

# St. Some Florida

June 2018 V204



## Dad

Back to Diving

Dave Lemoine is now diving horizontally! No more upside down diving. But he didn't like his BC. I wish he would accept a new BCD so he could enjoy diving more. He's just too stubborn.

Our first two days of diving were just shy of crappy for seeing underwater life. That's ok. It gave dad time to get comfortable under water again. We did experience an OK wreck dive.



## Mom

Reading and Relaxing

Mom has never been a diver. She slept in every day we were in the Fort Lauderdale hotel. She was perfectly happy having her boys (sans Jason) going out diving. She could sleep late, read all day, go out to dinner in the evenings with us, and read late into the night. That's her thing!

Spending time alone with my family for a week is like recharging my family batteries. I love my mom and dad so much!



## Jeff

Keeping an Eye on Dad

Jeff is really a spectacular diver. It's a gift to dive with such an experienced diver. I never worry about him. I can focus on taking pictures.

We have always looked out for each other and between the two of us, dad (who rarely dives any more) has two divers to keep tabs on him.

Jeff has a lot to share about diving I'll never do: cold diving, deep wreck, ice!



## Me

Dead Watch New Watch

The dives in Lauderdale were complete crap. It didn't matter. The dives were all about being with dad and Jeff - in warm Florida waters.

Diving got even better once we dove with the shop in West Palm Beach, but my dive watch died. Dad and mom bought me a new watch, but new gear adds a dimension of "oh crap" to any dive. I need a few hundred more dives with this Oceanic.

# SWITERLY



## Dinner on TASIS

Eating with Theresa

Theresa, my former principal, invited Todd and Sarah out for dinner. I got to tag along. It was just another beautiful evening on the Swiss-Italian border. We drove to a small Italian hotel overlooking a lake with not-so-bashful ducks. Our waiter stopped dead in his tracks when he saw my mismatched yellow and red Chuckies! Pretty funny. Thanks for picking up the bill TASIS!



## Visiting the Volpis

Yard Gnome!

A visit to Switzerland is only complete if I get to see my buddy Volpi at his Swiss Mountain Retreat. Todd, Sarah, and I loaded into their 4x4 truck and headed up the mountain to spend an afternoon of laughter and natural peace with Volpi.

If you listen carefully, you will hear a cuckoo in the distance. If you are watchful, you will see deer, local crazies, and fleeing hares. I even had a few moments to hide some Packer goodies in the cabin.



## Volpi Pizza Again

A Green Bay Packer Honor Dinner

This is the pizzeria I ate at every night during my Swiss summer. It sits just below Volpi's city house. Everyone knows Giorgio because he has been eating here since God's dog was a puppy. Everyone knows me because I didn't miss one dinner the entire month I house sat for Volpi.

The evening was full of laughter and veiled threats from Volpi. He still wants revenge for all of the Packer goodies I hid all over his house. Little did he know, at that very moment, several new items had been placed in his mountain cabin. He will be finding hidden Packer goodies for years to come! Volpi and his family are just great people!



## Swiss Picnic

A rare lunch with Dumbass

Yeah, that's my pet name for Todd. I cannot write the names he calls me.

The three of us packed up some beers in the cooler and took a mini grill into the mountains past the Versasca Damn. This was one of the most scenic picnics I have ever been a part of. We spread out our swiss cheeses and pork products near a cold mountain stream in a mountain valley. It was a perfect time with family.

# ST.SOMEBUFFETT



## Happy Kappy?

Lifetime BFF

I can roll into Kappy's house at any time of day or night and feel like I am at my own home. His kids are all grown up now. Jonah, the Giant mini-kap was loading his truck in the driveway and heading to work. Time flies.

This particular time, I didn't find a happy kappy in the kitchen. He lost his dad a few months ago on Super Bowl Sunday and he is still dealing with it.

Most of our car ride was spent on feelings. Even if we don't see each other for three years, we can catch up on events in five minutes. This was different. By the end of our four hour ride to Minnie, I had a relatively Happy Kappy. I look back on that car ride with deep respect for our friendship. Kappy is one of the most stable aspects of my crazy, rambling, constantly changing life.



## Paul & Cherie

Buffett Existentialists

I had the pleasure of meeting Cherie and Paul several years ago. We share two loves in life: a love for Kappy and a love of everything Buffett. If you count their dog (Pokie) then it's three things we share.

This concert was unlike any of the previous half dozen concerts we have attended together. These two Parrotheads didn't bring any props. Paul didn't even drive a rented RV. Just a few jello shots and a full sized parrot costume on hand. Believe me, this was bizarre.

Usually, Cherie has close to four hundred jello shots to share and they have a rented RV packed to its beak with beach balls. Look back in the newsletters and you will find a story about them restating their vows in full wedding attire - at an Alpine Valley Buffett concert.



## The Stalker AirBnB

Quite the Experience

Arguably the most memorable story of this concert, our AirBnB host story is both scary and funny. I am surprised he didn't get in the car when we left for the concert.

Our AirBnB was very cheap. Just off 35W, in Minneapolis, we pulled up to a shitty ranch house. The basement was refurbished with 2<sup>1/2</sup> bedrooms, kitchenette, couch, and bathroom.

We didn't notice the connecting stairwell until we were having a few beers and listening to music. The plastic sliding curtain opened and our host came down to use his grill and again to get a few beers from the fridge.

The fifth time, he sat down with us. He grabbed a beer from the fridge... dimmed one light...turned on a hall light...then lowered the volume of the stereo. "So what's up guys?" Scary shit. We still think he was sniffing through our underwear while we were at the concert.



## Matt & Stacy

My Overseas Family

I was so happy when the Judds appeared at the pre-concert warm-up bar! There are very few instances that compare to having this group of Parrot lovers together.

A few years back, Mat and Stacy made an appearance at Alpine Valley to meet Kappy, Cherie, and Paul. That was pre-kids, so they spent more time with us. This time, even though it was at Target Stadium (just a short one hour drive from their Wisconsin cabin), the Judds had to disappear early and tend to their flock.

No matter, even a few minutes with Matt and Stacy at a Buffett concert is enough to last me for a few good years. The added bonus having them around is it deflects some of the unwanted attention I get for coming from so far away to a Buffett concert. Somehow their presence adds to the reality that I am actually at a Buffett concert from several thousand miles away.

# SON OF A SON... 2018



## A Parrot-Head Pre Concert Party at the PourHouse

Downtown Minneapolis, near Target Field (June 30, 2018)

What do you do when a Buffett concert is at a ballfield? Go to a bar. There just isn't anywhere to tailgate, legally. I woke up on the couch at 8am and said "beer me". I didn't even have to get off the couch. By 1pm, our small group was camped out belly up to the bar and listening to a Buffett cover band called *Pirates, Guitars and Beachfront Bars*. I don't know how much our bar bill was, but the \$80 I slipped Kappy was only part of the bill.

The bar was semi-empty by the time we rolled in. A few beers and chicken wings later, the place was standing room only. Paul only attracted about a hundred Parrot photos for the Verzano website, but we had the opportunity to watch one of the best looking and efficient bartenders I have seen in my life. Impressive.

This pre-party turned out to be more fun than the actual concert at Target. We made a lot of new friends, saw a plethora of excellent costumes, and kept the bartenders flying behind the bar. It wasn't easy to maintain our bar property, but our teamwork and communication were spectacular throughout the

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four hours! Matt and Stacy found us just in time to leave for the concert! Check out my octopus hat!!

Yes, a Buffett concert is something to experience, but be wary if this particular harbor (Target Field in Minneapolis) is the only one you ever see. For most of our group, this concert falls to the bottom of all lifetime Buffett concerts. I lost my voice trying to conduct our section of seats in singing along with the song list. Jimmy didn't really offer any songs to rave about. He did sing *Gypsies* and *Pascalouga*, but the rest of the set could have been sung if you've ever listened to the radio. Come on Jimmy! Seriously! It seemed like Jimmy accidentally walked on stage and sang some songs.

Perhaps it was the crowd. The stadium didn't fill up until the Eagles took the stage. Only three of the original Eagles were on stage, but Vince Gill sat in. It was a fantastic 2 1/2 hour Eagles concert.