

Main Menu

- [Home Page](#)
- [Trustee Guidelines](#)
- [GA Reference Material](#)
- [Keyword Search](#)
- [Download Center](#)
- [Contact Administrator](#)

**Houston, TX - Spring 2014
Information Section**

[Houston Conference Info](#)

Rolling Agenda

- [Houston Absentee Ballots](#)
- [Agenda Information](#)
- [Conference Bids](#)

Submit an Agenda Item

BOT Committees

- [Anonymity](#)
- [Blue Book Revision](#)
- [Conference Oversight](#)
- [Digital Media](#)
- [Hotline Implementation](#)
- [Hotline Files](#)
- [Intergroup](#)
- [International Relations](#)
- [Literature](#)
- [Member Retention](#)
- [Mobile App](#)
- [Online GA Meeting](#)
- [Pressure Relief](#)
- [Prison - Canada](#)
- [Prison - US](#)
- [Public Relations](#)
- [Rules and Procedures](#)
- [Telephone Conference Call](#)
- [Trustee Removal Merit Panel](#)
- [Trustee Website](#)
- [Website Revisions](#)

Trustee Line & Other Features

- [Trustee Line Home Page](#)
- [Login For The Trustee Poll](#)
- [Trustee Poll](#)
- [>>Trustee Information Update<<](#)
- [Trustee Website Tutorial](#)
- [Area Event Flyers](#)
- [Local Area Website Guidelines](#)
- [New Area/Trustee Accommodation Fund](#)
- [Local Area Help Flyer](#)
- [Board of Regents News Page](#)
- [Trustee Memorial Honor Roll](#)

Future Conferences

[Upcoming Conferences](#)

Select Language ▼

Trustee Line for March 2014

A PDF version of this issue to distribute to your rooms, or to print out for easier reading, will be available after 3/31/14.

Thoughts From The Trustees - Current and Past

The subjects listed below are themes that have been submitted by other Trustees. You may respond to any of them, or start an entirely new subject

Item	Subject	Last Entry	Entries
1.	Recipe For Freedom, Attraction Versus Promotion, Money, Some Personal Thoughts	3/5/14 8:11 AM	2
2.	Phone Meetings Counting Towards GA Anniversaries	3/16/14 8:12 PM	2

The Combo Book and the 2-Year Rule

3/2/14 - 7:04 AM

I have often wondered about this and never seem to think of asking anyone, the Combo book and the two year rule. When did this first appear and why ?

Was it simply that sometimes a tendency to want to change small details took too much time, or that the vast majority of such proposed changes seemed to fail ?

Is it to do with the feasibility of the cost of each reprint ?

All seem very valid points and I would not take issue with any of them per – se. Doubtless there are other reasons, which is why I enquire on the Trusteeline as to the reasons and the genesis of the current situation.

The thrust of this question I ask is also this, would it be feasible to still have combo book items as part of each agenda while, perhaps, still only having to reprint every two years.

To avoid confusion it could simply be a case that the changes could be listed on a single sheet displayed in each room until such time as the reprint was made.

This might even encourage more interest and involvement in the rooms as well as down here at trustee level, if members can see they truly can have an input, if they choose to.

Even the most committed and dedicated amongst us can sometimes feel apathetic or just worn out if it seems nobody cares or that they are just being taken for granted.

It would seem to me that this might alleviate the current situation where all discussion on the combo book seems to focus only into a small time frame, rather than take place over a more balanced spread of time. It could also allow the trustee poll fulfill further its already useful purpose.

It also might enhance a balanced approach to combo book changes if Authors know that, whether at the Conference, through the trusteeline or other communication, the discussion and exchange does not have to wait until the fall of every second year.

After all, we do care, that is why we have a fellowship, something to be appreciated and sustained. If we look after it, it will look after us.

Just some thoughts, ideas and questions as I find, whether items succeed or fail, it is the exchange of ideas that produces real results.

Looking forward to hearing others thoughts and ideas.

Odie. B. - Area 36, Ireland South - East

3/5/14 - 8:11 AM

Odie,

I will respond to your question about the 2 year rule. I am going to speak for my area with this. In area 8a, we feel that we should only have combo book changes every 5 years. Here is our reasoning for this.

1. Every time that there is a reprint of the combo book, there are rooms that may have 2, 3 or more versions of the combo book. There may also be some smaller rooms who can't always afford to replace the combo books they have every 2 years. I know that some people will say that someone should give these smaller rooms new books if they can't afford it but what is it we hear? "Each room should be self-governing except in matters affecting other groups or Gamblers Anonymous as a whole." Along with self-governing should also be self-supporting.

2. Why is there always such a need to change the combo book all the time? Is everything that can possibly be covered addressed in the combo book? Of course not! We are never going to fit everything we need into those 17 pages. It's a tool to use in our recovery.

3. It is also a financial burden. Every time we change even one word, we have to reprint the combo book. Not only in English, but in every language that this book is translated to.

4. Have there been any life altering changes made to the combo book? Did changing the way a line might be worded change the meaning that was originally intended? From what I've seen in the last 8 years, not so much. A lot of the wanted changes have seemed more ego driven rather than something that really makes a difference to the compulsive gambler who still suffers.

There is that old saying that "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." I'm glad that most of the changes get voted down. It shows that for the most part, this fellowship is satisfied with the one piece of literature that is probably used more than all the others combined. And they are satisfied with it because it already works.

Looking forward to Houston!

Your Grateful Sister in Recovery,
Karen E. - Area 8A, Minnesota

Telephone Meetings Counting

3/16/14 - 12:30 PM

I have submitted an item on the Trustee Poll regarding phone meetings counting towards GA anniversaries due to a conversation with another member who also regularly attends the Wednesday 9PM Telephone Meeting Conference Call. In thinking about it, I thought it would be a good topic submit to the Trustee Poll for feedback from the Trustees.

Here are some things to think about on this subject. People missed meetings this winter due to meeting cancellations as a result of extreme weather conditions (polar vortex) that occurred this winter. Also, as many of us have heard on the phone meetings, not everybody has a GA meeting close to them. Some people talk about being 2 hours away from a face to face meeting or not having a Wednesday meeting available to them. I am very saddened when I hear that and grateful that I am in an area of the country that has meetings available and close by every day of the week.

This is one of the things that I really love about being part of an International program of recovery. I have never met this person (in person) for he lives in another part of the country (although I have shared some phone meetings with

him) and probably never will. He had some very strong opinions about the phone meetings counting towards GA Anniversaries. This subject certainly is in need of feedback from the Trustees, even though we already approved the telephone guidelines. Whether you agree with his position or not, I respect him for seeking our feedback.

Looking forward to seeing everybody in Houston!
Tom Z. - Area 15, New York

3/16/14 - 8:12 PM
Dear Fellow Trustees,

I am a little bit confused. We voted to bring phone meetings to gamblers anonymous, to help people who can't physically attend a meeting. I have gotten feed back from the phone meetings and I am happy to report all positive. I haven't been on the phone meeting yet. The phone meeting is at the same time that I attend my Wednesday night meeting. I am aware that these meetings don't count towards the meeting requirements to celebrate an anniversary. I was all for these guidelines until, I heard that a fellow gamblers anonymous member was unable to physically attend their regular meeting and used the phone meeting as an alternative. I have since changed my position on the phone meetings. I now think they should count as a regular meeting. It would be selfish of me not to consider another members struggle to physically attend a meeting. I live in an area where meetings are within 10 miles of my house and are available every night of the week. I don't think I would be attending as many meetings if I had to drive 3 hours both ways, Who has the time to do that? I understand I drove 3 hours each way to a casino. I also didn't attend work the next day after my casino trips. I attend work the day after a meeting. It is not up to me or anyone else to tell a member what meetings count towards their anniversary. We have people on Long Island who celebrate while they are in action and when we know they don't have the physical meetings to celebrate. They celebrate because, the 39 weeks is by their own admission. I am not the GA police and if a member says they have attended 7 phone meetings and 32 physical meetings then, in my opinion they have the meetings to celebrate their anniversary. Why do we have to make things so complicated? I think we have to put ourselves in the position of the member, who lives in buffalo and has been unable to get out of their driveway due to a mound of snow. The member who has cerebral palsy and can't physically attend their meeting on a regular basis, the member who has cancer and is too sick and weak from chemotherapy to physically attend a meeting. I think we need to show some compassion and remember this is about helping the compulsive gambler.

Mary R. - Area 15, New York
