

Joel Tendler

By Ken South

In January, of 1942, Winston Churchill spent a few days of vacation on Pompano Beach. In February, President Roosevelt signed an executive order directing the internment of Japanese Americans. In New York City, the ocean liner *SS Normandie* caught fire while being converted into a troopship and then capsized. Later that month *The Voice of America* began broadcasting. And, the 14th Academy Awards, was held in Los Angeles, with *How Green Was My Valley* winning Outstanding Motion Picture. Glenn Miller and his orchestra, topped the charts with *Moonlight Cocktail*, and *A String of Pearls*.

Also, on February 15th, of that year, Mr. October was born in Brooklyn, NY, joining an older brother, and before the arrival of a sister a few years later. Mr. O went to elementary school and to New Utrecht High in Brooklyn, graduating in 1959. He especially enjoyed his participation in the school chorus.

His college career began at New York University in NYC, with a major in English, graduating in 1965 with a BA. It was then on to New Paltz State College, for his Masters. He fell in love with the Hudson Valley and ended up teaching English at Hyde Park HS for the next 9 years!

A good friend invited him to a weekend in Provincetown, MA and after just a few visits to "P-Town", he caught the "bug". In 1969 he purchased a guest house, named it, *The Plaza*, and he was in the hospitality business. He thoroughly enjoyed the role of innkeeper. He treasured the people he met from all over the world, and apparently they had a wonderful experience also, as he had an 86% return rate! He heard feedback that guests would like rooms with kitchens. His building was not really capable of that modification, but it led Mr. O to purchase a restaurant, named it *Plain & Fancy* and it became very popular as well.

Of course, the guest house business is seasonal, the spring and summer, are the busy months. In the midst of his travels, Mr. O became friends with a gentleman who owned a small, 18 room, hotel in Miami Beach, called the *Sunset Inn*. He was looking for someone to manage his hotel during the season in South Florida. So a mutual arrangement was struck. Mr. O would run his "P-Town" guest house for the six summer months, and manage his friend's hotel in Miami Beach for six winter months. This arrangement was an advantage to both and went on for 10 years!

In the course of these events, Mr. O shared his life with his partner Keith. They were together for 20 years!

One day in 1990, a customer approached him at the *Plain & Fancy* restaurant and asked Mr. O if he was interested in selling the business. He really hadn't given it a thought, as it was a rather successful enterprise. But almost, "just to humor" the customer, he quoted him an outrageous price, about four times what he paid for the place. Without batting an eye, the man said: "OK, let's do it!" The deal went thru and Mr. O then had a sizable nest egg with which to retire! Mr. O did retire and moved to Ft Lauderdale.

Brandon was an employee at the *Sunset Inn*. He asked Mr. O if he could "crash" at this place for a few days, which he did. As these things go, a few days became 26 years! Brandon went on to work for a cruise line, which meant he got free travel passes, so the couple traveled the world together. Brandon was 16 years younger. Mr. O was devastated when Brandon was taken by Cancer, just a few years ago.

Recently, Mr. O moved into John Knox village, which he finds a warm, accepting community.

