

# The COCONUT TELEGRAPH

MARGARITAVILLE FEB 1988

VOLUME 4, NO. 2

## WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PERFECT MARGARITA? OMIGOD, IT'S ME!

By George "Lime Wedge" Murphy

It's Saturday night, December 12th, and Jimmy Buffett is officially going to open The Margaritaville Cafe. Parrot Heads from as far away as Texas, Ohio, Massachusetts, and California are cajoling our doorman, Skip "Mr. Clean" McGowan into letting them through the door. "I cooked dinner for Jimmy once," claims one, and "We went to different schools together," argues another.

Carpenters finished building the stage area this morning and J.L. Jamison, our sound man, has been running tests on the new \$18,000 sound system for tonight's show. Chef Ron "Chevron" Oldham has the kitchen, as well as the kitchen staff, fired up, cheeseburgers ready for paradise. The Waitron staff are ready and in their Reeboks.

Bartenders David "The Human Blender" Blinderman and Barbie "Doll" Geekie are behind the main bar and I have climbed the stairs to the balcony bar to overlook the high-ceilinged, pastel-colored club as well as the gathering excitement.

For months, we'd been watching the club take shape under the experienced and sleepless eye of manager Kevin Boucher: stairways and balconies launching themselves up the walls, the ceramic tile-covered bar gathering its mismatched colors, wooden ceiling fans dropping like DC-3 propellers from the ceiling, mismatched raspberry, turquoise, and pink chairs transforming the floor into a tropical bouquet of color, tin-roofed awnings over the bar and the wooden house trim on the walls transforming the interior of the club into a sort of backyard exterior. As the work progressed, I almost expected to see hammocks strung between the support posts.

At our staff meeting in the kitchen earlier in the

week, Jimmy had made his business (personal?) philosophy clear, "I work hard and I play hard," he had said. "Let's all do the same and have some fun here, What'd'ya say?"

After all the months of waiting, we were more than ready. Besides, who'd want to argue with a suggestion like that? Ironically, one week earlier, at the staff party on my houseboat, our collective tongues in our collective cheeks, we'd agreed on a staff motto and cheer: "No Fun!"

Were we ready for this night? Are we not Parrot Heads?

By 9:30 we were jammed and ready for more jammin'. Then in they came: Jimmy, Harpoon Man "Fingers" Taylor, percussionist Ralph MacDonald, Robert Greenidge on steel drums, and local favorite Woody Jenkins on lead guitar.

"When I started out playing bars in this town," Jimmy began, "all I wanted was enough money to buy a boat I could sail away on if success faded. The other alternative was to buy my own bar so I

so I could hire myself and just keep singing. Welcome to Margaritaville!" As Jimmy launched into two new songs from the upcoming album, something strange happened to the Parrot Heads in my vicinity: A bizarre, thirsty look glazed over their eyes. "MARGARITA, FROZEN, SALT" it seemed to say, "AND FOUR CORONAS."

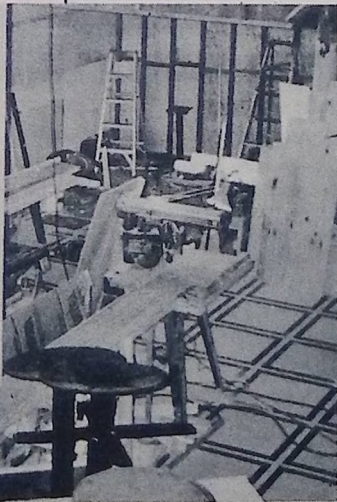
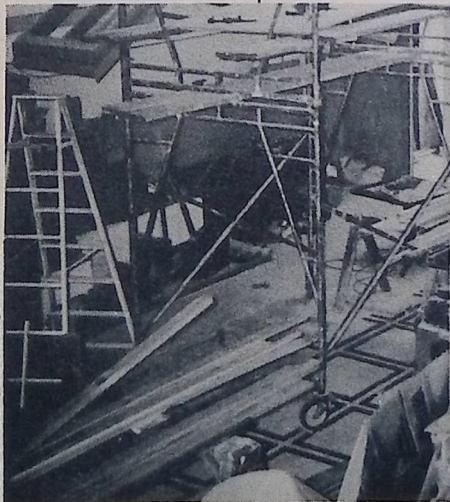
For the next four hours the singing continued, the party went on. But amid the chaos and rafter-shaking stomp, the only questions for me were, "How fast can my hands move between this blender and this cooler?" and, "Is my margarita OK?"

By 1 AM the blender was starting to overheat.

By 2 AM we'd run out of two kinds of beer and an angelic menage of "wasted away again" voices was clearly (?) articulating our favorite (and most profound) statement of philosophy and behaviorism: "But I know... it's my own damn fault." The whole damn party had,

Continued on back page.

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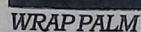
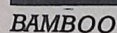
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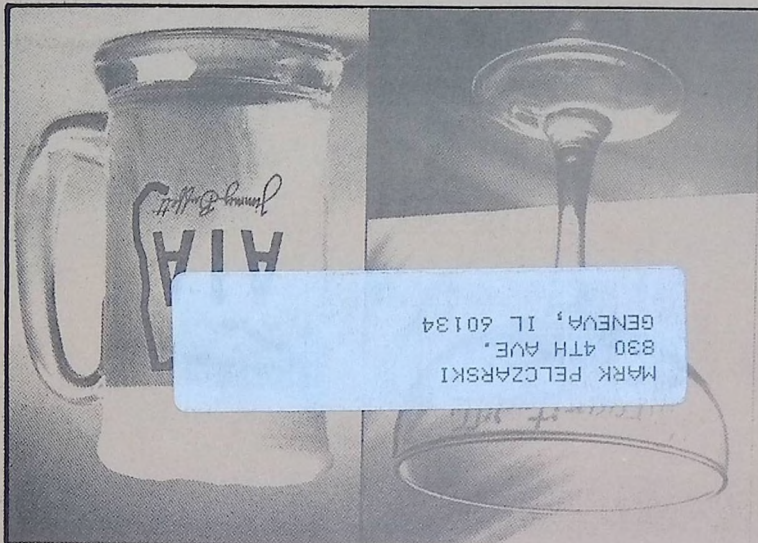
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## “OMIGOD.IT’S ME...”

in fact, been everybodys' fault

By 3 AM the crowd finally started to thin.

By 4 AM we had closed the doors, exhaled, passed hugs around, and finally had a chance to sit down ourselves for an opening night toast. I cranked the blender up one more time, sat back and tasted my own Margarita.

It was, well, I hate to admit it, PERFECT.

*George Murphy compiles Bantam Book's annual EDITOR'S CHOICE fiction anthologies, hosts the weekly TV talk show "Coconut Hotline" in Key West, and tends bar at The Margaritaville Cafe.*



GEORGE MURPHY & BARB GEEKIE Photo by Richard Watherwax

### SON OF "FINGERS"

Greg "Fingers" Taylor has at long last started work on his second LP this month. This album features Coral Reefers Tim Krekel and Michael Utley, as well as Texas Blues guitarist Anson Funderburgh; who also produced and performed on HARPOON MAN, Fingers' first album. The as yet untitled album was produced by Michael Utley and recorded in Key West at JB's Shrimp Boat Sound studio (CT Nov. '87). Blues fans who enjoyed Fingers first effort, can look forward to some "hard drivin' rock'n roll" sometime later this year.