

# Sammy Long

Sammy Claus of Hilton Head

When a young man named Sammy Long graduated from high school in Huntsville, Alabama in the late 1970s, little did he know that he would end up spreading joy and creating fun times in Hilton Head, while making Christmastime brighter for some very deserving kids. Upon graduating from high school, Sammy received training in plumbing and steam fitting, moved to Aiken, and went to work for the Savannah River Plant. His first Hilton Head experience came when he began working on the Hyatt ballroom on weekends. One thing led to another and before he knew it, Sammy had moved to Hilton Head. He'd always wanted to live on the beach, and this was a dream come true for him. Sammy initially didn't think he would be here for long. However, he hasn't left yet and has no plans to move.

Over time, Sammy began working construction during the day and area banquets at night. He even owned his own company for a time, and dabbled in painting and restaurant maintenance. Then, he became a DJ and worked with Westwind Entertainment for several years.

Another pursuit that is near and dear to Sammy's heart is Ultimate Frisbee. Sammy has been involved in the sport since his high school days, and has maintained his love for the sport through the years. For a while, Sammy was driving to Savannah to play Ultimate Frisbee. Then, the drive

became too inconvenient, so he decided to form a team closer to home.

As Sammy continued playing Ultimate Frisbee, he began thinking about how he could help others. Sammy says he was lucky to have the things he needed growing up. He realized that not all other children can say that. With this thought in mind, Sammy decided to do something for area children. In his words, he wanted to "have one day a year that he could help others."

Sammy and some assistants began hosting an Ultimate Frisbee tournament and Sammy has become "Sammy Claus" for this fundraiser. The entry fee to play is a new, wrapped toy for a child, and admission to the after-tournament party is a \$10 donation. For Sammy, the best part of the tournament is that everyone benefits from the event. The participants get to have a great time with other players and they are helping provide a great Christmas for area kids who might otherwise have to do without.

Making the fundraiser an annual event, to be held at the beginning of December, is a foregone conclusion for Sammy. He always looks at the bright side of things, and thinks of how he can make things better for others. And this event is no exception. For more information about the annual Ultimate Frisbee fundraiser, visit [www.discsoutheast.com](http://www.discsoutheast.com).

— Kristy Gillinder

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