

MARC ZAPPULLA, COPYWRITER PORTFOLIO

From *Unmasked*, the autobiography of Gerry Cheevers

I was just a kid, maybe eight years of age; young and tough, and eager to play hockey. I was eager to win. I was a member of the St. Denis Shamrocks Church team, an expansion club in the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) in St. Catharines and my dad was the coach. I played forward the first game and failed to register a point. Sadly, my teammates, each one of them, shared my regrettable fate as we were taken apart that day 18–0.

When the following contest was upon us, my dad, the crafty guru of all that's hockey, put me between the pipes. I can't recall my father having any intuitive sense of my ability as a future goaltender. His decision did come easy, though. His rationale: He had no desire to put anyone in net aside from his son, and the poor goalie that let eighteen slip past him in the previous game never showed up. That fact meant little in the interim as we were thrashed in game two, 15–0. I had no time to weep or wonder as dad penciled me back in goal. Discouragement, though, that is something I never embraced.

I played with no mask, no fear then, only the desire to win. I met each attacker head on with the same intensity in my first game as a kid, as I did in my last game as a professional. I relished my time in net as a young boy; clearly, I never left. I was born and raised in the urban area of St. Catharines, Ontario, in the heart of the Niagara Falls region, about sixty or so miles from Toronto, just across Lake Ontario. My folks were both Canadian born. My dad, Joe Cheevers, was a great athlete and hall of fame lacrosse player in the Heartland Province. And though he never got paid much in the sport, lacrosse was a relevant part of his life, as it was for a lot of folks across the vast northern tundra of Canada. As the breadwinner in the family, dad was one of the top car salesmen in all of Canada, as well as the Assistant Manager of the St. Catharines Arena. And he would later become a scout for the Toronto Maple Leafs. Bette Cheevers, my mom, would stay home and raise us kids. There were three of us: Me; my brother, Pat; and my sister, God rest her soul, Sally. She passed away too soon at the age of two after succumbing to Cystic Fibrosis. My mother wasn't a big hockey fan, but she knew what was going on. She went to all my games when I was a kid, but ended that trend when I relocated from St. Catharines to Toronto to play at the junior level. My aunt and grandparents on my dad's side were the only other relatives I had in St. Catharines.

Despite its quasi remoteness, life for me, as a kid in Ontario, would be anything but anomalous. As early as I can remember I was wearing skates and playing hockey. Every other house in the neighborhood had some sort of patchwork icy expanse we could call a rink, so finding a pick-up game was trouble-free to say the least. My dad would build one across the street from where I grew up; accessibility was perpetual. Quite frankly, if someone took a stroll down my street back then, they'd probably find a makeshift rink every third or fourth house down. And playing hockey as much as we did wasn't isolated to the area where I grew up—that was the culture in Ontario and the rest of Canada. So if we weren't tearing up someone's backyard, practicing at the rink, or playing street hockey, we'd be skating at the nearest pond. It's what we did after school until our parents rang the dinner bell. Through our devotion to hockey, naturally, a lot of us would pay mind to the ones who lit the lamps in the NHL. The only problem of course was that we couldn't see them; we could only hear them over the radio. The airwaves were busy each night in most households across Canada.

From my novel, *The Last Longshoreman*

The following morning, the carved-up, bloated, and squished corpse of Butchie's victim was discovered by a couple of crew members on the ship—two guys trolling the hole, probably looking for some product to take home themselves. Whatever the case, they alerted the captain, and he in turn called the authorities.

Within an hour of the find, the state and local authorities descended on the pier like the Germans over Poland. They questioned everyone from the guys working security at the gate to the captain on the ship. But they got nothing. And when my turn came around, I didn't flinch.

A cold and agitated state cop stopped me as I was on a break—or a “lap,” as we called it. In his thick Boston accent, he asked, “Anything you can tell me about the body we found on the ship, kid?”

“No.”

“Have you seen anything out of the ordinary lately, witnessed any argument or altercation... anything at all?” he asked.

I shook my head. “No.”

If I learned anything growing up in Eastie, it was this: you never volunteer information. A simple yes or no will do, because the last thing I wanted on that day was to self-induce a cloud of suspicion hanging over my head by getting into a lengthy conversation with one of these detectives. So a dense look, a gentle headshake, followed by a one-word answer—that's how it's done.

“Thank you for your time,” said the cop, and then he walked off and evaporated into the yard.

They weren't stupid, those detectives—they knew someone on the pier had something to do with the murder—but gathering any evidence that could potentially lead to a viable suspect was tough going because we were all “D and D,” or deaf and dumb. We never saw anything, and if we did, we pretended like we didn't. It was a code followed religiously—and not just in Boston, but in every port up and down the East Coast and every terminal on the West Coast too.

When the dust settled that afternoon, I met up with a guy named Mickey Con in one of the coffee rooms we had down on the docks.

Mickey was fairly new, with a tenure of about eight months of sporadic employment on the docks. He was tall and wiry, with a shaggy do protruding from his flat cap and an unrelenting, bare gaze that, quite honestly, freaked out a lot of guys on the pier. And the guy never shut the hell up. Mickey could talk the balls off a brass monkey if he had the opportunity. He had no sense. He was a sex fiend, a gambler, a smoker, and a drinker—and quite erratic—but he was a good guy in my opinion, just a little nuts.

According to him, as a young fella he once bought a car off a used-car dealer on the South Shore, but after just a couple of days of driving the thing, he somehow convinced himself that he got a raw deal on the sale. So the crazy bastard went back down to the dealership and drove the car right through the showroom window.

He did some time for that.

Not too long after he got out, he picked up some Chinese food from a place in the South End of Boston and had an argument with a guy behind the counter, so he went home, had his dinner, and then went back and drove another car through the front of the joint and did it with a smile, I was told.

Thankfully, no one got hurt in either case.

He did more time for that, which included a stint in the psych ward.

How did he end up on the waterfront?

His brother Sam had a union card passed down from his father before him. That was the only way to get a job on the docks back then: you had to have a relative who had previously been a union member or one who was currently working on the waterfront. If a person wasn't qualified by family, a connection through a union official or organized crime was always a surefire way of landing the union card.

Unfortunately, Sam was killed in Korea just as Mickey was let out of the nuthouse, so he took his card and started working immediately.

Mickey and I grabbed a coffee, sat, and spoke at length about the spectacle of that day, which was the cops swarming all of us, trying to excavate our brains and get to the bottom of what had happened.

Not surprisingly, Mickey started poking and prodding. "I heard it was one of the fellas that did that guy in," he said.

"Is that right?" I said.

"That's what I heard," said Mickey as he brought his hot cup of joe up to his lips and slurped a sip. "Just sayin'."

"People say funny things sometimes," I told him.

"Yeah," said Mickey. "You hear anything?"

"No."

I wondered at that point if Mickey knew something of the truth and was testing me. After all, I'd just met the guy. But I relaxed rather quickly and came to the conclusion he wasn't bright enough to even think that up. But I figured, why take a chance? So I told him I'd see him tomorrow and cut the conversation short.

Two days after the murder, I showed up to the pier and "faced" for a job in the hiring hall. That's when a good number of guys literally face the stevedore and wave their arms in the air to get his attention in hopes of getting picked for a job. Hence the term.

The stevedore pointed to me right away to work on a ship unloading again. It struck me as odd, as I had the feeling he'd sought me out in the crowd. In any case, I was happy to be working that day.

There were roughly the same number of guys on the ship that morning, minus one, of course. But also present was that crazy son of a bitch Butchie.

We spent all day on the ship, working. For Butchie, it was just another shift. For me, well, it was pretty messed up. I wasn't ready to interact with him so soon, but I lent nothing to the effect of a guy looking to avoid contact. I was cool, calm, and collected, just a kid who didn't know any better. Had I shown signs of anything less, Butchie would have taken notice.

As the day progressed, the conversations were minimal—"Pass me this" or "Hand me that"—and that was fine with me. It wasn't until the end of the day, when the monotony was busted wide open, that Butchie said, "You do good work."

I replied, "So do you," boldly referring to the way he murdered that guy a couple of days ago.

He looked sharply at me and at my grin, and he gave a slanted grin back. He was impressed, I figured, at the fact I could make light of the incident.

"Walk with me," he said.

He took a few steps, and I followed him to a quiet spot near the port side of the ship. He stopped and said, "Listen...thanks."

PRINT PIECE: FLYER

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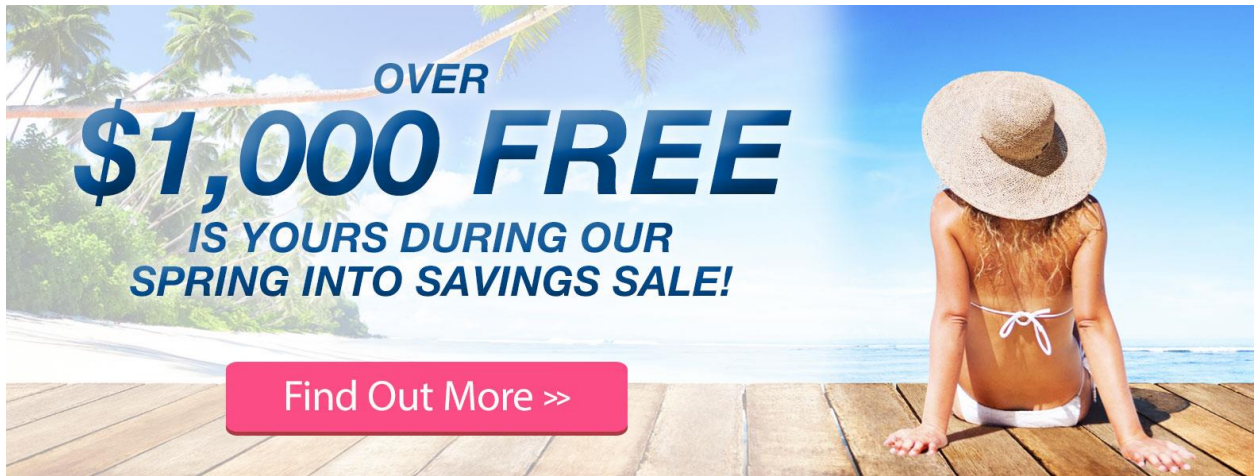
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Virgin Gorda - An Alluring Sanctuary

This island gem in the British Virgin Islands has remained un-commercialized and pristine, attracting honeymooners and privacy-seekers the world over. Dramatically shaped, the island reminded Christopher Columbus of a reclining woman, so he named it Virgin Gorda. Beach-lovers will enjoy the beautiful stretch of pristine beaches, particularly the Baths, a beach made up of giant granite boulders that form hidden pools and grottos. Vacationers will also enjoy the unique indigenous plants that flourish in the National Parks and can admire the exotic birds and ruins at the Little Fort National Park.

Virgin Gorda is truly one of the most beautiful destinations in the Caribbean, where you can truly get it away from it all and simply relax.

Activities

Charter a boat. It's among the most popular activities in the British Virgin Islands. Other watersports such as sailing, windsurfing, snorkeling, and scuba diving are readily available. Or, take a gander at hiking. The trail at Gorda Peak is one of the most popular in the islands. Hikers walk along paths lined by abundant wild orchids. For a watery hike, the winding trail through the Baths will challenge the less athletic! Wear tennis shoes to ward off the spiny urchins. Another interesting trail goes to the southern end of Virgin Gorda ending near the ruins of the old Spanish Copper Mines.

Beaches

Little Trunk Bay is among several beautiful beaches lining the shores of Virgin Gorda. Over the hill, north of the Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbour and Spanish Town, and around the corner from Little Dix Bay lies Savannah Bay. This quiet beach is known for its swim along with the fact it's protected by offshore reefs, which at times can be tricky to get to.

The Baths is the most visited beach in the British Virgin Islands. Its massive, granite boulders create hidden pools and grottoes. The trail through the Baths is now marked, but the journey can only be recommended for the athletic person.

Just north of the Baths, sits Spring Bay. A picturesque, palm edged beach that meets the turquoise waters on the south side. Bask in its soft white sands and underwater boulders to make the views that much more spectacular.

Shopping

Virgin Gorda is not a shopper's paradise but there are shops at Spanish Town, the Bitter End and Leverick Bay where you might find some interesting souvenirs and island apparel.

St. Martin - One Island, Two Destinations

St. Martin is uniquely governed by two countries: The island's northern collectivity, Saint-Martin, is governed by France, while its southern territory, Sint Maarten, is governed by the Netherlands. Each side offers a different atmosphere, allowing you the unique opportunity to experience two destinations in one. No matter which side you stay on, you can discover the island's breathtaking beaches, excellent snorkeling, scuba diving, deep-sea fishing, horseback riding, and more.

St. Martin villas on both sides of the island feature ultimate tropical luxuries such as cliff-top ocean views, direct beach access, and large private pools.

Must-See

Enjoy the best snorkeling on the island at Captain Alan's Snorkeling Adventure and have fun while you do it!

The Sint Maarten Museum was founded by the St. Maarten Museum Foundation. The objective of this museum is to reflect the history and culture of the island and its people from prehistoric to modern times.

The Sint Maarten Zoo focuses on plants and animals of the Caribbean basin and South American area, including a substantial reptile collection.

Activities

The island as a whole offers gorgeous beaches, as well as some of the best restaurants in the Caribbean and buzzing nightlife. Visitors will also enjoy tropical scenery and wildlife, ocean adventures like boating and snorkeling, shopping (both high-end and bargain), and much more – there is something for every Caribbean traveler.

Both sides of the island celebrate Carnival with parades, music, and feasting, though at different times; the French side celebrates pre-Lent in February, while the Dutch side celebrates post-Easter in late April.

Love the ocean? St. Martin offers sailing regattas and deep-sea fishing tournaments throughout the year, as well as diving excursions, yachting and more.

When to Go

The most popular time to travel to St. Martin is from December to the middle of April. Off-season is also rainy season (and technically hurricane season), from late May to mid-November. It doesn't necessarily rain every day, however, and the island's high temperatures remain relatively consistent throughout the year. If you don't want to take any chances with sunshine, travel between December and April. If you prioritize privacy above all else, travel between May and November, when crowds will be at an all-time-low.

NEW SHIP COPY

Witness a New Era in Cruising

Celebrity Edge

SAILING IN 2018

A revolutionary new cruise concept designed to shatter expectations has now become a reality—we're talking about Celebrity Cruises' newest class of ships, the *Celebrity Edge*. From its stunning Pool Deck to the ocean-facing Magic Carpet dining area, this "urban condo"-inspired decor delivers something for everyone.

The *Celebrity Edge* is not just another new ship, it's a statement about the future of cruising that lies ahead. Therefore, we're happy to announce that this revolutionary design in cruising is available for Caribbean sailings, and is set to make its maiden voyage December, 2018.

SHIP FEATURES

Magic Carpet

Enjoy a floating platform that outwardly-faces the horizon and is equipped with a full bar, alfresco dining and live music performances. This impressive and innovative venue sits 13 stories above sea level offering breathtaking views at every turn.

Solarium

Unwind in this adult-only covered pool area which showcases a chic style with its 3D art wall, sunshine and ocean views. Bask in its serene atmosphere and reclaim your sanity in this state-of-the-art chamber of leisure.

Edge Staterooms

Discover a new level of modern luxury and comfort *with the introduction of* the Infinite Verandah. With a touch of a button your stateroom goes right out to the water's edge giving you the open air of the ocean whenever you please—an experience no one has ever felt on a cruise, ever. Each stateroom is also equipped with the most stylish furnishes and exclusive handcrafted collections.

Find out what else *Celebrity Edge* has to offer.

LEARN MORE

PRESS RELEASE

Boston's own Marc Zappulla shines a light on the darkness that has cloaked the seedy underbelly of the waterfront in his hometown for decades with his first novel, *The Last Longshoreman*.

Zappulla offers a unique and authentic take when depicting the city's felonious nature, distinctive language and multi-cultural aura, and he did it all while using the docks as his principal platform.

Fellow Bostonian crime writer, and bestselling author Dennis Lehane has been capturing the essence of his beloved town for years with works such as *Mystic River*, *Gone, Baby, Gone* and *Moonlight Mile*. When asked to comment on Lehane's success, Zappulla said, "No one does it better...and he's had a profound effect on me."

The result has taken us here: *The Last Longshoreman* tells the story of Tony Costa, a life-long criminal who grew up in 1940s East Boston running illicit errands for his mob-connected uncle. Beginning work as a longshoreman on the Boston waterfront at just eighteen, Tony befriends Butchie Shea, a stone-cold killer from "Southie." Together they embark on a crime spree that chills Boston to its core and culminates in the largest waterfront heist in U.S. history.

Through it all, Tony valiantly tries to get on a more righteous path. But his rough and tumble upbringing and Mafioso-entrenched environment makes this dream all but impossible. Along with Tony's struggles, the book details the crime and corruption that ruled Boston's docks in the pre-Whitey Bulger days. Bribes, kickbacks and wholesale theft were common, as were mayhem and murder. Not since the Marlon Brando classic "On The Waterfront" has there been such a detailed account of life – and death – inside one of the most powerful unions in the country.

"Zappulla's story takes you on an unexpected thrill-ride from beginning to end, and offers a rare and genuine portrayal of life on the Boston waterfront..." – Mike DiStasio, host of the groundbreaking podcast "Reel Talk with the Hollywood Kid."

The Last Longshoreman is available on Barnesandnoble.com, Amazon, Amazon Kindle and more.

To learn more about the author, visit www.marczappulla.com, email 137473@email4pr.com or call 781-267-8855.