

# Suite 404

BROWARD COUNTY INTERGROUP, INC.

Oakland Commerce Center 3317 NW 10<sup>th</sup> Terrace, Suite 404 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309

Phone 954-462-7202, 954-462-0265; www.aabroward

# **STEP 11:**

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

# **Step Eleven: The Practice Of Letting Go**

Tools to find peace

About twenty-four years ago, I went to my first AA meeting. I was an angry single mother who drank daily. At first, I was astounded by how much you knew about me--you seemed to tell my story every time you spoke. I was overjoyed when I realized that, with your help, I could live a life without alcohol.

But that pink cloud attitude slowly changed to one of discontent. I began to see many differences between you and me. You were mostly men who smoked and could go to meetings whenever it pleased you. I hated the smoke, didn't particularly like men, and had two small children to care for, in addition to a full-time job. Not only did I drink again, but I raged at my poor children and withdrew from those who could help me. It was back to loneliness and despair for all of us.

Today, although it has been many years since my last drink, it has not been so many years from my times of despair. One of my dear children was killed in a car accident, and the other went on to a life of his own. It is easy for me to feel lonely and to fall into thinking, You are different from me and cannot offer me what I need. I find it easy to forget that I am not the one in charge of my life. It is also easy to forget that I am much happier when I "let go and let God."

Today, the difference between the last time I relied on alcohol and now is that I know how to use the tools I learned from practicing the Twelve Steps. When I don't feel willing or able to "let go and let God," I know of some things that will give me encouragement:

1. Listening with my heart. When I listen with my heart at meetings, I hear the human condition of suffering, attachment, love, and longing. I also hear the human solution of love and acceptance. I hear that we are only human and that when we identify our limitations, we also identify the need and possibility of the divine and the reliance upon God.

When I listen with my heart, I can hear the peace of mind that soothes the sorrowful. They speak of the love they feel when they rely on a power greater than themselves and how much enjoyment they have in their lives when they remember that they do not have the final word.

2. Using what I have learned (so far) from practicing Step Eleven, I pay attention to the rise and fall of my belly while I breathe, in and out--and, as a thought intrudes, I gently push it away, tell it "later," Continued on Page 3

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# **Concept XI**

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.

### **Tradition 11:**

"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."

# **A Spiritual Exercise**

#### **Exploring the Traditions**

Years ago, in Orange County, California, I had a young sponsor who had a special formula for thinking about the Traditions. It consisted of answering two sets of questions--one on what the Traditions meant to AA as a whole and the other on what they meant to me. This approach helped me understand these AA principles, so I'd like to share my reflections on the Eleventh Tradition here.

#### Q 1. What does Tradition Eleven mean to AA?

It means that AA is not God and that it should be humble in its dealings within the Fellowship and with those outside itself. If humility is "not fighting with reality" and, as noted in the Big Book, God is the "Creator," then AA should give credit to God, the Final Reality, for what it is and what it does. We don't blow our own horn. We don't look for "public relations" but rather for "spiritual relations." Doing this we find that the various media are so amazed at this unheard of stance before the world, that they can't get enough of us or do enough for us.

#### Q 2. What does this Tradition do for AA?

It keeps us humble, in proper relation to God and to man. It keeps us spiritual in focus and not lost in self-praise and self-seeking. It strengthens our singleness of purpose. It makes AA attractive to those who are looking for something which will save them and not just use them to serve itself. It keeps AA from doing what institutions are prone to do: make an end of themselves, instead of just a means to an end. It keeps us free.

### Q 3. What could happen to AA if Tradition Eleven did not exist or were not practiced or observed?

AA could self-destruct. We come into AA with a great burden of guilt, shame, fear, anger, hurt, and resent-ment--a grand assortment of monsters within. Until we deal with that burden, many of us tend to over-compensate by being grandiose, puffed-up, arrogant to an extreme. We strut across the stage of life, supersensitive to ourselves but amazingly insensitive to others.

We are given to jumping into conflict not so much to solve problems or seek the truth as to be right one more time, beating the other guy down and building up our sick concept of prestige. This attitude, if not checked, could tear AA apart.

#### Q 1. What does this Tradition mean to me?

My arrogance is the measure of my fear. Tradition Eleven reminds me that the group and the Steps eliminate my fear and diminish my arrogance. It also encourages me to avoid all self-seeking and concentrate on the welfare of AA. I should avoid all grandiosity expressed in looking for personal fame by means of press, radio, film, and TV. When I was drinking, the "name of the game was the pain of the shame." Remembering that pain, I should praise AA, not my little part in it. It is not about me. It is about God and AA.

#### Q 2. What would happen to me if this Tradition did not exist in my life?

That's easy. I would get drunk. I would live in the immaturity of competition, not in the maturity of cooperation. My fear-driven pride, arrogance, and over-compensation would lead me to fight reality again and to alienate myself from God and from others, from whom my sobriety in the Fellowship flows.

#### Q 3. What happens if I practice this Tradition as an integral part of my spiritual life?

I can expect a daily reprieve. I can expect to stay sober. I can enjoy walking as one of many, in fellowship, mutual respect, and love. I can live in the vulnerability mutually shared, by which we heal each other, heal ourselves. I can surrender to the blessings of AA as they slowly, constantly, and inexorably take over my life.

— Jim H., Adelphi, Maryland —

Thank you to all the dedicated volunteers in Broward County, and for all you wonderful alcoholics who continue to support your Intergroup office.

Continued from Page 1

and then I go back to that rise and fall of my belly. Remember how we delayed taking that first drink? Today, I can delay taking that thought (or that thought taking me).

- 3. Praying to my creator for help, over and over, almost chanting, until I feel the firm, loving arm of his compassion on my shoulder.
- 4. Writing--releasing thoughts from my mind onto paper or the computer and letting them swirl around outside of me.
- 5. Listing resentments and following the simple Big Book format of looking at and diffusing these resentments.
- 6. Listing fears, because I seem to always have fears, and asking myself (as the Big Book suggests), Why do I have these fears? Is it from relying on my own finite power? Can I see my way to trusting these fears to God and asking to be directed as to who I should be and not what I should do?
- 7. Working with someone else. I try to remember that if I am afraid, someone else is too. If I am lonely, then so is another alcoholic. I can help by reminding others of the tools available to us. I can reach out--on the phone or in meetings. I can break my icy wall of self-will by connecting with love and dispelling confusion and loneliness.
- 8. Having gratitude. I use that old gratitude list trick that we seize upon as newcomers and may forget as the fear of the first drink fades. By the end of each gratitude list, I feel a renewed reliance on my creator.
- 9. Finally, trying to remember that although I may be unique, I am not so different, after all. I am remembering this right now as my words reach you.
- Anonymous, California —

Grapevine Online Exclusive

# November, a month of gratitude

For one minute, walk outside. Stand there in silence, look up at the sky, and contemplate how amazing life isl **SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WENESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY** Find 5 things 3 Look for a way Write a note Leave a thank Tell a special to express someone in your everyday to be to someone who you note [with your am grateful gratitude for a thankful for ... and has enriched tip] for someone life what he/she keep a journal. you spiritually. difficult person, or who waits on you. means to you. situation. 11 12 Write a letter Forgive Say "thank Call someone Give a sincere Blessings are Make a list of compliment to oftentimes not someone today, you" to a child in you haven't seen 5 past experiences to someone in and find something your family saying "Thank You." someone you do valued till they are vour life. in a while, and that seemed bad. but for which you not know. for which you can let them know you gone. - Thomas Fuller be grateful. appreciate them. are now grateful. Gratitude Thank Make a list of Find 5 unique Say "thank Tell the check Thank somesomeone who has the people in your you" to someone -out person in the makes sense of ways to show one who has our past, brings served our country life for whom gratitude today. who works as a grocery store brought you joy. you are grateful, peace for today. through military volunteer in your how much you Tell them how they - Melody Beattie and why. appreciate them. service. community. bring joy to you. 20 Do a "secret" 21 It is impossi-23 Use the word 25 Share your 22 Make time to Give some-GRATITUDE as be kind to someleftovers with act of kindness ble to be negative one a flower as a for someone who while we are giving one with no family an acronym, and someone, and thank you. has blessed your thanks. nearby. find something share grateful-- Donald Curtis you are grateful for. life ness praise Send an God gave you Let a sponsor Spend time appreciate tribu email to a long-lost a gift of 86,400 know how much focusing on value recogni seconds today. gratitude for your friend. Try Facehis/her advice gratitude Have you used one to say "thank you?" book to find Spiritual growth has meant to you. thankful them! this month. thanks love

# Intergroup wants to express our appreciation

for those groups and individuals who have made generous financial contributions, and give a special thank you to all the members who have volunteered their time to help the sick and suffering alcoholic.

# My Vote: No Opinion

# It's election time! Members are stressed and rattled. Time to share about it? Uh ... maybe not

When I was in very early sobriety, a woman who always had an amazing way of sharing attended my home group. She was funny, sharp and always seemed to say something I identified with and needed to hear. It was as if my Higher Power cleverly had her say words just for me.

At that time, the country was heavily focused on a presidential election. News organizations covered it nonstop. Many of my conversations with my family centered on the presidential debates and the candidates. The election was almost impossible to avoid.

During one of our home group meetings one day, the woman I so dearly loved to listen to spoke up. She talked about one of the two candidates and that candidate's political party. It just so happened that I supported the opposing party. Not only did I not agree with her point of view, but I felt offended by her words.

I didn't speak at that meeting but later I told my sponsor about what had happened. We had a lovely discussion about acceptance and the Tenth Tradition. I felt that if this woman had truly understood the full scope of Tradition Ten and the impact of her words, she would have spoken differently.

Now when she shared, I found flaws in everything she said. I even hoped that at meetings she wouldn't be called on to speak. I no longer heard any message of recovery in her words.

My sobriety has progressed over the years. I don't put as much stock in what other people say in meetings about their personal beliefs. I can easily discard words I don't agree with or dislike. We all can learn from the example of the many once hugely successful Washingtonians, whose demise strongly influenced our Tenth Tradition.

As with everything I find offensive, I need to look at myself and see what I can learn from the experience of feeling offended. I take special care not to voice my political opinions or my view on other controversial topics at meetings or with my sponsees. Recently I asked one of my long-time sponsees if she knew which political party I support, now that we're barreling into another presidential election that will undoubtedly be contentious.

She said she had no clue. That's exactly the response I wanted to hear. I still look forward to hearty political discussions with my family but I don't ever want anyone in the rooms, especially newcomers, to think that what I say in meetings and my sobriety are flawed based on my personal opinions on outside issues.

— Jenine M., Atlanta, Ga. —

# LIVING A LIFE OF GRATITUDE

#### For too long, we've taken gratitude for granted.

Yes, "thank you" is an essential, everyday part of family dinners, trips to the store, business deals, and political negotiations. That might be why so many people have dismissed gratitude as simple, obvious, and unworthy of serious attention.

But that's starting to change. Recently scientists have begun to chart a course of research aimed at understanding gratitude and the circumstances in which it flourishes or diminishes. They're finding that people who practice gratitude consistently report a host of benefits:

- Stronger immune systems and lower blood pressure;
- Higher levels of positive emotions;
- More joy, optimism, and happiness;
- Acting with more generosity and compassion;
- Feeling less lonely and isolated.

# **Definition of Broward County Intergroup, Inc.**

Your Intergroup office services all groups in the Broward County area. It is not a governing body and does not attempt to, nor can it, rule any AA Group. Its sole purpose is to act as a clearinghouse for the convenience of members and groups desiring assistance, and to extend the Twelve Step Work "carrying the message" to the sick alcoholic. The Intergroup office is supported entirely by contributions from groups, usually a specified amount each month or at intervals throughout the year.

The office purchases and sells all conference-approved books and literature to groups throughout Broward County.



# Focus on Sobriety

Barbara B. ~ 20yrs.

<u>Jay G</u>. ∼ 20yrs.

# **Here and Now**

Terry G. ~ 6yrs. Spiro N. ~ 7yrs. Ray S. ~ 41yrs.

### **Stepping Out**

John P. ~ 32yrs. Joe F. ~ 32yrs. Chrisy ~ 22yrs. Bob Ř. ~ 26yrs.

### Westside Men's

Armen Z. ~ 23yrs. Sean M. ~ 9yrs. Tim A. ~ 7yrs.

### Men in Recovery

Frank P. ~ 44yrs. Bill W. ~ 35yrs. Bob G. ~ 34yrs. Will S. ~ 7yrs.

#### Ft. Lauderdale Women's Sue E. ~ 11yrs.

### Don't Forget Group

Bill N. ~ 42yrs.

#### **Downtown Dry Dock**

Louise ~ 31yrs. Trey ~ 37yrs. Sully ~ 37yrs. Delores ~ 37yrs.

Lunch Bunch Jimmy Z. ~ 12yrs Cliff ~ 23yrs. Jennifer ~ 5yrs.

#### **Mountain Group**

Dawn D. ~ 1yr. Natalie S. 1yr. Alexandra F. ~ 2yrs. Ashley K. ~ 3yrs. Patty P. ~ 13yrs.

#### **Sober Women Today**

Lori A. ~ 27yrs.

# Free and Easy Group

Thom F. ~ 42yrs.

#### Live Laugh Love

Pam ~ 2 yrs. Jewel ~ 2 yrs.

#### Oakland Park

Damian S. ~ 11yrs. Joel C. ~ 35yrs. Dan I. ~ 29yrs. Jack P. ~ 46yrs.

#### **Meeting in Print** Chet R. ~ 24yrs.

# Sober Sisters

Rachel G. ~ 14yrs.

# October Celebrants

(not previously submitted)

### **Express Group**

Sonia ~ 23 yrs.

#### It's your Birthday!

Many AA members across the country share their Anniversary by giving a dollar or two, for each year of their sobriety to their Intergroup Office. This insures that the same help that they received will be available to others who are new to the fellowship.

Start this year. It is not how much you give that's important. It's thinking of others on your special day, that makes it so special. This is a wonderful way to express your gratitude by helping others receive the blessings of sobriety.

Group Contributions and individual contributions are the life support of Alcoholic Anonymous. There is no such thing as a small contribution.

Make checks payable to:

Broward County Intergroup, Inc. 3317 NW 10th Terrace, Suite 404 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309

# Thíngs we cannot change,

Brían D. Laurie S.

They will be missed by all who knew them.

### **SERVICE WORK**

Read the un-circled letters to reveal a hidden message

**ARCHIVES** CORRECTIONS **GRAPEVINE GSO INTERGROUP SECRETARY** TREATMENT

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**AREA DISTRICT GREETER HOSPITALITY LITERATURE TREASURER** 

**BCIC** Broward County **Institutions Committee** Next Meeting: November 12<sup>th</sup> 10:00 a.m. at the Twelve Step House, 205 SW 23rd St., Ft. Lauderdale.

**Intergroup Meetings** Are held at: The Twelve Step House, 205 S.W. 23<sup>rd</sup>, Ft. Lauderdale, **Upcoming Meetings** November 20th —December 18th at 1:00 p.m.

#### **General Service Office, NY**

P.O. Box 459 **Grand Central Station** New York, NY 10164-0371 212.870.3400

**Bridging The Gap** 877.207.2242

#### Broward Co. Intergroup, Inc.

3317 NW 10th Ave. Suite 404 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309 954.462.7202

#### **BCIC**

P.O. Box 22701 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33335

#### **Area 15 General Service**

Treasurer, P.O. Box 690275 Vero Beach, FL 32969-0275 (772)360-7949

#### **District 9 General Service**

P.O. Box 100126 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33310 **Suite 404** welcomes your thoughts and experiences with A.A. We love to run articles written by local people in A.A. so, let us know about your experiences with Alcoholics Anonymous, or in your local home-group. **Contact us at help@aabroward.org or will@aabroward.org** 

# Suite 404 readers tell us about their favorite passages in AA literature

My favorite passage in AA literature comes from the chapter "More About Alcoholism" in our basic text, Alcoholics Anonymous. It reads as follows:

We alcoholics are men and women who have lost the ability to control our drinking. We know that no real alcoholic ever recovers control. All of us felt at times that we were regaining control, but such intervals – usually brief – were followed by still less control, which led in time to pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization.

Although, most of the Big Book's first 164 pages screamed out to me that they were divinely inspired, this particular passage was so deeply identifiable that I was nearly in shock. Each time I repeat the phrase "pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization" it produces that gut-wrenching feeling of shame that I don't ever want to forget. Whenever the thought of escape or giving up seems to be creeping into my present moment, all I have to do is remember that paragraph to know that drinking is NOT an option for me.

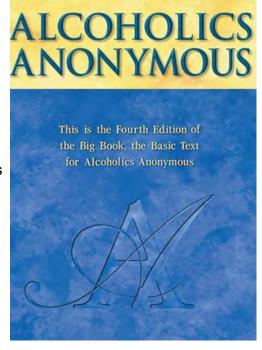
—Mary S., Wilton Manors, FL—

### Suite 404 readers tell us about their favorite AA literature

What do you mean write about my favorite AA literature? I don't feel the literature has helped me that much in the last 38 years. It has been mostly the fellowship that kept me coming back and taught me to not take a drink one day at a time. I was one of those very slow learners.

When I first came to AA the stories at the back of the Big Book were the only thing that made sense to me. I could identify myself as an alcoholic by reading those stories, and so I knew I was in the right place. I understood the first step, too – that I had to surrender completely. Beyond that, the steps were very confusing to me – it was like reading Greek. I could always follow the stories, though, and that kept me coming back.

I currently have several books in my house that are "AA literature", but I don't use them very much to this day. I have read some of them in the past, and I can understand now at meetings when information is being shared from them, but only the big book of Alcoholics Anonymous became a daily tool that could keep me moving through a program of sobriety, because I could relate to the stories. So, I guess the Big Book is my favorite, if I must choose.



—Denise J, Coral Springs—

**Suite 404** is a monthly publication of Broward County Intergroup, Inc. (BCI). The opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of BCI or AA as a whole.

We welcome your thoughts and experiences with A.A. Contact us at help@aabroward.org or will@aabroward.org

**Faithful Fivers** are fellow A.A. members who donate five dollars (\$5) a month to Intergroup as an act of gratitude. Their generosity helps us to carry the message of A.A. to the still sick and suffering alcoholic throughout the year.

# Thank you to our Faithful Fivers. Your contributions are so appreciated!

Tom & Liz J., Gregory C., Sherri D., Suzanne J., Ron J. Bob H., Anonymous I, Bobby V., Janet M., Elizabeth B., Happiness Is Group, Lillian M., Tim S., Milinda B., Barbara S., Lois O., Richard H., Richard S., Sam B., Mark S. Howard S., Douglas C., Jennifer S., Ted K., the other Bob H., Carol B., June C., Bob H., Pat R., Leslie R., Eric P., Tara D., Nancy S. and maybe YOU next time?

Please consider becoming a "Faithful Fiver." Your commitment of \$5.00 a month to your Intergroup Office will go a long way toward helping carry the message to the still sick and suffering alcoholic who reaches out.

Fill out this form and mail it in with your contribution today!

It is the still suffering alcoholic who ultimately benefits from your generous spirit!

Name:

Address:

Email:

Sobriety Date and Home Group

Make checks payable to:

Broward County Intergroup, Inc.3317 NW 10th Terrace, Suite 404, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309

# Service Opportunities

Broward County Intergroup's 6<sup>th</sup> Annual

# AA's Got Talent Planning Meeting

Planning Meeting: Saturday, November 19th, Saturday, 1:30pm, 441 Group, 1452 State Road 7, Margate, FL 33063

# Winterfest Planning Meeting

# Area Quarterly in Sarasota Hosted by District 7

January 6th – 8th, 2017, Hyatt Regency Sarasota, 1000 Boulevard of the Arts, Sarasota, Florida, 34236

**Intergroup Office Will Be Closed:** Friday, November 11th, for Veterans Day

## **MEETING CHANGES**

#### Monday

**NEW MEETING Women's Open House,** 8:30p.m., 101 Club, 700 SW 10th St. & Dixie Hwy., Pompano, FL. 33060. OBBw

#### Tuesday

**NEW MEETING** <u>Veteran's In Recovery.</u> 7:00p.m., Fellowship Recovery Center, 5400 W. Atlantic Blvd. Margate, FL 33063 CCCm

**NEW MEETING Splinter Group,** 9:00a.m., First Pavilion On Beach, North Of Fishing Pier, Pompano, FL **Wednesday** 

NEW MEETING Solution By The Sea, 8:30p.m., 2035 Harding Street, Hollywood, FL 33020 OLTSP NEW MEETING The Harbor Group, 8:00p.m., Sober Today Club, 1633 S.21st Ave., Hollywood, 33020 Wednesday

**NEW MEETING** <u>3rd Floor Sobriety.</u> 5:30p.m., Pembroke Professional Centre, Suite 383, 9050 Pines Blvd. Pembroke Pines, FL 33024 OBB

#### **Thursday**

**NEW MEETING Men Of Integrity,** 8:30p.m., Fellowship Recovery Center, 5400 W. Atlantic Blvd. Margate, FL 33063 OCCM.

**NEW MEETING <u>Atlantic Woman's Group,</u>** 5:45p.m., Fellowship Recovery Center, 5400 W. Atlantic Blvd. Margate, FL 33063 CRFw.

Eastside Back To Basics, 7:00p.m., Christ Comm. Church, 901 E McNab Rd., Pompano.

<u>Living Young & Sober,</u> 7:30p.m., The Hope Spot, 218 Dania Bch. Blvd., Dania, **Is Looking For A New Home.** <u>Open Arms,</u> 7:30p.m., Mount Olive Baptist, 401 NW 9th Ave., Fort Lauderdale, **Has Moved to** Delevoe Park, 2520 NW 6th St., Ft. Lauderdale, FL. 33311

#### **Friday**

<u>Friday Night Step Series</u>, 8:00p.m., Sober Today Club, 1633 S. 21st Ave., Hollywood, FL33020 OSS <u>Perry Street South</u>, 7:00p.m., ProAm Building, 1915 NE 45 St., Ft. Lauderdale, **Has Added A New Night** It will meet two nights now. Tuesday at 7:00p.m., and now, Friday at 7:00p.m.

#### Saturday

**NEW MEETING <u>Doing The Deal,</u>** 7:30p.m., Fellowship Recovery Center, 5400 W. Atlantic Blvd. Margate, FL <u>Saturday Night Sobriety,</u> 7:00p.m., Kiwanis Park, 520 Ramblewood Rd, Coral Springs, **No longer meets.** 

#### Sunday

<u>Sunday Night As Bill Sees It</u>, 6:30p.m., Kiwanis Park, 520 Ramblewood Rd, Coral Springs, **No longer meets.**Daily

<u>Options Group.</u>: 5:30p.m., Luther Memorial Church, 1925 N 60th Ave., Hollywood, **No longer meets.**<u>Good Morning God.</u> 10:00a.m., Tae Kwan do, Sun Village Plaza, 4577 N. University, Lauderhill, **Has Moved to,** Unity Room, (Old Sunrise Room) 4525 N Pine Island Rd., Sunrise, FL. 33324

12 & 12 Group, :8:00p.m. Tuesday & 7:30p.m., Friday, Sober Today Club, 1633 S. 21st Ave., Hollywood, No longer meets.

# Upcoming Events

- **Nov. 3-6 10th International Conference, Seniors in Sobriety,** Bahia Resort Hotel, San Diego, California. For more info check website, www.seniorsinsobriety.org.
- Nov. 11 District 9 53rd Gratitude Dinner, Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church, 5555 N. Federal Hwy, Ft. Lauderdale. Coffee at 5, Dinner at 6, Speaker at 7:30. Tickets \$15.00 All proceeds to benefit the General Service Office in New York.
- **Dec. 3 General Service, District 9, Winterfest Dinner & Ice Cream Social**, NSU Cafeteria, 3200 S. University Dr., Davie. 6:00 p.m. Dinner, Speaker. \$8.00., In Advance, \$10.00, at The Door, Bring a newcomer! **NSU** is a totally smoke-free facility.
- **Feb. 4 6th Annual AAs Got Talent,** Coral Springs Charter School, \$10.00. Adults only.