

Video gives Jupiter bar a 'Five O'Clock' shadow

Alan Jackson filmed his latest hit at The Square Grouper.

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JUPITER—The sun lies low over the Loxahatchee River. The lighthouse stands silent guard on the north shore. To the south, pelicans float in the inlet eddies, their gullets filled with the day's cast-offs from the charter boats tied up at the dock.

Out back, the bait coolers have been slammed shut. Beach music wafts from fake-rock speakers scattered around a gravel yard at the Jupiter Inlet end of Love Street. Along two sides of a 30-by-20-foot converted bait shack, a dozen people have staked out spots at an outdoor bar. . . .

Sounds like something out of a Jimmy Buffett

song, doesn't it? But the bar is actually a country star. Castaways Marina, better known as The Square Grouper, is featured in the video for Alan Jackson's latest No. 1 hit, *It's Five O'Clock Somewhere*.

Jackson, a part-time Jupiter Island resident, asked Buffett to join him in the recording, which has become Jackson's 30th chart-topper. It's only the second for Buffett, who also did it with *Margaritaville* in May 1977 — but he's not hurting. He and Jackson could, in fact, be twins. Both like boats, fishing, singing and making money.

The video opens with Jackson and his band on Hullbilly, his 46-foot sportfisherman. It then moves to The Square Grouper, with scenes of locals dancing and Jackson, barefoot but still

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in his trademark white hat, strumming and singing away.

*Pour me something tall and strong,
Make it a hurricane before I go insane,
It's only half past twelve, but I don't care,
It's five o'clock somewhere.*

Midway through the song, Jackson muses, "I wonder what Jimmy Buffett would do." He strolls through a door at the back of The Square Grouper and, through the magic of editing, appears on a concert stage in Indianapolis, where he joins Buffett, who is singing the song.

Although Buffett has never been here, The Grouper is more than a video location for Jackson. It's a hangout whenever he's in town. He suggested to friend and bar owner Jim Burg that they shoot the video there. Officially released last week, the video is at No. 16 on the Country Music Television chart and climbing. Jackson's *Music Video Collection* and *Greatest Hits II* (including *Five O'Clock*) were released Tuesday, a week after Country Music Television shot footage at The Grouper for CMT's *Top 20 Countdown*. CMT was back two days later to do an on-location interview with Jackson.

"What better place to get away from it all?" said CMT's Donnie Vancleve. "The vibe of it is great."

But despite the new fame, life at the bar hasn't changed much since the video was shot there in June. Customers still don't need shoes or shirts to get service, and the parking lot isn't overflowing with cars from North Carolina or New York.

To prove the point, Roy Chapman, customer and sworn enemy of the new anti-smoking law, points to his swim trunks and T-shirt and asks, "Where else can you wear this and have a beer and a cigarette?"

"It's the way Jupiter used to be," manager and bartender Mike Stuve suggests.



SHANNON O'BRIEN/Staff Photographer

LOCAL HANGOUT: Patrons of the Square Grouper (from left) Robert Singer, Michael Singer, Jamie Thomas and Michael Singer Jr. relax at the inlet bar that's featured in Alan Jackson's latest video.

"This building's been here for 30 years, and we just kind of modified it. . . . There's not a place like this until you get to Islamorada."

"The view's worth a million," bartender Vicki Revelle adds as she cues up the video for the thousandth time, laughing and pointing: "There's me, there's me!"

Another bartender, Clayton Varney, actually served as a stand-in for Jackson in two scenes.

The building went up in 1970 as a bait and ice hut for fishermen. Burg, son of Clifford Burg of developers Burg & DiVosta, bought it three years ago and in February dropped the live bait for a bar. In the back is a carved closet door from Jackson's house. For countertops he used teak and fiberglass room dividers he salvaged while renovating Perry Commo's old home across the inlet.

No signs advertise The Square Grouper, but people find it by sea and by land. Its name doesn't appear in the video, but people are getting the word.

Last week a caller from Nebraska

asked for the Web site address. "I told him we just got our phone in not too long ago," Stuve says. "We're still far away from a Web site."

Sales of koozies (beer bottle insulators) and T-shirts imprinted with "It's 5 o'clock somewhere" are picking up, Stuve says. An octogenarian couple from Ohio stopped by last week, and the bar is even seeing customers from Boca. But mostly it's the regulars: Wealthy residents from Jupiter Island tie up their boats at the dock with people who pay for a beer with loose change.

Unfortunately, it won't last. Eventually, the city will push forward with its Riverwalk project. Shops and restaurants on the ground floors, offices and residences above. Burg knows the day will come, but he's in no rush.

"I don't think the time is right, economically. We don't need to do it tomorrow," he says. "Besides, I'm 38 and I've still got a lot of partying in me. It's like having Margaritaville right here in north county."

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