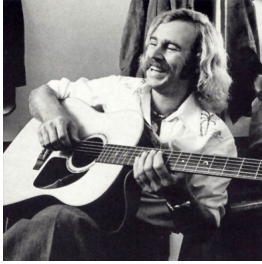


## Buffett in Bossier City: One more item to cross off the bucket list

Written by By Terry Mathews  
Monday, 03 June 2013 15:31

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Stayed home today - feeling a couple bubbles off plumb since doctor changed meds Thursday. The Tiki Gods took pity on me.

One of the perks of being an arts editor is that you get invited to opening nights. At about 11 this morning, I received a press release from the Bossier City Margaritaville people. Jimmy's playing a show in the Paradise Theater on Wednesday, July 3, during the hotel's grand opening. I've been on the guest list for a couple of months. My foggy brain put two and two together and I about fell on the floor. I'm going to see Jimmy Buffett in Bossier City.

So what's the big deal, you ask? Let me explain.

First, there was no guarantee Jimmy was going to perform - or even be in the state, for that matter. He skipped the opening of the Atlantic City Margaritaville on Memorial Day weekend.

Second - stay with me on this one - my college friends had friends who went to high school with Willis Alan Ramsey ... the one-album wonder from Highland Park.

At the time, WAR was playing the circuit (bars), along with Jerry Jeff Walker and Jimmy Buffett. My college buddies let me tag along, and I got to hang out with the three up-and-coming singers from time to time during their gigs on Greenville Avenue.

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WAR was brilliant, but reserved. His "green" album continues to influence artists today. Texas has produced some great songwriters - Guy Clark, Willie Nelson, Townes Van Zandt, to name but a few. WAR's name belongs on that list. His fans are still waiting on a second record.

Jerry Jeff was a rascalion and a total chick magnet. He's now a Texas legend.

Jimmy always had a large time, but at the end of the evening, he was all business. No matter how altered he was - this was the early 1970s - he knew exactly what the bar owed him at closing time. He kept the tab in his head ... and on the occasions I was there, he was always right on with his numbers.

I was not surprised that he built an empire around his brand. Jimmy is now the world's richest beach bum, playing to sold out crowds and selling us the accessories that go with his easy, breezy lifestyle, including his own tequila, beer, shrimp and clothes. A news source last week said "Margaritaville" is the most lucrative song ever. Pretty amazing accomplishments for the son of a son of a sailor from Alabama.

I've been a parrothead since before Jimmy came up with the name. I've watched the one-man show turn into a monstrous, moving carnival, complete with stage sets, one of the best backup bands on the planet and huge tailgate parties that last for days. I've been to more shows than I can count. I took a week's vacation to follow him from Texas to Indiana to Wisconsin. I even saw him twice - on Oahu and Maui - while on a Hawaiian vacation.

But to me, he'll always be the hungry kid with a dazzling, slightly goofy smile, moustache and bright blue eyes that had crinkles at the edges even then. That's the Jimmy I love - the Jimmy before "Margaritaville," the Coral Reefer Band and all the casino/hotel/restaurant/corporate-infused madness that makes up his life these days.

For me, it's just Jimmy, a guitar and a room full of people who loved music.

I've wanted to see him in a small room again for over 20 years now. The Paradise Theater in Bossier holds 900. So, being there will be a real treat. Beats the heck out of a 22,000 stadium in

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Frisco or sharing him with 40,000 others at Alpine Valley, Wisconsin (the site of Stevie Ray Vaughan's last show).

It will be a great way to finish out my Buffett concert-going days. Just Jimmy, me and 899 other lucky souls in parrothead paradise.