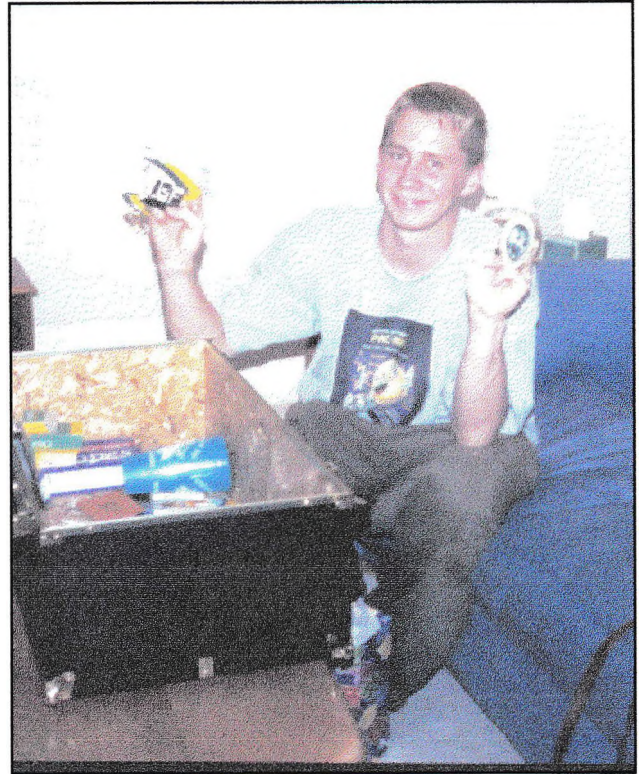


SFPA'S SOUTHERNMOST MAGAZINE



NO. 117

JUNE-JULY 1998



THE PHOTOS on the cover and this page no doubt show that one of the big happenings around here in June was Scott's graduation.

Scott Brown graduated from Manatee High School on June 6, 1998. On July 8, he turned 18. On August 21, he goes to college.

Whew!

A lot of emotion in just a few months. My oldest son graduates and earns a scholarship (tuition and books) to the University of South Florida in Tampa. Ahem, MY alma mater.

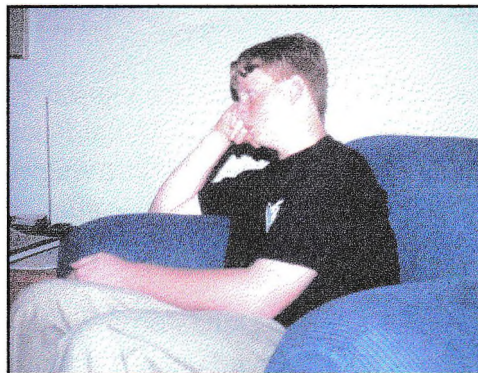
He's a good, hard working kid. He has been working at Winn Dixie for the last year, putting in more than 30 hours a week to put some spending cash in his pocket and stock up for college.

On Friday, June 5, my mom and dad and I took out Scott and Ryan for dinner at Outback, then went over to Shelly's house for a party. In addition to money, I gave him a trunk to take to college. I also filled up the trunk with all kinds of college supplies — paper, paperclips, pens, pencils, stapler, etc.

Scott seemed in seventh heaven — not only was he getting out of high school, but he had all these gifts and money thrown at him. Well, I mean, who wouldn't feel great about it. He did tell me though that he felt sad that he would miss so many of his friends from school.

Graduation was at the Manatee Civic Center at 9 a.m. Saturday, June 6. With almost 500 graduates, it took about two hours. Scott said he was nervous that he'd trip on stage, but he did just fine. Later that day his mom had a party for him.

The next week, he went to a two-day orientation at USF. He saw his dorm, ate in the cafeteria (he said 10 times!!!) and got a tour of



Ryan Brown isn't bored at his brother's graduation party, just resting his head.

Oblio

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Cover

Photos from Scott Brown's graduation party on June 5, 1998. Top photo is of Scott showing some University of South Florida decals. Bottom photo is three generations of Browns: Gary (left), Frank (center) and Scott (sitting). Photos by Shelly Wadlow

Manatee Press no 583

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the campus. They also got to register for classes for the first semester. If I remember correctly, Scott has English, History, Math, Social Science and Golf. He has only one class on Fridays, so he's already learning the advantages of registering early.

He was very enthusiastic after coming back from the orientation. I thought maybe he'd brush it off as just something he had to do, but he talked on and on about what they saw and did. Made me wish I was going.

He'll live in Delta dorm, which was a girls' dorm when I went to school, but that didn't seem to bother him. He found out his roommate is some guy from Connecticut.

Interestingly enough, all the dorm rooms have phone jacks for phones and computers, as well as free Internet access for each student. They also have cable TV capabilities if they want. Of course, when I went to USF, electric typewriters were all the rage and TVs were forbidden in rooms (we had one anyhow).

Classes begin August 28 and they can begin moving in the dorms on August 21. Scott isn't sure when he wants to move in, but I offered my help in a cautious manner. I remember when I was first going to college, I just wanted my parents to drop me off and go, but they HAD to come up to the room and check things out. Two days later, I wished they were there.

I have mixed feelings about all this. I'm thrilled that Scott has made it through high school and into college. I know he'll grow and thrive there. On the other hand, it's tough to think that the little kid I played ball with, comforted when he cried, wrestled with and planned with is now in college.

Well, he better not be drinking beer and thinking about scoring with women on campus. I mean, just because I did it, doesn't mean he has to do the same. But he will. Probably even better.

COMPUTER TALK

You may have noticed the extra photos this issue. They come courtesy of my new Mustek 600 III EP Plus Scanner. I wanted to hold out to get a really top of the line scanner, but Sears had the Mustek for \$89, with a \$30 rebate. A \$59 scanner was hard to resist.

I haven't had it long, so I'm still experimenting with it. In fact, I see the cover had a few goofs that I need to figure out how to correct.

So far, it seems to work just fine. With relatively little input from me, the machine performed well.

I'll continue to experiment this issue and the next until I get a handle on things. What is amazing to me is that in just a few short years, scanners have not only become generally available to the public, but at continually declining prices. I suspect, however, that improvements will be made to the device over the next few years to make it more reliable and less cumbersome.

It's an amazing time we live in, isn't it?

Along the computer lines, I'm sitting here sans modem and Internet connection at the moment. About a week ago, I came home and turned on the computer only to discover that I could not connect to America OnLine. My modem didn't work.

I unplugged everything and plugged it back in. Still didn't work.

Disgustingly, I started looking for a new modem. I called my computer-smart sister and she said I should call the maker of the modem (U.S. Robotics). I did and they tested the modem over the phone. They said to pack it up and ship it back to them and they'd send me a new modem.

It'll take a week to 10 days, but it'll save me bucks. Meanwhile, I have felt a little out of touch by not having Internet connection. It's a little like not having a telephone or television.



Roy Rogers: 1911-1998

My heroes in my young life were varied. Baseball players — especially the Cleveland Indians — were seasonal. Superman, who was on TV and in comic books, nevertheless was fictional.

And then there were the cowboys. Hopalong Cassidy, Gene Autrey and Roy Rogers. Loved all of them. But there was always something different about Roy and his cast of characters. Dale Evans was always present and while she was not his equal in dealing with the manly rigors of the West, she held her own and clearly an influence for the on-screen cowboy.

Of course, Trigger and Bullet were there to support him.

My younger years, as I suspect those of many still in *SFPA*, were spent watching and idolizing cowboy stars in the movies and on TV. I carried it over to my wardrobe and bedroom decor, also. As a 5 year old, I had a Hopalong Cassidy lamp and costume, a Roy Rogers bedspread and some generic cowboy pajamas.

When we played outside, it mostly was some sort of cowboy chase and fake fights. No one got hurt (except a girl named Amy, who got hit by a rock I threw, but we won't go into that) and we generally duplicated things we saw on television.

Roy was a not-so tough cowboy who never backed down. He was always getting knocked out from behind (cowardly act, no doubt) and certainly had to get up off his butt more than once in fist fights. But he always won. He ALWAYS won. The white hat never lost.

When faced to shoot at someone, Roy did one of two things: he shot away to scare them or he cleanly shot the gun out of their hand. And his shot was so good that he actually hit the gun and made it fly from the bad guy's hand — he rarely put a bullet in the guy's hand.

OK, we can call it pure idealism — or even hokey — but it was the code of the West and the code of the movies. And I bought it. So did most of my generation. In fact, it's the never-say-die and idealistic nature of heroes like Roy Rogers who fueled the social revolutions of the 1960s. It was right, so don't give up.

But whatever he meant, Roy kept his good looks and good voice and good living to the end. I'm sure he was no angel, but he lived by his public image for 87 years. Not a bad role model.

I've always held a very close relationship with Roy and Dale and their cast of characters (human and animal) because I liked them. they were good people doing and saying good things. I eventually came to realize it was only Hollywood, but it didn't matter. They were special in my life.

I shed a tear when Roy died. My pal, Roy.

He was a true hero.





(The above editorial cartoon and others in this issue is by Don Wright, the Pulitzer Prize winning editorial cartoonist of *The Palm Beach Post*. Now that I have a scanner, you'll be seeing more of Don's cartoons here. Hope that's to your liking, Jeff, since you requested them.)

The News

Let's see what has been on the national agenda lately besides everyone's favorite solicitor general.

The Southern Baptists showed their true colors this spring by meeting in Salt Lake City and telling their members (and everyone else) that all this man and woman being equal stuff is a bunch of 20th century crap. The wife in a marriage should submit to the husband's demands. Honor and obey, say they Baptists.

Of course, the reason given was to follow the Bible's instruction. After the verse cited went on to tell the man he also should keep and treat his slaves well, the religious zealots had to do their own spin control (don't you hate that phrase by now — let's promise not to use it anymore) and tell the laughing public that they were being misinterpreted. They merely meant to say that a husband should lead in the marriage and provide for his family. A woman should participate in decisions, etc.

I don't think so. It's clear what their agenda is. Anyone who doesn't agree with their interpretation of the Bible or their religion are evil, will go do hell, blab, blab, blab.

Religion is becoming a divisive political force in the U.S., just like it is or has been in practically every nation or collective since humans first bowed to fire and other imaginary beings. And what's worse than all these natty religion movements are the politicians who pander to them and vow to pass laws supporting these unnatural, hoodoo voodoo schemes to gain power. It's sad and stupid.

NOT A GOOD INVESTMENT — The *Washington Post* recently published an article about how many publishers are losing big bucks signing up political types to write books.

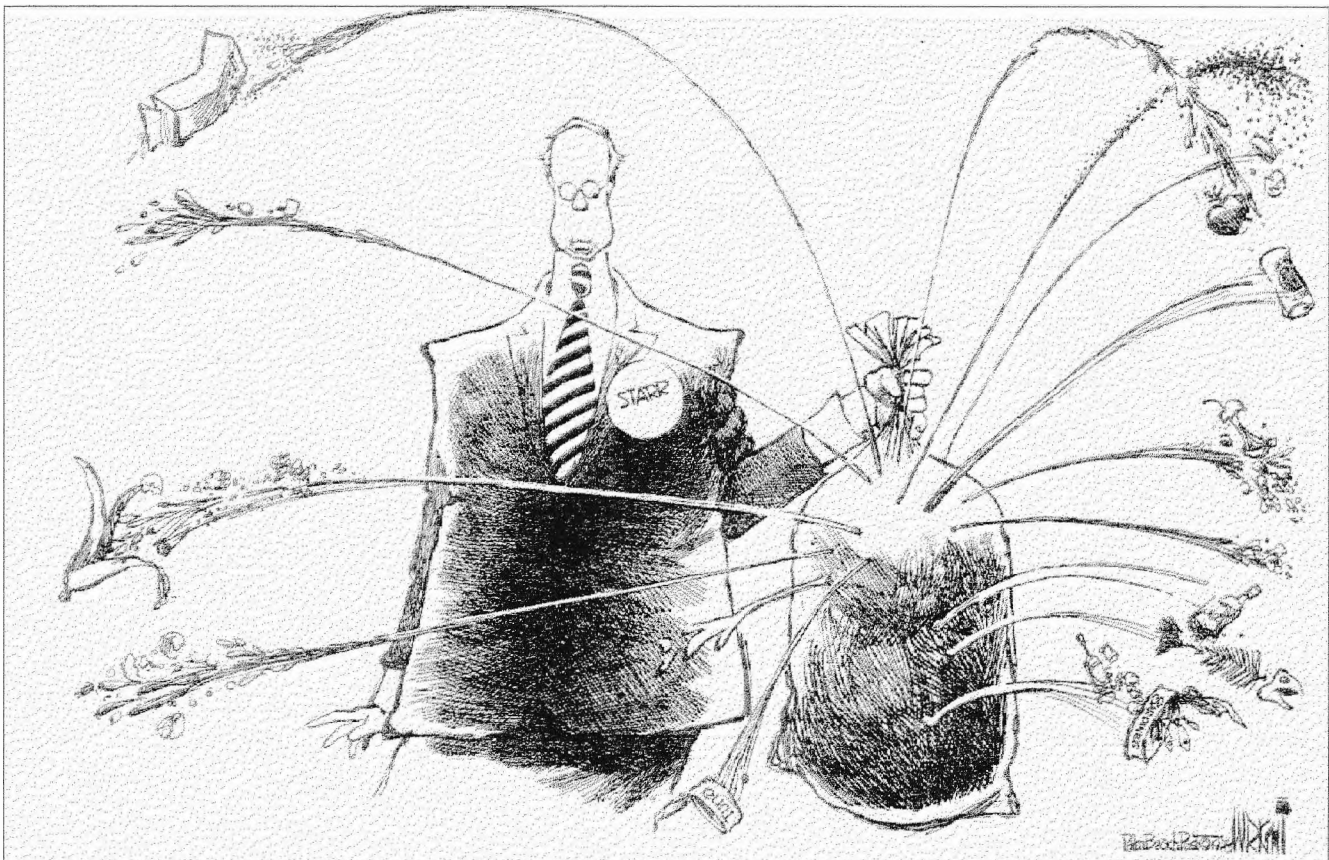
It seems those type of books have never sold well and continue to be ignored by the public in this day and age. The two prime examples are the last two Newt Gingrich books, *1945* and the most recent one with him in an Alan Alda sweater confessing how many mistakes he's made in the last three years.

Jim Baen of Baen Books was quoted in the article about *1945*. Well, it basically was a plea for someone to take the 100,000 copies of *1945* off his hands. I've seen it in the local Books A Million stores discounted for under \$10. Must have been a hell of a novel.

THE STARR FRONT — Ho hum, the minute by minute investigation into Bill Clinton's every move plods along like some bad *Saturday Night Live* sketch. The all-encompassing indictment of Webb Hubble not only didn't work, it was thrown out on its ear. So much for threatening people.

Actually, the failure of the Whitewater, so-called filegate and travelgate investigations have shown the public that there is more smoke to Ken Starr than fire. And this latest probe into sex in the White House convinces the public that this entire five or six year investigation has been nothing more than a political witchhunt on the part of the Republicans.

They couldn't beat Bill Clinton, so they are going to hound him out of office. That's why he remains high in the polls and Starr well below 20 percent. The voters don't buy it and the GOP just can't understand why. If there is a Clinton legacy, it well may be he outsmarted the entire Republican Party time and time again.



BRILL'S CONTENT — The first issue of Steven Brill's *Content* magazine start with a BANG, to say the least. A revealing interview with Inspector General Starr, who admitted he and one of his top officials were the sources of leaks to select members of the news media, got the sort of publicity that any magazine publisher would envy.

But lost in the war of words about what Starr said then his henchmen denied, is Brill's lengthy article on the conduct of the news media during the initial reporting of the Monica Lewinsky case.

As an insider, let me say I agree with Brill's criticism of much of the reporting during that time and after. Somewhere along the line, some reporters and editors have decided that if someone leaks something to them, they have the right to broadcast it or print it as fact.

When I first started as a reporter, I came back with a decent story about how the city budget was in good shape and everything was rosy at city hall. I wrote it and turned it in. My editor came back to me and asked how I know this was so. "Well, Clarence Giddens told me," I said. Giddens was town manager.

He was not impressed. He asked me in rapid order: "Did you see the budget? Did you talk to other council members? Did you compare it with past years?"

No.

He held the story, a move that bothered me, because I knew we'd be beat by the competition. He didn't care.

I went back and did the story the right way. The figures checked out and the mayor backed Giddens' words. BUT one of the five councilmen didn't like how the budget was being handled and thought more savings could be gained with better accounting and a closer look at how money was spent.

It was a little better story and didn't earn me any prizes (or friends). But the lesson was learned. Just because someone in government or a position of power tells you something, it doesn't mean it's the truth or that everyone agrees with it.

No, that wasn't something just Gary learned. It has been the backbone of good journalism for many years. Ask. Question. Get others to talk. NO anonymous sources.

In the search for the "scoop" and under the pressure of corporate robots who want profits above anything else, journalists have gotten sloppy and editors lazy. It's as if as long as someone says something, it's OK to publish or broadcast it. The other night on one of the local TV stations, a reporter based his story on a woman who said she was "going" to file a lawsuit. She alleged that some big store discriminated against her because of her race.

Of course, if she never files that suit or she was just blowing off steam, the TV station allowed itself to be used to slander a store on allegations that were never alleged in court.

I can tell you two things about news media types in Washington, D.C.: 1. They think no other place exists that is more important; and 2. They are certain the everyone else "doesn't understand how Washington, D.C., works."

Of course, this is arrogance times 10. There people are under the illusion that what they do is more important any anyone else. And the politicians they cover are even worse.

The latest journalistic GOOF to get big exposure was the story broadcast by CNN with help by *Time* magazine about how the U.S. Army used deadly gas to kill the enemy and deserters during the Viet Nam War. Unfortunately, the story was shallow and based on a few words from an 86-year-old general, who later denied he said what they thought he said.

An embarrassment to CNN, *Time* and my profession. When will it stop? Not until several big

money lawsuits begin hurting those corporate profits. Then, the results will be similar to Gannett and Knight-Ridder's approach to journalism: only nice, lifestyle stories so no one is offended or sues. Of course, that will be the death of corporate journalism, but don't tell them.

Needless to say, journalists are perceived by the public to be big, hairy monsters of pack mentality, drooling after any stupid quote from anyone who can string three words together and being led by big, pushy cameramen. No matter what happens in the Lewinsky case, my profession has been damaged by those who want short-term glory instead of long-term truth.

HOT, HOT, HOT

No doubt, many of you have read or heard about the hot weather and deadly fires in North Florida during June and early July. As I type this, the normal summer rains have started and life is somewhat back to normal.

But for a few weeks, it got kinda' of scary.

Usually, the rains start in April or May here in Florida. By June, they become so routine, you can set your watch by them. They start in the early afternoon and last for an hour or two, then slowly get later and later.

This year, however, it rained pretty good in February and then stopped.

Things became browner and drier. Around Memorial Day, the fires started. Maybe the first ones began because of careless campers or lightning. Then again, maybe an arsonist or two had something to do with them.

Nonetheless, they started. Most of them in sort of the northeast part of the state. Flagler County and other places between Gainesville/Orlando and Daytona/Atlantic Ocean began to feel the brunt of the fires. They burned strong, often creating their own weather systems within the burning area.

Still, no rains came.

About 40,000 acres in Taylor County, one of my former homes, burned in early June. That's about the time the *Post* began sending reporters and photographers out to cover the story.

This also was about the time the country started paying attention. Not just to the fires, but in the unusually high temperatures. We had temperatures moving into the mid-90s. And that truly is beyond what Florida gets. Oh, we'll have our days of 96 or 97 degrees, but it's a rarity and lasts just a day or two.

This heat wave kept up. The daily weather reporter read like this: Highs 95, Lows 88. No rain.

Meanwhile, the fires kept growing and growing. Eventually they evacuated the entire area of Flagler County (near Daytona Beach) — about 40,000 people. That lasted three days.

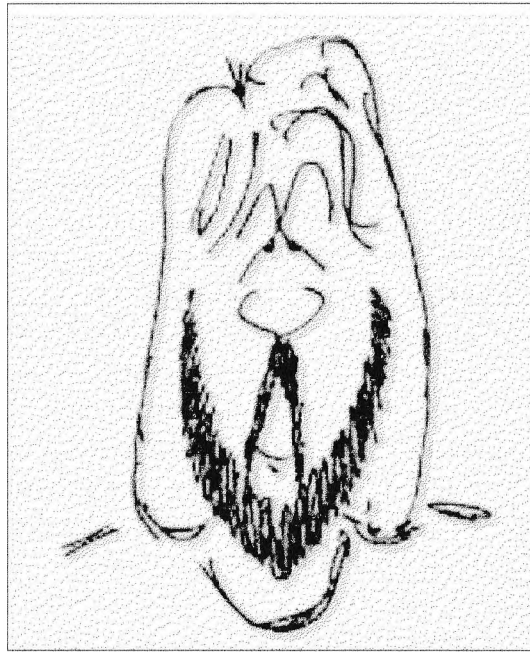
And for the first time, we started getting some affects of the fires down in Palm Beach. Toward the end of June, I remember walking out one morning and taking about three steps, then stopping. I panicked. I could smell smoke. Something was burning.

It wasn't my apartment or anything nearby. It turned out to be the fires up north. A Southerly wind was driving the smoke and smell to us. For the next week we had a smoky smell in the air and a haze hanging around.

There never was any threat of fires here. We had a couple of small ones, but nothing like up north.

Soon, the winds died down and the fires were under control. Then, it started raining. Raining for several hours each afternoon. The threat was over.

Of course, by the next issue, I'll be talking about flooding. It never ends.



NILSSON LIVES or HOW I FOUND HARRY

My fascination with the songs of Harry Nilsson started one day in the 1960s when I was driving my Corvair somewhere in Hialeah. A medley of Beatles songs came on the radio. Under the title, *You Can't Do That*, the song strung several Beatles tunes together. Neat.

I learned that day the guy's name was Nilsson. Nilsson? Nelson? Was that his first name or last? Later that week, I searched the records stores for the album. I couldn't find it, but I did find another album by him called *Aerial Ballet*. Some nice songs, including *Everybody's Talkin'* — soon to be made famous in *Midnight Cowboy*.

Somewhere along the line, I read that the Beatles thought Nilsson was pretty cool. They said he was their favorite American singer/songwriter.

Not long after, I was in the Sears record department (when they carried records) and saw a new Nilsson album. It was called *Harry* and support a picture of Nilsson as a kid of about 10. That coulda' been my picture. So, I bought the album.

I fell in love with it. Not the picture, but the songs and the voice. Amazing. It featured *The Puppy Song*, *Mother Nature's Son*, *Nobody Cares About the Railroad Anymore* and *Rainmaker*. I played it over and over, then bought the 8-track.

After that, I was hooked. I didn't miss any of Harry's albums: *Nilsson Schmilsson*, his top selling album that featured *Without You* and *Coconut*; then *Son of Schmilsson*, with *Space Man*, *Remember* and the ever popular *You're Breaking My Heart*, *You're Tearing Me Apart*, *So Fuck You*.

Harry also made a famous animated cartoon called *The Point*, with an equally famous score. Then, he did an album of old classics called *A Little Touch of Schmilsson in the Night*. That was followed by *Pussy Cats*, an album produced by John Lennon.

Somewhere along the line, Harry took one too many drinks and possibly too many drugs. His music was still compelling, but the albums were not as overwhelming. Instead of 10 great cuts, there

were only two or three. The last Nilsson album I bought was in 1978. It also turned out to be his last album for RCA.

Other than the score for *Popeye* and some cuts for Disney, I heard little about Nilsson. I knew he made an album for Mercury in 1984 called *Flash Harry*, but it was only distributed in Great Britain and Europe. I never got a copy.



There were a few public appearances at Beatleests for Harry and he co-authored *The Telephone* with Terry Southern. The movie starred Whoppi Goldberg and was unique, but too long and boring. Goldberg thought it was a career mistake for her.

In the early 1990s, Disney ran *The Point* for several months and had an article about Harry and his family — six kids.

I kept telling myself to write him a letter. Just tell him I thought he was great and I miss his music. I never did.

The next thing I heard about Nilsson was that he had a massive stroke in 1993. After recovering, he started putting together his last album. A year later, he died.

I always thought Nilsson fans were few and far between. I know Janet and Mike here like his stuff. But there was never a big fan group devoted to his music. Or, so I thought.

In May, I did some Net searching and found a website devoted to Nilsson. It's run by Roger Smith in Winter Springs, Fla. In early June the first HarryFest took place in Glendale, Calif. There were 40 people there, including Harry's oldest son, Zak, and the kid who played Eddie on *The Courtship of Eddie's Father* (Nilsson did the theme song, *My Best Friend*).

Along with the website there is a quarterly newsletter, T-shirts and a daily newsgroup. I'm in heaven.

MY SISTER THE BACKUP SINGER

About two years ago, my sister, Jeanne, joined the Nova University Choir. She always has had a beautiful voice and loved singing. But career and life put her early ambitions at bay.

The choir, located in Fort Lauderdale has gone all over the world doing showtunes, hymns, you name it. When she found the Nova Choir, she was in her glory.

In April, the choir was asked to sing backup at a Michael Crawford concert in West Palm Beach. They found the choir on the group's website.

Crawford is/was the original Phantom of the Opera and has a marvelous Irish tenor voice. He has done a few albums and at least one TV special since his Phantom run ended. I'm not a fan, but appreciate his talent.

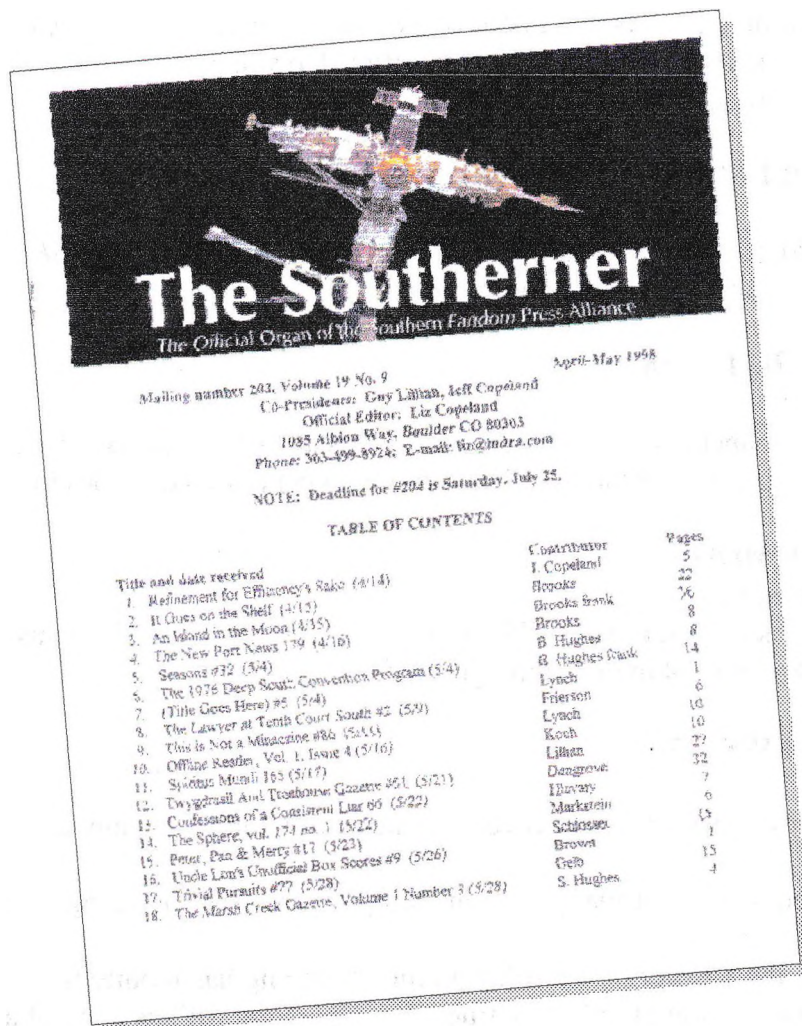
Jeanne got tickets for me and my parents at the Coral Sky Amphitheater, just 15 minutes from my home. The tickets turned out to be center stage, row five.

He did a very nice concert featuring some Phantom songs, Irish ballads and inspirational pieces. The place was packed, even though it was a humid night.

I enjoyed it and it was neat seeing my sister standing in the back with about 20 other members of the choir singing these great notes.

I'll have to tell her how proud I was of her — and, of course, kid her about it. I wouldn't be a proper big brother if I didn't do at least that.

Arrows



Mailing Comments on the 203rd SFPA

THE SOUTHERNER Vol. 19, #9

Liz Copeland

Early deadline noted! Hey, it's vacation time and even the Official Editor is entitled to take some time off. Of course, it's without pay, but hey, what more could you ask for?

Just the "inner bitch" line was good enough for Rule 4. But doesn't it seem like all OEs go through this. The first year they are understanding and flexible, but in the second year they begin to insist the rules be followed to a 'T'. Or something along that matter. I think anyone who has been an OE can understand why dictators are the way they are.

By the way, I noticed you had yourself owing four pages after having just a two-page zine. but what about *The Southerner*? Wouldn't that count as 4 pages? Of course, you can count the OO in whatever way you want, but I always counted it toward my page credit each mailing (although I don't think I ever needed it).

The reason I bring this up is that I believe we should change the *SFPA* Constitution to remove the OE from owing dues during her/his term(s) in office. Do you agree? How would you suggest I go about bringing up this proposal?

REFINEMENT FOR EFFICIENCY'S SAKE

Jeff Copeland

Interesting problem and discussion of its solution. Also neat that *SFPA* has been in the forefront of better computer technology for the future.

IT GOES ON THE SHELF #18

Ned Brooks

As usual, my comment is that I looked through this and enjoyed it, but no real hooks. However, I did enjoy your cover this time. Nasty cat always trying to get those poor dogs in trouble.

AN ISLAND IN THE MOON

Ned Brooks and William Blake

I wonder if in his wildest dreams William Blake ever thought he'd have his writing in this apa? Nah, I doubt it. Thanks for franking this through, Ned.

THE NEW PORT NEWS #179

Ned Brooks

What? After two zines with nice covers on them, you don't have any artwork for your cover? Tsk.

I can't get used to the fact that you're in Georgia now. Are you going to change the name of your zine to *The De Catur News*?

As I type this, the suspect in the Atlanta clinic bombing has reportedly been spotted close to home in North Carolina, stealing food and a truck. He apparently isn't as good of a survivalist as he's been made out to be.

No, I can't agree that the "fittest" in the Darwinian "survival of the fittest" theory means the ones who reproduce the most. Sure, that's part of it. But it also means you live long enough to reproduce and your offspring lives. Being able to protect yourself against disease and other life forms. Heck, if your definition was right, it would mean Wilt Chamberlain would be the most perfect life form on the planet — and we all know he can't shoot free throws.

I think Goodwills across the country are wise to collectors and collectibles. They don't even put the fast food toys in the general bin anymore. They are under lock and key. Geeze.

I think there's a difference between being anti-Christian and not parroting the Christian thought. All the complaints I've dealt with as an editor was not that the newspaper was anti-Christian (although they claimed it as such), but that we didn't say what the Christian Bible says.

Tennessee Ernie Ford wasn't a fan?

I read some accounts of Davy Crockett's life when I was younger and don't remember anything

about him grinning a bear to death. That was, however, part of the Disney series starring Fess Parker. Davy's sidekick Jesse Russell kept telling the story to folks on TV.

I know little about Anthony Robbins, other than his gig is making people feel confident. Sort of an inner guru or sorts who thinks he's more important than anything else.

I remember whenever I had a headache in public school, I never could get a fucking aspirin to help me. They'd make me lay down in the nurse's room until I felt better. But there was no drug connection there — schools were afraid of giving some kid aspirin and him having an allergic reaction or dying or something. So we suffered while the lawyers felt good about saving the school board money.

Not wanting to start a lengthy debate about Waco (and certainly there is enough blame to go around), but if those 79 people died because they followed a zealot or were held captive by said zealot, who is the terrorist?

You MUST write about moving all your stuff from Newport News to Atlanta. What fun that must have been.

My fast food visits mostly are collecting related — and mostly with my kids. I can understand a kid in his or her first job fumbling around and screwing things up. Been there, done that. But sometimes pure stupidity reigns.

Hmmm, you can change the point limit on Hearts? Mine is 100. I'll have to check, because the 100 games go too fast.

And you know for SURE that in the fictional land inhabited by the Simpsons, that Homer wore a muu muu and not a mau mau? You're a better man than I am.

You think Hank's head would have knocked down more pins than his bowling ball?

SEASONS #32

Binker Hughes

Even though you didn't finish the basement by your deadline, it's good that you're making progress. I try to make lists and give myself deadlines on jobs I have to do. And most of the time, some spill over to other days or weeks. But there are those times when I finish up everything and wonder what in the hell I'm going to do with myself.

Although I don't know all the specifics of your parents' physical woes, having to deal with them isn't an easy job. I'm fortunate, in that my dad has had various ailments, but mom has been healthy as a horse. He stopped driving, but she still does well. I know what will happen when one of them dies or it gets more difficult for them to regular things. They are out in the country and will need someone to help them. And they'll be stubborn enough to either not tell me or dismiss my offer to help.

I'm just playing and learning the scanner right now, but I'm already thinking of things I can do with it for my apazines. It might surprise even me.

More and more I'm not answering the telephone, but picking up when I find out who is on the line (or call them back). For a long while I felt guilty about doing that, but lately I figure it's my right to talk to who I want to and when I want to. Most of the time I pick up the phone, though.

Yep, the nice thing about missing mailings or having low page counts is that a year later you can make up big time with decent-sized zines.

Glad you liked the last few *Oblios*. Actually, I had "centerfolds" in three straight issues and it is a pain stapling them, then folding them. However, they look good when they're done.

DEEP SOUTH CONVENTION PROGRAM 1976

Binker Hughes

Hmmm, did I go to those. No, I don't think so. So, thanks for the book — even if it is 22 years late. Ha!

(TITLE GOES HERE) #5

Nicki and Richard Lynch

Man, I've been meaning to visit your website. Hopefully, this will remind me to do so.

So, how long do you think it will be before zines will be online only? I get several online zines (comics, wrestling) that aren't on paper. they are short newszines, but electronic only.

THE LAWYER AT TENTH COURT SOUTH #2

Meade Frierson

Sounds like a TV show from the early 1960s.

More and more I find people really hooked on *Babylon 5*. I taped the first show and watch it on rare occasions, since I work nights. Shelly and her son never miss an episode.

Sigh, your toothy problem is one that's starting to get to me, too. I had regular dental care until I got divorced, then when I found I needed \$1,500 in work and the dentists wanted cash up front, I passed and have done so since. It's sad, but I'm fortunate I do have good teeth. However, one is about to depart and that's not good.

THIS IS NOT A MINACZINE #86

Richard Lynch

Nice diary of your trip to Eastern Europe. I've seen some of these pictures before, since my parents have gone that way at least twice. But it's always great to see and here about the old country. I always wonder where I'd be living and what I'd be doing if my parents' parents never came over here (well, and they met, etc.).

I have mixed feelings about the Indians being in the sickly American League Central. On one hand, it's great to see them breeze through the season and (hopefully) win handily, but on the other, I worry that they won't be sharp for the playoffs. However, they put things together just perfectly last year, so I won't complain.

We say the Cubs play the Cardinals here in West Palm at the end of the preseason. McGwire didn't hit a home run, but he is a moose.

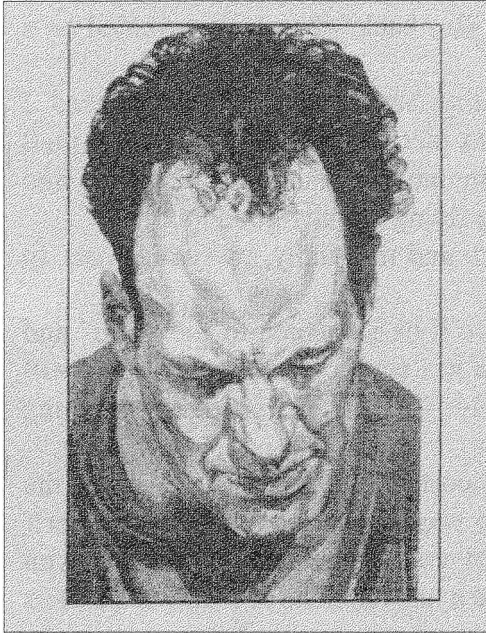
OFFLINE READER #4

Irv Koch

I have problems with wax in my ears, too. My father does and so did his father, so I know who to blame. Occasionally, it'll bug me and I either have to clean them myself or get them cleaned. It can be a pain in the ass hearing that echo all the time.

No doubt, the time I spent fumbling around on my home PC has helped me at work. Not necessarily in knowing specifics to correct something, but in the thought process by which computers run. When something goes wrong, press that control button and see what the other buttons will do.

I've had to deal with daily newspaper stock pages for years, so I have a pretty good idea how frustrating that can be. It's getting easier, but not by much.



Cover to *SPIRITUS MUNDI* 165

SPIRITUS MUNDI #165

Guy Lillian

Ugh, don't mention the Taxman, please. Last year was not a good one for me, since I had some income balancing to do during the two months I was out of work.

Before I forget, I've been meaning to tell you that one of the hottest fanzines in comicdom these days are the dozen or so issues of *The Amazing World of DC Comics* in the 1970s. They are selling at a minimum of \$20 and I've even seen folks will to spend \$75 to \$100 for certain issues. You worked on some, if not all, of them, didn't you?

So, is all the legal maneuvering in the Starr inquisition the stuff lawyers talk about and analyze or is it tiresome in the legal community, too? One thing is for sure, all the political spinsters and lawyers on TV predicting what will happen look even worse than some journalistic efforts as of late. Sad stuff.

Now we know why the REAL Prof. Smith didn't want to be in the *Lost in Space* movie. He knows better.

We've had a number of articles recently about bad oysters in Texas that got people thee sick and then found their way to Florida, where a couple of hundred got sick. You really will never know if it was the oysters that made you barf or the flu, but I doubt that would have made you feel any better at the time.

Isn't it funny that when someone wants your money, they want it now and it's out of your account before you can say Uncle Scrooge. But when you want their money, it's sit and wait pal.

I have found, however, that the squeaky wheel really does get the grease. The more you bitch and complain, the faster they'll eventually do something just to get rid of you.

No real vacation for this boy, even though I have vacation time. An unexpected expensive trip to the dentist by Scott and college bills means my vacation will be limited. A week here with Ryan and maybe Scott (but I'll still be working), then several days in early August with Shelly. We're going up to my parents' place to put them online and then back to St. Petersburg so we can watch the Indians and Devil Rays at Tropicana Field.

I could work at home, but it probably would take some getting used to — if not personal discipline. The goal is to do 8 hours of work in less than that, then coast. Of course, the boss will find out and funnel more work to you.

Nah, there was never any thought of trading Dan Marino for Rashaan Salaam. In fact, the Dolphins finally traded a draft choice for Salaam, then shipped him back when tests revealed he's damaged goods.

No doubt, computers are making such leaps and bounds that Superman would be pleased. I mean, look at what we can do now sitting at home — scan in color pictures, talk to others via e-mail and look up practically anything imaginable on the Internet. Remember it was just a few years ago when we were fumbling with mimeos and dittos, thinking we were doing a pretty good job.

I liked *Billy Jack*, too. But I saw it a couple of months ago and it is sadly, sadly outdated. In fact, parts of it appear downright silly.

Sigh, you tell the truth here — beginning late this year we'll be subjected to the “Top” and “Best” of the 20th Century stories and features until we get sick of it. I suspect some newspapers will do special sections on the last 100 years. I'd rather have it that way — all at once — than something every day for the next year. Ugh.

I suspect one reason that the NBC VP more or less supported Simpson (especially at the beginning) was that he was a good friend of his. I think that's the way any friend reacts to another's misfortune. I mean, if Dennis was accused of murder, no doubt your first reaction was that you couldn't imagine him doing it. Of course, being in a public job like a head honcho at a network makes it tougher when you have to say those things in public.

What is interesting, however, is that after Bryant Gumble left, *Today* has shot up in the ratings.

But face it, Katie Couric is a cute woman close to your age and you want to nail her. No beating around the bush, here.

Is there a dominant literary figure in American today? Well, a well-known author just became the fifth author ever to have books at the top of both the *New York Times*' fiction and non-fiction lists. Faulkner, among others, is one of the five. Who is it? Jimmy Buffett, now of Palm Beach and Long Island.

One of the problems about discussing the Starr-Lewinsky-Clinton matter here has been the huge gaps of time between when I write something and when you read it and then respond to it and then I eventually read it. I know a lot of people have said they are bored with the probe, but I really think people know and understand that this is a most bias and partisan investigation.

Of those who said they'd vote for George Bush Jr. over Al Gore, 40 percent didn't know what job Bush had. So, are we talking support here or name recognition?

One of the problems with the next few presidents is that there will be “independent” investigations of them from Day One and that will consume the news and the job. It has neutered the office, which delights Congress to no end.

And here's a prediction: If the Secret Service agents are required to testify before Starr's grand jury, during the next Presidential election campaign, agents will be called to testify about certain statements made by one or both candidates. It's a downward spiral.

No, Hillary didn't say it was a “smart” right-wing conspiracy, just that it was there. Truth be known, her hubby has outsmarted and out politicked each and every one of them. that's why they hate him so.

Former SFPAn Mark Verheiden has just signed a big deal with Dreamworks to write a movie based on a video game “Dead.” You know who is partner is? Jesse Dylan, one of Bob's offspring.

Agreed, Two-Face is one of the best villains in comics and often is misused. Is he crazy like the Joker or just a confused man? I rather like him when he's portrayed as a true split personality. The fight between good and evil.

I'm near my "you're 18, going to college and have to be responsible" speech to Scott. I've been going over it in my mind and don't want to start ticking off things he shouldn't do. I know he'll listen, but I want to make sure he's not listening to it as a lecture, but just a talk between us.

Or, I could just say, "Don't you DARE do what I did when I went to college."

Alan's not only engaged, but I think his future wife has moved into his abode by now. I'm not sure when the wedding is, but I'll provide pictures if he slips up and accidentally invites me.

Well, I wish we could go back to about six months ago and hang our heads about my profession and that be it, but since then the track record has been terrible. Even worse. I am embarrassed.

I agree, I'd much rather have 250-350 pages of good apa than 1,000 pages of anything for the sake of big page counts. But, we were foolish in our youth.

I've never viewed political correctness as right-wing, Guy. I believe it came from a more liberal view of treating minorities and other groups in public. A woman could be Mrs., Miss or Ms., according to political correctness. Redmen or Indians are now Native Americans. Colored folk are black or African-American.

PC isn't all bad. It's respectful — at least in a public setting. However, it has been embraced by all aspects of American lifestyle to promote their cause, rather than to show a sense of politeness. It has become dictatorial in this decade, that we agree on.

Long story on the Carl Barks suits. Don probably can do a better job of detailing it. But the man and woman who were supposedly representing Barks and his artwork ended up suing him for non-payment of certain contractual obligations. The 96-year-old legend counter sued the pair, saying they misrepresented him and stole from him. Mucho bucks.

Of course, those of us who work until 1 a.m. don't have a favorite morning show, unless we don't go to sleep until very late.

Gee, it me moi who wanted to know who led the "first zine" parade in *SFPA* and you came through. I knew Ned would lead the parade, but I would have guessed he did so twice as much as the 21 you have him for. You're second, eh? I'm in a logjam with Atkins, Hutchinson and Wells for fifth place. I guess I need to get something in early and bust from the pack. Thanks for doing this guy (but I know you love doing it).

TWYGDRASIL AND TREEHOUSE GAZETTE #51

Richard Dengrove

Well, have you been subpoenaed yet? If not, what's your problem?

If there is a black Ford in the White House, we'll remember that we read it here first.

I went through that period a couple of years ago when older members of my family started dying. It seemed like someone dropped every few months. Bad state.

One thing they believe in at *The Palm Beach Post* is training. I'm grateful for it. Too many times I've been handed some new equipment and told how to turn it on. The trouble is, without training, you don't get the company's money's worth from the purchase of the equipment. Truth is, most of the computer equipment I operate, none of my bosses could begin to use.

In fact, I once went over to talk to our newsroom computer guru in Bradenton and he was putting together a spreadsheet for our fantasy baseball league. I asked him if he wasn't afraid to be caught and he laughed. "Do you think (the executive editor) could even begin to tell what I'm doing?"

My feeling is Starr is going to go down in history as a foolish, stupid man.

I've learned that it's not good to get angry all the time, but it doesn't hurt to get angry every so often. Don't ask me how often — OR YOU'LL PISS ME OFF.

(Musical interlude: Just got the Lovin' Spoonful CD featuring the albums *Do You Believe in Magic* and *Hums*. Featuring the great line: "Well, you kicked my dog and drown my cat.")

Well, I don't agree about how intellect has been downgraded in this young generation. I've seen kids in schools and what they do these days and I promise you that we're in good hands. Besides, more children than ever are at least getting a basic (reading, writing, arithmetic) education than ever in our history. Back 60 years ago, an 8th grade education was a dream to many Americans.

And I know it as a fact. Scott scored 11 points higher on his SATs than I did.

Ahem — we speak of the magical apazine *IGNITE* with reverence around here. I've been in SFPA for 25 years and still have not been invited to do an *IGNITE*. But my time is coming.

The idea of a pristine, happy future as portrayed at the 1939 World's Fair and in the 1950s is no different than how mankind has dreamed from the start. We've always felt that if he had more fire or more money or indoor plumbing or computer servants, that life would be clean, wonderful and happy. Then the REAL human mind kicks in and tries to destroy what might be an idealistic existence.

I don't think whatever "men's movement" there is in this country hasn't worked on the assumption that men shouldn't pay child support. However, it has fought the very real and crazy judicial notion that in a divorce the woman should always get custody of the children unless she's nets or drugged out.

Well, that picture of the president and others in your zine has been faxed to Little Kenny Starr for subpoenas. Obviously, it's difficult to tell where the president's hand is and he should be accountable for its location. Drum him out of office. Impeach. How dare he be different from the Republican guard.

Although I'm a "paper" person, I really don't think we'll lose much when all books and papers go to disk or computer or whatever is coming in the future. The idea still will be there. I mean, I'm sure that when the printing press was invented there were people who preferred the oral storytelling technique. In fact, many people called the printing press the devil's instrument.

It's just that we're used to sitting down and reading a paper book. Two generations from now they may well sit down with a hand-sized computer with access to millions of books, magazines, articles and *SFPA* zines.

My kids need a swift kick every so often, that's for sure. But so did we all. They've got a nice group of friends with whom they plot, plan and dream. So far, so good.

I haven't seen the *Drudge Report*, so I don't know what political leanings it has. However, from his admissions, he is and isn't a journalist. He wants to have the access without having the responsibility.

There's something about Clinton that makes his political opponents hate him. Maybe it's his appearance or the way he does business. I don't know, but they just hate the fact that not only is he successful, but that he is the president of this country. I'm sure Pat Robertson prays nightly that God smite the devil Clinton. I think this whole period will say a lot more about the faceless, petty people who gathered to stone him than of Clinton the president.

Belle Glade is a rather small, country town. I'm sure that the main reason for your rejection was that you were over qualified to be there and you'd leave for some other place in less than a year. Nonetheless, it's far from paradise.

One thing I learned while I was off for two months late last year is that I missed being given a

daily dose of immediate news at work. It was hard not to hit a button and have the urgent wire come up with the latest breaking news. TV didn't come close to that.

Oh no, stockholders are only about money, according to the corporate bigshots. They think that if they make a lot of money now and the company fails five years from now, who cares.

Case in point is Al Dunlap, of Boca Raton, who is known as "Chainsaw Al" because when he takes over a company, he fires thousands of people to make more money for the stockholders. He loved the nickname and was a big tough guy in the corporate world until he got caught screwing up Sunbeam. HE was tossed out on his ear and then he cried numerous times during an interview with the *Wall Street Journal* because he was wrongfully dismissed, etc. I say, FUCK HIM.

Is your back cover from Red Lobster?

THE SPHERE Vol. 174, #1

Don "Black Patch" Markstein

You seemingly always have had a touch of sympathy for pirates during the time I've known you through fandom. Can you include *Mickey Mouse and the Air Pirates* (a REAL pirate connection)? And don't forget Jimmy Buffett and his pirate connections.

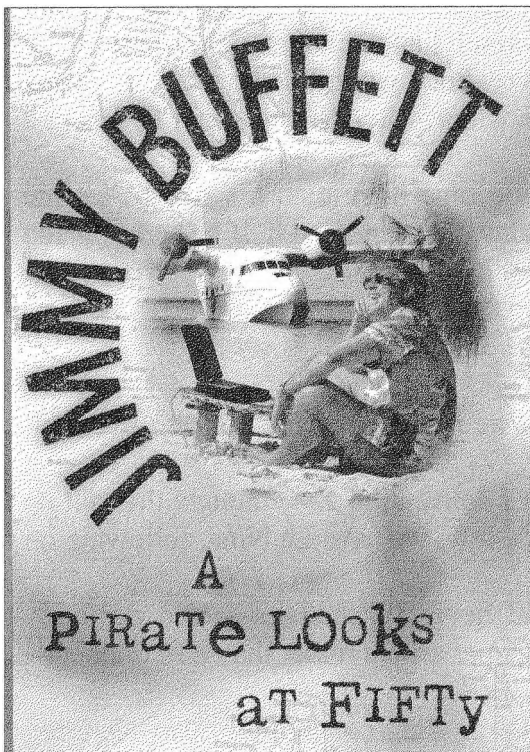
Let's see: Terry and the Pirates? The reprint of E.C.'s *Piracy* has just concluded its seven-issue run.

I don't know if it was lack of will that ended up as the downfall of Disney's comic book division. After all, comic book sales are considered wonderful these days if they top 100,000. I suspect they just didn't pay off for them. After all, it's not like it is their only way to get their characters in front of the public, like Marvel.

But that said, I'm sure your theory has a bit to do with it. If I recall, there was some reluctance at first to even go into the business. Their *Disney Adventures* digest seems to be doing quite well.

The Mickey Mouse video just came out and I haven't had the chance to look at it yet, but apparently there's some old stuff on it. Probably not enough to satisfy folks like us, but it's still nice to have.

By the way, did you hear they finally uncovered a print of Disney's first cartoon, *Little Red Riding Hood*? It was presumed lost to the ages, but a copy turned up in England at an estate sale for \$3.



Cover to Jimmy Buffett's recently released kinda' autobiographical 'A Pirate Looks at Fifty.'

CONFESSIONS OF A CONSISTENT LIAR #66

Arthur Hlavaty

I would guess that the “old IBM secret” probably started when the first automobiles were made and became popular. Someone came up with a great idea of changing the appearance of the car(s) each year or so, thereby making even recent car owners envious of the new stuff. Sigh. the human condition, I guess.

From what I’ve heard, Marv Albert was one of those “new era” sports guys in the 60s and 70s along with Warner Wolfe. He always has been a pretty decent basketball announcer (not an easy task), but I never thought much of him in other sports.

One of the real benefits of being in South Florida is that I’ll have total coverage of the Miami Dolphins. The *Post* has two sports reporters on the Dolphins beat and we cover them as well, if not better, than the *Miami Herald* and the *Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel*. I appreciate it, believe me.

I think Randy Moss has the ability to be a great receiver, but I wonder if he’s on the wrong team to get there. There’s aren’t enough balls to go around in Minnesota. He might end up being a problem like Keeshan was if he goes public.

I don’t agree with Andrea Kramer on why Moss has become notorious. It’s that he’s gone through these bad boy things and has some great talent — and almost squandered it. If he hadn’t made it big after FSU, we wouldn’t know who he was — or the race of his victims.

PETER, PAN & MERRY #17

David Schlosser

Hmmm, a *SFPA* pension plan. Now there’s a thought. If we had one, maybe Lon and Alan still would be here.

I think El Nino doesn’t exist, but at the last weatherman’s convention, they thought this shit up to make sure they got more attention on the nightly newscasts. Now, we have La Nina, following on the tail of El Nino.

I started reading Michener’s book on Kent State and never finished it — and the book disappeared. It was a lot like his Sports book, a loooooong newspaper article rather than a fictionalized account of real history.

As for CBS “maintaining a pretense of suspense” in the skating competition, that has been standard TV practice for years. In fact, back in the early 1980s, ABC paid big bucks to broadcast some skating event and (I believe it was a test case) then tried to control the reporting of the event by not allowing other news organizations in. Of course, that only brought more coverage to the event and ABC backed down.

I think they should keep Interleague play to a minimum each year. That way, fans who like it get a dose of what they want and it’s not over done. But don’t be surprised if at some point baseball just realigns everything.

I think that in addition to making sure a child does homework, etc., parents have to instill a sense of drive into the child. Make him or her WANT to do the work and do well. That’s the hardest part, because it is absorbed over a long period of time.

Maybe we’ll be the last generation of baseball fans who really CARES about particular players like Orel Hirschser playing for other teams — especially the sworn enemy. Our kids will accept it as a fact of life — just like mom or dad changing jobs. Too bad, it is cool when a player stays put.

Great *Dilbert*. I feel like it was for me. Thanks.



TRIVIAL PURSUITS #77

Janice Gelb

The above in honor of your covers and inside cartoons, of course.

We'll take part of those 109 days of rain down here. Of course, sooner or later it'll be daily wet here and no rain out your way, so we can't complain too much. The first real rain we got was on a Friday and when I got into work, everyone was in a good mood about it raining. I said that I'd give them a week and they'd be complaining about the rain again. I was right.

I read somewhere that in antitrust cases like that against Microsoft, the company being investigated is more worried about public image than any fine or eventual loss of marketshare. That's probably right in this case. Microsoft started with no or little competition and suddenly finds itself surrounded by all kinds of companies in the computer biz. Gates probably resents this and wants the field to himself.

We had a lengthy article the other day about Johnson detailing the problems the team had with having no real money to pay players and stay under the salary cap. They had a lot of backloaded salaries when he took over and he claims that prevented them from doing some things they wanted to do. Of course, one of the reasons they had those salaries is that he got rid of a lot of players. Works both ways.

I haven't seen *Titanic* — and I'm proud of it.

I had the same feeling when I moved into this apartment. It just wasn't "home" to me until maybe three or so months, then I began settling in and accepting it.

Not knowing a hotel wouldn't take a check is similar to me trying to pay my hotel bill with cash in Atlanta. They wouldn't take it. They wanted a credit card to assure I wouldn't trash the room. Geeze.

Joe Celko's adopting children doesn't show how old we are getting, it calls for serious investigation of this country's child adoption laws.

Of course, the answer to the Princess Diana-Mother Teresa newsplay question is just what you say: Diana's death was unexpected, therefore immediate news; Mother Teresa's death was expected, therefore regular news.

My visual of "Casual Festive" is you have a good time, but don't move around much.

The Spreewell suit against the NBA can't top this: After the residents of Flagler County returned home from being evacuated because of the fires, one homeowner complained to The Associated Press that while he was gone the firefighters plowed up his yard to create a firebreak and save his come from burning. He said he just paid \$15,000 for landscaping and "someone is going to pay for this." Absolutely incredible.

Sometimes divorce has one big evident reason, but you're right in that there are many reasons — from person to person and in each case.

You found Carl Hiaasen's *Lucky You* a bit too weird? You've been away from Florida too long, Janice.

Most names given to machines at work are unprintable in a family apa like *SFPA*. As I type this, I'm a few hours from going into work where a big DTI upgrade awaits. I anticipate many bugs today. Sigh.

I, too, hope the "invest your Social Security" gambit doesn't pass, otherwise we're flirting with disaster for sure. I mean, people get bilked regularly on pouring diluted tar on driveways instead of asphalt. You think they're going to be able to increase their Social Security holdings? Yikes, I worry about this.

Well, my income increased moving over here, but so did my living expenses. And with a kid going to college, it seems I'm back to where I was a few years ago. Arrgggh. But I don't mind paying anything toward college — as long as Scott makes something of it.

No doubt, the folks at the *San Jose Mercury News* are dreading at the fact that Tony and his pals are coming their way. No matter what they printed. It's interesting, but they are less than 100 people moving. They fired a batch and some didn't want to make the move. It's the final straw in Tony Ridder taking over the company.

Have you read *Content*? Get a copy if you can. It's not a bad magazine.

The Lower Case item that said: "737 from Boston hit by lightning" means: 1.) Lighting struck a 737 jetliner taking off from Boston; or, 2.) 737 people from Boston got hit by lightning.

I wonder what would happen if aliens landed and, let's say, decided to make contact with the Pakistanis or Peruvians first. It would blow our minds.

Well, I should correct those figures on the *Post*'s circulation. Average daily is a bit over 175,000. Average Sunday is over 250,000. And during the winter season, we hit 250,000 on a regular basis. I read something that last year or the year before we had the biggest circulation grown of major dailies in the country.

The movers packed about half of my stuff when I came over here. I packed all the comics and books. I left the rest for them. You're right, that is wonderful!!!

I just don't understand the Piazza trade and think it was a mistake on the Dodgers' part. I believe Murdoch will run the franchise into the ground.

As for the Marlins, the one nice thing is you can walk up to the gate and get a ticket at any time. They are looking to get rid of Todd Zeile and maybe Renteria, too. The big news lately is that the sports agent, Joe Cubas, who has been helping players come over from Cuba, is going to get a group together to buy the club.

Barry's sense of humor hasn't changed much and I think we've all gotten used to it.

Aw, come on, Janice. You'll always be a Dolphins fan. Just don't turn into one of those fair-weather fans — bad mouth them when they do poorly and jump on the bandwagon when they succeed.

THE MARSH CREEK GAZETTE #3

Steve and Suzanne Hughes

Nice zine folks, but how can you have a wedding story on the same page as one titled "Free At Last!"? (Just kidding Suzanne, honest).

Your back page essay on knowing when to quit is both well said and steeped in logic. Even if we can't quit, sometimes we have to do just that. I was thinking the other day about going out to Las Vegas to visit one of my best friends. Then I realized I haven't done much traveling at all since I got married in 1979. In fact, the only trips I took were job related or within Florida. That's not good. Not as worldly as I'd like to be at 51.

COMMENTS

Steve Hughes

I should note here that the e-mail one-shot was a great idea. I intentionally didn't read everyone's contributions online so I could read them in the zine.

I liked *Deep Impact*, but there was something missing and I can't quite figure out what it was. There were enough curves in the plot that kept me interested.

Cases like Karla Faye Tucker raise good debate. One thinks that if a person kills someone, they have to pay the price for the crime. If it is death, then it is death. If it is long incarceration, then make the best of it and become something better. The problem with Tucker is that she only recently became "religious." I couldn't buy it.

I always go back to "how would I feel" if someone close to me was murdered. Would I want revenge? Would I demand nothing short of death for the guilty person? Or, if that's not possible, at least life imprisonment? Unless there were serious problems with the identity of the killer, I think I'd want revenge. I'd want the person to die.

But I've never been for the death penalty. The bottomline is that other than being killed I'd never want the murderer to walk free again. If I could be assured of that, I could let go of what happened.

I think.

If you make it to the Keys, don't pass up The Margaritaville Cafe.

To maintain a decent weight, I have to stay active and exercise. I haven't and it shows badly. It is much harder for me to start exercising these days. I need a quick kick in the pants. Hopefully, when Ryan comes to visit, we'll play basketball and doing some early morning walking.

So, where did you find those cartridges for your Epson printer at 2/3s the normal price? The best prices I've found has been at Sam's, where a black ink cartridge is about \$17. Color is \$28. My color cartridges seem to last a lot longer than the black.

It's funny, but after I left the *Herald*, I had this desire to stay in touch with a lot of my friends at the paper. And I did so. But that slowed down somewhat after a few months and my move over here to Palm Beach. But in the last two months, I've heard from a lot of them (most of them are in other jobs at other papers now) again. I guess it just takes time.

I'm having fun learning the scanner. The directions that came with it are from hunger. But I think I enjoy figuring equipment like this on my own. It's not the best way, but a lot more fun.

SOUF'PAW #7

Richard Brandt

A new car? Great. The one thing I found when I bought my car about two years ago is that the big bucks I was putting into repairs has disappeared. However, the 36,000 mile mark is coming up very, very soon.

Yeah, I went from a two-bedroom partment to one-bedroom. Considering I had boxes shoved in three closets in the biggr place, it's amazing I have room to walk here. But somehow, I do.

I really don't want to put boxes in storage, either. It may be in the near future that I have no alternative.

I got the idea that one of the purposes of Kelly Girl (now, Kelly Office or something updated and non-sexist like that) was actually a try-out for some jobs. I think there was more to those work contracts than employees were led to believe.

I'll never forget working for a month for the Florida Department of Corrections as a part-time worker and ending up doing more important work than a couple of the people who were full-time. They wanted me to apply for the job, but the way state jobs went, it was doubtful I would have gotten it. Besides, I wasn't interested.

STOMP YOUR HAT LIKE UNCLE NED #1

George H. Wells

Gee, Ned moves and gets stomped all in one mailing.

Been watching some *Man From U.N.C.L.E.* shows late at night on TBS or TNT. The acting doesn't wear well, but some of the plots continue to be interesting.

OUR WEDDING

Steve and Suzanne Hughes

Nice photos. Great color printing. But more importantly, congratulations!

TENNESSEE TRASH #33

Gary Robe

Great photo on your cover. Ah, T-ball was great fun. Once a game there would be a ball hit in the outfield and some kid would be so oblivious to it that he or she wouldn't hear the fans yelling to get the ball. The "comedy of T-Ball" is right.

One thing I regret was that my job would never allow me to coach any of the teams Scott and Ryan played on. Working nights or long days just didn't allow it. In fact, I tried one year to get some time carved out to be an assistant coach, but I couldn't get the time off. Grrrrr.

Glad you got to see more of Miami than just a convention center or South Beach. As Janice will tell you, there are many neighborhoods in South Beach that had the exact feel of "old time" New York neighborhoods back in the 1960s or so.

When I was in high school, these neighborhoods were a combination of homes, shops and retirement hotels. All those retirement hotels, while not all rundown, weren't in the best of shape. Old folks sat in lawn chairs on the porches. We would surf at South Beach Pier on weekends. It was there I found a liking for bagels. Our routine would be get up about 7 a.m., drive out to South Beach, get a couple of bagels, then surf and search out girls.

One of favorite places as I got older was Lincoln Road Mall, an outside mall with several movie theaters, lots of stores and a couple of good newsstands. I'd often go there, have dinner, go to a

movie and walk up and down the mall. Before I left, I'd stop at the newsstand for a magazine, comic book or whatever.

I haven't been out to Lincoln Road since the late 1970s. I'll have to take a drive there sometime to see if it's still as I remember.

If its conspicuous displays of wealth you're looking for, come up to Palm Beach next time you're here. It's amazing.

Hey, let's not be bad-mouthing the Heat, OK? They'll be back.

Sawgrass Mills is one of our favorite places to shop. nothing else, you get a lot of good exercise just walking around there. However, you are right in terms of getting "bargains" there. You have to be sharp and know what you're looking for.

You ate at Joe's Stone Crabs? One of the best.

Glad you liked your Miami visit. Like any big city, it has more than its share of faults, but basically it's a very fun, diverse place.

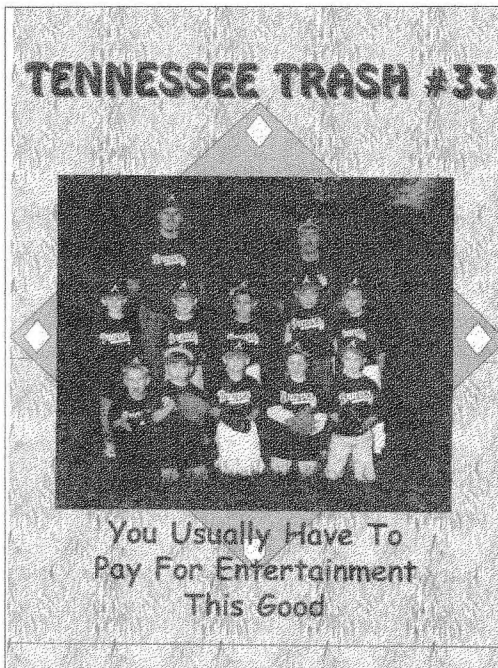
My favorite T-ball story about the kids was when Scott got up for his first at bat. I told him to move his body around and hit it to right field. Damn if he didn't. Right down the first baseline for a triple. But he could have had a home run. Turns out between second and third his helmet came off, so he stopped, retrieved the helmet and then started running again. Fun stuff.

Sorry to hear about Corliss' arthritis. Now, every ache and pain I get, I'm going to worry about.

It used to be fun explaining apas to people. But these days, they usually answer with something like, "Well, why don't you just e-mail then?" or "Sounds like a news-group to me."

A four days/10 hour job is OK if you do line production work or something that starts and stops easily. My cousin works for AT&T in Orlando and works a 4/10. He loves it. He said since they started it about four years ago, he gets a lot more overtime.

If I'm not mistaken, Eastman Kodak has gone through a number of those corporate cutback phases where they layoff or get rid of thousands of employees. A friend of mine in Rochester is constantly upset when these happen. The corporate beast, however, merely blinks and continues. It's a sad state of affairs — and Carl Hiaasen hit the nail on the head in *Lucky You*.



THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIAN #5

Robert Lichtman

Ugh. Dealing in cars. My least favorite sport. It's not that I'm intimidated by the necessity, but it's just one of those things I want to get over with as soon as possible. But at least in your case, some things fit right into place.

TYNDALLITE Vol. 2, #77

Norm Metcalf

Considering the times, I think Hitler probably would have found television to his liking in gaining control of Germany. We all must remember that the state of the world and Europe at the time was ripe for the taking, so we agree that TV probably wouldn't have done much more to stop him.

CECI N'EST PAS UNE PIPE

Jeff Copeland

You can't let a little ol' blister stop your apac, now can you? Come on, pop that thing and get to typing.

Everyone is worried about the amount of space on their computers these days. But it seems the more space we get, the more we fill up. I know that's been my axiom around here.

On several trips to various parts of Europe in the 1970s and 80s, my parents got along just fine speaking German and, of course, English. They said whenever their German failed or another language came into play, English soon popped up. And if the language barrier couldn't be overcome, it wasn't important enough to deal with.

Tom Clancy's personal life has been a shambles in the last few years, so possibly that could have been the cause of Liz's dislike of his current books.

The problem with playing *Let It Be* after John Lennon's death is that he didn't write the song. In fact, he didn't like it much at all. It's sort of like when John and Paul were guests on the *Tonight Show*, the band played *Here Comes the Sun*, a George Harrison composition.

"YNGVI IS A LOUSE" AND OTHER GRAFFITOS #53

T.K.F. Weisskopf

There are NO excuses for a wimpy zine. But a bad printer is close.

GUILTY PLEASURES

Eve Ackerman

The interesting thing about the Knight-Ridder pullout in Miami is that rumors again surfaced that Ridder wants to sell *The Miami Herald*. Why he'd want to do such a thing is hard to understand, but he takes everything personal. Otherwise, I say "Good riddance."

YOUR NOT PRESSING HARD ENOUGH...

mike weber

Is that your printer or copier that's so light in the middle of the page? The Two-Face cover came from the download section of the DC website on AOL. They often display covers months in advance.

Or maybe the eyeprint ARM can just slap silly the person with the wrong eyeprint. A Three Stooges approach to banking of the future.

Cartoon Museum faces uncertain future

By Gary Schwan

Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

BOCA RATON — Mickey Mouse put Orlando on the map. Why couldn't Beetle Bailey do the same for Boca Raton?

Tourism was on the mind of government officials in 1994 when they lured the International Museum of Cartoon Art to Mizner Park with start-up money and dirt-cheap land. Boasting one of the best collections of its kind, the cartoon museum seemed like a can't-miss attraction for scholars and fun-lovers.

But more than two years after opening its doors to a half-completed building, the cartoon museum is still seeking a punch line. Museum officials are happy to be up and running. But they concede that management changes, inadequate money raising and make-shift galleries are keeping the museum from reaching its potential as a must-see destination.

The museum "just doesn't deliver as dramatically as it should to meet the expectations audiences have for a cartoon museum," said Dennis Barrie, the museum's former adviser, who was director of the \$94 million Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland. "It needs to upgrade its whole presentation, and the feel of the building."

Founder Mort Walker, the creator of Beetle Bailey, who brought the museum to Boca Raton when it outgrew its suburban New York home, said the "biggest challenge is the same one facing every other museums in the country — raising money.

"But our programs seem to be going good. Our attendance seems to be going good. I'm not in the least bit discouraged. I could be happier. But, good God, we're in a start-up situation."

More like a Catch-22 situation, said Barrie. And one that may stem from a decision to open the Mizner Park building in two phases. With only the first floor open, the museum has a temporary feeling that doesn't present exhibits to their best advantage, he said.

"Those temporary (exhibition) walls! They look like they could be wheeled right out the door."

Lively, well-mounted exhibitions attract visitors. And ticket sales are essential to the museum's bare-bones, \$1 million annual operating budget, noted Abbie Brennan Roeloffs, the museum's acting director. "Improving the space was the very first thing I noticed that needed to be done," she said.

So, the museum may try an intermediate step — a \$1.5 million renovation of the first floor that would upgrade the galleries, theater and education facilities, and include some interactive exhibits. Part of the money could come from a \$500,000 construction grant from the state, and part from a \$1 million gift from the Hearst Foundation. Another \$500,000 would have to be raised, Roeloffs said.

Construction could begin next autumn and be completed in 2000. The renovation would push back completion of the entire \$15 million project indefinitely. Officials had hoped to finish the building by 1999, including a second floor filled with the sort of high-tech exhibits that are all the rage in American museums.

The timetable change isn't a "fall-back position," Roeloffs said. "It's a responsible, strategic decision. We're answering what our community and our patrons are telling us about the museum."

Fund raising has been a problem for the \$15 million project from the start, officials said. The operating budget is in the black. But the cash flow is tight, Roeloffs said, largely because the museum has no endowment to dip into.

With only 10 full-time employees, the museum is understaffed, relying heavily on 150 volunteers. The museum has raised only \$7.5 million in construction money, largely from the newspaper industry.

A board of trustees, loaded with big-name artists and industry executives, is also supportive. But the museum must do more to attract local donors, according to Will Ray, president of the Palm Beach County Cultural Council.

"Boca Raton philanthropy has not done its part for the museum," he said, noting that the largest

individual gift remains \$1 million from California resident and *Peanuts* creator Charles Schulz.

The biggest single gift from a Boca resident is \$250,000 — from Mort Walker and his wife, Catherine.

“We’re a little disappointed that we haven’t had more local support,” said Joseph D’Angelo, president of the museum’s board of trustees and chairman of King Features Syndicate. “But it takes time for institutions to become part of the community, including the Kravis Center. It’s a small miracle that we have such a beautiful building up and running.”

Roeloffs disagrees that local support has been lacking, noting that \$2.5 million has been raised from South Florida donors and corporations, such as SunTrust bank. “I don’t think Boca Raton has let us down, but I don’t know that we’ve done enough to include the community in our plans.”

The museum attracted roughly 55,000 visitors in its second year, down from 70,000 during the first year. “A 20 percent drop off after the first year is not unusual for any new museum,” Roeloffs said. Roughly 145,000 people have visited the museum since it opened.

Attracting visitors is a challenge. D’Angelo said the museum “never wanted to become a fun house. On the other hand, it has to be more user-friendly. Some people walk through and think it’s terrific. I thought it would be more interactive. But that will come when we achieve a higher profile and shake more dollars loose.”

The museum’s greatest asset is its extraordinary collection, observers agree. Numbering more than 160,000 objects, the archive includes classic comic strips, political cartoons, animation art and films.

“We’ve never wanted to become Disneyland,” Walker said, adding the museum has tried to walk the line between scholarship and entertainment. “One of our functions has always been to convince the world that cartoons have (artistic and cultural) value.”

But so does old-fashioned pizzazz, he said.

“In the past, we’ve had a lot of generic-type exhibitions — *Cartoons Go To War*, *The Art Of Animation*. But the exhibitions that really seem to bring people out are the ones that have a star, like Garfield.” A Garfield retrospective is at the museum through Aug. 30.

The challenges go beyond exhibitions, said cultural council president Ray. “The museum has lacked consistent management,” he said.

Before the building opened, Fritz Jellinghaus worked as development director, also serving as a kind of acting director. He left for a position at a New York museum. Last year, Kip Eagan became director after heading the Palm Beach Community College Museum of Contemporary Art in Lake Worth. He resigned in May, saying he wanted to return to his first love — fine art. Roeloffs, 45, who was serving as a private consultant, was named acting director. From 1989-1994, the Tequesta resident was associate director of the rock and roll museum under Dennis Barrie. Her specialty is finance and organization, and she helped raise money for the popular I.M. Pei-designed building.

“She’s one of the most organized people I’ve ever dealt with,” Barrie said. She has a great ability to plan things out for the immediate and long-term future. Organization supplies stability. And the museum needs to do some long-term planning for five and even ten years.”

Any new museum faces problems, said George Bolge, director of the Boca Raton Museum of Art, which plans to build a new facility at the opposite end of Mizner Park, and may compete for some of the same dollars.

“It takes three to five years to get a new museum up to speed,” he said. “As much as you plan, when you open the doors there are always a host of contingencies that pop up.”

“It seems clear now that they probably needed more funding from the very beginning,” Barrie said. “But it’s a great concept, with wonderful people involved. It’s blessed with a superb collection, many assets, and it ultimately will be a wonderful facility.”

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