

## LONGTIME RIVER HAVEN MARINA OWNERS:

# POWELLS LAUNCH INTO RETIREMENT

By DEBRA BUTLER

The Steinhatchee Chamber of Commerce recently bid Tim and Shari Powell farewell, presenting the recently-retired River Haven Marina owners with a plaque in recognition of their many years of service to the community.

What started out as "something new to do" in 1998 when the couple noticed a classified ad in the newspaper, ended up launching the Powells on a

22-year journey of festivals and fishing tournaments in the coastal community of Steinhatchee.

Living in a congested area of Virginia, not far from Washington D.C., Tim and Shari were bored with retired life and trying to decide what they wanted to get into next when they came across an ad in the Washington Post.

Recently retired from his career as a building contractor, Tim and his



Retiring River Haven Marina owners Tim and Shari Powell were honored with a "castaway" party last week and presented with a personalized anchor retrieval ball signed by friends and well-wishers who attended.

son made the first trip to Steinhatchee, Florida in 1998 to look at the marina advertised for sale. The two

or three-line classified ad was actually for Sea Hag, which was basically just a marina store at that time.

On the second trip, also in 1998, both Tim and Shari came down and hooked up with a realtor.

"Our realtor drove us around Steinhatchee, and River Haven was not for sale, but we liked the layout of it better than Sea Hag," Shari said. "River Haven had the boat lift, the motel and the cottage. We asked the realtor to call the owner of River Haven to see if he would sell. The owner was Fred Morgan. Fred told the realtor that yes, he would sell it."

On August 1, 1998, Tim and Shari became the new owners of River Haven Marina.

"We were ready for a change and we got it," Shari said.

Within the first two months of ownership, a pair of hurricanes swept through the Big Bend area, and Tim found himself being interviewed by meteorologist Jim Cantore of The Weather Channel while Shari watched on television from Virginia.

Although their marina was the only one in town to be spared by flood waters, the Powells began wondering what they had gotten themselves into.

Some 22 years later — on Dec. 6, 2020 — friends and well-wishers gathered at the Powell's Riverview House to honor the couple with a "castaway" party in tribute to the couple entering their second attempt at retirement.

The fire pit roared and stories were shared, as attendees teared up and offered their best wishes to two people who mean the world to the town of Steinhatchee.

Symbolic of saying farewell to their "ball and chain" business, the Powells were presented with a bright-orange anchor retrieval ball signed by all attending partygoers.

The Powells have given generously to their community over the years, supporting numerous causes.

"Tim and Shari have graciously donated the use of their property to allow us to provide nightly entertainment at the Fiddler Crab Festival for the past 10 years. Without their support, the festival would not be what it is today," said Steinhatchee Chamber President Pam Wessels.

Of their fondest memories from over the years, the Powells will miss the people that they have met the most.

"You see women customers coming into the marina that are pregnant and then years later their grown children are coming back. It's then that you realize how long you have been in business," Shari said.

Owning a marina and motel is a full-time commitment. Many holidays have come and gone that Tim and Shari were unable to travel together to see family.

That is all going to change, and the Powells will now have more time to spend with their nine-year-old granddaughter.

During a recent tour of the Riverview House, the Powell's vacation rental which can sleep up to 14 people, Tim Powell said, "this will be our job now."

The Powells will not be

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On behalf of the Steinhatchee Chamber of Commerce, President Pam Wessels (left) recently presented a plaque to Tim and Shari Powell in recognition of their years of service to the community.

LET'S TOAST TO THE

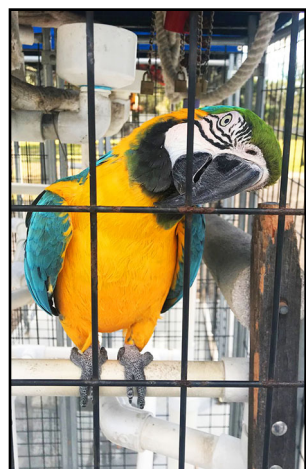
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Unofficial River Haven Marina mascots Louie and Charlie, will no longer greet customers at the main entrance or entertain admirers on the back deck. (Above) Charlie, a 21-year-old male blue and gold macaw, has the largest vocabulary of the two.

Merry Christmas

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