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Trustee Line for September 20, 2006

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General Submissions From The Trustees

Submit a response to the [Trustee Line](#) because of something you have read in this or any other issue.

Hello to all the new Trustees, returning Trustees, and to all former Trustees

As we continue to prepare for the October national conference and Trustee meeting I want to thank everyone for getting their registrations into the conference committee and their reservations into the resort. It looks like a very well attended conference and Trustee meeting will ensue

There is still time to get reservations and registrations in, but please hurry. If you experience any problems please contact me as soon as possible. There have been a few glitches in the hotel registration process as the resort switches over to the Hyatt Regency brand. But we are taking care of them swiftly and amicably, but we need to know if you are experiencing any problems

On another note, I recently participated in the conference call demonstration put together by David M. This call went smoothly and was not a difficult process. The benefits to this call are endless as we use our imagination to put this tool to work. It had good clarity and sound. The moderator is able to take different forms of questions, and we can listen in on a meeting, or discussion. We can use this tool for the BOT, committee meetings, BOR....or any time we need to communicate with each other, or need to listen in and ask questions on any particular subject. Thank You for letting me participate in the experiment, I found it quite eye-opening.

Looking forward to seeing everyone, it will be here real soon

Richie S. - Area 6
2006 Southern Conference Chair

In attending past trustee meetings I have observed that the same small percentage of the group speak on each issue. When wondering why, I thought maybe it is because newer trustee don't feel they will be recognized and put on the list of speakers. The chairs do a great job in getting to know the trustee's names, however, I think it would make their job easier and possibly the new trustees more confident if a name card was made for each trustee and in order to be recognized to speak you merely raised the name card. What do you think?

Carol K - Area 9

Like to see a Trustee's decision on whether children should be allowed at regular GA Meetings!

David F. - Area 3

I would like to take this opportunity to ask the Trustees to announce at their Intergroup meetings, that the '90 Day Committee' is still looking for good positive suggestions for our next meeting. The committee is making good progress and we would like not to leave anyone out of the mix. The '90 Day Room' is such a great tool to help in member retention that we would like as much input as possible. You can contact me through the Trustee Line and present any ideas you may have.

Thank You
Andy D - 90 Day Room Committee Chair
Area 12

AS A NEW TRUSTEE I AM SORRY THAT YOU DID NOT GET A BIGGER RESPONSE FOR THE WEDNESDAY NIGHT MEETING FOR NEW TRUSTEES. WE WILL HOPE THAT THE MEETING IN FT LAUDERDALE WILL BE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE FOR US. CHICAGO IS BRINGING 3 NEW TRUSTEES TO THE CONFERENCE. THANK YOU DENIS, FOR ALL YOU DO.

KATHY H. - Area 8

I would like to share my thoughts on the issue of men and women in GA and how to protect one from the other. I understand that many members would like to see a division of the sexes. Meetings for WOMEN only and for MEN only. Thank God it wasn't that way when I came to the rooms. It was hard to enter GA but for me it would have been near to impossible if I had to enter a room full of women. Through recovery and making an extreme effort I have been able to establish some rewarding relationship with

women, but for me it is a constant struggle. I was always more comfortable in a group of males even as a child, long before sex was an issue. I was tomboy. My experience through my life with girls, ladies, women and I have few other names that aren't so nice have been very negative and painful.

I do understand that members should feel safe in the meetings but in addition to gender issues there are other things that make people feel unsafe. As members I feel we should be observant and help each other conduct ourselves appropriately.

I spent much time on the phone with a member that wasn't going to return because he didn't want to see the guy who keeps asking him for money. Even though we say before each meeting that if anyone asks or offers you money let a trusted servant know, he didn't do that. I only found out when I called because I hadn't seen him in the rooms for a while. Thankfully both members are still active.

I have seen women hit on men, women hit on women, and men hit on women in the rooms. I have suggested to a member that she shouldn't give a particular male member a ride to or from a meeting by herself and suggested she ask one of the male members to do so. She was relieved by the suggestion, she felt she had to because our mission is to "help the compulsive gambler who suffers" and he was hurting very badly and had no way to get to meetings. I spoke with another member who called a member because she hadn't seen him in a meeting lately. He became very inappropriate and she called me after the phone call extremely upset. I told it was okay to hang up! Sometimes people need permission to hang up and/or say no.

Still yet another meeting said he wasn't going to return because he wasn't accepted and people made too much of his language. Others were going to keep coming because of the foul language. I was very unhealthy when I came in the rooms and I believe most others are too. I spoke, on the side, to the man who uses the F word in his therapy and shared with him that he tends to do that if he starts to feel accepted and it is his way of making sure he isn't welcome. I then asked him what he would do if someone in NA (which he is a long standing member of and feels very accepted) did what he did that night. He said he would have pulled him aside just as I was doing and thanked me.

Members have talked to me on the side from time to time as I am learning and growing and sometimes need guidance. This world isn't perfect and to survive and not gamble I must learn how to deal with it. I know this was long and most of you probably stopped reading halfway through but I felt a burning need to say that some of us need the help from the other gender as much as some of us need protection from the other gender. Be careful you don't make the wrong choice for someone else. For the majority your thoughts may be right but thank God I was able to speak to men as I find it very difficult to share my thoughts and feelings with women.

Carol K - Area 9

Dear Trustees:

I look forward to meeting with you at the upcoming Florida conference and answering any questions you have about the operation of the ISO and welcome any suggestions to improve our fellowship. The last operating statement showed a minus \$13,456.21 of disbursements in excess of income. The BOT have approved and asked the BOR. to fund a National hotline. The anticipated cost of such hotline would be \$1600.00 monthly. In addition the BOT approved a web-site which is anticipated to cost \$9,000.00. There seems to be no plan by the BOT to fund such projects nor increase revenues to the ISO.

Therefore, it has become the responsibility of the BOR to create additional revenue within the requirements of the guidance code. The primary sources of revenue for the ISO are as follows:

1. Donations from groups, intergroups and cans
2. Literature
3. Conferences
4. Lifeliners

The best and most immediate source of increasing revenue is through Lifeliners. It is sad and disappointing to note the lack of Lifeliners. Even more disappointing is the fact there is a considerable percentage of trustees and past trustees who are not Lifeliners. The fellowship has thousands of members with thousands of years of abstinence and recovery, yet according to the June 2006 Bulletin we have only 259 Lifeliners, and not all of those are regular contributors, that translates into less than one percent (1%) of our membership being Lifeliners.

On a final note I cannot stress enough the importance of national conferences adhering to the financial guidelines put in place by the BOT. Many of you are not aware of the serious problems created in the past. Consequently the BOR is requiring of all conferences at which the ISO supplies and sells G.A. literature that all monies received from such sales must be paid to the ISO Executive Secretary at the conclusion of such conference.

I look forward to a successful conference in Florida.

Respectfully, Benni F. - Chairman Board of Regents

Last month I participated in a 6-person BOT conference call organized by David M., Trustee Website Chair Area 12. The purpose of this call was to demonstrate a platform

through which the Trustees, primarily the incoming Trustees of this current term, can participate in a question/ answer forum with the Board Chairman, the 2 Assistant Chairs, and perhaps as well with Karen H., IES.

In my opinion, this venue and (potential) conference call meeting would be of benefit to incoming Trustees and the Board as a whole. Not only would it serve to familiarize newcomers to Trustee meetings about procedural matters and the like, but it would also help establish rapport among new and current Trustees. The opportunity to meet others first by phone and later connect a name to a face in Florida can only aid in strengthening unity and fellowship.

I'm reasonably confident that there would be an overwhelming number of participants -- newcomer, mid-comer and veteran Trustees alike -- once word gets out that this would be an effective platform. Therefore, I encourage our Board Chair, Denis, to consider bringing a BOT conference call meeting to fruition before the first session of the Florida BOT meeting.

Ed E. - Area 2

By now each of you should have received your copy of the agenda for the October meeting. As you can see we have much work ahead and I hope that each of us spends the time beforehand to review the items listed. I ask that you consider each one carefully as every one of these items is important to someone and each deserves our best efforts. It's easy to dismiss subjects that are not of importance to us personally but we have a responsibility to one another and to the fellowship that we must respect.

I suppose all of us have, at one time or another, been frustrated by the discussions that take place at our meetings and by the subjects we consider. In the August issue of the Trustee Line Joan L. took the opportunity to express her disdain for trustee meetings and, apparently, many of the trustees she served with. While Joan said nothing that I have not heard before I was a bit put off hearing this from a Trustee. Her main complaints seem to be that the vast majority of items discussed were useless and most of the trustees had to say was "a lot of sticky hot air". What really struck me was her comments that "So many things need to be changed" and "I'm only one person who can't fight city hall". This is the thinking I would like to stop in it's tracks.

While none of us can do this on our own, all of us can be part of making things better. I don't recall one single item that Joan put on the agenda to help change things. I don't recall Joan ever approaching me, as Chairman, with a single suggestion as to how to make things better. So, I suppose what I am saying is that I think the criticism is unfair and this type of thinking needs to be challenged.

The agenda is open to all of us as are the committees that have been formed which are trying to improve the way in which we operate as a board. In addition, all of my contact information is readily available to you as is the contact information for my two co-chairs. All of us are open to and appreciative of your suggestions and advice.

On another sour note, another month has passed and we still have not received most of the required documentation from the Boston Conference committee. No bank statements, no cancelled checks, no deposit slips, no paid invoices, no cash receipts and no registration information. We also have no idea of when we will have any of this information. We must, as a Board, find a better way of doing this. After the Florida situation, and in an attempt to protect the fellowship in the future, the Board laid down simple but strict guidelines under which conference committees must operate. They are meaningless if a conference committee refuses to honor them. And right now, there is simply nothing we can do about it. The fellowship deserves better.

Denis M. - Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Dear David,

Thank you for the excellent job you are doing with the Trustee Line. I hope you and the other Board Members will indulge me for the following comments, since the October B.O.T. Meeting in Florida will be the first meeting I will not be a Trustee at since, 2002. I will be at the Conference and plan to attend the meeting.

However, I will miss being a Trustee after having served from 1978 to 1986 (the last 4 of those years as Vice-Chairman) as a Trustee from Connecticut and for the last 4 years as a Trustee from Area 3A, in San Diego.

It was certainly a privilege to serve with all of my fellow Trustees. I wish to thank Denis M., Michelle J. and Chuck R. for a job well done. Also, many thanks to Tom M., Chairmen of the Board of Regents and to Karen H. of I.S.O. for the great job she does for G.A.

Below are some comments to suggest to the Board. I think it will be a big improvement if Committee reports are limited to 10 to 15 minutes and in the future Committee Chairmen should E-mail or distribute their report to Board Members at least 2 weeks prior to the Board meeting.

I also think that the Chairman of the Board should follow Robert's Rules of Order when conducting the Board meeting unless the Board has voted to amend or change a particular procedure.

Here are my thoughts on the following Agenda Items:

Item No. 11 Please Defeat this Motion to Remove it. I believe we should continue to print the G.A. definition of Gambling in our literature. This is especially important for the new members.

Item No. 15 Please Pass This. To add the word Internet to Unity Step 11. This is an item that I proposed at the Board meeting in Boston that was carried over to this Agenda. In this day and age the Internet is used by many people on a daily basis. Remember it did not exist in 1957 when G.A. was founded. I believe it would have been included in Unity Step 11 at that time.

I have been a member of G.A. for many years and I am not particularly sensitive about who knows I am a member. However, we have to think of our brothers and sisters and not jeopardize their anonymity. Remember people make assumptions about those who are seen or heard together. Also, please think about the meaning of the word Anonymous, 'lacking individuality, distinction, or recognizability' especially how it relates to recovery in our program.

Item No. 36 B.O.T. Procedures - I ask all Trustees to Defeat this Item. A Point of Order or Challenge to the Chair should not be subject to discussion. The Chair should absolutely not have the opportunity to speak on the Challenge first nor have the last word.

I also believe it does not require a Second. The purpose of a Point of Order or Challenge to the Chair is to prevent the Chair from making incorrect decisions on Procedures. The vote on a challenge allows the members of the Board to agree with the Chair or overrule his procedure or decision.

Item No. 42 Guidance Code - Please Pass this Motion. I agree that cameras, tape recorders or other recording devices should not be allowed at any official G.A. meeting. Anonymity is a very important principle of our program and this would be an absolute violation of Unity Step 12.

P.S. To David M., Area 12 - I understand the meeting you complained about in the Trustee Line was not an official G. A. meeting.

Item No. 50 Guidance Code - I agree with this Motion but, I would suggest 3 terms consecutively, instead of 2.

Items No. 52 & 53 These Motions concerning Committee Reports are a very good idea.

Item No. 54 Credit Cards are an excellent addition to Question 16, page 15 of the Combo Book.

Item No. 57 I am very much in favor of this addition to the Guidance Code concerning the use of Robert's Rules of Order.

Item No. 63 Please Pass It. Combo Book - "but cooperates with Gam-Anon" is a long overdue addition to the 2nd paragraph of Page 2 of the Combo Book.

David F. - Area 3A

Hello All,

I'd like to start by welcoming all the new trustees to the Board, I understand there will be a large turnover at this next conference. New members, new ideas, new perspectives keeps things changing all the time. I am one of the Trustees from Area 2B in Sacramento, California One day at a time and higher power willing I will reach my 20th year in February of next year.

I just returned from a 12 day vacation with my wife in Australia where we attended the 2006 Australian National Conference in Coolangatta, Queensland. Truly the friendliest place on earth. We were treated like royalty along with Tom and Nancy P. from Arizona. There were 200 attendees and some good workshops and fellowship.

I drove 1,200 miles on the opposite side of the road and survived. I kept turning on the windshield wipers everytime I wanted to turn. Shared that at the convention and told them by the time I leave this car will be the cleanest car in all of Australia. I sat in on their Trustee/Delegate meeting at the conference where representatives from the different states meet together to discuss there areas issues and business. Realizing that Australia is as big as the United States in size and their GA area includes New Zealand I don't know how 4 Trustees handle all that ground. They have a number of RSO's that appear to be operating as our Intergroups do here in the states.

I am a member of the International Relations Committee and I am compiling a status report of all countries which we have been in contact with since our inception about a year ago. The committee's mission is to reach out and spread the GA word as far as we can until there are meetings everywhere. It includes helping the I.S.O. with correspondence of all types. Examples being request for Starter Kits and information on starting new meetings, dealing with translation of literature, promoting conferences, answering a multitude of questions about our fellowship and most of all reaching out a hand of friendship to let the world know we are all one fellowship. Karen H. has a saying that she uses frequently that is so true, " There are no strangers in GA, just friends you haven't met yet." I personally am working the steps now with members from Slovenia, Croatia and South Africa by email. I am now emailing over 50 countries and it is a very rewarding experience to have friends all around the globe. We on the committee hope after you hear our presentation will want to join the IRC as we have only a few

members right now.

Once again welcome to the new Trustees and I will see you all in Ft. Lauderdale in October.

Steve R. - Area 2B

Dear Fellow Trustees:

Well, less than a month from now, we will be sitting in the BOT rooms and wishing that we had had that orientation meeting for newer (and older) members...at least, speaking for myself. I am looking forward to seeing old friends and new friends and finally, being able to get up and talk on an agenda item.

That being said, I did want to lend my support as well for David M's concern on having a meeting taped. In accordance with our Past Trustee Decisions, Section 4, Groups and Intergroups it states: 'Board consensus is that tape recording of a GA meeting without the consent of the group does affect GA as a whole'. (Montreal, 2004) Regardless of how the meeting format was set-up or advertised, if members of the group do not consent to being taped, then the group should abide by the Past Trustee Decisions and the member should not be made to feel that they could 'leave if they didn't like the decision'.

Also, I just wanted to comment on Carol's statement with regard to abstinence dates, whether the member is new or returning, our Guidance Code clearly defines in Section 4 that 'Date of abstinence starts from your first meeting after your last bet.' I believe that this should apply to all members, whether they are new or returning members. Here in Las Vegas, we have a couple of inpatient/outpatient programs for gambling addictions and we have had instances where members of the outpatient program were abstinent from the bet for 2-3 weeks and then, came to their first GA meeting. It was kindly explained to them that although they had in fact abstained from the bet for 2-3 weeks, their official abstinence date did not start until that first GA meeting. It has not discouraged those members from coming back to their next meeting.

I also wanted to comment on Joe B's July submission with regard to updating the Young Gamblers in Recovery and I go on record here that I would love to help with the drafting. I attend meetings held at the Las Vegas Rescue Mission and also co-chair a meeting that we bring to the Salvation Army Men's residence (since they're locked up for a period of about 8 weeks) and I have noticed with alarm, that so many of the newer members are YOUNG. As poker tournaments and 'video gaming' continues to proliferate, it is attracting younger and younger kids. I just met 3 members that were not even legal to gamble and got busted for underage gambling. I don't know about the rest of the country, but I have definitely seen a rise in the number of younger members coming to our rooms.

One final note in regard to an upcoming item by Howie and his attachment for the Ft. Lauderdale agenda. I have discussed this item with him already and suggested that he approach this differently. He currently has proposed this attachment to be page 18 of the Combo Book, and I believe that it would be better to expand on what he currently has written, and instead, make it a separate pamphlet (much like the Suggestions for Coping with Urges to Gamble, Young Gamblers in Recovery, etc). It is currently written more for the dealers (many of whom now get their nightly 'tokes' in the form of a check), but does not address the peripheral workers in the gaming industry and how they should handle being around the casino. I have talked with quite a few bartenders, cocktail waitresses, pit bosses, craps dealers, blackjack dealers, and they feel that this would be a valuable tool for all individuals in gaming (OTB's, racetracks, sportsbooks, casinos, cruiseships, etc).

Once again, looking forward to a fabulous conference and world-class facilities (as promised by my friend, Richie S)...See you soon.

Karen L. - Area 3

As I sit down to write this, I have just returned from making an Area Trustee visit to a meeting about an hour and a half away—each way. It is a meeting that I do not get to very often, but someone requested that I come, so I made arrangement to go this month. Everyone at the meeting was truly appreciative of me taking the time to be there and I have to say I thoroughly enjoyed being to talk about what it means to be a Trustee, to inform them of opportunities for giving back financially to ISO and to the area, to review the upcoming agenda, and to answer questions. It made me reflect with gratitude on how I always get back much more than I put into this program. It was also encouraging and inspiring to see how the meeting has grown and how interested the members are in expanding their involvement and service to GA as a whole.

For this edition, I wanted to comment on how much our work at the Trustee meetings helps gamblers anonymous as a whole. I am very much looking forward to seeing everyone at the Florida conference and to meeting all the new Trustees. With the conference being less than a month away, I am recommitting myself to reviewing literature and the agenda in order to be prepared for the meeting. The Trustee website is a great resource and I have to say I really enjoy looking at literature that I do not often pick up. The more prepared each Trustee is for the meeting, the more productive our time will be.

I notice that there are a number of Guidance Code agenda items and encourage everyone to review the Guidance Code closely. A couple of comments that came to mind after reviewing the agenda. . . . Most agendas seem to have quite a number of proposed

changes to the combo book, and many of them have passed in recent years. Many members in my area keep their Combo Book to use at each meeting although the latest version is available for purchase or use at the meeting. There is just something about that first Combo Book that you get that cannot be replaced. It has become very interesting the last few years to note the many versions that are now available. My point being that I believe the Combo Book to be a great piece of literature. I do not think it requires change, except in rare circumstances. Many of the changes are good ideas, but really....how much improvement does the Combo Book need? It works. How productive are we being? Some of the changes to the Combo Book might be more effective as a separate pamphlet; some might not really make enough difference to justify the cost of the change. I am simply challenging us all to think more creatively to improving and adding to the other GA literature so that while the Combo Book will certainly remain a mainstay at the meeting, we could possibly encourage members to read and obtain topics from improved literature so that the comment: 'the only thing most GA members ever read or refer to at a meeting is the Combo Book, so that if it not in there, it might as well not be in the literature at all' would be heard less often.

Since I got on a roll with the Combo Book issue, I will save further comments for future Trustee Lines. Looking forward to a great BOT meeting and conference in Florida!

Michelle J. - 1st Co-Chair Board of Trustees

During the Florida conference, I hope that we will all be focused on each item that is part of the Trustee meeting agenda, in addition to the procedural issues that invariably come up during the Trustee meetings and gum up the works. For many of you who are reading this, just being at your first Trustee meeting may be a bit intimidating in your own mind, but what you may think is a bad decision during the Trustee meeting, will probably be echoed by many other Trustees. Just because you may be new to the BOT doesn't mean you have to suppress your opinions or feelings about any issue. At the beginning of the Trustee meeting, all of you will hear that from a procedural standpoint, the BOT is 'guided' by Robert's Rules, but works on tradition. As they say, the devil is in the details, and that is why I have written this item for the Trustee Line.

In recent years, some of the decisions that have been made by 'some' of the Chairs have been inaccurate and highly inappropriate. That is a very broad and possibly offensive statement for some who read this, but those who know me understand that I don't like playing politics. Obviously, we have 3 Chairs and there isn't much room to hide with an assertion such as what I have made, but this situation is not limited only to this current group of Chairs.

Being one of the Chairs is not an easy job when it comes to running a Trustee meeting. Perfection is expected, but clearly that is far from the reality of what is humanly possible. There are close to 100 Trustees, many of whom are poised to quickly seize the opportunity to point out objections to procedural moves during the meeting. Up to now, the Chairs have been making decisions that are being done on the basis of 'tradition'. The problem is that tradition has morphed into a quick assessment that has nothing to do with tradition.

Another issue is that these traditions change from Chair to Chair within the same meeting and certainly change from Trustee meeting to Trustee meeting. The Rules and Procedures Committee will be working to memorialize decisions that affect how the Trustee meetings operate, but it does not have the capacity to change procedures. The Trustees must mobilize their ability to add agenda items to the future Trustee meeting agendas to change how we do things. Essentially, I am asking for all the Trustees to not just sit there during the Fort Lauderdale meeting, but to remember the procedural problems that may be encountered and act upon them with agenda items for Chicago that will remedy the potholes in our procedures.

Approving agenda item 57, which invokes Robert's Rules during the Trustee meetings, will be a start, but it will have to go through 2 successive votes requiring two-thirds of the Trustees to approve the change to the Guidance Code. Passage of this item will no doubt cause the Chairman to appoint someone to be the 'keeper' and reference source for Robert's Rules for clear and easy reference during future Trustee meetings. The BOT has the ability to appoint such officers as needed as per Article IX, Section 1 of the Guidance Code.

Compulsive gamblers that don't work within structure are nurturing a situation that borders on chaos. Structure as to how we run the BOT meeting will make us more efficient and help to eliminate the personal decisions that have characterized 'some' of the decisions made by the Chairs.

David M. - Area 12

Trustee Hot Button for September

How to use the Trustee website to speed up the BOT meetings

September 7, 4:12 PM
Hi Guys,

I would like to see the Trustee Website used to get a 'look see' before going to the meeting on how the Trustees feel on the agenda items. This can be done by having a poll taken to determine the Trustees' opinions on each item; how they would vote on them.

There were 14 items that failed in Boston, in April 06, of these 14, 10 had vote counts next to them and 8 of them had more than 70% 'no' votes. (below are the % and agenda items numbers). If we took a poll vote before the Trustee meeting on the Web Site, it would show that some of these agenda items may not make it. The person or persons submitting them would see this and may chose to have it dropped or no discussion on them. This can save time for the items that need to be heard.

Unfinished Business

#12....53%

New Business

#5.....96%

#11.....96%

#12.....85%

#14.....57%

#15.....78%

#22.....99%

#23.....97%

#28.....96%

#34.....77%

Joe B. - Area 6C

September 16, 8:09 PM

Dear Fellow Trustees:

Prior to the Trustee Line being posted to the Trustee website, it was mailed out in 'snail mail' and unless you were a Trustee or knew one, you as a member did not have access to what was being written. Today, our members can now access the Trustee website and see what the Board of Trustees and Board of Regents (now) are all about...What exactly are they doing for the membership? This electronic 'tool' is only going to be as effective as we are, inasmuch as we tend to be procrastinators, let's take advantage of this tool.

There are going to be almost 50% new Trustees for the Ft. Lauderdale conference. Although this will be my first officially as a Trustee, I have become pretty familiar with the workings of a BOT meeting. This Trustee line can be used as a learning tool from those who came before us to share their strengths and experiences to those just becoming a Trustee...Where is the input and suggestions from those past Trustees? There were quite a few items left on the Boston agenda and there's no sense in pointing fingers at any one individual...It was a function of how the entire agenda was put together for Boston. However, what's wrong with utilizing the efficiency of this electronic tool (the Trustee website) to submit committee reports ahead of time in this forum. In addition this would allow for motions to be submitted ahead of time on the agenda so that all Trustees have the ability to know what motions may be generated and have the ability to provide input prior to the Conference (especially for those out of country or voting through a proxy).

Karen L. - Area 3

September 20, 4:48 PM

Fellow Trustees,

A topic well worth having a lively discussion over indeed.

I have logged about twelve years on the Board of Trustees between two different Areas in Northern California. Sat in the meetings and watched the interaction get very heated, get very stagnant, repetitive and disruptive at times. The BOT meeting at the Boston Conference last year was very disheartening, many things happened that were unproductive and immature at times (by both the Board and the front Table). The Trustee Website and the Trustee Line are tools that have long been needed and when used correctly can reduce the time it takes to conduct all our business on the board when we meet. My observations over my time on the board are that we (and i include myself) tend to not be very prepared when we come to the meeting. We often don't bring the proper materials we will need in our discussions of the Agenda. When we haven't prepared and reviewed the agenda items (which is part of our duties as an elected Trustee) it slows the meeting process down to a standstill at times having to explain the point of view of the presenter and what they mean. The fault for that lies squarely with us.

The Trustee Website and Trustee Line are a vital link of communication between Trustee meetings. All those questions about upcoming agenda items can be reduced if we ask them directly to the presenters ahead of time in the Trustee Line. History speaks for itself the participation in the Trustee line varies greatly at times. We don't seem to want to use this tool to our advantage enough. The result is long BOT meetings, and one speaker after another saying the same thing. Again the fault lies with us if we don't use this tool to our advantage.

We are in the age of 'A Thousand Committees', we sometimes say 'we have too many committees now'. They all represent questions or help or work the fellowship needs attention on. With so many committees the time expended at the BOT meeting is tremendous. The committee reports for the most part can be posted on the Website prior to each BOT meeting. The need for lengthy presentations can drastically be reduced if 'we use the Website' to post the reports.

The need to spread the word about upcoming events around the world is another good

use that the Website can accomplish.

The process of submitting agenda items is so much easier now and quickly handled. We can now view the agenda as it is created between each BOT meeting. that in turn allows us to contact the presenters with our questions in advance of the BOT meeting. This in itself will reduce the time spent on the agenda if we take the time to do it. When you just stop and think about it, our areas elected us to make the effort to represent them. Don't just sit and listen at the business of the BOT, your opinion and your area's opinion is important, express it and grow in the program knowing your doing your elected job as best you can.

Lastly for the newer Trustees, I have been gathering the history of GA Worldwide for more than a year and a half now for a booklet. This booklet will be given out to each registered member at the 50th GA Anniversary conference in Los Angeles, California in 2007. This has been a massive project and the booklet will be over 200 pages two-sided. It will contain information from all over the world on GA's beginnings in each country along with sharing stories. This type of medium (Website and Trustee Line) allows the transmission of a need for information to be accomplished easily and with little cost involved.

In closing Kudo's! to the Website committee for the effort that is involved with making all this happen, allowing us to use this tool to be more efficient in our job as Trustees. Will we use it? I hope so, If we all make that effort to make it work it will work.

That's my two cents, see you in Ft. Lauderdale.

Steve R. - Area 2B
