

**ACTIVITY:** Swimming

**CASE:** GSAF 2000.08.30

**DATE:** August 30, 2000

**LOCATION:** The attack took place in an inlet off Boca Ciega Bay which is near Tampa, Pinellas County, Florida, USA. The Kubinski home is on Holland Drive, a cul-de-sac in the Belle Vista neighborhood of St. Petersburg Beach, just north of the Pinellas Bayway Canal.

**NAME:** Thadeus Kubinski

**DESCRIPTION:** The swimmer was a 69-year-old retiree. He was a strong, very fit, swimmer.

### **BACKGROUND**

**MOON PHASE:** New Moon

**WATER CONDITIONS:** The murky waterway is home to schools of mullet and other fish,

**ENVIRONMENT:** Tampa Bay has an abundance of prey items (tarpon, snook and redfish) and is a major pupping ground for several species of sharks. Bull sharks, *Carcharhinus leucas*, the species suspected in this incident, are common in Tampa Bay during the warmer months.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 10 feet

**DEPTH OF WATER AT INCIDENT SITE:** Five to seven feet

**TIME:** 16h00

**NARRATIVE:** Moments before entering the water behind their home, Kubinski and his wife, Anna, noticed a commotion in the water but thought nothing of it. Anna climbed down the ladder at the end of their dock while her husband jumped into the water. Moments later the shark bit him. Anna saw her husband struggling with the shark and saw the shark's dorsal fin. She got out of the water and ran for help.

**INJURY:** The swimmer suffered a massive chest wound and died almost immediately. The crescent-shaped bite extended from the swimmer's right armpit to his hip, about 15 inches in length, crushing his rib cage and lacerating his liver. The swimmer was dead when paramedics pulled him from the water.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** The sequence of events suggests that the commotion heard by the couple was related to a feeding shark that was chasing prey and when Mr. Kubinski suddenly jumped into the water, that action triggered a predatory or defensive response by the shark. The tooth impressions are characteristic of the bull shark about nine feet in length with a mass of 400 lbs. A tooth recovered from Kubinski's body was compared with similar-size teeth of bull sharks to determine the size of the shark involved in this attack.

**SOURCES:** Orlando Sentinel, August 31, 2000, page A19; Charlotte Observer, September 1, 2000, page 4A

**CASE INVESTIGATOR:** Erich Ritter, Ph.D., Global Shark Accident File

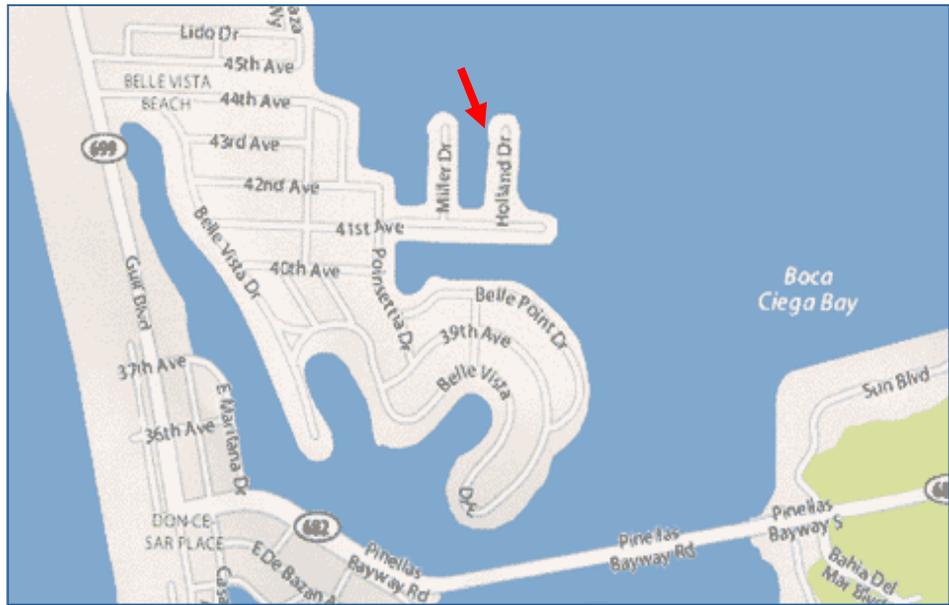
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*1998: Anna & Thadeus Kubinski*



*The Kubinski home & dock.  
AP Photo*



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