

Mike Cochran

By Ken South

In 1955, Disneyland opened in California, the first McDonalds opened in Des Plaines, Illinois. The FDA approved the Jonas Salk, polio vaccine, “Rock around the Clock” was the first rock and roll song to make #1 on the charts, and on the 27th of April of that year, Mr. April came into this world in Louisville, Kentucky.

He was the 2nd child in the family that included his parents, his older brother, two younger brothers and a sister. Mr. April lost his father when he was just 21 years old, but he still enjoys the company of his mom to this day.

Evansville, Indiana is where Mr. April spent his grade school, high school and community college years. He graduated in 1976 with an Associates Degree in Business Management.

Mr. April was a kind of “Jack of all trades” finding work in diverse types of employment. He worked as a builder of homes for several years, before he started a career in the railroad industry. This required his moving to various cities to “work.” As a brakeman and later a flagman, he worked for the Louisville & Nashville Railroad in Nashville, St. Louis, and Chicago. These engagements were very limited as they were all temporary, the railroad was constantly hiring and then laying off its employees.

In 1982 Mr. April moved to Florida for the first time with his “friend-partner-wife” and her daughter and son. From the beginning of their relationship, they struggled with many serious problems, most involving the behavior and personalities of the children. After several years of trying, they decided to go their separate ways.

By 1983 Mr. April discovered the advantages of joining into a wholesale candy business. As a broker, he arranged sales of candy in the US and across the world. He got to travel internationally and then even became a partner in the company. He continues to broker the sale of literally tons of candy all over the world from the comfort of his own home in Coral Springs.

He began his early retirement from the railroad in 1986.

Mr. April’s unfolding gay life began when he was still in his troubled marriage and found gay friends in his local church groups. He and his wife even tried marriage counseling, but nothing seemed to be able to save their 10-year relationship.

On Derby Day at the old Chardees, a friend set him up on a blind date. Mr. April has always been attracted to older guys, so when he met Jim Kinley and took a gander of his deep blue eyes, history was made. They were lovers, (though they lived separately, two blocks apart) from 1993 to 2002. On Jim's 80th birthday they took a wonderful cruise together, but just weeks later, Jim passed away.

Once again at Chardees, he met his second lover, Cy Matthews, a retired principal. They had a beautiful partnership for 13 years until Cy passed away on August. 15, 2016.

Mr. April has found it advantageous to keep his professional life and his personal life separate. Following Cy's passing and looking for new ways of connecting with gay men, Mr. April joined Prime Timers after attending a social at Tropics. Mr. April's nickname in the community of "The Candy Man" may help you identify him.

