

Women's club helps families during holidays Series: GOOD FOR YOU

[CITY Edition]

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Author: PAT SCARBERRY

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The Palm Harbor Junior Women's Club played Santa during the holidays, donating gifts and Christmas dinners to six needy families.

Club members painted Christmas windows and marched in the Christmas parade in Palm Harbor.

They also donated canned goods to Feast of Palm Harbor, made cookies for the Neighborly Senior Center of Palm Harbor, participated at Honeymoon Island for Myrtle Betz Day and provided support for the Community Chest of Palm Harbor with money raised at the club's fifth annual fashion show at Innisbrook.

The Palm Harbor Junior Women's Club will meet at 7:30 p.m. Thursday at the Palm Harbor Library, 2330 Nebraska Ave., Palm Harbor.

Meetings are open to all women living in Palm Harbor. For information, call 787-6245. Women Voters chose members as directors

Margaret Heveran of Clearwater and Eleanor Kennedy of Dunedin have been appointed to the board of directors of the North Pinellas County League of Women Voters.

Ms. Heveran is chairwoman of the league's Voters Service committee.

Ms. Kennedy is chairwoman of the committee conducting a study of health care planning and financing. Panhellenic organization honors past presidents

Clearwater Alumnae Panhellenic recently honored past presidents at a luncheon at the Countryside Country Club.

Those honored were Carol Nielsen of the Sigma Kappa chapter; Sharri Sprott of Alpha Gamma Delta; Nancy Tobin of Alpha Delta Pi, Faye Dibb of Delta Gamma.

Also honored were Patricia Berry of Alpha Xi Delta, Edith Wiseman of Zeta Tau Alpha and Virginia Jones of Alpha Chi Omega.

The Falcon Aires, a singing group from Dunedin High School, entertained for the luncheon. New officers are chosen for Homemakers Club

Sylvia Freer has been elected president of the Harborette Homemakers Club.

Leatrice Giffen has been elected first vice president; Beryl Jones, second vice president; Alice Austin, secretary; Dorothy Collins, treasurer; and Velva Edwards, delegate to county council.

Harborette Homemakers make tray favors for Meals On Wheels, cancer turbans for chemotherapy patients who have lost their hair and a soft-sculpture toy for each child admitted to Helen Ellis Memorial Hospital in Tarpon Springs.

They also donate a birthday cake each month for clients of the Palm Harbor Senior Citizens Center.

The club meets at 1:30 p.m. the first and third Tuesday of each month at the senior citizens center at Florida Avenue and Omaha Circle in Palm Harbor.

Gwen Hartley will be the guest speaker at the Jan. 15 meeting. Couple celebrates 55th wedding anniversary

Samuel and Gladys Schaffzen, married Dec. 22, 1935, in New York City, returned to the city to celebrate their 55th

wedding anniversary with family and friends.

The Schaffzens came to Clearwater 12 years ago. Before retiring, he was a bakery supervisor. She owned a yarn shop for 30 years.

They have three children and three grandchildren. Straight pitches in

Clients of Straight Inc., a drug and alcohol treatment center for adolescents and their families, donated toys and clothing to children under the supervision of the state department of Health and Rehabilitative Services.

Parents of clients donated soap, batteries, candy and other toiletries to military personnel in Saudi Arabia. Staff donated canned goods and other non-perishable items to the Religious Community Services Food Pantry, Military news Marine Pvt. Derrick M. Benton, son of Lee Elliott of Largo, has completed training at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C.

Benton is a 1990 graduate of Largo High School.

[Illustration]

BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO; Anniversaries: 91; Caption: Samuel and Gladys Schaffzen

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EXPERT WITNESS FOR HIRE

[CITY Edition]

St. Petersburg Times - St. Petersburg, Fla.

Author: David Olinger

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Need a psychiatrist who is willing to swear that a Prozac prescription could cause a man to walk into his bedroom one night, place a pillow over his wife's head and stab her in the neck and back? Who will testify that being left impotent by a car accident is not a serious problem for a man in his 50s because people at that age can't have sex often? Who will state that a psychiatrist who had sex with boys outside his office should be allowed to continue treating children in his office?

Who has been willing, on occasion, to judge the sanity of people he hadn't interviewed?

Who lists among the many credentials on his resume a membership in the American Psychiatric Association, though he relinquished it eight years ago, and two positions he never held at Johns Hopkins?

Dr. Walter Afield is your man.

Afield, a 55-year-old Tampa psychiatrist, is a familiar figure in Florida courtrooms. His interest in forensic psychiatry dates to his residency at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center in the 1960s, when he interviewed Albert DeSalvo, "the Boston Strangler," and found him to be a "clever, bright psychopathic guy who seemed like just one of the boys." By now Afield has been called as an expert witness in thousands of civil and criminal cases, including some of Florida's most sensational murder trials. In the six months through April alone, he reported being called as a consultant or giving testimony in 200 legal cases, averaging better than a case a day.

As a psychiatrist, Afield has testified on everything from neck injuries in car accidents to the serious psychological damage an Iranian immigrant can suffer when accused of shoplifting. He advertises his clinic in the yellow pages as a center for treating drug abuse, nerve injuries and mental illnesses and himself as a physician, neurologist, neuropsychiatrist, psychiatrist and child psychiatrist. He says he knows of no area in psychiatry where he would not be qualified to testify as an expert.

As a witness, Afield wins praise from lawyers who admire his affable, understandable presentation of psychiatric issues. He also has provoked controversies within his profession about the psychiatrist's role in court, most recently with his sworn testimony in a deposition that the antidepressant drug Prozac probably caused a man to knife his wife.

Afield brings impressive credentials to the witness stand: a doctorate at Johns Hopkins University, certifications in adult and child psychiatry, a teaching fellowship at Harvard Medical School, an assistant professor at Johns Hopkins, founding chairman of the University of South Florida's psychiatry department, an examiner for the national board that certifies psychiatrists.

He charges an impressive \$500 an hour for expert testimony, nearly three times his hourly rate for private patients.

Afield's resume also lists several credentials that psychiatric, university and hospital officials say are inaccurate.

For one, he lists a membership in the American Psychiatric Association (APA), a voluntary organization that sets ethical standards for psychiatrists and investigates complaints against them. Afield is not a member. The APA and its state affiliate, the Florida Psychiatric Society, say he resigned from both groups eight years ago and has not rejoined them.

Afield attributes the reference to APA membership to an outdated resume, which lists several psychiatric associations he has left and omits several others he has joined.

The resume also says he was the director of the department of child psychiatry at Johns Hopkins Hospital and an

assistant professor of neuroscience and pediatrics at Johns Hopkins University from 1967 to 1970, where he worked before practicing psychiatry in Florida.

Mary Foy, assistant dean and registrar at the university's school of medicine, said Afield worked in the hospital's division of child psychiatry, then part of its pediatrics department, but "was never head of child psychiatry here." He was an assistant professor of psychiatry and pediatrics, but not neuroscience, she said, because "the department of neuroscience did not exist then."

And, according to his resume, Afield is a staff consultant in psychiatry at nine hospitals in the Tampa Bay area. Most of the hospitals confirmed he has staff privileges, but not Bayfront Medical Center, St. Petersburg's largest hospital. "He has not been affiliated with Bayfront Medical Center for several years," spokeswoman Janan Talafer said. On the witness stand

Afield grew up in Florida, left to study medicine and returned in 1970 to start a psychiatry department at the University of South Florida campus in Tampa. He stepped down as its chairman four years later, and in 1975, he opened a private sex therapy clinic for married couples only. A devout Catholic who once described himself as "very much a moralist," he likes to relax after work by listening to his collection of Gregorian chants.

Today he runs the Neuropsychiatric Institute, a Tampa clinic offering substance abuse programs and therapy for families and children, and practices psychiatry from a plush 11th-floor suite with a balcony overlooking Tampa Bay. He sees private patients for \$175 an hour, he said, but his best-paid work comes from the lawyers who call on him to testify about the mental competence of criminal defendants or the psychological damage and physical pain inflicted by car accidents.

Lawyers who have hired Afield describe him as a psychiatrist with an easygoing manner, who is calm and confident on the witness stand, who communicates to juries in down-to-earth terms.

"I think he's an excellent witness," said Patrick Doherty, a prominent criminal defense lawyer in Pinellas County. "He does know what he's doing. He's got great credentials, and when you put him on the stand, he's sane. A lot of psychiatrists you see on the stand don't have that quality."

Alvin Weinstein, a Miami lawyer who cross-examined Afield in a civil case last month, offers a different assessment. Some of Afield's testimony as an expert witness "was laughable," he said.

The plaintiff in the case, Alan Hilkene, was 59 years old and married. He testified he had been unable to have normal sex for three years since a concrete truck toppled onto his car, injuring his spine. Afield, a defense witness, maintained that Hilkene's impotence resulted from age and emotional factors.

"I felt that he was an advocate rather than a truthful witness," Weinstein said. "I felt he was exaggerating. I felt he willfully attempted to mislead the jury to have them believe he held an academic faculty position at Harvard."

Before the trial, Weinstein requested information concerning Afield's qualifications and the frequency of his court appearances. The plaintiffs received, among other things, a resume listing Afield as a member of the American Psychiatric Association.

Weinstein said he was unaware of Afield's resignation from the APA. If so, Afield "misrepresented to the plaintiff his qualifications," he said.

"That's interesting as heck," commented Dr. Jonas Rapoport, medical director of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, a group that certifies specialists in forensic psychiatry.

In preparation for a trial where another psychiatrist has been called by the opposing side, "the first thing I do in the case is look at the APA directory," Rapoport said. And "if he wasn't a member, then I would alert the attorney," he said, because that can signal a resignation related to an ethics investigation.

Afield said no ethics complaints were pending against him when he left the APA and the Florida Psychiatric Society. As of Friday night, he had declined to authorize the release of membership records which could verify his statement.

He left the APA, he said, because "I got a little tired of the politics involved in it." Among the disagreements he cited were the association's opposition to the Vietnam War - which ended eight years before he resigned - and its threat to boycott New Orleans as a convention site after Louisiana declined to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. He also called the association an enemy of programs to control the rising costs of psychiatric care, such as the managed-care program he runs which reviews psychiatric treatments covered by company health plans.

John Blamphin, an APA spokesman, said he found Afield's complaints puzzling. "We never had a position against the war," and the APA did convene in New Orleans in 1981 after debating whether to find an alternate site, he said. The APA does have concerns about managed-care programs that make patients "feel they are being denied care inappropriately," he said.

About 37,000 of 40,000 psychiatrists in the United States belong to the APA, Blamphin said. After seeing a copy of

Afield's resume, he commented, "I think it's misleading. Because he is not a member."

Blamphin and Margo Adams, executive director of the Florida Psychiatric Society, said they cannot discuss whether Afield's 1983 resignation was ethics-related without the psychiatrist's written consent because APA investigations were strictly confidential then. Psychiatrists commonly resign for other reasons, such as disagreeing with association policies or believing its dues are excessive, they said, but if a psychiatrist resigns during an ethics investigation, he or she cannot rejoin until it is resolved.

The Department of Professional Regulation, the state agency that investigates complaints against Florida doctors, shows Afield has a nearly impeccable record as a Florida psychiatrist. It found probable cause to investigate him just once, when he was accused of exploiting seven patients by performing unnecessary tests and charging excessive fees for pain evaluations. The complaint was dismissed in 1989 for lack of "clear and convincing evidence" substantiating those allegations. Sex, great and otherwise

In a sworn deposition in the Hilkene case, Afield disputed the couple's description of their sexual relationship before the accident as great, saying that "three times a month is not great sex." He said that "people in their 50s aren't able to have intercourse very frequently." He said if you're over 50, you're "really lucky if you can get it twice a week. That's been my experience unless they're out chasing prostitutes and professionals."

The psychological harm of impotence, Afield said, depends on how a man was raised and his ethnic background - "usually Italians get very upset if they can't maintain an erection," and "the Spanish also have the same kind of situation, and they're certainly macho men." He said some men live for sex and get very upset if they can't maintain an erection, but "others who aren't so macho don't care." He said "there are many, many marriages where masturbation is the only activity that goes on."

Afield called the Hilkenes "comfortable" and said they needn't bother with sex therapy.

Weinstein said he found Afield's testimony "intemperate and unprofessional, in view of his slur about Italian and Spanish people. . . . I felt his great interest is in nothing but money."

In an interview, Afield said his testimony on male impotence in the Hilkene trial, which ended with a \$900,000 verdict for the couple, was based on a career of clinical experience with patients. At the age of 58 or 59, "sex is not that big an issue," he said, and "in general, there is a diminution of sexual performance after 40."

Among ethnic groups, sexual differences arise from cultural and not genetic factors, he said. For example, "the Irish men are somewhat castrated" culturally, he said, while with "the Latin male, there's much more emphasis on the macho, on the masculine."

Dr. Bonnie Saks, a psychiatrist and certified sex therapist in Tampa, called Afield's statements in the Hilkene case "really sad."

People can have good sexual relationships into their 90s, she said. "My favorite couples are from Sun City. They're wonderful. They always do well."

Notwithstanding his appearance as an expert witness, Afield is not certified as a specialist in sex therapy, and "he isn't an expert in that field," she said. "I think people should ethically restrict themselves to fields they're knowledgeable about."

Saks would not say whether an ethics issue was involved in Afield's departure from the American Psychiatric Association and its Florida chapter. "I'm not at liberty to discuss it. I'm a member of the Florida Psychiatric Society's ethics committee," she said. "Ethics procedures are confidential."

Several other Tampa Bay area psychiatrists also declined to answer that question, citing the confidentiality restriction. Unpopular defendants

As a professional witness, Afield has taken on some well-known institutions and defended some unpopular defendants. He testified on behalf of a young woman who said she was abused by Straight Inc., a drug treatment program he says was "performing malpractice . . . serving almost as a jail." He helped a young man get released from Anclote Manor, a mental hospital that had been accused of keeping insured patients against their will. He testified for the defense in the case of Billy Ferry, who had killed five people by firebombing a Winn Dixie supermarket, calling him a totally insane "wild man" who "was an animal, essentially."

He spoke up for Dr. Donald Rife, a child psychiatrist who admitted having sex with three boys during his career, including a 12-year-old entrusted to his care, and to playing games in his Jacuzzi with the nude 7-year-old son of a neighbor. Afield argued Rife should be allowed to continue treating children, despite those episodes, because there was no evidence he ever had sex with a patient. The Department of Professional Regulation disagreed, ordering Rife in 1990 to undergo therapy and to stop treating children for a minimum of two years, a decision that Afield now characterizes as homophobic.

John Newton, Rife's lawyer, calls Afield "one of the most painfully honest witnesses I've dealt with" as well as a psychiatrist who showed concern for a colleague in trouble. "It would have been easy for Dr. Afield to say, 'I don't want to bother with that,' but he didn't," Newton said.

Bill James, Hillsborough County's state attorney, remembers Afield's involvement in a 1977 criminal trial less fondly. James, then a federal prosecutor, clashed with Afield over the testimony of the star witness in a major arson case - Willie "the Torch" Noriega.

Noriega, as James recalls, was a professional fire-setter who had burned about 50 buildings, including his own mother's home. In exchange for a lenient sentence, Noriega provided detailed testimony about a Tampa arson ring that bought rundown buildings, made cosmetic improvements, insured them and then burned them. Because he had previously been treated for mental illness, he was examined before the trial by two psychiatrists who found him competent to testify.

The defense called on Afield, who "talked to a couple of people" who knew Noriega, James recalled, "looked at a couple of medical reports, and then took the stand. Testified that in his opinion Willie was a chronic paranoid-schizophrenic. He had never talked to Willie in person."

The jury deliberated an entire month, he said, before finding most of the 20 defendants guilty.

Afield said he had no choice in that case but to offer an opinion based on medical records and interviews with Noriega's acquaintances because prosecutors prevented him from conducting a personal examination. "Bill James wouldn't allow me to see the patient," he said.

The arson case was not the last in which Afield reached conclusions about the mental condition of a person he had not interviewed.

In 1983, Afield was called as a state witness against John Joseph McGoff, who had killed a St. Petersburg psychiatrist. McGoff was behaving strangely at his trial. He testified that podiatrists cut off feet, pediatricians make children sick and "the human brain resonates like a viscous crystal - like an old radio set - to the mind of God." He had also refused to be examined by Afield, saying he had no comment for psychiatrists. Afield looked at hospital records, talked to people who knew McGoff and concluded the defendant was not as crazy as he seemed. "To me, Mr. McGoff is a malingerer and is playing games with us in an attempt to feign mental illness," he testified.

McGoff was convicted, but the verdict was overturned, and in 1985, he was sent to a mental hospital by a judge who found him incompetent to be retried.

In 1987, Afield relied on media accounts of a shooting spree to reach an opinion about the attacker's mental competence to be tried for murder. Two days after William Cruse killed six people at a Palm Bay shopping center, Afield said in a newspaper interview that "it sounds to me that he knew right from wrong . . . You can't really paraphrase it too well. But he just seems to be a rotten SOB."

When the case came to trial, Afield was called as a defense witness. Cruse, he told the jury, is a "madman, and he belongs in an insane asylum."

The jury convicted Cruse and sentenced him to die in Florida's electric chair. Prozac and violent behavior

Afield's foray into the Prozac controversy began with a referral from Ronnie Crider, a lawyer representing a Pinellas County man accused of attempting to murder his wife. Afield expects his testimony in that case to draw national attention to a trial scheduled this fall. It has already caught the attention of a group linked to the Church of Scientology which has been conducting a national anti-Prozac campaign.

Crider's client, Kevin Callahan, allegedly walked into his bedroom one night, put a pillow over his sleeping wife's head and stabbed her in the neck with a knife. Janet Callahan remembers crying out, "What the hell? What is wrong?" before she was stabbed again in the back and lost her breath. Her husband was struck by lightning several hours later and was taken to the same hospital where she was being treated for stab wounds.

At the time, Kevin Callahan was on probation on arson and fraud charges. He had been arrested the previous year on a charge of striking his wife, which was later dropped after she withdrew the accusation. He had a swelling on his head that the doctor treating him was worried about. He was taking two medicines for depression, Prozac and Elavil. On the day of the stabbing, Janet Callahan said he had also smoked a small amount of marijuana with her. He denies that.

In June 1990, three months after the stabbing, Callahan "talked at length concerning the possible effects of Prozac on him, and he was concerned about some material the Scientologists (had) given him about Prozac possibly causing violence. I told him according to the literature, there's very little evidence to support such a claim," wrote Dr. George L. Warren, the psychiatrist treating him.

Three days after he talked to Warren, Callahan was examined for the first time by Afield, a psychiatrist he says was chosen by his lawyer. Afield drew a different conclusion about Prozac. He decided it probably caused Callahan to stab

his wife.

"I think the Prozac was probably the primarily responsible agent in this situation," he said in a sworn deposition.

"There have been other reports in the literature," he added, citing a case in Kentucky "where the guy (who) shot everybody was on Prozac. And this guy who shot the rabbi fellow in New York two or three months ago apparently was on Prozac. And we're beginning to see some reports of this around the country, people on Prozac committing violent acts or intense violent outbursts."

Afield said his belief that Prozac caused the man to stab his wife would not be altered by information indicating that the man had a history of violent outbursts. Prozac "would probably enhance" such violence, he said, "because if you have those kinds of outbursts, you . . . probably, with what we know today, ought not be taking Prozac."

Afield said in the deposition that he has not done research on Prozac, but his clinic has seen many people who take it. He no longer prescribes it, he said, because of reports "around the country where people have been acting strangely and bizarrely."

Asked in an interview to name the reports in scientific literature documenting that Prozac can cause patients to become violent toward others, Afield said he knows of none.

"It's too early for that to get in the scientific literature. The drug's only been on the market for three years," he said.

He said the reports he has seen on violence and Prozac came from the media, including a television news documentary, "something like 20/20, which knocked the hell out of Prozac."

Dr. John Zajecka, a psychiatrist who has done Prozac studies at Rush Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center in Chicago, said he has treated hundreds of patients with the drug, "and I've yet to see any overt violent behavior" as a result.

Afield's testimony on Prozac "is really unbelievable," Zajecka said. "There are several conclusions drawn on very little scientific data."

Another critic of Afield's testimony on Prozac is his successor as chairman of the psychiatry department at the University of South Florida, Dr. Anthony Reading.

Depression is a common illness that, left untreated, can lead a person to suicide, alcoholism, drug abuse, marital troubles or the loss of a job, Reading said. "I see people who've been depressed for two years, getting more depressed, putting it off . . ."

Given the large number of people now taking Prozac or considering treatment for depression, presenting testimony unsupported by scientific research that the drug can cause murderous violence "is potentially very harmful in terms of public health," Reading said.

Afield's testimony on Prozac has been welcomed, on the other hand, by the Citizens Commission on Human Rights, a group founded by the Church of Scientology that has been campaigning against Prozac as a treatment for depression.

This month, the church paid for a full-page ad in USA Today implying that Prozac caused the murderous rampage committed in 1989 by Joseph Wesbecker, who shot eight people and wounded 12 others in Louisville before killing himself. The drug has also come under attack in dozens of lawsuits filed by people blaming Prozac for violent or suicidal behavior. To date, those claims have not produced one jury verdict that Prozac can cause people to become violent, according to the drug's manufacturer, Eli Lilly & Co.

The church's claims have been bitterly disputed by psychiatrists, who call it one of the best and safest drugs for treating depression. Now Scientologists have an ally from the psychiatric community in Afield, who cited Wesbecker's rampage in his deposition as one of the violent episodes "in the literature" about Prozac.

"In this area, pretty much the psychiatrists are in favor of the drug, from what I've been able to tell," said Richard Tinkenberg, executive director of the Citizens Commission on Human Rights office in Clearwater. Afield "is the only psychiatrist I know of" who disagrees, he said, but "there are probably others."

Afield said he knows nothing about Scientology and has no quarrel with Prozac's manufacturer. "I'm not one to kick Prozac out of the business. I own Eli Lilly stock," he said. Good and bad testimony

To Reading, the Callahan case exemplifies what is distressing about the ways expert opinions are presented in court. The ability of lawyers to find a dissenting psychiatrist on almost any issue creates an unfortunate public perception that in psychiatry there is no body of knowledge, he said, "that it's just a matter of opinion, that nobody knows anything."

In Reading's opinion, there are few psychiatrists nationally who have the research and clinical experience with Prozac to call themselves experts on its potential effects.

"What worries me is how an individual can claim to be (an expert) on this particular subject without that," he said.
"Reading newspaper articles does not make one an expert."

Within the psychiatric community, there are frequent complaints about what passes for expert opinions and little agreement on how to define unscientific testimony, let alone prevent it. In the courts, a doctor certified to practice psychiatry can be hired to testify as an expert on a great variety of subjects. Some psychiatrists think their colleagues should be testifying only on subjects where they are recognized as experts. Others say it is best to let juries decide who is the most credible expert when psychiatrists offer conflicting opinions.

The American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law has formed a task force to wrestle with the question of defining what is good and bad testimony.

Rappeport, its medical director, said he often gets calls from colleagues involved in malpractice cases who are upset about the other side's expert testimony and from lawyers asking what the academy is going to do about a particular doctor. Typically, "it turns out the attorney's on the other side," he said.

The problem is, "the courtroom is an adversarial arena and not a scientific arena. If you're going to testify, you're going to discover that this is not a medical conference. You are of no help to anybody if you are wishy-washy. It's akin to a 101 course. You don't list all the exceptions," he said.

"On the other hand, there are some colleagues who overstep the bounds out of all credulity."

Afield said he sometimes feels uncomfortable about being called into a criminal trial to contest another psychiatrist's assessment of a defendant. He thinks it might be better to let juries reach their verdicts first, and then call on psychiatrists to debate questions of sanity.

"I don't think psychiatrists belong in the courtroom," he said, but "society asks us to be there."

He professes not to enjoy being hired by lawyers. "I put my fees up so high to make them go away," he said, because court appearances disrupt his schedule and restrict his ability to see patients, and the other side's lawyers browbeat him if they can.

"Deep down I really don't like to do it that much," he said, but "attorneys like me. I've got good qualifications, and I tell the truth."

He would not estimate his yearly income as an expert witness, but "I make a lot less than cardiac surgeons," he said. David Olinger is a staff writer for the St. Petersburg Times.

[Illustration]

COLOR PHOTO, FRED VICTORIN; BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO, (3); Caption: Dr. Walter Afield; Bonnie Saks; Bill James; Anthony Reading

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Deputy's wife to face prostitution charge Series: STATE DIGEST

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Police issued an arrest warrant Monday for the wife of a Broward County sheriff's deputy to face prostitution charges, the woman's attorney said. The woman, Kathy Willets, said she would turn herself in to authorities today and post \$2,000 bail for her release, said attorney Marc Rubin. Kathy Willets' husband, Jeffrey, was arrested last week and accused of pimping for his wife. An attorney for Jeffrey Willets, a nine-year veteran of the sheriff's department, previously said he participated in the prostitution scheme as a way to help cure his wife of nymphomania. Drug center closes amid allegations RICHMOND - A St. Petersburg-based private drug treatment center that faced allegations of patient abuse has closed its Virginia operation, state officials said Monday. The Springfield office of Straight Inc. closed Friday, the state Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services said. Straight Inc. has used a variety of controversial mental and physical techniques to deter children from drugs. The program's philosophy includes breaking down patients' defenses about drug use, a process critics have said can be demeaning. Company spokeswoman Joy Margolis said 60 percent to 70 percent of patients do not return to drug use after participating in the program. The program had worked to correct several violations, including physical restraint of rebellious clients, but still faced problems in renewing its license, said Jacqueline M. Ennis, assistant commissioner of the state agency. He got no prize when he won this car JACKSONVILLE - When you win a car that comes with tools, you've got to wonder. Fourteen used cars - some more used than others - were given away at the Jacksonville Suns baseball game Saturday night. Mike Opalewski's prize was a 1976 Ford LTD, which he describes as "the worst car in your dreams." It has one flat tire and two others so bald "you can see air," a hood that doesn't fit, faded and scuffed red paint, a beat-up vinyl roof, a badly torn front seat and a cracked dashboard. One thing it doesn't have is an ignition switch. Opalewski couldn't start it even with the screwdriver that came with it. Steve Martin, general manager for Frank Griffin Volkswagen, which donated the LTD, said a staff member drove the car to the ballpark and he assumed it was in reasonable shape. Martin said he would work with Opalewski to make sure he feels like a winner. For now, Opalewski says, "the screwdriver was the only valuable thing I got out of the deal." Woman hits cyclist, drives off with body OCALA - An Ocala woman hit and killed a bicyclist early Monday and then drove more than five miles with the man's body hanging off her windshield, police said. Terri Ann Meade, 27, of Ocala hit Theodore R. Young, 63, also of Ocala with a Mercury Cougar about 2 a.m. When Meade struck the victim, he became wedged in the front window with his legs hanging over the hood of the car, said police spokeswoman Lynn Cyprian. Meade continued driving to the parking area behind the Jungle Garden Inn, police said. At 2:30 a.m., someone called 911 to report the accident. Cyprian said authorities were investigating the accident and had not charged Meade, pending the results of blood tests taken at the scene. Briefly . . .

Ethics chairman elected: Dean Bunch, a Tallahassee lawyer, has been elected to a one-year term as chairman of the state Commission on Ethics.

HMO inquiry planned: A panel of the Florida Board of Medicine plans to look into whether health maintenance organization doctors are overburdened and whether overall health care has been affected. Rolling sentencing delayed: An Ocala judge has delayed indefinitely the sentencing of Danny Rolling in a grocery robbery. Rolling is a prime suspect in the slayings of five students in Gainesville.

Credit: Compiled from Wire Reports

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Abstract (Document Summary)

HMO inquiry planned: A panel of the Florida Board of Medicine plans to look into whether health maintenance organization doctors are overburdened and whether overall health care has been affected. Rolling sentencing delayed: An Ocala judge has delayed indefinitely the sentencing of Danny Rolling in a grocery robbery. Rolling is a prime suspect in the slayings of five students in Gainesville.

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At least we have our priorities straight

[CITY Edition]

St. Petersburg Times - St. Petersburg, Fla.
Author: HOWARD TROXLER
Date: Aug 2, 1991
Start Page: 1.B
Section: TAMPA BAY AND STATE
Text Word Count: 590

Document Text

The top stories this week were:

The Tampa rich-kid rape case.

The Kennedy nephew rape case.

Pee-wee's Big Adventure.

The amorous couple videotaped by neighbors.

Bare-bottomed hot dog vendors, who seemed to show up on the TV newscasts with amazing frequency. (Should we refer to it not as taped "footage," but as "buttage?")

The Fort Lauderdale deputy's wife who said she became a prostitute to cure a case of nymphomania.

Oh, and in case you didn't notice, the official end to a nuclear arms race that, for five decades, has threatened to destroy the entire planet.

The Florida Bar must be awfully proud of Frank Vaccaro, the Tampa lawyer defending one of the two men from prominent Tampa families charged with rape.

Vaccaro has publicly promised to "assassinate" and "obliterate" the reported victim in court. Then he produced his client at a news conference to call her a "blatant whore."

Why is it that lawyers are always whining and moaning about their cases being "tried in the media," until they want to do it themselves?

Is it possible for the public to seek a gag order?

There's no council like St. Pete's council, you're a great council, you know!

A new Grand Prix, what could be more ex-ciiii-ting!

Because to shaky deals the city's so in-viiii-ting!

All they need's a briefcase and a fancy pitch

And you will make them rich!

In more debt you go!

If he puts up, then we'll shut up, but until then you'll understand,

Don't you be deceived or let yourself believe

Even if you're desperate just once to succeed

A hundred fifty grand in cash is all you need

So make them fork over the dough!

Asks a Straight Inc. spokeswoman: "We don't abuse kids. If we abused kids, do you think parents would want to have their kids here?"

Well, uh. .

If Bob Graham got caught running through the U.S. Senate stark naked, clutching a bottle of booze in one hand and a crack pipe in the other, while shouting that Norman Schwarzkopf was a sissy. . .

He MIGHT lose next year. Might, mind you.

But as he finishes his first term as a U.S. senator, the former two-term governor seems to be as popular as ever.

He'll just keep popping up all over the state doing those "work days," jotting down voters' names in the notebooks that he keeps religiously, and generally being insouciant ("calm and untroubled," Webster's says).

A former Panhandle congressman named Bill Grant thinks he can whip Graham, even though Grant couldn't even hold his own House seat last year after he switched to the Republican Party.

Grant says Graham is "vulnerable" because of his votes on federal civil-rights laws. He might want to ask Paula Hawkins, who used to be the second most popular politician in the state until Graham booted her out of office in 1986, just how vulnerable Graham is.

How come our government scandals in the Tampa Bay area are usually about land zoning, while Broward County's are usually about sex?

The latest example comes from Fort Lauderdale, where the vice mayor resigned this week. His name apparently popped up in the records of a deputy's wife who has been charged with prostitution.

Doug Danzinger had made a career out of campaigning against pornography, nude bars and those troublemaking spring breakers.

Sometimes it seems like politicians fall into two classes: those who have sex and those who don't want ANYBODY to have sex.

Trouble results when you forget which side you're on.

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Are cries for health care reform finally being heeded? Series: LETTERS

[CITY Edition]

St. Petersburg Times - St. Petersburg, Fla.

Date: Aug 12, 1991

Start Page: 9.A

Section: EDITORIAL

Text Word Count: 3280

Document Text

My husband and I recently watched a C-Span program on health care reform, wherein many people gave statements to the congressional Subcommittee on Health Reform in Washington, D.C. It was very informative and it's about time Congress woke up and started the ball rolling about this important subject in the United States.

A few of the speakers were members of Congress from Ohio, Illinois, Massachusetts, California and Florida (Rep. Gibbons). They in essence testified that the United States has fallen way behind in providing essential health care for its citizens. A "first-rate country," as we always deemed the United States to be, we lag far behind such countries as Japan, Germany, United Kingdom and Canada. The United States spends more per capita and covers millions less than these countries do. They (the speakers) also blamed a lot of this deficiency on the strong lobbyists; i.e., insurance, medical suppliers, American Medical Association, etc. Some of the persons who spoke have now introduced various bills to try to rectify this sad state of affairs. One point we particularly liked to hear was presented by Rep. Pete Stark of California who suggested (and not in jest either) that members of Congress give up their "perks" of health insurance paid for by taxpayers for a while and walk in the shoes of the American citizens/voters, who for various reasons are without any or have inadequate health coverage, or are on the road to the poorhouse because of rapidly increasing premiums to their employers, those on Medicare with Medi-gap insurance, and the ones who have no insurance at all. Would that all members of Congress have the courage to even say this to their fellow workers!

When we retired eight years ago, we paid approximately \$1,500 per year including major medical with prescription service. Now we pay about \$2,650 including what is deducted from our Social Security check for Medicare coverage. Now on a much lower income, we are paying much more due to rapidly spiraling costs. It won't be long before the cost of health insurance will be beyond the reach of most people. For young families and single persons trying to make ends meet, it is already a burden. This program really uplifted us as maybe there is a "silver lining" with the health care crisis, and it is a real crisis, this country is facing. Perhaps our cries in the wilderness of government for a fair shake for American citizens is at last being heeded by the people we send to Congress to serve "we the people" and not "we, the self-serving Congress." Let's hope and pray it is so. Albert and Dorothy Pascale, Port Richey A bill that only 'postpones a solution'

Recently Sam Gibbons, our congressman from the 7th District, sent his constituents a summary of his proposed Medicare Universal Coverage Expansion Act of 1991, H.R.1777. With this mailing, he confirms himself as a typical "spend and tax" politician.

If Gibbons and his accomplices further subsidize the purchase of health care services, the price of these services, and thus the cost to taxpayers, will accelerate. In an attempt to mitigate this effect, if Congress sets an arbitrary ceiling on the price of certain health care services, then supply, or access to these services will decrease. These are counter to the intended effects.

Furthermore, Gibbons suggests that this bill will give Americans freedom from fear. This is doublespeak. With this bill, Gibbons actually advocates dependency on the government. Therefore, he is an enemy of freedom. From dependency comes bondage. The presumption that he can legislate fear from Americans is a vain and arrogant one.

To finance the deficit, the government sells bonds, etc. As the government becomes less credit-worthy, it must pay the buyers of the debt a higher interest rate to attract their money. This capital is drawn away from the income generating firms that we all work for. National income, tax revenue and employment suffer. Their only alternative in this case is to print money. The resulting inflation jeopardizes the very core of our savings, the personal investments that we have in our future.

Gibbons and his pals, with this and other deficit-increasing proposals, are painting the country into a corner that may soon be inescapable. This bill does not solve a problem, but only postpones its solution. Politicians supporting this bill are buying votes with short term Band-aids.

Please do not mistake my feelings for a lack of compassion for my fellow man. Rep. Gibbons and I both share a desire to help those among us who are in great need. We differ only, albeit greatly, on how to best accomplish this. We all know, deep in our hearts, that "but for the grace of God, there go I." But if Congress continues to live like a king in a fool's paradise, we will say, "Holy mackerel, there we all go," for a debtor has no control over his destiny. Thomas C. Rechin, Tampa Rates up, service down

The Postal Service wants to raise the first class letter rate to 30 cents. I wish they would drop it back to 3 cents. Not because I begrudge them the money, but because I would like to see a return to the service we got for the 3 cents.

From anywhere in town you could walk a few blocks and find a mail box. The other day I wanted to mail a letter from Sand Key. There is only one shopping center on Sand Key, so I thought there must be a mail box there. Forget it.

When it cost three cents I could mail a letter and safely assume that it would be delivered in a day or so. Two months ago I asked my broker to mail me a check. It was important that I receive it within a week. No such luck. I had to ask him to cancel the mailed check and wire transfer the funds.

A few weeks ago an eleemosynary institution in Baltimore received a batch of checks that had been mailed three years earlier. Did they get an apology? No. They got a bill for the difference between the postage when mailed and the postage when received.

It seems every time the rate goes up, the service goes down. I wonder what they will subtract when they add that extra penny. Andy Johnson, Clearwater Straight responds

Re: States take hard look at Straight, July 31 and Straight sues client families, Aug. 1, about Straight Inc., the non-profit substance abuse treatment program, by the Times' reporter, David Barstow.

After numerous personal invitations, I am truly astonished that Mr. Barstow would decline the opportunity to visit the program and speak with families in treatment, if he really is interested in doing a thorough story reflecting honest efforts to understand Straight. After all, it is these families who can best speak about their experiences with treatment at Straight.

As was noted in the articles, Florida licensing authorities have praised the Straight program. In addition, Straight is proud that all of its programs are accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of health care organizations, the nation's most prestigious health care accreditational agency which accredits hospitals and other health care organizations.

Straight recognizes the epidemic proportions of substance abuse among our nation's young people, and we recognize the need for an adolescent treatment program which is affordable to middle-class families. Therefore, Straight has maintained fees that are low when compared to other substance abuse treatment facilities. In addition to its low fees, Straight has always endeavored to be flexible with families in arranging payment terms. However, if we are to continue providing vital treatment so desperately needed by families suffering from substance abuse, we must receive compensation.

During the past years, over 1,000 former clients, have become delinquent in paying for the treatment their children received at Straight. We have contacted these families and have made every effort to resolve these situations reasonably. Unfortunately, in some cases the former client simply neglected to make payment and legal action was necessary to recover Straight's costs for the treatment provided.

Mr. Barstow indicates that some of these former clients, who have not paid for their children's treatment, are now complaining about the program. It seems these people complain only after being contacted about their unpaid accounts.

To continue the constant barrage of "bad press" against an organization that treats substance-abusing children only hurts the families and the children's opportunity to return to the community as vital contributing citizens. Joy Margolis, Vice President, Public Affairs, Straight Inc., St. Petersburg

The Times did not visit Straight only because the stories were written under deadline for publication the next day. The Times has written extensively about Straight's programs in the past, including a five-day series that detailed one youth's course of treatment. More on Straight

Your recent articles concerning Straight Inc. prompt me to write about my personal experience. I feel compelled to share with the community the very positive feelings I have for the Straight organization, and the services it provides for substance-abusing adolescents and their families.

My family's contact with Straight, Tampa Bay, began in August of 1987 when we admitted our 17-year-old son into

treatment. We were aware at the time that Straight was considered by many as controversial. Thanks in part to a glowing recommendation by our pediatrician, who has practiced in Tampa for many years, we decided to find out for ourselves what Straight was all about. I thank God that at that crisis point in our lives, we did not allow adverse publicity to deter us.

Four years later, I look back on our months in treatment at Straight with an abundance of good memories. Participating in the Straight program has brought us many long-lasting rewards. Our son yesterday celebrated four years of sobriety. His brother, who also graduated from Straight, is four years clean as well. The strength and support we have drawn from Straight will be with us always. The friendships we made there are enriching and enduring parts of our lives.

My husband and I now participate at Straight as volunteer parents. We know that our sons are clean and sober largely through their own motivation, but we shall never forget that their recovery began at Straight. We feel strongly that without the Straight program, two of our four children would not be alive today. We continue our involvement with this fine organization, not only to express our gratitude, but also in an attempt to assure Straight's survival for other families who follow us in dealing with the heartbreak of having a child who is addicted to drugs. Name Withheld, St. Petersburg

I am writing this letter in regard to the two recent articles about Straight, Inc. I am a graduate of the St. Petersburg Program and I was upset when I read them, because they appeared to be extremely one-sided. I think that Straight gets a lot of undeserved negative publicity. I say it is undeserved because I experienced first hand what Straight is all about.

When I walked through those doors, I did not get brainwashed, threatened or abused; what I did get was a second chance at life. I am the first to say that Straight is not perfect - but what in this world is? When I came to Straight I was hurting - and the staff and the other kids there showed me that I did not have to live the way I was living anymore.

I cannot speak for the other programs, but at the St. Petersburg Straight I found care. I found people who understood because we'd all been in the same place and we knew what it was like to be young and get mixed up in drugs. Straight is not an easy program, but its success seems to be a lot better than that of the 28-day "country club" rehab. I am grateful that I am sober today, because I don't know where I would be if I had not gotten help. All that I can tell you is my own experience, which I wouldn't trade for anything because it meant my life. I want to share that with your readers because I believe the program deserves a lot more credit than what it has been given. Why don't you print some of the success stories - Straight has saved a lot of kids' lives. Name Withheld, Odessa

Back in the early '70s, the organization was called "The Seed."

My son was 13 years old when I was confronted by his school counselor and informed that he was addicted to "downers." After investigating, I learned that he had been given drugs by a grown man who worked for my husband. He wanted to get as many children hooked on drugs as he could so that he could encourage them to come to his home for photographing. (He went to prison for child pornography.)

At the time, the only facility in the area was The Seed. I put him in there three days after learning about the drug problem. I was as brainwashed as some of the children there were. They operated much like a religious cult, with plenty of emotion involved. You weren't allowed to see your child at all for a period, and then only across the room, using a microphone to speak to them.

They were encouraged to admit to much more than they had done, so that it looked good for those in charge to have cured them of their many drug problems. If they didn't respond in the accepted way, they were not allowed privileges, or to "go home" for a weekend.

Children were put in charge of other children. The power that this promoted also promoted a lot of cruelty and mistreatment.

I was told that you had to pay what you could afford, but it was never enough. When my son went to the "guest home," (you are not allowed to know where), he came back with all of his clothes and shoes missing. I was told that it was his responsibility to see to it that he had them (a complete wardrobe).

I was called at 11:30 p.m. one night and told to come and pick him up. They said that the program wasn't right for my child. This was thousands of dollars later. I was also told that he had tried to commit suicide by using his fingernails to cut his wrist. Again, he had no clothes.

My son had to go to countless psychiatrists and counselors, but nothing ever was able to undo what The Seed had done.

He was killed in an automobile accident at the age of 17. Name Withheld, Clearwater Earth First!

Do you know about an important trial which is going on in Prescott, Ariz.? When the trial began June 19, you gave it just a few lines hidden deep in the paper. Unless I've missed it you have given no coverage since. The trial I speak of deals with a conspiracy trial against five Earth First! activists, Dave Foreman, Peg Millett, Mark Davis, Ilse Asplund and Marc Baker.

This trial should be of interest to all environmentally conscious Homo sapiens as the tactics used, although not new, ushers in a new era against the environmental movement. The Black Panther Party of the late '60s and the American Indian Movement of the mid-'70s know where I'm coming from. Recent attacks against California activists Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney in 1990 and the recent burning of the home in Arkansas of Greenpeace toxics activist Pat Costner proves that violence against the environmental movement is escalating to new heights.

Domestic spying and covert disruption of dissident groups has not ended in this country. I feel the environmental movement has become targeted as we have reached a point where the general public is beginning to listen and becoming more educated as to the ongoing environmental destruction of the planet by big money, and we are now effectively causing change. Bill Brooks, Canebrake Earth First!, Palm Harbor Clearing up misconceptions

Kudos to NBC for airing the drama Strange Voices on July 29. The story had enough factual information to hopefully clear up some misconceptions about schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is a physical disease that affects an organ of the body: the brain. Schizophrenia is a chemical imbalance in the brain that interrupts the normal thought process, causing the victim to have audio or visual hallucinations that can cause bizarre behavior patterns. Behavior that can be observed in one-third of the men and two-thirds of the women who are homeless people living on the streets in our "kinder, gentler nation."

Secondly, the program touched on the gamut of emotions and facts that the family faced as a result of their daughter's illness:

Coping with a disease they do not understand.

Crises - surviving the violent tantrums and near suicide of their daughter.

Stigma - being shunned by those not understanding the manifestations of schizophrenia.

Guilt - blaming selves or hereditary factors as the cause of the illness.

Frustration - when financial resources were drained, finding that the only desirable location for the daughter's recuperation had a waiting list years long because of lack of funding.

Consolation - becoming aware of peer support groups who also have loved ones suffering from the disease.

Hope - in knowing that medical research continues for more effective psychotropic drugs to restore chemical balance to the brain. The latest and most promising drug at this time is clozapine.

Videotapes of Strange Voices should be sent to President Bush and members of Congress so they can examine their collective conscious and realize that it is their responsibility to enact legislation to provide funding for community treatment facilities to adequately treat and care for the tens of thousands of people who suffer from schizophrenia. Where will the money come from? A good start would be decreasing money allocated for foreign aid, the space program and the defense department. Bob McDonald, Dunedin Check the noise level

Re: Arena football at the Suncoast Dome

From a senior citizen with apologies to the younger ones.

I have waited from the first Storm game to write this note. (I am a season ticket holder, four seats, wish I had eight, all in Section 120.) But the noise level was so high that it was the last game of the regular season, Aug. 2, before I decided to question the volume of excess decibels.

Why? I wore ear plugs at the Aug. 2 game and really enjoyed the entire evening, even the subdued yakking by the announcer.

Question? Will somebody please check the noise level with a decibel meter and tell me if I should apply for the ear plug concession at the Dome or just shut up? Joe Cihak, St. Petersburg

What to do with the Dome.

On the principle that we should laugh at ourselves before everyone else does, paint it yellow and proclaim it the Lemon Dome. Barbara Sinnott, St. Petersburg Share your opinions

We invite readers to write to us. Letters for publication should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 1121, St. Petersburg, 33731. Or they can be sent by facsimile machine by calling the Times' fax number, 893-8675. They should be brief and must include the handwritten signature and address of the writer.

Letters may be edited for clarity, taste and length. We regret that not all letters can be printed.

[Illustration]

BLACK AND WHITE CARTOON, DON ADDIS; Caption: A serpent from the medical insignia wraps itself around the neck of a hanger and asks, "So...Still tryin' to make a comeback, eh pal?"

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Abstract (Document Summary)

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Ensuring a better planet - a few good ideas at a time

St. Petersburg Times - St. Petersburg, Fla.

Author: BETTY JEAN MILLER

Date: Aug 13, 1990

Start Page: 198

Text Word Count: 552

Document Text

Every Saturday morning, the beige-and-brown Nissan station wagon moves slowly along Shore Acres' Bayshore Boulevard, intermittently stopping, lights blinking, as the woman and boy get out, pick up boxes and bags at the curb and load them into the wagon.

The pair are Francine Fournier and her 9-year-old son, Jesse. Since June, the dedicated environmentalists have been a one-family recycling machine, providing curbside pickup of aluminum cans and glass in their neighborhood.

They began the effort after Mrs. Fournier decided she needed to do something more than just recycle her own family's cast-offs.

"I saw a documentary on TV about Mother Earth, and it really made me feel guilty," she said. "I thought, 'Wouldn't it be nice if I could get my neighbors to pitch in, too?'"

She handed out fliers to everyone on Bayshore Boulevard, giving her name, address and telephone number.

"Mother Earth Wants You! Please Recycle," the papers announced, promising Saturday morning service, rain or shine. Reaction was instantaneous. So far, the Fourniers have 20 clients. The two arranged for someone else to take the route during their two-week vacation.

After the 9 a.m.-to-noon Saturday collections, Mrs. Fournier takes everything home and spreads the contents of the containers out on her lawn, separating the glass into containers for green, brown and clear pieces. "I feel like if I ask my customers to do that, they'll say, 'Forget it,' and not put anything out. And it doesn't take any time," she said cheerfully.

Then they take their booty to R.V. Shulenburg's recycling center at 2600 22 St. N, where they get 1 cent a pound for glass and 38 cents a pound for aluminum. "It takes a lot of cans to make a pound," Mrs. Fournier said. Their total take usually is between \$6 and \$7. Mrs. Fournier deducts \$2 for her gasoline, and Jesse takes in the rest as his allowance.

The spirit is contagious. "I see enthusiasm building," Bayshore Boulevard resident Kathy Elston said. "I notice the neighborhood is really picking up on it. It made us sit down at home and talk about what else we could do." As a result, she and her husband, Alan, who sell lighting fixtures, plan to write the companies they do business with and ask them to use recyclable packing materials.

"We were also thinking if she (Mrs. Fournier) needs more help, we could divide the neighborhood into teams. It's people like this we need more of," Mrs. Elston said.

There are other advantages to the program besides helping the environment and providing Jesse with an allowance, Mrs. Fournier said.

She spends weekdays working at the Straight Inc. drug rehabilitation facility, and the Saturday morning project "gives us a chance to have quality time together and gets him away from so much television."

"Yeah, I feel like it's doing a good deed for the future," said Jesse, a Campbell Park Elementary School fourth-grader. "I'd say it's hard, but me and my mom, we talked about it." He likes the money, too. "Sometimes I save it, and sometimes I spend it on candy."

Then, in a confidential tone, he added, "The thing I hate is missing the cartoons on TV."

[Illustration]

BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO, Cherie Diez;; Caption: Francine Fournier, son Jesse and friend Eric Aschenbrenner

gather waste for recycling, (ran CTI, NT)

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Lewis defends his role in recruitment of foreign banks Series: LETTERS

[CITY Edition]

St. Petersburg Times - St. Petersburg, Fla.

Date: Aug 19, 1991

Start Page: 9.A

Section: EDITORIAL

Text Word Count: 3047

Document Text

Re: Is he a regulator or a promoter?, editorial, Aug. 11.

Regarding your editorial questioning the propriety of my participation in the recruitment of foreign banks, both tradition and statute require that I engage in that activity.

Beginning in the late 1970s, then-Gov. Reubin Askew requested that I accompany him on trade missions to promote international banking in Florida. His successor, Bob Graham, continued to stress efforts at recruiting foreign trade, recognizing the substantial economic benefit that the 68 foreign bank offices currently located in Florida have brought to the state.

Moreover, Florida law mandates that the comptroller or his designee shall serve on the Florida International Banking Advisory Council. In my capacity as chairman of the council, I am required by law to assess the "particular needs of the state's small business community in relation to how international banking laws can assist in the promotion of foreign trade activities."

It is thus my responsibility to promote as broad a participation by banks as possible in the economic progress of our state.

In the event that you believe that this role in any way conflicts with our responsibility to initiate tough regulatory action against foreign banks when circumstances warrant, let me remind you of the role we played in the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) matter. When an indictment was returned in the case in the fall of 1988, we immediately obtained removal and prohibition orders against BCCI officials implicated in the money-laundering activity and issued a regulatory order against the institution.

As soon as the bank pled guilty to money-laundering charges in February 1990, we initiated action to revoke its license and seized \$18-million of its funds to satisfy any outstanding claims.

Significantly, no other regulator, either in this country or abroad, chose to close BCCI operations in their jurisdictions until roughly 16 months later. Gerald Lewis, Comptroller of Florida Tallahassee It's a bad idea

Howard Troxler's humorous remarks aside, and your editorial position notwithstanding, an income tax for the state of Florida (indeed, for any state) is a bad idea. It is a bad idea because the Florida Legislature cannot be trusted with that kind of power.

I didn't say "money"; I said "power." The power to tax is the power to destroy. Those states which levy income taxes are, for the most part, in worse shape than those which do not.

It's almost a side-issue that the Legislature can't be trusted with that kind of money, either. The Florida Lottery was supposed to solve the financial woes of our educational system; all who voted for it did so with that understanding. The resultant betrayal of the people's trust amounts to a statewide scandal. Who could now believe an income tax would turn out otherwise? Frank Clarke, Oldsmar 'Economic growth'

Re: Reaganomics still holds political magic for GOP by David S. Broder.

The GOP leaders are kidding themselves. Candidate Bush had it right when he called it "Voodoo Economics." The only voters who have gained from Reaganomics are the very rich; 99 percent of us have lost ground.

The massive tax cut for the rich (from 70 percent to 28 percent) was, according to the Laffer curve, supposed to increase productivity. What a laugh; it only increased the national debt!

Broder and others have referred to eight years of "economic growth" under Reagan/Bush. How can this be? As an industrial nation, "economic growth" should mean a strengthening of our industries. Under Reaganomics, they have gotten weaker! David D. Porter, St. Petersburg Making a comeback

Thanks to conservationists, the banning of DDT, and cooperation from the public, brown pelicans are slowly making a comeback from near the brink of extinction but they're facing other threats and one of them is fishermen's hooks and lines.

I hope that fishermen will be aware of the danger and will cooperate to help preserve this protected species. Pelicans will dive on trolled, cast, live or other baits visible to them and may get hooked or tangled. Here are some suggestions to avoid or minimize such problems with pelicans or any other kind of sea bird:

1. If you are trolling or casting and see a pelican eyeing your bait, and you are using a sinking lure, take steps to let the bait sink, such as stopping the boat or letting out line. If you are using a floating lure or are unaware of the pelican until he is diving toward your bait, jerk the bait at the last moment to spoil his aim.
2. If you are "still" fishing or casting and pelicans are attracted, stop fishing until they get discouraged and leave, or else fish deep to get the bait out of sight.
3. If you do hook or tangle one don't cut the line. To do so is a virtual death warrant. Reel it in carefully or maneuver the boat to the bird while keeping a taut line. Do this immediately so the bird hopefully won't get more tangled or try to swallow the bait. You may want to cover the bird's beak and wings with a towel or article of clothing while you hold it and remove the hook and line.
4. Don't discard fishing line (or six-pack rings) in the water or anywhere else where birds can get tangled in it and don't leave unattended baited hooks lying around on piers, etc.
5. Don't hand feed the birds. They tend to lose their fear of humans and are more likely to get into trouble with fishermen.
6. If a bird is badly injured, you may want to take it to a wildlife rescue organization. Roger M. Wernicke, Pensacola 'No voice, no choice'

Re: Abortion rights showdown in Wichita, Aug. 8.

I get so tired of pro-life stereotyping. It seems that the majority of people think that all pro-lifers are middle-aged, male, religious fanatics. As a mother of two and a pro-lifer I can tell you that is not true at all. I have worked with many people, most of whom were women of varying religious backgrounds.

I applaud the efforts of Randall Terry and those members of Operation Rescue who left their homes, families and jobs knowing they could face prison to speak for those who have no voice - no choice.

In this country you can be fined or sent to jail for damaging a sea turtle egg, yet every day, 4,400 unborn humans are legally murdered in their mothers' wombs. What kind of nation have we become that a turtle life carries more value than a human life?

Wake up, America, before it is too late. Support all women by supporting better pre- and post-natal care, programs like WIC, and places like ALPHA House. Stop killing unborn babies and start supporting their mothers. Help them through adoptions and help them rebuild their lives.

If we all worked together we could make this a "kinder, gentler nation." Lauri Anne Barton, Largo Debt owed, but to whom?

Attached to my latest Florida Power bill is a proud announcement that for my convenience I can now charge my utility bill on my MasterCard or Visa. This is not a good idea. The flat fee and interest on the cash advance will result in an increase in the debt load of those least able to manage it. A final thought: Could it possibly be that the motivation for this dreadful concept is that the customer will then owe this debt to their card issuer, rather than to Florida Power? Steven Gaber, St. Petersburg Preserve the wetlands

Re: Wetland policy is changed, David K. Rogers, Aug. 10.

The new policy that President Bush is adopting about the wetlands is like that of an enemy who enters our country hoping to cause destruction.

We imprison and call those who spy on us traitors because we fear that they want to destroy our country, our people, our land, yet we allow the destruction of our wetlands by people who are no different than those we call traitors.

Our wetlands, what's left of them, are as important to the good of our country as our Constitution, the Statue of Liberty, our national parks, etc., and they should also be preserved. Write to your members of Congress; save our wetlands.

Frank Collins, Port Richey Interesting contrast

A very interesting contrast of pictures on the Aug. 13 front page.

We have one group of people making an adjustment on equipment located 146-million miles out in space and another group of people unable to keep seaweed out of the power supply.

One could say you have covered all the news from the sublime to the ridiculous. Kenneth E. Berry, Seminole Castro, Cuba not the enemy

From my observations, Fidel Castro's real sin is that he won't take orders from the U.S. government, and to tweak the nose of our proud presidents, starting with Eisenhower and Kennedy, is unforgivable insolence, certain to invoke the wrath and retaliation of Washington. So, to punish Castro for his independence, we tried to invade Cuba at the Bay of Pigs, assassinate him via the Mafia, destroy the Cuban economy with our embargo, and indoctrinate them with the Voice of America. Still, Fidel Castro can mingle with the common people. It is possible the Cubans prefer to run their own country!

Canada, Mexico, European and South American countries, and I guess every other country, except the United States, have normal, friendly relations with Cuba.

Our enemy is not Castro or Cuba; it is our own hollow arrogance - arrogance that feeds our vanity and is exploited by our crafty politicians. Preposterously, the same U.S. leaders who reproach Cuba, now have the monumental political task of diverting American attention from our crippling domestic problems until after next year's election. Would that they could embargo that mess.

No wonder Cubans don't want us to dictate their form of government. James Wilkins, St. Petersburg Fighting AIDS

Re: Missionary in the land of AIDS, Aug. 4.

I applaud the efforts of Patricia Harrington. Her work in the fight against AIDS is by far the best example of community service I have ever read or heard about. The government can take a lesson or two from her approach to solving social problems sans bureaucratic red tape. Talk about getting to the root of a problem! The town of Belle Glade will surely benefit from her courage and compassion. Her story shines a little hope on a possible future free of this deadly disease. Laurie A. Paul, New Port Richey Feeling good

On Aug. 14 you had a letter of which the main theme was that Americans who voted for Reagan and Bush must be feeling bad. Well, I imagine that all America must be sick all the time because it voted overwhelmingly for the two, and at one time, 49 states did so. My question is: How would we feel if we had voted for a couple of jerks like Mondale and Dukakis? We would not only feel sick, we would be in a hospital. Henry Ristorcelli, Seminole **Victims of Straight**

As an organization which represents victims of Straight, we feel compelled to respond to the Aug. 12 letter of reply which was written by Joy Margolis, a representative of Straight Inc.

First, we would like to address the issue of Straight's flexibility in dealing with clients and their payment for "services rendered." We have talked directly with many families which were involved in the Straight program. A recurring statement all these families have in common is that Straight was, and continues to be, a dangerously abusive program. Straight clients and staff members have repeatedly beaten, sexually abused, physically abused, and emotionally abused one or more members of all these families. It is this abuse, of which we have ample documentation, that led many of these families to protest the payment of fees to Straight Inc. An example of this is the Saccomani family which filed an abuse report with HRS because of the abuses suffered by Mrs. Saccomani's son, Larry, who was "beaten by three clients while staff members were present . . . the staff members did nothing to stop the abuse." This abuse report was confirmed by HRS (abuse report number 89-065599). Mrs. Saccomani refused to pay for her son's "treatment" after which she was sued by Straight Inc. It appears to us that Straight is only flexible in dealing with clients and their families when it is to Straight's advantage.

As for Ms. Margolis' premise that Straight has maintained low fees, we would contend that there are no fees low enough to compensate for Straight's flawed treatment modalities and incompetent staff. Indeed, why should any program charge such high fees while delivering only child abuse, family abuse, and widespread distress?

Again, Ms. Margolis errs when she claims the only time these people complain is after being contacted about their overdue bills. Mrs. Saccomani complained about the beatings her son suffered before she received the final bill from Straight. In fact, these beatings were the reason for the termination of her son's "treatment" in Straight; these beatings were also the reason for her protests against the final bill from Straight.

We would like to conclude our letter by offering official court documentation which establishes Straight's long record of abuse. Please bear in mind that these cases are but a small sample of the abuses which have been taking place at Straight Inc. Case number 83012161CI, Jacqueline Stallings vs. Straight Inc. involved a "malicious act" committed by Straight Inc. against Ms. Stallings. Straight lost this case. Case number 85001827CI, John Douglas vs. Straight: In this case Straight committed a "wrongful act" against Mr. Douglas. Again, Straight lost the case. Our final case, number

85011481CI, Karen Norton vs. Straight Inc. involves negligence fomented by Straight against Ms. Norton. Once again, Straight lost the case.

We as representatives of the victims of Straight truly feel that the record of Straight Inc. speaks for itself. Straight is a dangerously out of control, abusive program. Their "treatment" (mistreatment) is legendary among informed treatment professionals. When an informed person considers the facts concerning Straight Inc., this question must be addressed: Is it possible that Straight's "means" do not justify its "ends"? Beatings, sexual abuse, mental abuse and emotional abuse are not recognized treatment methods in this 20th century. Richard R. Bradbury, President, Hillsborough Chapter, National Support Group Network for Victims of Straight Inc., Tampa Cartoon comment

In your Aug. 11 Perspective section, a cartoon by Clay Bennett depicts an apprehensive male patient in a hospital or clinic waiting room, reading a newspaper, which headlines, Doctors accused of ordering unnecessary tests. Nearby stands a doctor with a report in his hands and says to his male patient: "Sir, we've got the results from your mammogram."

Obviously, Mr. Bennett considers this a humorous example of an "unnecessary test." Actually, a mammogram done selectively on a male patient may be a life-saver. Men do have cancer of the breast, albeit infrequently. I speak as a radiologist, who is now retired.

Perhaps, a "pap smear" would have been a better example of an unnecessary test on a man. Harry J. Manning, M.D., Clearwater

You recently displayed an editorial cartoon that indicated some humor could be found in a mammogram being performed on a man. The primary aim of the pictorial sarcasm was the ordering of unnecessary tests for patients by doctors. Both of these positions are unfounded, possibly damaging and irresponsible in this instance.

I manage an imaging facility specializing in mammography. We perform approximately 20 male mammograms a year. While the incidence of breast cancer in men does not warrant mass screening, the disease does strike men. It represents .7 percent of all male cancers. Some medications commonly prescribed can cause changes in the male breast. Gynecomastia also can be a clinical problem in younger men. Lumps scare men when found in their breasts, just as in women, and must be investigated. These questions must be answered, and mammography provides the best answers.

The cartoon, that perpetuates the idea that the mammogram is an unneeded exam for a male, may cause great harm. Most men are hesitant and embarrassed to speak with their doctors about breast problems. It indicates they should be reticent to submit themselves to a medical procedure that could save their lives.

Irresponsible medical practices should be stopped. Patients should be aware of the need for tests prescribed by their doctor. The cartoon did not meet this goal in this instance and did a disservice to men. Christine Scheulen, R.T., R.D.M.S., Administrator, Nova Imaging Center Inc., Clearwater Wisconsin's ethical example

Hooray for the Wisconsin Legislature!

And isn't it time for the Florida Legislature to follow Wisconsin's example and prohibit our legislators, administrators and staffers from accepting anything from lobbyists - not even a cup of coffee or stick of gum - and enforce this with stiff fines and/or jail terms?

If any of our legislators cannot afford to be representatives of the people without lobbyists' support, they should quit. Someone else, equally qualified or better, will be there to run for the seat, someone who will not find it necessary or desirable to take gifts.

Is a constitutional amendment by petition in order? Roland J. Quinn, Port Richey

Re: A serious look at ethics, Aug. 12.

Congratulations to Wisconsin Senate President Fred Risser for taking a tough, yet proper, stance on ethics. And a loud and lusty Bronx Cheer to the Florida Legislature and Sen. Arnett Girardeau for their so-called ethics "model for the country."

As a purchasing professional in military electronics for many years, a policy of accepting nothing was rigidly enforced and supported by a corporate ombudsman. There is nothing wrong with conducting business at arm's length.

The state of Florida should emulate Wisconsin's policy and apply it to all state, county and local elected and appointed personnel. Operating by different rules is ludicrous. Clifford F. Doll, Oldsmar

[Illustration]

BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO; BLACK AND WHITE CARTOON, DON ADDIS; Caption: Gerald Lewis; Male airline passenger to woman seated beside him, 'My fear of flying has been displaced by my mortal terror of everything else.' Headlines of paper he is reading are Train Derails, Cruise ship sinks, Bus burns, Motorist shot, Pedestrian beaten,

robbed and Cyclist slain

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Ex-judge escapes long-term sentence

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Two Pinellas County teen-agers claim they are still haunted by the former Illinois judge who sexually molested them.

"I was not physically hurt but I was mentally hurt," one wrote. "I spent two or three weeks at Horizon Hospital because of it. I still have recurring nightmares because of it."

The other said he moved in with the former judge turned teen counselor because he had nowhere else to go.

"I trusted him," the teen-ager said in a letter. "He took advantage of me. . . . I think he should get 40 years."

But on Thursday, Arthur Nicol, a former Illinois associate judge who moved to Palm Harbor several years ago, escaped a lengthy prison sentence for molesting the boys in 1989.

Pinellas-Pasco Circuit Judge Brandt C. Downey III sentenced Nicol to seven years in prison followed by 15 years of probation on three counts of having sex with the boys, who were 14 and 15 at the time. Under state sentencing guidelines, Nicol faced 12 to 17 years in prison. Prosecutors had sought a 22-year sentence.

In deviating from the guidelines, Downey said Nicol is remorseful and poses no threat to society. He also said the former judge voluntarily began treatment for sexual offenders and has no prior criminal record. Downey said prison offers no treatment for sex offenders.

"He is attempting to address the problem; that is commendable," the Pinellas judge said. "I don't feel, however, that community control and probation is adequate."

Nicol, 42, stepped down from the bench in Champaign County, Ill., in 1985. The former judge told the Champaign-Urbana News-Gazette his career change was compelled by a religious experience in which he felt directed to work with troubled teens. He opened The Greenhouse, a home in Champaign where teens could go for counseling.

In early 1986, the newspaper reported that law enforcement agencies were investigating Nicol for making sexual overtures to a 14-year-old boy. Police also investigated him in another incident involving a 17-year-old, the newspaper reported. Charges were never filed in either case.

In 1987, Nicol, father of two, divorced his wife. He moved to Pinellas County where he began offering family counseling services out of an attorney's office. He also began working at Straight Inc., the Pinellas County treatment center for youths with drug and alcohol problems.

He met the 15-year-old at Straight. Later, the boy moved in with Nicol and introduced him to a 14-year-old friend. Nicol was arrested in April 1990 after the older boy told his father about the sexual incidents.

Both boys currently are in custody on charges unrelated to the incidents with Nicol, according to testimony Thursday.

At the hearing, Assistant State Attorney Joseph Bulone asked the judge to give Nicol a stiff sentence because of the injury he caused the teen-agers.

"They were troubled teens before," he said. "Now they're even more troubled. . . . There's a lot of pain for the victims as well."

Defense attorney Paul Levine presented a number of witnesses who testified that Nicol had a good prognosis for staying out of trouble if he continued undergoing intensive, long-term treatment.

"Incarceration alone will have little impact on deviant behavior in the future," said Leo P. Cotter, director of SHARE, an outpatient treatment program for sexual offenders.

Walter Afield, a Tampa psychiatrist, told Downey that Nicol needs plenty of counseling. Without treatment in prison, Nicol is "either going to kill himself . . . or turn into a rather serious sexual offender."

Nicol also had a few words for the judge.

"I need treatment," he said. "I do also believe at some point I need the forgiveness of these men."

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