MAN OF THE MONTH

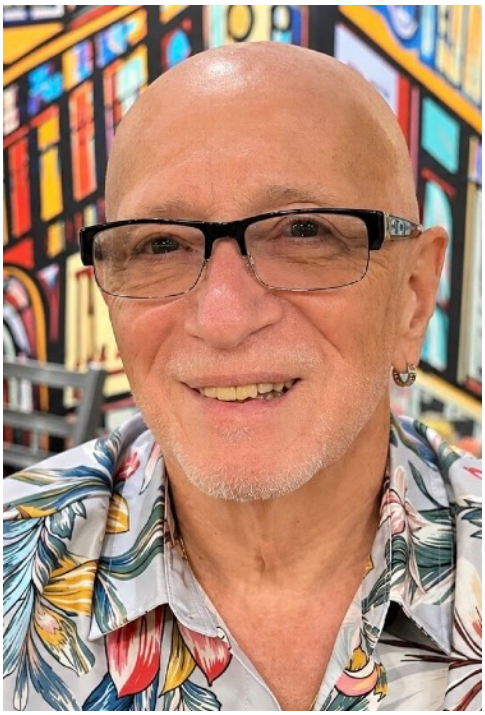
LEONARD GRAZIANO

Interviewed by Al Remer



This month's "Man of the Month" is Leonard (better known as **Lenny**) Graziano. He was born in Brooklyn, New York, in an area called Greenpoint that was a very nice, quiet, Italian neighborhood. On hot summer nights, one neighbor would bring out coffee, another would bring out cake, and everyone would sit out in front of their houses and socialize. Lenny attended Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School and later attended Delahanty High School. After that, he enrolled in the Fanuele School of Music, where he studied concert piano. Lenny graduated from the school, earning his teacher's certificate in music. In addition, he attended the Mandl School of Medical Assistants and received a degree in laboratory techniques.

Lenny lived in one place until he was 52 years old. During those years, he met Bill (a New York City firefighter), with whom he spent 41 years until Bill passed away from cancer at the age of 71. Lenny's entire family accepted Bill with open arms, something that was unusual in those days, especially for a Catholic family. Also, Bill never had a problem at the firehouse with anyone knowing that he was living with Lenny. During their early years together, Lenny worked for Anchor Savings Bank for 17 years. However, Bill talked Lenny into leaving the bank and going to work for the New York District Attorney's Office, from which he retired in 1995.



The only regret Lenny has had in his life was not being able to marry Bill, as gay marriage wasn't legal in those days. Lenny always wanted to be able to refer to Bill as his husband. When Bill retired after 28 years with the FDNY and Lenny retired after 13 years from the New York City District Attorney's Office, they moved to Sheffield, Massachusetts, and built a house in the Berkshire Hills, where they lived together for about 18 years. After Bill's death, Lenny moved to Palm Bay, Florida, for about 10 years and now resides in Palm Aire. Lenny has been a member of Prime Gentlemen for about 5 years. He loves to swim, walk, and ride his bike. Also, he enjoys playing his Mason & Hamlin antique grand piano every day.