

# Scientology still grabs attention

Most local residents now realize that all those people in white uniforms scurrying along Clearwater's downtown streets are Scientologists, although some tourists still ask whether we have a U.S. Navy base in town.

But even locals were mystified by the new outfit — black shorts with black T-shirt or tank top. So I called Bill Daugherty, a Scientology spokesman here, who said those black-attired people are part of the "estate crew." They do gardening chores and cleanup work at Scientology's many buildings plus other "menial-type" tasks, he said.

"They work as a team and really get into it," Daugherty said. He added that they are "just a small part" of the estate crew, which also includes those who work on new construction and do regular building maintenance.

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While driving in downtown Dunedin the other day, a bumper sticker on the car in front of me caught my attention:

*Psychiatry kills. Don't let them drug your children. 1-800-869-CCHR.*

Suspecting a Scientology connection, I called the number and reached the Scientology-affiliated Citizens Commission on Human Rights in Los Angeles.

A woman asked why I was calling and I said I was curious about this bumper sticker I had seen. She took my name and address, and in a few days I received a "Hello!" letter that stated:

"The Citizens Commission on Human Rights is an organization established to investigate and expose psychiatric violations of human rights. We have been doing this for 20 years in the areas of electric shock treatments, psychiatric rape and abuse, and the psychiatric drugging of schoolchildren through the use of dangerous and addictive am-



CLEARWATER TIMES  
ST PETERSBURG  
EDITOR'S NOTE TIMES  
BOB 7/13/89  
HENDERSON

phetamines like Ritalin."

Enclosed with the letter were two pamphlets — "How Psychiatry Is Making Drug Addicts Out of America's School Children" and "Ritalin: A Warning for Parents and Teachers."

The Citizens Commission on Human Rights is periodically promoted by local Scientologists, who have appeared on cable TV talk shows to denounce Ritalin.

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Members of the West Florida Y Runners Club recently gathered for their quarterly dinner meeting at Chief Charley's Restaurant in Dunedin and got more than they bargained for.

Before the scheduled program had begun, while people were still eating, a woman walked up to the microphone at the head table and introduced herself as Sandra Johnson of the local Dianetics running team. *Dianetics, the Modern Science of Mental Health* is the 39-year-old book written by Church of Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard that still is used by his followers.

The woman said she and her fellow Scientology runners enjoy all of the road races sponsored by the club and appreciate the dedication of club president Skip Rogers, who was stepping down that night after a two-year term. She then presented Rogers with a leather-bound volume of *Dianetics*.

He was speechless. A few people applauded. Most just sat there dumbfounded.

The woman, who said later she is from Australia, often is a top finisher in her age group at local races. She and her fellow runners wear bright yellow running shirts with "Dianetics" in red letters on the front.

They have been stringing up their banner near the finish line at some races. In at least one instance, race officials took the banner down because it implies that Scientologists are one of the race sponsors.