



May 19, 2025

Kathi Purdy

Kathi was born in Trenton, NJ to a minister and a mother working for the State of New Jersey. Kathi was athletic in her younger years, playing women's hockey with an affiliate of the New Jersey Devils. One night while carousing in Princeton, NJ at Tommy Bar & Tap, part of the Devils Bar Network, Kathy got involved in a fight with patrons who supported the opposing team. Implicated in the serious wounding of a patron by a senior member of a local white supremacist group, Kathy reached an agreement with the courts to testify for the prosecution in exchange for a reduced charge and entry into the Witness Protection Program.

While on a tour with the Devils, Kathi had become intrigued with the United States Peace Corps headquartered in Washington, DC. Under the Witness Protection Program, Kathi joined the Peace Corps under an assumed name and took on a 2-year commitment as an Emergence Relief Advisor. Kathy was deployed to Tuva, Spain in 1977 following a major landslide that took several lives, and Singapore in 1978 who was suffering from major catastrophic flooding.

At the end of her 2-year deployment with the Peace Corps, Kathi took a job with the United Nations office of Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief. Here Kathi traveled to foreign countries during times of crisis, providing emergency preparedness and crisis/emergency relief management. Often, the locations of crisis were along a coastline, and Kathi had always been a lover of the beach. With her athletic background and keen sense of balance, she took up surfing when time would allow, and traveling the world allowed her to refine her surfing skills in many exotic countries.

In 2008 while deployed to Yemen during a food and sanitation crisis, Hurricane Ike struck the United States coastland causing widespread damage and disruption. Kathi left Yemen for the United States to assist in the emergency response along the Louisiana and Florida panhandle coastlines, where she happened upon Jimmy Buffett playing at a Jazz Festival in New Orleans. Intrigued by Kathi's past and stories of her sacrifices to help the needy, Jimmy was inspired to write the song "Surfing in a Hurricane". Kathi has been a Parrothead ever since, accepting the position as Secretary & Phlock Messenger with The Villages Parrot Head Club.