

Michael Weitzman

by Doug Kent

Many of our stories begin in Brooklyn New York. This month's July/August Prime Timer or Mr. Summer (Mr. S) as we will call him, began on April 12, 1944 in that same city. The third child, behind two sisters, born to the stay-at-home mother and barber father soon found out that parents do not always stay together. At age 5 divorce hit the household and Mr. S found himself being raised by his loving grandmother. Elementary, Junior and High School were pretty much uneventful except for the fact that Mr. S was packing on the pounds. His part time work in a Bagel Shop did not help the situation. He graduated in 1961 and accepted a position with the Federal Government at the Brooklyn Army Terminal as a clerical specialist due to his ability to type fast.

He worked there four and a half years and then enlisted in the Naval Reserves. During training he confided to the Chaplain that he was gay and much to his surprise he was discharged from the Navy, but was eligible for service in the Army. A letter concerning his sexual orientation sent by a health care professional to the Army closed this chapter of his life and he did not serve in either branch. However, he was no longer eligible for Federal Civil Service and could not return to his old position at the Army Terminal. He was living at home, taking part time jobs to make ends meet. Eventually his typing skills were the catalyst for a clerical position at the Juilliard School of Music, which he kept for about a year.

It was in 1970, after Mr. S lost 70 pounds, that Weight Watchers became interested in this now fit, young, and handsome male. Weight Watchers felt he would be the ideal candidate to conduct meetings. He also did some modeling work on a part time basis for the Weight Watchers organization. His involvement with Weight Watchers escalated to higher positions and eventually he was promoted to Southeast Regional Manager and assisted the Weight Watchers franchisees in growing their business. He purchased a condo in Florida and enjoyed traveling all through the Southeast for the next 10 years.

In 1980 he left the corporate office to work with a Palm Beach franchise and was the VP of Operations for 11 years. He left this position and decided to accept life on a more casual basis. He

studied massage therapy and eventually studied computer technology and worked on his own for a short period of time. He then began to work for various companies in the tech field. In 2000 he had some back surgery and after his recovery, he worked as an independent contractor in the computer technology field. In 2008 he retired and has never looked back since.

As a child Mr. S did have some encounters with other boys. This experimentation led to the realization at age 18 that he did indeed like men. At age 23 he had an apartment in Manhattan and he met his first partner with whom he lived for 10 years. They decided to part as a couple after the first year, but stayed close until his friend passed in 1984. Mr. S had many encounters as he traveled throughout the Southeast with Weight Watchers, until he met his long-time partner J.R. in 1979. They bought a home and spent the next 30 years together. With the passing of J.R., Mr. S struggled with grief and finally landed back in Fort Lauderdale. Friends introduced him to Prime Timers and eased him back to single gay life. In 2011 he met his current partner, Brad, and they share a beautiful home in Fort Lauderdale.

Mr. S still enjoys messing with technical stuff and computers. He enjoys his music, the Prime Timer Social Scene, has become a gym rat keeping his Weight Watchers body in shape and he cruises much of the time. That is on ships. An affable man, with a big smile, Mr. S enjoys life to the fullest. Identify him with all this information?

