



# HOW

Monthly Publication of the Indian River Central Office of Alcoholics Anonymous

Volume 33 • Issue 11 • December 11, 2014

"The HOW is published to improve communication between local AA Groups and encourage the participation of AA members in service and activities."

"A.A.'s Twelve Steps are a group of principles, spiritual in their nature, which, if practiced as a way of life, can expel the obsession to drink and enable the sufferer to become happily and usefully whole."

## A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Approximately 7 or eight months ago, the general service office in New York City received a call for help from a small island in the Abaco area of the Eastern Bahamas. It was learned that a small group of people, six of them, with the aid of a big book and a copy of how it works had achieved sobriety over the past two years.

Much like the Washingtonians of over 160 years ago they had learned each other's stories verbatim and were wondering if that was all there was. To charge things up a bit they instituted a game night, Saturday evenings the group would get together in a fellowship setting and play games such as Pictionary. The evening was such a success in this small community, that the townsfolk could not help but observe the fun the fledgling AA group was having in not drinking. Some asked if they could join in the fun, however the small group without realizing it, used tradition 11, and even though most of the townsfolk knew all the members of the group, it was decided to keep game night for the Fellowship only.

Once the call for help was received in New York people that look at things like that, were pretty much amazed and immediately contacted the South Florida area 15 Delegate, and informed him of what they had learned. It just so happened that Delegate and I had made the acquaintance of a Julia N. who had moved from England to the Bahamas little over a year and a half ago, she even attended one of our quarterly assemblies and we were working on trying to get something set up for the folks just off the coast of Florida. However, before things really get under way, Juliet fell in love, got married, and moved back to England. That pretty much ended our efforts at that time.

Once the Delegate received a call from the GSO, things were set in motion, email and voice communications were established with the fledgling group, finally arrangements were finalized for a trip to Hope Town, located on Elbow Cay in the Abaco section of the Eastern Bahamas. The plan was to go over on Thursday November 6 to return on Monday, November 10 of this year.

The party that was going over consisted of the Area 15 Delegate, 2 Past Delegates a district 8 Chair and area 15 registrar. It should be noted, that we do not frivolously spend your dollar that goes into the basket, the 2 past Delegates, the Area registrar and the District Chair funded themselves for the trip.

On the appointed day, November 6, we met at West Palm Beach airport and boarded a two prop plane which took us to Marsh Harbour where we went from the airport to the ferry landing and were taken across the Abaco Sea to Elbow Cay. We were greeted at the lower dock in Hope Town by some of the local AA members who took us to our lodging, a three bedroom home bordering the Atlantic on the back side and the Abaco See just across the street in front of the house.

The district chair had flown over the day before and was staying at a local inn, we met up with him about an hour after we had arrived. (as a side note, he had to leave late Saturday for a Sunday District meeting back home)

First order of business was a meeting at 6 PM at the library where all of Hope Town AA meetings are held. Usually meetings are held at 6 PM Monday, Wednesday and Friday. However they threw in a couple of extra meetings so we could have as much time as possible to share Experience, Strength and Hope with each other.

Our first meeting at the library was memorable, the meeting was opened with the Serenity Prayer, then "How It Works" was read. By this time we were joined by a 4 additional members of the group, after a little while another member came in and we were asked to share our stories with them. At that first meeting the Delegate, one of the past delegates and the registrar shared. We did not worry too much about the length of the meeting, if I remember correctly we were probably approaching the two-hour mark. The group members had arranged for a potluck supper at the house where we were staying, and I tell you what we ate good, they treated as well. Even while we were eating the discussion never wavered from Alcoholics Anonymous and the wonders that awaited our newfound friends. Between the meeting and a potluck, we took a little walk, stopped at a local grocery store, if anyone has a picture of publics in their mind, forget about it, no supermarkets on the island just mom-and-pop stores. We were also shown by the coffee shop was apparently that is where everyone meets.

A little side note of interest. One of the local AA members tried to get sober back in the mid to late 90's but was unable to do so in Hope Town, so she ended up in a beautiful area here in Florida where she maintained her sobriety, only to lose it for a number of years after returning to Hope Town. That beautiful area in Florida is called Indian River county, in fact right here in Vero Beach where she attended meeting at our very own Safe Harbour Women's group.

Friday we met everyone at the coffee shop at around 9 AM, drinking coffee and talking about, you guessed it, Alcoholics Anonymous. We had learn, understand and remember that we were in a foreign country, with people who do not have the benefits that we enjoy of having sponsors, having a plethora of meetings, old-timers sharing experience strength and Hope. Like stated before, what they had was a big book, "How It Works" and the

*(continued on page 5)*

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Traditions


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# STEP



***“Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message and to practice these principles in all our affairs”***

“For it is only by accepting and solving our problems that we can begin to get right with ourselves and with the world about us, and with Him who presides over us all. Understanding is the key to right principles and attitudes, and right action is the key to good living; therefore the joy of good living is the theme of AA’s Twelfth Step.”

*Reprinted from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions  
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## PRINCIPLE BEHIND STEP 12

**Service** - “Having experienced a psychic change that keeps us sober one day at a time, we’re empowered to demonstrate the new principles by which we live. We remain in action in our daily life through example. We seek out and are available to help others in need. We continue to carry the message of hope and recovery. We strive to help wherever we can even in the smallest simple tasks of life.

### TRADITION 12

“Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.”

### CONCEPT XII

The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

### TRADITIONS CHECKLIST

1. Why is it a good idea for me to place the common welfare of all AA members before individual welfare? What would happen to me if AA as a whole disappeared?
2. When I do not trust AA’s current servants, who do I wish had the authority to straighten them out?
3. In my opinions of and remarks about other AAs, am I implying membership requirements other than a desire to stay sober?
4. Do I ever try to get a certain AA group to conform to my standards, not its own?
5. Have I a personal responsibility in helping an AA group fulfill its primary purpose? What is my part?
6. Does my personal behavior reflect the Sixth Tradition – or belie it?
7. Do I do all I can do to support AA financially? When is the last time I anonymously gave away a Grapevine subscription?
8. Do I complain about certain AAs’ behavior – especially if they are paid to work for AA? Who made me so smart?
9. Do I fulfill all AA responsibilities in such a way as to please privately even my own conscience? Really?
10. Do my utterances always reflect the Tenth Tradition, or do I give AA critics real ammunition?
11. Should I keep my AA membership a secret, or reveal it in private conversation when that may help another alcoholic (and therefore me)? Is my brand of AA so attractive that other drunks want it?
12. What is the real importance of me among more than a million AAs?

Merry  
**CHRISTMAS**

\*\*\* & \*\*\*



Join us for the Alcothons at the Newport Club  
 Fellowship, Eat & Meet

**CHRISTMAS ALCOTHON**  
**Dec. 24 -25**

4 - 6 pm	Indian River Thursday
6 - 8 pm	Hibiscus Thursday
8 - 10 pm	South Vero
10 - 12 am	I Am Responsible
12 - 2 am	Early Risers
2 - 4 am	Vero Beach Men's
4 - 6 am	ODAAT
6 - 8 am	Free & Easy
8 - 10 am	Magnolia Group
10 - 12 pm	Safe Harbor
12 - 2 pm	Indian River Men's
2 - 4 pm	Easy Does It

**NEW YEAR'S ALCOTHON**  
**Dec. 31 - Jan. 1**

4 - 6 pm	Royal Palm
6 - 8 pm	Hibiscus Thursday
8 - 10 pm	Vero Beach Group
10 - 12 am	ODAAT
12 - 2 am	Free & Easy
2 - 4 am	Vero Beach Men's
4 - 6 am	Early Risers
6 - 8 am	Indian River Men's
8 - 10 am	Indian River Women's
10 - 12 pm	Magnolia Group
12 - 2 pm	Indian River Thursday
2 - 4 pm	Easy Does It

Alcothon sponsored by the Indian River Central Office  
 Newport Club Outside Room  
 2536 16th Ave, Vero Beach

# SEBASTIAN HOLIDAY ALCOTHONS

Community Center 1805 N. Central Ave (off Jackson St) near Wal-Mart on US1

## Christmas Alcothon Dec. 24-25

Wed. 10 am	A New Day
Wed. 12 pm	Lunch Bunch
Wed. 2 pm	Sebastian Freedom
Wed. 4 pm	Man to Man
Wed. 6 pm	Sundowner's
Wed. 8 pm	OSSABAW
Wed. 10 pm	Big Book Study Group
Thurs. 12 am	ODAAAT
Thurs. 2 am	Butch
Thurs. 4 am	Butch
Thurs. 6 am	Lunch Bunch
Thurs. 8 am	Barefoot Bay
Thurs. 10 pm	A New Day
Thurs. 12 pm	New Beginnings
Thurs. 2 pm	Step Sister's
Thurs. 4 pm	Man to Man

## New Year's Alcothon Dec. 31- Jan. 1

Wed. 10 am	A New Day
Wed. 12 pm	Lunch Bunch
Wed. 2 pm	Sebastian Freedom
Wed. 4 pm	Man to Man
Wed. 6 pm	5:32 Step Study
Wed. 8 pm	OSSABAW
Wed. 10 pm	Big Book Study Group
Thurs. 12 am	ODAAAT
Thurs. 2 am	Butch
Thurs. 4 am	Butch
Thurs. 6 am	Lunch Bunch
Thurs. 8 am	Barefoot Bay
Thurs. 10 pm	A New Day
Thurs. 12 pm	New Beginnings
Thurs. 2 pm	Step Sister's
Thurs. 4 pm	Man to Man

## "PEN TO PAPER, IF YOU PLEASE"

### How can I serve my A.A. community too?

Wouldn't it be nice if we could have some local flavor articles to publish. We have a thriving A.A. community in Indian River County so there should be plenty to go around.

Another source for good articles would be the committee chairs, let everyone know what your committee is up to; what does it entail to be on your committee; are there requirements; and what are some of the rewards you have received having been involved in service at the local level.

Articles or personal stories would be welcomed on the Steps, Traditions or Concepts.

Don't forget, this publication is YOUR voice to the AA Community.

## Important Info From Indian River Central Office

All checks for Literature, Group Contributions or Donations must be made out to our official title, "Indian River Central Office"

The bank will not accept "Indian River Intergroup" as a substitute when submitting a check for deposit.

Our two mailing addresses are as follows:

Indian River Central Office  
1600 26th Street, Suite 6  
Vero Beach, FL 32961

Indian River Central Office  
P.O. Box 1776  
Vero Beach FL 32961

Literature increases imposed by New York back in September will now go into affect January 1st.

## A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY *(continued from page 1)*

"Promises." When we first walked into the coffee shop the proprietor, who was working behind the counter, looked at us and said "You must be the people from AA", at first we assumed she was one of us, not so. We found out real quickly that in this small community, where people trace their roots back to the late 1700s when they arrived from the US mainland, was very close-knit. They are descendants from British loyalists who came to the Abacos from the American mainland after the US had gained independence from Great Britain. They were no longer welcome, yet here we were, all these years later, welcomed with open arms.

The Abacos have a totally different culture than what we have, no secrets, everyone pretty much knows everyone. The island is so small that no one gets their mail delivered, all mail on Elbow Cay is general delivery. If you want your mail, head for the post office 'cause that's where it is. While at the coffee shop we sat outside, and I tell you, the coffee was delicious, Starbucks eat your heart out. Pretty much the entire day was taken up with talking about how AA is organized what is a GSR, what is it DCM and so on and so forth. Things that we take for granted were unknown in Hope Town, which is why they called the GSO. We told them about our quarterly assembly, the number of people that attend. It was difficult for them to wrap their heads about the fact that between 700 and 800 alcoholics come together every three months for the purpose of ensuring the survival of Alcoholics Anonymous and to continue bringing the message of sobriety to the still suffering alcoholics throughout our area.

I suppose it should be noted that South Florida area 15 includes not only South Florida but also the Bahamas, the US and British Virgin Islands, Antigua, St. Maarten as well as the Cayman Islands. Area 15 is truly an international area of Alcoholics Anonymous. There was a time back to the 90s when the Bahamas were actively participated in our area, no one really remembers what happened to cause the non-participation and the demise of many of the groups that were active 25-30 years ago, but none of that really matters, right now we are more interested in bringing what little help we can through our combined Experience Strength and Hope to Hope Town. Another surprise we had on Friday was the arrival of an AA member from Freeport, he had heard about what was happening and came on over. He was a welcome addition, participating and ready to bring our message, meaning the message of AA, back to his people, his group, in Freeport.

For lunch we were taken to the Firefly resort, a beautiful place and we were left to ourselves for about two hours I guess, we had a wonderful meal and but when we returned to the library it was right back to discussing the wonders of Alcoholics Anonymous. There was so much food left from the potluck the evening before, that it was unanimously decided to finish off the rest of the food that night after the 6 PM meeting, which we did. Part of the Friday night meeting was one of our past delegates giving a presentation on the organization of AA, including the service manual. What would've been a 45 minute event probably lasted close to two hours, so many questions. We had to constantly remind ourselves that what is run-of-the-mill for us is brand-new for our good friends in the Abacos. After dinner we talked about and organized the presentations for Saturday. The plan was to start at about 9 AM and finish up about five. The event was to take place at a beautiful home owned by one of the group members. The delegate and the registrar both had PowerPoint presentations, we checked them out and everything was set to go. The only mishap we had was that the delegates luggage somehow did not make it to Marsh Harbour, not only did his bags include his clothing it also included about 50 pounds of AA books meant for our newfound friends. The literature was contributed by the General Service Office, all we had to do was pay for it to be shipped over. In any event we set the schedule, the delegate would start with his delegate's report on the Annual General Service Conference held each April in either New York City or Rye, NY; then the registrar would do a Powerpoint presentation and discuss the traditions, then lunch to be followed by the second past delegate talking about and discussing the concepts. Then the delegate would finish it up talking about the history of Alcoholics Anonymous. That's not exactly how it worked out.

When Saturday rolled around we were taken to the home where all the activities were to take place, which by the way, is beautiful and spacious, there was more than sufficient space for what we had planned. Now if we had just done the presentations as planned, the way it would've worked had it been in Florida (where we usually preach to the choir) we probably would've been done by 5 PM. However, once we got started, there were questions and comments, our friends were so hungry for learning about AA, about recovery, about maintaining recovery, enhancing their newfound sobriety that by the time we completed everything it was 10:15 PM. At one point we broke for lunch, hamburgers and hotdogs done on the grill right where we were, and dinner was pizza being delivered. The entire day was one great, big, huge spiritual event. By the time we got back to our lodging everyone was beat, but the adrenaline kinda kept us up for a little while longer just talking. What a wonderful day it was.

Sunday was a rest and relaxation, Keith had a 27 foot boat with twin 250 Evinrudes, and that baby moved once we cleared the harbor, I tell you what. The fair of the day was conch hunting. Two of the lady members of the group, once we got to the happy hunting grounds, jumped overboard and were snorkeling in 10 to 12 feet of water that was so clear that the bottom was totally visible. After bringing up 10 or 12 Conchs, we were ready to head to one of the smaller cays where the rest of the group was waiting with some more that we had not yet met. We learned how to get conchs out of the shell and how to make conch salad, which by the way was delicious. It was late afternoon by the time we got back to Hope Town and we decided that it was now our turn to take those members that were able to go out for dinner. We went to the Abaco Inn, a lovely place, would do extremely well here in Vero Beach, I do believe it would give some of what we think of as the better restaurants in town a run for their money. Delicious food.

A little sadness started creeping in as we started to realize that this was our last full day on the island, tomorrow morning at 8 AM the ferry would be taken is back to Marsh Harbour, to the prop plane that would whisk us back to West Palm Beach. Even so, sleep came easy it had been an exhausting three days.

As we left Elbow Cay, there was both joy and sadness, also a few tears, both on the dock waving goodbye as well as on the ferry heading towards Marsh Harbour, also waving goodbye.

I don't believe I will ever forget these 5 days, it ranks right up there with the Sunday big meeting at the International Convention. A spiritual high that is impossible to put into words, but which rings loud and clear in the heart.

I hope that we helped, time will tell, for me those five days have produced a profound, lasting effect which once again has proven that there are things in life that occur because they must, not because we will them to occur, and that we are indeed but "Trusted Servants."

Thank You Bill and Dr. Bob.

"For anonymity reasons, all names have been removed from this article

Dutch V. Royal Palm Group

# 2014 OFFICE ACTIVITY

## Calls for Assistance & Walk-Ins Nature of Calls

	OCT	NOV	DEC	4th Q	1st Q	2nd Q	3rd Q	TOTAL
12th Step Support	14	-		14	42	57	28	132
General Info / Misc.	99	-		99	204	257	207	694
Purchases	97	-		97	267	293	234	824
Meeting Info	22	-		22	105	90	109	289
Alanon / NA	5	-		5	28	22	16	67
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>-</b>		<b>237</b>	<b>646</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>2196</b>

# Gate Lodge

TUESDAY 8:30 pm	
12/9	Easy Does It
12/16	Noontime
12/23	ODAAT
12/30	A New Day
1/6	Easy Does It
1/13	Noontime
1/20	ODAAT

THURSDAY 8:30 pm	
12/11	Roseland
12/8	I Am Responsible
12/25	Candlelight
1/1	Indian River Men's
1/8	I Am Responsible
1/15	Man to Man
1/22	Candlelight

SATURDAY 8:30 pm	
12/13	Indian River Womens
12/20	South Vero
12/27	Early Risers
1/3	Vero Beach Men's
1/10	Indian River Women's
1/17	Indian River Thursday
1/24	South Vero

All meetings start at 8:30pm. Group members that are taking the commitment are asked to check in with the tech on duty upon arrival. Thank you to all the groups for participating.

We represent the fellowship and present the program.

Please contact Samantha G. @ 772 584 9838

# BHC\*\*

**MONDAYS @ 7:00 pm**

\*\* This facility requires 2 years of sobriety for visiting AA's

12/15	Early Risers
12/22	South Vero
12/29	Lunch Bunch
1/5	Vero Beach Men's
1/12	Indian River Men's
1/19	Early Risers
1/26	South Vero

# BIRTHDAYS

December 2014

Happy Birthday to All!



Please bring list of your group's celebrants' names and number of years to Central Office or submit via e-mail to irhow@yahoo.com by the last Friday of the preceding month (email submissions preferred)

Thank you.

## AA Only

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## A New Day

Mike L. ....	1
Dee N. ....	3
Vincent L. ....	5
Carol P. ....	8

## Barefoot Bay

Carol S. ....	30
Sandy A. ....	32

## Candlelight

Billy D. ....	1
Winston H. ....	1
Roy C. ....	8
Tom R. ....	25
Tom W. ....	28

## Early Risers

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## Easy Does It

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## Free and Easy

Bob L. ....	18
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## Free Wheeling

Adam P. ....	7
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## Friday Night Young People

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## I Am Responsible

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## Indian River Thursday Night

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## Indian River Men's

Clay .....	9
Jim M. ....	28

## Indian River Women's

Allene M. ....	23
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## Kings Highway

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## The Magnolia Group

Annie .....	3
Joannie .....	39
Linda .....	45
Natasha (Dec) .....	3

## Man to Man

Michael L. ....	1
Michael C. ....	1
Louie M. ....	2
Vinny L. ....	5
Dave F. ....	20

## Meat & Potatoes Group

.....

## Noontime

.....

## ODAAT

Terri R. ....	1
Ron S. ....	3
Michael W. ....	4
Joani M. ....	10
Donna K. ....	11
Dawn T. ....	12
Karen M. ....	15
Jim H. ....	15
Barbara L. ....	22
Allene M. ....	23
Anne K. ....	25
Vivien B. ....	32
Bev R. ....	39
Linda M. ....	45

## OSSABAW

Rick W. ....	10
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## Royal Palm

James W. ....	30
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## Roseland Sebastian Speakers

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## Safe Harbor

Judy M. ....	38
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## Sebastian 12 & 12

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## Sebastian 5:32

Linda C. ....	9
Barbara L. ....	24
Denise L. ....	26

## Sebastian Lunch Bunch

Laura A. ....	25
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## Sebastian Sundowners

C.J. ....	3
Lia V. ....	7
Linda L. ....	9
Michael C. ....	13

## Sebastian Stepsisters

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## Sober Rainbow

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## South Vero

Adam F. ....	1
Mark L. ....	1
Terri R. ....	1
Nicole M. ....	2
Sandie S. ....	2
Adam B. ....	8
Gus J. ....	13
Sheila M. ....	15
Louie F. ....	17
Bob H. ....	28
Art B. ....	29
Kevin S. ....	31

## December

Patrick W. ....	1
Richard V. ....	1
Ryan Z. ....	1
Sebastian .....	1
Ken P. ....	2
Allison H. ....	4
Matt H. ....	4
Chris O. ....	4
Dave P. ....	6
Jo Ann H. ....	16
Dave B. ....	18
John M. ....	39

## Surfside

Judy S. ....	17
Al C. ....	35
Barbara C. ....	40
Marty P. ....	50

## Vero Beach 12 & 12

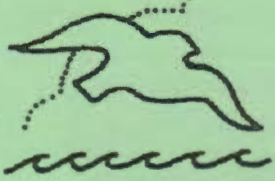
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## Vero Beach Group

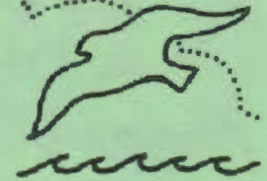
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## Vero Beach Men's

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Indian River Central Office of Alcoholics Anonymous  
 1600 26th Street, Suite 6  
 P.O. Box 1776  
 Vero Beach, FL 32961  
 772-562-1114



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Lane S.  
 Karen M.  
 Don Mc.

It is both a privilege and a responsibility for groups and members to insure that not only their group but also the Indian River Central Office remains self-supporting. It has been a tradition in Indian River County that individual members are encouraged to donate one dollar for each year of sobriety, during their Birthday or anniversary month. Below is a handy form for that purpose.



**Indian River Central Office Birthday Plan**

This contribution on my #\_\_\_\_\_A.A. Birthday is my way of saying *thank you* to the Central Office for serving the A.A. community in Indian River County.

Contributor: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Group Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate whether you want your contribution credited to (a) your group\* or (b) anonymously \_\_\_\_\_

Make check out to **Indian River Central Office of AA**. Drop off at the Central Office or mail to the address listed Below.

**1600 26<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 6  
 Vero Beach, FL 32961**

**Phone 772-562-1114**

