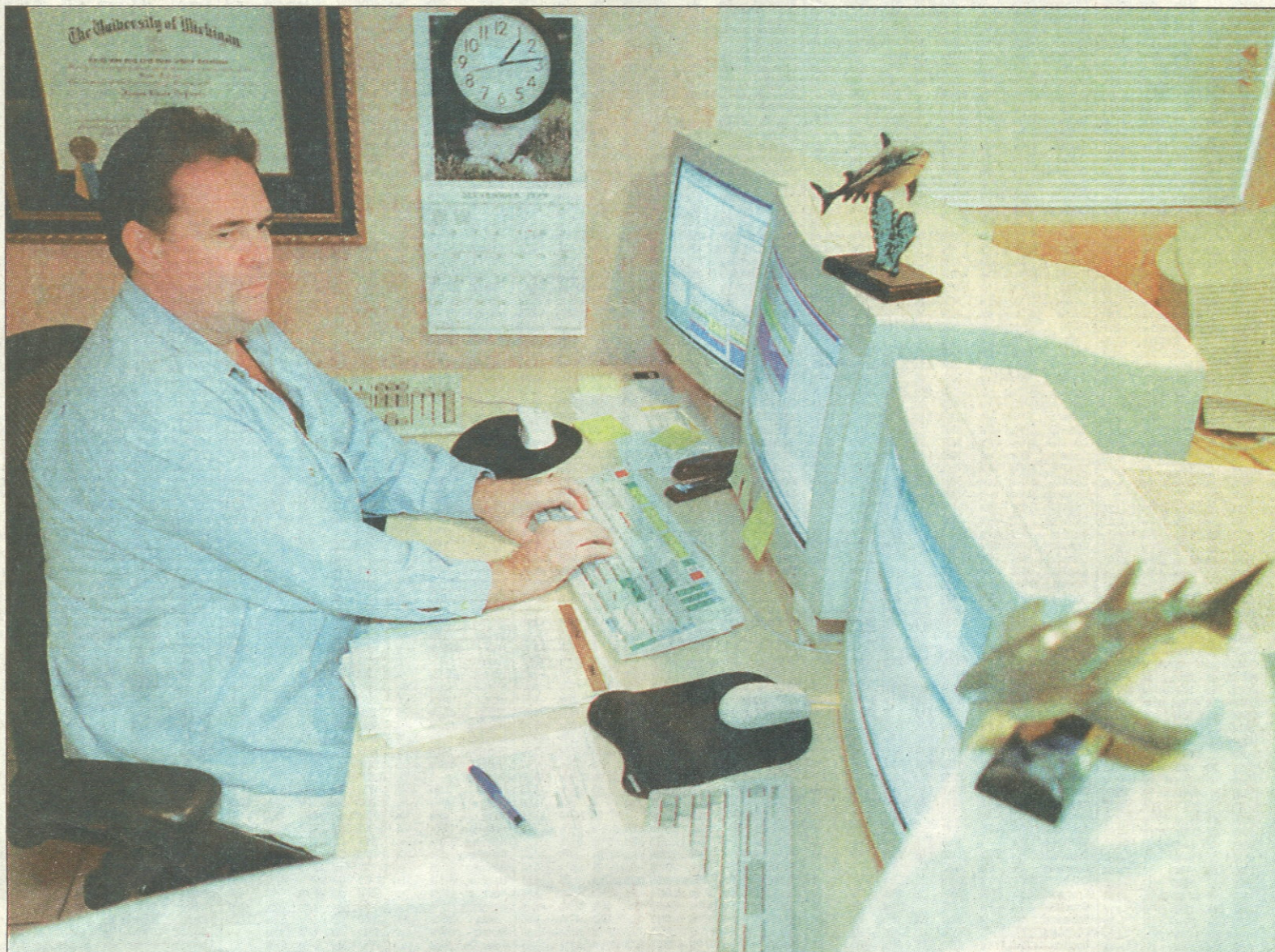


# BUSINESS

BRADENTON HERALD • SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1999

## 'NET WORK



ALEX DIAZ/Bradenton Herald

Online stock trader Jim DePorre, also known as "Rev. Shark," gets down to business in his home on Anna Maria Island. The former attorney from Michigan has his own "Shark Attack" chat room on America Online and a membership-only online site. A weekly stock-picking newsletter is in the works.

# Trader builds national following while trolling for treasure online

GARY HABER

Herald Business Writer

From his Anna Maria Island home, more than a thousand miles from the concrete canyons of Wall Street, Jim DePorre is as plugged into the market's daily gyrations as any trader on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

DePorre, who moved to Anna Maria from Ann Arbor, Mich., six years ago, spends his days buying and selling stocks online. From his home office, DePorre keeps his eye on the price movements of hundreds of mostly small-cap stocks.

Eschewing a buy-and-hold strategy, DePorre makes as many as 60 trades a day, and an enviable living, he says. As of Sept. 22, his model portfolio, was up 150.4 percent since its inception in April 1998, says DePorre, who goes by the nickname "Rev. Shark." The \$45,000 his portfolio started with was up to \$112,674.

Overall, DePorre says, his online trading has netted him an average of \$30,000 a week over the past six months.

DePorre's stock trading prowess has won him a devoted following among fellow online traders and write-ups in financial publications like *Smart Money* magazine. He has his own "Shark Attack" chat room on America Online. His membership-only online site — [www.SuperTraders.com](http://www.SuperTraders.com) — has attracted traders willing to pay \$250 a month to swap trading strategies with DePorre and his online regulars. *The Shark*

*Report*, a weekly stock-picking newsletter, is also in the works.

"We're building a community of traders," DePorre says of what's become a booming cottage industry.

Yet, despite his success, DePorre says, "I don't think I've done anything that spectacular."

Don't tell that to folks like south Manatee County resident Scott Taylor, an online trader and tool company owner, who came out on a recent night to hear DePorre speak before an audience of about 30 investors in Sarasota. Taylor has followed DePorre's AOL chat room for the past two years.

"You can tell he's very knowledgeable," Taylor says. "He oftentimes makes good picks. They're oftentimes moneymakers."

DePorre's accomplishments are even more remarkable, given that he fell into online trading several years ago at one of the lowest points in his life.

At the age of 32, DePorre lost his hearing, forcing the University of Michigan Law School graduate to give up a successful law and accounting practice in Michigan. (He has since regained his hearing after successful cochlear implant surgery two years ago.)

The Internet was in its infancy then, and DePorre began to frequent some of the early chat rooms just to maintain contact with other people.

Four or five years ago, DePorre began to trade stocks over the Internet, something he found he enjoyed.

"I'd dabbled before, but I didn't have

"He's a bright guy, but not everyone is as bright as he is, and can do what he does."

**Herb Greenberg**

financial columnist for the San Francisco Chronicle

## About SuperTraders.com

Jim DePorre of Anna Maria Island will tell you up front that his brand of fast-turnaround online trading is not for everyone. The name of his Web site is enough to send some conservative investors elsewhere: SuperTraders.com — Aggressive Stock Market Trading.

An introductory blurb on the site sets the stage for those who are interested in learning more:

"Successful stock trading is not luck as much as it is hard work and discipline. Experienced traders seek out their peers, not to chitchat, but to exchange ideas to improve their craft. Trading stocks is a serious business for them. They work hard at finding new ideas, and are always concerned about risk. If you're serious about trading stocks, and this sounds like you, welcome to SuperTraders.com."

time for stocks," he says. "It was a way to stay active on the computer."

Being able to trade over the Internet helped DePorre overcome his deafness, recalls Scott Slutsky, a fellow trader and DePorre's partner in the SuperTraders Web site.

"It was the perfect thing for him," says Slutsky, a part-year Anna Maria Island resident. "When he couldn't practice law, he could be online, and he didn't have to talk to anybody. It put him on an equal footing with everyone else."

DePorre eventually became a regular visitor to the Motley Fool, a popular personal investing chat room on AOL and part of a larger personal investment company of the same name.

It was there that Herb Greenberg, a financial columnist for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, took note of DePorre for his humorous, sometimes pointed, takes on investing. Greenberg made DePorre a

## TRADER FROM PAGE 1

regular part of Greenberg's Bizinsider financial Web site.

"He had a great ability to communicate," remembers Greenberg, now a columnist for the online financial daily The Street.com. "I think he's a very witty, smart guy."

Of course, Greenberg adds, not every online investor is as savvy as DePorre. Nor should they expect to equal DePorre's online trading success.

"He's a bright guy, but not everyone is as bright as he is, and can do what he does," Greenberg says.

DePorre acknowledges that his

kind of aggressive trading is not for every investor.

First off, he recommends that people who hope to make their living as online traders start with at least \$100,000 in capital. It also takes a certain kind of temperament to ride out the ups and downs of the stock market.

"You've got to be emotionally and psychologically suited," DePorre says. "If you get too euphoric or depressed with every trade, you'll go nuts."

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