

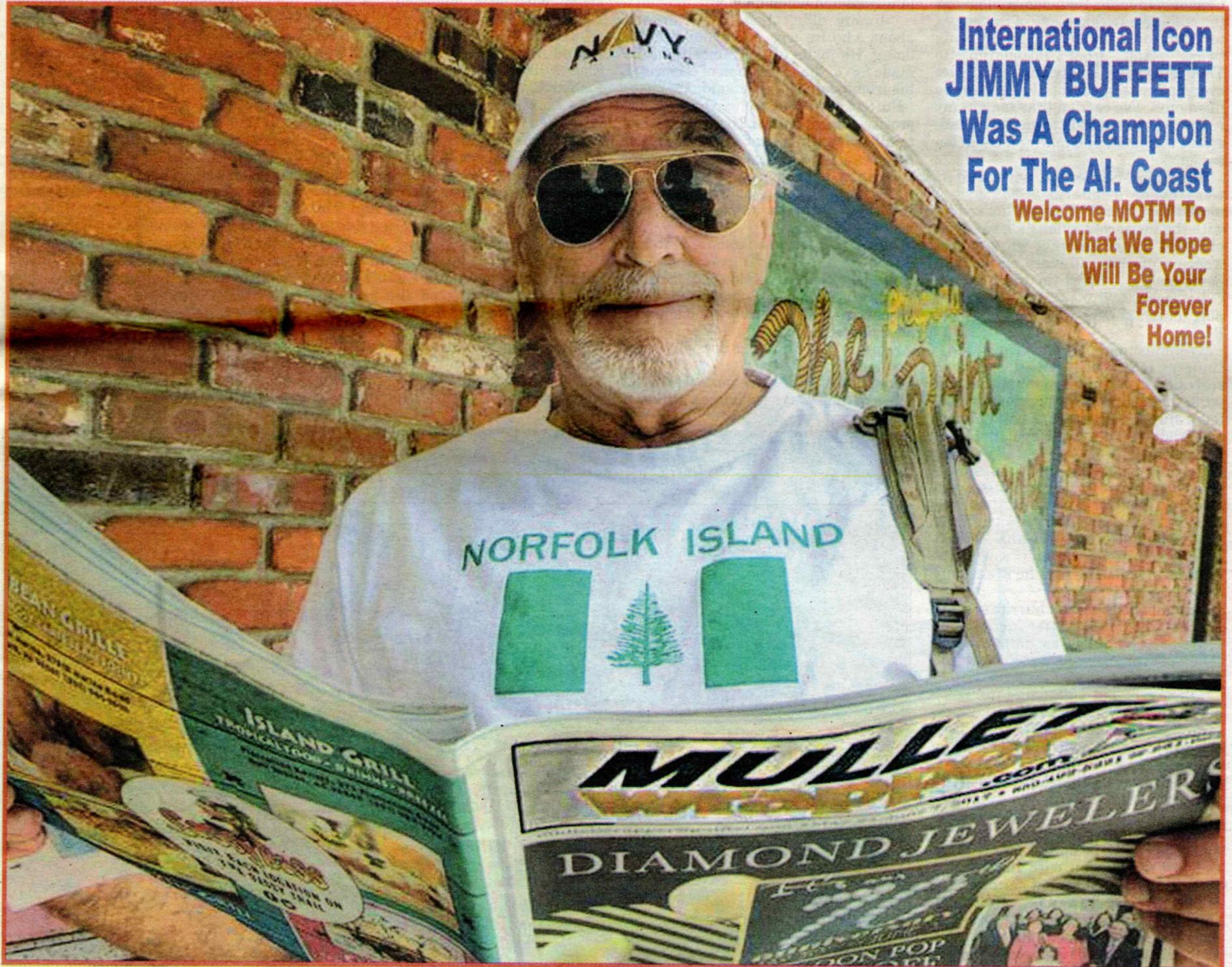
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International Icon JIMMY BUFFETT Was A Champion For The Al. Coast

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Jimmy Buffett's impact on Gulf Coast culture is part of his legacy

Mobile's famous son spent quality time seeking out fun on Pleasure Island

By Fran Thompson

I've been connected to Jimmy Buffett ever since I played rugby for the Erie All-Blacks in the 1970's. That was 1100 miles and a lifetime ago.

As soon as the Erie boys - local mill honkeys with a smattering of college kids - heard that people were eating Cheeseburgers in Paradise, we learned the song. We tweaked one of the verses to "Two for a dollar. That's 50 cents twice." And from Pittsburgh to Youngstown, we loudly and proudly let everyone within earshot know how we liked ours. I've carried that song in my rugby party songbook from Fort Lauderdale to Seattle and many places in between.

My rugby connection with Buffett went major league in 1983 when I moved east from NOLA and hooked up with the Pensacola Aviators, a side that included a core group of white jacket wearing players at every post match party (A White Sport Coat and a Pink Crustacean). Why wouldn't we? Our post match parties were on Pensacola Beach.

My publishing highmark came early. Buffett wrote us a letter to the editor in response to a solid story Bob Patroni wrote about him as a preview to Buffett's July 1990 concert at Ladd Memorial Stadium (with Little Feat and Clint Black).

Patroni asked at the end of his essay if Jimmy ever paid back the mini-mart in reference to The Peanut Butter Conspiracy, a song about a band trip from Hattiesburg to New Orleans. Buffett answered that he did not. (I saw an interview in which he said he eventually did.)

I've published through hurricanes and an oil spill, and that letter from Buffett remains my publishing hallmark, although Jimmy posting a picture of him reading my newspaper is close.

Buffett has had a profound influence on me, my newspaper, my community, my friends, my social life, on how I see the world. He touched millions of us that way.

Yet he always retained the essence of what it means to be from Lower Alabama. To have New Orleans, Mobile Mardi Gras, parochial schools, the Gulf and good gumbo be part of your culture. Celebrating all that with Buffett as a soundtrack is part of that culture.

Buffett passed away peacefully surrounded by family, friends, music and dogs on Sept. 1 after fighting Merkel Cell Skin Cancer for four years. He was

76, and his last gig was this past July in Rhode Island (Page 13).

"Growing old is not for sissies, I promise you," Buffett wrote on his website after cancelling stops on his final tour.

"He lived his life like a song 'til the very last breath and will be missed beyond measure by so many," Buffett's family posted when he died.

"Jimmy didn't have any illusions about who he was and what he was doing. He made fun of himself and he made fun of the institution of celebrity," his friend James Taylor said.

Buffett projected inclusiveness, generosity and adventure. He made it clear to all around him that fun is fair. And he became an international musical icon while doing so.

Yet when at home, he was one of us. He grew up with the same perfect sand between his toes.

I've seen Buffett at a famous theater in Paris, La Cigale, and even that was through a local connection. Gulf Shores' trop rock ace Brent Burns was invited to visit with Jimmy before the show at that Parrot Head mecca. My press pass got me only as far as the dressing room door.

And I was there the next afternoon when Brent played what he called a

bucket list gig at a bistro on the Siene River. Of course, Brent's set included Livin' The Life (Jimmy Buffett Only Wrote About).

I saw Buffett play on an aircraft carrier flight deck inside the Naval Air Museum onboard NAS Pensacola. He was very happy to be there playing songs with Mac McAnally beneath beautifully restored airplanes.

I saw Buffett the only time he ever rocked his sister's restaurant in Gulf Shores. It was at the Freddie & The Fishsticks show on the day that Hurricane Alex forced postponement of his scheduled free BP sponsored concert on Gulf Shores Public Beach.

"I guess I psuedo opened for Jimmy Buffett," said another Mobile raised musician, Wes Loper, who played the inside stage before Freddy And The Fishsticks took the stage outside at Lulu's.

Loper, who also lent Buffett his guitar to play for his mother at LuLu's Weeks Bay years earlier, said the two also shared a Grammy winning producer, Alan Schulman.

Loper sat at a dinner table with Buffett at a boat show in West Palm Beach, and when in Nashville, he, Eric Erdmann and the Ugli Stick hit the hotel

bar with all the Coral Reefers.

"Alan got me a couple songs in the rotation at Radio Margaritaville and that helped launch me to a lot more listeners," Loper said.

"I never considered myself a trop rocker. But I like to keep it fun and I sing about life on the water. I don't know anything that I could say about Jimmy that has not already been said or that he has not already written in his own songs."

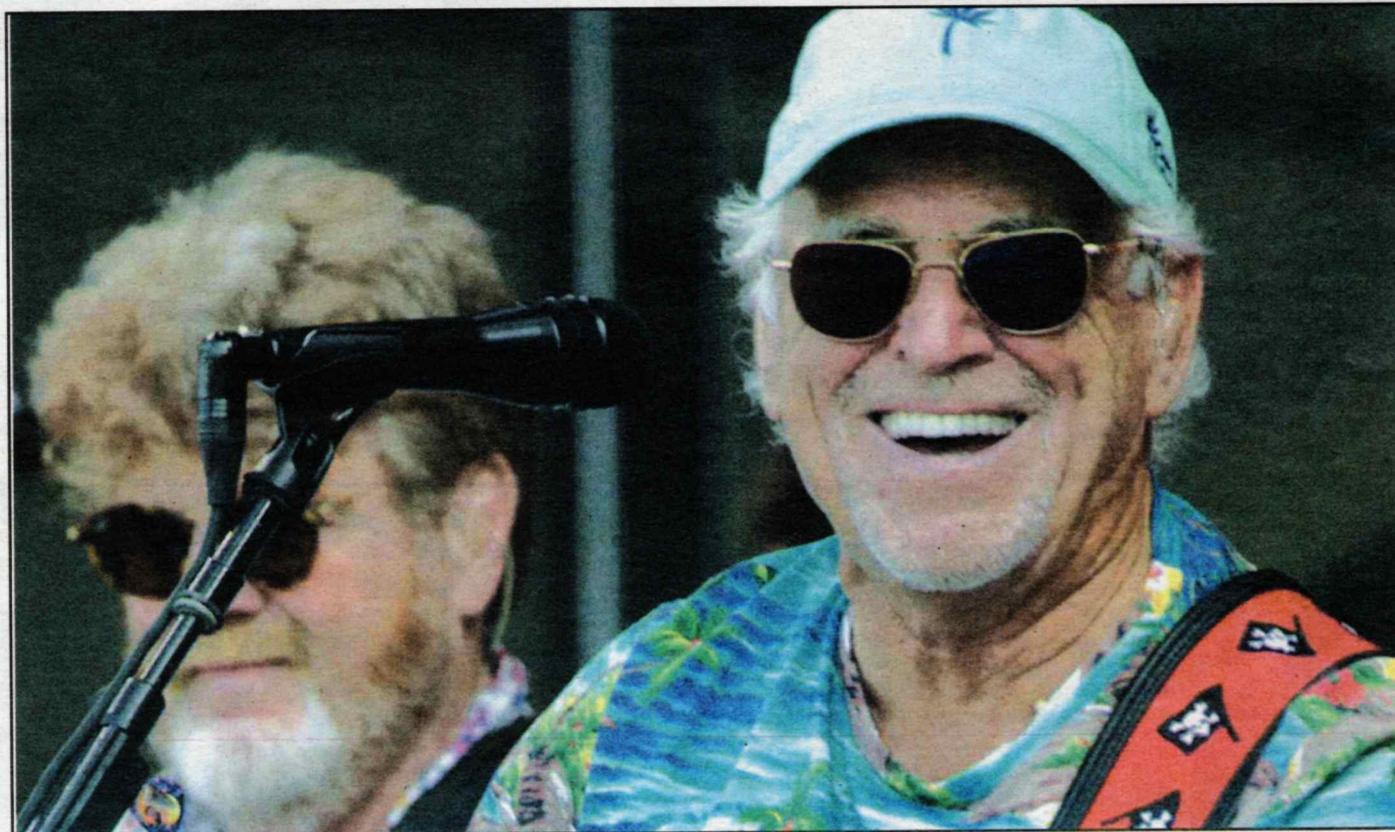
That free Gulf Shores' show finally went off 11 days after Buffett played at LuLu's. Four days after the show, after an average of 1.5 million gallons of oil were released into the ocean for 87 consecutive days, BP successfully capped its Deepwater Horizon well.

Johnny Fisher was in the car with Lucy Buffett when her brother called and said he wanted to play a free concert at the beach.

Fisher, LuLu's GM at the time, has a good story about how Lucy's "One Love - One Ocean" fundraising t-shirt ended up on Buffett's back on stage that day.

"I told Lucy she needs to get Jimmy to wear a One Ocean t-shirt on stage, but she said she didn't like telling Jimmy what to do and was super reluctant to ask him," Fisher said.

"So, I called up Jimmy's right hand man Mike (Ramos) and asked what kind of shirts Jimmy wears on stage. He said the Gap or Old Navy. So, I got about 10 shirts, had them printed up with the One Ocean screen and asked



Mike to put them in Jimmy's room."

Fisher was at soundcheck before the beach concert when Buffett came out in a yellow One Ocean t-shirt.

"Jimmy said over the mic, 'be careful what you wish for, Johnny.' For awhile, I thought he was talking about the big show and some of the craziness that went on putting it together," Fisher said.

"But now I really think he was talking about the One Love t-shirt. The thing is, he was wearing a yellow shirt, and I did not bring him a yellow shirt."

"I told Lucy she needs to get Jimmy to wear a One Ocean t-shirt on stage, but she said she didn't like telling Jimmy what to do and was super reluctant to ask him."

Buffett did not wear Gap or Old Navy t-shirts on stage. His seamstress sewed the One Ocean screen onto one of his custom shirts. And it worked.

Fisher said LuLu's had to hire five employees to answer phones and process t-shirt sales after that concert.

That same custom One Ocean t-shirt is

now on display in a shadow box at LuLu's along with some local sand and an oil spill tar ball.

Will Kimbrough, a fellow Mobilian, was playing guitar in Buffett's band that day.

He and Buffett co-wrote Bubbles Up, one of three recently released songs that will be included on a posthumous album, Equal Strain On All Parts, that will be released Nov. 3. In all, Buffett has cut 22 of Kimbrough's songs.

"Jimmy and I agreed that the slide guitar solo should pay tribute to Duane Allman, and that's who I was channeling on my beat up old Gibson in the studio that day," Kimbrough posted. "God bless Jimmy Buffett."

The upcoming album will mark the eighth consecutive time Buffett has included at least one Kimbrough cut on an album. Those songs include Nobody from Nowhere, Piece of Work, Wings and Soulfully.

"Will is a wonderful throwback to the now bygone era of singer, songwriter, musician and entertainer," said Buffett about his writing mate. "On stage, he can charm a crowd whether fronting a band, or playing solo. That is why you see his songs on my albums and his face on our stage."

Mobilians Kimbrough, Buffett and Jimmy Hall all take pride in the fact that they grew up in The Port City.

"My Mobile brother. Gone too soon," the still rockin' Hall recently posted.

My friends have seen Buffett play at LuLu's on Weeks Bay, the Flora-Bama and Judge Roy Beans in Daphne.

Johnny Barbato, another musician from Mobile (Davidson), saw him play with 25 other people one night and 15,000 people a short time later.

Barbato was rocking Waylon, Willie and Jerry Jeff songs with fellow Port City bluesmen David Moody, Lou Wamble, JW Slyde and Wick Lar-

son when he started playing at LuLu's on Weeks Bay, Lucy's Buffett's first location.

He said around that time Lucy invited him to a birthday party for their mother at a home on Mobile Bay that included a set of songs from Jimmy.

"There were about 25 people there, and I'm one of maybe five who were not family," Barbato said. "I'm just trying to stay out of the way. But when Buffett started playing, it was like there was a halo over his head. It was like nothing I've ever seen. And I saw it clear as day.

"He was using some kind of rented 12's (speakers) and he had no monitor. It just blew my mind. It grabbed me so much that I went to his concert a few weeks later in Biloxi and he did the same thing to 20,000 people that he did to 20. The dude was that special. There are very few people in the world that can sit down and just be themselves like that.

"Besides that, he is a poster child for musicians not to quit on themselves," Barbato added. "If you read Willie Nelson's book on how to make it in the business, he says on page one that you have to conquer your home town. Buffett didn't conquer his hometown, he conquered Key West, and that was after plenty of failure."

Patrick Quinn, a fellow McGill grad and musician, remembers as a youngster seeing Buffett play at a private party in Point Clear with the band Taco Ted And The Five Sombreros.

"I was peeing in Mobile Bay sitting in an inter-tube," said the Gulf Shores resident, whose father graduated from McGill High School a year before Buffett.

I never saw Buffett (or John Prine) play at the Flora-Bama. Neither did Darrell Roberts, even though he started playing music there in 1982.

Roberts spent a short time at BC Rain High, about seven miles west of Buffett's McGill. Already a road musician, he came back from Austin at 18 and met Buffett at a Mobile record store (Darrell was working). They've crossed paths at home and on the road ever since.

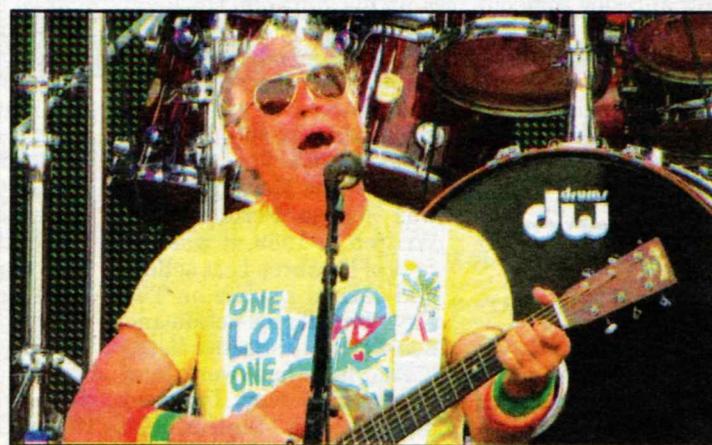
"I remember him coming into the Flora-Bama, but I don't ever remember him getting up and playing," Roberts said. "I'd get there and Joe (Gilchrist) would tell me he had just played.

"A lot of times Jimmy would be there by himself. The last time I saw him was a couple of years ago eating gumbo at The Point."

Roberts, Lea Anne Creswell and J Hawkins are the three early Flora-Bama possible-probables still playing gigs around town.

Creswell said she loved it when Buffett told the 'Bama audience not to bother shouting out requests, as he was going to play what he felt like playing.

Hawkins said he was on a break in the front bar around 1982 when he looked through the win-



JIMMY PLAYS FREE SHOW AT GULF SHORES PUBLIC BEACH

With help from openers Kenny Chesney and Zack Brown Band, Jimmy Buffett and his Coral Reefers (including fellow Mobilian Will Kimbrough) entertained around 35,000 fans during a free concert sponsored by BP Oil, even as oil spilled into the Gulf from the 2010 Deep Water Horizon platform from April 20 until Sept. 19. Eleven missing workers were never found despite a three-day U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) search operation and are believed to have died in the explosion that sank the oil rig and caused the spill. Tickets to the concert held in June were given to anyone willing to rent a hotel or condo on Pleasure Island at the time. But certainly, a majority of those with their feet in the sand were locals. The concert was broadcast live on CMT. Buffett changed the lyrics to "It's all BP's fault" during Margaritaville. **Pictured:** Jimmy Buffett performs at Gulf Shores Public Beach; a group from the Flora-Bama Lounge, including late co-owner Joe Gilchrist (left) bring a banner to show their support for Buffett during the concert.



BUFFETT PLAYS GIG AT SISTER'S GULF SHORES RESTAURANT

When the threat of Hurricane Alex forced the planned BP Oil funded free Jimmy Buffett concert at Gulf Shores Public Beach to be rescheduled, Buffett and his Coral Reefer Band instead played a full two plus hour set at his sister Lucy's Gulf Shores restaurant, Lulu's at Homeport Marina. Buffett was ferried to the show via the Intracoastal Waterway by a boat that moored near the outdoor stage.

dow and saw someone pick up his guitar on the main room stage.

"I was about to go in and kick somebody's a@#, but by the time I got to the stage I saw who it was," Hawkins said. "It was not unusual to see him in there. He'd pop in periodically and just sit down and enjoy the music. It wasn't any big deal."

Buffett's first book, *Greetings From Margaritaville*, was set on Perdido Key. Written in 1989, it was the first of his three best sellers and earned a place on The New York Times fiction and non-fiction best seller lists. "That book had everything to do with why I moved here," said the Mullet Wrapper's own Ron (Funny Bones) Jones. "So, yes, he had an influence on my life. I rented a place on West Beach for \$350 on Dec. 17, 1992, and the first thing I did was have a filet and a piece of key lime pie at Coconut Willy's. I joined a gym, found a coffee house and took three months off to figure out what I was going to do. And I used his music as my soundtrack."

Although Buffett was born in Pascagoula, he grew up in Mobile. Buffett's mother (Mary) inspired his love for literature and his father (James) and grandfather his love for the sea. He was an altar boy at St. Ignatius and graduated in 1964 from McGill.

"I've got some fond memories and some not-so-fond memories there," Buffett said about his time at McGill in an Al.com interview.

Buffett matriculated for a short period at Auburn, and then attended Pearl River Community College. By the time he graduated from Southern Miss in 1969 with as a history/journalism major, he was already playing in French Quarter bands and busking on Bourbon St.

Like most males, he started playing guitar to meet girls, and he honed his craft playing gigs at the Admiral Semmes Hotel in downtown Mobile.

His first trip to Key West was as a passenger in Jerry Jeff Walker's 1947 Packard after a gig fell through in Miami in late 1970. He decided to stay and write about that city's characters, wanderers, adventurers, smugglers, con artists and free-spirits.

Buffett made some noise with the song *Come Monday from his Living and Dying in 3/4 Time* album in 1974, but everything changed for him in 1977, when he released *Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes*.

The album included the most requested song ever on *Pleasure Island - and maybe America*. His only top 10 single, *Margaritaville* was a 22 week mainstay on the Billboard chart.

"It was like a vacation to listen to that song," said Taylor in *Rolling Stone*. "But at the same time, it exposed itself and gave you a hint of the dirty underside - the hangover."

Margaritaville (Page 18) was accepted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 2016 for its cultural and historic significance and helped brand Key West as an international destination resort.

"There was no such place as Margaritaville," Buffett told the *Arizona Republic* in 2021. "It was a made-up place in my mind, basically made up about my experiences in Key West and having to leave Key West

and go on the road to work and then come back and spend time by the beach."

The copyright on that song inspired a business empire that grew to include a Broadway play, Grammy nominations, casinos, retirement communities and hotels, a radio station, clothing and apparel lines, food, beer, tequila, salad dressings and even salsa. *Forbes* (Page 20) placed Buffett's net worth at \$1 billion when he passed.

Buffett left his fans with 27 albums and numerous high quality downloads from his 30 song concerts that left attendees as exhausted as he was, partly because of the legendary pre-concert parties that Parrot Heads - there are 200 local chapters across the United States - use as an excuse to turn every venue's parking lot into a tropical island, a mini-Mardi Gras.

"When he's doing a show, he thinks about his show more than anything. He has a family and a business and everything else, but Jimmy's show, I think, is the most important thing in his life," said Coral Reefer guitarist Mac McAnally.

Buffett described the Parrot Heads in 2012 as "the social network before there was a social network."

Coral Reefer bassist Timothy B. Schmit, coined the phrase.

"People had already started wearing Hawaiian shirts to our shows, but we looked out at this Cincinnati

crowd and they were glaringly brilliant to the point where it got our attention immediately," Buffett said. "Then Schmit says, 'They look like Deadheads in tropical suits. They're like Parrot Heads!'"

Buffett's friend James Taylor tells what he thanks is the perfect Parrot Head story.

"Jimmy was wakesurfing one day. He was trying to catch a wave from a tanker, a big freighter," Taylor said. "Jimmy somehow got the captain's name from the Coast Guard. You can track marine traffic on your cell phone if you have the right app. He got in touch with the captain of the boat, and the guy changed his course and altered his speed to make the perfect wave for Jimmy to ride behind this freighter. The captain was a Parrot Head."

Buffett's grandfather was a steamship captain and his father traveled to India and Africa as a naval architect with the Army Corps of Engineers. So, he came by his adventurous spirit and wanderlust naturally. The Gulf of Mexico was his doorway to a world full of characters like those he heard about from his grandfather, according to his bio.

"The siren call of exotic ports was in contrast to his days as a parochial school student and an altar boy, and it only took a guitar to take him off course from the life his parents had imagined for him," it stated.

Son of a Son of a Sailor, released in 1978, was Buffett's most obvious ode to his grandfather: "The sea's in my veins. My tradition remains. I'm just glad I don't live in a trailer," he sang.

"You can't grow up around water and not develop an almost cellular longing to be out in a boat on that water. So many of his songs resonate with his love of exploring the ocean," Buffett's sister Lucy told Al.com. "That notion was born in his youth on Mobile Bay, Dauphin Island, Gulf Shores and the Mis-

issippi barrier islands."

Buffett has been described as a "life's a beach avatar" and "Hemingway with a guitar and a Whaler boat." "Bard of beach rock" and "poet of paradise" also fit. And he was as comfortable writing heartfelt a ballad like *A Pirate Looks at Forty* as he was with playful rockers like *Cheeseburger*.

"When you look at his entire catalog, you can't help but appreciate his deep emotional side. Much to his own chagrin, I might add. He's really quite modest and private; like most men, he won't wallow in the emotional side of things for very long. He really is more of a 'breathe in, breathe out, move on' kind of guy," Lucy Buffett said.

Shea Jordan of Gulf Shores said she would play her dad's copy of the 45 single *Come Monday* over and over again when she was a child.

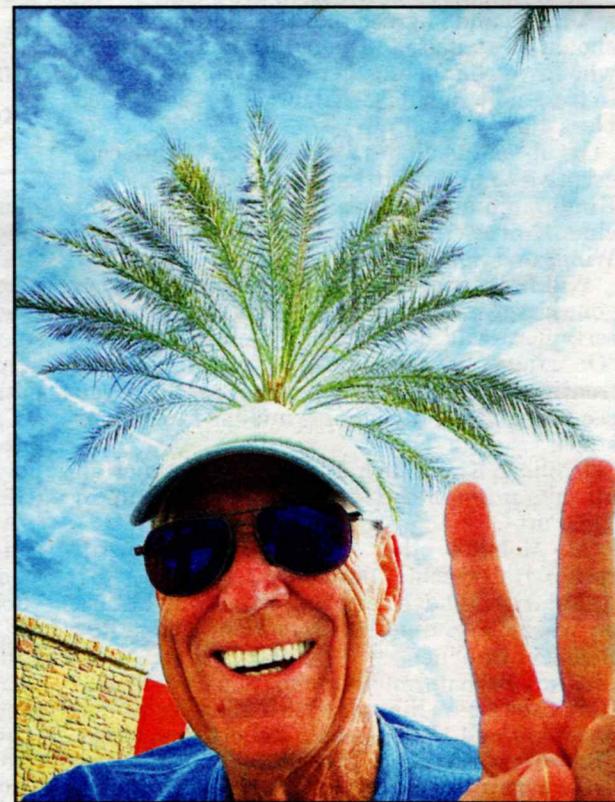
"Those 45's were everything to me because I was kept from him. Those records made me feel like I was with my dad and kept me connected. Music is so personal and *Come Monday* was absolutely one of my favorites."

"I still have those old 45's and they are still in the same olive green twist handled cylinder holders," Jordan added.

Buffett helped make having a devil-may-care, gently rebellious nature an appropriate lifestyle. He bottled and sold the idea that attitude was directly affected by latitude.

That so many fans looked at Buffett like he was part of their family seemed normal. The connection was that strong. He allowed us to grow older while refusing to grow up.

And he did all that just by being himself. James Taylor put it this way: "The main thing he shared with us was his joy of being alive. It was a gift to be around him, and it was delightful to witness that life. He had an immense amount of positive energy."



Jimmy in Palm Springs, CA (Coral Reefers facebook page)

3,000 fans will be here to raise a toast to Jimmy Buffett during Meeting of the Minds

“We didn't choose Jimmy, we were on a parallel path. We knew the words the first time we heard them.”

By Fran Thompson

Parrot Heads have been described as a combination of Canadians, hippies, Gandhi and your cool uncle.

They love to get together and party with or without Jimmy Buffett being there to join them. But it's a party with a purpose, they will be quick to tell you.

“We have donated over \$62 million to charity since we started,” said Pete Ferralli, co-chair of the Meeting of the Minds celebration of trop rock that will bring more than 3,000 Parrot Heads to Pleasure Island from Oct. 23-28 for mostly music themed events. Pre-registration has closed. For more MOTM info, visit motm.rocks.

“We will be doing all kinds of stuff to raise money for the city's charities while we are there,” Ferralli added. “We arranged for bloodmobiles to be there for three days. We will have auction baskets, raffles, a silent auction, a 5K Run. Just about everything we do will raise funds for the host city's charities.”

The convention will give patrons ample opportunity to raise a glass to the Gulf Coast native who invented the genre, and the group and anyone else who wants to join them are invited to raise a toast to the event's spiritual leader on Oct. 25 beginning around 5 p.m. The

Gulf Shores High School Steel Drum Band play a set of Buffett songs before the toast.

“We decided to do something as a group on Wednesday (Oct. 25) at The Hangout,” Ferralli said on his way home from a Parrot Head event at the Surf Ballroom (venue for Buddy Holly's last concert) in Clear Lake, Iowa.

“We have not finalized everything, but our president and some other people will say a few words and then we will all come together and raise a toast. All of us are taking this pretty hard. We knew he was sick, but we didn't realize how bad it was. Please tell all the Jimmy Buffett fans from town to come down and join us.”

Ferralli said although the Oct. 25 party at the Hangout is open to the public, Hangout events slated Oct. 26-28 are for MOTM registrants only.

And there are many to choose from, as Lucy Buffett's LuLu's at Homeport Marina in Gulf Shores, Live Bait in Orange Beach, The Flora-Bama on Perdido Key and

Sassy Bass in Fort Morgan have music scheduled every night and most days.

There is no cover charge for most of the events outside of the Hangout.

Highlighted MOTM charitable events open to the everyone include the Skip-pin & Sippin 5K & 1-Mile Fun Run/Walk at LuLu's at 8 a.m.

on Saturday, Oct. 28 benefitting Bras Across the Causeway, a shoe and toy drive at The Hangout open throughout the week and a blood drive with blood drives Oct. 25, 27 & 28 at LuLu's.

Another MOTM fundraiser is the first annual Celebrity Putt Putt Tournament on Oct. 25 at Shrimpy's Grill and Golf. Registration is \$45, and Shrimpy's has \$3 drinks (this ain't Key West!).

The registration fee includes a free drink. Trop rock celebrities will be at every hole along the way. You can even pay \$5 to have the trop rock celebrity play the hole for you. (Register at MOTM.rocks.)

Ferralli has attended 20 of the first 30 MOTMs, including the first

one in 1992 at Margaritaville in the New Orleans French Quarter.

The MOTM Board decided to move its gathering to Gulf Shores after 20 years in Key West because it is more centrally located, less expensive, just as beautifully tropical and provides more infrastructure for future growth.

“The history of this area when related to Parrot Heads is so iconic, and the community has been amazing to work with as we endeavored to move the event from Key West,” said Suzanne Calhoun, Meeting of the Minds co-chair. “We invite the community to join us at our public events, and we look forward to giving back to Gulf Shores and Orange Beach.”

While the main focus of the convention is live music, there will also include breakout sessions, leadership growth opportunities and philanthropic efforts to benefit the local community.

“Between the philanthropic events they are planning and the number of restaurants and venues they will be using, the cities of Gulf Shores and Orange Beach will feel the economic lift during an otherwise slower time,” said Michelle Russ, vice president of special events for Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism.



Pensacola Beach Margaritaville was the first hotel

Not surprisingly, much of Jimmy Buffett's Margaritaville branding was in Florida. The first Margaritaville restaurant opened at the Universal CityWalk in Orlando in 1999, and Pensacola Beach was home to Jimmy Buffett's first licensed hotel.

“Having grown up in Mobile, Pensacola Beach was the first Florida I ever saw, long before I headed to Key West,” Buffett said when the hotel opened. “It is great to be coming home and making a commitment to Pensacola and the Gulf Coast, especially at this time.”

At a cost of \$50 million, Margaritaville Pensacola Beach oceanfront hotel opened in a prime location in the middle of the island's commercial district on an 800 ft. parcel in June of 2010 on the former

site of a Holiday Inn destroyed by Hurricane Ivan on September 16, 2004. The hotel site includes over 800 feet of gulf-front property and an additional 800 feet that overlooks the bay.

The LandShark Landing Beach Bar is now the Salty Rose, but the hotel's center of attraction will always be the 1,000 ft. of quartz white sand just outside the back door.

Promising “barefoot elegance,” the Pensacola Beach hotel kicked off the run of Margaritaville luxury hotels to which Buffett sold intellectual property. Not all have flourished.

“Anytime your franchise agreement is coming up, you have a decision to make about the next chapter for your property,” said hotel co-owner Leigh Taylor.

“We're very proud of our history with Margaritaville. We were the first hotel in that brand and we have had a great relationship with them,” she added.

The first Margaritaville Casino opened in the Flamingo Hotel in Las Vegas a year later, in 2011.

The company's flagship Margaritaville Hollywood Beach Resort opened in 2015 with eight restaurants, 369 rooms and more than 30,000 square feet of event space.

The Island H2O Live! Water park sprang up in 2019 along with Margaritaville Resort Orlando in Kissimmee.

In 2017, Buffett announced his first retirement community, Latitude Margaritaville, which opened in Daytona Beach. It's limited to residents aged “55 and better.”

In 2021, the world's first Margaritaville-branded cruise ship, Margaritaville Paradise, launched from the Port of Palm Beach.

New Orleans nurtured Buffett through the decades via football, fun, friendships, and a long-running affiliation with Jazz Fest

Editor's Note: *Back in March of 1993, Jimmy Buffett talked to New Orleans OffBeat magazine's Keith Spera, who now works for the Times Picayune in that same city. Always articulate, Buffett told us why all Gulf Coast music lovers know what it means to miss New Orleans.*

"I was going to school in Poplarville [Mississippi] and I got a job at Trader John's [in the French Quarter], so that had to have been 1967. That was kind of like the minor leagues, and that little club fed other places. The major leagues was the Bayou Room on Bourbon Street. If you weren't good enough to get into the Bayou, then you went to Trader John's. But a band had tragically been killed in a car wreck on the Causeway that had worked in the Bayou Room. We went down and auditioned and got the job.

"Tuesday through Sunday, we started at seven in the evening. We played until three in the morning, half hour on, half hour off. And then Mardi Gras, we started at 10 in the morning, and we went until four. I think that's the hardest job I ever did, doing literally 20 hours of playing. It was amazing. I was 19 years old or something like that.

"In those days, the biggest thing to do was to try not to get as drunk as the audience. Occasionally, we didn't make the cut, and that wasn't fun. I learned early on that it was a responsibility to be onstage. I had seen bad drunk performers, and I really didn't want to be one. I slipped occasionally, but that was a different time. You'd get off work at three and you never got home 'til the sun came up, so you slept all day. And you could get a mufuletta for a dollar and a six pack of Dixie, so it wasn't a bad life.

"I used to come down before the Trader John's gig and play on the streets around the Seven Seas and Las Casas de Marinas. I busked probably in the summer of '66 and got that job in '67, and in '68 I was back working on the street. I always had a good time doing it. It's just what you did. Between gigs, you played on the street. For me, it was fascinating. You were living that kind of romantic life—the reason most people who had any artistic tendencies went to New Orleans. It wasn't any kind of degrading or down-on-my-luck or broke thing.

"There were definitely songs [that earned tips]. They were all covers. I don't even know if I'd started songwriting then. Hey, it was the 1960s. A lot of Barry McGuire, "Eve of Destruction." Folky stuff. Protest songs. I remember there was a song called "The Song of the Salvation Army." There was one Mason Williams song called "Them Poems." Certain catchy songs. There were other people playing that had the real jobs and there were groups that I looked up to. I'd pick up material from them and apply the stuff that really

worked on crowds and worked it into my set. Humorous drinking songs.

"I've always been a shameless entertainer. Chances are, if someone was stopping and listening to you and you made them feel good, then they would put some money into your guitar case.

"And right down the street in those days, Frogman [Henry] was still on the street. And the Nevilles were at the Ivanhoe Piano Bar. There was a lot of music on the street in those days. There was a great piano bar on Iberville, and they had this guy play some Frank Sinatra stuff. And then there was always Las Casas. They had conga drums chained to the wall in the front room, and you could rent the conga drums and play along with the jukebox. I always loved that.

"I learned what I was best suited to do. I'm not the best singer or the best guitar player, but I could front a band and run a band. I was the only one in the band who had credit at the music store because I had another job, so I became the leader of the band, and I liked it.

"I was thrown into the spotlight of being the leader of the band 'cause I was the only guy that had credit at Werlein's to buy the sound system. All I wanted to do was be a background-singing bass player, but then I had no choice.

"My personal history goes back to New Orleans when I was a kid, because my grandfather was a captain for the Delta Steamship Company. I remember coming over to meet his ships. When I decided to go out on my own, New Orleans was just, to me, the haven of lunatics from the South, and I fit right into that category.

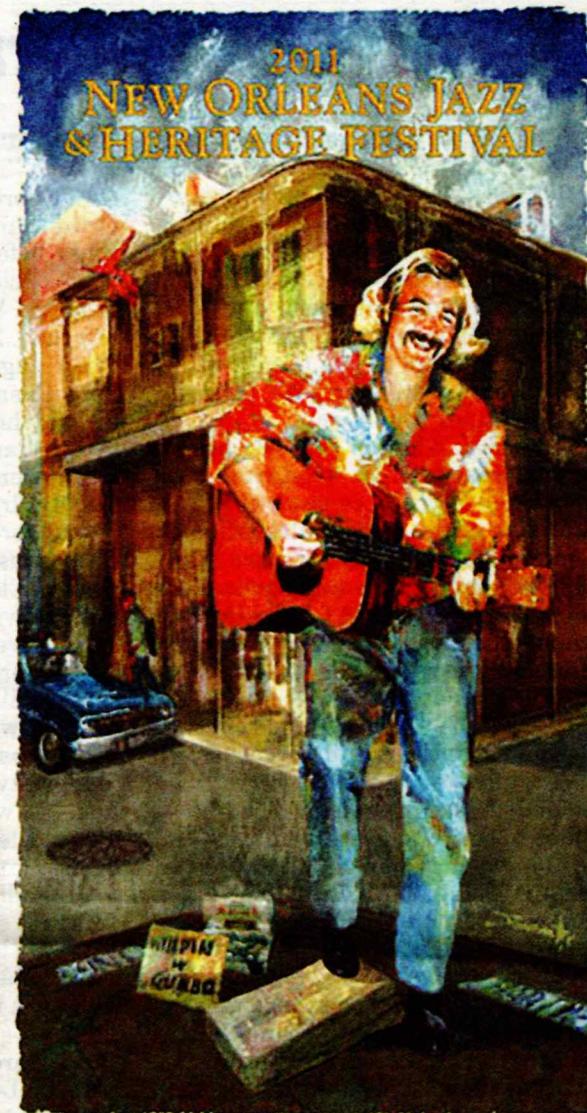
"But it's nice to see with my 14-year-old daughter, it's a place that it was equally magic for me when I was her age as it is for her, and there aren't many places around that you can say that. One of the great things about New Orleans is that its cultural thread has maintained through generations. That's what I really love about it."

Editor's Note: *Spera, who now works for the New Orleans Times Picayune, also wrote a beautifully crafted Buffett story in the Sept. 2 issue of that newspaper. The info below is from that story.*

"The ethos of Jimmy Buffett boiled down to Key West and New Orleans," wrote Spera. "It was New Orleans that launched his career and nurtured it through the decades via friendships, fun, football and a long-running affiliation with the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival."

Spera wrote that in the late 1950s, Buffett spent a summer working for his uncle, Jack Rappaport, selling 3D glasses out of an office at the Saenger Theatre in New Orleans. "This is where it all started," Buffett said during a 2012 Jazz Fest performance. "New Orleans was my Paris before I got to Paris."

Spera added that one of his chain of Margari-



taville restaurants was in the French Quarter, and his Margaritaville Record label released albums by New Orleans bands' the Iguanas and Evangeline. Louisiana slide guitarist Sonny Landreth was a Coral Reefer, and the late Art Neville of the Neville Brothers married his wife Lorraine at Buffett's house in Key West. Buffett performed at Allen Toussaint's 2015 memorial.

Spera stated that Buffett's performance at the 2006 post-Hurricane Katrina Jazz Fest best captured his emotional connection to New Orleans. "Buffett was essentially the grinning uncle who cracked open the whiskey after the wake," Spera wrote. "He choked up during the first verse of "City of New Orleans" but quickly recovered. He reaffirmed his ties to the region, singing about gumbo and crawfish pie. He slipped a reference to FEMA trailers into "Son of a Son of a Sailor."

Pictured: The New Orleans Jazz Fest honored Jimmy Buffett in 2011. The poster, by New Orleans artist Garland Robinette, "Busking Out: Becoming Jimmy Buffett," depicts Buffett on a street corner playing for tips. The poster includes a "Will Play 4 Gumbo" sign and a rendering of Buffett in the background walking into the future.

Buffett was also a citizen of Who Dat Nation

By Fran Thompson

Jimmy Buffett was a longtime New Orleans Saints fan, and he frequently visited the team during practices and games. He was in the locker room celebrating with the team when they won their only Super Bowl Back in 2010.

Buffett, who, as a child, went to Tulane football games at the venue with his father, was in the stands when John Gilliam returned the opening kick-off 94 yards against the Los Angeles Rams for a touchdown at the very first Saints game on Sept. 17, 1967 at Tulane Stadium, according to a tribute on the Saints' website.

"We thought, 'This is gonna be easy,'" Buffett recalled.

Buffett had gotten to know some of the original Saints while playing at the Bayou Room on Bourbon Street, as the bar was a hangout for Saints players.

"I think it was more because we had a hot chick in our band," Buffett said. "They were more interested in her than in our music."

In January 2010, Buffett flew his jet 5,400 miles from Bora Bora to New Orleans, a trip that included a stop to fix a flat tire, to see the Saints beat the Vikings in the NFC Championship Game and advance to the Super Bowl.

According to the Buffett obituary in the New Orleans Times-Picayune, on his way into the game, Buffett stopped at a Poydras Ave. tailgate party thrown by a coalition of fans called the Down Undas. Some wore sun visors sprouting a shock of spiky hair, a tribute to the Saints' defensive coordinator at the time, Gregg Williams. Buffett offered to get up and sing if someone gave him a visor and a bowl of gumbo.

The Times Picayune reported that Buffett sang "Margaritaville" and "Sea Cruise" atop a flatbed truck with local swamp pop band the Creole String Beans.

"We faked 'Margaritaville,' but it didn't matter," Buffett said. "Everybody was having a good time."

Buffett watched the game with Jazz Fest producer Quint Davis in a suite and wrapped Davis in a tearful embrace when Garrett Hartley's overtime field goal won the game for the Saints, allowing the team to advance to the Super Bowl.

"It was stunned shock and disbelief, such an emotional thing," Buffett said. "The game had all the great Shakespearean drama you could want."

Long after fans left the Superdome to join parties all over the city, Buffett went down to the field and laid down in black and gold confetti. "I tossed it around 'like the child of Mardi Gras that I am,'" he said.

The Times Picayune also reported that in

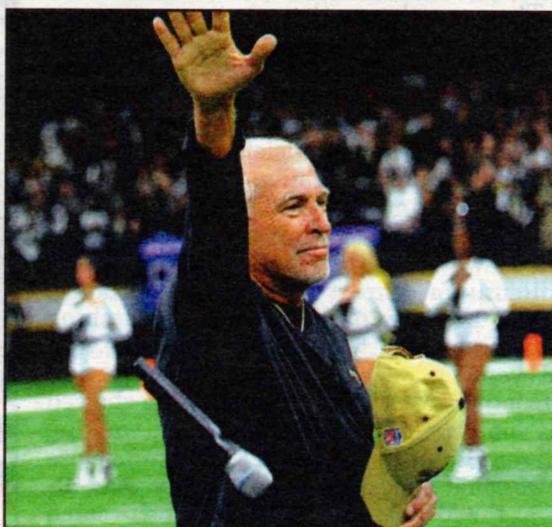
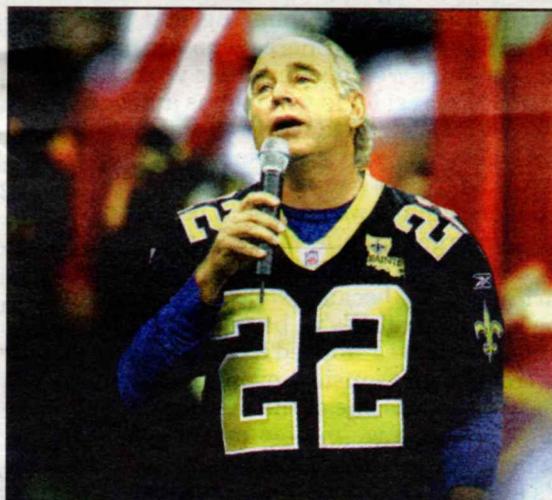
2019, Buffett came onstage at the 50th anniversary Jazz Fest dressed as a blind referee in reference to what has become known as the NOLA No Call that knocked the Saints out of the play-offs. Who Dat Nation's wounds were still fresh even three months later.

After leading Buffett around stage for a bit, two Saints' cheerleaders tore off his referee's costume and Buffett started his show.

Perhaps the most infamous blown call in NFL history, the NOLA No Call occurred on Jan. 20, 2019 at the end of the Saints NFC Championship Game against the Los Angeles Rams for a spot in the Super Bowl. The Saints were in position to put the game away with a touchdown or by simply getting a first down and running the clock down for a field goal.

On 3rd & 10, Rams defender Nickell Robey-Coleman crunched the Saints Tommy Lewis way before he touched the pass from Drew Brees. It was also an illegal helmet-to-helmet hit. The officials called it an incomplete pass.

Pictured: Jimmy Buffett singing the National Anthem before Saints' games.



Buffett remembers NOLA at Wrigley Field concert

On Sept. 5, 2005, a week after the levees surrounding New Orleans were breached following Hurricane Katrina, Jimmy Buffett played the first-ever concert at Chicago's Wrigley Field, dedicating "City of New Orleans" to its namesake. Eight months later, he opened his Jazz Fest show in the still-devastated city with the same song.

"That fit my sense of connection. How do you musically get to people about something that devastating, and still not preach to 'em? Some people choose to preach. I choose not to," he said.

Allen Touissant wrote "Hang With Jimmy Buffett"

The late Allen Touissant wrote a song about his friend, Jimmy Buffett and there is a recording of him singing Hang With Jimmy Buffett at the 2005 Jazz Fest: "I don't believe it has to be like this; Life holds more than a single twist; I saw some birds flying south today; I think my feathered friends have pointed the way. I'm gonna hang with Jimmy Buffett; Gonna swing with Jimmy Buffett; I'm gonna lay back in the sun; Partake of all the fun; I'm gonna hang with Jimmy Buffett."

Buffett compared Touissant's work as a producer, pianist, songwriter (Southern Nights), musical genius and composer and his influence on New Orleans music to Satchmo himself. Touissant (and Jesse Winchester) were part of Buffett's 2010 free concert at Gulf Shores Public Beach.

"It is rare in anybody's life that your heroes wind up being your close friends," Buffett wrote on facebook after Touissant's passing in 2015.

"More than often those we worship from afar don't quite measure up. But Allen was simply one of the good guys. When I realize I can't text him about the Saints. When I go to New Orleans next week and there realize, that we can't have dinner and talk about new talent in the city or plan fishing trips on Long Island next summer. That is when I will know that he is gone. But as the good nuns and brothers used to tell us, 'The soul lives forever.'

"Too many gifted people either squander their talent or never get to see themselves and their work appreciated fully. That was certainly not the case with the 'Maestro.' He has left to the city he loved so much, a legacy, in my humble opinion, equal to Louis Armstrong. The body of work that his soul produced is hard to wrap your head around. Allen went out doing what he loved - playing for people. You can't ask for more than that."

Jimmy Buffett was part of the fabric at Jazz Fest

Jimmy Buffett played at the New Orleans Jazz Fest for the first time in 1989 and played his final show there at the 2022 fest. He has sat in with Lyle Lovett, Dave Matthews, Allen Touissant and many other performers during the fest. And, in deference to the respect he garnered from event producer Quint Davis, he was given use of a golf cart to scoot around the Fairgrounds. Buffett and Dave Matthews were the first two name acts to commit to the post Katrina 2006 Jazz Fest. Buffett also played at the 50th anniversary Jazz Fest in 2019. Buffett introduced Davis to Hollywood producer Frank Marshall and that resulted in "Jazz Fest: A New Orleans Story," a 2022 documentary that won a Grammy. "As the festival grew, he grew. It seemed like he helped pull us along," Davis said. "When I put Jimmy on the last Sunday, everything changed and we had 50,000 people show up."

Davis added that Buffett arranged tours around the fest and typically gave the festival a steep discount on his fee.

MOTM Co-Chair Pete Ferralli shares his Parrot Head journey

By Pete Ferralli

My journey as a Parrot Head began with my brother-in-law, who was a passionate music lover and a former high school band member. He introduced me to Jimmy Buffett's songs in the mid-1980s, when I visited him during the holidays. I was impressed by the upbeat and fun music, as I had always enjoyed music myself.

Although I could play a little piano and guitar, my brain was not wired to be a professional musician. I was more of a promoter and started back in high school as a DJ playing for the dance crowd in my hometown (Washington, PA). I also found part-time work at the local radio station. My wife and I continued to follow Jimmy's music through the years and attended a few of his concerts.

In 1997, while living in Arizona, I learned about the Parrot Head Club in Phoenix. I contacted the club president, and she sent me newsletters about club activities. My wife and I decided to join the club and participate in some of the charity events. To my surprise, I soon became the president of the club in 2000. That was the start of my involvement with the PHIP organization and my life as a true Parrot Head.

Biggest Challenge in Planning MOTM

One of the key aspects of planning a successful event is having a well-organized and motivated staff who can adopt a business mindset. An event like MOTM is more than just a fun gathering, it is a professional opportunity. The Parrot Heads are fortunate to have many skilled and talented members in our organization. The challenge is to recruit and engage those individuals who can contribute to the event. We have members who have experience in hosting local events and some who have participated in larger-scale activities. We also have members who come from diverse backgrounds and professions and have valuable skills. We need to identify and involve those special people. I like the fact that many of our team have relevant experience in working with groups and managing these kinds of musical events.

Making MOTM More Accessible

I have been a Parrot Head for more than two decades, and I have served in various leadership roles within the organization, such as club President and event organizer. I have also been a loyal member of PHIP for 25 years. One of the events that I have been passionate about is MOTM, which I have attended many times in Key West. However, I noticed that many Parrot Heads from the Western US were missing out on this wonderful event due to the distance and the cost. That's why I joined a committee in 2001 to propose some alternative locations that would be more accessible and affordable for all our members.

Making MOTM More Affordable

Unfortunately, the PHIP board decided to keep the event in Key West at that time. But last year, they finally realized that Key West was becoming too expensive for many Parrotheads, and they

formed a new committee to look for a better place. I was happy to be part of this committee, and we worked hard to find a location that had everything we needed: facilities, lodging, and a beach vibe. We chose Gulf Shores, and I was honored to be part of the team that will run the event there. I am proud to be part of the Parrothead community and its history.

It's All About Budgets & Schedules

I have gained valuable business insights from my diverse experiences as an Electronics Engineer, a military officer, an Engineer, a Program Manager, and a Business Development Manager for various Fortune 500 companies, as well as an entrepreneur of two travel agencies and a craft store. I understand the importance of budgeting and scheduling for any business operation, as they are essential for achieving the desired outcomes.

Respectful Addition To Community

Our goal is to provide a memorable and enjoyable experience for our guests at a reasonable cost. We are new to Gulf Shores, and we want to establish ourselves as a positive and respectful addition to the community. We can achieve this by behaving responsibly, caring for the environment, and supporting local causes. Moreover, we are excited to bring some amazing and professional musicians to Gulf Shores who can inspire the local students. We hope in future years many of the Gulf Shore residents will join us and our organization at MOTM. We do have a local club that is always welcoming new members.

Married 54 Years And Still Having Fun

I was honored that I was asked to be part of the committee to organize and manage the event in Gulf Shores. Jimmy Buffett's songs have always been part of our life because we've lived the kind of life he sings about. We've been married for 54 years, and we've never stopped having fun and adventure traveling to musical events. Joining the Parrothead Club was one of the best decisions we ever made, because we met so many wonderful people who share our passion and spirit. The Parrotheads are more than just a fan club, they are a family. They are always there to support us, no matter where we are or what we need. We are so grateful for all the memories and friendships we've made through this amazing organization.

Jimmy Was More Than A Musician To Us

Jimmy was more than a musician to us. He was a part of our Key West family. We've seen him perform live five times at MOTM and more than 40 times in concert. Each time was a memorable occasion. However, the two most memorable were the Millennium concert at Universal Studios. Bringing in the new millennium and watching Jimmy zip line down to the stage was once in a lifetime event.

And the other, MOTM of 1998 when he showed with his son Cameron on his shoulders, walking down Green Street to the stage. We were so close to him; we could almost touch him. Every year, attendees at the MOTM events would hope to catch

a glimpse of him in town. They would run from venue to venue at the sound of a rumor that Jimmy was seen in town. This year, he may not be here physically, but he will always be in our hearts.

We Hope To Keep Coming Back

The wife and I love coming to Gulf Shores whenever I can. It's such a nice place to hang out with friends and enjoy the beach. The food here is awesome and the people are very friendly. I've been friends with (See Page 22-23 story) Brent Burns for more than 25 years and he's typical of the type of people you find here. He's always been there for me and he's a true Gulf Shores local. I hope to keep coming back here for a long time. I'm sure our members will love it here too once they see how amazing this place is.

20 MOTMs With A Bullet

My wife and I have attended 20 MOTM events. We have also traveled to many other great venues that host Parrothead events. Each is special in their own way. I would estimate that we attend 8-10 events a year both domestically and internationally. With up to 3000 total attendees MOTM is the largest of any of the Parrothead events.

Ready For GSHS Steel Drum Band

I am looking forward to hearing the Gulf Shores High School Steel Drum Band play on Wednesday at the Hangout. We were told about this group during our meeting with the city and we are working with the school's musical director to have them play at the event. Since this event is on Wednesday, Oct. 25, locals are welcome to join us at the Hangout. Following the steel drum band performance, we will have a memorial to Jimmy Buffett and a toast. From Oct. 26-28, the event will be closed to members and registrants only.

Pictured: Pete and Kathy Ferralli have lived the kind of life Jimmy Buffett sings about for the full 54 years they have been married.



Paul McCartney played a private show for Buffett family before he passed

Editor's Note: According to media reports, Paul McCartney played a private show for Jimmy Buffett and his family during Buffett's final days. The bedside concert included an emotional rendition of "Let It Be."

By Paul McCartney

I've known Jimmy for some time and found him to be one of the kindest and most generous people. I remember once on holiday when I had forgotten to bring my guitar and was itching to play. He said he would get me one of his, but I said, I'm left-handed. So, Jimmy had his roadie restrung one of his guitars which he loaned me for the duration of the holiday. He then followed this act of generosity by giving me my own beautiful left-handed guitar that had been made by one of his guitar-making pals. It's a beautiful instrument, and every time I play it now it'll remind me of what a great man Jimmy was.

He had a most amazing lust for life and a beautiful sense of humor. When we swapped tales about the past his were so exotic and lush and involved sailing trips and surfing and so many exciting stories that it was hard for me to keep up with him.

Right up to the last minute his eyes still twinkled with a humor that said, "I love this world and I'm going to enjoy every minute of it."

So many of us will miss Jimmy and his tremendous personality. His love for us all, and for mankind as a whole.

Last, but not least, is his songwriting and vocal ability. If someone made an interest-



ing remark he repeated it in his gorgeous drawl and said, "That's a good idea for a song."

Most times it didn't take too long for that song to appear. I was very happy to have played on one of his latest songs called "My Gummy Just Kicked In."

We had a real fun session and he played me some of his new songs. One, in particular, I loved was the song, "Bubbles Up." And I told him that not only was the song great but the vocal was probably the best I've heard him sing ever. He turned a diving phrase that is used to train people underwater into a metaphor for life when you're confused and don't know where you are just follow the bubbles - they'll take you up to the surface and straighten you out right away.

So long, Jim. You are a very special man and it was a great privilege to get to know you and love you. Bubbles up, my friend.

In Their Own Words...

- "I have always been a shameless entertainer. Chances are, if someone was stopping and listening to you and you made them feel good, then they would put some money into your guitar case."

- Jimmy Buffett.

- "It's so hard to say goodbye to someone."

- A choked up Bono at U-2's Las Vegas show. Bono dedicated "Love Rescue Me" to Buffett's family who were in attendance. He called out each by name: Jane, Savannah, Delaney, and Cameron, and also called out Jimmy's doctors.

- "It's often said around town, when Jimmy Buffett is discussed, that everyone in Mobile has a connection to the man."

- Mobile Press Register reporter Jared Boyd.

- "Who knew people wanted to live in Margaritaville I thought for a while it was a myth."

- Jimmy Buffett about Latitude Margaritaville.

- "He was really who he was. He surfed, he was in boats and seaplanes, he was in the

Caribbean all over the place. He never had to put on anything for this brand that grew up around him. He had some real smart people managing aspects of the brand, but all he had to do was keep on being himself. Everything that he did that was so successful was him being who he was."

- New Orleans Jazz Fest producer Quint Davis.

- "My grandfather was a captain for the Delta Steamship Company. I remember coming over to meet his ships. When I decided to go out on my own, New Orleans was just, to me, the haven of lunatics from the South, and I fit right into that category."

- Jimmy Buffett.

- "What an incredible talent and man. His songs will live on forever. I'll bet most of y'all don't know that he wrote the theme song for Barmageddon for me about two years ago. Raising a glass today to the Son of a son of a Sailer."

- Blake Sheldon.

I said, 'Well, I have to say, Paul, I think you're the best that's ever been.' And Paul said, "Well, that's probably right, but my friend you are amazing."

- Mac McAnally.

Mac shares story about time they played for Paul

Editor's Note: Mac McAnally shared a story about playing a show with Jimmy Buffett when Paul McCartney was in the audience during an interview with Mississippi Public Broadcasting (mpbonline.org).

By Mac McAnally

Well, Jimmy and I occasionally will book an unannounced acoustic show just to sort of warm up, because Jimmy doesn't play guitar every day. He's got a company to run and boats to run and all that sort of stuff. So, when he's been off the road a while, we'll book a little unannounced acoustic gig to warm up, and we were booked as an opening act in the Hamptons for a surf band. We're just looking around playing for a hundred people. And Jimmy looks over at me halfway through the show and he says, "You nervous?" And I said, 'I don't know, a little bit. How come?' He said, "Your hero's here." And I look out and Paul McCartney and his wife were just sitting down, And this club (Stephens Talkhouse) is so small. I could have hit him with a paper wad.

And then I was like, yeah, I'm nervous now. I am nervous now. Jimmy knows I'm a ridiculous Beatle fan. Of all the ways you dream about meeting Paul McCartney, none of them were me playing and him listening. I wanted to be in the audience.

So Jimmy throws me this. He says, "I want to let my guy here, he's an instrumentalist, play an instrumental. And I did my little version of Little Martha and I couldn't even look. I was looking straight down at the stage. I couldn't look at the crowd at all, but I played little Martha and I made it through it. And at the end, Jimmy's like, look up and I look up and McCartney's jumping up and down with his hands in the air and whistling and clapping his hands.

I get chill bumps talking about it now because I'm still basically seven years old as it relates to the Beatles. And he asked to meet me. I stuck my hand out and he just gave me a bear hug me like your favorite uncle would bear hug you. I felt like I should say something. And while we were still hugging, I said, 'Well, I have to say, Paul, I think you're the best that's ever been.' And Paul said, "Well, that's probably right, but my friend you are amazing."

That's really all I need in the way of compliments. An hour later, Jimmy and I are packed up carrying our guitars out to the parking lot, and Paul was still standing outside talking to anybody that wanted to talk, saying hello to anybody that wanted to say hello. And Jimmy Buffett and I are lugging guitars to his little SUV. Jimmy says, "You know what? If Paul McCartney's going to be a nice guy, we got to be nice guys." If anybody deserves to get to be a jerk, it's Paul McCartney, because he's been bothered for his whole life and he was just as nice as he could be to every soul in that place. So that's an inspiration and a role model for me and anybody else that's wanting to do this job.



CONDOLENCES FROM BEACH BOYS MIKE LOVE & BRIAN WILSON:
 "Your music brought joy to so many people, including me. It was always a pleasure when our paths crossed and we were able to share the stage together. I will hold dear our time spent together on stage, especially you singing "Kokomo" with us. No more shoes, just your toes in heaven's sand. Rest in peace Brother Jimmy," wrote Beach Boy Mike Love. Brian Wilson was more direct. "Love and Mercy, Jimmy Buffett," he wrote.

Clint Black remembers first time he shared stage at Ladd-Peebles

By Clint Black

Jimmy Buffett was one of my biggest influences and I got to discover first hand that he was exactly who we all thought he was. He was a modern day Mark Twain, who turned his many adventures into songs and books and transported us to those exotic places he loved.

In 1989, when Jimmy found out I was a Parrot Head and invited me to open for him in Mobile at Ladd Stadium. What a gift he gave me. As time went on, he would spend time on the phone with me, helping me understand this crazy new world of the record business.

We would go on write Happiness Alone together for my 4th album & when his harmonica player

left the band, he invited me to join him on tour! What a guy. These are not a part of the big dreams we have of making it in showbiz. These are things we couldn't have possibly imagined.

I toured with Jimmy for half the summer of 1998 & came away with a new lease on touring. He ran a fine ship & it was a most fun & relaxing voyage. I imagine only the circus could compare with a Jimmy Buffett tour. Beyond the controlled chaos of his show, there was a depth to his lyrics that defied the carnival nature of his concert experience. Margaritaville defined him to many, but to me, you could've set that aside & still have too many masterpieces to name. There's both joy & pain in reminiscing. He left behind so much to remind us of why we loved our King of the Parrot Heads. The pirate who looked at 40 and 50, now looks at the Pearly Gates. Rest in Peace on that golden beach my friend. We'll miss you so badly.

"I can tell you he was the same fellow in person that you saw and heard."

- (Jimmy's Coral Reefer guitarist) Mac McAnally

By Fran Thompson

Jimmy Buffett's right hand man in the Coral Reefers, Mac McAnally, has won a record setting 10 CMA musician of the Year awards, and has co-produced and co-written numerous cuts on Buffett albums since the two Mississippi natives connected in 1976.

Mac titled the following social media message about the passing of Jimmy Buffett "Loss and Gain."

"I am without words for about three weeks now," Mac wrote. "I usually have too many. The closest thing I ever had to a big brother left this world on Sept. 1. I've been comforted by so many beautiful tributes and am grateful for them. It is my intent to offer comfort and tribute in words and music for the rest of my life. I'm just slow getting up to speed. Jimmy would be laughing at me (or IS laughing) for dragging my feet.

"What I can say in lieu of the right words that continue to evade is what an honor it is and has been to ride shotgun with a one man fountain of positive energy that saw fit to take me under his wing forty some odd years ago," McAnally added. "And to the folks who only knew him from the stage or through the speakers I can tell you he was the same fellow in person that you saw and heard. Trying to help everyone he crossed paths with have the best day possible. Rich folks, poor folks, strangers and friends. Blue and white collars, all religions and political camps. He saw life as a gift to enjoy and his calling was to spread that joy. I've never seen anybody do it better."

Six days after Buffett passed, Mac dedicated one of his songs Buffett recorded, "It's My Job," to his friend during a show in Indiana.

"One week ago tonight, I had the privilege to go say goodbye to my buddy. And we got to say the things that we already knew but still wanted to

say. There's no conveyin' what it means, and I ran out of words and I was about to just bawl like a three-year-old. So I picked up the guitar and I played him this," Mac said before playing the song. Mac followed that up by playing "A Pirate Looks at 40" for the audience.

Buffett and Mac connected when both were with the same record label back in 1976. "Jimmy wrote me a little note and said, we're going to be friends. We're both storytellers from Mississippi. I'm going to sing some of your songs, we're going to write songs together," Mac said.

"You never know in show business who means what they say, I don't think, but he does. And all those things happened, plus a lot more," he added. "And we're still running around together. He's like family and the whole coral reefer entourage is second family to me. So it's turned out great for me and I hope him as well."

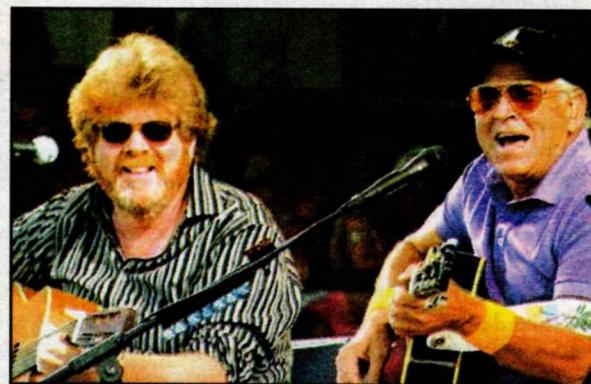
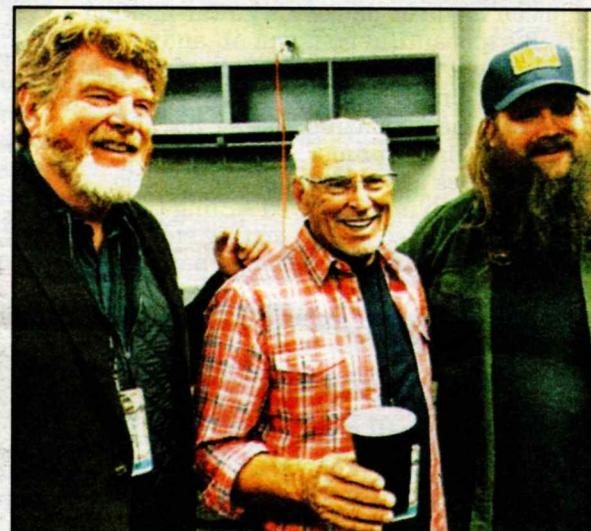
A musical prodigy, Mac was playing professionally in night clubs in Tennessee, just across from his Belmont, Mississippi home, by the time he was 13. He quit school in 11th grade, as he was already an in demand session player in Muscle Shoals' famed studios. He scored a Top 40 pop hit, "It's a Crazy World," at age 20, but even though he released 11 more albums, stardom eluded him, and that was OK by him.

"I was born without the ambition to be the guy in the middle of the stage," he said.

In addition to JB, he has worked with Ricky Skaggs, Linda Ronstadt, Dolly Parton, Amy Grant, Mary Chapin Carpenter and Sawyer Brown.

He has written top hits for other artists, including "Old Flame" by Alabama and "Down the Road" by Kenny Chesney. His songs have been recorded by Reba McEntire, Ricky Van Shelton, Charley Pride, Randy Travis and others.

He said, like his friend JB, he looks at every



day as an opportunity.

"Whatever our life is today is the best thing we have. And I look at it as personally, not just an opportunity, but it's a responsibility to figure out some way to enjoy it and try to make things better, and I look forward to waking up every day and taking another shot at it," he said.

Pictured: Mac McAnally and JB in 2020; Mac, JB and Chris Stapleton backstage at the Willie Nelson tribute concert in January of 2019 at Bridgestone Arena in Nashville.

“A man whose spirit could not be broken”

By (Jimmy's daughter) Delaney Buffett

Jimmy Buffett's daughter, Sarah Delaney Buffett, shared a touching message to her father on Instagram. "He told us not to be sad or scared, but to keep the party going," Delaney wrote. "I will love you forever, and I will always keep the party going (responsibly, of course)."

By Delaney Buffett

I knew my dad my whole life but in his final days, I saw who he was a man whose spirit could not be broken. Despite the pain, he smiled everyday. He was kind when he had every excuse not to be. He told us not to be sad or scared, but to keep the party going. And as much as I'd like to use that as an excuse to drink myself into oblivion worthy of his literary heroes, I know it's not what he meant.

"Yes, he loved his weed and his wine, but the truth is, most of the time, he was just high on life, and that is what he wanted for everyone: to enjoy the fantastic trip that life can be.

"My dad was the joy he sang about. He was the hardest working person I've ever seen. He was a great man and an even better dad to my brother, sister and me. He was generous with his friends and strangers alike. He had a deep admiration for the people he worked with, and he never took himself too seriously, which is probably what I loved most about him.

"When I showed him the South Park episodes that parody him, he loved chuckling along. I remember teasing him about their Margaritaville blender jokes, and without missing a beat, he zinged me with 'You live off those f!@#\$ing blenders!' He got me there.

"Over the past few days, people have thanked me for sharing my dad with them, but I know he would have wanted me to thank his fans for sharing their lives with him," Delaney wrote. "We are his family but the stage was his home, and you, his band, and everyone on the road gave him the strength to keep going back. I'll pass something along my mom said to me, 'Whenever you feel sad or lost, look for the messages in the music. There are plenty.

"My dad repeatedly told us how much he appreciated the doctors, nurses, and every person who was there for him during his battle with cancer," Delaney wrote. "So to those who took care of my dad at home and in the hospital, I want to thank you for giving us more time together. I am eternally grateful.

"To the family and friends supporting us during this time, thank you for reminding

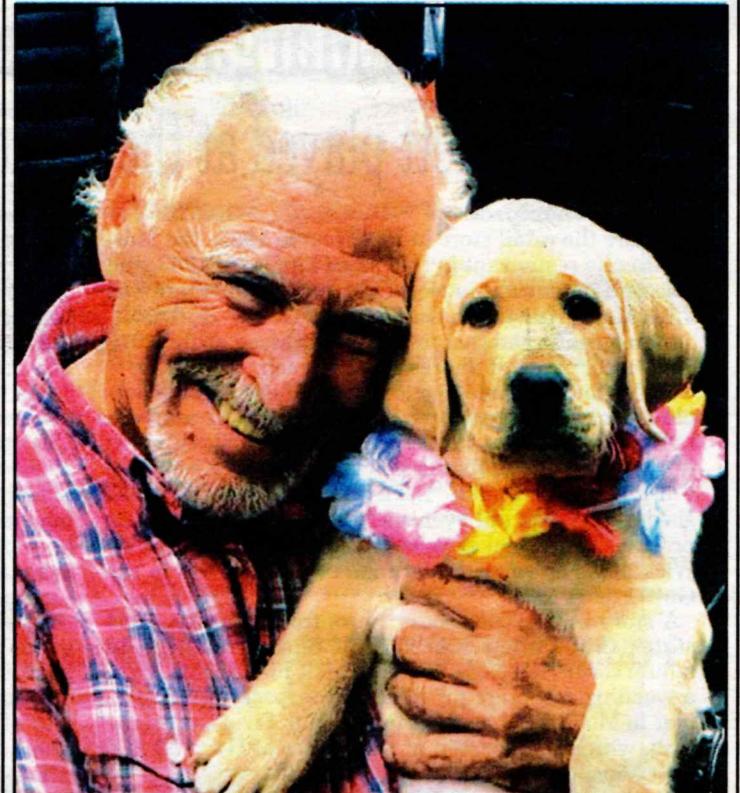
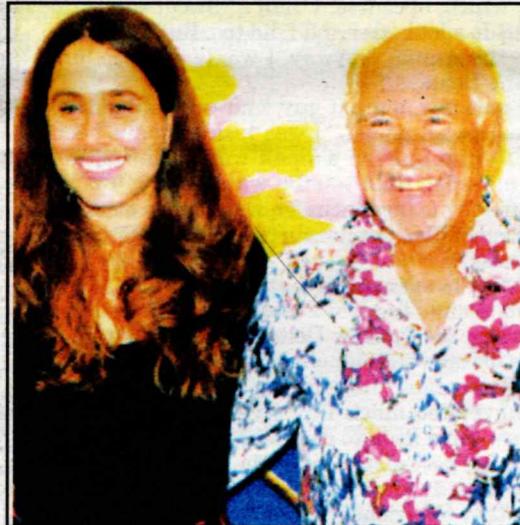
me of the importance of human connection. I knew laughter was the best medicine, but it's never rung truer than it does now. If we couldn't laugh, we would all go insane.

"And a big thank you to everyone for your tributes, stories, and notes. My dad and I shared a love for words, so reading yours has lit up my darkest hour.

"And finally, to my dad, thank you. You turned nothing into something and gave me everything. I will never be able to repay you or my mom for my beautiful life. I will love you forever, and I will always keep the party going (responsibly, of course)."

Jimmy Buffett's Daughter Pens Touching Tribute to Her Father: 'A Man Whose Spirit Could Not Be Broken'

"He told us not to be sad or scared, but to keep the party going," Delaney Buffett writes



Jimmy Buffet was an avid dog lover

Jimmy Buffett was an avid animal lover and owned several dogs, among them Lola, Kingston, Pepper, Rosie, Ajax and Kody. Just before he passed, Buffett posted a video on Facebook with several shots of his Cavalier King Charles Spaniels. And Buffett includes the song "Like My Dog," written by Harley Allen and Scotty Emerick, on Equal Strain on All Parts, an album due out next month.

"Like My Dog"

She never tells me that she's sick of this house
 She never says, "Why don't you get off that couch?"
 She don't cost me nothing when she wants to go out
 I want you to love me like my dog
 She never says I need a new attitude
 Her and your sister ain't always in a feud
 When I leave the seat up, she don't think that it's rude
 I want you to love me like my dog does, baby
 When I come home, want you to just go crazy
 She never looks at me like she might hate me
 I want you to love me like my dog
 She never acts like she don't care for my friends
 She never asks me, "Where the hell have you been?"
 She don't play dead any time I walk in
 I want you to love me like my dog does, honey
 She never says, "I wish you made more money"
 She always thinks that pull my finger's funny
 I want you to love me like my dog
 She don't get mad at me and throw a major fit
 'Cause I said her sister was a bitch
 I want you to love me like my dog does, baby
 When I come home, want you to just go crazy
 She never looks at me like she might hate me
 I want you to love me like my dog
 Why won't you love me like my dog does, baby

Pictured: Buffett and a friend during his appearance promoting the Broadway play *Escape to Margaritaville* on *The Today Show* in March of 2018.

The original Margaritaville was in Gulf Shores

Jimmy Buffett played at the grand opening in June of 1984

By Fran Thompson

Before the retail store in Key West in 1985, the Margaritaville restaurant in that same hamlet in 1987, and a second restaurant in New Orleans in 1993, there was J.B.'s Margaritaville in Gulf Shores.

Jimmy confirmed that fact from the stage at the 2010 BP Concert at Gulf Shores Public Beach:

"We're coming home in a lot of ways here. A lot of people don't know, if you study your history - it's not even in Wikipedia - that the actual first Margaritaville was in Gulf Shores, Alabama before it was in Key West, Florida," Buffett said. "Let's just say we didn't do as good here as we did eventually, but it was a learning process. Thank you everybody. You can put that up on Wikipedia or you can just take it and throw it in the Gulf. I don't care."

A story in the Tuscaloosa News from June 19, 1984 states that Buffett was in Gulf Shores to shoot an album cover (see page 17 story), visit his parents, go to a wedding reception for NFL quarterback Kenny Stabler in Mobile and help his friend, Dan Sweet, open the club, which was located at the corner of Hwy. 59 and Fort Morgan Rd.

"I tried to franchise a club under the Margaritaville name in Florida. But I couldn't get trademark rights because there are so many using the name around the country," Buffett told the Tuscaloosa News. "A friend, Dan Sweet, talked to me about doing it in Gulf Shores and it got me interested because I wanted to come back home."

Although he knew Jimmy's sisters Laurie and Lucy when they were all at McGill-Toolan High School in Mobile, Sweet did not befriend Buffett until the early 1970's.

"Jimmy played at the Admiral Sims Hotel all the time," Sweet said. "He was just a nice guy and way smarter than you would have guessed. He already knew what he was doing."

Sweet said he grew closer to Buffett in 1977 when he helped Jack West build the legendary Judge Roy Bean in Daphne (it burned down in 2005).

"His parents lived down the street. So, Jimmy would come down when he was in town," Sweet said. "He was a regular and fun to be with. He was smart. He always got to the punch line early."

Sweet may not have become part of Parrothead trivia were it not for a fire that claimed an early 1800's house in Fort Conde (Mobile) that he was remodeling to open as a bar. "You could see the fire from the Eastern Shore," he said.

With his original plan up in smoke, Sweet called Buffett and said he had a chance to buy Sam & Shine's in Gulf Shores and wanted to name it Margaritaville. Buffett gave him no assurances at the time, but he called back a little later and said he talked to his attorneys and it could open up as J.T.'s Margaritaville.

At the time, Buffett's lawyers were in litigation with two different bistros doing business as Margaritavilles in South Florida that Buffett had nothing to do with, Sweet said.

"He said put the initials J.T. in front of it and we could do it. His lawyers said it would help with the litigation if he also had a place with the name," Sweet said.

Buffett made several trips to Gulf Shores to check out the building, which included a fireplace and a huge patio, and he was definitely involved with the bistro's set-up and atmosphere. Buffett insisted that six ounce bottles of coke be used for all the mixed drinks. Almost the entire Coral Reefer band played at the grand opening, according to the owner.

"He liked the way it looked, and his suggestions were always the right move," Sweet said.

Margaritaville had its moments, especially in the summer and when bigger acts played there. But Sweet was not prepared for the winter season. He said he knew business would slow down in the winter, but he did not know it would be non-existent. That and four hurricane evacuations in the summer of 1985 were the original Margaritaville's Waterloo.

Sweet said Coral Reefer guitarist Mac McAnally, a frequent performer at the club, played at the grand opening for a putt-putt golf course he put in the courtyard, but that addition was not nearly enough to combat the lack of business in the winter, and the club closed after around three years in business.

"For the next 30 years Buffett would say that I owed him money, which, of course, I didn't," Sweet said. "He expected it to do a lot better and I did too. But I just didn't factor in the winter. Anyway, I would still see him around at The Bean."

"He was a nice guy, a great guy, and very influential in the world," Sweet added. "I was lucky to have been involved with him in even a small way. You couldn't have much more fun than you did with Jimmy."

He said Buffett's business acumen was always evident, and he is proud of him, but not surprised by Buffett's incredible success.

Sweet went on to open and eventually sell bars (Dobie's) in Mobile and (Toddys) Tuscaloosa. He now lives in retirement on the Tensaw Delta in Spanish Fort.

"All the fun for me with nightclubs was in the building, design and decoration," he said. "The day-to-day operation was never too much fun. Even when it was a packed house, you'd have to deal with people fighting."

He said one his best memories of the Buffett family is a trip he took with Jimmy's mom (Peets) and sister (Lucy) and other old friends to see Jimmy play a show at The Superdome.

Mark Calamette was bartending at Adolph's at Gulf Shores Public Beach when Sweet was a manger there. He left to join Sweet's team at J.B.'s Margaritaville as a bar manager before taking a career turn and going to art school. He now owns a company that designs and builds Mardi Gras floats.

Calamette's Buffett bonafides are many, and include a story we won't repeat for publication that ended up with both him and Buffett crashing on sofas in Sweet's West Beach living room.

Calamette bought Buffett's now famous 1963 Falcon from him and Buffett gave him the original screenplay for the Margaritaville movie written by PJ O'Rourke that was never made. The script includes Buffett's notes in the margins.

Like Sweet, Calamette said he is a bit fuzzy about exact dates for the grand opening or how many times Buffett played there, but he also remembers good crowds in the summer and empty space in the winter.

George Thoroughgood and The Delaware Destroyers and John Prine were among the best shows Calamette saw from behind the bar.

Buffett asked Calamette to draw a map of Margaritaville to use in the proposed movie from a sketch that Jimmy drew after a long night at Judge Roy Bean.

Buffett wanted to meet him at 6:30 a.m. in the cottage behind his parents' home nearby, as he had an early flight to catch. Calamette figured if he went to bed, he would not get up. When he showed up in the morning, Buffett was just returning from a run.

"The guy was super human," he said.

Buffett's Margaritaville sketch included The Reptile Barn and Joe's Bar, and Calamette still has it, along with the script with Buffett's notes.

"That Margaritaville was a little piece of history, especially with Buffett being able to bring it to his attorneys to use to get the attention of the court to tell the other bar owners to cease and desist. The Margaritaville name was his and he was open."

A 1985 story in the South Florida Sun-Sentinel about Greg Fingers Taylor, a charter member of the Coral Reefers and a mainstay on Buffett's early albums, stated that Taylor played at the grand opening with Buffett in 1984.

Longtime Gulf Shores resident Milton Rittelmeyer said he was there that night and many times thereafter, but he does not remember Taylor playing.

"That doesn't mean he wasn't there with him," Rittelmeyer said. "And I'm not sure it was the official opening, but it was the first night it was open."

Rittelmeyer said other concerts he saw there included WAR, Bachman Turner Overdrive, Jerry Jeff Walker and the Neville Brothers.

Taylor and Buffett met in a campus coffeehouse at Southern Miss around 1970. Buffett was a recent graduate and Taylor had already sat in with Delaney and Bonnie Bramlett and the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band when they played on campus.

"I was the local harp player, and I was supposed to play with everybody," Taylor remembers. "I got Jimmy a date with a girl from Burger Town, and at the end of the week I drove him home to Mobile. We stayed up all night. Driving along as the sun came up, Jimmy was playing his guitar, singing all his songs to me."

"Fingers' comeback concert was at JB's Margaritaville, a 180-seat Gulf Shores bar in which Buffett had a financial interest. It was there in June 1984 that the two reunited after a yearlong separation," is how The Sun-Sentinel put it. "Buffett performed opening night and invited Taylor down to reprise their original two-man show. They played for three hours."

J.B.'s Margaritaville was originally a bowling alley. It was also re-invented as the Lamplighter, Crabby Pete's and Peanuts Sports Bar. There is a Walgreen's there now. A poster on the Buffetworld facebook page stated the place was not anything like the present day Margaritaville clubs.

"There was very little, if any beachy decor. It was more dance clubbish and they hosted live music, including a Pensacola reggae band every Tuesday for Rum and Reggae, Lazy Day. I also saw Otis Day and the Knights for a toga party, A Flock of Seagulls, and Leon Russell and Edgar Winter together."

According to the post, the bar had a sloping ramp down to the main floor with curved, flat railings and surfing, sailing, and sailboarding videos looped on monitors.

"Jimmy did play there in 1984 and 1985. I can't remember seeing him there in 1986 though. That doesn't mean that he didn't, just that I can't remember," a poster named Linell stated.

Ocean was backdrop for Buffett's final show

Fittingly, Jimmy Buffett's final concert appearance was with Mac McAnally, his most trusted musical collaborator, and it was on a stage with an ocean backdrop.

Buffett made an impromptu appearance on July 3 at Sunset Cove, a waterfront bar in Portsmouth, Rhode Island. The crowd was there to see Mac, and roared to its feet when Buffett came out to join his Coral Reefer guitarist and drummer Eric Darken during the Alan Jackson hit "It's 5 O'Clock Somewhere."

When Mac sang, "At a moment like this, I can't help but wonder what would Jimmy Buffett do," Buffett came on stage, strapped on his guitar and said, "How 'bout I play it for you (in place of 'Pour me somethin' tall an' strong')."

A few hours before the show, McAnally told Sunset Cove owner Mike MacFarlane that Buffett wanted to "crash the party," MacFarlane said. After being under the weather" and off the road, Buffett was itching to get back on the road, MacFarlane said.

So Buffett hopped on a flight from Long Island with his daughter, and MacFarlane, whose 50th birthday fell on the day of the show, met the two of them at the airport. "Nobody had a clue," said MacFarlane, who booked Mac specifically for the birthday party. "I didn't want a surprise party for my birthday, but in reality, I did have one. The surprise was just for everyone else."

Buffett added another decade to the protagonist in the song "A Pirate Looks at Forty" in honor of the host.

"You can't write a check for what happened," MacFarlane said.

Buffett postponed shows beginning in May to deal with his health issues.

"Once I am in shape, we will look at the whens and wheres of shows," he said on Facebook on May 19. "I think playing is as therapeutic for me as it is for fans to listen and sing along. Looking forward to announcing a new date for Charleston as well as some new shows! Fins up!"

MacFarlane told CBS Boston that the crowd of a few hundred was there expecting to see McAnally, a member of Buffett's Coral Reefer Band for more than 40 years.

"Mac got a hold of me and said, 'Hey Jimmy just reached out and wants to come up and do a few songs what do you think?' and I said 'let's find a way to make it happen.'"

Buffett was staying in Long Island and wanted to get out of the house. So he left a note and flew to Rhode Island to perform an eight-song, 45-minute, hit-filled set with Mac.

Buffett quietly canceled a festival gig slated for July 6. Then, in mid-August, he canceled the Charleston, S.C., gig he'd talked about making good on.

As summer roared along, he slipped out of the spotlight aside from several nostalgic posts on social media, where he'd also compliment artists who covered his songs and reflect on better times.

The set list for the final show: "It's Five O'Clock Somewhere"; "Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes"; "Cheeseburger in Paradise"; "Song of a Son of a Sailor"; "Come Monday"; "Volcano"; "A Pirate Looks at Forty"; "Margaritaville."

"It's a full moon tonight, and the stars aligned," MacFarlane told The Globe.

Sporting khaki shorts, a tropical print shirt, a Navy Sailing baseball cap and sunglasses, Buffett looked fit and joked with the crowd.

"I had to go by Block Island to check the surf break," he said between songs on the makeshift stage.

"I met Mac years ago," said MacFarlane. "We've been friends, so I met Jimmy through Mac. Jimmy's actually a Peter Millar fan, which is my full-time job. So we do some Peter Millar work together."

"Jimmy's been down and out a little bit and is not on tour right now. He found out his friend Mac was doing a show here, and Mac told him it was actually my birthday. Jimmy said, 'You know what, I'm on Long Island and we're gonna come to Rhode Island and we're gonna have a party for Mike and blow up this whole town.'"

"It was very last-minute, but through the help of the Portsmouth PD (below with Buffett) and a few other people and our staff here, we made it happen," said MacFarlane.



10 things my uncle taught me

From Melanie Buffett (Lucy Buffett's daughter)

1. Don't park like an !@#hole.
2. Never stop listening to music, reading, learning, and exploring.
3. Write what you know, but make up stories and write those too.
4. If you have the luxury of working out everyday you've hit the jackpot.
5. Don't quit your day job and live within your means.
6. Joie de vivre is free and boredom is a choice.
7. It's never too late to start something new or reinvent yourself.
8. Healthy living and cheat days are equally important.
9. Stay mellow.
10. It's all about the dancing.

Rolling Stone: And Jimmy, when you do leave us, how would you like to be remembered? What would you like people to say about you?

Jimmy Buffett: I'd say "He had a good time and made a lot of people happy" would be good. Yeah, that'd be good.

Cool Jimmy Buffett nicknames

- Parrotmeister
- Ralph Lauren of Leisurely Escape
- Patron Saint of the Untroubled
- Bimini Juffett
- The Tropical Troubador
- A Poor Man's Gordan Lightfoot
- A Drinking Man's Martha Stewart
- YNWIDBA (You'll Never Work in This Bidness Again)
- Jolly Mon
- Nautical Wheeler
- Mayor of Margaritaville
- Mogul of Margaritaville
- Rock's Romantic Poet-Pirate
- Life's A Beach Avatar
- Hemingway With A Guitar
- Mark Twain In A Boston Whaler
- Bard Of Beach Rock
- Poet Of Paradise
- Our favorite (from Coral Reefer post): I call him Betty and when he calls me, he calls me Al

“The last words he whispered to me were, ‘Have fun.’”

(Jimmy's sister) Lucy Buffett, owner, LuLu's Restaurant, Gulf Shores

By Lucy Buffett

How do we live in a world without Jimmy? He was never supposed to die! With the amazing outpouring of love and grief streaming on social media and the many texts, emails, and phone messages I have received, it seems that so many feel the same way as I do.

Jimmy was so many things to so many people. For me, I always felt safe in a world that he was in because as my big brother, he felt like my protector. When he played the amphitheater in Key West last February, I remember gazing around and thinking, I have known him longer than anyone here, along with my sister, LaLa. Maybe not as well as others, as he married and had his own family, but we had the destiny of knowing him as a kid and the three of us had common goals to supersede our humble beginnings. That was a strong bond that only the three of us could understand. He paved the way for that to happen for all of us in a bigger way than we ever imagined.

Bubba, his childhood nickname and how we refer to him, always kept his Southern Gulf Coast roots and the importance of family anchored in the vast depth of his psyche. Like my father and grandfather, everything he did in pursuit of a successful career was to provide for his family — his wife and his children were his anchors and his motivators that kept his incessant drive in check but still allowed him to enjoy the “fruits of his labor.” BIG TIME! LOL. Still, the family had to share him with so many and that was hard at times though ultimately a blessing that enriched all our lives.

He didn't make a big deal of his diagnosis four years ago to any of us, though he took every avenue possible to heal. There were times of great joy and celebration as the illness would get in check after repeated treatments. One such was a lunch at Louie's, one of his favorite places. Regardless of his busy, busy life, he took time to check in. He did not want us to worry. Then, we would get word of a “setback.” Still, he remained optimistic. He was the best person I know that could “breathe in, breathe out and move on...” after hard news.

He fought bravely and gave it everything he had. We had a beautiful goodbye visit earlier in the week. He specifically asked me to bring my pup, JoJo, with me. And I also brought Gumbo and water and sand from the Gulf of Mexico that gave him so much joy to touch and taste those elements that inspired his dreams as a child. He had my grandfather's twinkle in his eye to the end and he was very clear that the music, the party, and the good life was to continue with his robust optimism in tow.

In the spirit that launched his imagination and purpose so many years ago, the City of Key West

turned out in colorful droves to honor him with a New Orleans second line parade in the streets. He maintained a love for Key West and a deep appreciation for his time spent there as a young, lost troubadour. I believe he knew what he was doing when he booked four shows there in February! He wanted to go back and give back to the place that started it all for him.

Toward the end, when we knew things were “going South” as my Daddy used to say, there was lots of talks and texts about the need for a “miracle.” That is when my husband, Mac, said sweetly, “Lu, the miracle is that we have had

him for the last four years!”

During those years, he continued to work, as always, with purpose and light-speed movement. We were always left in his wake or his vapor trail as he ventured to the next thing! He was an ordinary man from an ordinary childhood that did extraordinary things that touched millions!!!

I know that he is flying high above Mother Ocean, soaring up to the Pleiades, and was gliding over Duval Street yesterday, laughing and singing all the way with his beloved Parrotheads and friends.

He didn't care about resting in peace. The last words he whispered to me were, “Have fun.”

Pictured: Lucy with her brother Bubba and a family dog, JoJo. “During sad times, it's our family, friends, and pets that help us hold on and keep moving,” she posted.





“Thank you for creating the world’s most joyful community.”

(Jimmy’s wife) Jane Slagsvol

Jimmy Buffett’s wife, Jane Slagsvol, thanked the Parrot Head community for its overwhelming support on her husband’s official website. Jane said she and her husband were surrounded by love everywhere they went.

By Jane Slagsvol

As Jimmy said a few months ago, “growing old is not for sissies.” These last few years have been unimaginably challenging for Jimmy and me, and we’re definitely not sissies. One thing we both knew and experienced, through every difficult moment, was the feeling of being buoyed up by all the people in our lives. Everywhere we went, at arenas, at events, and even in the hospitals, we were surrounded by love. There is a whole world of people I want to thank for the incredible kindness you showed us.

Since those early days and all through the decades, Jimmy’s fans became a big, boisterous family. Thank you for creating the world’s most joyful community. The smile that Jimmy beamed at you from the stage was sparked by your spirit. I think that’s why he loved performing so much.

He was so grateful to the community you built around him. Your sympathy and support inspire and comfort me and my family.

To the teams of doctors, nurses, hospice workers, and caregivers, your compassion was overwhelming in the best possible way. Jimmy listened to everything you said and followed your every order. You gave him hope, even at the most hopeless moments. Thank you for your tenacity in seeking the best solutions at each stage of his illness. You were honest, brave, and empathic; you showed us such dignity and goodness. I could not have asked for a better team of professionals.

To all those who work with and for Jimmy and me, thank you. We know that we’ve surrounded ourselves with the best,

most honorable, most generous people, and we know how fortunate we have been for all these years. You made our lives better in thousands of ways, big and small, each day. That was especially true during these last few years. I hope you know how much we care about you and always value the work you do. It is deeply comforting to know that I can depend on your loyalty, your sincerity, and your respect. You have earned ours in return.

To my amazing friends, you have expanded the meaning and depth of friendship. Jimmy and I felt your breathtaking love and compassion throughout our lives and, especially, over these past few years. Jimmy brightened telling you stories over long dinners as the cicadas sang. He loved occupying his place at the head of the table, looking at the people he cherished. You created a microclimate of affection that surrounded us like the sun. It gave us hope; it felt like a celebration even when things were grim. It’s a balm to me now. Without your friendship, we surely would have fallen. I wish each of you has friends as gracious, generous, and kind.

Jimmy was love. Every cell in his body was filled with joy. He smiled all the time, even when he was deeply ill. And his sense of humor never wavered. Jimmy was always the optimist, always twinkling, always making us laugh.

To my family. I cannot begin to express what you mean to me and Jimmy. I cherish you, I love you, and I am unfathomably grateful to you every day. You are my heart.

One of the last songs Jimmy recorded was “Bubbles Up.” He sings, “Just know that you are loved, there is light up above, and the joy is always enough. Bubbles up.” Jimmy knew he was loved. Right until the end, he looked for the light. Thank you for giving joy to him and to me.

- Love, Jane

In Their Own Words...

- “It’s important to have as much fun as possible while we’re here. It balances out the times when the minefield of life explodes.”

- **Buffett facebook post from 2022.**

- “If I were a very religious person, I would say that constitutes the redneck Riviera rapture.”

- **Buffett, Wharf Amphitheater, April 24, 2015**

- “At the Bama Breeze. You’re one of our own down there. You never drink alone down there. Good God I feel at home down there.”

- **Bama Breeze, Buffett’s ode to the Flora-Bama.**

- “Jimmy Buffett, Roguish Bard of Island Escapism, Is Dead at 76.”

- **New York Times headline.**

“I blew out my flip-flop. Stepped on a pop-top. Cut my heel, had to cruise on back home. But there’s booze in the blender. And soon it will render. That frozen concoction that helps me hang on.”

- **Verse from Buffett’s only top 10 hit.**

- “Buffett has been regaling audiences for over five decades with songs about the faces and places he’s seen during his journey along the road less travelled. With Hemingway’s eye for detail and Mark Twain’s inclination for mischievous humor, his music tells the stories of hustlers, beach bums and pirates he has encountered while traveling to all corners of the world.”

- **Mullet Wrapper preview of 2021 Buffett Wharf concert.**

- “Sweet Home Flora-Bama.”

- **Buffett tweaking the Skynard song on stage at The Wharf.**

- “I’ve done a bit of smugglin’, and I’ve run my share of grass. I made enough money to buy Miami. But I pissed it away so fast. Never meant to last. Never meant to last.”

- **A Pirate Looks at Forty, maybe Buffett’s most enduring song.**

- “Jimmy painted pictures and short stories in all the songs he wrote. He taught a lot of people about the poetry in just living, especially this kid from East Tennessee.”

- **Kenny Chesney in a statement to Rolling Stone.**

- “The way I understand it growing up, Mardi Gras was a time for partying, and partying at Mardi Gras took on a whole other definition. “To most people, it was allowing themselves to disregard many of the rules by which they lived most of their lives.”

- **Excerpt from Buffett’s book, A Pirate Looks At Fifty.**

- “It was still a Navy town. It was a gay town. It was a hippie town. It was a local fisherman’s town. You want a melting pot? It was just that. It never ceased to give me ideas or hear stories from which those first songs came.”

- **Buffett describing Key West in the early 1970’s.**

- “The audiences are so much fun for me to look at they are as entertaining to me as hopefully I am to them.”

- **Jimmy Buffett.**

- “It’s always a sad day when we lose a beloved artist and musician and so sad for me personally to lose a dear friend.”

- **Paul Simon.**

- “It’s pure escapism is all it is. I’m not the first one to do it, nor shall I probably be the last. But I think it’s really a part of the human condition that you’ve got to have some fun. You’ve got to get away from whatever you do to make a living or other parts of life that stress you out. I try to make it at least 50/50 fun to work and so far it’s worked out.”

- **Jimmy Buffett.**

- Two weeks out of the year, it’s all about sin ... count me in.”

- **Lyrics to Serpentine, one of Buffett’s odes to Carnival season.**

- “That’s a very interesting question. I don’t think there would have been.”

- **Would there be a Jimmy Buffett, if he didn’t go to New Orleans.**

- “You learn on the streets, and you learn it playin’ in bars, and you learn how to get along with people, and you learn what it takes psychologically to A, start a band, B, keep it together, and C, if you hit, deal with the success. It eats up a lot of people.”

- **Buffett in a 1993 interview with Offbeat.**

As Jimmy himself said...

“And if you do decide to wander, please leave a tiny bit of room in your heart for me. For if I live in your hearts, I really have not died.”

•••••

- “I’m growing older but not up, my metabolic rate is pleasantly stuck. Let the hands of time blow over my head, I’d rather die while I’m living, then live while I’m dead.”
- “Breathe in, breathe out, move on...”
- “It takes no more time to see the good side of life than to see the bad.”
- “It’s a fine line between Saturday night and Sunday morning.”
- “One of the inescapable encumbrances of leading an interesting life is that there have to be moments when you almost lose it.”
- “Searching is half the fun: life is much more manageable when thought of as a scavenger hunt as opposed to a surprise party.”
- “If we couldn’t laugh we would all go insane.”
- “Pack your bags, we’re going on a guilt trip!”
- “Surrounded by stories surreal and sublime, I fell in Love in the Library once upon a time.”
- “Later down the road of life, I made the discovery that salt water was also good for the mental abrasions one inevitably acquires on land.”
- “We are the people our parents warned us about.”
- “Songwriters write songs, but they really belong to the listener.”
- “Maybe there is another who sees life not as a flickering candle but as a torch that can illuminate an undiscovered world.”
- “There will always be those who feel more comfortable not venturing from the warmth of the hearth, but there are those who prefer to look out the window and wonder what is beyond the horizon.”
- “You know death will get you in the end, but if you are smart and have a sense of humor, you can thumb your nose at it for awhile”
- “The right combination of guilt and machismo has sent many a fool out into the jungle when he should have stayed home.”
- “I just want to live happily ever after, every now and then.”
- “The only thing that is still free in this world is religion, which is why a lot of people “find it.”
- “When you go to the movies these days, you know they try to sell you this jumbo drink, 8 extra ounces of watered down cherry coke for an extra 25 cents. I don’t want it. I don’t want that much organization in my life. I don’t want other people thinking for me. I want my Junior Mints. Where did the Junior Mints go in the movies? I don’t want a 12 lb. Nestle’s crunch for 25 dollars. I want Junior Mints. We need more fruitcakes in this world and less bakers! We need people that care! I’m mad as hell! And I don’t want to take it anymore!”
- “I have never cared about setting world records, or filling my boat with fish, or, for that matter, even catching fish. I go for the experience of spending six hours in the arms of the ocean, never thinking of a single thing except chasing fish.”
- “That to me is the way any good romantic would look at his life: Live it first, then write it down before you go.”
- “Life is a journey that’s measured not in miles or years but in experiences, and the route your life takes is built not of roads but of songs.”
- “My voyage was never a well-conceived plan, nor will it ever be. I have made it up as I went along.”
- “I like who I became just fine. That’s the way life is. We all try to make something out of our lives, and some of us are just luckier than others.”



Buffett & Bob Hope golf at Pensacola Open

Longtime Gulf Shores resident and fellow McGill High School graduate, Milton Rittelmeyer shares a picture he took of Jimmy Buffett playing in the pro-am with Bob Hope and PGA pro Jerry Pate at the Pensacola Open at Perdido Bay Golf Club. Pate, a Pensacola native (Washington High School), won the tourney in 1981.

Rittelmeyer said Buffett’s first tee shot hit a woman in the gallery in the chest. Buffett, of course, apologized. He also remembers that although he was a right handed guitar player, Buffett hit golf balls left-handed.

Lee Elder became the first black golfer to ever qualify for the Masters when he won the Pensacola Open in 1975. The PGA accepted only “members of the “Caucasian race” until 1961.

JD Spradlin to play MOTM opening ceremony at LuLu’s

Also music & bloody mary fundraisers, 5K race, blood drives

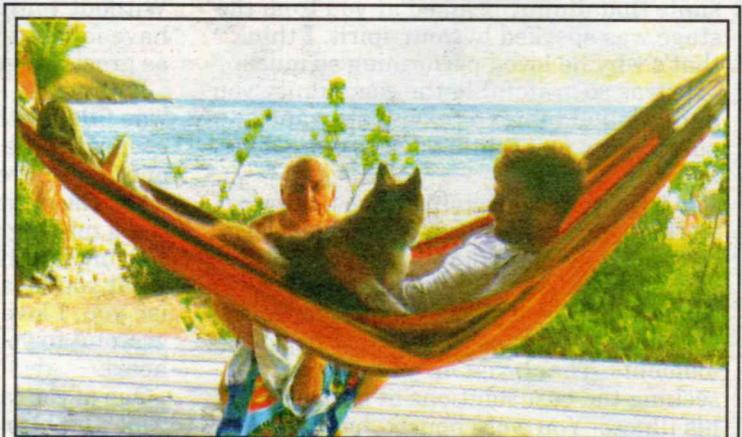
The Meeting of the Minds 2023 welcoming ceremony will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 24 at 4:30 at LuLu’s at Homeport Marina in Gulf Shores, and feature entertainment from JD Spradlin and Renee Adams. Local Trop Rock legend Brent Burns will be playing welcoming friends to LuLu’s from 1-4 p.m. from Oct. 24-27 and his gigs will most definitely include special guests.

• LuLu’s will also host the First Annual Parrot Heads in Paradise Skippin & Sippin 5K & Fun Run on Oct. 28 at 8 a.m. And, of course, the post-race party will be all about “sipping & eating.” Registration is \$30 per person (runsignup.com), and funds raised will support local breast cancer patients through the Bras Across the Causeway non-profit, whose mission is to make an impact directly to patients of The Breast Center at Providence Hospital (brasacrossthecauseway.org) and make the difference these patients need to get the assistance during this crucial time in their lives.

• Life South Blood Drives will be held at LuLu’s from 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. on Oct. 25, Oct. 27 and Oct. 28.

• The Sarasota Parrothead Club will host a bloody mary fundraiser on Oct. 27 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on LuLu’s Beach

• John Patti will host a Lone Palm Foundation Benefit at LuLu’s on Oct. 28 from noon - 3 p.m. Patti’s special guests will include Nadirah Shakoor. The Lone Palm Foundation is the charitable arm of Parrot Heads in Paradise (PHIP) and was formed to further the commitment of Parrot Heads worldwide and support the social and environmental needs and concerns within their communities. It hopes to achieve its philanthropic goals by supporting the Parrot Head community and its environs on a local level, striving to preserve the world’s ecosystem for generations to follow. The non-profit shows its concern for humanity by performing charitable actions for the simple reason that it is up to all of us to leave the world a better place for all.



MY DAD LIVED THE HAPPIEST LIFE: Cameron Marley Buffett, Jimmy Buffett’s only son, shared that he and his dad had an “amazing relationship” in an Instagram post. “My dad lived the happiest, most fulfilling life anyone could,” he posted along with a picture of his dad and their dog relaxing by the beach. “We had an amazing relationship and I miss him so much. He had an amazing gift of being able to see the positive in everything, and I will try to do the same, for him.”

Lost Shaker of Salt celebration Oct. 28 in Fairhope

American Legion Post 199 in Fairhope will host a musical celebration of Jimmy Buffett's life that will also serve as a fundraiser for Buffett's charitable foundation, Singing for a Change. Billed as the Lost Shaker Salute to Jimmy Buffett, the event will be held from 4-7 p.m. on Oct. 28 on the Legions' beach stage below the Fairhope Bluffs. Doors open at 3 p.m. Tickets, if still available, are \$30 per.

"Still is a rotten call," Buffett says after being tossed

One of the more often repeated hilarious Buffett stories is about the time, while there with his son, he was kicked out of a Heat-Knicks game for cursing at NBA official Joe Forte in 2001. "It was a bad call. It still is a rotten call," Buffett told Sports Illustrated. "John Starks clobbered Tim Hardaway. It was a close game. I just said you stupid, mother !@#\$\$, that is the worst call I ever heard. People yell all the time, but he turned at me. Normally, referees do not make eye contact. So while he did not come over to me, he told the local security guard. By then the crowd was getting into it. Pat Riley was on the bench, asking 'They are kicking you out of the game?' Alonzo (Mourning) was like: 'Sit down. You stay there.' I told the security guard, 'This is probably not a good idea.'"



RIDDLES IN THE SAND COVER SHOT IN GULF SHORES:

According to a newspaper story published in the June 19, 1984 Tuscaloosa News, the album cover for Jimmy Buffett's Riddles In The Sand album was shot in Gulf Shores. The album marked a charge to a new style of music Jimmy called "Gulf and Western," which was the original name of the album. Three singles were released from the album, with When the Wild Life Betrays Me reaching #42, Who's The Blonde Stranger no. #37 and Bigger Than The Both Of Us #58 on the Billboard Country chart.

Where did Jimmy eat that Cheeseburger in Paradise?

It should be noted that a very formidable Cheeseburger in Paradise is served at Jimmy Buffett's sister Lucy's LuLu's restaurant in Gulf Shores and Buffett's own branded restaurants. But various other diners and dives have claimed inspiration for the song.

One story behind Buffett's famous song about America's signature sandwich is that he was sailing with pals in the Gulf of Mexico near Pine Island Sound when they docked on Cabbage Key, a small island located off Lee County's Pine Island. Established in 1944 the island's Cabbage Key Inn & Restaurant served him the burger that inspired the song.

Mobile's own Dew Drop Inn was included in Buffett's list of 10 Best Cheeseburgers published in the Parrot Head Handbook. Located on the corner of Old Shell Rd. and Louiselle St., The Dew Drop Inn Chili Burger was Buffett's go-to burger whenever he was in his hometown. But in Buffett's own Parrot Head Handbook, Jimmy wrote:

"It goes back to a long trip on my first boat, the Euphoria. We had run into some very rough weather crossing the Mona Passage between Hispaniola and Puerto Rico and broke our bow sprit. The ice in our box had melted, and we were doing the canned-food-and-peanut-butter diet. The vision of a piping hot cheeseburger kept popping into my mind. We limped up the Sir Francis Drake Channel and into Roadtown on the island of Tortola, where a brand-new marina and bar sat on the end of the dock, like a mirage. We secured the boat, kissed the ground, and headed for the restaurant. To our amazement, we were offered a menu that featured an American cheeseburger and pina colladas. Now these were the days when supplies in that part of the world were rather scarce-when horsemeat was more plentiful than ground beef in the tiny stores of the Third World. Anyway, we gave particular instructions to the waiter on how we wanted them cooked and what we wanted on them-to which little attention was paid. It didn't matter. The overdone burgers on the burned, toast buns tasted like manna from heaven, for they were the realization of my fantasy burgers on the trip. That's the true story."



Matt Hoggart picks up a hitchhiking JB on way to Jazz Fest

Coastal Mississippi musicians Matt Hoggart, Darwin and Dana Nelson, Taylor Craven, and Johnny Myer hosted a tribute to the musician who connected them at a packed out Grand Magnolia Ballroom two days after Jimmy Buffett passed in Pascagoula, Buffett's hometown.

Hoggart shared one Jimmy Buffett story where Harrison Ford hanging up in the balcony at Margaritaville - New Orleans with his wife while he was playing a gig there was - not even the highlight. Buffett, in town for Jazz Fest, jumped up on stage with him. "We made up a song on the spot," Hoggart posted on facebook, with a video to back it up.

Hoggart also posted a hilarious video of him picking up a hitchhiking Jimmy Buffett on old Hwy 90 in New Orleans. Buffett is carrying a sign when Hoggart pulls his SUV over.

Hoggart said a month before the shoot, Buffett bought him a GoPro camera to create his own show for Margaritaville TV. Buffett then decided he wanted to shoot a video with him when he was in NOLA for Jazz Fest. "Jimmy concocted this whole script himself, and we used my single GoPro camera during a two day session to record," Hoggart posted. "Everything was done in 1-take segments, and in between the camera shots, Jimmy would move the camera to a new spot in my van or have me hold it for a different angle.

"Jimmy made a copy of all the video and said he wanted to edit it and create a final version and wanted me to do the same," Hoggart said. Buffett later sent him an email to a link to an edit he said he finished on his plane. "Ya'll, he wasn't a passenger on that plane, he was the pilot," Hoggart posted.

Hoggart said the Jazz Fest sign Buffett was holding when he picked him up is his only autographed memento from his friend, except for a check when Buffett signed him to his label.

"The sign is hanging in my office, and the check was spent quickly and foolishly by a guy who still can't believe he got a chance to take this ride in life. I hope the video makes you smile," he posted.

Pictured: Hoggart and JB somewhere during the shooting of their "Hitchhiker" video. Hoggart said while the photo above was being taken in a parking lot on Hwy 90, a star-struck customer rear ended another customer's car right in front of them.

In Their Own Words...

“He understands his brand, which has a substantial reach. One of the secrets to his success is that he never really loses any fans.”

- Warren E. Buffett

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• “Jimmy was a reader. In fact, a friend of his gave me his copy of E.B. White’s collected essays, and every sentence had his comments in the margins. He read all the time. Quite apart from music or anything, he was very smart and curious and had tons of energy.”

- JB’s friend/brother-in-law Tom McGuane

• “It’s important to have as much fun as possible while we’re here. It balances out the times when the minefield of life explodes.”

- Buffett facebook post from 2022

• “If ‘I think that what we’re trying to do is show that you [should] develop a parallel career. Certainly, you want to make good records, but also, it’s important for a band to have the independence of income so you don’t get dependent on a record label for advances. That’s what eats a lot of people. I know—I’ve been there.”

- Jimmy Buffett

• “The pirate has passed. RIP Jimmy Buffett. Tremendous influence on so many of us.”

- Toby Keith

• “Jimmy Buffett was a unique and treasured entertainer. His fans adored him and he never let them down. This is the saddest of news. A lovely man gone way too soon.”

- Elton John

• “Margaritas have gotten very sweet. I like real lime juice; I don’t like a lot of sugar. The other day I was watching ‘Queer Eye’ and they were doing a makeover, and the guy had what he called a Redneck Margarita, which was just bad tequila and Mountain Dew. And I went, ‘That’s way too far, I’d never do that.’ But good tequila and a lime, yes.”

- Jimmy Buffett

• “This man personified joy. Embodied goodness. Always smiling. I remember the time he met my mom at jazzfest and showered her with love... like he knew her his whole life. Bet he did that millions of times to millions of people.”

- Today host Hoda Kotb.

• “I can’t change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination.”

- Jimmy Buffett

“His witty, wistful songs celebrate a uniquely American cast of characters and seaside folkways, weaving together an unforgettable musical mix of country, folk, rock, pop, and calypso into something uniquely his own. We had the honor to meet and get to know Jimmy over the years, and he was in life as he was performing on stage – full of goodwill and joy, using his gift to bring people together.”

- President Joe Biden

• “We’ll meet at the Riverview Plaza at 3 p.m. and take off at 4 p.m. We’ll go down Dauphin Street and end at Moe’s Original BBQ. There, we will partake in margarita and cheeseburger specials while enjoying the music of Jimmy Buffett performed by Teddy Williams and friends. Musicians are invited to sign up and perform their own tribute to Jimmy. Think of it like a Margaritaville open mic night! All are welcome to participate and perform their favorite Buffett song.”

- Facebook post for a 2nd line parade in Mobile



Buffett’s Jurassic World cameo is the best ever

Jimmy Buffett accrued an extensive resume of film credits to his name over the years, including a hilarious cameo in the 2015 Jurassic Park sequel, (above) Jurassic World.

In the movie, Buffett plays a bartender at Margaritaville Resort who makes a run for his life when the town comes under attack by dinosaurs. But he makes sure he saves his margaritas, making a run from the predators with a drink in each hand.

One of the all-time great cameos in movie history (at least among Parrot Heads), it came about thanks to a pre-existing relationship between Buffett and producer Frank Marshall, who would go on to produce an award winning documentary about the New Orleans Jazz Fest.

Buffett appeared in two of Marshall’s earlier films, Hoot and Congo, and Jurassic World director Colin Trevorrow wanted the scene to feel as authentic as possible – including using real brands like Margaritaville.

“Somehow, a Margaritaville wound up being chosen to be the bar here and it’s just marvelous to see. I’m a big fan of Jurassic Park and it was fun to do,” Buffett said.

Buffett played a heckler in the 1994 movie “Cobb,” the Tommy Lee Jones biopic about troubled baseball great Ty Cobb.

During the shooting of that film, Buffett rewarded unpaid extras who participated in crowd scenes at historic Rickwood Field in Birmingham with a free concert.

Buffett wrote music for Fast Times at Ridgemont High and Urban Cowboy. He also appeared in Rancho Deluxe. His TV credits included the Hawaii Five-O revival of the 2010s, on which he starred as the helicopter pilot Frank Bama, a character from his best-selling 1992 novel, “Where Is Joe Merchant?”

Gnathia jimmybuffetti is word’s newest crustacean

Just before he passed, a group of Miami scientists named a newly discovered tiny crustacean they found in the Florida Keys Gnathia jimmybuffetti in Jimmy Buffett’s honor. It was the first new gnathiid isopod discovered in Florida in nearly a century, according to marine biologist Paul Sikkel, a professor at the University of Miami.

A active environmentalist, Buffett co-founded the Save the Manatee Club in 1981 with former U.S. senator and Florida Gov. Bob Graham.

“By naming a species after an artist, we want to promote the integration of the arts and sciences,” Sikkel said.

Buffett played Margaritaville in Key West six hours after writing it

Jimmy Buffett moved to Key West in late 1971 after having just performed a series of shows at Coral Gables’ influential Flick Coffeehouse with Jerry Jeff Walker, and his earliest performance on the island was a two-set show Buffett gave at Crazy Ophelia’s Café on January 27, 1972. Buffett said in an interview that he later that he later scored gigs at Howie’s Lounge and the Chart Room. The review of the Ophelia’s show makes it clear there was already some buzz on the island about the “young Nashville folk gypsy.” Bill Huckel, founder of the Solares Hill newspaper, wrote that Buffett “picked and plucked at the strings of his guitar and the hearts of a hushed crowd.”

Huckel was impressed enough to dub the musician with the mantle of “a spokesman for this generation. This guy made everyone feel like one big, happy family.” The warm reception at Crazy Ophelia’s kicked off the Key West phase of his career, which would come to define his persona and tie him to the island forever, even though he was often on the road.

“Mostly, [my success] happened working from the road. A lot of people have the misconception that when I came here, I stayed in a house in a rented room and stayed drunk for ten years and became a star. That’s absolutely not true,” Buffett told the Key West Citizen in 1981. “I was quite vigorously on the road, doing concerts. The only way for me to survive was to do concerts.”

Buffett was actually in Austin, Texas, when the inspiration struck for “Margaritaville.” He and a friend had stopped for lunch at a Mexican restaurant before she dropped him at the airport for a flight home to Key West, and they started drinking margaritas.

“And I kind of came up with that idea of this is just like Margarita-ville,” Buffett said. “She kind of laughed at that and put me on the plane. And I started working on it.”

He wrote some on the plane and finished it while driving down the Keys. He reportedly debuted the song that same night at Ophelia’s.

“I was on the Seven-Mile Bridge, and, ah, somebody had broken down. And we were stuck there for an hour, and I just sat out there on the Seven Mile Bridge, just looking out, and I finished the song there, and I got to Key West. And I was working in a little club on Duval Street called Crazy Ophelia’s. I went in, and I had to work that night, and I played the song. People liked it. I went, ‘Wow, this is pretty good.’ And, you know, it was, it was fresh. It was maybe six hours old. But it was four years before it got recorded.”

By 1973, Crazy Ophelia’s was gone. However short-lived, the café was influential, both as a center for Key West’s anti-establishment community and as the place where a young Jimmy Buffett got his start on the island.

(Source: The Florida Keys History Center)

In Their Own Words...

"I wish I could play like Eric Clapton. I really do. But maybe Eric Clapton wishes he could cast a fly rod like I do."

- Jimmy Buffett.

• "Well, 8-tracks are available through snail mail. Just send me a check, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope."

- Grandfather of Trop Rock Brent Burns

• It's funny to me that I was hard to categorize and I am now a category."

- Jimmy Buffett

• "He seemed to be so forceful and energetic all his life, every minute of it, that it's hard to believe that he wouldn't have ordered death out of the room."

- Author Tom McGuane, Buffett's brother-in-law

• "I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails."

- Jimmy Buffett

• "There are already conversations about whether there is a road or something we can build in his honor. I think Mobile definitely needs to do something because of who he is and what he's done."

- Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson

• "Somebody said once that we were like Deadheads with credit cards. And every now and then, I could slip something in like "He Went to Paris," one of my favorite songs I wrote. And yeah, the songwriting probably gets overlooked sometimes, but I don't mind. I've had a great run and I'm enjoying it, and I'm not telling people what to listen to."

- Jimmy Buffett

• "Because it's always five o'clock somewhere, flags of the United States and the State of Florida at the Monroe County Courthouse in Key West, Florida, City of Key West City Hall, and at the State Capitol in Tallahassee, Florida were ordered to be flown at half-staff for 24 hours from 5 p.m. Sept. 7 to 5 p.m. the following day. Floridians 'Trying to Reason with Hurricane Season' are encouraged to commemorate the legacy of our adopted native son by raising their margarita glass and enjoying a cheeseburger here in paradise to wish the 'Son of a Son of a Sailor' well." he added.

- Florida Governor Ron Desantis

• "He grew up in a household that was working class, but cultivated people, really, especially his mother. His mother was very literate and a very good book reader. She'd always wanted to go to college, and couldn't afford to. And she finished her working life and went to college and graduated after starting at 65."

- JT's friend/brother-in-law Tom McGuane

• "Though he left the hard partying to his youth, Jimmy Buffett was able to call upon the joyful feeling of an endless summer that inspires the young, and the young at heart. But he also captured the complexities of life, love, and growing older. In a cynical world where the half-life of celebrity can be encompassed in nanosecond news cycles, Buffett endured. He knew who he was and what his fans wanted."

- Dan Rather

• "There's a lot of wreckage on the road to success."

- Jimmy Buffett



Stars Fell on Alabama had a memorable 20 year run Four clubs hosted event that attracted 600 parrotheads to Pleasure Isle

The 20th Anniversary Stars Fell on Alabama, the finale for the event, was appropriately themed "Pirates Look At 20," and it was a fitting send-off thanks the Lower Alabama, Mobile, Towns Around Biloxi and Montgomery Parrot-head clubs who hosted the party with a purpose.

A note on the registration form was very telling: "Don't miss the conga line away from the sand and sun and back to the bus. The phun always seems to happen on the ride back to The Island House!"

The 600 attendees danced and swayed to The Boat Drunks, Girlz Rule (Lynley Tolls, Kristie Bobal, and Heather Vidal), John Patti, Donny Brewer and the Dock Rockers, Sunny Jim, Jerry Diaz and Hanna's Reef, Mississippi's own Rain Jaudon, and Steve Hopper from the tropics of Tennessee.

Boat drinks, brightly colored shirts, live music, conga lines were part of the decor in the lobby of the Island House Hotel, and the daily parties started at breakfast.

Greg Dumas set-up his Radio Trop Rock show from the Island House pool deck and also served as auctioneer. The late great local parrothead, Jane Tarver (pictured) continued what had by then become a traditional vow renewal ceremony on the beach. As usual, the St. Louis Parrothead Club won the award for having the most registered attendees.

The "Phlocking" raised close to \$200,000 for charities during its 20 year run, and each of the sponsoring clubs chose a charity to sponsor.

Similar to MOTM, Stars' events included Bottomless Bloody Mary & Mimosa breakfasts, Mini-Mart meetings, silent auctions, raffles, cookouts and one event titled the "Thank God The Tiki Bar Is Open."

"We have a lot of people that come each and every year," said Charlotte "Mama Bear" Skinner, who came over from a Satsuma (15 miles northeast of Mobile) to lend her expertise as PHIP Director of Conventions. "There is a lot of partying and cocktails, but it's true what we like to say, it's also partying for a purpose."

The idea for the Stars Fell on Alabama gathering was hatched in April 1999 when leaders from three Alabama Parrothead clubs decided while doing tequila shooters at the original LuLu's on

Weeks Bay to organize a regional phlocking. It was only a year earlier that the Mobile Parrothead Club was revived. Soon after, the long dead Biloxi PHC was revived, and a few months later the Montgomery PHC was founded. Being all within close proximity and age, there naturally were new bonds and friendships formed, and the three clubs began to work (and play) together.

Skinner formed the Coastal Alabama PHC in 1995, but there was not much interest at the time. In 1998, John Thornton, Larry McNeese, Dave Luley and Sean Eifert got together and started the Towns around Biloxi Parrothead Club. Vince Allison, a longtime Atlanta Parrothead, was desperate to find more like minded parrotheads when returning home. So he founded the Isle O'Bama Parrothead Club.

There was already an annual parrothead party hosted by a Mobile hockey team, but nothing much bigger than that.

After a few more shooters, Thornton, Allison and Skinner decided the party they were having was a perfect foundation for what would follow.

The very first Stars was held in downtown Mobile. Over 150 parrotheads enjoyed hockey games, a parrothead parade on ice, conga line parties, a balcony contest, parking lot parties, a bus trip to LuLu's and, of course, entertainment from parrothead bands. Attendees that first year raised \$3K for the Alzheimer's Foundation.

The Lower Alabama Parrothead Club at one time was 150 members strong and extremely active on the Pleasure Island community service trail, volunteering at local marathons, bicycle events, the Shrimp Fest, Coastal Clean-up, and The Alabama Gulf Coast Zoo.

"We always have a good time when we phlock together," said Jane Tarver, who passed away in 2022. "I love seeing friends I've made through the years, but it's all about the music, too. We have some of the best trop rock bands in the country coming in."

"Jane was our very own Parrot Head Minister," said Lucy Buffett, owner of Lulu's at Homeport Marina, when she passed. "Heaven has gained a great lady and a 'good' hurricane. I can only imagine the fun trouble she must be causing. She was an incredibly special person and will be missed by us all. Godspeed Hurricane Jane."

Fun Facts About JB

- While working as a journalist for Billboard magazine in Nashville in 1970, Buffett was credited with breaking the story about the disbanding of the pioneering bluegrass duo Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs. He also penned a story about Willie Nelson.
- Down to Earth, Buffett's debut album, was released on Andy Williams's Barnaby label in 1970. It sold a reported 324 copies.
- Buffett moved from Key West to Aspen in the late 1970's and has lived on St. Barts in the Caribbean, Palm Beach, and Sag Harbor on Long Island.
- Buffett's album A1A, released in 1974, was his first album that referenced Key West and the easy going beach life. A1A runs along Florida's Atlantic Ocean coastline.
- Alabama shows: Buffett performed at Coleman Coliseum in T-Town in Oct. of 1992. He also played there Feb. 20, 1979 and Sept. 15, 1977. Buffet played on Dec. 2, 1998, at the Mobile Civic Center and July 29, 1990 at Ladd Memorial Stadium. Other Mobile shows listed on websites include: Feb. 23, 1977, (Municipal Audi); Nov. 15, 1974, (USA); and Nov. 11, 1974 (Saenger Theatre). He also played shows at the opening of the first sanctioned Margaritaville in Gulf Shores, at his sister Lucy's Lulu's restaurants on Weeks Bay and in Gulf Shores and at Judge Roy Bean and the Flora-Bama and at both of his good friend Kenny Stabler's Gulf Shores bistros - Lefty's and The End Zone.
- Buffett is credited with inventing trop-rock, a genre that incorporates rock, reggae, country, caribbean, calypso and zydeco - sometimes in the same song.
- The Boats, Beaches, Bars & Ballads boxed set at one time was the eighth-selling boxed set in history and the biggest-selling MCA boxed set that year.
- The first Buffett branded beer, Lone Palm Lager, named after one of Mr. Buffett's songs, did not sell as well as the brewers hoped. Consumer research revealed that the name bummed people out because it made them think about drinking alone. Re-branded as LandShark Lager, sales of the same beer took off.
- "All That Is Sacred," a documentary that stars both Jimmy Buffett and novelist Tom McGuane, Buffett's friend of 50 years going back to his Key West days (also JB's brother-in-law), premiered at the Telluride Film Festival only 12 hours after Buffett's death. The documentary is about Key West in the early and mid-'70s and a group of friends that also included writers Jim Harrison and Richard Brautigan.
- While playing in 2007 at a sold out Madison Square Garden, Buffett got word that Flora-Bama co-owner Joe Gilchrist was in the audience and gave the late/great Gilchrist and the Flora-Bama shout-outs for supporting original music at his bistro. Gilchrist said NFL Hall of Famer Quarterback Kenny Stabler, who passed away in 2015, was the person who introduced him to Buffett.
- Keith Harmeyer, a friend and sometimes Buffett vocal coach explained Buffett's magic formula: "His songs introduced us to the notion that just maybe if you were a little bold and a little more crazy and were willing to walk away from it all, you wouldn't have to suffer most of your life just to enjoy a tiny bit of it. You could be in your own 'Margaritaville' all day, every day. That was a powerful and seductive idea. And so, his music became the siren song of a generation longing for the good life."



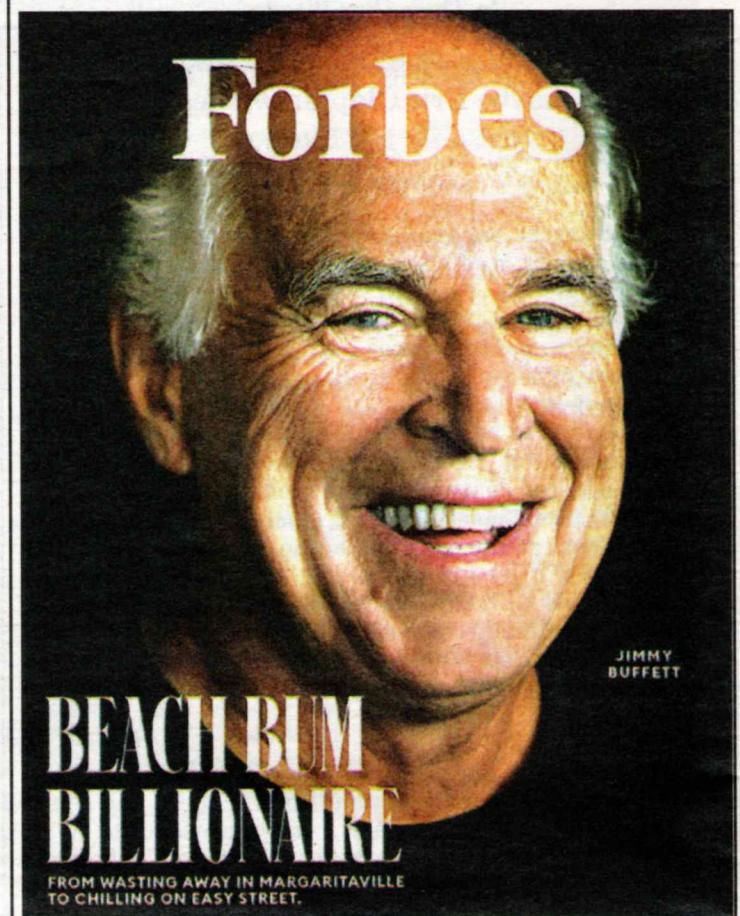
Bill Whyte surprised by Buffett at video preview

Bill Whyte, a singer/song-writer/DJ who has frequently collaborated with local Trop Rock legend Brent Burns, shares a JB story from his days as a country music DJ.

"I was in Nashville with WUBE Radio in Cincinnati for the Country Radio Seminar which is the radio broadcaster's version of MOTM. I got an invitation to go to the old Mercury Studios one night during the convention to see the premier of the video "Who's The Blonde Stranger" that was Jimmy's new single as once again they were trying to get that song played on country radio.

It was a small intimate gathering. Maybe 20 or so broadcasters from all over the country. In the studio they had laid out chips and salsa and cold drinks for the radio folk. After a bit they lowered the lights and the "Blonde Stranger" video went up on a screen. I liked it...liked the song...but I'm biased as I am like most of you reading this a huge Jimmy fan. When the video finished and the lights went back on ...standing next to me (pictured) was guess who? Uh huh. I had to kind of remind myself I was a radio professional and to try and act like one while fighting the urge to turn into Joe Fan. He could not have been nicer. He made time to talk with everyone who was there and posed for pictures. I like the fact that he's wearing that particular t-shirt as A1A is my favorite Buffett album. And that he's also holding a cold one in his hand while we chat.

Turns out "Blonde Stranger" got some country radio airplay but not enough to make it a radio hit. But I've always been a huge fan of the song. And every time I do hear that song it takes me back to that Nashville night and that memory.

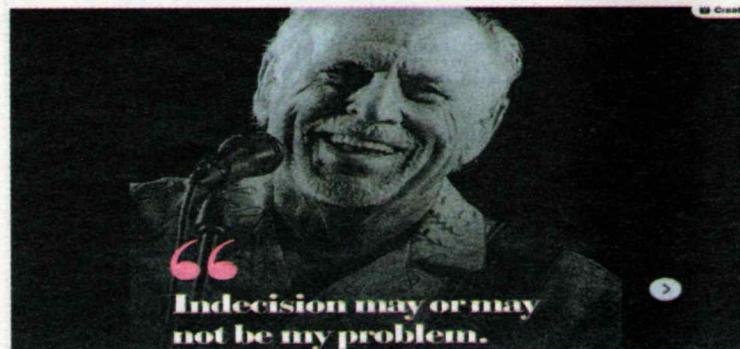


Beach Bum Billionaire

This year, Forbes counted 2,640 people on its annual World's Billionaires List released in April, including the troubadour who turned his carefree, island vibe into a branding business that stamped the Margaritaville name on restaurants, hotels and casinos into a \$1 billion fortune.

"I knew Margaritaville was a hit, but there are lots of hit records. They knew before I did that it was an annuity, it was not just a song. It took me awhile to figure that out. Jimmy Buffett Burgers were popping up everywhere," Buffett said to Forbes about his early efforts to build the Margaritaville brand.

"The lawyers and the business men, they wanted me to fight every one of them and I just thought I got better things to do with my time. It all started because I didn't know if I was still going to be a viable act. I didn't realize until later that I'd put my thumb on the generic pulse of people who associated that lifestyle with that song."



Buffett donated two WWII era planes to Battleship Park

Jimmy Buffett, an avid flyer, anonymously donated two World War II era planes - a Boeing Stearman and a Grumman Goose - to USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park in 2022. The Boeing Stearman was a prop in Buffett's video for the song "Trip Around the Sun." The Grumman Goose was part of the Royal Canadian Air Force and patrolled the Canadian border during World War II. The planes were shipped in pieces and re-assembled at the Medal of Honor Pavillion at Battleship Park. Both planes are now on display in the pavilion. With Buffett's passing, Park officials revealed the donations and added a wreath and an iconic Hawaiian-styled shirt by the Grumman Goose in honor of Buffett.

"Jimmy wished to remain an anonymous donor. As the world mourns his passing, we are pleased to finally be able to share his generous contributions to the park," park officials posted.

Buffett once crashed a seaplane near Nantucket while taking off and swam to safety with only minor injuries.

In 1996, Jamaican police suspected his airplane was being used to smuggle marijuana and shot at it. Bono and Buffett's wife and daughters were among those on the plane. He wrote about the experience in the song "Jamaica Mistaica."

U.S. Senate approves resolution honoring JB

U.S. Senate approved a resolution introduced by U.S. Senators Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) and Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-Miss.) in honor of the late singer-songwriter, James "Jimmy" William Buffett on Oct. 4.

Buffett was born in Pascagoula on Christmas Day 1946 and graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1966 and before that attended Pearl River Community College in Poplarville.

"Jimmy was a generational talent and entrepreneur who made his native state proud. With this resolution, we raise a glass to honor the life and legacy of this musical pioneer," Wicker said.

"Jimmy was a true Southern storyteller who was generous enough to share his piece of paradise with the world," Hyde-Smith said. "In honoring him, we celebrate the man who brought us with him on many of his adventures around the sun, from the Pascagoula Run, to the shores of paradise,

and we are all the better for it. I have no doubt his legacy will continue to inspire generations to come."

Buffett International Airport and AIA Jimmy Buffett Hwy?

According to The Palm Beach Post, officials are taking steps to name the Key West airport after Jimmy Buffett, and a petition to support the name change had garnered 25,000 signatures in the first three days it was circulated.



The idea was also endorsed by someone who altered the Key West International Airport entrance sign to

add Buffett's name to it days after Buffett passed. The sign read "Key West Jimmy Buffett International Airport." It was quickly removed.

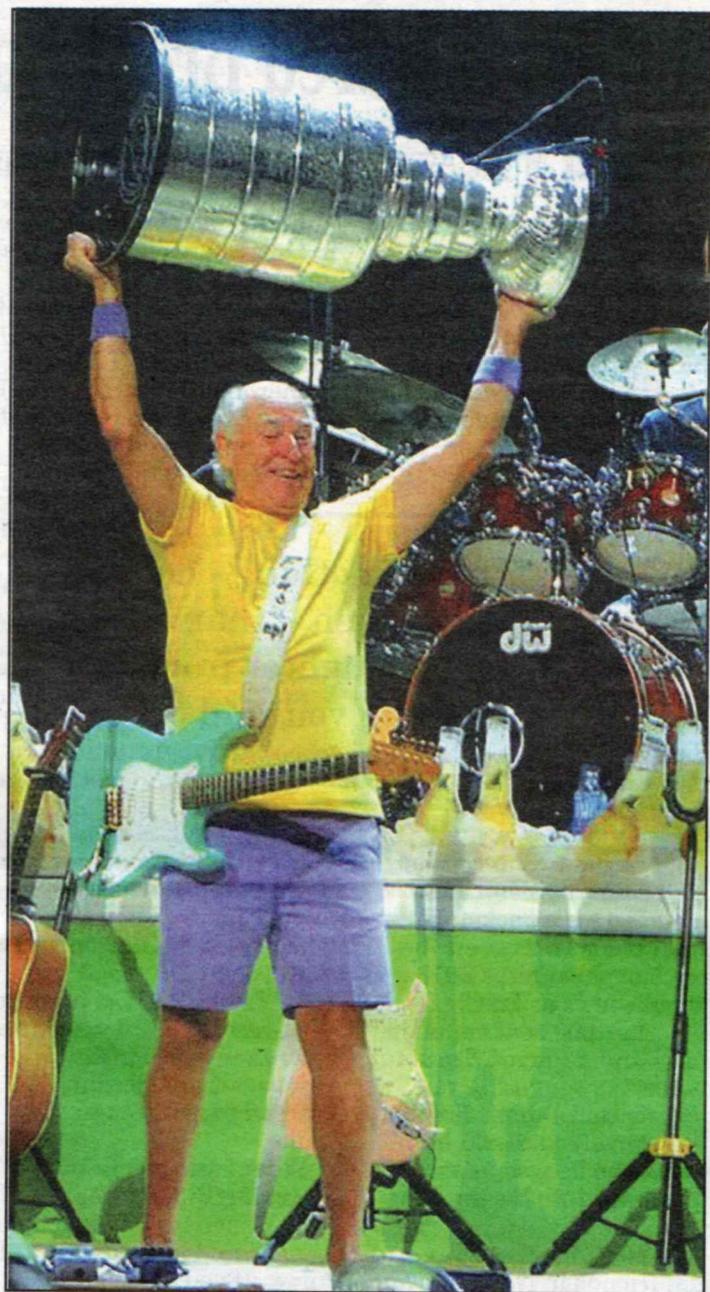
Monroe County commissioner Craig Cates said the county wanted to be respectful of Buffett's family in any process and that the Federal Aviation Administration would have to approve the name change. If all the entities involved approve, the issue would put it into referendum for Monroe County voters to decide.

The Palm Beach Post reported a petition began circulating just days after the legendary singer-songwriter's death on Sept. 1. As of Thursday, the petition had already gathered 22,994 signatures of the stated goal of 25,000.

"We also are respectful of the family," Monroe County commissioner Craig Cates, a former mayor of Key West, said in The Palm Beach Post.

"We're making sure that we'd be allowed to change the name, which we probably will but that's still a process."

An avid pilot and former Key West resident, Buffett's 1974 album A1A was named after the hwy. that connects Key West to mainland Florida. and there is a chance that sections of that road may carry his name. State Rep Chuck Clemons has filed House Bill 91, seeking to grant an "honorary designation" to A1A in Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach and Nassau counties. If the bill is approved, the coastal highway, which stretches from Key West in the south to Fernandina Beach in the north, will be renamed the Jimmy Buffett Memorial Highway in those counties.



20 degrees and the hockey game's on

Thanks to an onstage visit from Chicago Blackhawks star Patrick Kane, Jimmy Buffett was able to hoist the NHL Stanley Cup trophy during his concert at FirstMerit Bank Pavilion at Northerly Island in Chicago June 29, 2013. The Blackhawks beat the Boston Bruins in six games to claim the Cup just five days earlier.

Patrick Kane, who scored the winning goal in the final game, described the experience of presenting the Stanley Cup to Buffett in one word: "Blast."

Kane, just 21 at the time, carried the Cup on stage during the middle of Buffett's fifth song, Boat Drinks. The crowd, of course, went wild and then cheered even more loudly when Buffett raised the Cup. Kane danced, played tambourine and bongo drums and kicked beach balls back into the crowd for the duration of the song and watched the rest of the concert from stage right.

"It was just a huge rush being on stage. The crowd was on fire," he said.

Buffett inspired Brent Burns "to write what I know"

TropRock Music Assn. Lifetime Achievement award winner has been our Island's music man since 1972

By Fran Thompson

Like many, many others, local trop rock king Brent Burns is surprised how difficult it has been to process the passing of Jimmy Buffett, the man responsible for the genre that has defined his professional career.

The recipient of the 2021

TropRock Music Association Lifetime Achievement award, Burns ran in the same Pleasure Island circle as Buffett 50 years

ago, but the two never met until Buffett's sister Lucy arranged for a backstage rendezvous (pictured) before one of Buffett's 2018 run of shows at La Cigale, a historic 1,000 seat venue in Paris and a Parrot Head mecca.

Burns said Buffett greeted him warmly and said he knew who he was as soon as he walked into his dressing room.

The two talked about mutual friends in Nashville and Pleasure Island and before he left, Buffett held onto Brent's hand and asked him if he wanted his assistant to take a picture of them together.

"When I introduced myself, he said, 'I know who you are, Brent,' and we had a great conversation. I was trying to be cool. I didn't want to be that guy. So I didn't ask him for a picture, but I'm glad I have it now. Looking back, it means a lot to me," Burns said.

One of Burns' best and most popular songs is titled Livin' The Life (Jimmy Buffett Only Wrote About).

"Jimmy spent a lot of time in Gulf Shores in the 1970's and 1980's. We ran around the same bases, but I was always missing him," Burns said. "He and (NFL Hall of Famer and Foley H.S. grad) Kenny Stabler were big buddies. And I would go into The Endzone and Kenny

would say that Jimmy just left or I would go into Coconut Willy's and Meryl Murphy would tell me I just missed him.

"He has al-

ways been part of the fabric down here," Burns added. "When I moved here full-time, I was disillusioned with Nashville. I had writer's block. I had just gotten divorced and I moved to the beach to try to figure things out and decide if I wanted to get back in the game.

"What I learned from watching Buffett was that I didn't have to chase the juke box. I could just play what I know. If you write good songs, people will find you. It worked out pretty good for me and it was kind of his inspiration that led me to take that path. He inspired me more than I realized at the time."

At least a part-time resident since he took a summer residency at the Gulf Shores Holiday Inn in 1972, Brent was named Pleasure Island's official music ambassador by the Convention & Visitors Bureau in 2006.

He also has a box full of plaques that thank him for the philanthropy that has continued to be his hallmark for 50 years. A longtime sup-

porter of Habitat For Humanity (\$1 donation for each CD sold), Brent reaches out to many other charities, both local and national.

In addition to his regular Monday 5 p.m. gig at Lucy Buffett's LuLu's in Gulf Shores, Brent will be hosting casual jams a LuLUs' with guests Oct. 24-27 from 1-4 p.m. He is also playing the "Bloody Mary Morning with Brent Burns and Stoney Gabel" show on Saturday, Oct. 28 from 9:30-11 a.m. at The Hangout. MOTM registration is required only for The Hangout show.

Not that most people would consider what Brent does for a living - writing songs and playing his own music live all over the country - work. And if it wasn't for the getting there, the setting up and the getting home, neither would Brent. His next road trip is the Nov. 2-5 Sunny Jim's Suncoast Sere-nade Songwriters Retreat in Osprey, FL.

"Really, I'm still having the time of my life," he said. "The traveling is harder. But I still love it and I would be bored without music. It's who I am. I'm not complaining. I have a great time working for great people when I get there. But it does get a little tiring. Sometimes I think I'd just rather go to happy hour."

If Jerry Diaz is the "Godfather of Trop Rock, then Brent is the grandfather of the genre. His total of 12 Trop Rock awards include Song, Entertainer and CD of the Year. He won three awards at the inaugural presentation in 2008: Entertainer of the Year, CD of the year (Ragtops and Flip Flops) and a special WAVE award for his humanitarian work through his Brent

Burns Charitable Foundation.

I've Got A Beach in My Backyard and Don't Come Knockin' If The Tiki Hut's Rockin have also won CD of the Year Awards. It is the accolades for songwriting that he appreciates most, as that is what he is at heart.

"Songwriter of the Year means the most because that is the part of what I do that gives me the most personal pleasure," he said. "I was kind of late to the party. A lot of guys start writing when they're in their 20's, but I was in my 30's before I got serious about it, and it turned out that one of the things I liked the most about what I do is writing songs, especially if it's funny and people laugh.

"There's nothing - no bigger rush - than hearing laughter from something you said or something you sang. It's a high I can't explain."

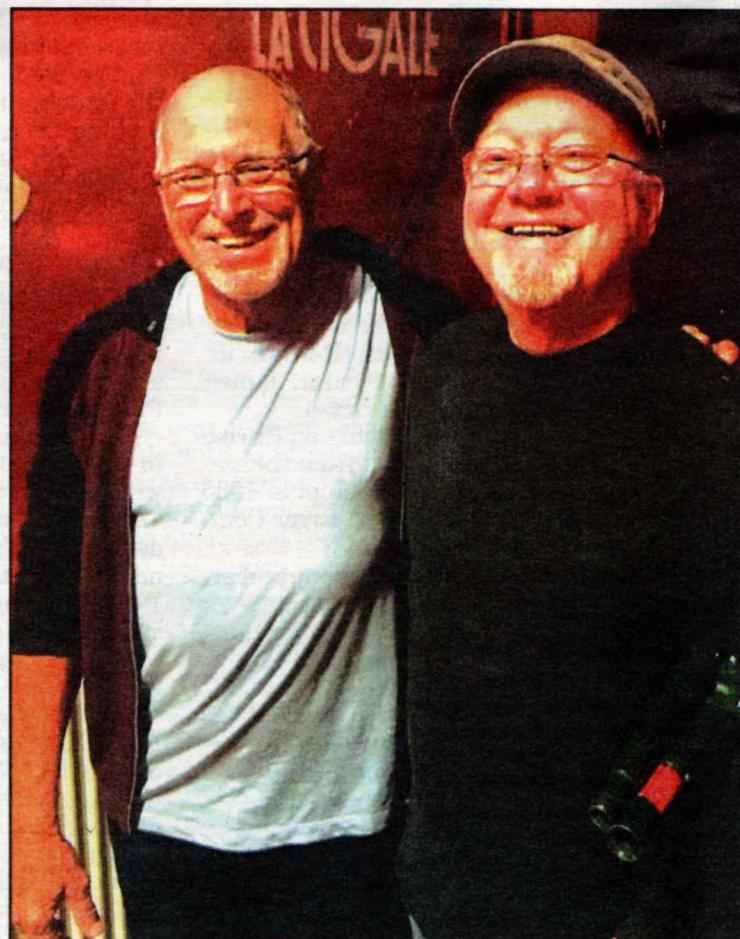
Brent has written songs with compadres like Bill Whyte, Roger Sovine, Bobby Weinstein, Steve Dean and the late Larry Butler. He said he will buy the beer and snacks for any co-writing sessions that include writers of that stature.

"Roger was the top dog in Nashville for a long time, and Steve Dean has six no. one hits. They all have had way more success than I have," Brent said. "I'm just glad they find it in their heart to write with me."

Brent could also drop Ray Stevens name, as that legend sang a duet with him on one of his co-writes with Whyte, Retired.

An Oklahoma native, Brent was fronting a rock-n-roll band while still in high school in Phoenix during the Vietnam War.

He volunteered and was



wounded in battle while in Vietnam. He was hospitalized for most of the next three years, but returned to music and hit the road performing all over the United States when he was finally discharged.

He later spent a year on the college lecture circuit offering an honest, insightful and humorous look at life as a combat soldier. Through those lectures, he was able to help others troubled with the effect of the war on their day to day lives.

"The media has provided us a view of that PTSD person from Vietnam, but the wonderful, funny thing about the human spirit, at least in a lot of guys I know, is that as tragic as that was, and being shot twice is not fun, and being in a hospital for three years is not fun, I can look back on that and laugh about a lot of stuff.

"It wasn't funny at the time, obviously, but I make jokes about it. The human mind at a given time can find humor in tragedy. Jokes made about horrible tragedies done the right way, they can be kind of humorous.

"And that's the great thing about the human spirit," he added. "You can laugh at the tragedies. I guess I'm laughing because things are so good now. I overcame that and life has been so good in so many ways.

"I've had my hills and my valleys, but there's been a lot more hills than valleys, and I'm aware of that and, man, am I thankful for it."

Burns' first taste of national attention came when he released Cheaper Crude or No More Food in 1980 in response to the previous

year's OPEC oil price hike. Brent spent \$1,800 that he didn't really have to record the single with a DJ friend from Phoenix, but it ended up selling 200,000 copies the first day and 500,000 copies the first month.

National talk show host Paul Harvey was responsible for the song's success, playing it three times on his show. It was the first time Harvey, the conservative news commentator heard nationally over the ABC radio

network, ever featured music on his show. It debuted on more than 818 radio stations across the United States.

"It's really something to see the American people fired up. I'm not a militant, I'm a record producer. I wrote this song out of personal conviction and to make people laugh. If it just shook a few politicians, I think I'd be accomplishing something," Brent said in the New York Times.

Cheaper Crude was also written up in the Chicago Tribune and Billboard Magazine. And Brent sang it live on the Mike Douglas Show.

One Arizona woman (not a close relative) ordered 5,000 copies, and a Salt Lake City radio station played the song every hour on the hour for a week. A radio station in Ohio reported receiving 3,000 calls about it after one spin.

"I found out that we were shipping wheat and food over to the Arab countries, and they were scalding us on the price and the shortage of oil. So, I was kind of ticked off, and wrote a funny song about it. I actually wrote it in '76. And in '79, a friend of mine remembered it and

sent it to Paul Harvey," Brent said.

"It happened quick. He just asked permission to use it if he wanted to. We didn't know what he was going to do, and he didn't tell us. One day, on a Wednesday, he played the doggone song and it just blew up. From that point on, it was a track race for months.

"I'm singing in lounges, and suddenly Real People's calling, and Hee Haw's calling. I was like, 'Really?' It was hard to get my balance.

"It came and went fast. Novelty songs usually do, but it was a great experience. We did sell a half a million copies the first week. I look back and I just laugh. I made money on air play and some performance money. But I didn't get any pay for any of the record sales. The company went bankrupt."

Cheaper Crude led to a record deal and Brent's 1980 move to Nashville to rub noses with other hit makers. These were heady times for a kid from Oklahoma.

"I had that one hit, but I always kind of thought I'd be a star, and I wouldn't have to write. I was really cocky back then. Too self-assured, almost. And then I got to Nashville, and I'm thinking I would become a signed artist and a star. But I started hearing demos of these guys with killer voices and great songs, and I'm thinking, I need to write songs, because there's a lot of great singers around.

"I started really taking the writing thing seriously, and it's become really a passion with me. I really like that end of things, the creative side," Brent said.

"I've had my cocky phases. Believe me," Brent added. "But sometimes life has hills and valleys. With Cheaper Crude, everybody wanted a piece of the action and wanted to be around me. You wake up six months later and the phone's not ringing, and nobody answering your phone calls."

Brent said he now looks at that failure to find a place in the Nashville music scene a good experience.

"It at least teaches you to savor the good times when they're there. Not be cocky, savor them. Be humble about it. That way, when things aren't going so good, you realize that's not forever either," he said.

Burns arrived in Gulf Shores when the area was a sleepy, little seasonal town with concrete floored honky-tonks and beach cottages.

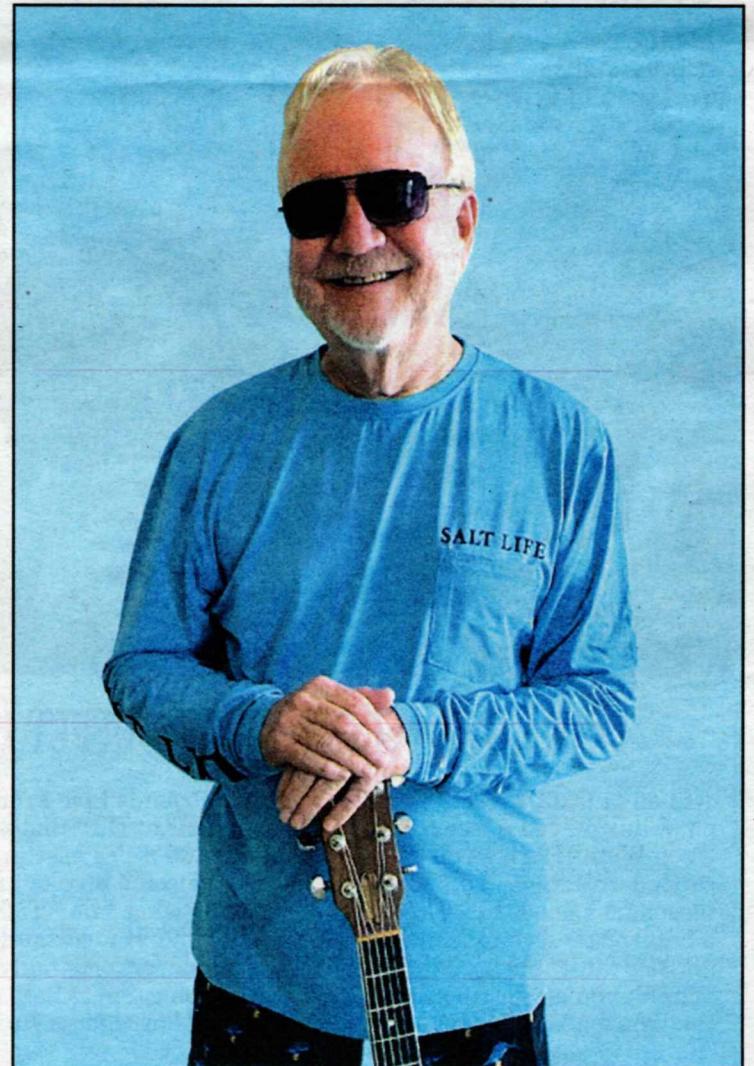
His ticket to town in 1972 and for many years after was a summer residency at the Holiday Inn Gulf Shores. Burns recalled how proud the locals were of the brand new hotel, the only building in town with an elevator and the only bar with carpet on the floor.

Music has taken Burns all

over the world. He has led tours of mostly Parrot Heads to Ireland, Scotland, Italy and Greece. He has also lent his name to European river cruise excursions. He often invites other songwriters to join him, and plays several gigs during each trip.

"In many ways, I feel like my life has been the most fortunate, blessed life in the world. Every morning I write a letter to God," Brent told his friend, New York Times best selling author Andy Andrews, on a podcast Andrews records in a studio at his retail/office suite at The Wharf in Orange Beach.

"Usually it's a letter of thankfulness and I ask for things sometimes, but every day, I thank God for my amazing life. It's so much fun, and it's been so exciting and so diversified. It's been great."





ONE LOVE - ONE OCEAN: BUFFETT PLAYS FREE 2010 GULF SHORES PUBLIC BEACH CONCERT

Billed as CMT Presents Jimmy Buffett & Friends Live From the Gulf Coast, Buffett & a Coral Reefer Band that included fellow Mobilian Will Kimbrough on guitar played a free concert for 35,000 fans at Gulf Shores Public Beach on July 11, 2010. The concert was funded by BP while oil still spewed from its Deep Water Horizon oil drilling rig about 100 miles east in the same Gulf of Mexico waters that served as a backdrop for the concert. The well was not capped until Sept. 19. "There are always welcome breaks in every storm," Buffett said. "But a few hours of fun, void of the constant reminders of the situation, is a good thing, and that is basically what I do." Tickets to the concert were distributed through Ticketmaster and given to anyone willing to rent a hotel or condo on Pleasure Island at the time. But certainly, a majority of those with their feet in the sand were locals. Buffett changed the lyrics to "It's all BP's fault" during Margaritaville. The concert originally was scheduled for July 1 but had to be postponed because of heavy surf from Hurricane Alex. "Thank you all for coming from wherever you came to help support our good friends, neighbors - and some of my family down here, as well," Buffett told the crowd after opening the show with "The Pascagoula Run," in deference to his birthplace.