



ONE SHOW AT A TIME

~ Who We Are ~

Summer 2017

The Wharf Rats are a group of concert-goers who have chosen to live drug and alcohol free. Our primary purpose at shows is to make ourselves available to anyone who feels we may have something they want. We don't tell others how to attend their show. We offer clean and sober support, strength, fellowship and hope. We are not affiliated with Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous nor any other twelve-step group. We are a group of friends sharing a common bond, providing support, information and some traction in an otherwise slippery environment.

Look for the yellow balloons, signs and the Wharf Rats information table.

~ Dedicated to the loving memory of Alex Wilfert.

*A Wharf Rat from Indianapolis Indiana. It's all he ever wanted to be...and more.*

It's summertime again -- at last! It's time break out the flowing skirts and sandals and fill the air with sweet patchouli and burning sweet white sage -- and the sounds and music of the Grateful Dead, and all of the band's children and grandchildren.

Where there is music, we will follow.

Weir bound together by two simple threads: Our love of the Grateful Dead, and our belief you don't need dope to dance. We gather at shows, all sorts of shows, always drawn to colorful, magical yellow balloons like musical beacons of flame.

Yes, we know Jerry's Gone ("Ain't never coming back again"). But we have discovered this beautiful music is far too powerful and rich to be defined by one single personality and held only in the talented hands of one man.

That's why today you'll find us at dozens of venues, large and small, spread across the world, shaking our bones to the live musical interpretations of Dead-spawned songs. There's Dead & Company, Phil & Friends, DSO, JRAD and countless other bands and people who carry on -- and move forward -- the musical traditions.

We realize we are different, in so many ways. Other bands have imitators - "tribute" acts who seek to capture and cash in on another's band's legacy, like standing in front of a crazy carnival sideshow mirror. The Grateful Dead stands alone, as an ever-expanding creative universe. That's how the Boys felt originally, way back when it all

started and the bus began rolling. No song was ever "finished" or "perfect." There are always more rhythms to explore, many musical roads not yet traveled. When a musician climbs aboard a Grateful Dead song, he or she is actually becoming one with the tune and steering toward the stars, taking the experience to a new and different place. The words and music then become intertwined with that artist's soul, and take on a new life with a limitless variety of results. This music is too good, means too much to too many people, to be put on a shelf behind glass where it can only be admired. We know John Mayer will never be Jerry. We never expected him to be that. Nor did we expect John K., Warren H., Steve K., Jimmy H. or anyone else to take his place. You don't replace Jerry. You can hear his voice and his laughter: "Replace me? C'mon, man, get real."

The evolution and constant growth of the music is a perfect fit -- a fitting home -- for the Wharf Rats and all souls seeking sanity and solace in a chaotic world. As we grow and change with our experiences, we see ourselves living and thriving in this music. It's our experience, strength and hope. It's our safety in numbers. We have learned, many times over, there is no perfection -- only progress.

There's a whole generation now that has climbed aboard the Bus since Jerry passed in 1995. Jerry is idolized and has earned revered status -- but it's because he will always

sing sweetly to us and speak to our souls. The dancing didn't stop in 1995. It was never meant to stop. Now we can dance carefree, sharing our stories of experience, strength and hope while thriving in our sober lifestyle. We have built an Unbroken Chain across and up and down that slippery slope. We celebrate our victories. We cry for souls lost in defeat. We offer rock-solid support for those who teeter on the edge. We have incredible strength in numbers. We are everywhere. I've seen hundreds of Wharf Rats join at set break under those yellow balloons, at venues across our country. Our Daddy has his family roots in Thailand, but he brings his heart and soul on every tour and owns a palace on Shake-down Street. We are here for each other. We are here for the souls who still suffer and have yet to find our light. Reach your arms out wide this year. Show people what we're all about, Sisters and Brothers. We are the Wharf Rats -- we ain't got no dime, but we got some time to hear your story. And we always have today.



LOOK FOR THE YELLOW BALLOONS!!



Chuck the Wharf Rat! May/2016

Yep... there I was as usual, standing up against the chest high structure separating the GA /orchestra/dance floor /section of the Capital Theater in Port Chester NY. Not so far removed from the Wharf Rat information table. It was a Rat Dog show during the early spring run of 2014 when, a clean-cut young man who didn't appear to be a Dead Head or even a wanna be. The young man approached me and said "Sir, do you mind if I ask you a few questions?"

When this happens to me and unfortunately it happens often enough I am somewhat flattered that someone is respecting my age but also unfortunately at the same time it makes me feel ancient. So of course, I said I didn't mind and he introduced himself as a Columbia University Graduate Student pursuing his Masters in Journalism.

The student went on to explain that he was assigned to do a magazine format type article regarding how music and culture can be inter-related and inter-twined. Cultures can create music associated with that culture just as Music can create its own culture. We see that there is a specific culture associated with Techno, Rap, Folk, Classical and Disco genres and defiantly with our beloved Grateful Dead scene.

So, the student said to me that I look like a seasoned veteran who is more than likely qualified to enlighten him on the genesis of the Dead and went on to ask me what attracted me to the Grateful Dead. Well, as most of my friends already know is that I don't have too many short stories and most of my stories start at genesis. So, I proceeded to enlighten him to my personal history and the 50-year history of the Grateful Dead.

That's how he came up with the title for his article "Parallel Lies" Well, who could really talk at a show, because you know to "Shut to F\_\_ Up" when Bobby plays! So, he asked for my phone number and called me some days later to hear my saga and the lore surrounding the "Dead".

Unfortunately, the drug culture of the

1960's surrounded the Grateful Dead and the Grateful Dead surrounded the drug culture. In retrospect that association that the "Dead" had with the drug culture is what attracted me to the "Grateful Dead". Yes, and a combination of the "Dead" & "Drug" & "Recovery" cultures is what attracted me to "The Wharf Rat's".

I basically moved away from being a "Dead Head" through the "1980's" because my addictions and life got in the way. I kind of resurfaced in the mid "90s" to the fold a little prior to Jerry's passing with some clean time under my belt. It was fall of 1994, at a show at Madison Sq. Garden is where and when I was initially introduced to the "Wharf Rats". I was already on tour with recovery but until then I did not know that a self-help recovery group was in existence for "Dead Heads" who were also pursuing recovery. I was also aware at that time that an actual self help style "Wharf Rat" meeting existed on Long Island in NY, not far from my home.

Unfortunately, after Garcia's demise there wasn't a whole lot going on with shows in general and at the same time I was pursuing a new career in Chemical Dependency Counseling in which I worked a lot of evening hours which precluded my attendance at the existing "Save Your Face" Wharf Rat Meeting.

Let's turn the clock ahead to 2009/2010 with the "Dead" touring and the inception of "Furthur" I started going to more shows and as fate had it I was dismissed from my position with the treatment provider that predominantly required me to work evenings. At last my nights were freed up where I had the freedom to go to more shows and self help meetings, especially finding my way to the Tuesday night Wharf Rat meeting.

Do you know the feeling when you finally get at home and "sit down to patch your bones"? Well that's how I felt when I finally got to the "Save Your Face" meeting out in East Norwich NY. I felt right at home as if I was in the middle of a venue with all my friends, how cool is it to go to meetings with "Dead Heads" wearing Tye Dye and colorful clothes and scarves and The Grateful Dead soundtrack of our lives playing in the background.

And, What I really liked about the meeting was that there was no redundancy due to the lack of a 12 step-meeting format. No readings at the beginning middle or end of the meeting...No one droning out a boring been there, done that qualification. Cut right to the chase sharing from the heart,

keeping it in the now. To me it was making my recovery process complete because of the kind of identification I needed to really develop positive social support to enhance my continued road to my recovery and destiny. If you would like to read more about my experience with the "Dead" and my recovery, check out the link below!

<https://readymag.com/u63898308/30518>

## ONE SHOW AT A TIME

My name is Mike and, I'm an alcoholic. I am Grateful to be alive & most Grateful to be a WharfRat! I went to my 1st Dead show on 3/31/1986 at Providence Civic Center. It changed my life. I only went to 10-12 shows between 1986 and 1990 when I first got sober. (5/26/90.) I first found the table in fall of 1991 at Boston Garden shows. I always felt a bit awkward, socially when I first got sober, especially when going to shows, where I knew staying sober would be a challenge. I had no idea that there were people like me still going to shows, and staying sober. I found the table while just roaming around the Garden and, although I don't remember exactly who I met that first night, I'm sure it was either Don B or Tony T, possibly both of them. There couldn't have been anymore than 7-10 of us at meetings at set break, but it changed my life. I had found exactly what I needed to be able to stay sober and continue to go to shows. There were people who loved The Dead, went to shows, and stayed sober, and they weren't all 70 years old! (I was 20 years old and sober in AA, there weren't many young guys back then.) Over the next 10-12 years, in between work, starting family, and life in general, I went to many, many shows and never went to a show without checking in at the table as soon as I was in venue and going to the meeting at set break, never. I picked up after nearly 12 years sober and turned my back on my WR family. Whenever I went to a show I found out where the table was and stayed as far away as possible. I hated myself! Imagine that, I felt horrible that I would go to shows drinking and using and the guilt and remorse that I felt was unbearable. I was out there drinking for more than 10 years. I have now been sober for 4+ years and I am so very Grateful to have the opportunity to live a sober life again. One of the things that is different this time is, I am trying to really get to know people that I meet at the table and at meetings at set break. The last time I never got close to anyone. I have been to 100's of Wharf Rat meetings and I never got close to any people, I was always on the outskirts.



I could not have continued to go to shows, sober, without every single Wharf Rat I have met along the way. While at the Chicago Fare Thee Well shows last July my girlfriend (also a Wharf Rat) and I were on the stairs at set break meeting looking down at the 100's of fellow Wharf Rats attending the set break meeting when I got goosebumps and tears in my eyes. Wow, we have come a long way since I began this journey in 1991, when there were maybe 10 of us at meetings in the early 90's. Thank you Don B, Tony T & Kristen T. From the bottom of my heart, Thank You!! Because of the Wharf Rats I can "Keep on Keepin' On", One Show At A Time! I don't have any earth shattering stories to tell, just my experience through the years, and to me, the Wharf Rats are "The Greatest Story Ever Told"

And there's nothing left for me to do but Smile, Smile, Smile!

Peace, Mike C



March 30, 1989, I was on a path of total self-destruction; living a very self-centered, dangerous lifestyle. I lived a few blocks from the Greensboro Coliseum and my new boyfriend mentioned a band was coming and the lot would be a non-stop party. I headed over to continue my self-destruction. I accomplished that goal but that trip to the lot became more than just another way to score, it marked the moment I began to understand I was 'the eyes of the world.'

I had a ticket and stumbled inside and immediately fell in love, like oh so many others, with the Grateful Dead! It's no exaggeration to say the Dead saved my life! I'd found the home I had been seeking - a place of love, peace and serenity. After that show, I was firmly on the bus. Who couldn't be after Brent asked everyone to hold up their fist, open it and share love with the world!!!!???? I'd always been a spiritual seeker and I'd finally found my church!

I jumped on tour and saw as many shows as I could before my use landed me in rehab months later. I'd love to say I became a Wharf Rat then, however that's not my story. I was too willful, believing I could handle myself since I 'only had a problem with coke and would only use psychedelics, weed, and alcohol going forward.' I got out of rehab one week before The Warlocks played Hampton

Coliseum, still to this day one of my more memorable shows. "Strangers stopping strangers, just to shake their hands," the music transported everyone inside to another dimension during those two shows!! Just a short nine months later, I'd break-down as Brent's death was announced. .

The next six years was a whirlwind of touring and trying to figure out my place in the world. The Grateful Dead's music had inspired me to care about my fellow man and my world. I began to recycle, sounds funny but before I didn't give a shit about anything much less my trash. I became involved in social justice issues, which led me, in my late 20's, to go to college; a huge thing since I'd barely graduated high school. I started trying to be a good person vs. a leach on society. But the drugs and alcohol were still my constant companion as was the guy who introduced me to my first show.

I was living in Myrtle Beach when Jerry died. The scene died for a while and I was lost. I threw myself into becoming an 'adult', thinking that would fill the emptiness inside. This was a time before cell phones and Facebook and, due to our nomadic lifestyles, I lost touch with many of the people I'd met on the lot. Some went to jail, others had mail returned 'undeliverable', and my best friend committed suicide during one of her drunken binges. None of this changed my behavior. If anything, it gave me an excuse to keep using. I tried controlling my use, my boyfriend's use, but always failed. I blamed everyone around me for my unhappiness. I tried geographic cure after geographic cure, not realizing I always brought myself along with me. Every time I moved I thought, "This is it. This is the place where I'll finally be happy." My boyfriend and I continued using heavily, isolating ourselves, attending shows/festivals only if we could get in free since our money was now being spent to keep up our lifestyle of active addiction. Addiction had taken over my love for music.

Still, the Grateful Dead's music paved a path for me to have a career in social justice non-profit field. They showed me a new way to live, a path that was kind, loving, and spiritual, and I'd embraced that way of life. Unfortunately my inability to stop using, (I'd added pills by now), kept my life unmanageable. By 2013, I was tired of fighting, tired of trying to control everything and everyone around me. My life quickly burned to the ground. We lost our jobs, our house was close to foreclosure, and, by May 2014, our 25 year relationship ended, each blaming the other's addiction. I lived out of my car, couch surfed, in bars by

10 am, heading back to things I swore I'd never do again. September 8, 2015 I finally admitted I was powerless and my life was unmanageable.

2 days later I headed to Lock'n by myself. Full of anxiety, I pulled into my Sober Camping site and hung my white key tag on the tent zipper. Angie D. introduced herself and me to the Wharf Rats and the Rat Girls. Her kindness and love I'll never be able to repay. I'd been so fearful I'd never be able to go to shows or festivals again, which I knew wasn't an option. Angie was a living example that it could be done. I was welcomed into a ready-made family with open arms and unconditional love. Thank You Wharf Rats!! You saved me too!

Since September 2015 my life has been a miracle, every day! I've met so many wonderful friends on-line, Dead & Co. and other shows. A special shout-out to The Rat Girls. I wouldn't be living the life I have today without their unconditional love and support!! LOVE YOU MY SISTERS!!

I'd never imagined living without drugs and alcohol. Today, I hate it took me so long. I caught the Dead & Co. shows on the east coast and have my tickets for that same leg again this summer. I have a strong network of Wharf Rats and always have someone to go with to shows. Paying it back, I've worked the table at String Cheese and Dark Star and started a Yellow Balloon Group in my hometown so others can experience the unconditional love and acceptance of Wharf Rats and know we can be clean and still dance our asses off.

May 2017, I was at a work conference in San Francisco. I'd connected with Wharf Rat Courtney P. who drove me to Terrapin Crossroads. Phil wasn't supposed to play but at the last moment that changed. Phil took the stage at 4:20, along with 3 others, and played to a small audience, which included me. Afterwards, I had the chance to thank him for the music and for paving the way to save myself through their music and lyrics. I also gave him love from all the Wharf Rats! Long Strange Trip Indeed.

Don't give up before the miracle happens my friends! If this can happen for me, it can happen for you! And, if no one has told you today they love you - I LOVE YOU! Now, let's go to "church" and dance our asses off!!

Toni M - Richmond VA

STILL CRAZY AFTER  
ALL THIS SOBRIETY

# WHARF RATS MEETINGS

## "Chicago Rats"

### "WharfRats Chicago AA Mtg"

Contact: Dennis P. (404) 579-6706  
dennis7686@hotmail.com  
1st & 3rd Saturday of each month  
"The Rec Room" 2:30 - 4138 N. Sheridan Ave

### Meeting in Pittsburgh, PA "Need A Miracle Group of NA"

Contact: Paula K. (412) 260-8230  
Pkassouf@yahoo.com  
Tuesdays 8:00 - Music and fellowship at 7:30  
Greenstone UM Church, 939 California  
Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15202

### Harrisburg Area, PA "Help On The Way"

Contact: OZZIE 717-999-3494  
gratefuloz3@gmail.com  
We meet every Tuesday, 6:00-8:15pm  
Music is played from 6-7pm-please bring an  
instrument if you play.  
7-8:15pm is a recovery meeting  
JFT RECOVERY CENTER.  
300 Market Street  
Lemoyne, PA 17043  
Wheelchair accessible.

### Wharf Rats of New England "Grow the Scorched Ground Green"

1ST meeting June 4, 2 pm  
Industrial Park Worcester MA  
Contact: dnagussie@aol.com or  
Facebook, "Wharf Rats of New England."

### Indianapolis, IN

#### "Rats NA Drain Ditch"

Contact: Tim D. (317) 319-4697  
walstib@netzero.com  
Fridays 7:00-8:00PM, Woodruff Place  
Baptist Church  
1735 East Michigan Street, Indianapolis, IN.

### Delray Beach, Florida "Gone Are The Days"

Contact: Chris S. (954) 232-5441  
and Chris D. (860) 581-0558  
walshed63@aol.com

Sundays at approximately 9pm, during the  
set break of the weekly Crazy Fingers show  
at Boston's on the Beach, 40 S Ocean Blvd  
Delray Beach, FL 33483, meeting is held in  
the pavilion on the beach across the street  
and to the north of Boston's.

### Richmond, VA

#### "Yellow Balloon Group"

Contact: Toni M. (804) 658-9969  
music4tonirva@gmail.com  
Every Third Monday 6:30 - 8:30  
Diversity Thrift  
1407 Sherwood Ave  
Richmond, VA 23220

### Egg Harbor City, NJ "Ship of Fools"

Contact: Scott C. (609) 705-1639 Opie C.  
(707) 382-6875  
1st Saturday at 7:00pm of every month.  
600 South Odessa Ave  
Egg Harbor City, NJ

### Forrest Hills, NY

#### "The Yellow Balloon Group Meeting of New York"

Contact: Chuck W. (917) 673-0008  
3rd Wednesday, 7:30PM  
The Reform Temple of Forest Hills  
71-11 112th St.  
Forrest Hills, NY 11375

### Philadelphia, PA

#### "One More Saturday Night Group"

Philly/South Jersey Wharf Rats  
Contact: George E. 856-412-0439 Email:  
geckenroth@gmail.com  
We meet the 3rd Saturday, 7pm  
245 4th St. Gloucester City, NJ

### San Francisco, CA

Contact: Charlie E. (415) 314-8442 (text  
message preferred)  
CsmcChar@aol.com  
Thursdays 8:15-9: 15PM, Holy Innocents  
Church, on Fair Oaks,  
between 25th & 26th Streets.

### Los Angeles, CA

#### "Wharf Rats of Los Angeles"

Contact: Jim Colleran (818) 481-7411  
jcolleran03@yahoo.com Tuesday 8:00PM  
Chandler Lodge  
11455 Chandler Blvd. (Cross St. Tujunga  
Av)  
North Hollywood, CA. 91601

### Arcadia, CA

#### "Wharf Rats"

Contact: Brian (626) 372-3591  
guthmo@yahoo.com  
Thursdays 7:30PM  
Santa Anita Church  
296 W. Colorado Blvd.  
Arcadia, CA 91006

### Wilmington, NC

#### "Wharf Rats" AA Meeting

Contact: Karen (215) 837-3799  
KarenBernatavitz@gmail.com  
Sundays 8PM  
Oleander United Methodist Church  
5810 Oleander Drive  
Wilmington, NC 28403

**IF WE CAN'T REACH YOU, NO ONE ELSE CAN! Meeting contacts whose email addys and/or phone numbers are not active, will be removed from the list.** The conclusion being the meeting is no longer active. Please keep us current with your contact info if you want to continue to be listed here. It matters ... to the folks out there trying to reach us, it definitely matters. Thanks everyone!

## Fellow Recovery Groups Stay Connected!

We may have been the first, but we are not the only ones out there! Fellow "yellow balloon" group websites and yahoo groups.

**Camp Traction -  
Clean and Sober Festival Camping**  
www.camptraction.org

**Phish**  
www.phellowship.net

**String Cheese Incident**  
www.scijellyfish.org

**moe.**  
happyhourhero.org

**Widespread Panic**  
www.soberfans.com

**Disco Biscuits**  
www.thedigitalbuddhas.org

**Umphrey's McGee**  
www.facebook.com/groups/muchobliged

**Yonder Mountain String Band**  
velcrockangaroos@yahoogroups.com

**Gov't. Mule**  
Monkeyhill@yahoogroups.com

The Wharf Rats can also be found on  
Facebook and at our home page:  
www.wharfrat.org



## The Yellow Balloon Group Meeting of New York

Reform Temple of Forest Hills  
71-11 112th Street  
Forest Hills, NY 11375

3rd Wednesday of the Month @ 7:30 PM

For FURTHUR Info Call Chuck  
(917) 673 0008

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/132064910253/>

If you'd like to be of service at an upcoming show please call the Wharf Rat contact in your area. If there is no contact in your area, maybe you'd consider becoming one. Tables are always in need of support. Table service, or covering tables for bathroom and dance breaks for people who are tabling. Donations of candy, yellow balloons, pens, envelopes are always welcomed. Stop by and see if you can help if you are inclined. Meet your local Wharf Rats, we can certainly promise you a warm welcome and you will walk away with some new clean & sober friends. Thanks to all the Wharf Rats everywhere who tended tables and volunteered in a hundred different ways this last year to meet all the needs of Wharf Rats bringing tables in whenever and wherever we can. Without your loving service, we'd be without the family gatherings and traction in this slippery environment that we share at shows..... Hugs to you all.

## Friends of August West

The time is right for Dancin' in the Streets... and baseball stadiums and festivals and anywhere we feel like it! And the best news of all? We Don't Need Dope to Dance! Summer Tour is just around the bend so get out and support your Wharfrat's who are out there spreading the word. Check your tour schedule for all our favorite bands..Dead and Co, Phil and Friends, DSO or any and all other Yellow Balloon supported music! I can tell you it will enhance and enrich your life, your fellowship, your circle, your soul and your friendships! I have had the privilege of sitting behind these tables since 1993 and there ain't no place I'd rather be! The sense of belonging and fellowship and gratitude you will receive and offer to others is amazing! So gather up some friends, hit the road and know when you get to the show, traction will be available...hit up the Wharfrat table, introduce yourself...you will be greeted with a smile and a hug.. newsletters, candy, stickers, bubbles and like minded souls will be waiting! I will be hosting @ SPAC...will be @ Citifield...We will also be in some capacity @ the PeachFest in PA. in August! Take care...hope to see you along the road! Peace, love and yellow balloons.. Murph..

## Let Go & Let Jerry

According to the dictionary:

At Sea – In a state of confusion or perplexity; at a loss, bewildered

“Where's the Dog Star? Where's the moon?

You're lost sailor, you been way too long at sea.”

This is as apt a description of me in my active addiction. I was drifting and dreaming. I was lost. My compass was spinning, I couldn't find a landmark, couldn't get my bearings. I was 23 in the summer of 1984 when I saw the Grateful Dead play this. I had no sense of direction in life. I had somehow graduated college the year before, left with a sort of a vague idea of a dream for what I wanted in life, and a vicious addiction that took over every area of my life, setting me adrift in the middle of a big empty sea in a boat of my own making, unable to power it to the shore and stability.

“Hear the seabirds crying

And there's a ghost-wind blowing.

It's calling you to the misty swirling sea.

Till the chains of your dreams are broken,

No place in this world you can be.”

As I drifted farther and farther out to sea, as my addiction progressed, my dreams were broken, replaced with the allure of using. I could see that with every dose, every drink, every toke, every whatever it was in that moment, I was drifting closer and closer to the rocks of ruin and death. I thought I was free from the shackles of conventional society, the flawed, narrow world my parents built, but there's a price for being so free.

“Go on and drift your life away

Drifting and dreaming”

By the time I saw that I was drifting away, it seemed too late, that all was lost. I could not see a way back. My view of reality was so distorted that it all seemed like a big dream; meanwhile, I had actually stopped dreaming when I slept or passed out. I lived a ghost-like existence. I had given up on any sense of a career, given up on relationships with anyone who couldn't help me get loaded. Some members of my family cut all ties and contact, while I avoided contact with others.

I had no idea how I could give up both Grateful Dead concerts and using, and I wanted no part of life without this music. I believed that any life without using would be a constant, day-to-day struggle, white-knuckling my way through life, constantly on guard against that overpowering urge to use. I had no idea that I could actually lose the desire to use. I despised myself for letting it get this way.

At some point a family member in recovery started talking to me, telling me about people she met in recovery who were Deadheads, who went to shows and stayed clean. She gave me a phone number. Eventually I called them, as I grew more and more desperate.

“This must be Heaven,

Tonight I crossed the line.

You must be the angels

I thought I might never find.”

I met them, I went to their house. I traded Grateful Dead tapes with them, I hung out with them. I don't remember any huge sales pitch for recovery. They told me about this group of Deadheads in recovery, called Wharf Rats. Beyond that, just simple, matter-of-fact statements, telling me how long they had been in recovery when it came up in conversation, and just letting me hang out and watch them go through life. And they seemed to do it so effortlessly. No struggle. No white-knuckling their way through their day. Attraction rather than promotion, showing me how to live by just living their lives, clean.

Soon after I asked someone to take me to a meeting. I've been clean ever since, 28 years now, as of May 4, 2017.

“Got to be Heaven

'Cause here's where the rainbow ends.

And if this ain't the real thing Well,

it's close enough to pretend.”

I discovered that through Wharf Rats, WITH Wharf Rats, I can go anywhere, be anywhere, at any show, stay clean, and enjoy the music. Thanks to this group and a fellowship and program of recovery, I've been able to build a life, a career, a long-term relationship. I've been able to be of service, to others at shows trying to enjoy the music without having to use, and to the world at large. I've been able to recover my health, my peace of mind, and a relationship with myself that lets me sleep peacefully at night, and experience life as a joyous dance.

“I'm still walking,

So I'm sure that I can dance

Just a saint of circumstance

Like a tiger in a trance.”

So now I'm trying to build a business. It's slow-going, but I still pour myself into recovery. I'm about as excited about my most recent anniversary as I have ever been over an anniversary. I love recovery, I love what this life has given me. I haven't used today. I tried to carry the message of recovery to a newcomer today. I've tried to practice the principles of recovery in all my affairs today. I made a meeting. I feel like a worthwhile human being, and even as I sometimes feel like I continue to drift, I trust that my sails are filling, and the wind is willing, and I'm good as gone again.

Sure don't know what I'm going for.

But I'm gonna go for it for sure.

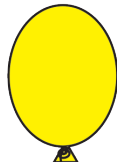
Thank you for being here, so that I can share this stuff with you. I love Wharf Rats, I love recovery, and I can honestly say I love myself today. That's a victory over addiction and my old way of life.

Dave R.



**Save Your Face**





# Wharf Rats Contacts

[www.wharfrat.org](http://www.wharfrat.org)

## WR Treasurer

### Stickers & Misc. Procurement

Long & short sleeve  
"T-Shirts" available.

Warren F.

34 Oxford Road

Old Bethpage, NY 11804

PH: (516) 420-0360

Cell: (516) 521-1424

NVRCMGBK@optonline.net

### Web Site & List-ServiDatabase

David F. - Norfolk, VA

Email: [dfrancis@dcf.net](mailto:dfrancis@dcf.net)

(757) 652-1711

<http://www.dcf.net/home>

### Newsletter

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# STICKERS

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Let Go & Let Jerry

WHARF RATS  
High On Music

THIS IS YOUR  
BRAIN ON HUGS

You Don't Need Dope  
To Dance



Save Your Face

ANOTHER DOPELESS  
HOPE FIEND

Friends of August West

Wharf Rats

## STICKERS!!

All stickers found on this page and in the rest of the newsletter are available at the Wharf Rat Table for a small donation or through Warren F.