

# Jefy Gaines

By Ken South

President Truman launched the Marshall Plan in 1948, NYC's Idlewild Field was dedicated, (later JFK Airport), and the Kinsey Report, "*Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*", was published. While on Broadway, crowds went to see *South Pacific*. And, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of January, in the Bronx, Mr. August joined his family following his older brother, with both boys sharing the same birthday date, 5 years apart!

Soon after Mr. A's birth, the family moved to Far Rockaway, Queens. Mr. A attended grade school and most of high school there, but finished high school at Lynbrook Academy on Long Island, graduating in 1966. While still a HS student, his working life began by helping out in his dad's laundromat business.

Belknap College, NH is where Mr. A spent his freshman year, then transferring to Emerson College in Boston where he majored in theater arts, but later decided to do human services work.

He started his career at the Mattapan Chronic Disease Hospital, south of Boston. He spent the next few years, first as a medical worker, and then as a counselor for various populations, including methadone patients, at an alcohol detox program and a counselor for a therapeutic community in Roxbury.

In 1977 Mr. A moved to Fort Lauderdale, FL, and worked for Broward county in its Health and Rehabilitative services department. In 1976 Mr. A took the est training, a Werner Erhard self-awareness program, and became a volunteer thru 1982. After leaving human services work in 1979, he found himself traveling to and from Fort Lauderdale, Coconut Grove and Greenwich Village in NYC, where he worked at the *Pink Pussycat* boutique.

The early 80's, to 2010 were spent in real estate. He started his own company, *Gainesway Reality* in 1988. A successful enterprise, it eventually employed over 40 people, but like other real-estate businesses, faced hard times in the 2008 financial crunch.

Mr. A's first gay relationship was brief, but intense. He met Vinny while in college in Boston. While they could not sustain their partnership, Vinny filled a big part of his heart for many years to come.

After Vinny, he met Mary Margarita in Boston, had an 18-month relationship, living together as a couple. Mr. A considers himself, to be non-binary as a political statement, he and Mary remained friends until her death in 2014.

The (TM) Transcendental Meditation movement in the US was introduced by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Mr. A. became a TM student in 1973 and practices meditation to this day.

One night in 1983, at the *Roof Top Supper Club*, he met his next "significant other", Phil. For a year and a half (1989-1990) they had an intense, loving, though problematic, relationship.

Retiring in 2010, Mr. A has an active life in the community. He attends the library for their classes and groups. He returned to his love of the theatre in 2013, by creating performance workshops and theater pieces for *Seniors and Friends of Seniors*. He is an MC at the *Open Mike* group, presently on line through Zoom.

He is a member of Prime Gentlemen, SAGE and the Pride Center where he co-hosts the Wednesday Drop-in. Mr. A performs with the *Galt Players*, the *After-Work Players*, and the *Sea Side Players*. He keeps his hand in the graphic arts by participating in the *Broward Art Guild*. and he thoroughly enjoys his participation in Prime Gentlemen activities.

