

FAN PARTY IN CHICAGO====WHAT A GROUP!!

May 28, 2014



Some of the fans at our Chicago gathering at Leona's

Just when you think you have things all figured out, life throws a major curve ball and you wind up in a place totally unexpected, like Alice down the Rabbit Hole (but a whole lot less creepy), I have always been moved by Bee Gee stories received from fans; but when there are scores of fans in one place all sharing stories and laughing about their "Bee Gee Addiction", it gets to be a whole different type of experience.

Leona's Restaurant in Chicago hosted our fan party before Barry's concert, and I once again had the joy of hearing what Gibb lovers had to say about their idols. Probably the highlight of this night was meeting people who I have known through Facebook only and who have been a presence in my life, contributing comments and sharing ideas about Barry, Robin, Maurice and Andy online. Somehow it seemed fitting to hug Janet and Heidi and all the others I felt a kindred spirit with, and my heart was full of affection for them all.

Jamie and Tanya came from Nashville, and as with many fans, first became enraptured with Andy back in 1978.



Jamie and Tanya

Diann came with her mother and told me the amazing story of meeting the Bee Gees on Oprah Winfrey's show in 1997 after winning a local contest in Indiana, which provided a trip to the show. Diann was 12 when she sat and chatted with the Bee Gee wives backstage. She and her Mom met all three brothers. I was foaming at the mouth by the end of this story.

Julie got tickets for her 50th birthday, and explained that she first heard "How Do You Mend a Broken Heart" when she was 7. She told me about having a collage of Andy photos and a life size poster of the three Bee Gees. Her love of the music brought her to Chicago from Oklahoma City.



Heidi spoke of having the Saturday Night Fever poster at age 10 and kissing Barry's face. Gee, none of us can relate to this, right? (I'd like a poster of him now, and I'd still kiss it.) Caroline made it to Chicago for her second concert after being at our fan party in Philly and seeing the concert there.



With Heidi and Caroline at Leonas

As the party got larger and more fans arrived, we filled up the restaurant and ate lasagna and eggplant and talked about Barry and this wonderful event. It's fun to see grown women jumping up and down like little girls who are about to attend a big party.

I loved Marjorie's story about taking her brother's Bee Gee records away from him when she was 5. Her mother eventually bought duplicates to keep the peace. Many fans say they had an instant connection to our boys. Marjorie said, "I knew it immediately at 5".

Vicki saw the brothers in Dodger Stadium in 1979 with 56, 000 of her best friends. She said they were and always will be "bigger than life".

Chris is from London originally and saw first saw the boys in 1991 and has been a fan for 40 years.

Jan and Bill told me about having original 8 tracks and Jan mentioned that her children grew up listening to the Bee Gees. (She was lucky enough to see Andy in Vegas in 1983). I often hear from people who find solace in the music and was not surprised to hear that when faced with family problems and a health crisis a few years ago, the music was "totally healing and made me stronger". She would watch concerts on her iPad "night after night."

The stories were poignant and lovely. Cindy and Tom from Michigan started with the Bee Gees in 1968 and mentioned "Life In A Tin Can", which is actually a very cool album! Cindy and Andy have birthdays two days apart.

Perhaps the most dramatic story came from Alejanra and Guillermo, who traveled all the way from South America and the country of Chile to see Barry. Guillermo brought with him a large hardback book (about the size of an encyclopedia) which has a Bee Gee photo on the front cover. Inside of this large volume are the lyrics to every Bee Gee song written (listed in chronological order). He created this book for his wife as a Christmas gift because she is a "crazy fan". When I asked him if he was a book publisher, he said, "No, I am a lover." Now that's a husband who loves his wife. This couple hopes to have Barry sign the book one day, and I hope this becomes a reality for them. They, like everyone else sharing the space, were devoted fans.



No one can ask for more in life than fulfilling a dream and finding joy in every moment as it comes true. Watching Barry Gibb perform on this tour is a fantasy come true. Writing about that experience is living the dream; however, adding the fans and their ideas to the mix is beyond all expectations for this writer. When a face lights up or tears come to the eyes as a Bee Gee memory is shared, I am able to relive that moment in time with the storyteller and I am changed by each personal tale. It is a gift I treasure.

Thanks to all who attended and a special thank you to Sally, the manager of Leona's, for her outstanding service and food. We loved every minute.



Sally was a treasure....manager of Leona's