

The COCONUT TELEGRAPH

MARGARITAVILLE MAY-JUNE, 1990

VOLUME 6, NO. 3

JL *Jamison is at work. Every night from 10:00 pm to 2:00 am, JL serves as the soundman, the lightman, stage director and production manager for the band he has booked at the Margaritaville Cafe. Lucky to be in bed by 3:00 am, only to get a 7:00 am wake up call Jimmy, an early riser, "JL, I need you to..."*

The former wrestler from Edinboro, PA. has followed a different drummer all the way to Key West, FL. Honorary member of the house crew at Center Stage Studio in Atlanta, a lightman who rose to production manager with the Producers, and owner of his own lighting system; JL provided the lighting for a Ronald Reagan appearance in Atlanta.

JL actually began working for Jimmy during 1987's 'Parrot Looks at Forty' tour. Since that time he has become Jimmy's right hand man; virtually on "on call" status in Key West. In addition to the above mentioned responsibilities at Margaritaville, JL also serves as drum technician for the Coral Reefer band, and lead singer for The Rolling Errors; a sound check band that has yet to achieve recognition outside their own very small circle.

I spent the greater part of a Sunday afternoon with JL in an effort to paint Jimmy Buffett with a broader stroke; what really goes on at home, in the studio, on the road...

CT: How did you first meet Jimmy?

JL: In 1986 I was the production manager for the Producers, former CBS recording artists out of Atlanta. A friend of mine, Don Jarvis, road companion with the Producers, was the soundman on Jimmy's 'Floridays' tour, and suggested me for the following summer. So I actually met Jimmy at the end of the 1986 summer tour, and was hired to work the 1987 'Parrot Looks at Forty' tour.

CT: So when you were first hired, it was just as a member of the road crew. How did you end up here?

JL: At the end of the 1987

tour in Honolulu, HI. Jimmy told me he was opening a nightclub (Margaritaville) in Key West, would I like to work there; soundman, booking the bands, etc. At first I wasn't sure he was serious, but after being home (Atlanta) for two days I received a one-way airline ticket to Key West. Here I am.

CT: That was nearly three years ago, things must be going well.

JL: Yeah, it was weird at first. I'm here one day and Jimmy leaves for Paris for a month. He had just bought the house next door to his and I was put to work, scraping, painting, etc. The Margaritaville Cafe was still under construction, and it was August (pronounced "hot as hell") in Key West.

CT: Not quite what you thought it was going to be?

JL: Well, no, but after a couple of months Charlie (the late great Charlie Allen) came down, and Ross Ritto arrived to set up the sound

system in the cafe. That was a real learning experience, Ross is one of the best in the business. (See 'The Studio That Ross Built' GT Nov '87) Then Jimmy came back to Key West, and things really fell into place. He helped familiarize me with the studio (Shrimp Boat Sound), met a lot of the guys working on the "Hot Water" album, and I fell in with the Margaritavilians. Of course, the work continued

"LADIES
& GENTLEMEN,
PUT YOUR HANDS
TOGETHER &
WELCOME TO
MARGARITAVILLE
CAFE..."



Continued on Page 2

on the house, but Jimmy and I put up a basketball hoop and spent a lot of time playing one on one.

CT: No offense, but when I look at Jimmy the first sport to come to mind is not basketball.

JL: I give a pretty good work out, he always beats me though with his left-handed jump shot. We've had some good games there. When the Neville Brothers were in town we played, and Robert Cray and his posse taught us quite a lesson one day.

CT: So it's not necessarily all work and no play.

JL: But when Jimmy wants to work, you work. That's the reason for the studio, when Jimmy gets inspired, we head for the studio. But other times we'll fish, or go flying. Jimmy was into sculling for a while; that thing is really hard to maneuver, but he would get it out in the morning, keep it straight as an arrow all the way to A1A. Lotta' fishing; he taught me how to fish the flats. That's where one guy is on the platform over the outboard and uses a pole to push the boat through the shallows spotting fish for the other guy. You haven't fished until you've caught a bonefish; best fighting fish in the world.

We were out in Key West harbor once, and I swear to God this is true, Jimmy was casting and I shouted "behind you", and Jimmy whirls around and places his lure inches in front of this tarpon, and he took off. Jimmy fought with him for over an hour, well over 100 pounds, and this was a flyrod!

CT: So in other words, Jimmy's not really into a boss/employee

thing?

JL: Jimmy's the boss, but most of the time he's cool about it. Every so often a really rotten chore comes along, and Jimmy will bribe me with a meal. He's into cooking; has a state of the art kitchen at his house, knows his way around too. He owes me a seven-course dinner for the pink truck episode, though. We're driving down the street and Jimmy eyes a derelict flat bed pick-up, "JL, buy that truck, paint it pink and we'll put it in the Fantasy Fest parade." So I'm driving this truck with a bunch of kids on the back, (second generation Margaritians actually) they all had Uzi waterguns, the truck's overheating...I don't want to talk about it.

CT: You mentioned the studio earlier. Talk about how an album is put together.

JL: Parts of "Hot Water" and "Lizard" were recorded there. The great thing is to meet all the people, especially on "Hot Water". Steve Cropper, Steve Winwood, James Taylor, Ralph McDonald, lot of history there. This was the winter of 1988,

Margaritaville cafe was done, and you never knew when one of these guys would show up to play. Some really great nights.

Anyway, back to putting an album together. Keep in mind I've only been around for the last two. On "Hot Water" Jimmy and Mike Utley spent a lot of time laying down the rough tracks, putting Jimmy's stories to music.

CT: So in other words, Jimmy has an idea, or a story. Mike Utley conceptualizes how the music will be arranged, and Jimmy refines the story to song length.

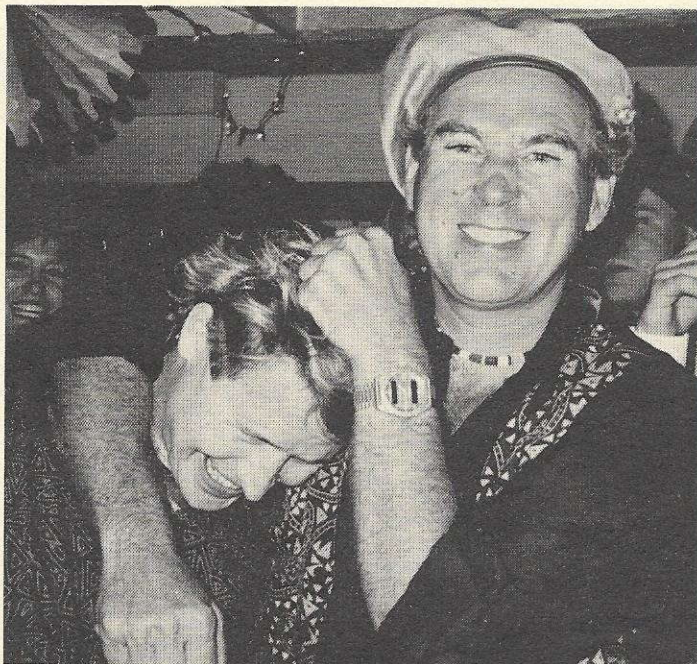
JL: Yeah, right. The other guys come and go all the time adding their tracks, it can get pretty exciting. Some of the song is recorded here, and some at New River studio in Ft. Lauderdale; lotta' road time.

Fingers' album "Chest Pains" was recorded at Shrimp Boat. Most of the recording and mixing was done by Ross Ritto.

CT: I also noticed Fingers' was kind enough to list you in the album credits. "Special assistance, Studio Stud Service: JL Jamison".

JL: Yeah, ya' know thinking about that time reminds me a lot of Charlie. He really meant a lot to me; at times I forget he's gone and I expect him to walk around the corner. At the studio or the house, but especially on the road, I really miss him... but he's still there. Charlie Allen; a mainstay in the Buffett entourage, died suddenly last February.

CT: You mentioned the road. I think in the great scheme of things Jimmy is most often associated with



*"The charisma he brings to the stage is unique in the world of entertainers. If there was just some way to get that personality across on the radio waves . . . ah well, that is not "his road."
Juliette Borchers, RMT*

touring. He's rarely heard on the radio, doesn't do any schlocky pro-motion-al stuff, yet every summer he sells out across the country. Jimmy is the consummate entertainer in that he, quite simply, entertains. Other artists release a product that is largely a producer's concept of what will sell on the record racks. In conjunction with the record promotion a video is made to appeal to the MTV crowd (average 13-20, IQ not age), then the group is forced to go on tour and actually perform before a live audience. Few can cut the mustard. Jimmy, however, is a mustard cutter from way back, having the ability to charm a crowd as well as entertain them. Work the room, so to speak.

JL: He's no Milli Vanilli if that's what you mean.

CT: A Buffett concert is an event, groups are formed, vacations are planned, Parrot Heads by the busload descend on venue parking lots literally hours before the show; Dead Heads with better taste in clothing. Each year the Coral Reefers are on the top of Rolling Stone's concert sell-out list. Each year newspaper/magazine articles characterize a Buffett concert as a party, a gathering of suburbanites cum-Caribbean comrades setting aside one night to revel in pseudo-debauchery. Each year the Margarita-



ville office is inundated with phone calls requesting concert information; starting in February! In this age of addiction (cigarettes, food, drugs) Jimmy appears to have found the potion craved by hundreds of thousands; all of whom must have at least one Buffett "hit" yearly. Jimmy's reply to that very rare (I'm being objectionable here) negative review: "I always thought that if you filled the hall and gave a good performance, you'd done your job." Succinctly succinct. But you're there, on the inside. What's it like?

JL: Scary at times, when you stop and consider that Jimmy is basically in control of 15 - 20,000 people.

CT: When did you start?

JL: My first time out was the 'Parrot Looks at Forty' tour in the summer of 1987. Our first stop was in Atlanta. We went several days early to rehearse, and coincidentally we set up at Center Stage Studio; I used to work there when I wasn't on the road with the Producers.

CT: What did you do there?

JL: I was part of the house crew. See, each venue has their own house crew. They unload/load the trucks, and we come in and set everything up. You can imagine the abuse I got when one night I'm part of the house crew and literally the next night, I'm with the band crew. My Atlanta buddies really gave me a hard way to go, "Where does this go JL, where does that go JL?"

CT: Just kidding though, of course.

JL: Oh yeah. Actually the first job I had on the road was to go to Wendy's and buy 50 cheeseburgers. That first year I was the "new guy", the third man on the pole. Third man on the lighting crew, sound crew and band crew. But it was good because I was involved in everything. Now, technically speaking, I'm the drum tech. The Coral Reefer crew has been the same for years. Going to practically the same venues each summer gives us a chance to see all of our old friends; members of the house crew.

CT: How is a typical performance set up?

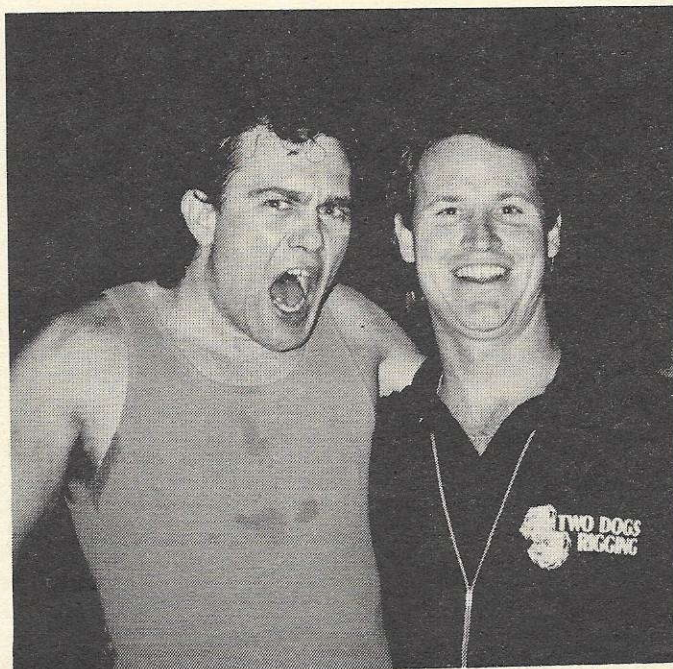
JL: First thing - eat. You figure we've just driven all night to the venue, once we're there the house crew unloads the trucks, we eat. The production manager, Joey Ciccoline, checks everything out; placing the set, lights, speakers, etc. The set, whether it's a ship or palm trees, can take a while to assemble. The lights go up, the sound is checked...

CT: And the Rolling Errors hit the stage.

JL: Yeah, right. After that, our job is done.

CT: Jackson Brown's 'Roadie' song, right?

JL: That's exactly it. My theme song.



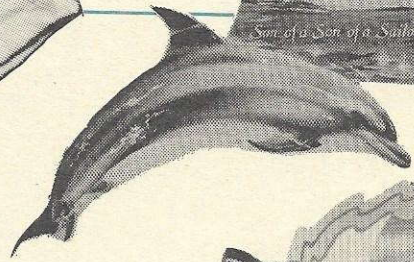
Fingers Taylor - JL

Continued on Page 6

MARGARITAVILLE SHORTS



SON OF A SAILOR



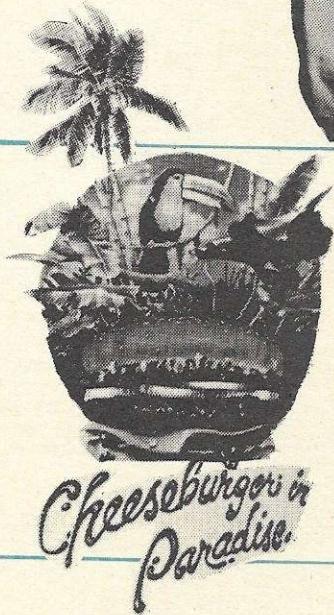
FINS



COTTON FLEECE SHIRT

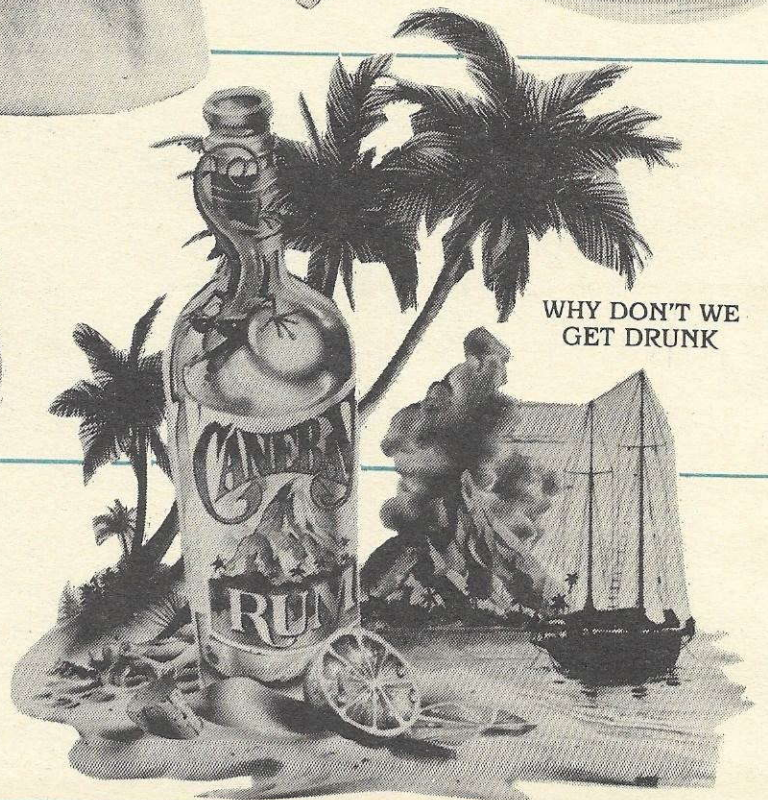


4



CHEESEBURGER
IN PARADISE

MARGARITAVILLE



WHY DON'T WE
GET DRUNK

*"The most in-demand clothing we get is from Jimmy Buffett. It's gone in two seconds. Those fans are really amazing."
Susie Coelho, Owner of Star Wears; a clothing store dealing only in the charitable resale of famous clothing.*

ANGES IN LATITUDE



**PERFECT
GRADUATION GIFT**

Parrot Head Pen & Pencil set. Guaranteed for life. \$30.00 for the set \$15.95 for individual pen. Sorry, pencil not sold separately.

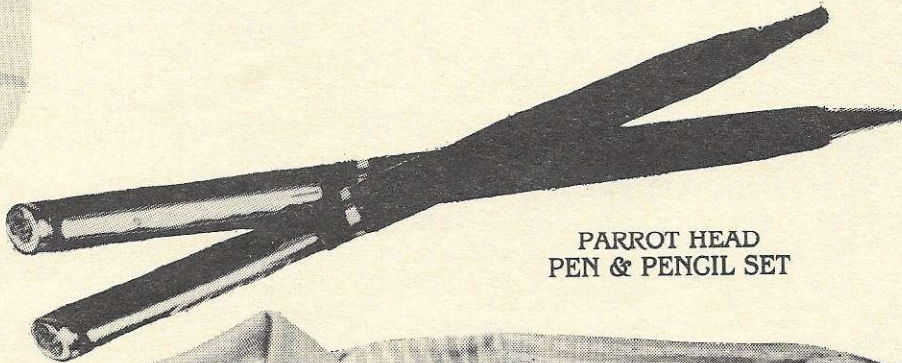
**MARGARITAVILLE
SHORTS**

100% Cotton Shorts. Features wide durable elastic waistband, satin stitched patch with Margaritaville logo, and 2 side pockets. Size S, M, L, XL. Available in White or Black. Some colors in smaller sizes, please call for availability. \$18.00

**NEW
MARGARITAVILLE
POLO STYLE SHIRTS**

Vertical Stripes accent this high quality 'outdoor impressions' polo shirt. Size S,M,L, & XL. Colors available: Peach collar/Embroidery-Mint Green Stripes, Blue collar/Embroidery-Grey Stripes, Green collar/Embroidery-Grey Stripes, Rose collar/Embroidery-Grey Stripes. \$30.00

PARROT HEAD
PEN & PENCIL SET



POLO
STYLE
SHIRTS



**NEW
COTTON FLEECE
SHIRT**

Bulky 100% Cotton Fleece With Embroidered Margaritaville Logo. Off shoulder sleeves supplement oversize design. Features include collar and banded wrists. Size L & XL only. Available in White, Yellow, Aqua, Navy, Peach or Grey \$36.00

**CARIBBEAN
SOUL DESIGN
T'SHIRTS**

100% Cotton crew neck t's inspired by Jimmy Buffett lyrics. Designs include: MARGARITAVILLE, CHANGES IN LATITUDE, CHEESEBURGER IN PARADISE, SON OF A SAILOR, FINS, CARIBBEAN SOUL CREST & WHY DON'T WE GET DRUNK. Available in White, Yellow, Blue, Pink, Peach or Mint. Size S, M, L & XL. \$13.95.

I'm not exactly a quiet guy. We were doing two shows somewhere, so we had the afternoon off. I was having a private party in the hotel pool, and Jimmy walks by. So I yell, "Hey Bubba, let's party!" Jimmy keeps walking, finds Ross Ritto, who's been with Jimmy for over 10 years, and asks, "Who brought this guy?" So my friend, Don Jarvis, had to wear a T-shirt that read I Brought JL."

CT: It goes without saying that the road is full of stories, right?

JL: Ralph McDonald once told me that when he was playing with Harry Belafonte he saw a bellman deck Frank Sinatra.

CT: DAA-OOOHH. But that's not the story I had in mind. I told Jimmy I was doing an interview with you and he said to mention the Yale Motel incident.

JL: I knew that would come up. I think we were in Cincinnati. We had been up all night "relaxing" on the bus. We got to the hotel and went up to

our rooms, when someone said that there was more beer on the bus. I went to the hotel lobby only to be told that the bus was in the parking garage a couple of blocks down the street. Once I found the garage, I went to the bus and loaded the beer into a pillowcase. So I'm in sweatpants, a T-shirt, with a pillowcase full of beer, I walk out of the garage, and I'm lost. Remember this is a big city, and we're downtown - lotta' buildings. Luckily I had the room key, but no name on it. So I began going from one hotel to the next, "Is this key to your hotel?" I walked around for a couple of hours, with a pillowcase full of beer over my shoulder, until I finally found the right hotel. Did I catch hell then.

CT: So was it the Yale Motel?

JL: No, Jimmy says that's the hotel I was looking for since it was a Yale key. (Yale is the brand name for keys & locks)

CT: How about clearing up something else. There seems

to be a great demand for backstage passes. What goes on backstage after the show?

JL: I don't understand what the big deal is. After the show Jimmy and the band literally run off the stage into a waiting limo, engine running. If not, they're stuck in traffic with everyone else. For all of you people dying for a backstage pass, you'll just be in my way. Maybe if we do two shows in the same city, or after the last show the band will hang around, but as a rule - they're gone.

CT: So am I, thanks JL.

Other comments concerning JL:

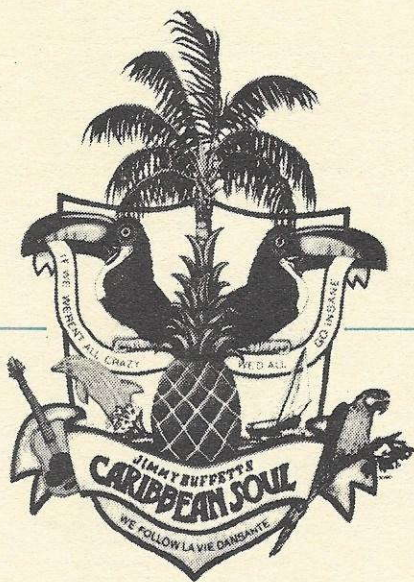
Michael Utley - "The man who brought Black Elvis to Margaritaville"

Fingers Taylor - "Great source of inspiration on the road. You can't be in a bad mood around JL, although he does get a little cranky when he is constipated."

Margaritaville Store staff - "WE LOVE YOU JL"



"Five dollars is very expensive for a newsletter that is not written by Buffett...I pay \$2.00 for an Arlo Guthrie newsletter that is written entirely by him." Rick Heyl, St. Louis. From a note included with \$5.00 subscription renewal.
Ed. note: You can get anything you want at Jimmy Buffett's restaurant



CARIBBEAN SOUL CREST



KEY WEST SCENE

Pastel colors dominate this fanciful look at Key West's waterfront. Bahamian style print available on white background only. One Size Fits All. \$18.00

COCONUT TELEGRAPH

Keep in touch with Key West and Margaritaville. The Coconut Telegraph is mailed six times a year. \$5.00 covers printing and postage. Outside U.S. \$10.00.

ORDERS TOTALING \$25.00 OR MORE GUARANTEES A YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION. SORRY, AVAILABLE TO U.S. CUSTOMERS ONLY.

MAIL ORDERS: Send check or money order to T-shirts, P.O. Box 1459, Key West, FL 33041. SORRY, NO C.O.D.'S

CREDIT CARD ORDERS; Call toll free 1-800-262-6835 Monday thru Friday, 9AM-5PM EST. \$10.00 MINIMUM CREDIT CARD ORDER.

TOLL FREE LINE FOR ORDERS ONLY PLEASE.

FAX # (305) 296-1084

ALL OTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL (305) 296-8981.

We accept overseas orders. Please send payment in U.S. dollars and double surface shipping/handling charges.

SHIPPING/HANDLING CHARGES: 3 items or less \$3.00, 4-6 items \$5.00, 7 or more items \$7.50. We ship via UPS. Florida residents please include 7% sales tax. Please allow 4 weeks for delivery.

1-800-COCOTEL

QTY	ITEM	SIZE	COLOR (3)	PRICE
SUB TOTAL				
We Accept VISA, MasterCard & American Express				Florida Residents only, add 7% sales TAX
				SHIPPING
				TOTAL
NAME				
ADDRESS				
CITY				
STATE		ZIP	PHONE	
CREDIT CARD NO.				EXP
CHECKNO.			SIGNATURE	

JIMMY'S JUMP UP 1990 SUMMER TOUR

JUNE 18 & 19	SAN DIEGO, CA	OPEN AIR AMPHITHEATRE
JUNE 21	*CONCORD, CA	PAVILLION
JUNE 22	*MTN. VIEW, CA	SHORELINE AMPHITHEATRE
JUNE 23	*HOLLYWOOD, CA	HOLLYWOOD BOWL
JUNE 24	*IRVINE, CA	IRVINE MEADOWS
JUNE 26 & 27	*DENVER, CO	RED ROCKS
JUNE 29	*GUYAHOGA FALLS, OH	BLOSSOM MUSIC CENTER
JUNE 30	*CHICAGO, IL	THE WORLD
JULY 1	*AUBURN HILLS, MI	THE PALACE
JULY 3	*PHILADELPHIA, PA	MANN MUSIC CENTER
JULY 6 & 7	*COLUMBIA, MD	MERRIWEATHER POST
JULY 8	*BRISTOL, CT	LAKE COMPOUNGE
JULY 10 & 11	*HOLMDEL, NJ	GARDEN STATE ART CENTER
JULY 13	#COLUMBUS, OH	CAPITAL MUSIC CENTER
JULY 14	#CHATTANOOGA, TN	LOOKOUT STADIUM
JULY 15	#WINSTON-SALEM, NC	GROVES STADIUM
JULY 20	#HILTON HEAD, SC	STADIUM
JULY 21	#CHARLOTTE, NC	MEMORIAL STADIUM
JULY 22	#WILLIAMSBURG, VA	GARY FIELD
JULY 26	MEMPHIS, TN	MUD ISLAND
JULY 27	#LOUISVILLE, KY	CARDINAL STADIUM
JULY 28	#BIRMINGHAM, AL	LAWSON STADIUM
JULY 29	#MOBILE, AL	LADD FIELD
JULY 31	*HOUSTON, TX	THE WOODLANDS
AUG 1	*DALLAS, TX	STARPLEX
AUG 3 & 4	*ATLANTA, GA	LAKEWOOD AMPHITHEATRE
AUG 5	*NASHVILLE, TN	STARWOOD AMPHITHEATRE
AUG 7 & 8	*GINGINNATI, OH	RIVERBEND AMPHITHEATRE
AUG 10	*PITTSBURGH, PA	STARLAKE
AUG 11	*INDIANAPOLIS, IN	DEER CREEK
AUG 12	*EAST TROY, WI	ALPINE VALLEY
AUG 14	*CANANDAIGUA, NY	FINGER LAKES
AUG 15	*WANTAUGH, NY	JONES BEACH
AUG 17 & 18	*MANSFIELD, MA	GREAT WOODS
AUG 19	*SARATOGA SPGS, NY	PERFORM ARTS CENTER

* Opening Act: Zachary Richard # Opening Act: Little Feat

8

The COCONUT TELEGRAPH

The MARGARITAVILLE STORE
P.O. BOX 1459, KEY WEST, FL 33041



MARGARITAVILLE VISOR

Colorful Margaritaville logo embroidered on a 100% cotton visor. Features terry cloth headband and is adjustable. \$10.00.

BULK RATE
POSTAGE AND
PERMIT NO. 225
KEY WEST, FL 33040

