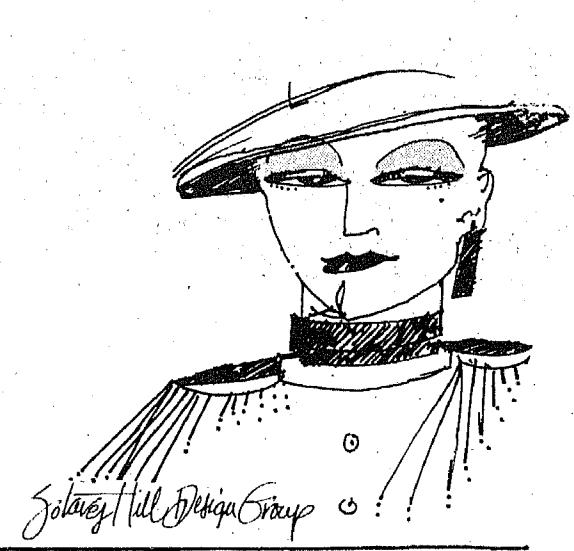
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KEY WEST, N.Y. ?

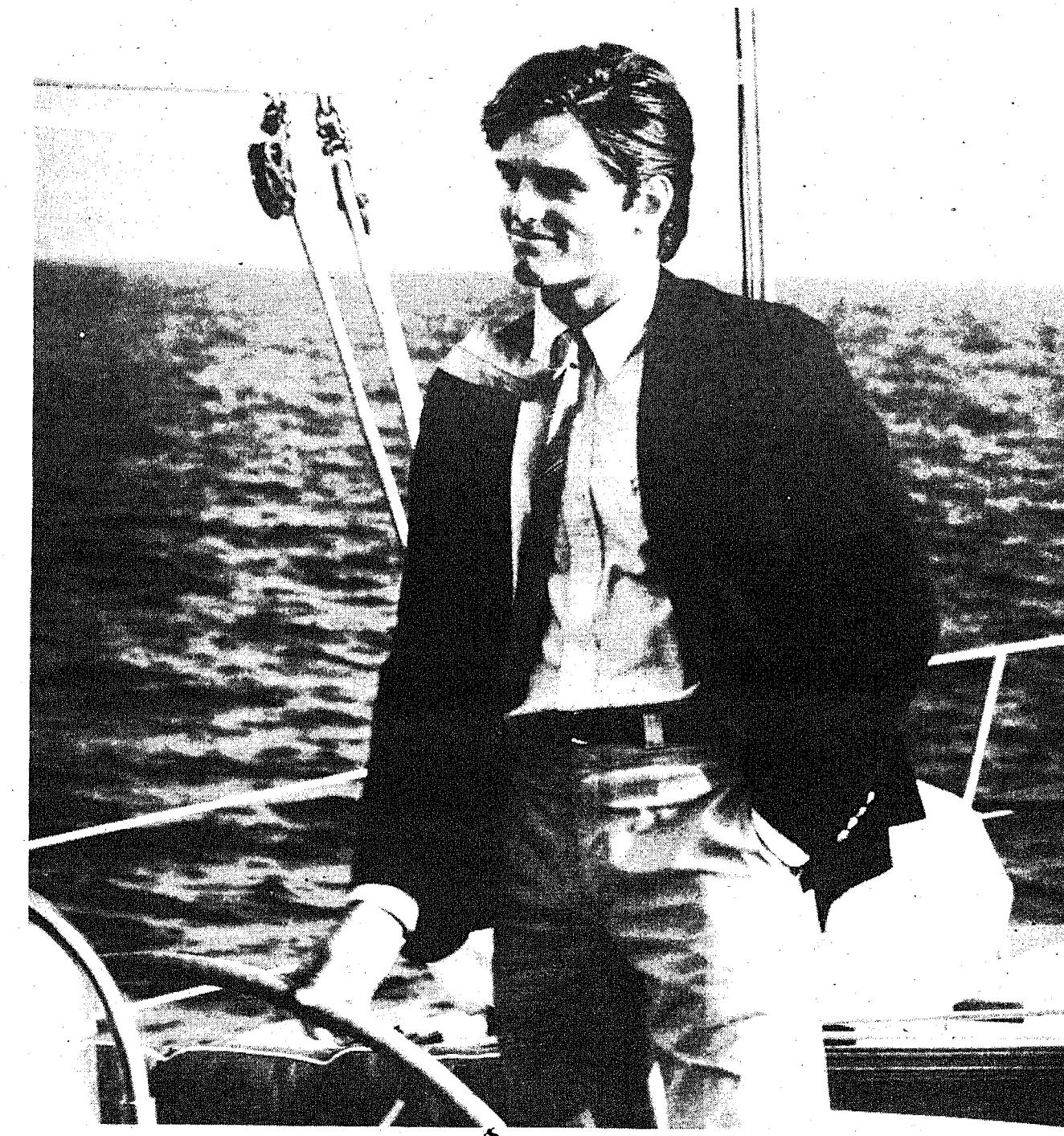
There was Margaritaville, somewhere lazy, yet in the know, still a place where the pace was slow and the rents were low, somewhere that tourists didn't go: hammocks and daydreams, time on your hands, a laid-back, quaint manana land.

Today, it's progress dreams, disco scenes and designer jeans, People Magazine's Calvin and Jimmy and Tennessee manana land's busy, tomorrowing- see, condos, limos, cruise bars, Stars; conch pools, shoe flies: fast bucks at work, in the wink of an eye we're "Key West, New York" Key West, N.Y.!

--Art Kara



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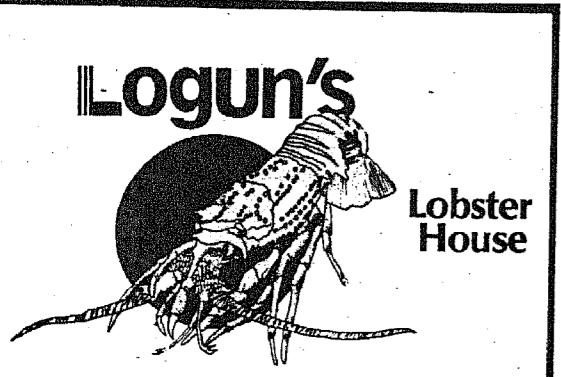
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EDITORIAL

BY BILL WESTRAY

IT IS DIFFICULT to be any more eloquent than these Miami Herald and News editorials about the dangers to all of the Florida Keys posed by the massive Port Bougainville Project. If this project goes ahead, it will be the beginning of the end for coral reefs, the remaining hardwood hammocks, and for the critically endangered American Crocodile and other high order wildlife. Port Bougainville, if permitted, along with some twenty other large development projects in Key Largo, would choke off and destroy the economy of the rest of the keys. The public needs to heed the warnings of Marjorie Stoneman Douglass, of the Friends of the Everglades, and Captain Mark Glisson,



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Key West, Florida

director of Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park. Fortunately, all is not lost YET! The South Florida Regional Planning Council, and Governor Graham and the Florida Cabinet will further consider and vote on the Port Bougainville Project early in December. In

THE IVORY TOWER

By JIM HAMPTON
Editor of The Herald

IN THE glorious Florida Keys, almost everything is different from anywhere else. Key West natives aren't called that; they're "conchs." Experiential at my back, and I'll scratch yours, politics aren't "good ol' b o y s"; they're "bubba's."

So it is that Port Bougainville, the largest development ever undertaken in the Keys, needs renaming. It should be called "Port Bubbaville." For this billion-dollar outrage in North Key Largo is bubba politics incarnate.

On paper, Port Bougainville is stunning. Its Mediterranean-village architecture could have been plucked from the scenic coasts of France, Italy, or Spain. Amenities will surround buyers of its 2,806 condos, priced at \$94,000 to \$240,000. Some units have boat bays under the house. There'll be 600 rooming houses, restaurants, nature walks, lakes, and, just the other side of a screen of mangroves, the emerald shallows of the Atlantic.

The reality that makes the development Port Bubbaville is stunning. It stuns anyone who'd never dreamt that the local, regional, and state agencies charged with preventing rapacious development would

stop it.

Has the DCA's vigilance

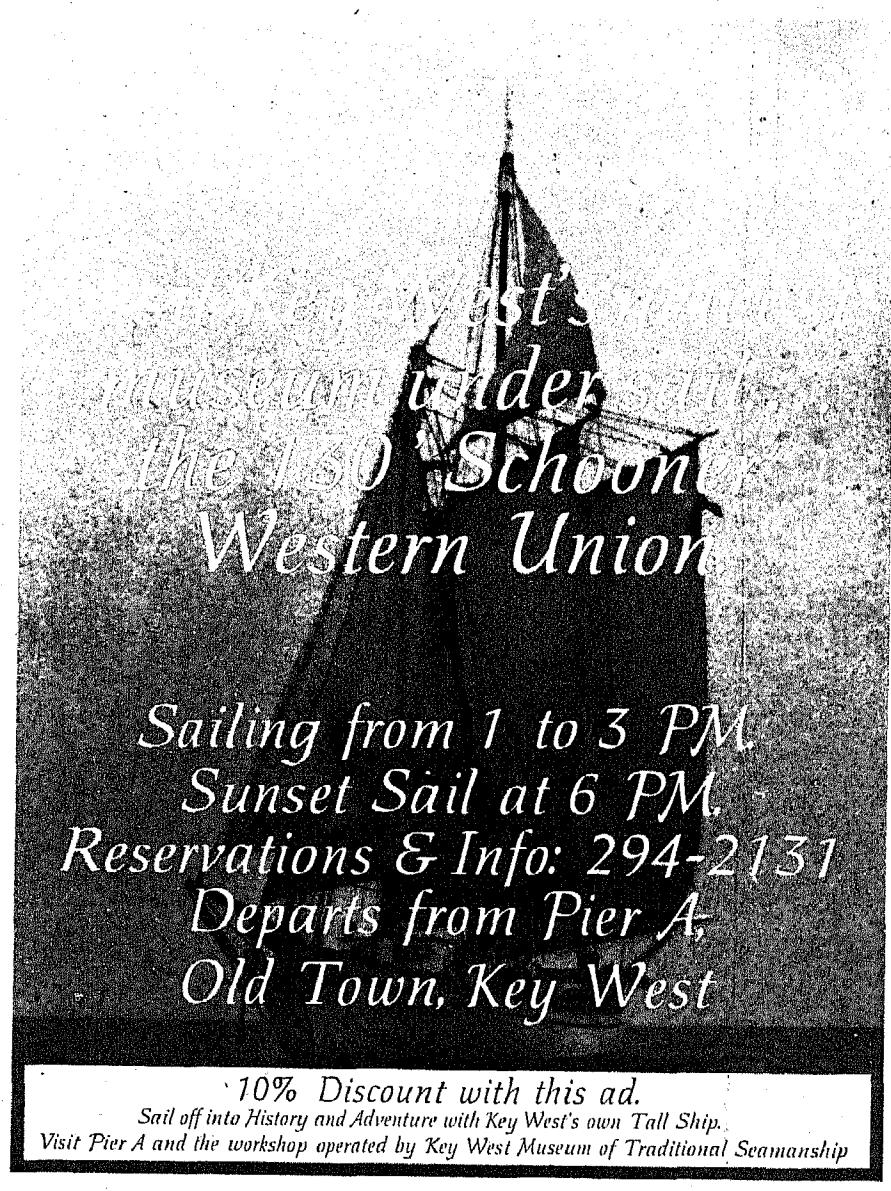
protected the Keys? No.

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Season's Greetings
to all our
"frost-free" friends!

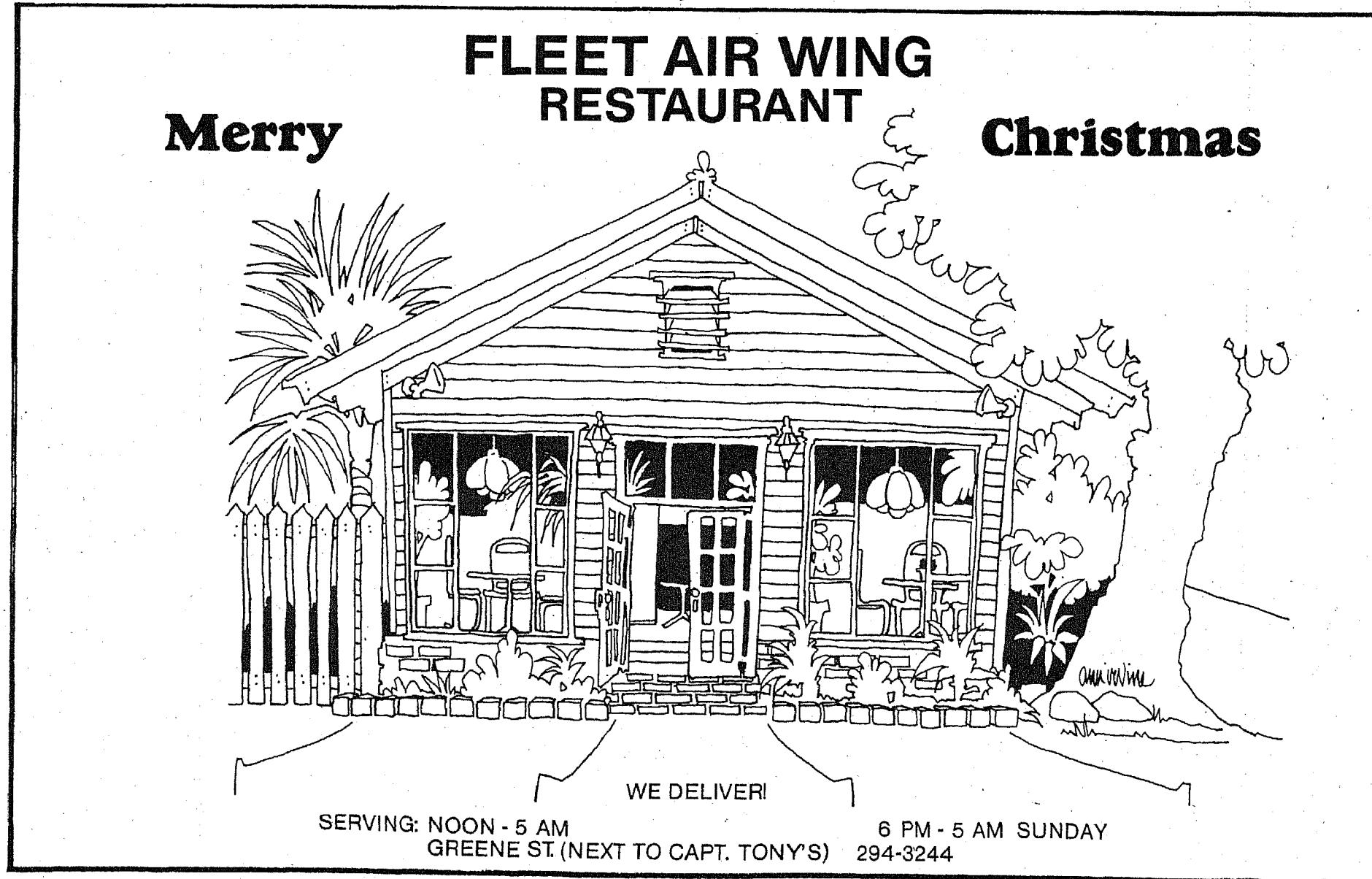
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6 PM - 5 AM SUNDAY

CONCH WITHOUT A SHELL

BY LEE R. ROHE

SEPTEMBER, THE WORST month of hurricane season, had finally passed, and with its passing went the sweltering days of still heat, overcast skies and a yo-yo barometer. Now the trade winds blew steadily until the Gulf Stream bulged shoreward, darkening the waters of the reef like an indigo dye. Without movement of their wings, frigate birds circled high above Key West as if revolving on a mobile. And the horizon, as seen through the windows of tree-lined streets, was pastel-blue and cloudless save for the occasional smoke plumes of ships sliding east or west. Conchitown gave a new impression: air and light organic.

NILES PINDER ALWAYS dreaded September because the most powerful storms were known to strike in that month. Even without storms, the many low-pressure fronts aggravated his arthritis keeping him housebound for days on end--to say nothing of how he and Conchita got on each other's nerves.

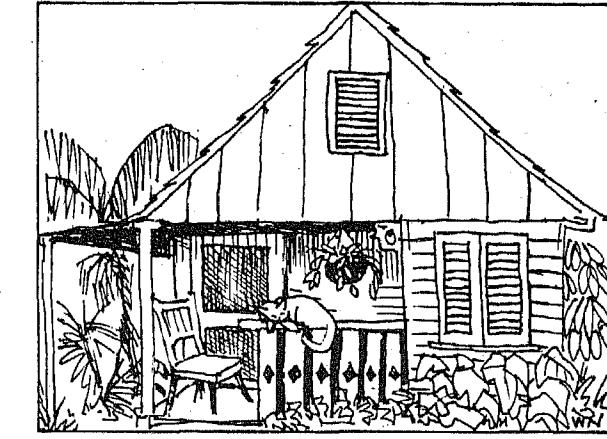
But with the onset of the easterlies, Niles was able to hang up the cane --he had carved it from a swordfish bill--mount the bike and resume the work which was their only possible salvation.

THE "LAST AND final" notice, they had received it two weeks ago, provided an extension of 30 days for satisfying the past due property taxes. On the edge of a precipice they found themselves, drawing closer each day to what promised to be a nightmarish plunge.

Although poverty-stricken and three years shy of eighty, Niles had not always been poor. During the days of the cigar industry he had made money. Remarkably, he was still muscular and

strong. His snowy hair he combed back like the mane of an old maestro. His eyes, wise and alert, were as blue as Calda Channel in summer. And there was something in his features which bespoke a noble--Spanish perhaps--ancestry. White mustache and eyebrows completed the notion.

BEFORE THE BAD weather, in the backyard of a gingerbread house recently



bailing out the marl with his homemade PVC bailer.

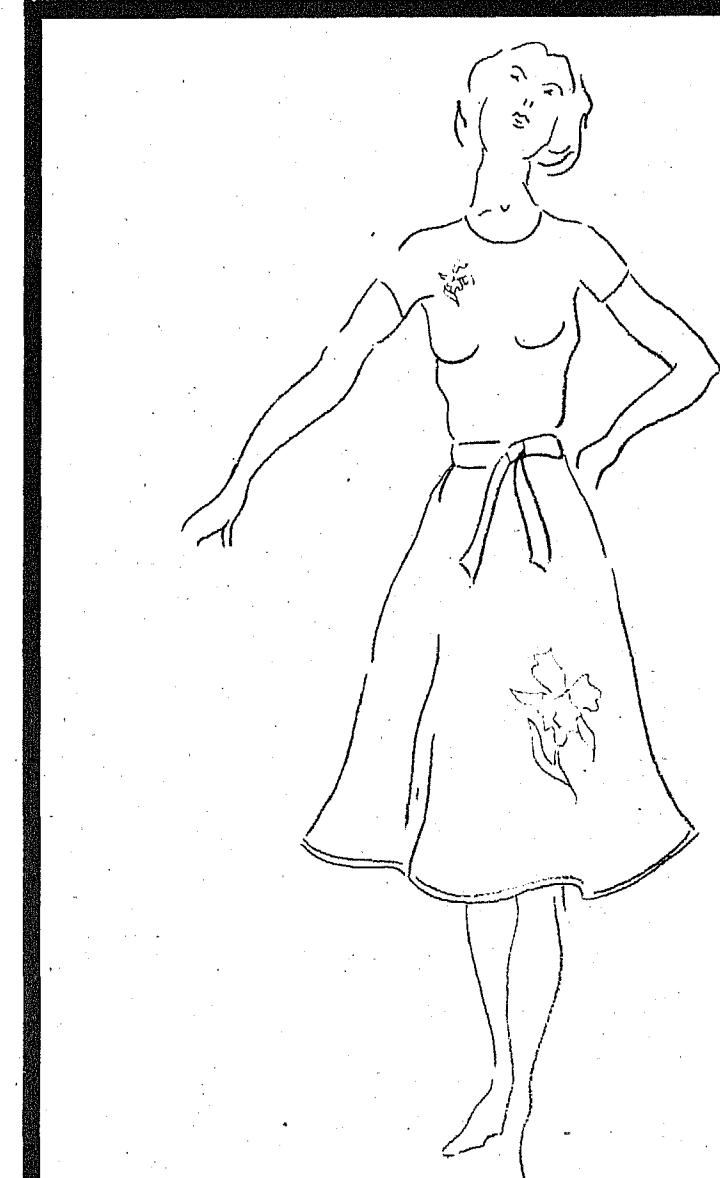
"You're damn lucky," he told himself aloud when he dropped the iron rod on his foot. "that's the foot with no sensations." The toes of his swollen feet protruded from the holes he had cut in the sneakers. Picking up the tam, he set it aside and carefully lowered the measuring pole down the narrow opening. He looked at the wet mark, pleased with his progress: thirty-two inches.

"BUT REMEMBER," HE admonished, "don't fall asleep in the rocker again with tools in your back pocket. You sure had hell to pay the next morning!"

The old man tossed a coffee cup into the well, retrieving it by a long piece of twine. The water was sweet. A well, he thought, must have slow seepage, gradual recharge. You have to know just when to stop. But today people have no patience for it, Niles concluded. Especially when they back in a truck and overdo it with an oversized auger. The well becomes brackish, sulfurous-smelling.

AT FOUR O'CLOCK Niles quit, hiding the tools beneath the back porch. Hitching up his khaki pants by the nylon rope belt, he put on the Cuban shirt and donned the wide-brimmed straw hat. The bike creaked and groaned as he pedaled towards Olivia, the toy propeller turning lazily on the rusty handlebars. It was strange how he now saw Key West: as if through the eyes of a condemned man.

JOSIE GRUNTS, THE bolita peddler, was awaiting his afternoon clientele while packed in a black Riviera. Half-heartedly disguised in Polaroids and a panama, he flicked off Radio Havana as Niles Pinder wheeled alongside. "Chief," Josie said, "where've you BEEN all these dog weeks? I was worried you went to



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GADOL'S FACTORY STORE
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AND THE
CONCH RESORTWEAR
612 Duval St., Key West, Fla.

heaven without sending me a postcard." "Heaven?" Niles replied. "You got a funny name for it. That's not where I went the other night in my dreams. I arrived at the Devil's doorstep--clearly and distinctly. It was raining outside--the devil was beating his wife--so he was too busy for me."

"You been sick?"

"Yes, you could say that... and MAROONED on a lonely island watching the rubber tree leaves turn upside down." He hesitated a moment and added, "That's a sign of bad weather, you know."

JOSIE GRUNTS NODDED at his prospective customer. "Tell me about it," he said. "The other, I mean."

Niles shook his head. "It's quite a catastrophe. The cabrons sent me a pink slip about the property taxes. Now, all I got, each day and night, are the worri-ations and willy whoopees."

"Conjo! Not you too?" Josie exclaimed.

"I've lost so many customers.

Things are getting so high.... Damn! I

lost my sister to Miami. She sold out

but found she couldn't afford to find

another place. She hates it on the main-

land. So do I. I'd rather be here drink-

ing espresso in a little Cuban restau-

rant."

"WHERE AM I gonna go?" Niles said. "What the hell am I going to do way up

there? Be another stranger, I guess. Be another Conch without a shell."

"Chief, don't let it happen." The Piña Colada Man drove by and they both nodded.

"Seems like a conspiracy," Josie said, "to move us out for the rich."

"Those winter people I'm working for," Niles said, "they have no idea of struggle. Last year, one day, those two quarreled for 20 minutes over whether to take a pill. Restaurants. That's another big, important issue for them. Where did you eat dinner last night?"

JOSIE LAUGHED. "WHERE'S your house, anyway?"

"It used to be on Angela but the street's been renamed Damnation Lane."

"Oh, I remember now," Josie Grunts said.

"Even if it was a shack it would still be too much to lose. It would break my heart," Niles' voice cracked. "Not to mention the memories," he said. "Grandpa Pinder built it during the slave days. He was hell on wheels. Boy! A fine wrecking master."

"How you gonna let 'em take all that?" Josie asked.

"GRANDPA DIDN'T STOP with the house," Niles said. "He built a schooner in the side yard and together with a

team of horses in front and a gang of men in back, they rolled her down Frances Street right into the harbor. The Godsend, he christened her."

"Nearly all my furniture was salvage awarded, fair and legally, to the old man. Among others, Papa was born upstairs and so was I. But Papa emerged in the midst of the Great Key West Fire while Grandpa was out fighting it. Afterwards, everyone said that Papa was born of the devil and raised by the thunder. It came true too. He knew the Brujaria, all right. He'd scare us and Mama with a mention or two of his 'Satanic Affiliations' as he called them."

"AND HE DIDN'T teach you a thing, huh?" Josie teased.

"Not me. I'm just an old Conch."

"Sure," Josie said, "but your reputation always precedes you around here. You're way off. All I've got is a chamber pot, a window to look out of, an oscillating flutina and a backwards-looking future."

JOSIE GRUNTS SMILED, pleased with himself at finally having trapped the old man. "Yeah," he said, "how about when you used to call birds down from the trees. Or hypnotize people and animals --"

"Who told you?" Niles demanded.

"FOR STARTERS, everyone! Even preacher's afraid of you, man."

Niles clicked his tongue. "I might've known. Papa used to say that secrets on a two by four key are as scarce as ambergris."

A POLICE CRUISER moved slowly down the street. Niles craned, feeling a sharp pain in his back. Releasing his breath, he said, "I've got work but it's not enough. I guess I got old too soon in life?" He casually handed Josie Grunts a matchbook and added, "It's my last until the government mails me my monthly Social Security."

Removing the tightly-folded twenty dollar bill, Josie Grunts pulled out a match, closed the cover and lit a cigarette. In Spanish, exhaling, he said, "Talk to me!"

"Twenty-two," Niles said.

SCRIBBLING THE NUMBERS on both ends, he tore the paper strip in two, giving the ticket to Niles concealed within the matches. "I wish you much luck," he said.

"Yeah," Niles responded hoarsely, "maybe it'll pay the taxes.... Well, let me go. Let me go and live out my life in pieces." He waved goodbye as he pushed off from the car.

ON THE WAY home Niles Pinder took

a shortcut, biking through the cemetery, passing the tiers of vaults--he had heard someone once call them condominiums--alabaster saints and porcelain angels flew past him. Then, coasting silently, he surprised the stooped man who was busy picking flowers from a fresh grave. Niles recalled that the man dried them, fixed the flowers in some arrangement and sold this handiwork to the tourists at Mallory Square during sunset. Glad he did not have to steal from the dead for a living, suddenly Niles felt less unfortunate. The old man pedaled onward.

SEATED BENEATH THE handheld shade of a frayed parasol, dressed in black, an elderly widow was visiting her husband's ten-year-old grave. Each day the woman made a visit which lasted for hours. In the afternoon, she read aloud from the Citizen or napped at the sun-bleached stone slab. At the least, Niles thought, he was still possessed of a full deck.

ARRIVING AT THE iron-picketed family plot, Niles dismounted cumbrously and hobbled up to his father's vault. Like a bemused guardian snooping within for family confidences, an enormous banyan had coiled tentacular limbs around the sarcophagus, cracking the

lid. Sadly he stood there, the lone survivor leaving no descendants of his own, sister and brothers gone. But due to the tenants in this corner, he traced his roots across the Florida Straits, beyond the horizon, to other coral islands like New Providence and Eleuthera.

HE HAD GIVEN up the task of trying to discover exactly where he had gone off course in his life's ambitions. Now, he had neither dreams nor desires; just simple wishes. Niles sensed without any alarm that he was soon about to founder on this reef of cluttered, broken stone and cement which surrounded him. Moving farther back, he knelt stiffly weeding the ground around a new monument. Grunting as he braced himself on the little fence, he rose facing it squarely, bronze nameplate shining.

NILES W. PINDER
1904

THUS, WHATEVER HAPPENED in the meantime, it was comforting for him to know that he would remain on the island forever. And like this day, there were times when checking the open date on the nameplate assured him he was still alive. Strangely enough, he tolerated his life now instead of enjoying it.

Abruptly, three prismatic butterflies alighted the marker and held

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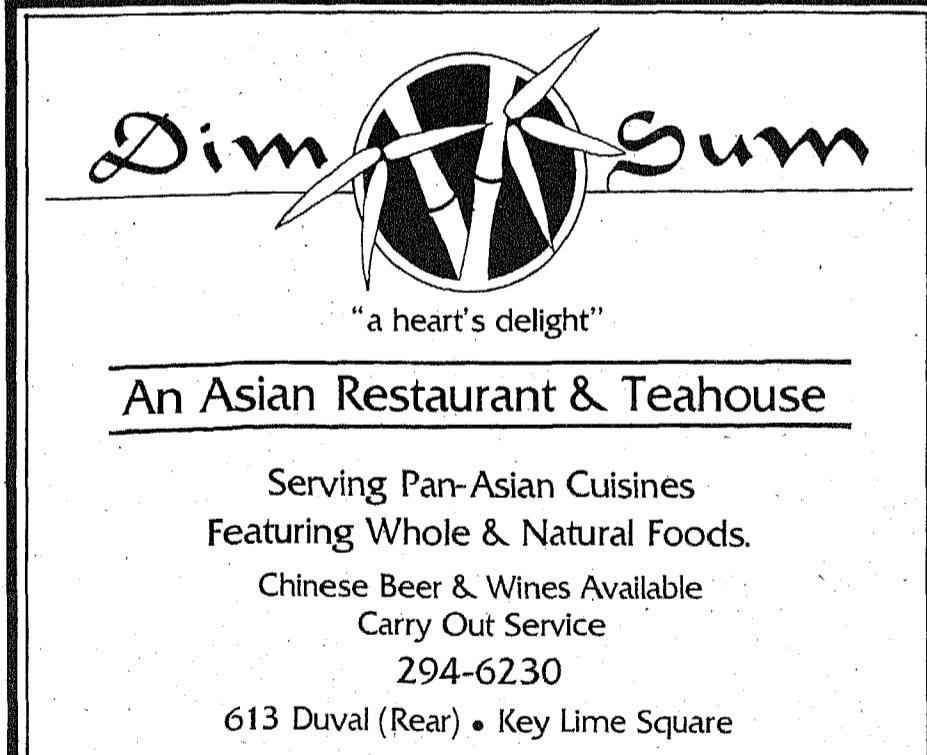
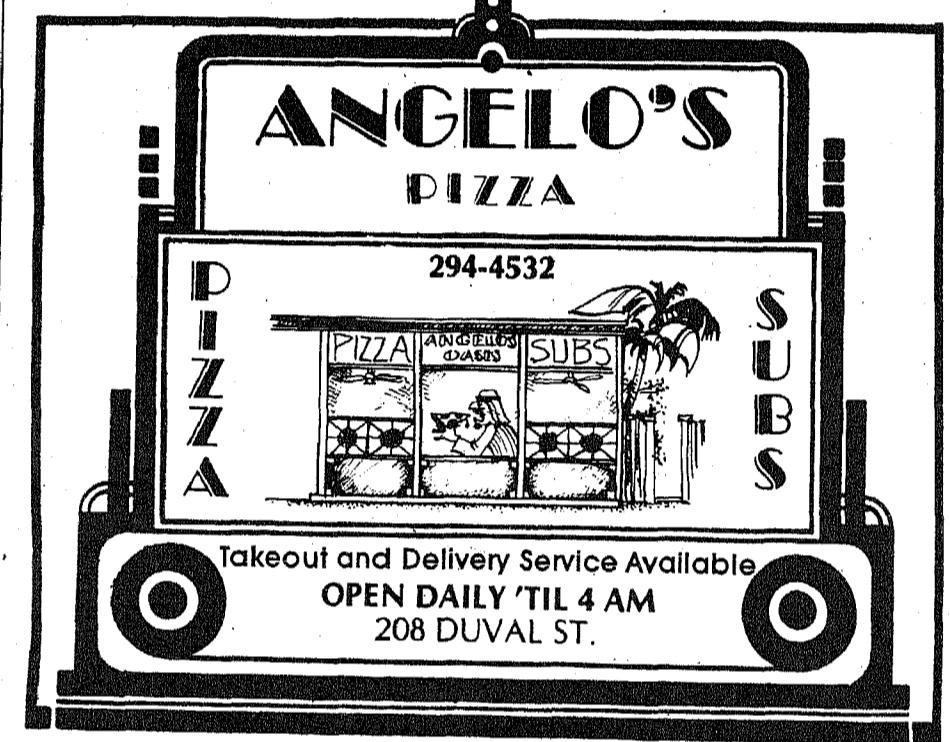
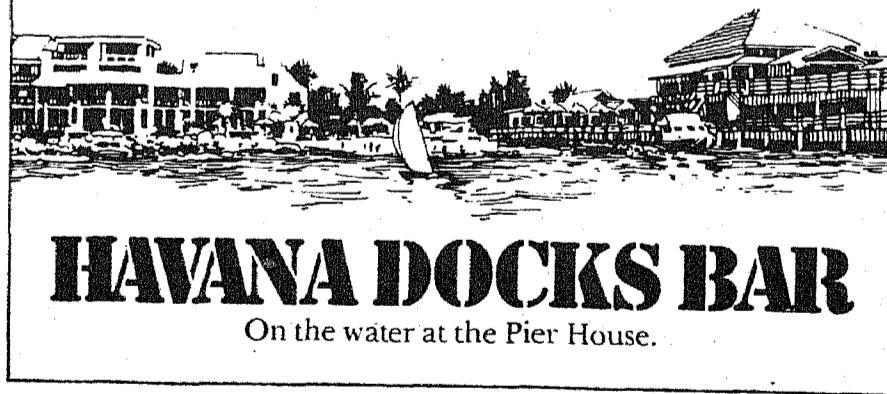
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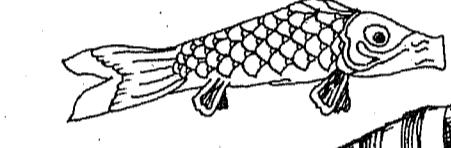
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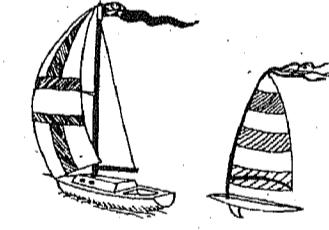
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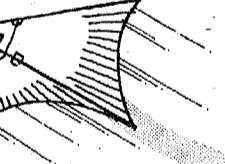
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briefly, delicate wings quivering, before darting about the old man and disappearing helter-skelter into the cabbage palmetto. He left the cemetery feeling certain they were a sign of good luck.

AT HOME, NILES Pinder reached for the doorknob and a stranger jerked open the door from inside. Introducing himself as Tom Jergan, realtor, the man said, "You must be Conchita's husband?" "Yeah," Niles said, "but don't let that fool you."

Jergan, who had a slightly effeminate manner, made a patronizing laugh. He quickly explained that he and the others were there on a "realtor's caravan."

AS NILES SHOOK hands with the others, he noticed two men were taking the living room's dimensions with a tape mea-

sure. Another snapped flash pictures. Outside, another was pacing off the lot. He felt as though he was at the scene of a homicide investigation. Hurrying to the kitchen, he found Conchita sitting behind the table demonstrating how to find the hidden compartment of a mahogany cabinet. Jergan was standing so close that Niles could feel him breathing on his neck. Conchita, a large woman who was jolly when unhampered by a checklist of sundry ailments, looked up in surprise.

"THAT CAME OFF the *Godsend*," Niles exploded. "I told you never to fool with that!"

"Don't YOU talk to me like that!" she scolded. "Niles, you're making a scene."

"Damn right I am," he said. "And on purpose too!" Turning to the group, he said, "Nothing's for sale. I don't care who brought you here or what my wife told you. What the hell am I supposed to do, sell and then try to find something cheaper?" Niles snorted. "This is one piece of Key West you can't have."

CONCHITA'S FACE WAS flushed, her eyes became liquid with tears. "How could you? I'll never forgive you. In front of all these people --"

"Where?" he demanded. "All I can see are buzzards and caterpillars invading my home."

"Mrs. Pinder," Jergan said, "is this what YOU WANT? It's not what we want. These people have spent their valuable time looking at your lovely home."

"We'll see what you want," Niles interrupted. "You know nothing. When this rocky road savage was still under his Mama's petticoats, he learned the *Brúja*, the fundamentals anyway, which eventually took me to the advanced stages of billygoat sticks, guinea pepper and Nassau parasols."

ADVISING THE GROUP in a suddenly calm and level voice, Conchita inter-

jected, "He's starting a curse on you all RIGHT NOW. You'd better go ... and in a hurry."

"Okay, we're going," Jergan said. Following them to the door, Niles said, lifting his cane off the hook on the wall, "No, not okay. Papa spoke the Unknown Tongue, and I know when something is going to happen before it happens."

Exiting the house, the procession went down the steps one by one. The three who were in the yard rushed up to the departing group. "Anything wrong?" one asked.

"C'mon, let's go," Jergan said. "I'll tell you later."

MILES STOOD ON the porch and pointed his cane at them. "The Horrors and Howls on all of you," he shouted. One of the realtors in the back of the line filing through the gate looked over his shoulder to see Niles whack the porch railing with the stick. The old man began a list of incantations:

"Saint Lucifer and Saint Kitts!
Andy Bo-kax, Doctor Radiator,
Rebels and Generations!
Katy Ka-tung, Mahilda Broom-fly
and Hurricane Alley!"

NILES' VOICE GREW stronger in the final petition as the people reached their cars:

"Man who appoints,
God who dis-appoints,
Wheels within wheels,
Damnation Lane,
Rowdy and Drowsy too,
The Devil's doostep,
And comets trailing stars!"

He gave the railing another crack as his words reverberated with anger in the narrow alley. Then he went into the house and cursed Conchita in Spanish.

LATER THAT EVENING the old couple ate dinner, Conchita giving him the silent treatment. Finishing his meal, Niles brought out the *Añejo* bottle, pouring the white rum into a short glass, adding a teaspoonful of sugar and a

little water. Conchita, waiting until he looked up, gave him an expression of disgust. Niles leaned back. "Yeah," he said, "I know, I know. The divorce papers are gonna say: Put plaster on his mouth. Plaster his mouth shut."

IN THE DEEPNESS of night, long after the couple suddenly retired, the sea breezes freshened, funneling down through the streets and whitewashed warrens of Conchtown. The woman's tongue in Niles' yard chattered as he slept fitfully downstairs in the rattan rocker, his old white head bowed in dreams. Beholding a magical pair of larger-than-life greyhounds, Niles cheered them on as they were wearing his *Bolita* numbers -- as they galloped across a night sky dusted with stars and ablaze with constellations. Abruptly, in the midst of the race, Conchita entered the dream, crashing his reverie and scolding him about squandering their money on the *Bolita*. Niles saw himself wearing a straight face while denying her accusations again and again. He woke up.

OUTSIDE, A SAPODILLA banged on the tin roof, rolling down until it thudded on the ground near Niles' window. Stunned and confused, he lurched forward in the shade, shining a flashlight through the screen. "Who's there?" he shouted. From upstairs where she had been lying awake with pleurisy, Conchita hollered down, "Niles, go back to sleep. It was just a dilly."

"A dilly?"

She coughed. "Yes! A DILLY!" "Oh?" he said, "and if you hear something in the night and wail, I come as fast as I can. But if I make a mistake, you act CONTRARY!" "Niles, you'll have a stroke!" "If that happens," he sizzled, "you can cash into YOUR JESUS. There won't be anyone home, then, to defend you and this house."

"Shut up!" she blurted, in exasperation and discomfort. "You want to wake the whole alley?"

HE MIMICKED HER, then yelled up the stairs: "You're CONTRARY to human nature. I'm talking about this house, the inaugurated principles of the problem of the FIRST PART."

"On Grunt Bone Alley, the other day, I saw a big hen. She was pathetic without ANY plumage on her behind. Something must've taken a wild swipe at her. Well, that hen was the same as you are right now: so nervous without feathers she couldn't both THINK and RELATE at the same time."

CONCHITA SOBED. "NOT one bone of sympathy," she declared.

"No, just tired and sore bones."

"I've got a fever. I can't sleep. I've been up all hours worrying about taxes; money, losing the house--"

Niles started to say something but Conchita kept talking.

"And that terrible scene you made," she said.

"Let's go to sleep," he said, his anger melting. After a long pause, he added, "Every concern is twice as big at three o'clock in the morning. We can worry it to death in the daylight, too, you know..."

"All right," she said, "but I still don't feel well."

NOW NILES WAS thinking too hard. He knew he would not sleep again. At first light, he decided, he could break some Cuban bread, pinch a few bites of smoked fish, and drink a cup or two of *café con leche*. Then, after breakfast, he could bike over to the *Bolita* banker's place.

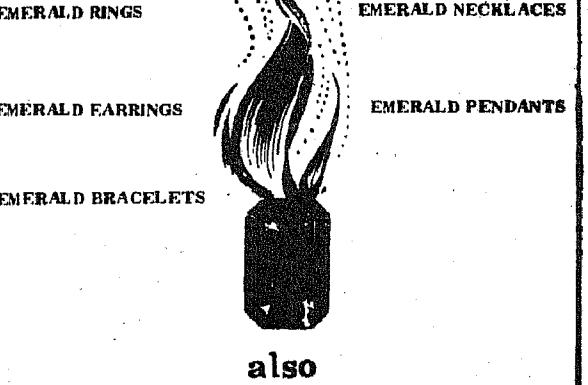
There he would check the fence upon which last night's winning numbers would be scratched.

Tomorrow, Niles thought. No, not tomorrow, but today. Today he would learn whether his number had come up.

(Editor's note: This story first appeared in the 1980 Florida Anthology published by the Apalachee Quarterly in Tallahassee.)

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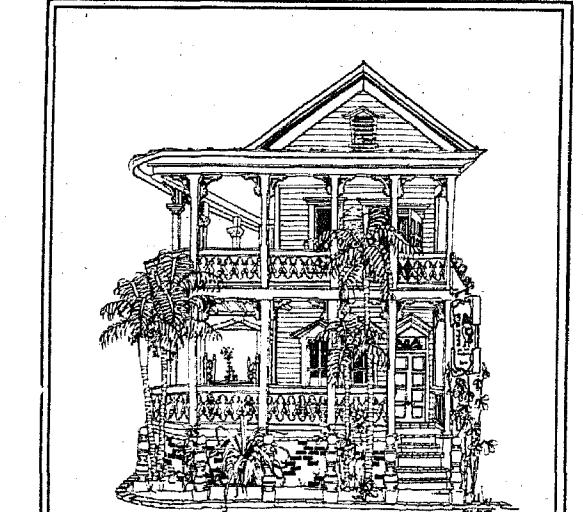
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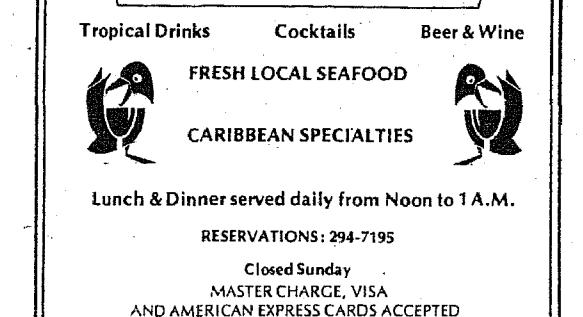
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DREAMS & REALITY

Colleen McGee

WOODEN-WHEELED CARTS, hand pumps for water in the kitchen and laundry beaten with sticks at the community well. As Mrs. Delores Mira said after her trip to Spain, "It was very beautiful and everything, but I don't think I want to live there. They're too far behind."

MRS. MIRA, HER husband James, her son City Commissioner Jimmy Mira and Marla Kittle had made a pilgrimage back to Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, Spain where she was born, and where she lived until she was four. Although her mother was a Key Wester and her father worked at a printing shop here, Mrs. Mira was born during a visit to her father's family in Spain in 1919. After her birth, Jose Castro, her father, returned to Key West to earn sufficient money for the rest of his family to return too. Several years later, when Mrs. Mira was four, her mother braved a thirty-day freighter trip with two small children to get back to the United States. It was especially difficult for her since she spoke only Spanish and had never travelled alone. Mrs. Mira had never been back to Spain again.

BUT NOW SHE proudly shows photos of the upstairs room where she was born, the small farming compound where her family's house is and neighbors and friends of her grandmother who remember babysitting her as a toddler. No relatives were there to greet her though. Her grandmother's two sisters were "unmarried ladies" and her grandmother's only child was Mrs. Mira's father. Her grandfather had one other son, but he was lost at sea, so it is

only the land and the parish records that remain.

"THE WHOLE TRIP was made on the spur of the moment, so to speak," says Jimmy Mira. They were on a tour that included Madrid and Majorca and on the flight to Madrid he said, "Well Mom, when we land in Madrid why don't we



Photo by John Leslie

The Miras, Delores and James.

get off the tour and go where you were born?" They thought about renting a car but as they left the tour, they changed their minds and decided to fly. So Jimmy went to the ticket office. "Knowing that I was an American they just threw me to one side and went rattling on. Well, my whole family speaks Spanish fluently, so I

jumped on the guy's case and started rattling to him in Spanish and his eyes got big. I said, 'I want to get on this plane, I want to go to Santiago right now!' And the guy said, 'No problem, no problem señor'. And we got on the plane, just in time, because that was the last flight."

SANTIAGO IS IN the northwestern part of Spain, up in the mountains. It was encased in fog when they landed that night so trying to drive into town without being able to see any city lights or signs was a real problem. Jimmy's father stopped to ask directions, and stood out in the cold fog listening to the explanation for nearly half an hour.

"WHERE ARE WE going?" he asked when he returned. "Hell if I know," he said. "These people don't know how to speak Spanish. I couldn't understand anything he said." He had picked a local resident who had both a heavy Castilian accent and a speech impediment to ask directions from.

THEY HAD MORE luck the next day though. They were looking for an address on an old letter that had been written in the early 50's to Jimmy's grandfather, Jose Castro. That spot was bare ground so they asked at the grocery store next door for information about the people who were gone. When shown the letter the woman said, "This is my handwriting!" The woman's mother had dictated the letter after Mrs. Mira's grandmother died, asking about the disposal of some property. She ran across the street to get her mother, a spunky old lady in her 90's dressed in traditional country black with heavy field boots showing under her long skirts.

LATER THAT DAY the Miras drove out of the city to the little village where Mrs. Mira had been born. It was not much more than an octagonal

cluster of buildings made of irregularly shaped local bricks. Rumors of their coming had spread all morning since the sister of the old lady at the store still lived in the compound. The drive from Santiago was short, only two or three miles, but slow because of the steep hills and farm traffic along the dirt road. One of the carts they passed had wooden wheels six feet across and was being dragged by a bull.

MRS. MIRA WAS recognized immediately (she is said to be the spitting image of her own mother.) "All the neighbors that lived there when my grandmother was alive were still there, even the maid that used to take care of me when I was small," Mrs. Mira said. She was shown the



PHOTO: The Castro family home, part of a farm compound near the city of Santiago, Spain.

room in which she'd been born and all around the little compound. In the center was the well where everyone got their water, and where the women washed the clothes, beating them with sticks to get out the dirt and draping them on bushes to dry.

THE TRIP FULFILLED a dream that Mrs. Mira had held for a long time. She had wanted to know where she came from and now she has photo albums and memories galore. But her Key West roots with children and grandchildren close by are very strong. "I'd rather be here," she smiles.

The Goodnight Kiss

Today I walked beneath a tree and suddenly...
Soft rustling dark
A fragrant breath
The sweet enclosure
Of my small bed at home
With Mother bending over,

--Carolyn Gorton Fuller

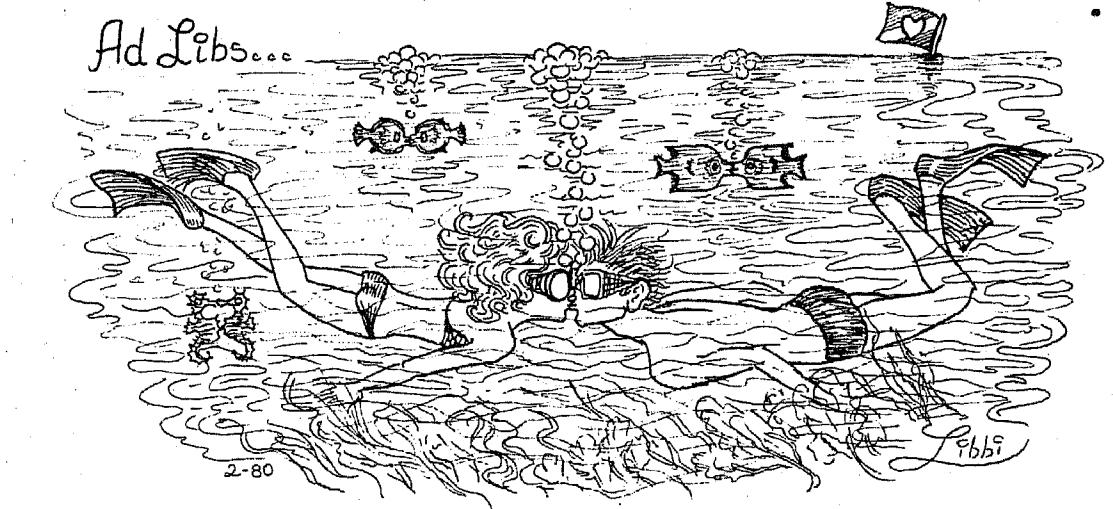
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Emlyn Williams as Charles Dickens

ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, Dr. William Prosser, Artistic Director at the Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center, talked to Philip Burton, that distinguished Key West resident who is an actor, author, script writer, lecturer, director, producer, drama coach and teacher, and whose ward is another famous Burton--Richard. The particular reason for the interview was due to an extraordinary event coming to the Fine Arts Center on December 10 and 11--"Emlyn Williams as Charles Dickens."

MR. WILLIAMS HAS been performing this one-man show, doing scenes from the famous novels and stories, for 30 years now, all around the globe. In fact, he's just completed a tour of South Africa. According to Mr. Burton, "This is possibly the only occasion that Key West has had a chance of seeing a performance that was a wonderful success in London and on Broadway in exactly the same way as it was presented there. I've known Emlyn Williams for a long time and I'm deeply grateful to him because he gave Richard his first chance both in plays and in films.

"STRANGELY ENOUGH I was present when this whole idea of the Dickens readings happened. Emlyn Williams was very well known, both in London and on Broadway, as a playwright and an actor ... I remember a party at Emlyn's house and he was not there. And his wife Molly, now unfortunately his late wife, was very apologetic and nervous. She apologized that Emlyn wasn't there because he was busy upstairs and was having a little trouble with a script,

but he would be down any minute. Ultimately he did come down and he was obviously in a bad mood. Somebody asked him what was wrong and he said, 'I can't do it. I've been trying to dramatize a novel of Charles Dickens'. Wait a minute! And he disappeared.

"WE WERE ALL theatre people at that party and he came down with the novel and he opened it to a certain page and he read a scene and said to us, 'How do you put that on the stage? John Gielgud, he wasn't Sir John then, said 'Like that.' And that was the beginning of the Charles Dickens readings.

"HE'S NOT CONTENT just to read the passage. He knows it off by heart -- he only pretends to be reading. That's exactly what Charles Dickens himself did! Charles Dickens was a frustrated actor and he made tours of the country giving these readings. And Emlyn has actually captured the whole thing. He makes up like Charles Dickens, he uses exactly the same kind of desk that Charles Dickens used. Not, believe me, that he doesn't know every word of it, just as Charles Dickens did, but he pretends to be reading."

"HE'S A FIRST rate actor, he really is. Anybody reading Dickens has to be capable of an incredible number of impersonations and I saw the original Dickens in London and it really is an extraordinary work. Anybody who sees it will never forget it and people went again and again to see it."

DR. PROSSER THEN mentioned the revival of interest in Dickens with the "Nicholas Nickleby" production in London and New York being such a big hit, and Burton said:

"I JUST HEARD of another one in St. Louis, A Tale Of Two Cities, with

a cast of 200! Incidentally, Dickens will never die because his interests are entirely people. When a writer is especially interested in the social conditions of his time, he might die when the social conditions change. Dickens is primarily interested in people, and when you're interested in people, they don't change. That's why I think Dickens will live as long as people live. Oh, his characters are immortal. There's not a single character you'll ever meet in this life that you won't find reflected somewhere in a character of Dickens. And Emlyn gives us all that color. You see these people. You see the action. It is quite a tour de force. It's an astonishing performance and Key West is so honored to have him here. I think it's amazing. I'm certainly going. I wouldn't miss this for anything, especially as I believe there are some things I haven't heard. This is something I just can't resist. I hope Key West proves itself to be worthy of his visit."



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Bolita Is More Fun Than Dope

BY BUD JACOBSON

SEEMS LIKE TODAY everyone is so geared up for dope, pills, sniffers, caps, uppers, downers, inners and outers that nobody is having any fun—it's all so grim.

Time was in Key West when all the action, fun and games centered around an old cloth bag filled with wooden balls with numbers on them. When it was thrown around a circle of men and three of the balls were plucked out (supposedly at random, although there was some question at times about whether it was at "random"), you had the old Cuban gambling game called "bolita."

AT LEAST YOU couldn't wreck your health making 25¢ bets a few times a week, or chancing a hand of poker in a friendly card game at the old Tomato League.

Take heart, though: bolita is still with us and going strong.

WHEN BOLITA WAS thrown in Havana (B.C., before Castro) it was on Saturday mornings. The numbers were announced in Havana on the radio and easily picked up here. By noon in Key West the winning three numbers were posted openly in saloons, cafes, at the docks, and the word was passed along the vine in political circles.

DURING THE WEEK, to keep up the local interest and give our friendly gamblers something to do, there'd usually be a "throw" held in one of the bankers' homes—Louis (Blackie) Fernandez, now dead, was the kingpin in banking in that era.

Artemio (Artie) Crespo, who was busted some months ago with a few business associates charged with running a lottery (another way of saying bolita),

put it most succinctly to a U.S. District Court, some years back:

"Judge," said Crespo solemnly, addressing Judge William O. Mehrtens, "bolita is a way of life in Key West."

NOW, HOWEVER, SINCE the boom in the dope business in Key West and the Florida Keys, over the last 12 years or so, the ancient and beloved bolita has taken a back seat, so to speak.

The bolita bankers today, the writers, the peddlers, all love it that way. They're out of the limeight, low on the horizon and, best of all, "Business is great," observed one of them who works Whitehead Street.

WHEN ARTIE AND his pals were nabbed a few months back, it was the first bolita bust in years in the county. Law enforcement, according to many officials, seems to turn a blind eye to "gambling heaven" along White Street, as they also appear to do on the Keys where bolita workers comb the neighborhoods for gamblin' men.

PROOF OF THE vitality in the local bolita racket was the recent "heavy win," rumored to be in the high four figures, by a well-known local citizen; some of the writers are also buzzing about the possible entry into the banking field by two other well-known and well-connected local gentlemen. The talk is that Artie "might go away and somebody's got to fill in."

THESE DAYS BOLITA has been reduced to the old numbers game—no more throwing the bag around the room.

The three winning numbers (you choose between 00 and 99) are determined by the quinela payoffs at pre-selected

dog tracks. Dog tracks in Florida, as you might know, are open and operating all year long, somewhere in the state, Monday through Saturday nights. On Wednesdays, though, the bolita throw in Puerto Rico is always used. When the Key West dog track is open in the winter months, the winning combinations for the Key West bettors are picked from the quinela wins there.

HERE'S HOW IT works, according to a seasoned gambler:

Quinela payoffs are taken from the second and third races, the fifth and sixth, and the eighth and ninth. These payoffs are public knowledge and are figured on the tote machine at the track—so no foolishness, like there used to be in the past, at times.

IF THE PAYOFF in the second race quinela is \$21.40, you take the digit immediately to the left of the decimal point—in this case, "1." If the payoff in the third race quinela is \$35.10, you take the number "5." Thus the first number of the three winning numbers would be "15."

And so on until you have the three numbers.

YOU CAN PLAY straights, parlays, or various combinations and you can win several thousands if your bet is big enough and you've got the right combination and, most of all, if you can trust your banker.

NOT EVERYTHING, HOWEVER, is peaches and cream in the bolita circuits. There is some cutthroat competition among the bankers (many of them are related to each other by blood or marriage); they squabble over their teams of peddlers and how much volume they might be doing, who's bringing the most bets to the counting house. And it's not unusual for a peddler to doublecross a banker, or welch on a bettor. When that happens, the peddler usually drops out of sight

for a long time, or goes to another town.

"WE GOT OUR ups and downs, like any business, but there's lots of guys who make a living from it," remarked a man in legitimate business downtown but who, as a sideline, maintains a small bank.

Almost like everybody in Key West, many of the prominent persons supposedly in the bolita game have colorful nicknames—Tisky, Tick Tack, Pepsi, Mustache, Mickey Mouse, Mr. Grass, Lu, Blackie, Solee, and others.

IN TODAY'S LEGAL lingo, you could call bolita the true "victimless crime."

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JEANETTE

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MURDER OF THE PEPPER TREE

It was not for me to know where it came from or who put it there (no one, probably; pepper trees are orphans of the air, unparented, too strong, too lush, too greedy of the soil, ill-mannered and disrespectful of man's toys and vanities; push it and it pushes back, stomp it and it springs to life) but the pepper tree had grown in sun and shower until it filled the lower left hand quadrant of my window, thrived and leaved in this best of all possible worlds for pepper trees, grew greener and taller with each live-long day, a faithful, pious go-forth-and-multiplier. (What did it know of prejudice and hate, of what went on under it or over it? Only the feel of wet sap rising, and the playful pressure of the ambient sun)

For a time I sedentary from my window aerie watched it spread heavy and preposterously rich, a woody aggrandizement; and (covertly) sanctioned its usurpation of the path and its benign neglect of the pampered lawn that yellowed in its shade. So when the saw bit, I jumped high, bemused to see my pepper tree drop bleeding limbs upon the favored grass and scatter the path with splinters of its whitened bone. When I could stand to look again, I could only see that abatis as abattoir.

I cried dry tears for days for my lost friend. Please tell me, sir, whatever could I do?

By Arthur Phillips

STAN BECKER
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The sea is my freedom from verbs of command that sprout out of faces, frame me inside small definitions as the digital clocks click off illuminated seconds.

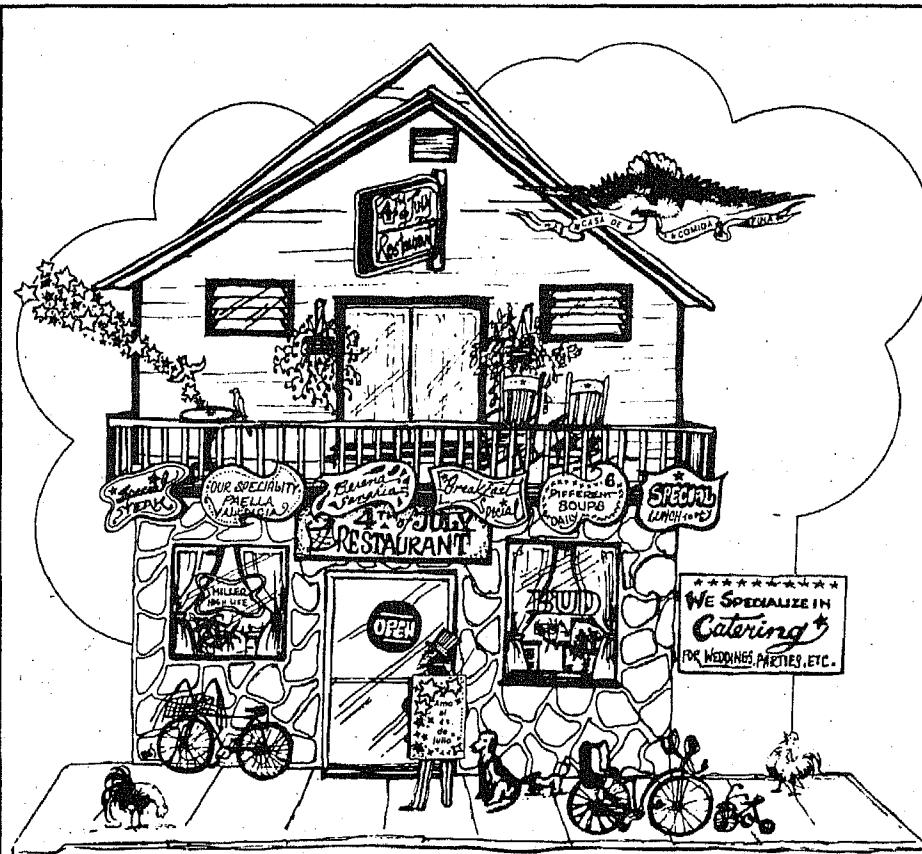
With my strong scissors stroke I kick them from hearing distance.

The warm water receives me and does not rush me to perform. I loll among the sargassum, try to coax a stripped fish from under a rock.

Then I stop and I am still. It swims out to meet me and inspect my nose. I roll and tumble in figure eight loops, disconnected from the grave ones and gravity.

There is no right or left. Intoxicated in the vertigo of this ocean womb, I swim to my own rhythm, the heartbeat of the sea. It belongs to all those who sit with clinched eyes on shore that dare look out, let go, join again with its primordial melody.

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THE WAY WE WERE: THE KEY WEST PLAYERS

BY GEORGE RUMENS

ONE NIGHT LAST November, when the lively applause had died away, and the actors had drifted away to the bars, I ran back into the darkened Waterfront Playhouse to fetch my script. The street-lights shone through the open doors and up the aisle. The air-conditioner sighed and the dressing-room lights ticked as they cooled. There was an ominous and pregnant silence, as if thirty people were hiding behind the costume rack, ready to spring a surprise party on me. I switched on a single light. The roaches tumbled in a box of wigs. The messages of luck and despair, painted on the mirrors with greasepaint, seemed strangely tragic. There was a rank smell of sweat and mothballs, of spray-paint and spilled wine, and of cigaret smoke. Voices seemed to hang in the air, like our memories of the dead. A theatre will do it every time! I snatched up my script, and skipped out into the hot night of Mallory Square. Let those with stronger nerves than mine commune with the ghosts of forty-three years! I am a coward in such matters.

THE FOUNDING FATHERS of the Key West Players were two reluctant visitors to Key West, sent to hunt Hitler's submarines with a squadron of flying boats. This was scarcely five years after Key West was officially declared the poorest town in the United States, and a hurricane had destroyed the rail-link with the mainland. People remember it as a time of broken streets, no sewage lines, salt-rusted cars without mufflers, and packs of ravenous dogs which were culled with occasional meals of poisoned bait. Onto this neglected little island came 200 naval personnel and families in the November of 1939. It was Patrol Squadron 53, and their 18 cumbersome seaplanes.

OF THE SQUADRON of young flying officers, fresh out of flying school,

who drank, and swam, and entertained young ladies at the Casa Marina, two ensigns suggested starting a dramatic group. Their names were Gerry Bogart and Jim Gerberding. The former completed his distinguished career as captain of the U.S. Navy, and the latter, sadly, was killed in action over Japan, for which he was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross. They were joined by local artist Mary Morgan, and went to the house of a local theatrical professional, Gertrude Wagner Ricketts. Years before, Gertrude had been offered her first professional part by the legendary Lunt family. She had all the experience they wanted.

Twenty people attended the first meeting at the Art Center on February 6th, 1940, in which Lt. James Gerberding was elected the first president. The naval officers at that first meeting were matched in number by interested Key Westers. At a second meeting on February 13th, the name The Key West Players was adopted, and so was the first play. It was to be *Squaring The Circle*, a comedy and satire on Russia to be directed by Gertrude, who was known as Mrs. Rob Roy Ricketts at that time. Also attending were several members of the present board, and Mrs. Max Eastman, former director of The Provincetown Players, and a personal friend of, and collaborator with, Eugene O'Neill. She immediately began some actors' workshops to develop their craft.

THERE ARE PHOTOGRAPHS of this first production which opened at the Harris School auditorium on March 29th, 1940. It seems to have been well attended, though in these early days of the Cold War, the Players were chided for what was seen as communist sympathies when many failed to recognize the satire. The cast was mostly navy, except for



The Key West Players in the Red Barn days. Can-Can, a review. From left to right: Unknown, Ruth Newton, Belle Hamilton, Lettie Sullivan, Ann Carleton. Mary Morgan and her sister Doody, daughters of Townsend Morgan, director of the Arts Center.

THE SECOND PRODUCTION, three one-act plays, saw the appearance on the stage of Ann Carleton, still a valued, active member of the Players, whose gentle persistence as producer has made possible this present season of plays. The third play, *Broken Dishes*, was di-



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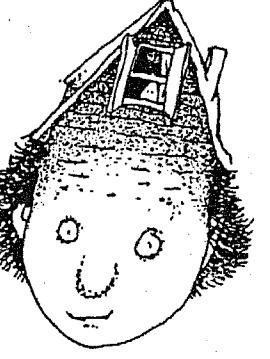


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HITTING
Use a log to hit a hog
Use a rake to hit a pig
Use a sweater to hit an ostrich
Use a ski to hit a bee
And use a leather
When you hit me

**HOW NOT TO HAVE
TO DRY THE DISHES**
If you have to dry the dishes
(Such an awful, painful chore)
If you have to dry the dishes
(Such a gloomy, dreary chore)
If you have to dry the dishes
And you drop one on the floor
Maybe they won't let you
Dry the dishes anymore.

ANTEATER
"A great anteater."
The gas man told my dad.
Turned out, it was
An aunts' eat.
And now my uncle's mad!

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they should have their own theatre.

The Woman's Club on Duval Street offered the use of their barn, a former stable and carriage shed. At one time it was used to house the mules which pulled the trolleys along Duval Street. It must have been a novelty for the Navy flyers and professional women who cleared out the manure. The experience left an indelible impression. Some claim you can still detect the odor of horse manure during present Barn performances, or is that a joke?

THE FIRST SHOW in the refurbished barn was *Claudia*, starring Janice White and Ann Carleton on February 28th, 1944. The Players were fortunate in having so many trained military people to work on the sets and the lights. The Barn is notoriously small. It was occupied by the Players for 16 years, and left many bittersweet memories. Its stage is considerably smaller than that of a school auditorium, and many actors remember being crouched into hot and dark little corners waiting to go onstage. The mosquito problem was serious at that time, and the stormy season added wet misery. The actors had to run around the back of the building and get through a hole in the fence in order to get to the other side of the stage. The owners of the fence closed the hole one season, so the actors made a style and climbed over it.

INSIDE THE BARN the dressing room was, and still is, a space the size of a walk-in closet. It was divided for men and women by a flimsy partition which soon became covered with hilarious graffiti. In these permissive times actors and actresses undress together without a thought. Thirty years ago the lack of privacy was accepted with good grace, even though it bordered on a scandal, and is still spoken of with embarrassment.

THE INTIMACY of the Barn stage provided for a close, largely permanent company, which included such familiar names as Emily and Lee Goddard, Jack and Muriel Clarke, George and Micky Renna, Burt Garnett, and the late Dorothy Raymer. Dorothy is remembered for her hearing aid, which she hid in her bosom. On one occasion another actress onstage with her had an attack of stage-fright and began to mouth her words inaudibly. Dorothy yanked out her hearing aid and turned it up!

THE BROWN BARN became the Red Barn. It continued the blend of Navy people, town people, and former professional performers, some of whom had seen their names in lights on Broadway, or had worked with movie stars of the time like Claude Rains, Bette Davis or the Marx Brothers. The programs or playbills became more professional, spelling out the high ideals of artistic expression or community service. They also carried familiar advertisers like Faustos. Program notes were by "Ophelia" and her pet scorpion "Calliope," who were rumored to reside in the attic of the Barn.

PHOTOGRAPHS SHOW THAT local artists achieved fascinating effects with paint to give an illusion of depth to the stage. The work of Burt Garnett and Suzi Depoo is especially remembered. The quality of the plays was less consistent, ranging from the dull to the wonderful, and standing ovations were easy to come by where the audience was so close they could read the thoughts of their friends onstage. And lest we feel too smug about our present lack of censorship, there is a photograph of dancers from this time in a Can-Can revue. Note the reclining nude on the set behind them. It suggests a very broadminded approach to theatre, even though bad language was still unacceptable.

THE SOCIAL SIDE of theatre was maintained by providing a last-night party in which some actors gave a gently mocking skit on the closing play. In an excess of enthusiasm, the beer and wine were replaced by whiskey and rum. The Woman's Club, which had no license for such things, reacted strongly. The Players came close to losing the theatre, and introduced new rules. It explains why the present backstage parties are always a matter of concern for the older board members.

THE PLAYS WERE reviewed for *The Key West Citizen* by Margaret Foresman, who seemed to have eyed each production with a powerful lens, and to have given merciless personal assessments of actors and plays. Looking back through old reviews she seemed to have been preoccupied with the details of performance, like the color of socks or the precision of an accent. Some of her more stinging comments are remembered a quarter of a century later, though if nothing else she shoved the Players to a greater awareness of standards of excellence.

THE WOMAN'S CLUB began charging a fee for the use of the Red Barn, and the Players themselves, always with an eye to the till, decided against renovating what was not their own. One of

their last Barn productions was the musical *Gigi*. It was performed in January 1961, and we are left with the question, "Could it have been as good as they say?" The critics and those who remember are unanimous. It was a smash hit. Mrs. Robert Nadeau, mother of four, played the 16-year-old *Gigi*. Directed by Dick Theall, it also featured Gertrude Splaine, Gladys Zimmerman, Bob Youmans, Marion Smith (Stevens), and Ann Carleton. It was the standard the Players took with them when they left the Barn. The next move by the Players could have killed them off. Instead, it threw them into a permanent place in Key West cultural life!

THE PRESENT WATERFRONT Playhouse was once a warehouse used to store ice in layers of sawdust, which was cut from New England ponds in winter and brought down as ship's ballast. It was, and still is, a massive stone structure, ugly and reassuring. It was at that time little else than four collapsing walls, a weak roof, a shaky second floor, and a loose rock and earth floor. Whoever suggested turning it into a theatre must have been mad! Many credit Dick Theall with the madness.

THE RENOVATION of the Waterfront was financed with small private dona-

tions, and with thousand dollar bonds paying six percent interest. The whole thing was done in very few months, leaning heavily on local builders and contractors. The floor was raised, the second story was torn out, a new roof was built, and temporary seating and a stage were installed scarcely in time for the first show. It was said that the lighting system by Bob Zimmerman was not ready until the second act of opening night! Curiously, the internal walls were never plastered. They remain to this day bubbling and crumbling like a sandstone cliff. For the Players they seem to represent the long years of improvised premises, and their unfinished quality offsets the opulence of the plum-red curtain, the painted sets and the plush new seats.

THE PLAYERS TOOK to the place with great confidence, and also with a good deal of generous modesty toward the town. They seemed eager to please. One senses that the Players at that time knew the importance of good public relations. They positively shoudered with hospitable good will and good intentions.

THE OPENING 1961-1962 season at the Waterfront under direction of the president of the season, Dick Theall, included Tennessee Williams' *Summer And*

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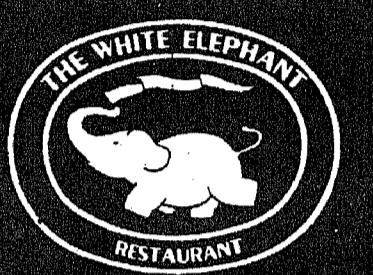
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smoke, Noel Coward's *Nude With A Violin*, and the opening show of the season, *Light Up The Sky*. Critic Margaret Foresman, who had declared previously that on occasion the Players' work had been so outstanding as to merit favorable comparison with professional troupes, gave several of the plays a cool reception. It would seem that the larger house demanded more experience and imagination from actors and directors. It is as true today as it was then, that what works at the Barn would not work in a larger house.

THE SIXTIES SAW many great shows and unbelievable sets. There was a move to huge casts, often approaching forty onstage! But plays stood or fell on who turned up for auditions. The 25th season in 1964-1965 ran into a wall of criticism. Half the plays were panned or damned with faint praise. One might guess that the Players hovered between their twenty-five years of amateur experience and ambitions to stray into the realm of professional theatre. It was, and remains, a painful lesson. Good intentions do not necessarily make a good show. Facing a shortage of com-



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Left to right: Fred Taylor, Micky Renna (president for the year) and Jack Clarke (five times president) on the old Red Barn set of "The Country Girl" by Clifford Odets. It was directed by Ernest Pollard, Jr., March 1954.

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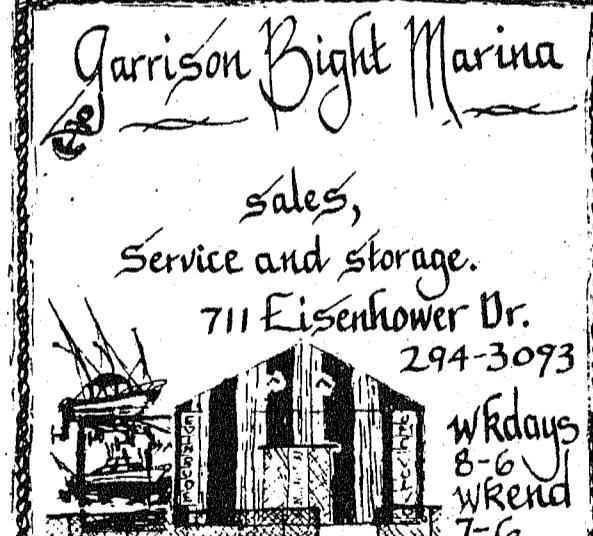
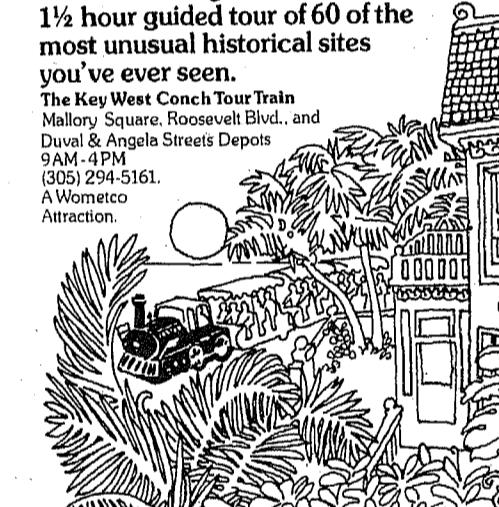
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petent directors, the governing board would claim that the theatre was a training ground, and allow anybody to direct. A lucky success with one play would permit an inexperienced director to produce several flops in a row. This began the Players' reputation for uneven quality over a season.

GENERALLY THE MUSICAL bailed out the season and kept the audience loyal. The following season, *My Fair Lady*, a resounding success, lifted confidence, though it is difficult to imagine the large cast trying to change in the narrow space backstage where the costumes are now stored. On the walls behind those stored costumes one can read frantic little messages left by nervous actors about to go on. Again a single curtain separated men and women. "If anyone had any modesty when they came, they certainly had none when they left," remembers Jack Clarke.

THE SEVENTIES SAW an older and wiser governing board, though they adhered to the same loose scheme of management of the charter members, where everyone on the board shared all the responsibilities. The first season of the decade was uniformly well received, and the board turned their thoughts to raising money for an extension to contain a workshop for sets, and adequate dressing rooms. The Players have always been very good at longterm financial planning, and this project was expensive. What's more, it was no easy job. The first foundations in 1974 disappeared into the swamp below! Jack Clarke and others scrounged cement; local contractors were strong-armed for fittings and fixtures, and the extension was completed, making the Waterfront the envy of statewide community theatre.

THE DECADE SAW a move to sophistication with Neil Simon and plays like *Becket* or *The Lion In Winter*. Out of a season of five plays, there seemed always to be two critical successes, two acceptable and one failure. This is a familiar cycle in community theatre. It is owed in great measure to the democratic nature of the governing board, and the two incompatible impulses of community theatre: the desire to have fun with your friends onstage, or a sense of responsibility to the audience. Only a strong reviewer could prevent self-indulgence onstage.

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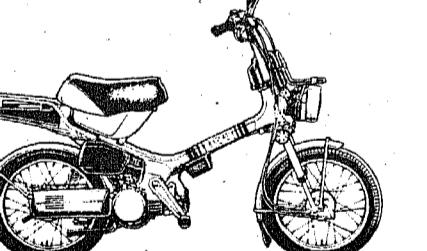
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THE REDOUTABLE MRS. Foreman was replaced by a local reviewer who could find something nice to say about anyone, if asked. Whereas the weak directors escaped censure, the better productions could no longer rely on genuine heartfelt praise for their work. Everything was praised equally, and community theatre was no longer considered in competition with professional theatre.

THE LATE SEVENTIES saw the theatre of uncensored realism. The vulgar language of some plays may have cost audiences, but now the Players were in competition with new companies forming at the Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center and at the Red Barn. In an unprecedented move, an experienced director and an old familiar actress with the Players, Ruth Newton, was elected onto the board and became president in

one shot. Evidently she sensed the plight of the Players, a determinedly amateur group inhabiting a beautiful theatre which demanded professional quality. She proposed giving paid acting classes, paying actors out of the box office receipts, and moving the waterfront toward a more professional status. The older members of the board resisted, and Ruth departed for the Players' old home, the Red Barn, to form an uneasy alliance with that director.

THE EIGHTIES ARE upon us, and several on the board have memories going back forty years or more. They are naturally very possessive of their achievements. They have a tendency to regard new ideas with distrust. Board meetings are sometimes marred with displays of bad temper, and young guest-directors are often treated with un-

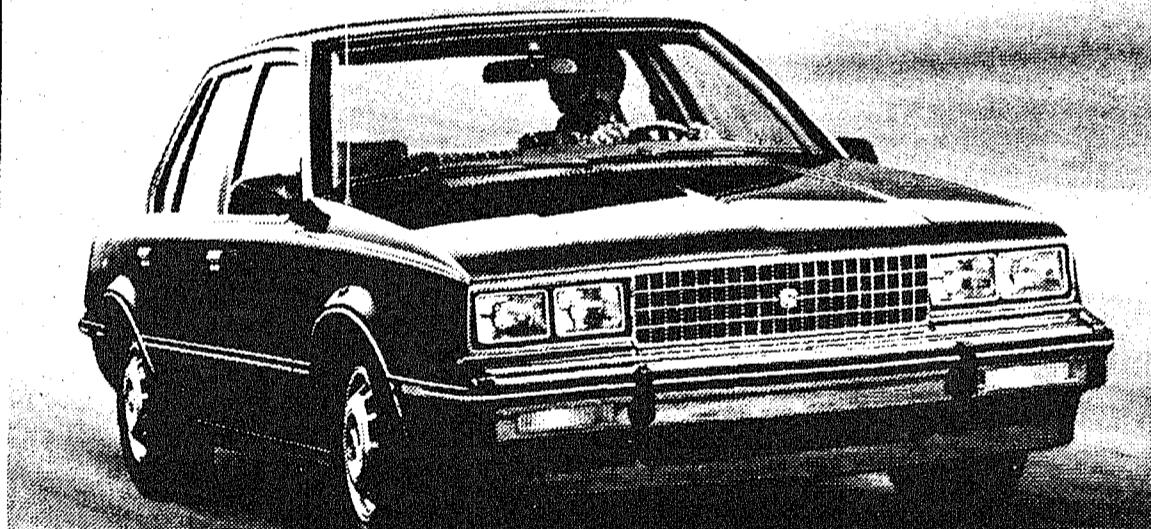
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knowing hostility. The next transition is a difficult one: the transference of power to the younger generation. The board has made several false starts in this direction by appointing local professional people with minimal experience of theatre. In this way they can hold onto the theatre a little longer.

LIKE THE ANCIENT idea of a fountain of water which keeps its shape yet is constantly replenished with fresh water, the Players seem to have been remarkably consistent over forty-three years and several thousand members. This consistency comforts the old and infuriates the young. But looking back over its colorful history, the Players has changed, and in an interesting way.

FOR THE FOUNDERS of the Key West Players, and for the oldest members now, theatre was most decidedly a piece of fun in the evening, and a time to socialize and relax after a day at a career occupation. Few plays were thought-provoking; nothing had a "message" hidden within it; everything was well-meaning and done with good taste. Some would like the Players to continue in this way, continuously reviving their favorites from the forties and fifties, and casting their acquaintances as actors. Some openly scoff at any attempt at Broadway Quality, or New York professionalism. But times have changed.

WE ARE NOW seeing young actors, directors and choreographers who regard community theatre as a stepping stone to a career in theatre. We are seeing young people onstage who claim that they are actors by profession, even at this community level, and who take temporary jobs to support this habit. We are seeing singers, dancers and actors whose ambitions burn within them.



The great Janice White, much loved actress with The Players, on the set of "Butterflies Are Free," directed by Jack Clarke, Waterfront Playhouse, January, 1974.

THE COMPETING Factions of community theatre live uneasily with one another. For the governing board of the Players, the friendships, history and traditions are everything. The fact remains that because of their outside professional and business interests, the older generation of the Players have been able to build up the enduring theatre company and house themselves in one of the neatest little custom-designed theatres in Florida. The younger generation of dedicated performers could never hope to achieve so much. For the young, those ninety minutes in front of the hot lights are the exquisite realization of personal ambitions. Most are unaware of the forty-three years of tradition on which they stand.

IT IS CERTAIN that the Players at the Waterfront have a long future ahead of them. The foundations of the group are built forever. The move toward a more professional status is inevitable. It will come in a few more years, and it will come with as much agony and uncertainty as each of the previous transitional moves of the Players.

THE KEY WEST Players are still the most receptive to newcomers in town. They are still a crackerjack of surprises, pulling off shows which other theatres dare not attempt. As I write this, a capacity crowd is giving a standing ovation to a musical which has been held over for a week. As we salute the founding members of the Players, we should remind them that they should have every confidence in the future. No one can step into the Waterfront Playhouse without being made conscious of their efforts. The ghosts hide behind the costume rack waiting to remind us, lest we forget!

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BY COLLEEN MC GEE

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IF YOU DON'T recognize South Beach from this description, don't feel uninformed. Very few people would. Yet this is a condensed version of the lease that Island Renovations holds on the city's beach property at the end of Duval Street. In 1979 Erwin Mayer bought all the stock in Island Renovations and in 1980, renewed the 1975 lease that they held for another five years.

ERWIN MAYER HAS a good reason to see to it that the beach is kept clean and that the area is well maintained. He owns two guest houses and a motel that border the city property and Southermost Motel just across South Street. For Vicki Weeks, who runs The Watersport People, a shop in the South Beach Motel, and the beach concessions, the change is terrific. "I feel safe on the beach in the evenings now," she says. Prior to Mayer's activities there was very little effort made to keep the beach at even a minimal level of usability. "Dogs were running everywhere and you'd find feces, carcasses of animals, old boats, anything. It was a real dirtbag handout."

MAYER HAS EVEN added a berm around the edge of the property with plantings

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A leisurely tour of the home and gardens of the late Nobel Prize Winner, Ernest Hemingway. The home was built in Spanish Colonial Style of native rock hewn from the ground with stone walls, rough tile, and fixtures brought by Mr. Hemingway from San Antonio, Cuba. The artifacts, pictures and trees are from all over the world. It is here that Mr. Hemingway wrote *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, *Green Hills of Africa*, *A Farewell to Arms*, *The Fifth Column*, *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* and *To Have and Have Not*. Mr. Hemingway was the first important writer to discover and make Key West his home. He owned the home from 1931 to 1961.

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The new planting at South Beach

too is a violation of the lease provisions, which require the restaurant and the bathhouse to be open at least eight hours a day, six days a week.

THE MAIN PROBLEM seems to be a feeling that Erwin Mayer views the beach as just an adjunct to his motels and would prefer that others not be using it. For instance, the plantings along the property lines were all done by taking a ten-foot-wide strip on the city side and planting sufficient cactus and other prickly plants that one cannot reach the property line except through paths and gates to each motel. Kathy Wolf, the landscape co-ordinator with the City of Key West, feels that the plants chosen are inappropriate for a public recreation area.

THE FINAL PROBLEM focuses on the daily seaweed removal. The lease clearly states that Island Renovations must "properly keep clean the entire beach premises and remove seaweed and debris from said beach premises without cost to the Lessor (City of Key West) on a daily basis." For a while the City was hauling away the debris after it had been raked and occasionally city crews would clean the beach, but that is not happening now. Weeks has taken over responsibility for keeping the beach clean. She has been attempting to find people she can pay to do this and must now call in a bulldozer once or twice a month to shovel aside all the piled-up seaweed.

OTHER COMPLAINTS ARE more trivial and in many instances Mayer has responded to them. The coconut palms that were in the area where the berm was built had had their trunks covered several feet above the roots, which threatened to smother them. When informed of this, he had spaces cleared around all the trees. Garbage cans marked "Southermost Motel" are stored on the beach property but it isn't clear that they are being used for anything but restaurant and beach garbage.

THE REAL DEBATE centers on the question "just who is benefitting from the way South Beach is run?" Is it the taxpayers, who have a pleasant, relatively clean and quiet beach to use, albeit without the amenities that the lease requires? Is it the city, which gets maintenance and concessions on its beach but not at the level which they negotiated for? Or is it Mr. Mayer, who, for two hundred dollars a month (a bargain even in 1975) gets a restaurant and a white sand beach for his motels and guest houses, at the cost of having the general public use it too?

TOILET FACILITIES ARE available inside the restaurant but it is only open from 8 a.m. until 12 noon. During the season (January through April) it is open until 1 or 2 p.m. with carryout sandwiches and drinks available until 5 p.m. This

McARTHUR Follow-Up

BY CHRISTOPHER LANE

ployee of Fast Buck Freddie's says it may be a while before he has the money to have his nose repaired properly.

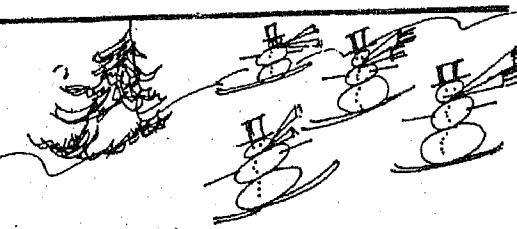
"I'M SURPRISED ANYTHING" came of it, knowing the history of Key West justice," said McArthur, now a student at the Fort Lauderdale Art Institute where he is studying ad design. "Even though I did get a little out of it, it was only half of what I needed medically."

ANOTHER MAN, A visitor from New York state, also successfully collected damages as a result of head injuries suffered in the senseless, unprovoked attacks. In addition to being ordered to make restitution, the four Key West High School students and one dropout were placed on probation for a year and had their driving privileges suspended. McArthur is being urged by friends to

press a lawsuit to seek full damages for his personal injuries.

"BUT I DON'T know if I really want to go through all that," McArthur said during a return visit to Key West late last month. "I'll tell you one thing, though. The incident has definitely tempered the way I walk around on the street anywhere."

For McArthur, Key West will never be the same.



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BY EMMA CATES

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FANTASY FEST

BY CHRISTOPHER LANE

FOR MANY KEY Westers, the party's over. The music soured long before the last plastic cup fell with a hollow clink on debris-littered Duval Street -- long before the last Fantasy Fest reveler staggered home to nurse the memories of merrymaking. Now, a

parade of ill feelings follows that mad march up main street. Torn by divisiveness; marked by name calling, pettiness, broken promises, the selling of sunset and surrounded in suspicion, Fantasy Fest Carnival '82 just wasn't what it used to be, many islanders contend. And that's sad.

"FANTASY FEST BEGAN with a real

rock-em, sock-em Halloween Party," explains Will Soto, Key West's juggler extraordinaire. "But someone looked at our party and said, 'Wow! I can make money off that.' They were trying to capitalize on something we offer for free," Soto says of the street entertainers' Mallory Dock stage. "They tried to make money off the spirit of Fantasy Fest. It's sacrilegious!"

THE CONSENSUS AMONG those closest to the fourth annual festival is that the celebration was overcommercialized, too long, too honky tonk and mismanaged. On top of all this bitterness, the Monroe County Tourist Development Council has called for a thorough audit of \$96,000 in promotional funds allocated by that group to Fantasy Fest organizers.

SAID COUNTY COMMISSIONER Richard Heyman, a TDC member: "An audit definitely is necessary. We're talking about quite a bit of money and the community has a right to know where it went."

TOWNSEND KIEFFER, THIS year's Fantasy Fest coordinator, must be cited for his Herculean effort of organizing a festival on such a grand scale. Though no diplomat, Kieffer did lure a record number of money-toting tourists to town. And much of the criticism leveled at his performance is unjustified, he says.

SAID KIEFFER: "PEOPLE who criticize and backstab are those who feel slightly envious that they didn't and couldn't do it. You don't build yourself up by tearing other people down. We simply created a mechanism that made money for the island's businesses during the worst time of the year. It was the biggest and the best. People came down here to party. And they did."

BESIDES, KIEFFER SAYS, when all the final figures are in, sometime in February or March, it will show Fantasy Fest '82 breaking even -- or better. "But if the festival takes a bath, the trade-off is (that) the area reaps a large financial reward. This is money that's going to come back as a consequence of what was done this year. We did succeed in pulling the rabbit out of the hat during the worst month Key West has. The people we brought to town helped to meet the payrolls, paid the rents and bought the television sets and radios from Seastown. It enabled some businesses to survive until the season that otherwise wouldn't have. That's what it was supposed to do. To help people get through the hard times."

WHILE MANY CONTEND Fantasy Fest only created hard feelings, there were several bright spots, including the Children's Fantasy Fest Day and the Rambunkhus Raftin' Regatta, which it should be pointed out were not a part of the official activities. "Parts of it were very successful," Heyman explains. "Like the classical concert, the Pretenders in Paradise Costume Contest and the Bahama Village Street Carnival. But the festival itself was much too long. It should be a four-day event at the most, incorporating all of the successful activities."

"THE LIGHTED BOAT parade was the silliest part," says J. T. Thompson, a Key West design artist. "It was held a half hour before sunset. And all the nine prizes went to the only two boats that entered: The Western Union and the High Tide. But then Townsend eliminated the prizes and awarded tee-shirts to each of the two boats. I think the whole thing was a farce. It was circus tents, elephants, Festbands and expensive, private events and nobody asked for any of that. It was just a high-powered promoter trying to make money. It had nothing to do with Key West -- and it flopped."

JOEL KOEFD, KEY West's new city manager, who witnessed his first Fantasy Fest this year, agrees that a four-day festival would be ideal. "Not only was it too long, but everyone I've talked to was turned off by the carnival atmosphere at Mallory Square. But the raft race was fantastic, and the parade was one of the finest I've ever seen. The crowd -- and there must have been 30,000 people on Duval Street that night -- was very well-behaved. There were no major incidents."

KOEFD SAID IT was necessary to delay the parade while he attempted to convince parade planners of the dangers of letting three elephants stroll up narrow Duval Street. "There was no request for animals to begin with," Koeffd explains. "And with that many people on the street and with some of them shooting off blanks, the elephants could have stampeded to create an incident of the first order. And besides, there were no arrangements to clean up the route behind the elephants."

KOEFD THINKS AN audit of Fantasy Fest expenses definitely is in order. "I think it behooves Fantasy Fest as a good business practice to let the people know where the money went. I don't see any reason why anything should be hidden."

JEAN THEISEN, KIEFFER'S able assistant, welcomes an audit "as a matter of course. It's nothing unusual," she said. "But the only thing they're going to find from the audit will be how much money we lost. It's unusual for a festival of this sort to make money, but in terms of bringing people to town it was very successful. That's one thing Townsend has to be given credit for -- reaching farther and getting information beyond the South Florida area. There may be a lot of bitterness over this year's fest, but because of the promotion that has been done, it will have a snowball effect on the island's tourism."

THEISEN SAYS MUCH of the suspicion surrounding the festival's finances could have been avoided with the addition of a bookkeeper on the planning staff. "What they need is a clearer system in the future in terms of public accountability," she offered. "Perhaps a certified public accountant should be hired on an annual basis to do an audit. The fact is we were understaffed the whole way through. Ideally, there should be a dedicated board of directors comprised of people committed to the festival. And there should be some early fundraising to give the festival an operational budget."

AFTER THE CITY ruled out alcoholic beverage sales at Mallory Dock, scuttling a prime source of anticipated fundraising, Theisen said she and Kieffer started scrambling to get other businesses to contribute to the festival's planning and promotion. The response, she says, was poor at best. But Theisen praised the Pier House and its owner Peter Henry for providing front money, which paid her and Kieffer's salaries.

"THEY WERE HOPING to later be reimbursed," says Theisen, "but now there's no hope of them recouping that loss. The amount represents a huge contribution by the Pier House. They're picking up the losses for the gate receipts that just weren't there, like at the [poorly attended] jazz festival."

KIEFFER SAYS HE had no choice but to charge a dollar to enter Mallory Square. He says he had to try to recoup some of the unexpected loss he says festival coordinators suffered as a result of the booze ban at Mallory Dock. When the town howled about losing the privilege of enjoying sunset and the accompanying entertainment by Key West's Street Theater -- on their own city's pier, no less -- Kieffer very undiplomatically branded the protesters "baby weasels." But petitions were circulating days before Kieffer's offhand comment. Almost 200 names of Key West residents and visitors, including a suspect "Opie Taylor" of Andy Griffith Show fame, Taylor,

were collected during the first couple of days of the celebration.

KIEFFER LAY THE blame squarely at the door of the city commission, saying it reneged on a promise to allow the festival to profit by selling beer and wine on the historic chunk of city property under the bigtop. "We had no intention of charging an admission, but we had to after the beer and wine shortfall. Without it, we just couldn't draw the crowds down. But a lot of bars in town ran out of well drinks."

ANOTHER CRY WENT up when festival planners failed to assist leaders of the Bahama Village project in paying lodging and travel expenses for the 57-member Royal Bahamas Police Band, always a crowd-pleaser and a sure drawing card for that rapidly-redeveloping neighborhood. Bahama

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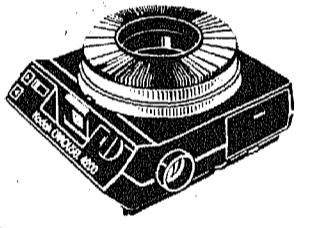
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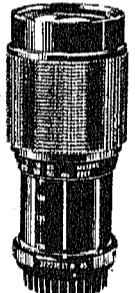
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Village organizers were led to believe that 10 per cent of the TDC's \$97,000 allocation would go toward band expenses. Instead, they were given only \$200 to help pay for the band's \$6,200 motel bill, \$5,000 food tab and \$3,400 in airline fares. That small grant wouldn't have been enough to put the band in tents at Boyd's Campground on Stock Island. In protest, our island's black community threatened to boycott the festival, which was promoted as having "something for everyone."

SURELY, THE CITY'S image didn't benefit from the publicity derived from the dispute. But TDC members did come through with more funds -- though still not enough, Bahama Village leaders contend -- to help rectify the situation. The show went on. But the ill feelings linger.

SOME OF THE PUBLICITY generated out-of-county by the festival also was unfavorable. In the Fort Myers (Fla.) News-Press, reporter David Futch quotes Kieffer as blaming Key West's "insular and conservative attitude" should Fantasy Fest fail. Said Kieffer to Futch: "If the town's smart, it [the festival] will be a lasting tradition. But I don't think this is a very smart town."

TICKET CHARGES FOR several of the events were considered exorbitant even by many educated locals, who stayed away from many of the events in droves because they felt their festival was being sold out from under them. Theisen admits the ticket prices were "inflated." Said she: "It was simply the only way to cover the costs." Kieffer says whoever didn't attend the jazz festival missed quite a show, which cost \$5 with the not-so-popular Festband. "I don't know what it would cost to see entertainment like that in Miami,

but it's more than \$5."

KIEFFER, 43, DOESN'T consider it likely that he'll be asked to do it again. "And personally I suffered a lot doing this. I suffered physically. I suffered emotionally. I think I probably knew that it would be like this when I said I would do it."

SOME KEY WESTERS are so turned off by the fourth annual Halloween celebration that, as far as they're concerned, it was the last Fantasy Fest. Its spirit, they said, was squeezed out of existence by pure and simple commercialism. "I'm thoroughly disenchanted with the whole idea," says designer Thompson. "I'm not even interested in seeing it happen again. It was nothing more than a cheap carnival."

THE SAME KIND of cheap carnival is free anywhere else in the country, adds juggler Soto. "This was supposed to be Key West's party. I wish there was some way I could apologize to all the people who did come down to enjoy our island. I'd like to say, 'Hey, this isn't Key West. Come back when it isn't Fantasy Fest. And let us have our Halloween back.'

THE BOTTOM LINE is that the festival was basically a commercial success, and with the lessons learned from this year's edition, Fantasy Fest '83 could easily recapture that original spirit which was unfortunately lost this year.

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23	22	21	20	19	18	17
31	29	28	27	26	25	24
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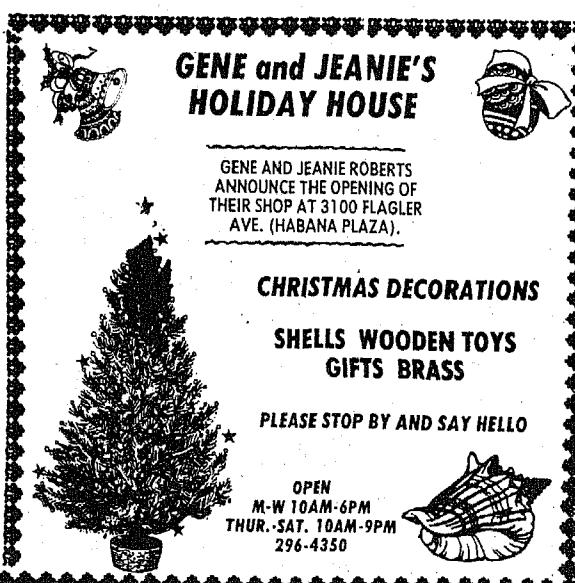
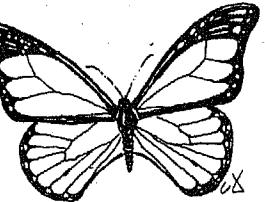
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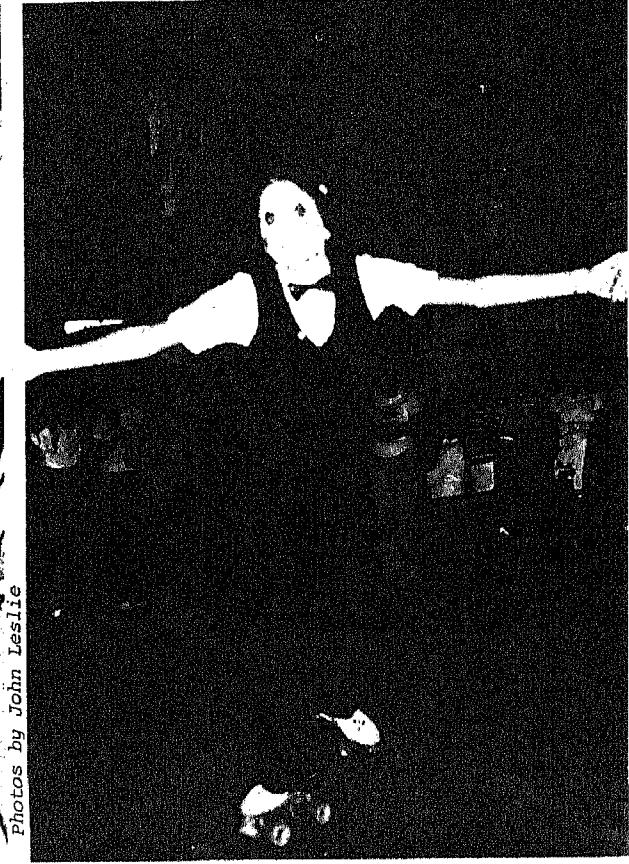
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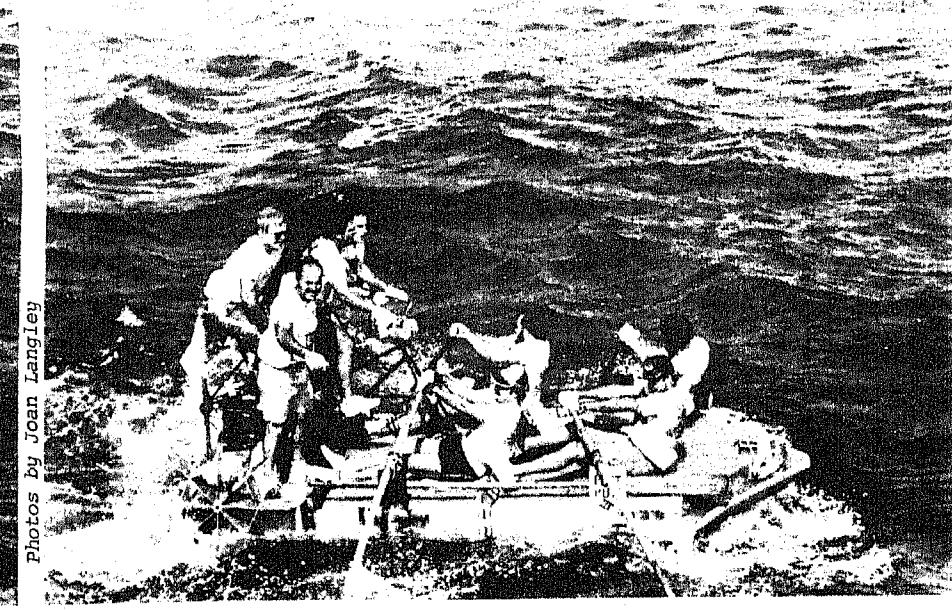
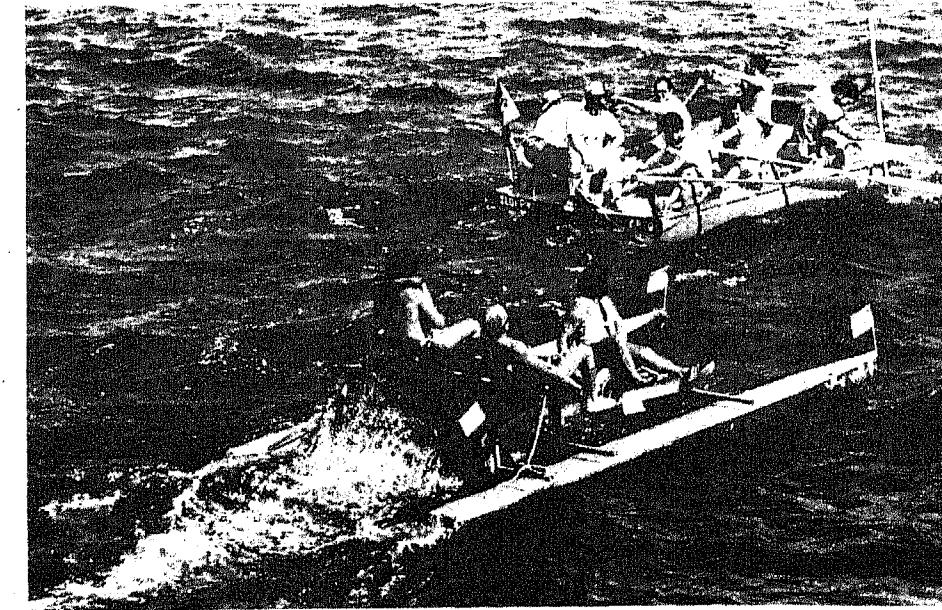
FANTASY FEST '82

THE PARADE



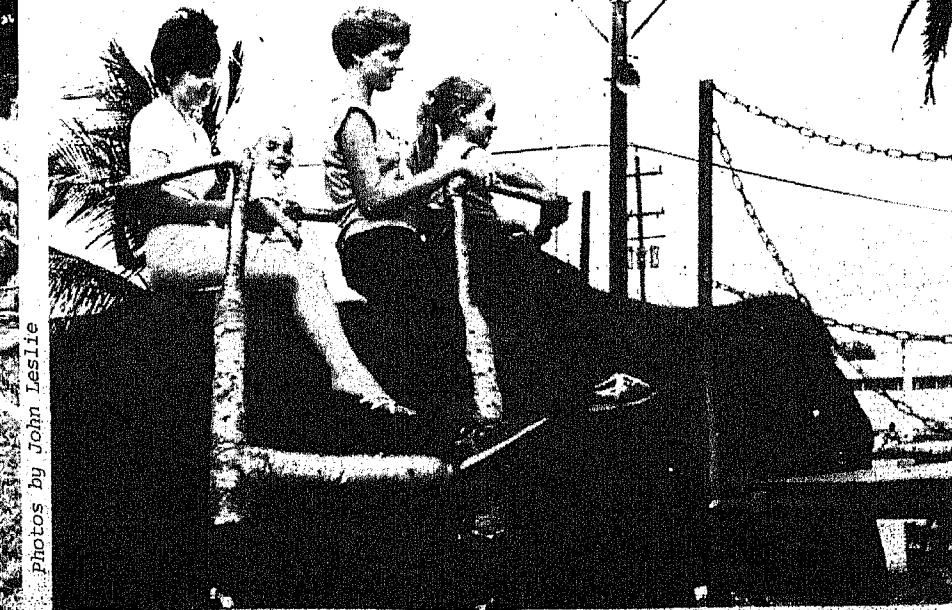
Photos by John Leslie

THE RAMBUNKSHUS RAFTIN' REGATTA



Photos by Tom Langford

Children's Day



Photos by John Leslie

AMUSEMENTS by TOM SCHMITT and
GEORGE GUGLEOTTI

NOVEMBER WAS a good month. Thanksgiving, incredibly good weather, the success of "Godspell" at the Waterfront Playhouse, the opening of The Copa Bar and Disco, the Red Barn's "Killing of Sister George" all augur well for the rest of the Season. But now, we are concerned with December and a busy month it is.

THE FLORIDA KEYS Community College Chorus, under the direction of Joe Wilt, will present the Christmas portion of Handel's "The Messiah." There will be two performances, Dec. 5, at the Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center and Dec. 12, at the Old Stone Church. Both performances are at 3:00 p.m.

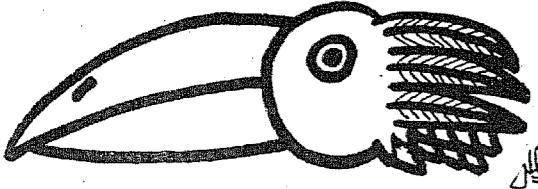
OUT AT THE Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center, rehearsals are underway for W. Shakespeare's "Hamlet." Directed by George Rumens, with Bill Prosser (the Artistic Director at TWFAC) playing Hamlet, this production is shaping up nicely for its January opening. The TWFAC will also feature "Emlyn Williams as Charles Dickens", a wonderful Christmas show for the entire family on Dec. 10 and 11. Mr. Williams has been doing this show for over 30 years and it has achieved worldwide critical acclaim. On Dec. 17, The Allard Quintet, the first in a Chamber Music Series, will be presented. For further information call TWFAC at 294-6363.

"THE OLDEST LIVING Graduate" by Preston Jones, directed by June Hunzinger, will open at the Waterfront Playhouse in Mallory Square on Monday, Dec. 13. "The Gin Game," with Rose Schoenfeld directing, is in rehearsal for its January opening, and the Waterfront's second musical of the season, "Show Boat," based on the novel by Edna Ferber, with book and music by Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein, to be directed by June Hunzinger, will hold auditions in late December. For information call the Waterfront box office at 294-5015.

VERY BUSY THIS month with acting classes, rehearsals, etc. is the Red Barn Theatre. "The Killing of Sister George" will be playing through Dec. 13. If you haven't seen it, you should. In rehearsal for its official Season Opening on Dec. 22, is "Broadway Fantasies." This musical revue was such a success when it was first done in October, that the Red Barn decided to bring it back in an expanded version. So if you missed it the first time around, you have a second chance. Auditions for the murder/mystery "The Runner Stumbles," to be directed by Richard Magesis, will be held some time in mid-December. For information concerning the Subscription Series (a bargain!), ticket prices and audition dates, call the Red Barn box office at 294-9911.

NOVEMBER WAS a good month, but it is past; and December, what with Santa and all he brings, should prove even better.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND Happy New Year to you all.



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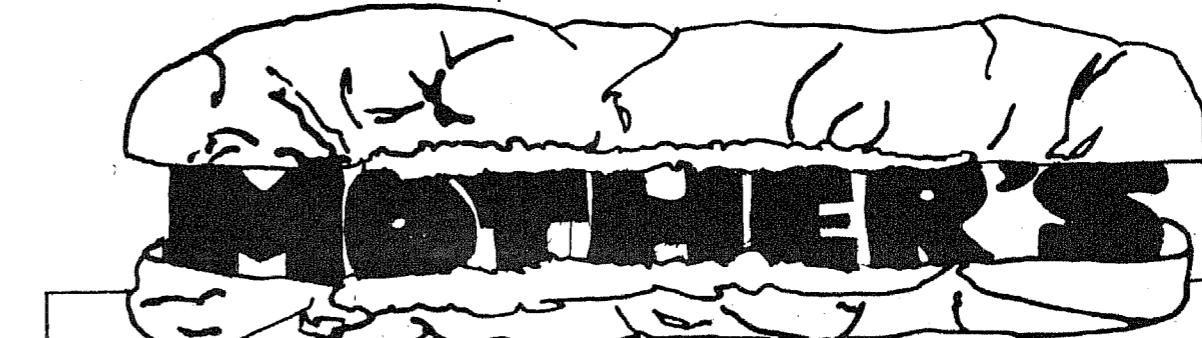
TO BE

I, a poet man,
delve Light,
And cadence my
distractive Sight.

Obedient, to
the Father of suns,

I verse to be
for He
And we,
ourselves One.

--Art Kara



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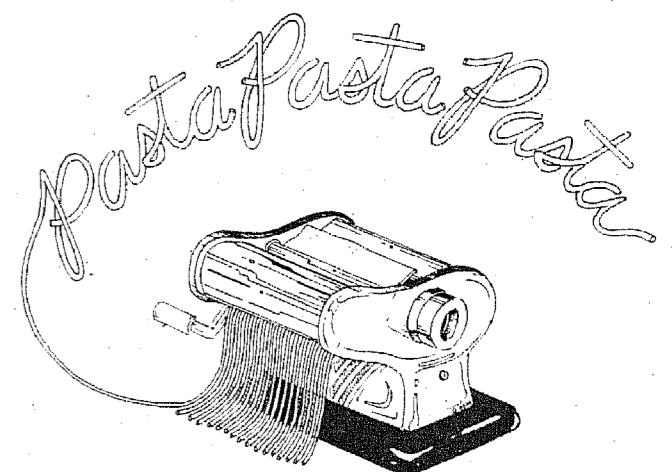
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violet blue peace

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GREEN PARROT COSTUME PARTY BY "AN OBSERVER"

WHEN WILL THEY ever quit? For the past five years on Halloween Jimbo, Bucu, Dashboard, Backdeck and Yeoman have dazzled the Green Parrot and the rest of Key West with their group costumes. They've walked away with prizes again and again.

Year after year they've awed us with such costumes as "The Lobster Trap," "Used Car Lot," "A Barrel Of Monkeys." On Halloween '81 they were spectacular dancing in the streets as "Sherwood Forest."

EACH YEAR WE wonder if this fabulous five will be back to entertain us. John, the manager, cringes when they descend on the bar with their tape measures. Can they possibly rise above their previous performances? As it turns out their imagination, creativity and originality is unceasing and unrelenting.

WITH THE GREEN Parrot costume contest only a few, short hours away, the masterminds set to work on what was to be the zenith of their art. When asked why they always wait until the last minute Bucu says, "We share the uncanny ability to pump up under pressure." Jimbo, "Tradition!" Dashboard, "That's as soon as we can get it together."

THIS YEAR THEY made their incredible entrance from a chauffeur-driven automobile. Emerging through the smoke of the fireworks display, Von Goon, the master of ceremonies, announced the "Flying Walendas." Resplendent in their jet-black tights and dago-T's with the infamous flying W emblazoned on their chests, the Walendas leaped to the trapeze in unison.

THERE WAS ADEQUATE juggling, and novel and never-to-be-repeated feats performed on the high wire. One of their outstanding stunts was Bucu drinking a beer while hanging by his feet from a twelve-foot-high trapeze, no hands.

AS THE BEER flowed the evening got foggiest and foggiest, and the stunts more daring. It was obvious that they were indeed unsurpassed by any competition. This outrageous event took place the evening after the parade and it was unfortunate that many could-be spectators missed this magnitudinous manfestation.

THOSE OF US who were lucky enough to be present were fascinated by the

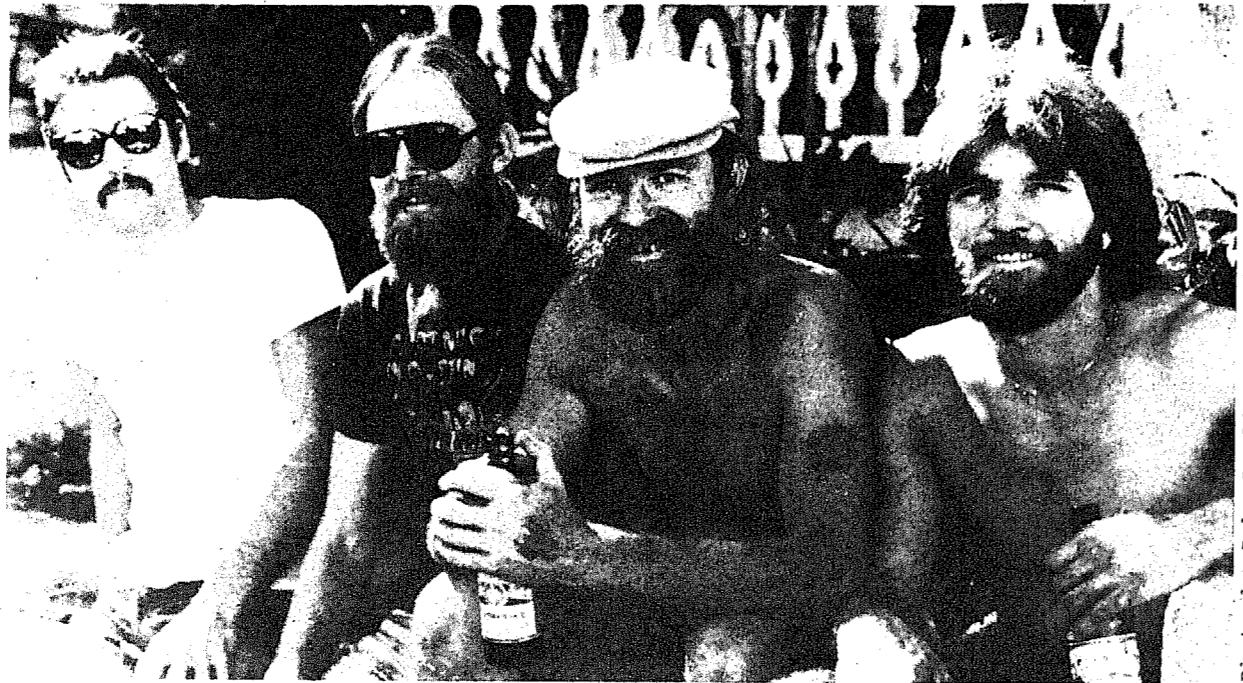


Photo by John Leslie

Dashboard, Yeoman, Jimbo, and Bucu

courageous derring-do of the men on the flying trapeze, and the high wire act. All done with no net. The herculean Walendas were fearless in their death-defying feats and pretty funny too. They were light-footed and nimble-witted which made it a thrill for all. It was of course 1st prize again.

WHEN ASKED TO speculate on whether they would be willing to undertake the task of going beyond the "Flying Walendas," Bucu replies with gusto, "We

must!" Jimbo, "No bout a doubt it," Dashboard, "Whatever it takes," Yeoman, "Ye-ooo!"

WE CAN BE sure they won't think about it now as spontaneity seems to be their secret. So next year on Fantasy Fest at the Green Parrot costume party we will all wait with bated breath to see what they will think of next.



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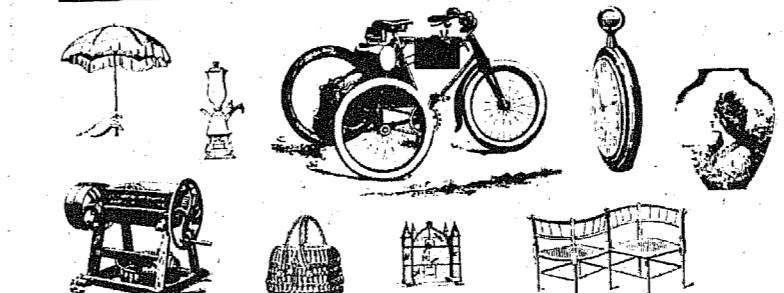
Enclosed is \$2.50, includes postage and handling for each letter.
If you'd like Santa to write to more than 1 child, please enclose list.



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walking down Duval Street,
arm in arm,
dressed in white,
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whispering.

Baxter

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I want to marry her
and live on a farm
with horses
and raise some kids
and chickens and tomatoes and corn
and go to the fair
and all those good things.
There's just one problem.
I can't remember her name.

Baxter

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Artists Unlimited, 221 Duval St., 296-5625. Hours 12 to 5 p.m. or by appointment. A delightful gallery in a Conch-style setting with an international reputation.

Artist Warehouse, 8 Charles St. (in Old Sponge House off Duval St.) Mon. thru Sat., 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and by appointment. A unique "work" gallery representing works by Karen Clemens and Bob Birbeck along with other local artists. 294-7141.

East Martello Gallery & Museum, 3500 S. Roosevelt Blvd., 296-3913. A "fort-museum" with some of the most interesting facts of Key West history and lore. Dec. 8-26, The American Water Color Society Traveling Show. Jan. 28-29, All Members Juried Show. All media.

Farrington Galleries, 711 Duval St., 294-6911. An artist-supply gallery featuring new work by Mario Sanchez, including his woodcarving "Bucket of Fish" and the new biography on him by Kathryn Proby.

Gingerbread Square Gallery, 901 Duval St., Information 296-8900; appointments 294-2165. Dec. 13-26, Water Colors by Fred Hunt. Dec. 27 - Jan. 9, Photography by Jeff Cardenas.

Guild Hall, 614 Duval St., 296-9359. Open 9:30 to 5:30 daily. Exhibiting an outstanding array of original art by Key West professionals Walter Ashe, Barbara Bauer, Sharon Cobb, John Cryer, Joan Howe, Ann Irvine, Fran Kehschild, Maxine McMullen, Irma Quigley, Norma Renner, Bee Sackett, and Carolyn Seiler. Featuring oils, acrylics, watercolors, drawings, prints, porcelain, weaving, basketry and other media.

Haitian Art Co., 600 Frances St., 296-8932. This gallery is like a trip to Haiti itself, replete with paintings and metal sculpture. Owner Ruth Kravitz encourages all interested to stop by and see her selection of a "little bit of Haiti."

Key West Art Center, 301 Front St., 294-1241. Open 10 - 5 daily; Sundays 11 - 4. Dec. 4-5, Mini Sidewalk Show in back of Fisherman's Cafe. One-man shows start Jan. 2. Jan. 2-Feb. Judy Chesher. Jan 8-22, Charles Gruppe.

Lighthouse and Military Museum, 938 Whitehead, 294-0012. The highest view of Key West can be had here, along with a survey of aircraft and wartime memorabilia.

Moira, the art gallery in Key Lime Sq., 294-1254. Oil portraits by Bob Birbeck. 11:00 to 5:00 Monday through Saturday; Noon to 4:00 Sunday; or by appointment, 296-9560.

Perkins Chandlery, 218 Whitehead St., 294-7635. Showing the following artists: Rollin Barker, A.S.M.A.; Commander J. A. Cryer.

EVENTS

Philip Burton Lecture: Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m., St. Paul's Episcopal Church. "Early Days of St. Paul's Church" Open to all.

Oldest House Museum, 322 Duval St., 294-9502. Antique lovers will enjoy this excursion into the furniture, housewares and decorations of Old Island interiors "way back when." Be sure to visit the kitchen out back.

FILMS

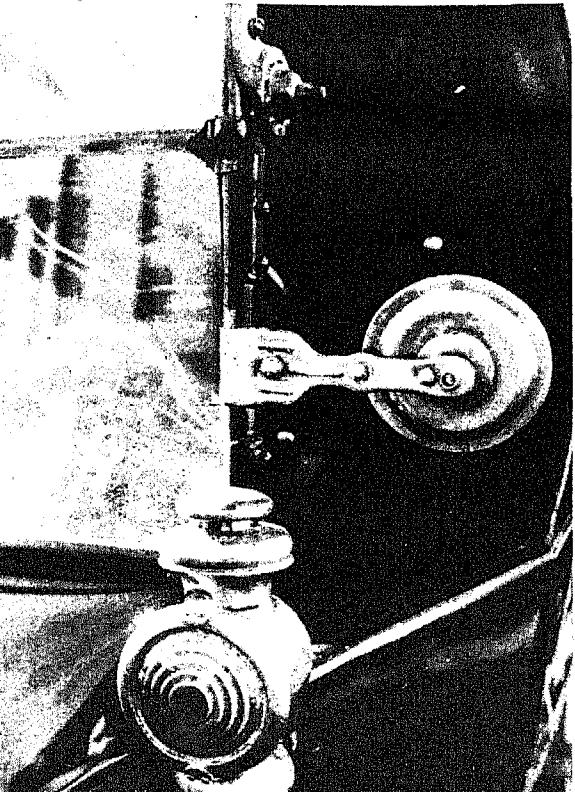
Key West Picture Show, Duval St. Shows "The Key West Picture Show" Thurs.-Sun. at 2, 3 and 4 p.m.

Monroe County Public Library, Fleming St., 294-8488. The library will be closing at 5:00 p.m. December 20 to January 30. Closed Dec. 24, 25, 31 and Jan. 1.

Adult movies: Dec. 8, "Twinkle, Twinkle Variations," "Conquest of Light," Dec. 15, "Norman Rockwell's World," Dec. 22, 3 p.m. "The Nutcracker," Dec. 29, 3 p.m. "Dunesbury Special - It Could Be Done."

Children's Movies: Dec. 4, "Lascadio the Lion" and "Pluto's X-Mas Tree." Dec. 11 "X-Mas Time, A Happy Time," "Ira Sleeps Over," "Gifts of the North Wind." Dec. 18, "The Magician," "Farround the Little Clown," "The Giving Tree" by Shel Silverstein.

Activities for preschoolers are scheduled for 9:30 to 10:30 Thursday mornings.

REGULAR
EVENTS

City Electric Utility Board, meetings 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 5 p.m., Board Room, 930 Caroline.

Flea Market, Saturday mornings, American Legion Home, Stock Island.

Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority: No regular meeting scheduled.

VFW AUXILIARY #6021, 2nd & 4th Sundays, Post Hall, 803 Emma St., 8:00 p.m.

Friends Worship Group (Quakers), inquiries, Sheridan Crumlish, 294-1523.

Key West City Commission, meetings 1st and 3rd Mondays at 8 p.m., City Hall, corner Simonton and Angela streets.

Key West Poetry Guild, meetings 1st Sundays at 121 Duval, Mostly Magnificent, 8:00 p.m.

Cosmic Lightbearers, Minister: Jeanette Bottoms. Sun. worship - W. Martello, outside - at 2 p.m. - bring mat.

Key West Woman's Club, regular meeting 1st Tuesday of each month, 2:30 p.m., 319 Duval St.

Marathon Lions Club, dinner meetings 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, Indies Resort, Duck Key, 7:30 p.m.

Marathon Shrine Club, luncheons every Friday, at high noon. All Shriners welcome.

Monroe County Commission: Dec. 14, Plantation Key Government Ctr. Dec. 28, Marathon Sub-Courthouse 10:00 a.m., both.

National Association for Retired Federal Employees: meetings last Sunday of the month at the Senior Citizens Plaza, 1400 Kennedy Drive, 3:45 p.m.

United Humanitarians, low-cost spay program now in effect; please call 296-5106 for information.

Wesley House Board of Directors, meetings second Tuesday of the month, 5 p.m., 1100 Varela St., 296-5231.

SELF
HELP

Alcoholics Anonymous, #4 Peary Court (clubroom), 294-9062. Meets nightly at 8:30; Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 12 noon; 10:30 a.m. on Sunday; 7 and 11 p.m. Friday.

Emotional Health Anonymous, meets Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., at First Congregational Church, 527 William St.

Overeaters Anonymous, meets Mondays at 7:30 p.m. at the Fleming Street Methodist Church, 729 Fleming St.

Volunteer Domestic Abuse Shelter, 294-5586.

Conscious Pregnancy Classes, 296-6259.

Hypoglycemia Association of America meets Monday, Dec. 13, 7:00 p.m., Monroe County Library and Monday, Dec. 27. Time and place to be announced.

Mail-a-Book Program, costs you only 29 cents, for mailing. Library, 294-8488.

Workshops in Life Painting and Drawing. For information and times and locations, call Malcolm Ross at 294-8301.

Zonta Help Line: 296-HELP. Call any time when you need help or referral service. (296-4357.)

The Key West Swim Club, at the high school pool: under 18 yrs. Mon. through Fri. at 4:30 p.m., Sat. 9:00 a.m. Adults: Tues. & Thurs. at 6:30 p.m., Sat. 10:30 a.m.

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