

**Pi Kapp Sees**

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# NEW HOPE FOR THE GREEN SEA TURTLE

Mariculture, Ltd. (which literally means "farming of the sea" is the world's only commercial turtle farm and Pi Kapp Marlin Simon is its project director. Located on about nine acres of land near the western tip of Grand Cayman Island, British West Indies, this unique business, by rearing the animals commercially, aims to make a profit but also to save the green sea turtle from extinction.

On his way to America Columbus discovered the sea turtle. His son, Ferdinand, recorded the discovery: "We were in sight of two very small and low islands full of tortoises, as well as all the sea about, inasmuch as they looked like little rocks, for which reason the islands were called Tortugas." Today these islands are called the Caymans and, with the help of Marlin Simon, the turtle is making a comeback.

Because the green sea turtle is so good to eat and his shell so useful, *Chelonia Mydas* has been hunted to the point that his species is endangered. One way to keep people from hunting the animal in his natural habitat is to furnish it to the market legally and economically. So with the twin motives of commerce and conservation the turtle farm, Mariculture, Ltd., was founded.

Marlin Simon and his assistants gather turtle eggs for their hatchery from Surinam, Costa Rica and the Ascension Islands, but for every 100 eggs they take, they return (a year later) one healthy year-old turtle. The survival rate for the hatchlings travelling across the beach and into the open sea is about two in 1000 so the year-old turtle has a much better chance to survive and reproduce. The female turtle returns to her birthplace to lay her eggs. Theoretically, the turtles released on beaches of Surinam will return there at maturity (about five years) to nest. Both Mariculture and the ecology are benefitting from this wise management.

In the newspaper "The Cayman Star," May 16, 1972, Simon reported on a recent egg-gathering expedition in Surinam:

"Mac and Lincon lived in a shack there with hot and cold running bats and rats. Last year we killed three or four poisonous snakes on the buildings, and there are lots of ticks. The mosquitoes are unbelievable! It was very humid

*From the editor:*

*In January, 1970, the 33rd Supreme Chapter recommended that the environment be a continuing concern of Pi Kappa Phi and that its members gain a greater understanding of ecology.*

*In addition to the SOAR program and other fraternity efforts in this regard, the Star and Lamp is undertaking a series of articles on the environment . . . some problems and some solutions. We hope they are interesting reading, but most especially we hope they inspire all Pi Kapps to look at our world and become active in its preservation.*

*Also we would like to solicit articles by or about Pi Kapps who are working in the field of environment control or improvement.*



*The "turtle conscious" Caymanians, who are good workers, consider Mariculture an important source of income.*



*Marlin Simon with one of his farm products ready for market.*



*This hatchling may someday furnish your table with succulent turtle steaks.*



*Turtle tanks at Mariculture. Each is capable of housing as many as 2000 green sea turtles.*

there and you are always sticky. There always seems to be a breeze, but it doesn't cool things off much. It also has other dangers. One boat we had brought in to help transfer eggs was sunk in the heavy seas. Luckily, there were no eggs in it.

"At night you could sometimes see gleaming yellow eyes that belonged to a jaguar. Lice were also a problem."


Marlin Simon may have to gather eggs for a while longer, but on May 19, 1973, there occurred a major event in turtle culture. On that day, female green sea turtles who had mated in captivity crawled out on Mariculture's man-made beach to nest and lay eggs which 60 days later successfully hatched. This was the first time in man's knowledge that *Chelona Mydas* had achieved a complete breeding cycle in captivity. Total harvest to date is 8000+ eggs with a predicted yield of over 10,000 eggs for the 1973 nesting season, and it is expected that over 90% in captivity will be hatched.

Today Mariculture's 70,000 turtles live in 41 concrete tanks. They are fed—six times a day—of food based on fish meal which is shipped to the island from Indiana.

In the mid 60's Marlin Simon became the assistant of Robert A. Schroeder who has received the first doctorate in zoology granted by the University of Miami. Together Schroeder and Simon concluded that if the green sea turtle were to survive it must be reared commercially.

Because of its warm waters and abundance of turtle grass, the Caymans were the logical choice for location, so both men moved their families there in 1968. With financial support from British and American investors, Mariculture, Ltd. was founded and stock issued at \$2.00 per share. By the beginning of 1972, the market price of these shares had risen by 125%, and by mid-March of 1973, shares were being traded at a price 650% above the original issue value. Gross sales are expected to be about \$2 million this year.

Perhaps it should be explained what the green sea turtle has that makes it so valuable. The meat, deemed excellent by pirates and seafaring men of old, is even better from the "farmed" turtles. It has better flavor, tenderness, texture and color. Some parts taste like chicken, some parts like veal. And turtle steaks are more nutritious than beef or chicken . . . more protein, less fat and fewer calories. The skin makes a handsome, supple leather for high quality shoes and handbags. The shell is highly prized for use in decorative ornaments and artifacts. And each turtle yields fat which is rendered to produce a light golden oil much in demand among cosmetic manufacturers.

It has been estimated that an acre of salt water five feet deep can produce 1,688,000 pounds of green turtle a year. One acre of land produces 800 pounds of beef per year. With the population increasing and part of the world already suffering from malnutrition, thoughtful people are looking seriously at Mariculture and farming of the sea. 

## ERNEST DeLANEY APPOINTED NEW NATIONAL CHANCELLOR



*Ted Scharfenstein (left), National President, and Jerry Matthews (right), Assistant Executive Director, chat with Ernest DeLaney about his recent appointment as National Chancellor.*

The National Council is pleased to announce the appointment of Ernest S. DeLaney, Jr., as National Chancellor. He fills the position formerly held by Robert L. Bennett, Sr. who recently resigned.

Ernest DeLaney, Mu initiate, did his undergraduate work at Duke University from which he was graduated in 1941. In 1952 he completed work for his law degree at the University of North Carolina, graduating as J.D. with honors.

He is now a partner in the law firm of DeLaney, Millette and DeArmon in Charlotte, North Carolina.

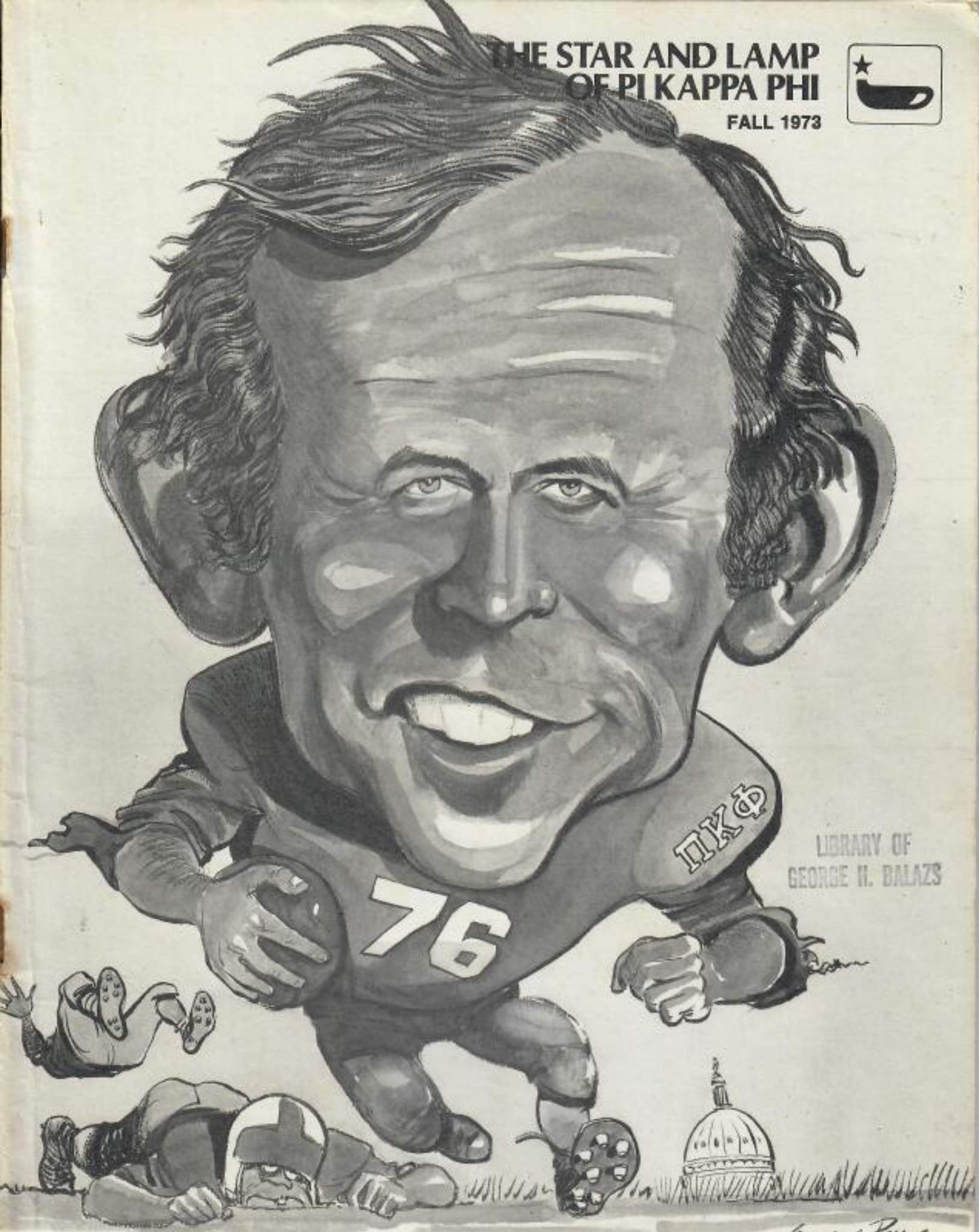
Ernest and his wife, the former Patricia Keegan, live at 4033 Beresford Road in Charlotte. They have two married children.



*Ernest DeLaney reviews papers for the purchase of the land for the new National Office with Executive Director, Durward Owen.*

THE STAR AND LAMP  
OF PI KAPPA PHI

FALL 1973



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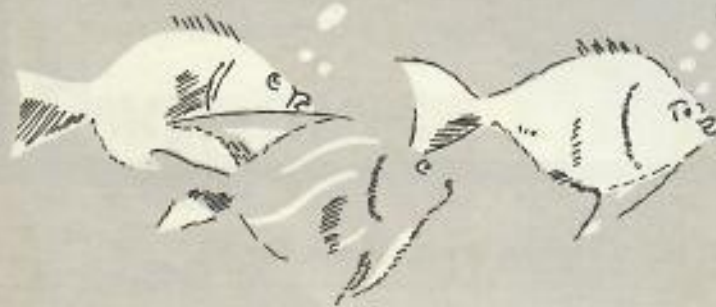
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**While Attending the 35th Supreme Chapter**

Step off the plane in Honolulu and be greeted with the traditional lei welcome of the Hawaiians. Be driven by bus to The Reef Hotel on Waikiki Beach, home of Don Ho, Hawaii's most famous entertainer, where you'll spend Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights. Be feted by a welcome open cocktail party one night; a Hawaiian Luau one night. Take the afternoon harbor cruise which includes all of Pearl Harbor. Enjoy buffet breakfasts served to you on Thursday, Friday and Saturday mornings. Other meals, ranging in price and prestige from Trader Vic's to McDonald's, may be purchased in restaurants close to the hotel on Waikiki. Fly back to San Francisco on Saturday afternoon in time to rejoin the group on the charter flight back to Atlanta Saturday night. Don't miss this great opportunity to visit fabulous, exciting Hawaii!



**Hawaii has**  
*a thousand things  
to do*

**DON'T LET THIS TRIP PASS YOU BY.**

Start now to make your plans for 1974

- August 17-21  
35th Supreme Chapter  
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- August 21-24  
Reef Hotel  
Waikiki Beach, Hawaii