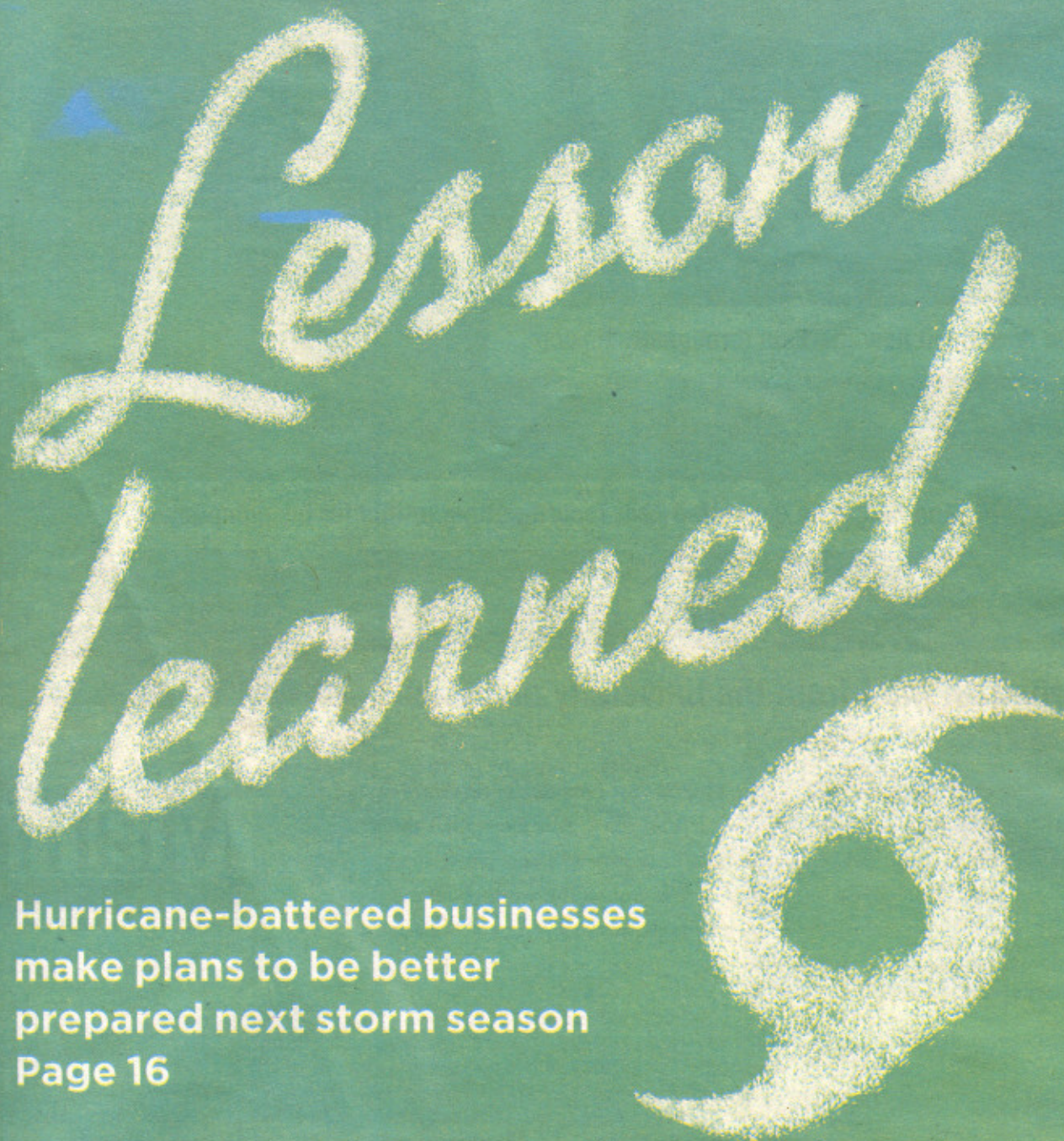


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JOB FILE

You can't hide; Sean Zawyer will serve you

■ **Wanting to open his own business, Sean Zawyer discovered that process serving was the perfect career for him.**

BY JONATHAN DUBIN
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If your name is on Sean Zawyer's list, you are going to be served. You may not be happy about it, but it is going to happen. That's the way it works at Gissen & Zawyer Process Service.

Process servers play an important role in the American legal system. They are hired to personally deliver court or administrative papers to individuals. When a paper is received, the process server collects a fee.

Zawyer did not originally want to work in this field, but "always in the back of my mind, I wanted to own my own business," he said.

Zawyer, 36, graduated from the University of South Florida with a degree in management information services in 1991. He came to Miami and worked at Royal Caribbean and Arthur Andersen in the '90s while earning an MBA from the University of Miami. At one point, he started a chocolate-covered potato chip business. These early experiences helped him learn firsthand the chal-

lenges involved in running a business.

After a chance dinner with an old college friend, Zawyer set his sights on the process service industry, and the two went into business together.

All process servers have to go through a certification process that focuses on the procedures involved in serving papers. The applicant must pass an in-depth exam, which costs \$165, and have a clean criminal record. Local courthouses frequently offer prep courses.

Often, it isn't as simple as "Knock knock, you've been served," Zawyer says. One of his favorite schemes involved dressing like a delivery man, creating a sob story, and delivering a gift basket to a woman who was avoiding papers by sending out her large, muscular son to say she was not home. Zawyer delivered two gifts — the basket and the papers. She, like everyone else Zawyer deals with, got served.

Zawyer has been spit at, had papers ripped up in front of his face, and has had to call the police to remove a woman who was blocking his path. Zawyer's message: "Don't shoot the messenger."

Zawyer's firm, which includes about 10 servers, serves papers in all neighborhoods, good and bad, at various



TIM CHAPMAN/HERALD STAFF

YOU'VE BEEN SERVED: Sean Zawyer is a process server.

times during the day and evening. He admits he sometimes gets into some "sketchy" situations.

Zawyer takes pride in the business he and his partner created. In only eight years, the firm has grown into one of the largest in South Florida.



PROCESS SERVER

Education: None necessary, but certification is required. An MBA is helpful in running your own business.

Salary: About \$25,000 part time and \$50,000 full time, but it varies.

Perks: Aiding in the process of the law. The work is relatively recession-proof because there is always an abundance of lawsuits.

Zawyer says that his company also provides a service that is a cut above what most other companies offer: online tracking that enables clients to follow the progress of their papers 24/7. The firm also serves papers in any part of the country and in many places around the world through Zawyer's extensive contacts with other process servers. Zawyer says 30 percent of his business goes outside of the tri-country area.

Regardless of where you are, however, you will be served.