

Herb Diamond

by Doug Kent

Would you think that a person who unfortunately never knew his mother and never developed a close relationship with his father, and was partially raised by his paternal grandmother would ever turn out to be a socially conscious, engaging and very funny Prime Timer?

Let's explore this incredibly "Wonderful Life".

In grammar school he was never chosen for anything due to the fact he was short, chubby, wore glasses and was extremely smart. He was aware at age 8 that he enjoyed the company of men.

Upon graduating from High School at age 16 ½ he promptly ran away to San Francisco and held a typing job for one day, due to appendicitis. His father had to travel to San Francisco to sign for the operation and decided after the recovery that Mr. March had to go into the service. This extensive typing experience would eventually allow him at his induction into the Army to volunteer as the company clerk and become the only paratrooper-medic in the U.S. Army to never attend basic training, and become the lover of his commanding officer who was an Orthopedic Surgeon.

After 3 years, he was discharged from the Army, and he attended UCLA as a pre-med student, but in just 6 short months he decided he would not make a good physician. Like many washed out pre-med students before him, he chose a career of singing and dancing. He was accepted into the Los Angeles Civic Light Opera and quickly made his way to New York and Broadway. He played several roles in Broadway shows, notably "Annie Get Your Gun" and "Taming of the Shrew". While touring in "Annie" Lena Horne saw him perform and asked him to join her in Paris at the Lido as one of her back-up singers. He loved Paris and lived there for two years appearing in various revues and studied French and also cooking at the Cordon Bleu.

A world class guilt trip from his Dad found Mr. March returning to Los Angeles to take over the family shoe manufacturing business, along with many retail outlets. He returned to UCLA and received his degree in History and English and further found his joy in men.

On the morning of November 8, 1958, he met "Ski" and that evening Ski moved in and stayed for



43 years. Gay relationships never last.

In 1965 they adopted their first son who was 11 days old and in 1966 they adopted their second son who was 8 days old.

After selling off the family shoe business, Mr. March bought and worked at a Beauty Salon in Beverly Hills. "Ski" loved his work at the salon but Mr. March did not, so he began to lead tours, world-wide, on a part time basis for the next 30 years. Mr. March has been in 117 countries while leading tours for Olsen Travel and Travcoa. He became a collector of beautiful things from all over the world.

"Ski" passed away in 2000, a very low point in Mr. March's life, and after struggling alone for 7 years, Mr. March met a wonderful tennis partner in 2007 and they were legally married in 2008. Deciding that tennis was better in Fort Lauderdale, the Los Angeles home was sold, and they moved to Florida.

Mr. March is a volunteer with the American Lung Association, Starlight/Starbright Children's Foundation that works with terminally and chronically ill children and The Broward Center for Performing Arts. He is a docent at the Bonnet House and the Museum of Modern Art in Fort Lauderdale. He is very active in Prime Timers, is one of 12 Ambassadors of the Fort Lauderdale Centennial for next year, and is an avid tennis player.

If you have not figured out who Mr. March is, then one final clue, he has a very sharp wit and a very positive attitude towards life.