

## Scott Jensen

by Doug Kent

How does one go from chronic alcohol abuse to sober, from homelessness to a high a rise condo in Fort Lauderdale? This journey in life makes for interesting reading.

Mr. August (Mr. A) began life on August 22, 1959 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the youngest of 4 children. The family functioned well, and the early childhood was fairly typical. His half brother and sister, and his sister all made it through elementary, junior high and high school without major problems. Mr. A struggled and began his drinking at the tender age of 14 with his Grandfather being his major enabler. This relationship set into motion a life struggle with alcohol. By the age of 16, Mr. A's grades fell, but he managed to graduate from Lincoln High School in 1977. By 1979, Mr. A had his first gay relationship and managed to acquire 2 DUI's that landed him into his first alcohol treatment program.

Sober now, Mr. A moved to Seattle, Washington where he met his second partner, and he secured a position as a records clerk. His partner was a legal secretary. Mr. A began drinking again but managed to keep his job. They moved to Washington D.C. in 1981 and stayed together till 1983 when they parted. Mr. A was forced to move back with family in Naperville, Illinois. His father passed in 1984, and his mother passed 6 months later.

In 1984 Mr. A moved in with friends in Chicago and he found a gay recovery program that same year. He became very active in the program and remained sober for the next 10 years. In 1987, Mr. A met Randal and they stayed together until 2001 when Randal passed away. However, it was Randall's influence during the latter part of the relationship that caused Mr. A's decision to return to alcohol once again. It was also in 2001 that Mr. A's sister was tragically killed in the 9/11 twin tower terror attack.

In February 2002 Mr. A once again entered a treatment program at the Gateway Westside Treatment Center, where he dealt with his dependence on alcohol and his newly diagnosed Bipolar condition. He was transferred from the inpatient unit to a half way house to continue to work on his recovery.

And work he did. He took a position with Radio America as an Account Representative where he worked for the next three years. In 2005, Mr. A suffered a mini-stroke, and he went on disability from work. His chronic pain, Bipolar personality and his recovery were all hampering his ability to work. Later that year, an error in his disability paperwork caused payments to stop, and he became homeless in Oak Park, Illinois. In 2007, an organization called West Suburban PADS provided a disability attorney, that recovered his disability payments, and provided housing assistance for Mr. A. It was through this organization that Mr. A became involved in matters concerning the homeless, and with persons with mental issues. He sat on boards, became an advocate and worked tirelessly for these causes. In 2014, Mr. A moved to Florida and continued to work on his recovery, as well as his other causes.

He began volunteer work at the Pride Center. In February of 2015, he became involved with the Prime Timers, and in that same year met his now partner. Mr. A maintains his residence in Wilton Manors, but spends much of his time at his partner's high rise condo in Fort Lauderdale. There you have it; that is how a person moves from homeless to high rise.

