

St. Some Times

June 2016

Vol. 174

- INSIDE THIS ISSUE -

MOVING TO FLORIDA - FLIGHTS - CRAP IN A HOUSTON CUP
BUFFETT IN CHICAGO - ZBB AT ALPINE



The Move to Naples

No, not the Naples in Italy. Mom and dad have now officially moved to Florida. The house in Green Bay was sold. Jeff and Jason's families divided up a lot of the furniture, pictures, and even candles. But it only made a dent.

I arrived in the USA on June 11. Mom had already purchased a ticket for me so I found myself on a plane on June 12 heading for Florida to help unpack the moving truck. It's hard to believe mom and dad could have done better than their last Condo, but they did! The house is amazing.

The new house is located in a posh housing community that makes Disney World look like a developing country. The community is gated and guarded, with golf cart paths interconnecting the streets. Palm trees and manicured

Three guys unpacked the entire trailer truck over four hours but it took mom, dad, me, and the Vanderkellens several days to unpack most of the

boxes. That includes breaks for dinner each night. (did you know there is a Culvers in Naples? Culvers, the butter burger fast food hamburger joints based out of Wisconsin?) My birthday was a day of unpacking boxes, but it ended with dinner at the Snook Inn.

Mom and Dad have a LOT of stuff - #holycrapthatsalotofstuff - !! I was lucky to have the time to help them out. It's not often that I can help out family with larger projects. We got most of the big stuff unpacked, pictures hung up, fake plants corralled into a corner for later placement, china almost unpacked, TV's mounted, and more.

One of my favorite memories of Florida has always been driving the little white E90 Mercedes that mom and I drove down from Green Bay a hundred years ago. Mom still loves McDonalds breakfast and I would make the daily breakfast run in the Mercedes. Surprisingly, little has changed in Naples since I was last there. Growth yeah, but it still seems the same. Mom had me drive into a nearby condo complex. She thinks I should move into one of the perfect little condos, but a quick internet search popped that idea with price tags starting at \$350,000.





This house is amazing. The back pool and whirlpool are surrounded by a bird cage to keep out the gators and mosquitos. Except for the Florida heat and humidity, the back pool area is a place you won't want to leave. I think, come winter, this pool area will be hyper-used.

Houston



Crap in a Cup

In February, I was hired by my new school. During the following months there were mounds of paperwork FedExed, mailed, and emailed to Houston and Saudi. The one idea overshadowing my hiring was: “you aren’t officially hired until you are through the entire process with Visa and Passport in hand on the airplane.” Every step of the way I was reminded of this.

On June 20, I boarded the plane from Naples to Green Bay. On June 21, I boarded another plane from Green Bay to Houston, Texas. The Houston trip is just another waypoint for new hires.

There was a driver waiting at the airport to drive me 45min to my hotel. The nice receptionist apologized for not having a King Suite. I just had to settle for the Queen Suite. The Queen Suite turned out to be two huge rooms bigger than the apartment I’ve been living in for the past two years. I dropped my book bag and headed downstairs to the bar while I waited for my medical packet to be delivered to my room.

The bar offered a pitiful menu. I ordered a bowl of chili and they gave me a lukewarm bowl of Hormel chili and a teaspoon. In TEXAS! Can you believe it? So I asked the other bartender where I could go for a steak.

I went upstairs to my room and verified my med packet. Sure enough, it was there. I unpacked it and read through the instructions. Stool sample with a little spoon? No way. Yep. But I hadn’t eaten anything. Time for a steak.

I crossed the street and ordered a \$50 T-bone and a few beers. Returned to the hotel an hour later and crashed on one of the two queen beds with the alarm set for 5:30.

Now, I won’t go into details about the stool sample collection. Let’s just say I have

done some really gross things in my lifetime, but this was the worst. My own stool. Ack! Double ACK!

The concierge called a taxi for me and 30 minutes later I was at the entrance of the Corporate services building. Supposedly, this support company brings in tentative hires all the



time and in massive numbers. I was only one of five candidates. Three of us were teachers, one lawyer, and one diplomat. On with the games.

We were treated to a process of medical tests, X-rays, and other fun stuff in between introductory presentations that explained the company in detail. This is one huge company. When noon hit, we were treated to an open choice lunch from their mess hall. We all sat together and talked with the new hire processing team members. Several of them were people I had been emailing since February.

I was back on the plane by five. The return route took me through Detroit. As I was getting yet another coffee, I found Isiaha - Kapp’s oldest son- at the gate. He did a double take because we haven’t seen each other in three years. Matt was there to greet me while I got my rental car in order. Yes, I ended up staying at Matt’s overnight so we could have a few beers and catch up on the past few years. That was a real treat!



Can you say CONCERTS? Real loud? Kappy bought tickets for the Buffett concert in Chicago at Tinley Park on Saturday, June 25. Then, Erin bought tickets for the Zach Brown Band at Alpine on June 26. Wow. Here's how it went.

Kappy and I drove down to Chicago and stopped at the Brat Stop (above) for a few brats. What an amazing restaurant! We arrived at the hotel and immediately met up with Paul and Cherie. We had dinner and drinks for a while before we had a surprise visitor (Becky). I was not going to sleep in the same room as them so I slept at Paul and Cherie's house. But that wasn't easy. I had to go through Pokey training.

Imagine a 100+ pound dog that doesn't trust strangers. My instructions were as follows:

1. don't look at Pokey
2. don't move (let him come to you)
3. don't ever sit in Pokey's chair
4. just watch TV until he comes to you
5. no sudden movements after he warms up to you
6. just because he accepts you doesn't mean you are through with 1-5

It only took an hour. Basically, Paul fell asleep in the arm chair and Cherie took Pokey

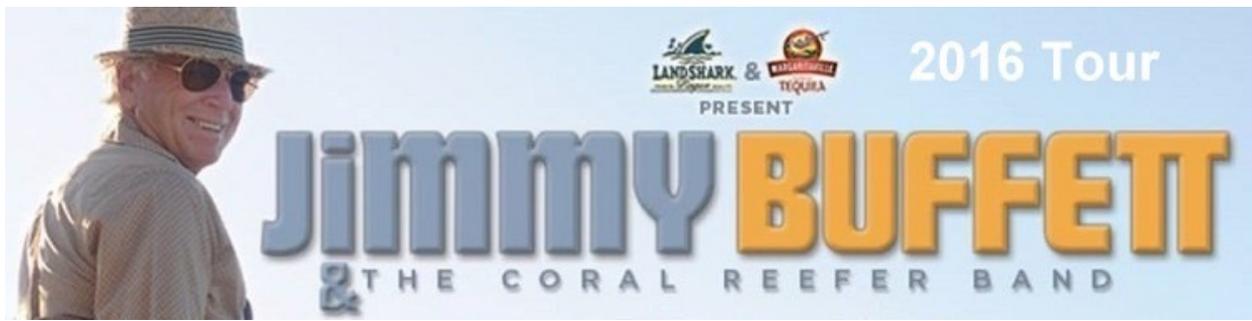
into their room for the night. They didn't want Pokey to rip my face off when I went to pee in the middle of the night.

We woke up early on Buffett day. Cherie was already making shots for tailgating and I was told to replay 1-6 while I drank my coffee. The coffee was great but I couldn't help with the shot production so I sat and listened to Cherie and Paul tell me about their latest ideas for Buffett. (Below) The Selfie frame was a hit.

We picked up Kappy and his companion from the hotel and piled into Kappy's truck. Paul doesn't drink on one day of the year - Buffett Concert Day - so we can all happily drink and get home safely. We arrived at the concert just before the gates opened for tailgating and prepared our tailgating entourage in minutes. We spent the hours before the concert mingling among parrot heads in the lot. Not as impressive as Alpine. By far. Yet, there was fun to be had.

So first of all, (see the final page) Paul is the ultimate Pirate's Parrot. He never drinks on Buffett Concert days. It's a long standing gift to Cherie and their daughter. Paul wears a Parrot onesie to every concert. Everyone wants a picture with Paul. —cont. next page





So this year was Cherie's idea of a selfie frame. This was a total hit! I was the camera man so I took photos for everyone and collected each one on my phone so Cherie and Paul can set up a website. We took over 100 photos of ParrotHeads in the frame, and that's just the ones from my phone. A lot went unrecorded on my phone because I spent a lot of wandering time.

The other tradition that will hopefully continue is Themed Hats. I made PeanutButter Conspiracy Hats for Kappy and I. It was ridiculous how few people actually knew the song. But wearing the hats made for a lot of fun. Lots of conversations started around the hats - even without the life sized parrot next to us. My goal: introduce a new Themed Hat for every concert.

Kappy, Becky, Cherie, Paul, and I had the maximum amount of fun at this concert. Huey Lewis and the News was the guest band. We all entered into the stadium together but got separated when I went for a "10-100" (watch *Smokey and the Bandit* again if you are confused by my reference), Kappy buggered off and bought me a concert T-Shirt, all we had to do was look for a giant Parrot in the crowd! Easy.

Needless to say, the concert went as expected. Few people around us knew lyrics like we did or sang as loud as we did. Beach balls were launched, beer was flowing, and Cherie won't remember anything past noon!

Paul drove Kappy and Becky back to the hotel. Paul, Cherie, and I went back to their house and Pokey remembered me. I didn't have to go through the 6 steps of acceptance! For the tenth night in a row, I slept in a different place. Their daughter was home so the lazy boy recliner was mine.

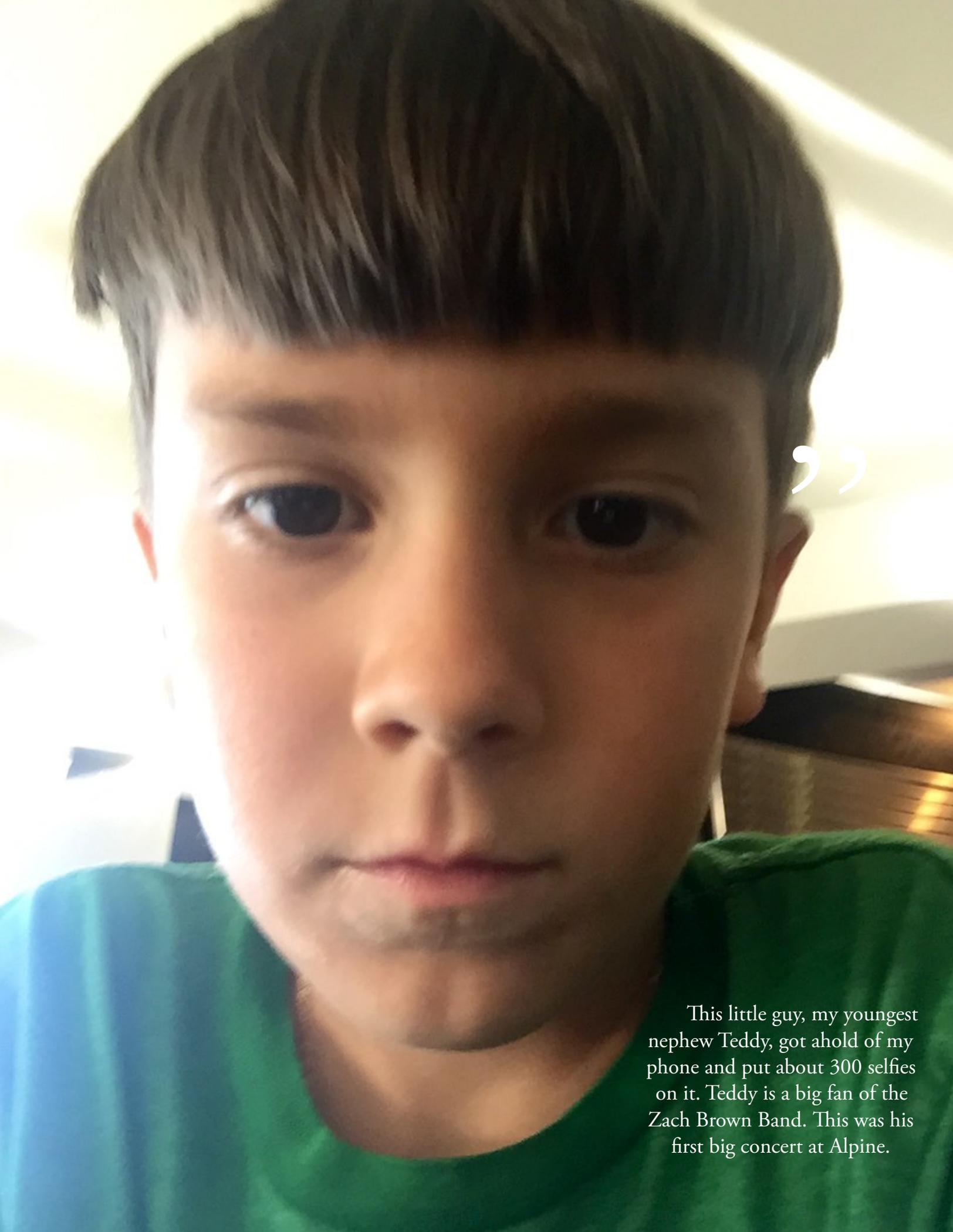
Becky left that morning, but after a perfect hangover lunch, the remaining four of us headed to Alpine Valley for Zach Brown. Consider it "tailgating LIGHT" compared to any Buffett. The concert was ok. It's just so difficult to follow up a day of Buffett. The good part of it was my family was there. Erin actually bought the tickets for us and this was Teddy's first big concert! Besides Jason, the only ones missing were the Judd Family!

Zach Brown put on a fantastic show. They played a wide range of music from Frank Sinatra to Nine Inch Nails and everything in between. His fans really got into the "buffett-esque" songs with the Caribbean feel. If the ZBB wants to adopt Parrotheads, they will have to bone up on the ambiance of the tailgating!

A big THANK YOU goes out to Paul and Cherie for hosting me and going to the concerts with us. Kappy got away with paying for everything this time, so "ThankYou bonehead!" I am paying for the next Buffett concert.

FINS UP until next concert!





This little guy, my youngest nephew Teddy, got ahold of my phone and put about 300 selfies on it. Teddy is a big fan of the Zach Brown Band. This was his first big concert at Alpine.



Perhaps the greatest fan at Alpine - this time Tinley - has got to be the Sober Parrot! Paul doesn't drink on Buffett Concert Days as a gift to his wife and daughter, so they all get home safely. Not to mention, he's always the "Best in Show" and everyone wants a picture with him.