

November is Gratitude Month

A Full and Thankful Heart...

One exercise that I practice is to try for a full inventory of my blessings and then for a right acceptance of the many gifts that are mine—both temporal and spiritual. Here I try to achieve a state of joyful gratitude. When such a brand of gratitude is repeatedly affirmed and pondered, it can finally displace the natural tendency to congratulate myself on whatever progress I may have been enabled to make in some areas of living. I try hard to hold fast to the truth that a full and thankful heart cannot entertain great conceits. When brimming with gratitude, one's heart heal must surely result in outgoing love, the finest emotion that we can ever know.

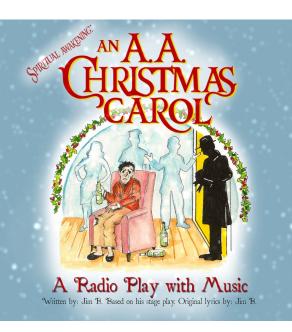
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Naples Intergroup/Central Office Gratitude Dinner/Annual Meeting

will be held on Saturday, November 23rd at New Hope Church starting at 6:30 p.m. Steering Committee, Vice Chair, Jim B., is in charge of this years event. It will be a sell-out occasion, so get your tickets early. Tickets are \$25 with some still available from your Group's Intergroup Representative or from the

Central Office. Look for the sider showing your gratitude each year of your sobriety. "Faithful Fivers" who are a each month toward the sup-Central Office to "Carry the

This year there will be a "Spiritual Awakening Singsongs from a CD made by The CD tells the story of a spirits who show him his life: has been affected by his visits brings about a change sobriety through Alcoholics know, the subject matter is



"AA Birthday Box" and conby contributing \$1 or \$2 for Also, consider joining the body of AAs who pledge \$5 port of Naples Intergroup/ Message".

special appearance by the ers" who will perform a few these Naples AA volunteers. practicing alcoholic visited by past, present and future as it alcoholism. The result of the of mind and his desire to seek Anonymous. Although, as we deadly serious, the approach

is full of humor and the joy of sobriety. Carrying the message is done through the music of the Christmas Season. Secular Christmas songs are presented with recovery-related lyrics. The CD will be available for sale for \$10.

STEP ELEVEN: "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscience contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

TRADITION ELEVEN: "Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films."

TRADITION ELEVEN (Long Form): "Our relations with the general public should be characterized by personal anonymity. We think A.A. ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast, filmed, or publicly printed. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us."

CONCEPT ELEVEN: "The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern."

11th Step Prayer: Higher Power, as I understand You, I pray to keep my connection with You Open and clear from the confusion of daily life. Through my prayers and meditation I ask especially for Freedom from self-will, rationalization, and wishful thinking. I pray for the guidance of correct thought and positive action. Your will Higher Power, not mine, be done.

TRADITIONS—CHECKLIST

This is a Checklist for Tradition ELEVEN. Reprinted with permission from Service Material from the General Service Office:

- 1. Do I sometimes promote AA so fanatically that I make it seem unattractive?
- 2. Am I always careful to keep the confidences reposed in me as an AA member?
- 3. Am I careful about throwing AA names around—even within the Fellowship?
- 4. Am I ashamed of being a recovered, or recovering, alcoholic?
- 5. What would AA be like if we were not guided by the ideas in Tradition Eleven? Where would I be?
- 6. Is my AA sobriety attractive enough that a sick drunk would want such a quality for himself?

The COURIER



The 2020 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous will be held July 2–5, 2020 in Detroit, Michigan with the theme "Love and Tolerance is our Code." A.A. members and guests from around the world will celebrate A.A.'s 85th year at this event with big meetings held Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning in the Ford Field Stadium. Other meetings, scheduled or informal, will take place throughout the weekend in the COBO Center in downtown Detroit.

Information about Convention registration and housing reservations is available at the Naples AA office.. All necessary information is included in the registration packet. This packet will lists numbers to call for answers to specific questions about housing, the program, etc. This information has been mailed to A.A. groups, offices and contacts around the world and posted on the website.



We're happy to announce that Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., is releasing Meeting Guide 3.0.

Meeting Guide is a mobile app focused on helping people find A.A. meetings and resources near them. The app has been updated to include some new features we're

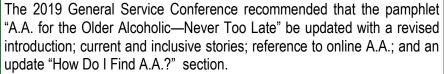
pleased to announce:

• Search -- Users will now be able to search for meetings by name or location • Daily Reflections -- a selection of reflections by and for A.A. members

 More accurate locations for access to local contact information
 Improved user interface -- with a new menu bar and Contact feature.

Meeting Guide is available for iOS and Android smartphones. You can download it for free on the App Store or on Google Play.

"A.A. for the Older Alcoholic" Call for stories to update



Email your sharing to: access@aa.org and put "A.A. for the Older Alcoholic" in the subject line of the message. Or, you can mail it to Access Assignment, General Service Office, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10163. The deadline for submissions is December 15, 2019.

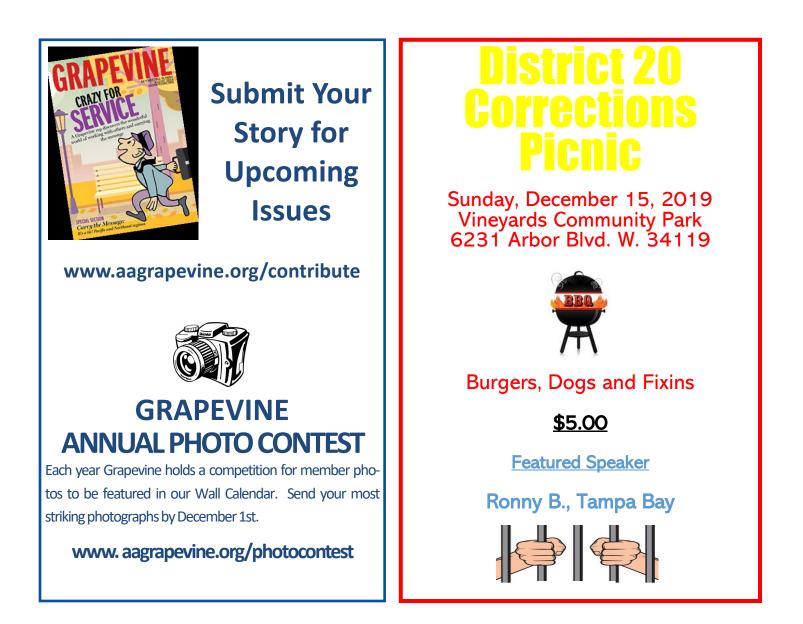
November, 2019

The COURIER

O ratitude is always in order, but many groups have designated November as a particular time to give thanks to the A.A. program. It has been that way since the 1940s, when the General Service Board held small "gratitude dinners," which were replaced in the 1960s by larger "gratitude" luncheons. These were ended in 1968 because they were deemed too expensive.

In 1956 and 1957, there were floor actions at the annual General Service Conferences recommending that Thanksgiving week in those years be designated A.A. Gratitude Week." <u>Acceptance may be the answer to all our problems, but gratitude has to be a close second.</u>

As many in A.A. have discovered, gratitude is a sure cure for self-pity. And can you be resentful at the same time that you're grateful? Some in recovery will coax their thinking onto spiritual lines with gratitude lists.



The COURIER

A Profound Sense of Gratitude How Fortunate We Are Today By Rick R.

Alcoholics Anonymous came into existence in 1935 when Bill and Bob started carrying their message to fortunate souls who, up to that point, had little hope of ever overcoming the disease of alcoholism. Prior to that, there were attempts to overcome the disease that came close but failed when they let



other issues distract them from their primary purpose. I'm sure they had some, but not all, of the answers, but it did give our co-founders some of the answers as to "what not to do" when they established the steps and traditions. The book, Alcoholics Anonymous was published in 1939 after the first 100 alcoholics had maintained their sobriety. I was born in 1941, just two year after the Big Book was published. I was 28 years old when I came to the program which, at that time, was only in existence for 34 years. They say that Alcohol has been around for about 10 thousand years. How fortunate we are today, to be among the first, to have been chosen at this time to have a solution laid at our feet and for them to have the wisdom to not allow the first 164 pages of the Big Book to be edited or changed. When I talk of the word Gratitude, I ponder the vast amount of time (10 thousand years) that there was no answer to this problem and the hopelessness of those unfortunate souls before 1935. As a child I watched my parents and grandparents, and many of the elders in my life hopelessly suffer through the pains of this disease and they didn't even consider it a disease. On October 15, I

will celebrate 50 years of sobriety and no one could be more grateful for all the benefits I have received as the results of clinging to this wonderful program and all the principles and values that have given me the tools that separated me from the delusional thinking of the past and showed me a path of recovery that has influenced so many people, starting with my immediate family and spiraling outwards to my relatives, my friends and coworkers and all my A.A. associates. If A.A. had come into existence and the Big Book would have been published just 30 years later than it was, I, most likely, would have been included in those unfortunate souls of the past that had no hope. I showed up at the doors of A.A. on Oct. 15,1969 and as I see it, the Program had evolved just enough to be ready for this Grateful recipient and I will always be amazed by the timing of it all. In the 84 years of its existence, Alcoholics Anonymous has been the answer for millions and considering all the ten thousand years before the existence of A.A; I believe we are very fortunate to be on the cutting edge of one of most important and beneficial developments in the history of mankind and to think that it all started when two common variety drunks got together and triggered the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Words cannot express the Gratitude I have for this program considering all the suffering that went on prior to 1935 when God saw fit to intervene and offer up a choice, and fortunately, Bill and Bob were listening and heard His loving voice. As I read the long form of the Twelve Traditions and all the pains it took when tackling all the points and counter points while formulating our program, I am amazed that all the pieces fell in place as they are today, and they seem to have gotten it right. I am extremely Grateful for those that came before me and handed me the wonderful life I live today.

The parade in my head

One of my favorite bumper stickers reads: "Meditation, it's not what you think!"

Having attempted meditation on and off for years and having read a lot about it, rather than trying to control and enjoy my thinking, I have come to the conclusion that meditation is a simple matter of just watching what I think.

I recently read that most people think about 200 thoughts a minute, and that 95 percent of our

thoughts are repetitive. So by my account, for the hour I lay awake last night watching my thoughts, about 12,000 of them paraded through my head, and 11,400 of those were redundant.

My lines of thinking typically have themes, which for last night was, "things to worry about." I wish I could report that there are acrobats of happiness, marching bands of well-being and columns of contented clowns parading through my nights, but those folks never come to town without an intentional invitation.

So, knowing how I think, I'm learning how to "watch the parade." For example, I know that every 10 minutes while I lie there wide awake in the middle of the night, my work (let's call it an elephant) comes into view.

Àlthough my tendency is to leap forth and jump on every elephant's back (such as, worry about financial insecurities), I find that if I remain on the sidelines and watch the elephants appear and disappear, I don't spend 15 minutes riding them, worrying about the multitude of difficulties associated with elephants (such as, am I going to get fired tomorrow?), which then influences how I function at work the next day.

Don't get me wrong, the elephants still show up every 10 minutes. I just don't feed them as much, so there are less elephant droppings to take to work the next morning, which my coworkers appreciate.

The middle of the night is a great time to watch your thoughts, so long as you don't latch onto any of them. I have just as many or more thoughts during the day, but in the light of day I'm distracted by all the things I'm doing, which presents yet another challenge. At night, I have only my thoughts to keep me company. So I practice a type of disengaged meditation. I simply watch the random thoughts pass through my mind.

By not engaging in the thoughts, I find they don't grow and turn into fear, anger, frustration, worry or resentment. A 15-second-long thought has no weight and is so much nicer than a 15-minute-long woolly mammoth that will smother me in my sleep under its weight. Hey, it's still insomnia, but it's so much lighter without the heavy baggage of emotional engagement.

And I've found yet another opportunity to practice the "Alcoholic's Meditation," which was first published in the November 2010 Grapevine and in a related article entitled "Step 11 to the Rescue" in Grapevine in 2013. That is, late at night when I need a reprieve from a negative train of thought, I engage the positive parade of acceptance and gratitude. By breathing in "welcome" and breathing out "thank you," I actually (somewhat) control the types of thoughts coursing through my mind.

Should you choose to meditate this way, here is a cautionary note: There may be pink elephants riding on pink clouds in late night parades focusing on acceptance and gratitude.

-- Ed L., Wightwood, California





The COURIER

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TRADITION 11

Being newly sober, I couldn't wait to tell the entire world of the fantastic life I had found from becoming a member of alcoholics anonymous. Every day I came home from a meeting I wanted to talk about the stories and the strong recovery present within the rooms. Of course I would want to discloseeverything I knew about these individuals - because they were my real life heroes! And most certainly those pictures taken at the Women's Banquet were going on Instagram - hashtag AAforlife. For me, finding this life of sobriety was the best thing that had happened to me and for many others. So why would anyone want to keep that from the world? Obviously my mindset was still one of self-centered obsession. The principal found within the 11thtradition was one I was not familiar with. Today after having a few years of sobriety and experience of practicing this principle in my own life, I understand the important of anonymity. Becoming anonymous is not about me, but that of the other members in my group. Anonymity essentially protects Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole. What happens if I disclose to social media that I am sober through the program of AA, but I begin to drink? Would that attract people to this program? Probably not. Every alcoholic isfull aware of the damage and suffering they can potentially bring into their own lives, let alone other's lives. Further, being a living example of how this program works in our lives is the best type of promotion - its real and people notice! The change in our appearance and our behavior speaks volumes tosomeone who is suffering and needs help. The movie "Angels in the Outfield" can help describe this type of attraction - "If you build it, they will come". If we show alcoholics that recovery is real and obtainable, they will come for help. All we need is to be ready when they walk in the door to their very first meeting.

GRATITUDE

Page 8		
FINANCES	OCT.	YTD
<u>Income</u>		
Literature/Merchandise	\$3,501	\$39,47 7
Group Contributions	1,906	23,560
AA Birthdays		589
Faithful Five	10	210
Anonymous		
<u>Total Income</u>	5,417	63,836
<u>Expenses</u>		
Bank/Credit Card Fees	85	1,054
Travel/Licenses/Permits		180
Office Supplies	28	898
Office Repair		259
Contributions		173
Payroll Net	1,711	17,111
Payroll Tax	1,113	4,454
Postage		70
Printing		914
Purchases/Lit./Merch.	2,884	22,860
Insurance		567
Rent	500	5,000
Sales Tax	262	2,625
Telephone/www	197	2,185
Utilities	100	1,000
Computer Equipment		1,351
Computer Software		787
Computer/Maintain		100
Total Expenses	6,893	61,807
Net Ordinary Income	-1,476	2,028
Other Income	2,225	
Other Expenses	_,3	1,628
NET OTHER INCOME	2,225	
NET INCOME	749	
		-

November, 2019

Thank You to all who contributed to Naples Intergroup/Central Office

Spirituality and Money

"While the work of the group treasurer often involves many details, it is important to remember that the money the treasurer oversees serves a spiritual purpose: it enables each group to fulfill its primary purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers. This is the fundamental work of A.A. and to continue it the group must keep its doors open. The group treasurer is an important part of this Twelfth Step work."

SELF-SUPPORT:

Where Money and Spirituality Mix

Naples Area Intergroup

1509 Pine Ridge Rd., Unit B Naples. FL 34109 (50%)

District 20

District 20 Treasurer P.O. Box 2896 Naples, FL 34106 (10%) General Service Office

P. O. Box 459 New York, N. Y. 10163 (30%)

<u>Area 15</u>

Lisa D. PO Box 1784 Pompano Beach, Fl 33061 (10%)

Disbursement of a Group's Funds

"After the group's basic needs are met, such as providing for rent, literature, refreshments, and insurance, the group can participate in the financial support of the Fellowship as a whole by sending money to various A.A. service entities: 1) their local Intergroup or Central Office, 2) Area 15 and District 20; and 3) the General Service Office in New York. Many groups provide financial support for their G.S.R.s attending service functions. These entities use contributions in a number of ways, always with the aim of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers. The A.A. Group Treasurer, F-96,

> Service material prepared by the General Service Office

GROUP*/MEETING CONTRIBUTIONS

The six digit number next to the meeting name is their unique AA Registration Number assigned by the General Service Office in New York. This number signifies they are a "Registered Group"...Those meetings listed without a six digit number are **NOT registered with G.S.O.** and therefore not a "Group" (by AA definition), but is a "meeting". **Please see A.A. pamphlet: "The A.A. Group…where it all begins" P-16*

11th Step Prayer & Med., 715482 0	Group/Meeting	OCT	YTD
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Group/Meeting	OCT	YTD
One Day At A Time	0	
Our Common Welfare		194
Out To Lunch Bunch, 147323	0	0
Pay It Forward, 704772	0	1,600
Primary Purpose Marco, 146715	0	1,125
Saturday Morning Girlfriends 678117	0	176
Saturday Night Live	0	50
Spiritual Solutions, 720796	0	250
Start Where You Are		
Step By Step.		
Sunday Night Speakers, 665079		
Sunlight Of the Spirit, 647959		
Sunset Serenity, 654981		
Survivor's, 157268		
SW 239 BID		
Swamp Group, 672733		
Tables of Naples, 147671		
The Solution Big Book Study Group 632503	0	0
Third Tradition,143298		
Three Legacies, 679400		
Thursday New Women		
Unity Monday Noon Step		
Unity Step		
Veranda		
Walk The Steps With Women, 701923	0	0
Wanderers, Ave Maria	0	0
We Care, Bonita, 617011	0	305
Wednesday Step St. Johns	0	85
Where Are We	0	0
Women's Spirit	0	0
Women's Step,159957	0	0

AA Groups/Meetings listed here are those which are either registered as a Group at the AA General Service Office in New York, or, have contributed financially to the Naples Area Intergroup.



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The COURIER

The Closing of St. Thomas Hospital

The recent announcement that St. Thomas Hospital will close in 2022 was met with much angst among the AA community. It is the Holy Grail for many alcoholics along with Dr. Bob's home, the Mayflower Hotel, the Gatehouse at Stan Hywet and King School. Summa Health Systems is "merging" with a much larger hospital chain in Michigan. Actually, Summa is being acquired by the much larger health care provider. The closing of St. Thomas's emergency room was an early indication that the hospital's management was concentrating at Akron City Hospital's main campus. The second unfortunate indicator was the Crystal Clinic's decision to build its own hospital in the Montrose area. The Clinic is expected to move sometime next year leaving dozens of hospital rooms and operating rooms vacant.

The sad fact is that many AA meetings will need to find new meeting locations. Even though Summa announced that a new health care clinic will be built on the main campus and will include detox facilities, etc., it is doubtful that meetings can be moved to the new location. The reason is parking. The main campus has paid parking for many visitors. Alcoholics are not going to be willing to pay for parking in order to attend an AA meeting. At least that's my opinion. And it is doubtful that anyone would be interested in purchasing St. Thomas. The building is old, inefficient and may even contain asbestos. More than likely, the entire structure will be razed. The site is attractive for residential apartments or condominiums.

If there is one thing that I have learned in my nearly 75 years, it's that nothing is permanent. If you look around you can see that many businesses have come and gone. Many buildings have come and gone. Think of all the rubber factories that have been razed. General Tire disappeared. Goodrich disappeared. The original King School was razed and rebuilt. The Mayflower doesn't resemble anything like it did when Bill W. was there. Things are always changing. The original art museum is a law office including the original East Ohio Gas main headquarters in Akron. National City Bank is gone. I could go on and on but you get the picture.

So, even if St. Thomas closes and is eventually razed, I am convinced that some of the AA artifacts will be preserved somewhere. Some might be moved to the new health care clinic, others might be given to the Akron Intergroup. The religious relics or symbols in the St. Thomas chapel might be donated to the Catholic diocese. Time will tell. I am sure the powers to be understand the significance of St. Thomas to alcoholics. But I also know that the hospital is a business. And the people who make the decisions are looking at the bottom line. After the Crystal Clinic leaves, there will be a very large loss of revenue. Couple that with the fact that the only new construction is at Summa's main campus, not St. Thomas. So Alcoholics Anonymous will have to accept the things it cannot change. The program of A.A. doesn't say anything about preserving buildings. Acceptance is going to be a challenge for everyone connected to St. Thomas. I'm sure Dr. Bob would understand.

Jack M., Akron Intergroup News, November 2019

As I approached the last two steps, I realized that my relationship with my Higher Power had grown strong as I worked the previous steps. I felt more awake. Aware. Conscious. Life was making more sense to me, and I could see the bigger picture.

So when Step 11 came around, it conscious contact with my High-prayer.

While in active addiction, my than an occasional "God, please



wasn't difficult for me to improve my er Power through meditation and

prayer life became virtually nil. Other help me," I didn't pursue any type of

spiritual path. But when I finally succumbed to asking for help, I began an inner spiritual quest for truth, peace, love, and joy. Somehow I just knew that I could experience those things if I consciously walked a spiritual path. The Birthday Club

Did you know you can share your sobriety and gratitude in a practical way by joining the AA Birthday Club? Sign up today and be featured in the *Courier*. Show your support for your Central Office. A donation of only one dollar for every year of your sobriety will help carry the message to alcoholics who still suffer. Envelopes available at Central Office or from your Intergroup Representative.



Ron P
Ron L.
Don M.
Dennis F.
Rad W.
Jackie T. F.
Judy W.
Steve K.
Peter F.
Bill S.
Mary B.
Laura T. F.

49 years 40 years 39 years 35 years 34 years 33 years 27 years 24 years 17 years 3 years 3 years



Faithful Fivers Needed



2019 Faithful Fiver Club

Ron L., Mary B., James B., Theresa R., Judy W., Kathryn Mc., Bill S.

We are members of A.A. who want the hand of A.A. always to be there in the Naples, Florida area. <u>It's easy to join!</u>

Use a Check or Credit Card to contribute monthly, or one time. Stop by the Central Office or Telephone the Central Office for a one time Credit Card charge.

\$5.00 per month or \$60.00 per year!

Your membership directly supports 12Step work in District 20 and Central Office Operations.

District 20

(Collier County, the portion of Monroe County bordered by Collier and Miami-Dade Counties, and the portion of Hendry County below the northernmost boundary of Collier County.)

District 20 Officers:

Chairman: Robert C., 784-8514 chairdistrict20aa@gmail.com Alt. Chair: Peter C. pete.curtner@yahoo.com Treasurer: Mary B., 777-8066 mbrown8869@gmail.com **Registrar:** Jill M., 309-3879 Secretary: Dianna M., 248-6565 diannamusse@gmail.com

Service Committees:

Treatment/Accessibilities <u>Robert C.</u> treatment@district20aa.org Business meeting the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m., 24 Hour Club

Corrections Jeff K., 776-5673

Business meeting the second Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m., 24 Hour Club

Public Information/CPC Dawn L., 253-5481 Business meeting the first Wednesday of each month at 7pm, 24 Hour Club

Grapevine/Literature Steve K., 430-9110 Business meeting the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30p.m., 24 Hour Club

<u>Archives</u> Laurel B., 451-0095 naplesboff@hotmail.com Business meeting 3rd Saturday (a) 24 Hour Club at 11am

<u>Current Practices</u> Jerry E.,776-6767 jeddleman@aol.com

District 20 Website Eric H., 738-8871

November, 2019

The Courier is published monthly by the Naples Area Intergroup of Alcoholic Anonymous with an office located at 1509-2 Pine Ridge Road, Naples, FL 34109-2198. This publication is by, for, and about the Fellowship of AA. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to AA as a whole, nor does publication of information imply any endorsement by either Alcoholics Anonymous or The Naples Area Intergroup. Quotations and artwork from AA literature are reprinted with permission from AA World Service, Inc., and/or The AA Grapevine, Inc..



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secretary@area15aa.org

<u>WILLOUGH</u> Sunday, Monday and Thursday 7:30pm Ken C., kenknauf@comcast.net J.C., 253-3602 superioryachto7@gmail.com

> HAZELDEN Monday, 7:00pm Tom H., 777-1430 tomhigh@me.com

BRIDGING THE GAP Melissa B. 720-982-1852 John B. 537-5862

The COURIER

Naples Intergroup

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Office Volunteers: Judy W., Tona W., Ivan B., Peter C., Ken H., Diane B., Nikki E., Chuck B., Mary B., Holly G., Mary Pat B., Charice ...and loyal Substitutes

After Hours Phone Mary B., 777-8066