Annexation, Expansion, and Regional Challenges

Pinellas by the Decades, 1972-1981

James Anthony Schnur
GOLDEN DOME AT THE AQUATARIUM
January 1974
1976
This House Is Believed To Be 125 Years Old

Old House Gets New Lease On Life
Old House On 37th Street At Ninth Avenue N

Paul Davis

Historical Home May Be Saved
AMERICAN REVOLUTION BICENTENNIAL
1776-1976
December 1975
Clearwater, 1975
Cazares assails Scientologists’ tactics

Compiled from staff and wire reports

Former Clearwater Mayor Gabriel Cazares said Friday he is “delighted” by published reports that the Church of Scientology has been waging an extensive, sophisticated campaign to discredit its “enemies,” including Cazares, public officials and journalists.

“The public has got to realize that this is a group that will stop at nothing to silence their enemies,” Cazares said.

The Washington Post, quoting unnamed sources, said Scientology documents seized by the FBI show an “attack and destroy” campaign carried out by the church’s “Guardian’s Office” to silence critics. The campaign included illegal surveillance, burglaries, forgeries and many forms of harassment, the Post said.

Among the targets of the campaign were Cazares and former Clearwater Sun reporter Mark Sableman.

Reacting to the Post story, Scientology spokesman Gregory Layton accused the U.S. attorney’s office and the Justice Department in Washington of leaking the documents to the press to try to discredit the church. “It is obviously a last-ditch, frantic effort to divert public attention from the scandals within their own ranks,” Layton said.

Among the “covert operations” shown in the documents are these:

- Scientology agents staged a fake hit-and-run accident designed to compromise Cazares, who had criticized the Scientologists’ purchase of a Clearwater hotel. A woman Scientology agent, driving a car in which the Clearwater mayor was riding in Washington, ran into another Scientology agent posing as a pedestrian, sped away from the scene and urged the mayor not to report the “accident.” The Scientologists tried to use the incident against Cazares in his campaign for Congress in 1976.

- The Scientologists attempted to discredit Sun reporter Sableman, who had written stories critical of the church, by forging the rough draft of a newspaper story under his name purportedly linking Florida politicians to organized crime. While Sableman was covering the Florida Legislature, the Scientologists posted the fake story to state legislators.

- Scientology infiltrators were placed at least three government agencies — the Justice Department, Internal Revenue Service and Drug Enforcement Administration — to gather intelligence and steal documents dealing with agency actions relating to the Scientologists.

- A campaign harassment was launched involving Scientology cutouts and background investigation from grantes in schools and background checks on government employees. Among the apparent Scientologists involved was Assistant County Atty. James F. Field.

- Scientologists threatened to blow up a Scientology office in Clearwater.
BAYFRONT CENTER

ST. PETERSBURG
FLORIDA'S
ST. PETERSBURG FEDERAL
Palm Harbor may form Chamber of Commerce as first step in drive toward incorporation

By CRAIG ROBERTON
Pinellas Times Staff Writer

PALM HARBOR — Increasingly concerned about determining their own destiny, residents of this old fishing village are planning a town meeting in September to discuss formation of a Chamber of Commerce.

But in the longer run, many residents here look to the Chamber as the vanguard for the ultimate incorporation of Palm Harbor as a town.

Incorporation is not a new idea here. Old-timers can remember when the old central residential area of Palm Harbor was known as Southerland and had its own town government. There was a college on a hill overlooking Florida Avenue. It provided most of the tiny city's tax base.

BUT WHEN the college closed its doors at the turn of the century, so did the city hall. Since then, talk of re-incorporating the old town has periodically surfaced. But the residents expressed little interest.

Now all that is changing. According to several leading businessmen, people are getting worried about the encroachment into their area of Tarpon Springs from the north and Dunedin from the south. They fear that Palm Harbor may lose its identity.

"They (Tarpon Springs and Dunedin) creep up on us every year," said Lonnie Hawkins of Hawkins Construction Co. "So we think maybe it's time to make a move."

The man who now functions as Palm Harbor's unofficial Chamber of Commerce is realtor Donald Valk. When a letter addressed to the Palm Harbor Chamber of Commerce arrives at the post office just up the street from Valk's Florida Avenue office, the postman delivers it to him.

"I GET A LOT of mail from people interested in Palm Harbor," said Valk. "Just the other day I got two letters from out-of-state."

Valk says he has talked to many businesspeople in town "and just about everybody is favorably inclined" toward forming a Chamber of Commerce. So Valk, one of the principal organizers of last year's highly successful Palm Harbor Arts and Crafts Festival, is taking the lead in forming the Chamber.

His idea is to "shoot for an incorporation in September" that will be open to a Palm Harbor, Crystal Beach and Ozona and will function as any other such chamber would promote the area and try to attract more people to it.

IN ADDITION, Valk said that the "frontrunner" for exploring the possibility of incorporating Palm Harbor.

Almost all the businesspeople indicated that they like the idea of it as a chance to improve living conditions and the town's mostly dirt streets the view of local sculptor and artist Hawkins, who said he fears that people or Dunedin may one day "dictate" Palm Harbor.
911 emergency phone call system gets Pinellas okay

By ROBERT HOOKER
St. Petersburg Times Staff Writer

CLEARWATER - A countywide emergency telephone system with two dispatch centers and a contract with General Telephone Co. to implement it were adopted Tuesday by the Pinellas County Commission.

Under the system, to cost the county $407,000 the first year (1977), anyone needing police, fire or emergency medical assistance can dial 911.

CALLERS SOUTH of a line running generally south of Largo and Ulmerton Road will reach St. Petersburg’s police and fire communications system, while callers north of the line will be connected to the sheriff’s administrative center.

Under law sponsored by State Sen. Richard Deeb, R-St. Petersburg, the county has until Dec. 31, 1976, to implement a 911 system.

AT LEAST 400 cities and counties around the country already have 911 systems, which began in Haleyville, Ala., in 1968. Studies have shown that people contacting fire, police and rescue agencies spend 90 seconds to four minutes finding and dialing conventional, seven-digit numbers — wasted time that 911 will save.

Also Tuesday, the commission:

✓ Asked the state for permission to widen the southeastern point of the treacherous interchange near Bay Pines veterans hospital and add more lighting to all three points.

January 1977, the same time all municipal courts in Pinellas must be turned over to the county.

✓ Asked the volunteer committee of builders, plumbers and electricians that advises the School Board on new buildings to assist the county as well.

✓ Learned that Bill Simon, a financial adviser to County Administrator Merrett Stierheim, is helping Chief Judge David F. Patterson analyze the 6th Judicial Circuit’s rising costs — assistance Patterson predicted will produce “substantial savings.”

✓ Confirmed the appointment of Edward Martin to the $18,500-a-year post of assistant community development coordinator. The community development department was created to administer a $5-million, three-year federal program in the county and a number of Pinellas cities.

Pinellas may defend impact fees

St. Petersburg Times Staff Writer

CLEARWATER — The City of Dunedin may get an ally in its defense of water and sewer impact fees — the Pinellas County Commission.

County commissioners indicated Tuesday that they may join Dunedin when a challenge of that city’s water and sewer connection fees is debated by the State Supreme Court — a case that County Administrator Merrett R. Stierheim called a potential “landmark decision.”

The county has had water impact fees since December 1973 and already has sold water bonds predicated in part on revenues from those fees.
Snow On Suncoast!

Snow Brought Glee And Problems On A Day To Remember In Florida

JOE CHILDS
Staff Writer

Write this date down. This was a day you'll want to tell your grandchildren about.

The snow you saw dancing in gusting winds today was the first trace of white stuff to hit St. Petersburg since 1964, when flurries last were witnessed.

Even more exciting is this tidbit: The finger-deep accumulation, confirmed in Tampa and reported in spots of Pinellas County, has not been matched since the late 1950s.

St. Petersburg's last measurable amount of snow fell Feb. 13, 1958, according to Evening Independent clip files.

Although no significant snowfall is expected tonight or Thursday, temperatures probably will be colder tonight than last night.

The National Weather Service in Ruskin is forecasting the coldest night of the winter season tonight. Readings could drop into the mid to low 20s in central Florida and upper 20s in St. Petersburg and coastal regions.

Predictions of bitter cold weather heightened fears among Florida citrus growers. The current cold spell may be the most damaging since 1962, the winter said to have brought the most destructive freeze of the century.

Lows last night were in the low to mid 30s for the second consecutive night. Pinellas Park was the exception as its low Friday marked the coldest temperature at that location since the 1950s.
Power Crisis Closes Schools

SHEILA MULLANE
Staff Writer

The area power crisis canceled classes at St. Petersburg Junior College and at Lakewood High School, Largo Middle School, Orange Grove Elementary School and Northside Christian School this morning. Thousands of other students in St. Petersburg and mid-county schools shivered in the dark and cold during the widespread power failure.

All area schools (public, private and Catholic) likely will be closed Thursday. A formal request to close schools in the 32-county area served by Florida Power Corp. to conserve power was made to State Education Commissioner Ralph Turlington this morning. Turlington said he would contact the 32 school systems and ask them to close Thursday.

Meanwhile, a spokesman for the Catholic Diocese of St. Petersburg said some parochial schools had closed this morning but he didn't know which ones. The power failure was compounded by a breakdown in their telephone service and they had not been able to contact their schools by late morning.

All adult vocational classes in the public school centers are continuing as scheduled, according to the school system.

All evening classes at the three SPJC campuses will not be held tonight to conserve power, officials said this morning. The daytime classes at the St. Petersburg and Clearwater campuses were canceled, said spokesman Jim Weakley, "because of the extreme cold and no lights." The SPJC administration building heat was shut off to conserve power, he said, in compliance with a Florida Power request. (See related story, Page 1-A.)

Many public schools in St. Petersburg and the mid-county area were without electricity or heat for an hour or more this morning. At one point administration officials told principals to use their own judgment in deciding whether to stick it out or send their students home.

Later in the morning the administration learned all power would be restored by 10 a.m. and instructed schools still open to remain open.

But by that time Largo Middle School had already sent its students home. The school has fewer windows than others and had grouped many of its students in the cafeteria and halls where emergency lighting was available.

Lakewood High School was forced to close and send its students home when it was discovered its power did not come back on when power was restored to the surrounding neighborhood.

The areas hit by the power problem were Gulfport, South Pasadena, south and northeast St. Petersburg and Largo.

There were also boiler problems at Pasadena Elementary, Clearwater Comprehensive Middle School and Dunedin High School unrelated to the power failure. Space heaters were sent to those schools.

Walter Pownall, assistant superintendent of institution services, said school custodians are being urged to arrive at their schools early Thursday morning to fire up their boilers.

Northeast High School Principal Bill Williamson said his school did not have any trouble this morning. His custodial staff spent the entire night at the school making sure the furnaces were working. They will stay at the school again tonight, he said.

Students at Boca Ciega High School "whooped" with glee when the lights went out there shortly after 7 this morning. The electricity remained off for about 40 minutes, according to school officials, but the school did not lose much of its heat.

"The kids were really very good about it," said Gibbs Assistant Principal William Brown. The electricity went off for about 30 minutes at that school.

At Legman Middle School students in rooms without windows were crowded into other areas of the school when the power failed.

A boiler failure at Clearwater Comprehensive Middle School affected about six classrooms. Auxiliary room heaters were provided,
2 dead, 60 injured as twister devastates elementary school

Just a splintered shell of what was High Point Elementary School remains in the wake of Thursday’s tornado.

South Africa troops raid Angola in retaliation for guerrilla attack

Timmy Duval never had his birthday party

You May Be Richer

Captain And Tennille of Special From Hawaii

Independent ACTION

Look For Your Money!
Some of the state’s unclaimed money may be yours. The complete list is in today's People Paper.

Lives Torn By Twister

Tops On TV

You May Be Richer

Weekender — Section B
MAY 15 SET FOR CENTRAL PLAZA
OPENING OF WOLFIE'S RESTAURANT

St. Petersburg soon will get another top-line eating establishment with an international reputation among gourmets... Wolfie's, until now confined to Miami Beach.

It was announced yesterday by Lowell S. Fyvolent, managing agent of Central Plaza, that Wolfie's has leased nearly 10,000 square feet at the east end of the new super-center in the one-time Goose Pond, and will be ready to open about May 15.

With a large dining area, soda fountain, kitchen, bakery, prepared food store, and catering service, Wolfie's will gain a Florida West Coast bridgehead, and St. Petersburg will have another lure sufficiently strong in itself to determine tourist routing through Florida.

Fyvolent said Mr. Meyers, founder and managing force of Wolfie's, will establish a corner entry at First Avenue and 32nd Street, in the unfinished east end of Central Plaza. Dining and soda area will have 40 feet of frontage, and run back 100 feet to the Central Plaza Shoe Repair shop.

The frontage of the next 25 feet westward will be a retail shop where Wolfie's baked goods and other foods will be sold over the counter. This section will run through the building 150 feet, joining another 25x70-foot rear section to provide kitchen and bakery area.

Meyers has told Fyvolent that he will start a catering service here with delivery by his own trucks to points as far as Sarasota and Lakeland. Moreover, Wolfie's will be the first major food establishment here to offer late service after-the-theatre up until 2 or 3 a.m. Through its Miami Beach establishments — including one site at Lincoln Road and Collins Avenue — Wolfie's has become nationally famous in a few years, and regularly fills food orders by air express throughout Latin America.

Since last fall, when a Times article about Central Plaza mentioned that the shopping center was negotiating with Wolfie's, Meyers has been urged by many residents and tourists to come here, he told Fyvolent.

K. M. Thompson Co., general contractors, will start finishing operations at the east end of Central Plaza early in March, and Meyers is now having "extravagant" interior designs completed.

Opening target date will be in the first half of May.

St. Petersburg Times, 26 February 1953
1973

WOLFIE'S BAKERY SPECIAL
Fresh Baked Pound Cake
- Nut
- Marble
- Raisin
- Plain

SALE 89c
REGULAR $1.25
SALE GOOD THRU FEB. 28th

Central Plaza Shopping Center

Try The New DRIFTWOOD CAFETERIA
New Management
Great Food
TODAY'S FEATURE
SALISBURY STEAK
$1.39
INCLUDES: 2 Vegetables,
   Roll & Butter and
   Tea or Coffee.
Serving 11 A.M.-2P.M.
And From 4P.M.-7:45P.M.
101 34th St. South
CENTRAL PLAZA
Driftwood Cafeteria, downtown St. Pete
Wedgwood Inn

TRULY A GREAT DINING EXPERIENCE

LUNCHEON SPECIALS $1.75

Complete Dinner Specials
Luncheon — 11:30 A.M.
Dinner — 5 P.M. 'Til Very Late

Live Maine Lobsters $6.95

FRENCH CUISINE

4th St. & 18th Ave. So. 862-8259
Famous For Steaks

CHIEF CHARLEY'S
KAPOK TREE RESTAURANT
Kapok Tree offers land for Clearwater arts theater

By CRAIG ROBERTON
St. Petersburg Times Staff Writer

CLEARWATER — The Kapok Tree Inns Corp. has formally presented its offer of 40 acres of prime wooded land near Tampa Bay to the city of Clearwater for a theater for the performing arts and adjoining park and nature trail.

In a ceremony late Friday afternoon, Kapok Tree financial officer George Voltzow produced architectural sketches of a $3.2-million complex to be called the Richard B. Baumgardner Center for the Performing Arts. The site is adjacent to the Kapok Tree Inn on McMullen-Booth Road and extends east to Alligator Lake.

"Kapok Tree Inns Corp. has a deep concern for the city of Clearwater," Voltzow said in a prepared statement. "We recognize the need for a performing arts center in Clearwater and wish to help the city in its effort to establish such a facility."

Mayor Gabriel Cazares, Commissioner Karleen De Blaker and Acting City Manager Michael Paroby, who gathered for the presentation in the board room of Kapok Tree Inns, gratefully received the offer of the land and indicated that the proposal will fare well when it is presented to the full City Commission next Thursday.
WELCOME TO

Walt Disney World®

We hope that you and your family will enjoy your stay in the Vacation Kingdom here at Walt Disney World. A multitude of Recreational-Leisure activities is yours to enjoy. This Ticket Book is your Passport to many wonderful adventures in the Magic Kingdom. May your stay be a pleasant one and may you return and visit us again soon.

Walt Disney Productions
1975 SPACE ODYSSEY

World Swings Into P.G.A. Winter Activities

With more than 8 thousand golf pros from around the world visiting our World and competing for over $150,000 in tournament prize money, this is an exciting month for you to be visiting the Magic Kingdom!

On January 13, Walt Disney World rolls out the “green” carpet to the Professional Golfer’s Association and their 1975 P.G.A. Winter Activities Program. The giant P.G.A. Merchandise Show, the largest private merchandising show of its kind in the world, will also be held during the same week. The show will feature the latest in golf equipment, clothing, and accessories.

Tournaments and practice rounds will be played on all three Walt Disney World courses: the Palm and Magnolia courses adjacent to the Golf Resort, and the Lake Buena Vista course in Walt Disney World’s Host Community.

There is no admission charge and all guests are invited to view some great golf in the following tournaments (see calendar on page 2 for course placement):

- The P.G.A. Junior-Senior Tournament, January 13, 15-16, teaming P.G.A. members under 50 with a partner over 50 in a best ball event to compete for $10,000 in prizes.
- The P.G.A. Quarter Century Club Championship, January 18-19, with P.G.A. members with over 25 years membership battling for $20,000 purse.
- The P.G.A. Match Play Championship, January 21, 25-27, for $20,000.

The biggest tournament of the month, the P.G.A. Seniors Tournament, January 30-February 2. Last year’s winner, Roberto DeVincenzo will play other notable pros in the event.

The future begins today in All-New Tomorrowland.
Joyland as it was in happier days

Joyland Now A Memory

Editor, The Times:

I have just finished reading Tom Rawlins' feature in The Times on Joyland Park, which was well written and presents a good picture of how the park stands today amid high weeds, rust and shame.

You see, for many months before the death of Joyland, I assisted Marion Blackburn in its operation and I feel the true picture has been missed completely. As I didn't have a father to advise me of what to do, not to do, and do all the a lot of 10-cent rides. On top of this, there was a terrific overhead for electricity, payroll, insurance and 17 other great rides plus many midway attractions.

Joyland Park would be open today if the public had supported its operation. It was a clean amusement park—both physically and in management — maybe this was its main trouble. You could come in anytime and never find trash in the midway, and by the same token, all employees were carefully screened. You found no cheats, pick-pockets or liquor problems.
Joyland -- It's Country, Western Music Center

By DONALD DAVIS
Of The Times Staff

Sheb Wooley, Nashville's Opry Sound, has found a home in St. Petersburg. That's Joyland, friends and neighbors.

Almost every night of the week there is good pickin' and singin' at Joyland, a country and western music palace on U.S. 19 North. And it gets mighty crowded.

Robert L. Swetland, a big man with graying hair, owns Joyland and makes no detours when talking about the attraction. C&W ballads have along the Suncoast.

"GOOD COUNTRY and western has been played for the past 200 to 300 years. It's been with us that long. And it will be around for another 200 to 300," he said.

"These other things come and go. The Go-Go stays for about six months; then the Peppermint Lounge comes and goes. But good country music... where there is a good place for people to come and hear it... has always been around."}

Newman on the revolving bandstand. Newman recently has climbed onto the charts with a tune called "Back in Circulation."

In the past, some of the performers at Joyland have been artists such as Sheb Wooley, George Jones, Melba Montgomery and Justin Tubb. A wall in Swetland's office has photos of many more Opry stars who have paid a visit.

"This is good country and western music territory," he said. "We have had a packed house just about every night since we opened." Joyland began operating as a C&W music center in August 1964.

It is situated on the site of a former amusement park named Joyland, and Swetland says he kept the name because of a flashy sign that cost $8,000 and was too expensive to waste.

"I HAD TALKED with several people about opening such a place," he said. "I figured this area was about ready for it. And this was a natural."

He said his first year has been successful for several reasons.

THE HUGE Joyland arena has a seating capacity of 750, and Swetland says he has plans to expand. On the slower week nights, huge plastic curtains partition off part of the auditorium.

He said there is a possibility of one day soon setting up a plant to press records at Joyland, and perhaps arranging a live television show broadcast.
COUNTY WOULD GIVE 400 ACRES

Pinellas Offers University Site

CLEARWATER — County Commission yesterday made a “gift” offer of 400 acres of the County-owned Toytown tract cut by Roosevelt Boulevard in northeast St. Petersburg to the State Board of Control on which to erect a state university.

The surprise move was made by County Commissioner C. James Wood and approved unanimously. Wood said the offer is “not inconsistent” with alternative plans to dedicate Toytown for County park purposes, since construction of university buildings could not come before 18-24 months.

“Even if the Board of Control accepts the site within six months, it would be all of 18-24 months before the Legislature could make funds available,” Wood said. “At the earliest, Legislature could approve funds next summer.”

CITY’S OFFER

St. Petersburg has offered the former Maritime Base (now the City’s Sunshine University) as a site for a state university. The offer is being scanned by the State Board of Control. No decision has been made.

Commission Also:

(SEE PAGE 22)

REQUESTED the Budget Board to extend its deadline on receiving the Commissioner’s 1965-66 budget.

EMPHASIZED that beer, wine, and liquor licenses will be harder to get under zoning laws.

REFUSED to vacate its temporary quarters in the Court House Annex.

United Aircraft
Still Planning
Pinellas Plant
The Pinellas County Commission agreed yesterday to permit St. Petersburg to use the Toytown area north of the city limits as a sanitary fill—but with safeguards for its future development as a stadium site.

Minutes earlier, apparently assured that the county would act, the St. Petersburg City Council had dedicated the city's present garbage dump for park use.

The dedication carried a provision that the city will continue, for a time, filling in with trash and garbage the present dump—an estimated 140 acres at 62nd Avenue North, east of Fourth Street. City Manager George K. Armes said 120 acres of this will be park area, with the rest reserved for easements and utility lines.

A REPORT BY County Commissioners Lloyd B. Hopkins and John W. Bussey, which the full commission accepted, recommended:

A $1 a year lease with a cancellation clause to permit the Toytown area for use as a stadium site in the future.

St. Petersburg immediately consider the feasibility of mechanical destruction of garbage and trash either by itself or in conjunction with other communities.

City Attorney Harry L. Young urged the council not to dedicate the land "unless it's absolutely necessary." He noted the obstructions to using the property for municipal projects if it were bound as a park.

Councilman Ell Jenkins said city-owned land near the dump would provide sites for fire stations, etc., if needed.

ARMS TOLD the council the city "would continue to fill in land (marsh area) to the east of the present dumping ground and hope that we'll be finished in a year." Armes said burning a 62nd would stop 30 days after the agreement was signed.

Jenkins said the newly-dedicated site would provide the only park for residents of the area and fulfills a promise to the people who have built homes near a garbage dump because the city for years promised the dump soon would be a park.

Council's request from the county came after Armes pointed out that the 62nd Avenue fill was

 ST. PETERSBURG GARbage now is unloaded

... at new city dump, located in county-owned Toytown area, 108th Avenue and Ninth Street North. Garbage is dumped into pits, then covered with marl from huge white mounds at right. The city will take bids Feb. 13 on a grinder that will chew up garden trash, metal, glass and concrete at Toytown. This will allow eventual closing of the old city dump east of Fourth Street along 62nd Avenue North, where trash is presently burned or buried. Individuals are asked to continue dumping all garbage and trash at 62nd, until that facility is closed.
HIGHWAY ROUTING BIG QUESTION

Stadium Authority Calls Toytown 'Primary Site'

County-owned Toytown in north St. Petersburg was selected as the "primary stadium site" yesterday by the Pinellas County Stadium Authority.

A 200-acre site on the 483-acre property for the $2 million stadium is "most probably available," County Commissioner R. Hosey Wick told fellow authority members.

"But one factor -- the proposed extension of the federal interstate highway -- may benefit or destroy the site."

Authority members agreed to seek a meeting soon with the St. Petersburg Expressway Authority and State Road Board member Al Rogers to get an idea of the proposed interstate routing.

Expressway members are seeking to get the interstate routed into St. Petersburg through Toytown, bounded by 9th to 22nd Sts., N., 102nd Ave. to Roosevelt Blvd.

Genung Named To Sheriffs State Bureau

TALLAHASSEE — Pinellas County Sheriff Don Genung yesterday was appointed an administrative board member of the Florida Sheriffs Bureau by Gov. LeRoy Collins.

Genung, who succeeded the late Sid Saunders in 1958 and was elected sheriff last November, replaces Sheriff P. Leslie Bessinger of Pasco County on the board.

Genung said he was delighted.
An American flag was hoisted on the wreckage of the Coast Guard ship Blackthorn at 1:05 this morning. It was the first time Old Glory had graced the ship since it tragically sank Jan. 29, taking with it the lives of 23 seamen.

After sitting on the bottom of Tampa Bay 22 days, the raising of the ship was a moment fraught with drama. A large red flag with "E" cast against an orange smokestack is one of the first things that broke the water.

The "E" stands for excellence achieved during naval drills. Under the two-foot "E" are eight slash-like hash marks. They stand for the number of times the Blackthorn won the coveted Coast Guard award.

The ship also has the markings "DO" after the letter "E." It signifies another Coast Guard award the Blackthorn won for mage control, a period of drills and underway training.

The Blackthorn was lifted out of the waters of Tampa Bay today at 9:05 a.m. The ship sank in less than five minutes under a moonlit sky following a collision with the oil tanker Capricorn. The tragedy, the worst in the Coast Guard's peacetime history, occurred just 1,000 yards west of the twin Skyway Bridge south of St. Petersburg.

Twenty-three crewmen of the Blackthorn went down with the ship. Twenty-seven members of the crew survived. No one aboard the Capricorn was injured.

The long-awaited lifting of the Blackthorn had been delayed for four days...
Freighter rams **Skyway**, span falls into sea, 30 are killed

Death rode in on early morning storm

He fell:

From the bridge, to the ship, to the sea
Jim Schnur
Associate University Librarian
Nelson Poynter Memorial Library, USF St. Petersburg

Past President,
Pinellas County Historical Society