

Roger Snyder

By Ken South

The Vietnam War came to an end in 1973. Also, the Supreme Court affirmed a woman's right to choose in passing Roe v. Wade. And, the **World Trade Center** became the tallest building in the world, while Spiro Agnew, Vice President under Richard Nixon, resigned in October of that year.

And, on October 7th of that year, Mr. April was born in Managua, Nicaragua. He joined the family as the second oldest boy followed by a sister and two additional brothers. At 13, the family had moved to Costa Rica where he worked for 3 yrs. When 16 yrs of age he called Los Angeles home, where in 1993 he graduated from HS having taken ESL classes to master English.

Mr. A then enlisted in the US Marine Corps, stationed at Camp Pendleton, CA and trained in an artillery unit at Camp Sill, Oklahoma. After his discharge in 1997, he enrolled at El Camino Community College, in Torrance, CA and following a few semesters, transferred to USC, (University of Southern California) with majors in pre-med and history. A highlight for him was to participate with the university choir's performance in 2000 of Messiah at Carnegie Hall in NYC! Following his graduation in 2002 he worked as an assistant lab director in a nano-tech synthesizing lab, which analyzed DNA strands for PhD students at NYU, and at a brokerage house for 3 yrs. In 2006 Mr. A met Bob DeBenedictis, and they were together for 15 years, until Bob's passing in 2021, he was 87 years old.

Bob was an entrepreneur, investor, and philanthropist. His business model involved investing in facilities with hard working undercapitalized people who added their own skills. He invested in NYC's Townhouse and East Side Sauna as well as LIPS and Tropics in Wilton Manors, among hundreds of other ventures.

Mr. A started working for Bob by managing several of his properties all while going to Columbia Business School and getting a degree in executive education. In 2008 he also started managing some hotel properties in the Ft. Lauderdale area. At this time, he got involved with a unique business. "The Belles Answering Service" was started in 1956 and catered to some of the biggest names in show business. After the service had been open for just a short time, celebrity lyricist Adolph Green and songwriter Jule Styne, clients of founder "MaBelle," told her they were going to write a Broadway musical about the business. The result was the Broadway production of "The Bells Are Ringing".

Mr. A bought the business and made major upgrades to modernize the service. He also had a long and loving friendship with Tom, who became very ill and depended on Mr. A's for his care, Tom also passed on in 2021. In the midst of all this, Mr. A managed to go to night classes at The Juilliard School in NYC and studied voice, piano and music theory!

With Bob's passing, Mr. A moved from Gramercy Park in Manhattan to Pompano Beach, Florida. He was introduced to Prime Gentlemen through his friend AJ and he also joined the Gay Men's Chorus. He's looking forward to the next chapter in his interesting life.

