

## **Matt Gill**

**By Ken South**

"My Fair Lady" opened on Broadway while "As The World Turns" and "The Price is Right" made their debut on black and white televisions across the nation. Young mothers were delighted to find disposable diapers available. as was the chance to use a non-stick fry pan in the kitchen. Teenagers screamed in their living rooms watching Elvis on the Ed Sullivan Show and they lined up to see "The Ten Commandments" at their local movie theater.

The year was 1956, when President Eisenhower announced his run for a second term. On February 5<sup>th</sup>, the last day of the VII Winter Olympic Games in Cortina d' Ampezzo, Italy, an Aquarius baby, our Mr. June, was born the youngest of four boys to his family in Providence, R.I.

Mr. J attended elementary school and later graduated from Pilgrim, HS in Warwick, R.I. in 1974. He enjoyed his time on the school's hockey team and spending summers sailing on Narragansett Bay. He attended Ohio State for a while and then the University of Rhode Island graduating with a degree in textiles in 1979. Between his junior and senior years, he took on an adventure by hitch hiking from coast to coast.

Following graduation, Mr. J found himself in Manhattan working in the textile industry and men's clothing business which included living in Milan in 94-95. After living in Manhattan for 15 years and Ridgefield, CT for 8, all while working in the textile and apparel industry, he moved to Ft. Lauderdale with a previous partner. He spent the next 20 years in the investment banking business, retiring in 2020.

While in college, Mr. J enjoyed going to a clothing optional, gay getaway known as "Moonstone Beach" in R.I. He attributes his first coming out experience to an exciting afternoon spent with two other sun worshipers in a secluded area. While he slowly unfolded his living as a gay man, he also continued to date women well into his 30's. During this journey he met Bob and they had a relationship for 16 years, during which he came out to his brothers and parents. Later he met Ray who had just ended a relationship, meeting him at Tropics through a mutual friend, and have been together for the last 16 years. He and

Ray bought a house together in Wilton Manors in 2010.

Since moving to southern Florida, Mr. J has not only enjoyed his swim team and wind surfing, but has become a kind of "group-aholic", as a volunteer, serving many organizations. They have included: The Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce, and the Business and Professional Group. Currently, he participates on the Wilton Art Board, the Advisory Board of parks and recreation for Wilton Manors, The Central Area Neighborhood Association (of Wilton Manors) as well as being a member of Prime Gentlemen.

