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INTERNET EDITION  
BREAKING NEWS  
CONTINUOUSLY  
UPDATED

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# THE KEYS

## Fishing ban off Tortugas in effect

### Scuba diving also off-limits in area

BY LISA FUDS  
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A federal regulation that prohibits fishing — and in one area, scuba diving and snorkeling — in the Tortugas Ecological Reserve goes into effect today following months of political dialogue and drafting.

Numerous commercial and recreational fishermen who frequent the remote Dry Tortugas now must permanently pull their lines and traps from a 50-square-nautical-mile area known as Tortugas South.

The fragile area, which includes Riley's Hamm, a natural nursery for snapper, grouper and other game and edible fish, is also off-limits to scuba diving.

Boaters must keep moving through the area, located more than 90 miles west of Key West, because anchoring there also is banned.

A small portion of Tortugas North, which boasts pristine sea-grass beds and dense coral reef (about 1,000 acres), is closed to fishing, but sport fishing is still allowed.

The federal regulation applies only to 1.8 square nautical miles in the northwest corner of Tortugas North. The remainder of Tortugas North, about 77 square nautical miles, is governed by the state of Florida.

Chava Heck, spokeswoman for Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, says enforcement of the new federal regulation may take time.

We plan to work first from an education perspective before we start writing a lot of tickets, but we certainly don't want people to read this as an opportunity to keep fishing and diving in places they shouldn't, Heck said. "It's just going to take a while before the word gets out there."

Marine authorities last year proposed closing more than 150 square nautical miles of state and federal waters to fishing and other water activities as part of a plan that would expand the boundaries of the Keys sanctuary and protect dwindling fish populations.

While the federal portion of the reserve becomes protected under federal regulation starting today, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has not yet implemented its own rule regarding state waters under its jurisdiction. State officials have published a draft rule, however, that will go to a vote March 29 in Tallahassee.

Should the commission approve the proposal later this month, it will be forwarded to Gov. Jeb Bush and the Cabinet for review in April. The state portion of Tortugas Ecological Reserve could likely be protected under Florida law in early July, Heck said.

## A DOG'S LIFE NO WANDERING FOR THIS GYPSY



Gypsy Rose. Lee sits comfortably in her basket all day while she is peddled around town by her owner, Ed Fortiano, a Key West resident and musician.

## Pace outslugs Coral Shores, 23-0

### Defeat is worst for Canes team in past 20 years

BY CHRIS LEONE  
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PLANTATION KEY — The Coral Shores Hurricanes baseball team suffered its worst defeat in 20 years Monday, losing 23-0 to Monticello Pace at home.

Pace jumped on the Canes' pitching staff early, grabbing a 13-0 lead after

just three innings. "It was one of those days," said associate coach Jeff Meyer. "If you're around baseball long enough, you will see a few of them. Pace is outstanding. They swing the bats extremely well. On top of that, everything they hit that we've not sold still found a hole," he said.

Pace, nationally ranked by several high school prep publications, scored in each of the game's first innings. The team collected 16 hits and five runs against a group of hurlers that have received compliments from opposing coaches.

"You always hear the expression that hitting is contagious," said Canes

### SPORTS ROUNDUP

Head coach Rick Russell. "It became an epidemic with Pace. I don't think anybody in high school baseball could have beat them Monday. Let's put it this way: I wouldn't want to play anybody that could have beat them on Monday."

The loss dropped the Canes to 5-2 (0-2 in district) on the season with both losses coming to nationally ranked teams.

Chris Leone writes a sports column weekly. If you have sports news, please contact him at [crleonemiamiherald.com](mailto:crleonemiamiherald.com) or call 305-853-5599.

## Painters tackle 'whaling wall'

### Mural restoration draws a big crowd

BY LISA FUDS  
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MAKATHON — Guy Harvey and Wyland, the marine wildlife artists, have set up shop in the parking lot of Marathon's Knart this week to take on a massive task: repaint a 150-foot-long, 22-foot-tall mural of whales, dolphins, fish and turtles on the front of the downtown Knart.

The massive project, which began Tuesday and will take three days to complete, isn't going unnoticed. Hundreds of admirers have parked themselves in the Knart parking lot along U.S. 1, lawn chairs and coolers in tow, to watch the two titans of marine art create spectacular scenery with their acrylic gypsy paint.

Although the artists have become accustomed to their popularity throughout the world, both said the hoopla surrounding their second whaling wall collaboration is unique. Jimmy Buffett music blared through loudspeakers as scores of onlookers cheered the artists' every brush and brush stroke. An open-air art exhibition displaying Harvey and Wyland's works added to the parking-lot drama.

Newborn sea turtles from a nearby turtle hospital will be brought to the Knart for use as models.

"This is not just a couple of guys painting a wall," said Harvey, 45, who today will begin painting his famous interpretation of reef and pelagic

fish. "Wyland is as much a skilled craftsman as he is an artist. He makes this into a really exciting event for everyone. I'm honored to be a part of it."

His assistant, the pair met for the first time at the wall of the visitors' center at Homestead Springs State Wildlife Park. Their inaugural collaboration — a 35-foot-long, 7-foot-tall sculpture of manatee, snook, jack and tarpon — took less labor and time than the Knart wall is expected to take this week.

Wyland, who goes by his last name only, has painted his life-size whaling walls, including the Knart mural in 1990.

The 44-year-old artist asked Harvey to help him repair the fading 19-year-old wall depicting Florida's living reef, but neither knows what exactly they will do.

"I have a general idea of what I'm going to paint, but I don't really know it once I'm up there with the air brush," said Wyland, who has vowed to paint 100 whaling walls, including a 10-mile section of the Great Wall of China by 2015. "It's definitely going to have a different look. That much I know."

As with every whaling wall he creates, Wyland is donating his time and talent and will give a portion of the proceeds from the sale of his artwork to the Turtle Hospital in Marathon, the Dolphin Research Center on Grassy Key and the Wyland Foundation.

Harvey and Wyland plan to complete the Knart mural by late Thursday and attend a dedication ceremony at 10 a.m. Friday.



## ART SHOWS ITS FACE

Members of Artists in Big Pine Key had drawings of local characters made by the late Peter Fourn, an artist, diver and lover of nature. A reception for a figurative student show will be held Friday at 7 p.m. at the gallery.

### KEYS BRIEFS

From Miami Herald Staff Reports

#### KEY WEST

##### WEEKEND PROSTITUTION, DRUG CRACKDOWN NETS 14 ARRESTS

Fourteen Keys residents were arrested over the weekend in an effort by several police departments against prostitution and the distribution of crack cocaine in Key West.

The two-night operation, conducted Friday and Saturday, concluded with 27 felony drug charges, two aggravated assault charges and two misdemeanor prostitution charges.

According to police, two undercover detectives posing as a Jamaican businessman and a construction contractor called a local escort service and arranged to meet two women at a local hotel. Once the women arrived and agreed to provide sex for money, Key West Police Street Crimes detectives raided the hotel room and arrested Karen Carlson, 26, of Big Pine Key, and Lauren Devenney, 26, of Key West.

Both women were charged with prostitution.

On Saturday night, officers from four law enforcement agencies posed as drug dealers in Old Town and arrested 12 locals for buying crack cocaine. One of the suspects, Latrice Rhodes of Stock Island, tried to run down two officers with a car after they attempted to arrest him, police said. Rhodes ran from the car after abandoning it on Catherine Street, but deputies later apprehended him on Stock Island.

Those arrested Sunday were John Diab, 46; Christopher Ippolito, 33; George Kelley, 46; Harry Crane, 38; Dominic Williams, 43; Robert Braglio, 28; Pedro Osowski, 49; and Charles Beck, 42, all of Key West; Leslie Harrison, 36; Marsha Lane, 38; and Triton Serradell, 31, all of Marathon; and Rhonda, 35.

#### MAN PLEADS GUILTY, GETS LIFE FOR FATAL BLDG COLLAPSE IN '99

A man has pleaded guilty to being his boss to death with the handle of a pickax.

Richard Ramon Agonzo, 36, entered the second-degree murder plea Monday before Judge Richard Payne, who sentenced Agonzo to life in prison for the May 1999 fatal bombing of William Jones, 51.

Police said Agonzo was upset that Jones, a jeweler, paid him \$40 after he worked 16 hours.

Jones was found dead in his home by a landlord and a sheriff's deputy who went to serve an eviction notice. Police found a pickax with blood on the wood handle.

A witness told investigators that Agonzo cried to her and said that "the best someone whom he worked for," according to a police affidavit.

Agonzo notified that Jones' death was a result of a sexual situation that got out of hand. The affidavit said that during a dispute, Jones "grabbed him (Agonzo) by his butt in a sexual manner — this action precipitated the physical violence."

Agonzo was arrested in Sibley, La., three days after Jones' body was found.

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