

MAN OF THE MONTH

Interviewed by Ken Sabanosh

It's 1950 in Detroit, Michigan, and the state was booming when Mr. A was born—its auto industry drawing families from across the globe. His parents, both Detroit natives, raised Mr. A and his older brother amid this vibrant mix of languages, food, and music. A rich cultural upbringing shaped Mr. A's lifelong curiosity. He excelled in sports—especially hockey—and became an avid fan of Motown, whose rhythm was the city's heartbeat.

Mr. A enrolled at the University of Michigan, first majoring in mathematics before discovering that words and ideas captured his imagination more deeply than numbers. He earned degrees in English, Psychology, and Education, with a minor in math, followed by a master's in Reading Education, specializing in reading disabilities.

After graduation, Mr. A moved to Houston to be near relatives, including his beloved grandmother. He recalls joining her on market trips where she haggled fluently in several languages—an experience that deepened his appreciation for communication and culture. Over the years, Mr. A's career spanned education, sports reporting, and retail management. Teaching, however, remained his greatest passion.

While teaching in Houston, Mr. A met a ten-year-old student, Steve, whose difficult home life troubled him. When Steve's mother could no longer care for him, Mr. A opened his home and became the father figure the boy desperately needed. Under Mr. A's guidance, Steve thrived, earning a place at Houston's High School for the Performing and Visual Arts and later at the Eastman School of Music. At fifteen, Steve came out to Mr. A—one of the first people he ever told. He would go on to build a 25-year career with the London Symphony Orchestra alongside his husband before both tragically succumbed to COVID-19 in 2020.

After a decade in Houston, Mr. A relocated to Austin, where he built community and fell in love. That relationship ended sadly when his partner was killed in a car accident—a loss that left a lasting mark. Seventeen years later, in 2001, Mr. A settled in Fort Lauderdale and moved to Palm Aire in 2003, where he remains an active and valued neighbour.

Community involvement has always been part of Mr. A's DNA. He served with the Houston Jaycees and later on the Travis County Advisory Board for Social Work, always championing fairness and empathy. A passionate bridge player and teacher, he has achieved the rank of Sapphire Life Master, and he stays active playing pickleball and continuing to learn every day.

A longtime member of both Prime Gentlemen and SAGE, Mr. A lives by simple but powerful principles: help others, be honest, and give back. His favorite motto captures his spirit perfectly: ***"The more you do, the more you can."***

Can you guess who our December Man of the Month is? Turn to page 7...

