

CHRISTMAS 2024



This year's CD, (#27!), marks another festive favorite — even though it wasn't originally intended as a holiday song . As usual, you'll need to give it a listen to figure out the song, but if you're looking for clues, check out the cover graphic. *Hint: it's straight from the lyrics, not the title.* It's also our first Christmas CD to offer up two versions by the same artist — because who can get enough of Tony Bennett?

Quick rewind to catch up: 2022's Christmas letter ended with a cliffhanger as Cary & Christy geared up to move to Florida after her dad's passing. That plan unraveled thanks to a topsy-turvy housing market and a detour when her mom relocated to Virginia instead. By summer 2023, Adam stepped down as General Manager sat Buffa's. Cary & Christy took the reins and steered the business back from the brink — no small feat.

Concerning Buffa's, we're thrilled to say this year's busy season (January to May) was a success, and though we just barely scraped through the summer, we're still standing. Like many restaurants in New Orleans, we've had to adapt — locals aren't hitting the scene as they used to. Now, we do our best to maximize when tourists are in town and batten down the hatches in quieter months. It's our new normal, for better or worse.

Big news: as of January 1, 2025, Cary & Christy will officially own Buffa's. Chuck, Janis, Adam, and Jarret will no longer be owners but will stay on for now as employees. The decision was shaped by rising costs and the need to keep Buffa's afloat. While not exactly what we imagined, we're hopeful it'll bring less stress and more peace. And we're all in on making sure Cary & Christy succeed.

On the personal front, aging has brought its fair share of surprises. Chuck dealt with severe nerve pain in his neck for over a year but found relief in August after disk replacement surgery. He's pain-free now — a win for both him and Janis since it's done wonders for his mood. Janis also underwent wrist surgery to tackle arthritis, and she's back in the swing of things, a little less pained and a lot more stylish with her helmet, cane, and walking sticks. (Those of you "of a certain age" may want to pay careful attention to the lyrics on track #13.)



Hopscotch

Our friend Ford, you'll remember, bought a boat in Sturgeon Bay, WI and began the Great Loop journey. He docked in Mobile, AL earlier this year but the marina told him he would have to move the boat if there was a named storm in the gulf (which there was — more than one as a matter of fact). So Chuck helped him move it to Madisonville, LA on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain, where he can check on it as needed. The boat is too big to trailer, and at a top speed of about 8mph, the trip from Mobile to Madisonville took 4 days. Hurricane Francine swept over it, but the boat came out unscathed thanks to the protection at the new marina. He plans to resume his voyage in January.

Chuck and Janis made their yearly trek to Chicago, then whisked grandniece Alex and her friend Audrey to New Orleans Trad Jazz Camp. In July we made our way to Mobile, AL, where we spent time in "Old Mobile" charmed

with shops and restaurants, then had a fantastic visit to the GulfQuest National Maritime Museum.

For Janis' October birthday, we headed to Oxford, MS, soaked in some Faulkner lore, hit up every bookstore, and caught up with good friends Dave Woolworth and Amy King. (Dave, our sound engineer during the noise ordinance debacle at Buffa's, remains a legend in our book.)



*Wm. Faulkner's Home Rowan Oak
Oxford, MS*



Adam and Kasey are holding steady. Kasey's still at Coop's Place, and their boys, Benjamin (11, in 6th grade) and Henry (6, in 1st grade), wowed us at their piano recital this year. Adam plays ragtime piano Fridays at Buffa's and volunteers playing piano at a local hospital once a week, keeping his love for music alive.

Jarret's making strides, too. He's focused on his health, lost weight, and is tackling some dental issues after years of Coke (the drink, not the other kind). He's downsizing and temporarily moving in with us while he saves up to find a new place.

As for the holidays, we are gathering with friends for Thanksgiving, while Cary & Christy host a holiday party at Buffa's for employees and those in need of cheer.

And as we always say: When are you coming to visit? Don't wait – we'd love to see you – it really is one of our favorite things!

The Rogers Family