

Villager Backstory

You may know Timmy Hendrix from D3 softball, but you might not know the Village of Caroline resident spent 20 years as a Florida highway patrolman and a Navy Cryptologic Technician.



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By Jammal Cutler

Timmy Hendrix has always been grateful but this year more than ever. Battling stage four skin cancer, Hendrix has shown what it means to live life to the fullest – both in The Villages and beyond.

The Villages is quickly becoming a prime destination for people from all over the world, including the Midwest, where Hendrix’s story began.

“I grew up in Logansport, Indiana,” he said. “It was quiet and small. I had dreams of becoming a race car driver or a policeman. We didn’t have much in my hometown. There was a mental facility, and I worked there for two years after I graduated high school. That’s when I realized I didn’t want to stay there for the rest of my life.”

After his time working at the mental health facility, Hendrix wanted to serve his country. He spent 20 years in the Navy as a Cryptologic Technician – collecting, analyzing and reporting electronic signals to assist with Navy operations.

“I loved it,” he says. “I loved being in the Navy – it was a lot of fun. I dealt with a lot of top-secret stuff. There were three different combinations to get through the doors into my space. It was always 55 to 60 degrees in there, and we had no windows.”

As he neared the end of his career with the Navy, Hendrix also worked as a Florida Highway Patrolman in the panhandle. The two occupations overlapped for three years.

“I knew I wasn’t going to be in the Navy forever,” he said. “So I went to midnight classes to become a patrolman in St. Johns County, just south of Duval. Working as a patrolman was a dream come true, but it was also scary because we were expecting our first child. I knew it would be worth it in the long run, though, because this way I wouldn’t have to look for a job when I got out of the Navy.”

When his law enforcement career ended, Hendrix set off on another adventure: becoming a truck driver.

“When I was a patrolman, I’d pull over these trucks, and the drivers were always so happy,” he recalls. “I asked one of them why he was so happy, and he said it was a good job – plus, he got to bring his dog to work. After I retired from law enforcement, I got my CDL and became a truck driver.”

When he wanted to move on from that gig, Hendrix used his experience driving trucks to land a spot as a van driver with rock musician Tommy Lee’s entourage.

“Just like that, I was off on a new adventure,” he says. “People joke that I’m like Forrest Gump – I’ve had such an interesting life. The highlight of being part of the entourage was when they asked me to drive a van from California back to this coast. I flew my wife in, and we drove back together, taking in all the sights.”

Hendrix made The Villages his home in 2024. After all his adventures, it’s a prime destination to settle down.

“I’m glad I’m here,” he says. “I love the warm weather and how clean it is. I’m battling stage four skin cancer, and I don’t know how much time I have left. The doctors said I wasn’t supposed to make it past Christmas 2023. But I’m here, living my life to the fullest.”

The Villages offers residents all kinds of activities, and Hendrix took full advantage by joining Division 3 softball. He’s played for four seasons.

“I played with various teams during the fall,” he says. “I love the camaraderie, and how nice everyone is. When people worry about my condition, I tell them I’ll always be in some sort of pain, but I’d rather be in pain while being active than stuck in bed.”

Hendrix may be far from his Midwest roots, but he’s found plenty of like-minded people in the Indiana group.

“It’s always fun getting to talk with people from the Midwest – that’s what I love most about the club. I love telling them about all the adventures I’ve been on and the people I’ve met. I’m good friends with Desmond Howard from ESPN. We always get dinner when I know I’ll see him.”