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## Buffett tribute band brings beach to park

### Parrots of the Caribbean opens summer concert series

By James Grant of The News-Sentinel  
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Attention all Parrotheads or anyone else who happens to enjoy the music of Jimmy Buffett.

“Parrots of the Caribbean: A Salute to Jimmy Buffett” promises to be a particularly festive way to begin Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation’s summer concert series Friday night at Foellinger Theatre.

The show features Parrots of the Caribbean, a band that will perform the Caribbean-flavored music of Jimmy Buffett, the man who gave the world classic beach-friendly songs such as “Margaritaville,” “Cheeseburger in Paradise,” “Fins” and “Come Monday,” among others.

Dave Albrecht, who has performed Buffett’s music for 13 years, is the leader of Parrots of the Caribbean and says he’s more than a tribute performer.

“I’m not just tribute, I’m (a Jimmy Buffett) impersonator,” Albrecht said in a telephone interview. “We stick to the theme, we play very few songs that aren’t Jimmy Buffett. We throw a few of our own originals in. ... I love what I do. I don’t sit still on stage. I play the harmonica and it’s a show.”

Albrecht initially began his career as an impersonator more than 20 years ago by impersonating Elwood Blues, the character made famous by Dan Aykroyd, who was part of the Blues Brothers along with John Belushi.

A harmonica player since age 17, Albrecht found himself in a nine-piece show band playing harmonica to the music of the Blues Brothers and impersonating the Elwood character from 1990 to 2000.

In 2000, he hit upon the idea of impersonating Buffett, who had a much bigger fan base than the Blues Brothers, and he’s had tremendous success since that time traveling around the world performing with Parrots of the Caribbean.

He’s also built up quite a following in Indiana where there are a lot of Parrotheads, the term that’s used to describe Buffett’s legions of loyal fans.

“I’m playing 60 shows a year and I play all over the country,” Albrecht said. “We were in Japan last year. I’ve been to Calgary Stampede (in Calgary, Alberta). I’ve been up there three or four times. We’re in Virginia, New York ... and I have a lot of shows in Indiana.

“There are pretty religious followers (of Buffett) around Indiana. In 13 years I’ve probably played 50 cities in Indiana ... at 54 I never quit my day job but I make good money at this and this is how I got ahead in life by being an impersonator.”

Albrecht says one of the things he enjoys most about performing Buffett’s music is the chance to highlight his harmonica playing, which is featured in some of Buffett’s most popular songs.

“Since I play the harmonica, it’s really weird because everybody gives me credit for sounding just like Buffett and looking like him but nobody ever comes up to me and says man you play the harp just like (Greg) ‘Fingers’ Taylor (who was Buffett’s harmonica player for several years),” Albrecht said.

“That’s the only reason I started listening to Buffett is because of the harmonica player,” Albrecht said. “A Pirate Looks at Forty’ is my favorite (song to perform) because I do my own little solo harp in that one and it’s like I created the whole thing by myself.

“It’s the sweetest, softest song,” Albrecht said. “And everybody’s real quiet and they can hear every note on the harmonica because they’re not wailing and it’s a quiet song and you’re supposed to sit and listen.”

Albrecht says the crowd actually becomes the show at Parrots of the Caribbean performances.

Because he focuses more on the music and less on stage chatter, and because his band is so good, Albrecht feels audiences get more involved in his shows and get a concert experience similar to Buffett’s, and that keeps his audiences coming back year after year.

“We are considered the No. 1 Buffett band in the country,” Albrecht said. “I’ll put it (Parrots of the Caribbean) up against any band.”



#### More Information

**AUDIO INTERVIEW WITH PARROTS OF THE CARIBBEAN SINGER DAVE ALBRECHT**

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#### BEACH PARTY

**What:** “Parrots of the Caribbean: A Salute to Jimmy Buffett”

**When:** 8 p.m. Friday

**Where:** Foellinger Theatre, 3411 Sherman Blvd.

**Cost:** \$10. For more information or to order tickets by phone, call the Foellinger Theatre at 427-6000. Tickets are available by telephone with a credit card or at the parks department office, 705 E. State Blvd. Call 427-6000 or 427-6715 day of show to purchase wheelchair-accessible tickets and companion tickets.

