LONG LIVE THE QUEEN

QUEEN OF THE VINE
ASHLEY THOMASSON AND THE BRIGHTON CENTER CREATE A BRIGHTER TOMORROW TOGETHER

By EDMOND ORTIZ

COMING TOGETHER
Amistad Community Health Center brings affordable, passion-powered healthcare to Corpus Christi

By PEDRO GARCIA

HOMETOWN HEALTHCARE
Dr. John McNeill and Twin Fountains cure the community with neighborly care

By PEDRO GARCIA

MISSION POSSIBLE: OPERATION BEAT CANCER
Renaissance Gastroenterology takes the fight to colon cancer with medical innovations

By PEDRO GARCIA

DR. ROBOTO
Austin Drs. Fox and Manuel Utilize Cutting-Edge Technology with Stryker’s Mako

By KIM ESTES

MEDICINE FOR THE MUSES
Dr. Evan D. Collins and The Houston Methodist Hand & Upper Extremity Center Care For The Arts

By PEDRO GARCIA
From Service in the Sea to Sawdust in San Antonio

Retired-Lieutenant Commander Stu Steward has travelled the world twice over, helped construct iconic casinos, and he continues to gift his neighbors and family woodworking wonders

BY JEFF WOOD

TU STEWARD would tell you he’s a very lucky man, but often times, when you go through a man’s life and his successes, you’ll find that luck had little to do with it. Steward had a 23 year career in the U.S. Navy as an engineer, retiring as a Lieutenant Commander, and he turned that success into a career as an engineer for many casinos in Nevada.

Born in 1933 in Alabama, Steward was raised on a farm with no electricity, growing cotton, corn and peanuts with his mother, father and one brother. In 1941, they moved to Columbus, Georgia, where his parents took a job in a textile mill during World War II. It was here that Steward graduated high school in 1950, and two weeks later, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy. “I was more interested in something like a trade school, rather than going to college. So after researching all my possibilities, I felt that the Navy offered good training for a career and had stability and long-term benefits,” recounts Steward.

After completing weeks of recruit training, Steward began to attend Class “A” Engineman School, and Stu’s odyssey in the Navy as an engineer lead him to serve and work on many naval ships. He travelled all over the world to places like Taiwan, Thailand, Japan, the Philippines, Korea and Okinawa. “I served in the Navy for 23 years, and 18 of those years were spent on a ship at sea,” laughs Steward.

But it was a stop in the United States where Stu found the love of his life, Barbara. “I was aboard a ship in San Diego, and a friend of hers knew a friend of mine and she introduced us. I fell in love, and we got married on February 14th, 1956. This February 14th, we will have been married for 60 years,” beams Steward.

Steward’s engineering degree also put him on the forefront of nuclear power. While Barbara and Stu resided in places like Hawaii, California and Idaho, his training led him to Galway, New York, where he found himself in a new technology the world had never seen. “When we went to New York, I went to the construction site of a nuclear power plant prototype, which was going to be installed on a ship on the east coast and I worked on it for a year. Because of that, I got promoted from enlisted to officer in the Navy,” recalls Steward.

Barbara and Stu lived the Navy life for 23 years with their two children, a son and a daughter, finding homes wherever the Navy stationed them. When Steward retired from the Navy in 1973 as a Lieutenant Commander, he took his talents as a successful engineer to Nevada. “We moved to a small town called Boulder City, Nevada. We felt it would be a good environment for our high school age children. I worked for a couple of home builders before accepting a position with...”
the Lakeview Company,” says Steward.

The Lakeview Company was interested in building hotels and casinos in Nevada and hired Steward as their chief engineer to supervise construction. It was his job to hire and train personnel for operation and maintenance of the water and wastewater treatment facility, as well as all the mechanical and electrical facilities associated with the property. The Lakeview Company and Steward worked well as a business, and together, they constructed such casinos as Railroad Pass Casino, Gold Strike Hotel and Monte Carlo. His time with the Lakeview Company went so well that even after he retired from the company in 1988, they kept him on as a consultant. “I remained on the payroll until the day we left Nevada in 2006. I stopped at the personnel office on my way out of Nevada and terminated my employment with Lakeview Company, however I continue to receive occasional phone calls from them for advice or information,” shares Steward with a grin.

But retirement didn’t slow Stu or Barbara down. Even before they settled into Independence Village in San Antonio, they traveled in a motor home wherever they saw fit. One of their favorite locations was in Arizona every spring to watch the spring training camp of their favorite baseball team, the San Diego Padres. “It was really nice to take Barbara out there for spring training,” recalls Steward, “The weather’s nice and there’s fifteen teams in the Phoenix area, so you could see anybody. One day, you could watch the Giants, and the next day, you could watch the Dodgers in totally different ball parks.”

After traveling the country, Stu and his wife decide to settle in San Antonio at Independence Village to stay close to their son and be a part of their grandchildren’s lives. The golden years have given them four grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Stu also stays busy helping out his community within Independence Village. In his hobby studio, Steward
continues to put his engineering talents to use with a workshop he uses to build things for others. “I have my tools and hobby stuff in there. If a neighbor needs help with a project, I can lend a hand or make it for them. It helps me keep busy,” shares Steward proudly.

Life in San Antonio at the Independence Village has been good to Stu Steward, and he is grateful for the blessings he has come across, but he feels none of it would have been possible without his wife Barbara. Steward explains that, “She did so many things for our family and for the kids. She took care of them when I was out on the ships, and she was always ready to move whenever it came time. Sixty years is long time and I’m grateful for each one.”