

FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE: 2016 Spring Trip to Florida

By Stephen Somerville

Before this column returns next time to the local themes of people, politics and public affairs, below are some unconnected, stream-of-conscious and (most likely) incoherent musings and observations regarding our annual family trip to Florida. The reflections from our just finished family vacation to Disney World can be broken down into two areas: t-shirts and my rather well known (and soundly ridiculed) prognosticating ability.

One of my favourite pastimes when I am in Florida is to read the t-shirts of people at the various Disney World theme parks. T-shirts ? like bumper stickers - say a lot about people. They are a way for individuals to express their individuality and to make a particular statement.

Witness a couple of the slogans that I saw on previous trips:

?You can either be: a) Gun Victim, or b) Gun Owner ? You Decide?. This kind of caught my attention. The gentleman wearing this shirt was a slightly built, unassuming guy pushing a middle aged woman in a wheelchair. Made me wonder what his story was. I saw a sixty-five year old man wearing a ?Give Tiger a break, Obama is screwing the whole country? shirt. Although he was supposed to be in the self-proclaimed ?Happiest Place on Earth,? he did not look at all happy and I did not see a wife or any children with him.

One of my favourite shirts, and I saw two different people wearing them, said ?I reserve the right to arm bears.?

These shirts had a picture on the front of a huge grizzly bear holding a shotgun.

I was not disappointed this year in my continuing quest to find interesting t-shirts.

I saw a thirty-something year old man wearing a t-shirt that said ? ?I'm busy - your ugly - have a nice day,? although he himself was not particularly handsome.

Another man was wearing a great shirt; it had a picture of a bride and groom on the front and above it was the words ?GAME OVER.?

This was priceless.

I wanted my own t-shirt. But in addition to the picture of the bride and groom I would include a small boy and the t-shirt would say ?GAME NOW REALLY OVER.?

An early-twenties lady was wearing a t-shirt that read - ?I jump out of perfectly good airplanes.?

A rather intriguing shirt was worn by a two-year-old.

The shirt had a Nike logo on the front with the words ?Game Changer.?

I guess Mom and Dad expect this little gaffer to be quite the athlete. Good to build the expectations up early.

My trip would not be complete without seeing a few political t-shirts.

I did see a couple of ?Clinton for President? and ?Cruz for President? shirts, and I also spotted a few ?Trump ? Make America Great Again? t-shirts as well as one lady wearing a ?Trump - Make America Hate Again? t-shirt.

Although I did not see the following t-shirt on this particular trip, a number of years ago down in Florida I spotted a guy with my all time favourite t-shirt ?Nixon and Agnew ? Rested, Relaxed and Ready to Roll in 92?.

Usually on these trips ?ole Somerville wears a golf shirt every day, topped off with my Toronto Maple Leafs baseball cap.

The Leafs cap has elicited a few different responses over the years.

Last March a guy wearing an authentic Sidney Crosby Pittsburgh Penguins shirt shot me a rather disdainful look while in line at the EPCOT theme park.

During that same trip while I was sitting on the curb trying to have a quick nap near the Splash Mountain ride in the Magic Kingdom theme park a guy walks by and says ?Go Leafs Go? and shoots me a big smile!

The last component to our trip was the NCAA men's basketball tournament ? also commonly referred to as ?March Madness?.

Everyone down in Florida was talking about the sixty-eight team field and the preparation of their office pool brackets.

I am also a big college hoops fan and I was able to catch a number of opening round games on television while in Orlando.

With the first two rounds of the tournament completed, I predict that the Indiana Hoosiers will beat the North Carolina Tar Heels this evening and then proceed through the rest of the tournament to win the Championship Game a week from now.

Stephen can be contacted at stephengsomerville@yahoo.com