The Admirals Club of Austin celebrates the 56th Annual Coronation Ball.
Debs from Texas and around the world sailed into Austin for the 56th Annual Admirals Club Coronation Ball weekend.

The action was non-stop for 17 visiting duchesses, 5 returning royalty, and 9 incoming royalty comprising the 2017-2018 Admirals Club Court. It all began with a special Friday luncheon prepared by David Garrido at Tarry House for the debutantes and their mothers, while the girls’ fathers got to know their daughters escorts over Cooper’s BBQ and a round of golf at Butler Park Pitch and Putt. A brief rehearsal then allowed just enough time for a quick wardrobe change before being received at the Governor’s Mansion for a cocktail party in their honor hosted by First Lady Cecilia and Governor Greg Abbott. This was unanimously considered a highlight of the weekend for the young college students who enjoyed two hours of enlightening conversation about politics and the future of our State with Texas’ First Family. But their evening was just getting started.

Next it was off the rooftop terrace of the JW Marriott to meet over 400 club members who had assembled for the traditional Friday night Cocktail Party. By 10:00, with a full day behind them, the duchesses, reigning royalty, and their escorts were then able to wind down on a riverboat cruise on beautiful Lady Bird Lake. They would need the rest because Saturday started early and moved fast.

Brunch at Headliners Club, rehearsals, more rehearsals, and a couple of hours in the Glam Room with hair stylists and makeup artists got everybody ready for the main event. The Grand Ballroom of the JW Marriott had been transformed into a tropical paradise befitting the theme of this year’s party – “Islands in the Stream”. In front of a crowd of almost 1000 guests, the presentation began with the return of last year’s royalty, Princesses Nancy Prickett, Alexandra Sherwood, Claudia Taylor, Marietta Wise and Queen Barbara Laughlin. This was followed by the debut of out-of-town duchesses Allison Buaas, Katie Dalton, Berkeley Fajta, Mary Grant Hall, Lauren Herms, Sophie Alcexis Hollis, Alyshol Holman, Meagan House, Lindsey Jacobs, Georgia Jeffrey, Elizabeth Ann Kettler, Callie McNamara, Grace Paukune, Maddy Paul, Sara Kate Puff, Courtney Schmuck and Rose Wallace.

The identity of the incoming royalty had been a closely guarded secret, but it can now be revealed that Princesses Mills Alexander, Claudia Covert, Madeline Hawkins, Allison Klein, Annabelle Plater, Virginia Simms, Caroline Webber, Hannah Windham and Queen Yates Auler have taken their place among past honorees in the long history of the Admirals Club.

Formalities concluded, it was now party time! Dancing to the music of Dallas’ Limelight Band was going strong at 1:00 a.m. when the venue slowly shifted to the private Hospitality Suite, which maintained the energy much later than this writer could continue to observe.
2016-2017 Royalty with the Duchesses and their escorts

Princess Virginia Simmons and her father Admiral Joe Simmons

Princess Annalise Plater and her father Admiral Bryan Plater

Princess Madeline Hawkins and her father Admiral John Hawkins

Princess Mills Alexander and her father Admiral Wick Alexander

Princess Hannah Windham and her father Admiral Jimmy Windham

Duchesses of the Royal Court. Front Row: Madeline Paul, Meagan House, Sophie Alice Hollis, Caroline McNamara, Elizabeth Ann Kehl, Lindsey Jacobs, Georgia Jeffrey, Courtney Schmuck second row: Allison Buaas, Grace Paulume, Lauren Herring, Kathleen Dalton, Third row: Sara Katherine Puff, Berkeley Faljo, Abigail Holman, Mary Grant Hall, Rose Wallace
Princess Caroline Weber and her father Admiral Phil Weber

Princess Claudia Covert and her father Admiral Brent Covert

Princess Allison Klein and her father Admiral Michael Klein

2016-2017 Queen Barbara Laughlin with 2017-2018 Queen Yates Auler

Incoming Royalty Escorts: Daniel Frishman, Matt Duke, Jack Dobson and Max Villareal

David Laughlin , Allison Laughlin, Queen Barbara Laughlin, Fleet Admiral Patrick Laughlin

Lacie Hollis, Mrs.Linda Rowland and Sophie Aliece Hollis

Duchesses Abigail Holman and Duchess Elizabeth Ann Kettler

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The Admirals Club was founded in 1961 to support the Chamber of Commerce’s Austin Aqua Festival and to promote the City of Austin as a business and tourism destination. The ten-day event included boat races, parades and culturally diverse theme nights as well as the Admirals Club Coronation Ball. In the spirit of Aqua Fest, the Admirals Club continues its long-standing traditions with a weekend of festivities including a mother-daughter luncheon, a father-escort golfing event, a cocktail party celebrating the Admirals Club Court crowned 50 years ago, and a late-night riverboat cruise to provide the visiting duchesses and escorts a view of the Austin skyline from Lady Bird Lake. This weekend culminates with the Fifty-sixth Annual Coronation Ball which will honor the reigning Austin royalty, our seventeen visiting duchesses, and will crown the 2018 Austin Queen and her Royal Court to reign for the year ahead.
The Admirals Club of Austin is pleased to announce a donation to the Beyond Batten Disease Foundation. Presenting the check is Fleet Admiral Mark Chandler, Admiral Jay Brown, Charlotte and Craig Benson with the Beyond Batten Disease Foundation, Mandy and Admiral Scott Norman.

Admiral Mark and Kelley Hawkins, Admiral Bill and Carlotta McLean and Admiral Jay and Sabrina Brown

Fleet Admiral Frank and Melissa Jackson

Fleet Admiral Laurens and Melanie Fish

Admiral Stephen and Suzanne Erickson

Admiral Tim Taylor and Princess Claudia Taylor

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