

Tom Pennekamp forms a law firm

BY LINDA RODRIGUEZ BERNFELD

Tom Pennekamp, scion of the famous Pennekamp family, is now the proud founder of his own law firm.

Pennekamp has been practicing law since 1990 and has worked at some well-known firms. He started at Mershon Sawyer Johnson Dunwoody and Cole doing business litigation. He wanted to do trial work, so he joined Grossman Roth and was a partner until the end of 2006. He started 2007 by opening Pennekamp Law at 1980 Coral Way.

"I do personal injury, product liability and some medical malpractice," he says. "I'm doing some business litigation as well, but very selected business work."

His cases have come through recommendations from other attorneys who know his work.

"A lot of them have come from defense lawyers who have been against me, which is a nice compliment," he says.

His background in the insurance business has been one of his biggest assets. Growing up, he had worked for his father who sold insurance.

"It helps me understand the insurance side," he says. "I can pick up a policy and read it."

It also gives him an understanding of whether the insurance company involved in a case is behaving properly.

Pennekamp is enjoying working for himself although he may be working harder now than ever before, but he says the work doesn't seem as hard now. But things are busy enough that expansion is the next logical step.

"I hate to turn away people who have a case," he says. "It's a good position to be in."

The Pennekamp name is familiar to most because of the John D. Pennekamp State Park in Key Largo. The park was named after Pennekamp's grandfather, a former associate editor at the Miami Herald.

"It gave him political power," Pennekamp says. "He used that political might for the benefit of everyone. He is the reason the Everglades National Park was formed. He got the money from the U.S. Senate to buy out the private



Tom Pennekamp

landowners."

Pennekamp says because his grandfather was so effective in creating the Everglades National Park, he was asked to get involved in the state parks system. While still at the Herald, Pennekamp shepherded the state parks system into a major force and helped create the world's first underwater park, which was then named after him.

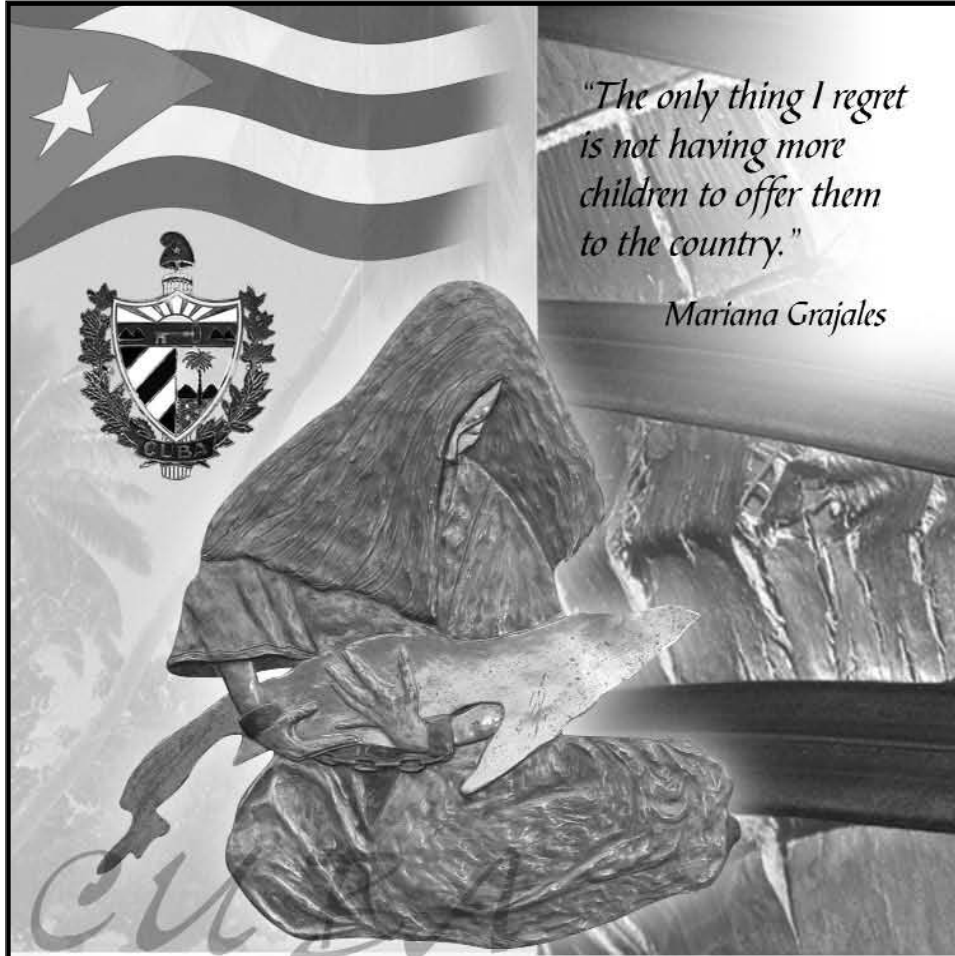
Like his grandfather, Pennekamp is very involved with the state's park system. He is on the board of directors of Friends of Florida State Parks. His board oversees citizens' advisory boards created for the individual parks. Pennekamp is also a founding member of the Friends of Bill Baggs State Park citizen support organization.

"One of my lifelong ambitions is to have enough time to go around and visit all the parks," he says. "My grandfather did that with my father. He used my father as a driver and visited all the parks."

Along with being involved with the state parks system, Pennekamp is also an active member of the Orange Bowl Committee.

Pennekamp attended Dartmouth College and received his law degree from the University of Florida.

For more information, call 305-860-4445 or go to <www.pennekamplaw.com>.



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