



Nestled among the multitude of Fishers, Indiana's city streets, this one in the Connor Knoll subdivision is a small "U" shaped street named "Buffett Parkway."

Yes, its namesake is Jimmy Buffett.

I thought I'd share how that naming came about with Jimmy's recent passing. My name's John L. Cox and I was a member of the Fishers Police Department from 1984 to 1999; when I started, there were only three of us, if you can imagine that. I was a steadfast Parrot Head, a lover of Jimmy, his music, and the carefree, tropical lifestyle that naturally comes with it.

In the 1980s, Hamilton County was experiencing tremendous growth, and eventually, revamping the 911 dispatch system became necessary. As part of that evolution, no new street names in the county could exist that were exactly alike.

Walt Knaepple worked for our Development Department, and he was always bringing in maps of new planned subdivisions within the then-town. I made fun of some of the names but understood the task of coming up with unique street names, especially since the entire county was exploding with growth.

I began to kid Walt about naming a street Jimmy Buffett Street or something with Buffett in it.

## ***BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR***

One day, Walt walked into the PD, stopped, smiled, and exclaimed, “Buffett Parkway!” I was sitting right there and, with a puzzled look, asked, “What?” “Buffett Parkway. You wanted a street named after him. Corby’s a fan, and he said why not? So Buffett Parkway’s in the planning stages as we speak,” Walt explained.

Corby Thompson was one of Fishers’ biggest developers at the time.

## ***MY MISSION***

To say I was thrilled doesn’t begin to describe how I felt. I thanked Walt profusely and knew I had a mission to accomplish. If there was going to be a real street in Fishers named after Jimmy, he had to be presented with the first street sign. That’s what you do in those circumstances.

Back then, Sunshine Promotions was the concert promoter in Indy – they built the Deer Creek Music Center – and their offices were on Allisonville Road across from the cemetery. It had just been announced that Jimmy would be playing a couple of dates there – this is now 1991 – in August.

I dropped off a letter addressed to Dave Lucas and Steve Sybesma, Sunshine’s owners, explaining the street name was the real deal and asking if it would be possible to present Jimmy with the first “Buffett Parkway” street sign before one of the shows.

A few days later, I received a phone call from Marilyn Stafford, Sunshine’s Ticket Manager, who told me Dave thought it was a great idea and that she’d handle the details. She also offered me front-row seats to both of his shows that year.

I still remember exactly where I was when I got that call.

This all occurred in late Spring of that year, so I had a couple of months to think about it. And to order the sign itself.

## ***A DREAM COME TRUE***

Finally, on August 11th, 1990, my wife and I were whisked back on a golf cart by Dave Lucas himself, given “all access” backstage passes, and escorted to the green room at Deer Creek.

After a bit, we were escorted to the little patio outside Jimmy’s Airstream trailer in the back lot and told we’d do the presentation there. Then it was back to the green room, the sign tucked under my arm once again. My nervousness grew by the minute.

After a few minutes, Jimmy walked in; I shook his hand and presented him with the first “Buffett Parkway” street sign. I told him it was on behalf of all of his Hoosier Parrot Heads. Jimmy grinned and said it was the first street ever named after him and added, “You’d think it would be in Florida, huh?” Jimmy seemed genuinely touched by the presentation and announced during the show, “They named a street after me in Fishers, Indiana!”

That sign proudly hangs on the staircase in the Margaritaville Café in Key West to this day.

### ***August 11, 1990 - Deer Creek Music Center Indianapolis, IN***



***Picture copied from a Poloroid.  
I will never live down the fact that I didn't put my hand  
up on the sign - presenting it to Jimmy.***

## ***AN UNEXPECTED BLESSING***

I was very blessed by the presentation as it led to more hang-outs and interactions with Jimmy over the years, a few that featured some real conversations with him. Jimmy Buffett was a natural, approachable, likable, and very down-to-earth person.

There may be other streets named after Jimmy now, but Jimmy himself said "Buffett Parkway" was the first.