

Joel Glass

by Doug Kent

It was just another normal evening at the Bronx Hospital on August 24th, 1936 when something very special shook the entire maternity staff. Mr. November (Mr. N) was born along with his twin sister. His sister was not in good health and passed away, but Mr. N thrived, as did his younger sister who was born 5 years later. The family was a very close knit family. Mr. N attended PS106 in the Bronx, and was an above-average student. He was often described as "bookish". His parents wanted him to have the benefit of music in his life so they arranged for piano lessons. It was at the age of 12 that the piano teacher instructed Mr. N in more than the music scale. Mr. N enjoyed the sexual encounter and they continued for several years. This did not affect his studies, and he went on to junior and senior high school in the Bronx. He graduated in 1953 as the class valedictorian. He was involved in track and received several history awards, dated girls, but also had encounters with other men.

After high school Mr. N enrolled in the City College of N.Y. and took a major in history with a minor in education. Mr. N continued to live at home and received his Bachelors Degree in 1957. With degree in hand Mr. N secured a position with the New York City Board of Education. Working full time in the New York City school system he immediately began his Masters Degree at Columbia University on a part time basis. In 1960 he received his Masters in History. He was married in 1958 and had a daughter, but not all was well at home. There was strife in the marriage and divorce came quickly in 1960. Undaunted, Mr. N completed all the classroom requirements for his Ph.D., but due to the pressure in his life did not complete his dissertation.

Single now, he moved into his own apartment in the Bronx, and continued to see male friends for approximately 5 years. He felt the encounters left him unfulfilled, so he decided to re-marry in 1965. His new wife was also a teacher and this marriage lasted 15 years and produced two sons. The couple purchased a home, raised the boys and traveled when there were breaks in the teaching schedule. This ideal middle class family was not without its problems. Mr. N continued to see male companions

on a discrete basis during his marriage. His wife was suspicious and in 1980 they decided to separate, and Mr. N moved to his grandfather's apartment in Manhattan to give him care and support. His wife stayed in the home to raise the boys. Mr. N continued to work and in 1982 decided to make a career change. He began teaching in a substance abuse agency that a friend ran. Mr. N liked the environment and took courses to become a recovery counselor and continued to teach. It was not until 1986 that his divorce from his second wife was final. Mr. N continued at the agency until 1998, when he decided to retired from everything at the age of 62. Prior to his retirement his parents and many of his immediate family had relocated to various parts of South Florida. Mr. N traveled to Florida every chance he had and became very familiar with the area. When he retired he move into his parent's condo and cared for his ailing mother who had lost her husband in 1994. His mother passed in 2004.

Mr. N had always been involved in many organizations in New York and this did not change when he settled in Florida. He was a Prime Timer in New York and that continued in Florida. He became an active member of SAGE. He had many relatives in Florida, he made many friends by attending gay churches, and became active in the gay social life around Wilton Manors. Mr. N was instrumental in forming several gay organizations in Florida. To this day he is active in a Senior Center in his neighborhood. He maintains a close relationship with his three adult children and his 5 grandchildren. He still enjoys teaching, and has enjoyed sharing his life over the last 10 years with his close friend who lives in his complex. This unassuming, quiet teacher attends many Prime Timer events and has many friends in the group. Can you use all this information to identify him? Be careful, it will not be easy.

