

CHEF KOPELOW'S
EATING FOR POWER
// THE NEXT CHAPTER
IN HEALTHY LIVING
// FEATURED ARTISTS //
DAYTRIPPING TO
LAGUNA // CHARLES
WARD, THE SUMMER
MAYOR OF MONTECITO

EXTRA-TV'S STUNNING
DR. ANNA GUANCHE
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CHARLES WARD: THE SUMMER MAYOR OF MONTECITO



Charles Ward speaking at Annual Santa Barbara Polo Party in Montecito. Photos by Kim Kumpart Photography.



Business Partners Katie Turpin and Charles Ward at the Centennial Anniversary Celebration for Santa Barbara Polo & Racquet Club.



Charles Ward and Ambassador Glen Holden at Santa Barbara Polo & Racquet Club.

FEARLESS, FORMIDABLE, AND FORTUITOUS ... CHARLES WARD CARVED OUT HIS OWN NICHE 34 YEAR AGO BY REALIZING THERE WAS A SELECT MARKET TO TAP INTO LUXURY BRANDS. SO, IN 1980 HE STARTED IDEA WORKS WHICH HAS REPRESENTED SOME OF THE WEALTHIEST COMPANIES IN EXISTENCE. HOWEVER, MORE THAN JUST SELLING AN IMAGE, WARD PRIDES HIMSELF ON CREATING PARTNERSHIPS AND SPONSORSHIPS BETWEEN THE HIGH-END BRANDS AND THE WEALTHY FAMILIES THAT PARTICIPATE IN SUCH LUXURY SPORTS AS POLO AND YACHT RACING.

As industrious as that sounds, Ward is the first to tell you, he does not take himself too seriously. He definitely enjoys life and he's a bit of a character.

Ward began an advertising agency in Austin, Texas with \$500 that he received from the sale of a motorcycle. He had never graduated college, had never taken an advertising class or even worked at an advertising agency. But that wasn't the first time he had been audacious.

Rewind to his early 20's when he walked into a radio-TV station and unabashedly asked for a radio job. Even though they told him there were thousands wanting jobs and he had never even handled a tape recorder, he said, "True, but I have the courage to interview anyone you name if you show me how to run the tape recorder."

They put him on the University of Texas station and in six months he was asked to anchor the weekend TV news. Even though they told him again why he shouldn't, he told them why he should and he prevailed. For the next three years he interviewed everyone from the governor on down.

"You couldn't say no to me," he recalls.

He got entry to an exclusive interview with convicted murderer James Cross, which he filmed at his own expense because the station wouldn't pay overtime, and he put it on air unedited. Then he gave his two weeks notice.

After a reporter wrote a story about him saying he would be starting a communications company within the next few months, the governor's office called him to ask if he could step it up so he worked on their project.

And so it went. Suddenly Ward was in advertising and his company became the first AAAA Advertising agency in Austin, Texas. His gross

billings were 20 million a year with offices in Austin and Houston.

During this time, Ward had one short marriage, and since then, he says, he's been married to his work.

He closed up shop in 1985 when the marketplace began to falter and the next day he was in a meeting in San Diego discussing raising \$16 million in funds to sponsor the America's Cup through Idea Works, the consulting company he had begun in 1980.

"I was free to just pick up and go," said Ward. "You could not have had this adventurous life I've had if you were not single. And that started my work with America's Cup and sports marketing."

And luxury marketing, like yachting and polo, didn't know what happened until Ward came along and found a way to marry corporate sponsors with the high-end sports.

Fourteen years ago, Ward began going to Santa Barbara because of his involvement with polo and the Santa Barbara Polo & Racquet Club (the season begins in May through August). He rents a cottage in Montecito for the duration and can be seen tooling around in some of the luxury cars he represents, even though he ships his own car there as well (hence the nickname the Summer Mayor of Montecito).

Along with his company Vice President, Katie Turpin, Ward runs Idea Works out of Dallas to take care of his current clients which include Bombardier, the longest running sponsor of Polo in North America, Westlake O'Gara Coach, El Encanto, a luxury hotel and resort in Santa Barbara, Lucchese Boots, Nespresso Coffee Makers, and Village Properties in Santa Barbara.

He says he's very proud that he changed the sport of yacht racing by bringing in corporate sponsors 27 years ago.

"We brought in more corporate sponsors than had ever been involved in one of those races before," says Ward. "And I think we've had an accomplishment in changing Polo which is not in the mainstream of the horse business, but in the mainstream of luxury. Before us, I don't think Ferrari or Bombardier thought about sponsoring Polo."

Ward's advice: "Find your passion and just go for it. As long as I enjoy doing this, I will keep doing it." **WM**

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