



On The Road: KEVIN FARLEY Comes To The Jacksonville Comedy Club.

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Liza Mitchell June 14, 2017 **Comedy, Feature, On Stage, Southside**

It's mid afternoon on a Tuesday and we are under a tornado warning just as I am set to interview actor and comedian, Kevin Farley. I call the California number provided by his publicist but it goes straight to voicemail. I dial again and this time it rings, as thunder rattles the window frames. My dog whines as I try to leave a semi-professional message. I check the time, less than confident in my PT-to-ET conversion skills. But I'm right on time, so I call back again. This time, he answers but sounds flustered. I sound obscenely perky as I tell him my name and the name of my publication. I need to reel it in. Farley asks if he can call me back in 15 minutes. Of course, I say. No problem. Thunder rolls in the distance. The storm is moving away. I'll get a second chance.

When the phone rings 20 minutes later, I'm ready to go, breaking the "no do-overs" rule of stand up comedy. In comedy, there are no second chances and no guarantees. Material

can slay a crowd or land like a fart in church. I ask Farley makes him laugh. “I always think people falling down are funny,” he says. “One of my favorite shows was “America’s Funniest Home Videos.” I love “Bar Stool,” too. It’s just a bunch of people falling. I think that’s the funniest thing in the world.”

Comedian [Kevin Farley](#) performs June 22-24 at the [Jacksonville Comedy Club](#) (www.jaxcomedyclub.com) where he will talk a lot about relationships, his weight problem, funny things that happened during the day and being from the Midwest and living on the west coast. “I’m a little different there,” he says. “I spend a little time talking to the crowd because a lot of funny stuff comes from that. The general tone is that I want everyone to have a good time.”



As an actor, Farley has appeared in such films as *The Waterboy*, *Black Sheep*, *An American Carol* and *White Knight*. He stars in the second season of the Netflix animated series “F is for Family” and the CMT show “Still the King,” which begins season two at 10 pm July 11. Filming for “F is for Family” is different than shooting “Still the King” which is a

half hour, single camera show because Farley has little, if any, personal face time with his costars like Sam Rockwell, Laura Dern, Bill Burr, Justin Long and Haley Reinhart.

“We just come in and do our bit so I don’t really get to see those guys as much just because we record our stuff separately,” he says. “It is weird but Mike Price who did The Simpsons is a great director and he knows exactly what kind of performance he wants to get out of you. He’s been around animation for a long time and he knows what he’s doing. I always feel like I’m in good hands when I go into the booth.”

He also hosts the podcast “On the Road” detailing life on the road as a stand-up comic (www.KeinFarleyOfficial.com). Farley offers insight into the cities he visits and the venues where performs night after night. It’s not always glamorous but more than often, the good outweighs the bad.

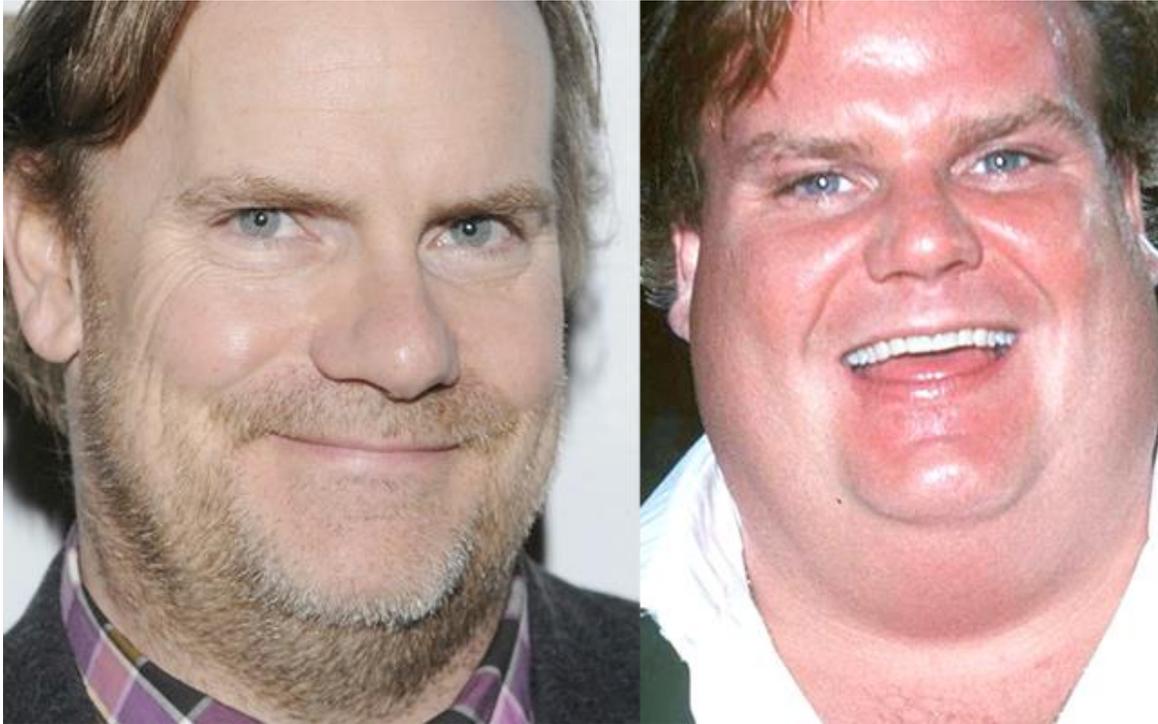


“I think it’s a lot of punishment in general. The shows themselves can be very satisfying when you do well. If I think a joke is really funny and they don’t laugh, I usually just blame the crowd. But a lot of times, I tell bad jokes, like we all do,” says Farley. “People ask me if I

get tired doing the road and like anything, there's good and bad with it. I like the shows, I like meeting the people. I thought why not do a podcast showing the bad restaurants and lumpy hotel beds and horrible comedy food."

As part of "On the Road," Farley interviews many of the comics opening for him, bonding over the shared struggles of road dogging and the passion for comedy that push them onto the next city, no matter how lumpy the bed or crappy the food.

"It's tough. They are trying to make it too. It was interesting to me. We're all just a bunch of guys trying to follow their dreams," he says. "You run up against a lot of roadblocks but the one thing we have in common is everyone is pursuing their dream."

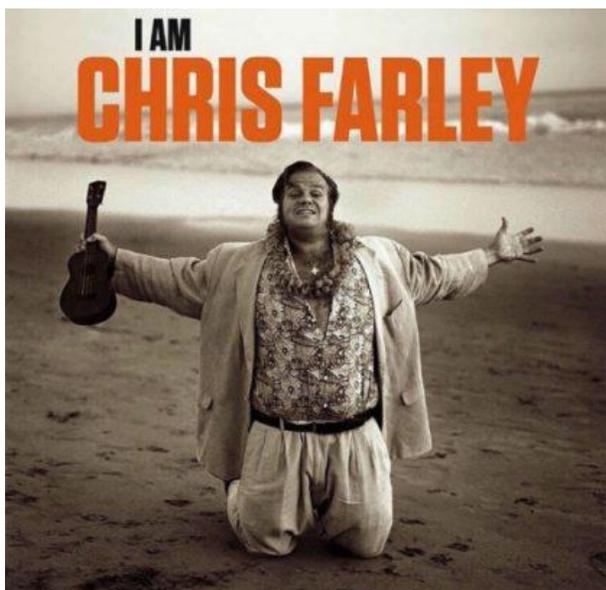


"I always look at myself as Chris Farley Lite, If he's a Guinness then I'm a Miller Lite."

Farley, like his brother, the late, comic legend [Chris Farley](#), studied with the [Second City](#) in Chicago, an experience he says made a lasting impression on his career as an actor, writer, comedian and producer. “I learned how to improvise at Second City and that has always helped my work in anything I do whether it’s acting or writing or performing. It’s always the rules of improv that I exercise the most like being open minded, saying yes and being brave and having courage and stepping off the back line. There are a million different things I learned at Second City that have served me throughout my career,” Farley says.

“When Chris went in to Second City, I didn’t even know you could do that with your life. My dad was like ‘you’re going into business’. When Chris went into theatre, I was like ‘if Chris can go into theatre, I want to go into theatre’. And my dad just gave up. He was like ‘do whatever you want. I don’t care. You’re on your own’.” I always look at myself as Chris Farley Lite, if he’s a Guinness then I’m a Miller Lite. I think we have the same kind of delivery so we’re similar that way but Chris was more bombastic. I’m not falling on tables or anything.”

As co-producer of the feature-length documentary “I Am Chris Farley,” he offered an intimate look into life with his older brother, who died in 1997 at age 33. Growing up, there



was always a lot of laughter between the “Irish twins” Chris and Kevin, who competed to see who could make each other laugh, often pushing the envelope to get the best reaction. The brothers shared more than a love of laughter with the near-identical facial features and same Midwestern cadence that bends into a slight question mark at the end of a sentence.

There was a period around the time the Farley family got their first VCR that the brothers would only respond to one another in movie quotes. It was a preamble to their later improv training to be able to react quickly and respond to a question in context with an appropriate quote.

“There was a time in our house where we would only speak in quotes from movies. It was more than a game of guess what movie this is from. We would answer each other with a different quote from a different movie. That’s how weird it got,” he says. “Once the VCR came into existence and we would watch movies over and over and over, it just became a sickness. We would do it all day long and my mom would be like ‘you people are sick’. It was crazy.”

We close the interview with an impromptu experiment designed to both challenge Farley’s movie quote recall and best summarize his life, so far. He’s more than game and laughs as he pauses to find the one that fits the bill. “Maybe Bill Murray in Caddyshack when he says ‘I talked to the Dali Lama and he said when you die, on your deathbed, you will receive total consciousness. So I got that going for me, which is nice’.”

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