

Dealing with Loss

Recently, someone on reddit wrote the following heartfelt plea online. "My friend just died. I don't know what to do."

Many people responded. Then there's one old guy's incredible comment that stood out from the rest that might just change the way we look at life and death:

"Alright, here goes. I'm old. What that means is that I've survived (so far) and a lot of people I've known and loved did not. I've lost friends, best friends, acquaintances, co-workers, grandparents, mom, relatives, teachers, mentors, students, neighbors, and a host of other folks. I have no children, and I can't imagine the pain it must be to lose a child. But here's my two cents.

"I wish I could say you get used to people dying. I never did. I don't want to. It tears a hole through me whenever somebody I love dies, no matter the circumstances. But I don't want it to "not matter".

"I don't want it to be something that just passes. My scars are a testament to the love and the relationship that I had for and with that person. And if the scar is deep, so was the love. So be it. Scars are a testament to life. Scars are a testament that I can love deeply and live deeply and be cut, or even gouged, and that I can heal and continue to live and continue to love. And the scar tissue is stronger than the original flesh ever was. Scars are a testament to life. Scars are only ugly to people who can't see.

"As for grief, you'll find it comes in waves. When the ship is first wrecked, you're drowning, with wreckage all around you. Everything floating around you reminds you of the beauty and the magnificence of the ship that was, and is no more. And all you can do is float. You

find some piece of the wreckage and you hang on for a while. Maybe it's some physical thing. Maybe it's a happy memory or a photograph. Maybe it's a person who is also floating. For a while, all you can do is float. Stay alive.

"In the beginning, the waves are 100 feet tall and crash over you without mercy. They come 10 seconds apart and don't even give you time to catch your breath. All you can do is hang on and float. After a while, maybe weeks, maybe months, you'll find the waves are still 100 feet tall, but they come further apart. When they come, they still crash all over you and wipe you out. But in between, you can breathe, you can function. You never know what's going to trigger the grief. It might be a song, a picture, a street intersection, the smell of a cup of coffee. It can be just about anything...and the wave comes crashing. But in between waves, there is life.

"Somewhere down the line, and it's different for everybody, you find that the waves are only 80 feet tall. Or 50 feet tall. And while they still come, they come further apart. You can see them coming. An anniversary, a birthday, or Christmas, or landing at O'Hare. You can see it coming, for the most part, and prepare yourself. And when it washes over you, you know that somehow you will, again, come out the other side. Soaking wet, sputtering, still hanging on to some tiny piece of the wreckage, but you'll come out.

"Take it from an old guy. The waves never stop coming, and somehow you don't really want them to. But you learn that you'll survive them. And other waves will come. And you'll survive them too. If you're lucky, you'll have lots of scars from lots of loves. And lots of shipwrecks."

Patria McKenzie



Rest in Peace

We thought of you with love today,
But that is nothing new.
We thought about you yesterday,
And days before that too.
We think of you in silence,
We often speak your name.
Now all we have is memories,
And your picture in a frame.
Your memory is our keepsake,
With which we'll never part.
God has you in his keeping,
We have you in our hearts.

Ocean Life 2018 Series



The Ocean Life series brings renowned researchers and academics to the Keys to educate, entertain, and inspire audiences of all ages. Hosted by Florida International University's School of Environment, Arts and Society and the Friends of the Key Largo Cultural Center, the series features interdisciplinary experts from FIU and the Keys. This series is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Linda Kaplan at linda@fklcc.org or (305) 396-7000, or visit merc.fiu.edu. Photo by Jeffrey Cale.

Friday, January 19, 2018

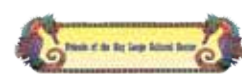
Friday, April 20, 2018

Impact of Fisheries on Marine Mammal Populations: Are Extinctions Inevitable?

Jeremy Kiszka, Ph.D.

6:00 p.m. Meet and Greet • 7:00 p.m. Lecture

Murray E. Nelson Government and Cultural Center
102050 Overseas Hwy. (MM 102) Key Largo, FL 33037



Sounds of the Keys



During a show at Gilberts, the Coconut Cowboys inspire a young boy to play in a band someday. Photo by Rob LeBrun.



The Coconut Cowboy with Taylor King Band at the American Legion.



The Copper Tones entertain at Bayside Grille. Photo by Angel Chambers DiGiorgio.



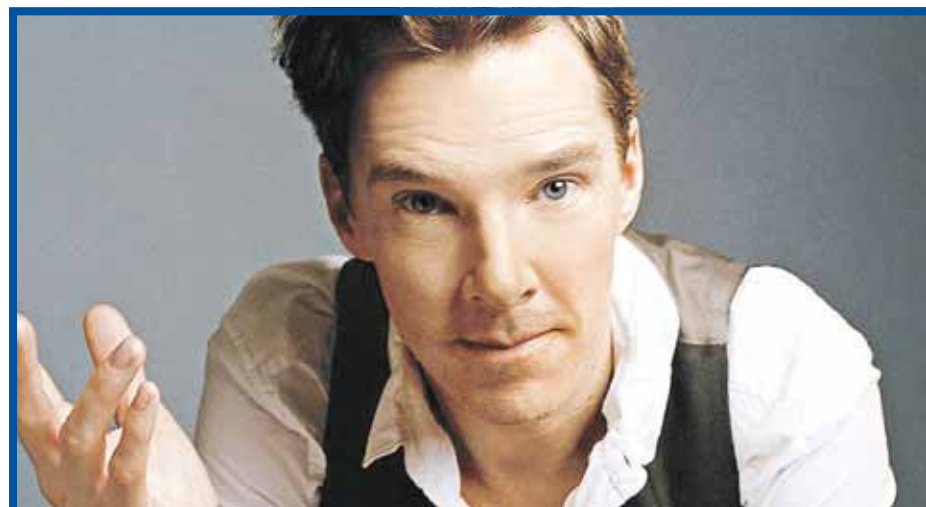
JC Costello joins the Thursday jam at American Legion. Photo by Video Dave.



Young or old....Mr Nice Guy rocks everyone at Gilbert's. Photo by Rob LeBrun.



A young lady from the audience helps the band Main Street perform at Gilbert's. Photo by Rob LeBrun.



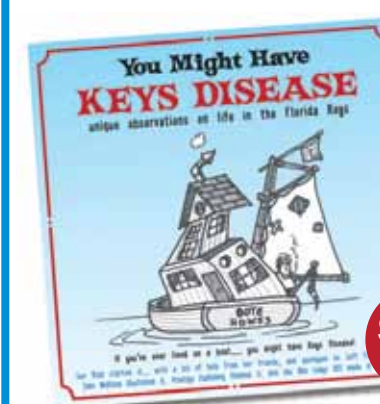
What's Your Benedict Cumberbatch Name?

First letter of your first name

- A Blubberbutt
- B Benedict
- C Benadryl
- D Benchthis
- E Bonapart
- F Brokenbrick
- G Boppinstick
- H Benefit
- I Scissorskick
- J Backitup
- K Beezlebub
- L Burgerking
- M Blenderdick

Last letter of your last name

- A Calldispatch
- B Comedimismatch
- C Cunningscratch
- D Cumberfinch
- E Humperdinck
- F Lumberlatch
- G Flubbercrack
- H Cumberbatch
- I Bandersnatch
- J Cuttlefish
- K Slumberbelch
- L Cupboardlatch
- M Combyourthatch
- N Thundermunch
- O Cricketbat
- P Johnnycash
- Q Comelycat
- R Custardbath
- S Thundercats
- T Numbercrunch
- U Luckycatch
- V Covertrack
- W Uptoscratch
- X Compasstrap
- Y Chunkybab
- Z Candygram



"You Might Have KEYS DISEASE"

Buy a book and find out!

Book sales benefit the Musician's Relief Fund in the Upper Keys

\$10

This 32-page book was created in the spirit of poking fun at our life here in the Florida Keys.

Written by Sue Beal with a little help from her friends, it was illustrated by the late John McKinna, a syndicated cartoonist.

The book was published and made available for sale so that the proceeds could help local musicians and their families.

Gilberts Resort funded the printing of the first edition, so all proceeds from the sale of this book will be used to help musicians in need.

Here in the Keys, we enjoy the music of so many talented, world-class musicians. Even as our community enjoys the fruits of their labors, we know the musicians have little to spare and have no safety net for when disaster strikes and they cannot work.

Our musicians are the first to sign up to make a community fundraiser or benefit a success.

Books are on sale at:

These locations also accept donations, or you can send a check to the Musician's Relief Fund, B.P.O.E. Elks Lodge PO Box 255, Tavernier, FL 33070-0255

Centennial Bank, Key Largo 100280 Overseas Hwy

Centennial Bank, Islamorada 81541 Old Highway

BPOE Elks Lodge, Tavernier 92600 Overseas Hwy

Jules Underseas Lodge, Key Largo MM 103.2, 51 Shoreland Drive