

THE CONNECTION

POLO | TENNIS | LIFESTYLES | REAL ESTATE

by Diana Lippert

Resident of "The Polo Condos" since 1977
Realtor Advisor Since 1988



Charles Ward

Ambassador Glen Holden

Interview with Charles Ward

"The Good Life, Savoring Every Minute Of It"



a Visit with Founder of Idea Works Global

CHARLES WARD

"Always stand for excellence and exceed expectations and you'll always have business for life."

Charles Ward

I had the distinct pleasure and honor to meet with Charles at Luckys to interview him as he most graciously accepted my request.

Such a gentleman with such an impressive and full life story.

Key to living life to the full

"Experiment and try different things. When you find your passion, you have it made for the rest of your life." Charles found his passion in communication.

"He gets up at 4:00 in the morning, curious about what's going on?"

Beginnings

Charles was born in Houston, Texas; his father an oil and gas attorney and his mother was a housewife until Charles was in high school. She then became a fashion director for a major Texas retailer and worked with all the top International fashion directors of the time.

Bill Blass, Diane Von Furstenburg and Oscar de la Renta in producing musical fashion shows with trips to Paris, Florence, Mexican resorts and New York City. Charles first suit, at the age

of 16, was a Bill Blass. Charles had one brother who is now deceased.

Progression of events

Charles began his media and broadcasting career while a journalism student at the University of Texas.

He worked at the college radio station hosting the early Saturday morning show. He loved it from the start.

He then became a radio announcer for an Austin radio station.

6 months at the station, he says that KTBC in Austin had an opening for a TV news anchorman. He decided "he wanted to be a news anchor"

Even though Charles admitted" he knew nothing about being a news anchorman, his confidence came through and he was hired.

He was at KTBC for four years."

In 1970's, from KTBC, Charles decided to embark upon his own marketing company. "Charles sold his motorcycle for \$500.00 and founded and became President of Media Communications."

"By the time I started my marketing company at the age of 26, I was a minor celebrity in my town from my time as

a TV anchor and radio announcer and business flowed in," he notes.

He built Media Communications, a AAAA advertising and marketing agency with annual Billings of \$20million.

The company developed the award winning Texas traffic safety campaign, "Drive Friendly".

After closing his Houston office in 1984, not knowing what was next after retiring at 30+, a new adventure was soon on the horizon.

A former client suggested that he see if he could help a private concern raise funding to the tune of \$16 million for Skipper Dennis Conner and crew in the Americas Cup Yacht race. "He said he knows nothing about yachts, but he knows how to close and attract luxury brands as well as about the bottom line."

Charles responded, "I am not a sailor," nor is 90% of America, but what I know is what Americans love, and that is winning.

We are going to get patriotic sponsors because we are the best and we are going to win." His enthusiasm proved



contagious and he went on to attract a number of sponsors (at a minimum of \$1 million each) that the yachting industry had never before utilized and raised the \$16 million in required sponsorships, including sponsor Anheuser-Busch. To close the deal with Anheuser-Busch, for example, Charles offered to put their logo on the keel of the boat. The unveiling of the winning boat's keel (the secret of its success-) is never unveiled until after the race, thus it is an enormous draw. "Charles coordinated the celebration of the Americas Cup victory from Australia in 1987, including a reception at the White House with President Reagan and ticker tape Parade down Fifth Avenue, NYC.



*Charles Ward and Katie Turpin,
his indispensable partner
for 16 years.*

From yachting to the creation of Idea Works, a sports marketing company, to The Santa Barbara Polo Club. In 2001, Charles began marketing for the Dallas Las Colinas Polo Club. Then he met Pat Nesbitt in Palm Beach at a Black Tie dinner. "Based on our results at the Dallas Las Colinas Polo Club," Charles recalls, "Pat invited our firm to represent the Santa Barbara Polo Club." Jesse Pruitt, the President of the Las Colinas Polo Club at the time said, "Our Club changed dramatically from the day I met him. Within a few months of taking on the Club, Charles brought in sponsor contracts with hundreds of thousands of dollars and made our Club one of the best known in the USA." At SBPC Charles began by bringing in Bombardier Business Aircraft and later contracted with The Montecito Journal which has been the Clubs sponsor for 14 years. Sponsors today are Farmers and Merchants Bank, Silver Air, Engel & Volkers, Belmond El Encanto and Tara Gray jewelers (she has designed the polo ring for the players for the finals

of the tournaments) which is given to each winner along with a trophy. Prior to his marketing work, the Santa Barbara Polo Club had no national contracts. They had a website announcing sponsorships at \$500.00. When Charles arrived at SBPC, he said, "take off the website, we have to charge." Charles has successfully marketed the naming rights to all the tournaments, and has helped design innovative signage and activation programs, along with the introduction of corporate and media sponsor flags on polo match days. He says, "It's not like work to organize polo events for the blue ribbon clients we work with. We get great satisfaction from seeing our clients get a return on investments from our efforts." Charles indispensable business partner at the helm is Katie Turpin. She has a marketing and communications degree from Holy Cross College. Katie has the qualities of determination, persistence and utmost integrity which

are important to Charles. Charles always makes a distinguished entrance at the beginning of the polo finals as he rides in one of the exotic cars of the car sponsor followed by rider carrying the US flag and the two opposing teams. "Charles has worked with 5 different managers in the 17 years he has been at SBPC and he enjoys working with David Sigman and Kerri. "They are doing a great job." Charles is held in high esteem. Texas Director of Tiffany & Company: "Charles is the ultimate networker. He has a keen sense of how companies and individuals can benefit by working together, and he makes it happen. I enjoy watching him work." Charles Ward's legacy may be that he "transformed corporate sports marketing in yacht racing and polo while having a great life."



Charles Ward, a young TV News Anchor at President Lyndon B. Johnson's Texas ranch advising the media that the White House Press Briefing would begin in 15 minutes