

Donald Harris

By Ken South

It was the first full year of the Great Depression, and Herbert Hoover was President. The [Chrysler](#) Building, the tallest man-made structure at the time, opened in New York City, and cartoon character *Betty Boop* made her debut. A flight of the Graf Zeppelin Airship took it from Germany to Brazil, while *Kentucky Fried Chicken* was founded by Colonel Harland Sanders.

It was 1930, when several famous Americans were born, including; [Don Shula](#), [Buzz Aldrin](#), and [Sandra Day O'Connor](#). And, on June 3rd, The Man of The Month, Mr. A, was also born, 5 years before his only brother in Mineola, Long Island, NY. As a result of the depression, the family was forced to move several times around New York State. First to Poughkeepsie, then to Peekskill, where Mr. A attended grade school. Then on to Massapequa, but there was no high school there, so he attended HS in Amityville, graduating in 1949. He enrolled at Cortland State College, majoring in K-8th grade education, and graduated in 1953. For the next six years, he taught 6th graders in Eastchester, NY.

One of the delightful perks of the teaching profession is that summers are free for other adventures, Mr. A took full advantage of this fact. A friend suggested that he might enjoy a trip to California, suggesting a fun place to stay in LA, the YMCA! It was during this summer that Mr. A explored his long-held feelings that he was "different". He met a young lady, who became his "pal", and it was to her that he first acknowledged his secret, he recalls saying to Sandy; "I think I may have homosexual tendencies!". His experiences that summer at Laguna beach and his visits to several gay bars, confirmed his suspicions! He fully embraced San Francisco and took a teaching position in Redwood City. He enjoyed teaching several different grades there and 36 years later, he was ready to retire. While in San Francisco, he met his first partner Jack. They relished their 16 years together until Jack's passing. Mr. A remembers their favorite bar was *The Toolbox*. Mr. A and Jack had a mutual friend, Bob, who after a time, became

partners with Mr. A and they moved to south Florida in 1991 to the Island Club. Their 14-year relationship ended when Bob passed away. Mr. A met his current partner, Terry, while on a cruise in 2011, he then moved into John Knox Village in January of 2016.

The couple enjoys a cordial relationship with Mr. A's nephew and two nieces. All involved with his move to John Knox Village.

Over the years, Mr. A has had a passion for travel. He took advantage of his free summers to explore the world. One summer was spent touring South East Asia, one exploring South America, and another enjoying the "Old World" of Europe, including Greece. And there have been numerous cruises to the East, West, and South Caribbean.

Mr. A was also one of the founders of Prime Timers of South Florida, attending the very first meeting of the group.

