Lee and Jim Bourg enjoy the benefits of their maintenance-free house at Independence Village.

By Amy Morgan

Grateful that they have remained safe and healthy on the grounds of Independence Village, Lee and Jim Bourg enjoy the benefits of their maintenance-free house and peaceful Cul-de-sac. Their two-bedroom home offers space to pursue their interests without being overwhelmed, while their screened porch and yard allow their two rescue pups to romp. They’ve even found a silver lining in the COVID-19 changes. Lee’s book club resumed meeting this month in one of the outdoor gazebos, which brought back lovely memories of their daughter, Terri’s, wedding, held there three years ago.

Terri reconnected with her high school sweetheart when she helped her parents with their move to Independence Village five years ago, Lee said. Returning to the gazebo reminded them of the joyous occasion.

The couple looks forward to returning to normal activities soon. Lee, known as “the hostess with the mostest,” greets guests when open houses are held at the Clubhouse. In addition to book club, she plays bridge weekly. Jim swims in the evenings, and they attend monthly programs that feature footage from scuba dives in various waters. They both enjoy dinner club, where they join several dozen friends for special gourmet meals prepared by Independence Village’s chef. He’s always looking to introduce a new delicacy, they said – although the staff put the kibosh on his idea to serve rabbit one April. “It felt too much like eating the Easter Bunny,” Lee said, which caused Jim to guffaw at the memory.

Jim began his career at Proctor and Gamble in Cincinnati in the early 1960s. His specialty was transportation —today described as supply chain. He eventually moved the family to McAllen, where he became Vice President of the Wornick Company, which created, packaged and distributed MRE’s for the military. His meals fed service members during Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Lee mentioned in particular how delicious their freeze-dried shrimp turned out to be. She said she encountered a beautiful tower of shrimp cocktail at a party and was stunned to realize that it had been reconstituted.

In the 36 years they lived in McAllen, the couple raised Terri and son, Cory, and served at St. Mark Methodist Church. Jim was treasurer and established a foundation that endowed college scholarships. Lee served on “just about every committee the Methodist church had,” she said. The couple currently attends Coker United Methodist Church where they enjoy the “absolutely wonderful music program.”

Lee spent decades teaching school, eventually becoming a counselor and principal in the Valley. After “retiring” she taught adults who were pursuing alternative teaching certification. The Bourgs were active in a symphony group that brought the San Antonio Symphony to the area. Performers would arrive mid-week, hold events in both Harlingen and McAllen, play a pops concert and conclude with an opera Saturday night. Lee loved the occasion to dress in formal attire and the opportunity to dine with the musicians after their performances. She fondly recalls sitting at the feet of Roger Williams while he played piano during a private party.

Jim also is passionate about sports. He hopes college football will be able to resume, so he can root for his beloved University of Michigan Wolverines.

For more information about the lifestyle offered at Independence Village, call (210) 764-5260, or go to www.independencevillage.com.