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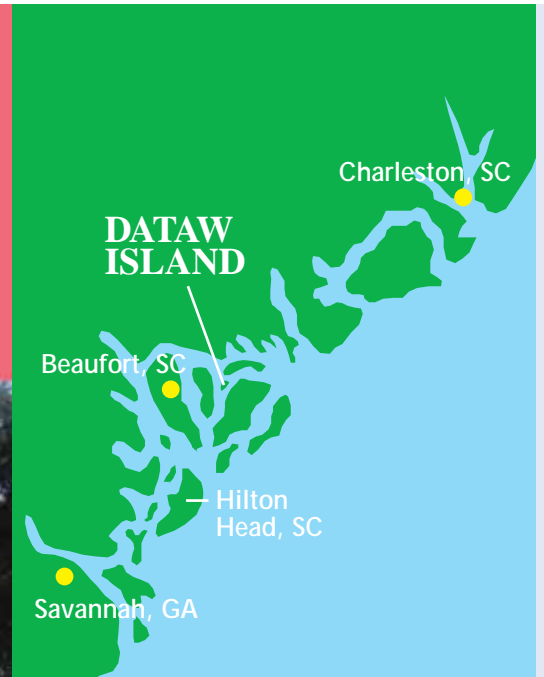
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EYES on RETIREMENT



By Liz Mitchell



A TALE OF ONE MAN'S PROMISE

Women don't forget a promise.

Just ask Alan and Yvonne Schuster about promises.

They met at an NCO club at Ft. Jackson. He really wanted to talk to the lovely, quiet lady and asked if she liked to dance.

"Not really," she replied.

"Well, I don't either, so we could get married," he responded, not intending to take rejection lightly. Four months later, they were married.

With college and military stints completed, Alan accepted a job with *Golf* magazine in New York City. After a few years there, his boss went to work for Schaffer Brewing Company and offered him a job in public relations at a huge salary increase.

"I didn't know what public relations was, but I liked beer," said Alan, then in his early 20s.

As spokesperson for a beer company which sponsored major sports events, Alan was in a young man's heaven – sports and beer, "What's not to like?" he recalled.

For 20 years the job brought him in contact with many interesting personalities and events. Bobby Thompson, legendary baseball player, remains in his arsenal of world-class friends. At 29, Alan managed the beer company's exhibit at the New York World's Fair during its two-year run. Later, he took charge of building a replica of *Yacht America* for his company.

When Stroh's Brewing Company bought Schaffer, the Schusters moved to the Detroit area. There Alan continued marketing beer for another 10 years.

When offered early retirement in 1994, Alan was tempted by the thought of avoiding the 6:30 am alarm clock. He told Yvonne he thought retirement would be a good idea.

"Okay, I'll start packing for South Carolina," she said, recalling a promise Alan had made when she agreed to marry him 33 years earlier.

"Why?" Alan wondered.

"Because you promised," she reminded him.

Alan had forgotten the promise, but understood that Yvonne would have her way. Happy and comfortable years outside the big cities of New York and Detroit were soon replaced with retirement planning along the southeast coast.

"I was born here. I love South Carolina," Yvonne said, offering no further explanation for her wish to return to her roots. She loves the weather, her flower gardening and finally being at home.

After they had visited coastal locations from Virginia to Georgia, the Schusters ended up in a beautiful waterfront bed-and-breakfast in Beaufort, South Carolina. Yvonne suggested a quick look at Dataw Island which a realtor had proposed to them during their destination shopping via phone calls and brochures.



"The first visit immediately made us think it might be the place for us," Alan explained. An avid golfer, he didn't need to sample the course to know it would be ideal. They purchased a lot and built a beautiful home.

Acknowledging the many features of upscale island living, just minutes from a small historic town, Alan also noted that a true unexpected bonus of their retirement life is the quality and number of new friends in their life.

People in Dataw and surrounding communities have become golfing and bridge friends. While working life in the city generated many friends who sometimes visit the Schusters in South Carolina, leisure activities have resulted in strong new relationships – a pleasant surprise of retirement and relocation.

Their two daughters and two grandchildren love to visit the quaint coastal location. One daughter lives in Scottsdale and one in Arlington.

Busy with community boards and committees, as well as golf, croquet and biking, Alan laughingly calls himself a tri-athlete. He taught an opera appreciation course for several years in the University of South Carolina Beaufort's lifelong learning program. He then developed a course called "Anything but Opera," which introduced his astonished music-loving groupies to rap, rock 'n roll, country and other types of music.

The Schusters value the challenges of activity and involvement along with leisurely living among like-minded families. Alan, now 71, and Yvonne, 67, don't think about age. It's only a number which they have to calculate when asked.

A promise made in youthful exuberance has led this happy couple to their lovely retirement lifestyle. ♦

Liz Mitchell writes from Beaufort, SC.