

Chris Robinson, 57

Tampa

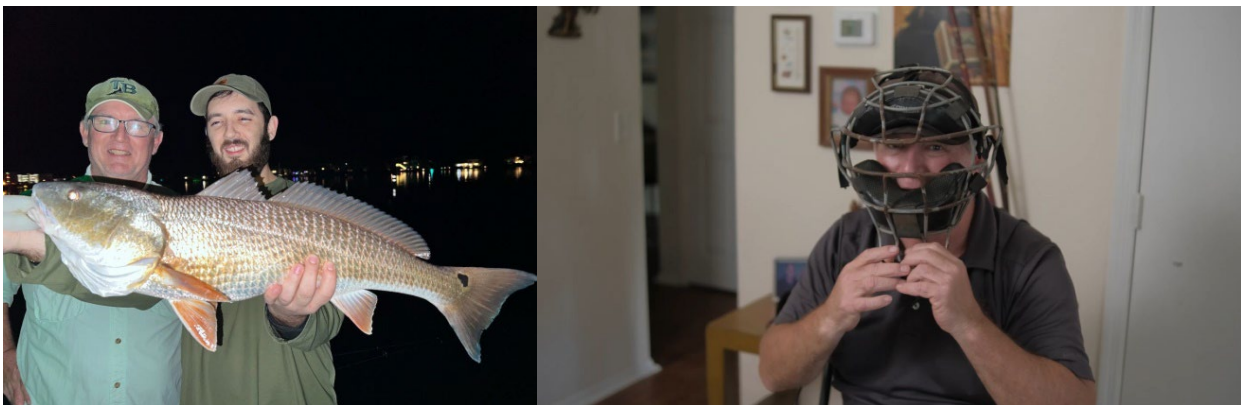
Right hip (left next year), January 6

Dr. Thomas Bernasek, AdventHealth Carrollwood



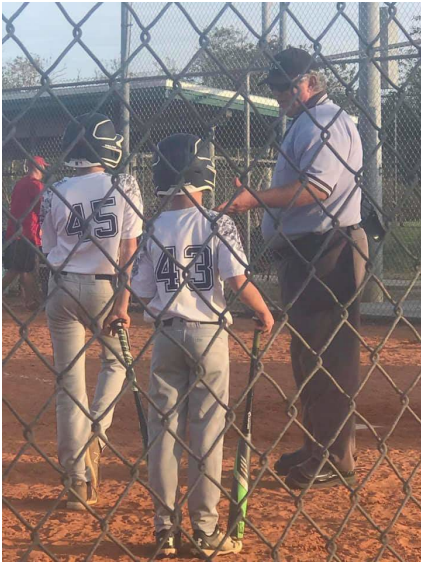
Chris Robinson, 57, has always had a vision– for his work, his physical activity and setting his sights on something bigger than he is.

An avid athlete, he played sports in high school and later baseball on weekends, waterskied, fished and enjoyed what he calls “Tampa life.” He attended chef’s school, worked in restaurants, got married and today has two adult children – a daughter in St. Petersburg and a son in South Tampa.



In 2001 Chris was in a car accident. When he got to the hospital, he was told he had hips of a 60-year-old man though was only in his mid-30s. The doctor who treated him also told him he would need to wait for surgery until his 50s since he was so young.

Chris recalls that in 2013 his hips became an issue and he started to overcompensate. He says he was overweight and came from a family of “soft bones.” His dad also had hip challenges but Chris was raised to work through the pain. “If you can walk,” he said, “then you can work.”



A few years prior, in 2010, his career shifted and Chris began to umpire high school and amateur baseball games across the country. Chris kept his eye on the ball, literally. He umpired until the Pandemic hit in March 2020 when games were curtailed only to start up again that June. He had made an effort to lose weight, stay active and work but he lost his padding and muscle tone. His hips started to click. He then dislocated his tailbone, developed sciatica and ultimately couldn't leave the hotel when he traveled because of the hip pain

Chris soon had the job of supervisor: he rode in a golf cart which took the pressure off his hips, made sure the other umpires showed up for games and that the baseball fields were properly maintained. In September 2022, he recalls being in Fort Myers at which point he was walking with a cane. The game got rained out and after ensuring all fans were out of the ballpark he went into the locker room where scar tissue he had from a colon surgery in 2001 ruptured. "I was on my knees and at first thought it was a kidney stone and drove myself to the hospital." A few days after his abdomen surgery, Chris was evacuated to Tampa as a result of Hurricane Ian. He didn't feel right and checked himself into AdventHealth Carrollwood. He was also still suffering from chronic hip pain and had no insurance. Doctors there recommended he receive care from the Pioneer Medical Foundation. He was then referred to Operation Walk USA where he qualified for a free right hip replacement. On January 6, he had surgery under the care of Dr. Thomas Bernasek at AdventHealth Carrollwood. Chris plans to have his left hip replaced next year.



In the meantime, he started a foundation to plant sea grass and ultimately restore the fresh water flow in Tampa Bay. "Instead of feeling sorry for myself, I started looking into what I could do for the community. I figure it will be spring 2025 before I'm fully mobile. By then, we'll start to get the Bay cleaned up through awareness, education and conservation. I've also created this nonprofit for my family to carry on a legacy for the rest of their lives."

Once again Chris has a vision ahead. One step at a time.