

Main Menu

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

**Houston - Fall '08
Trustee Agenda**

[Houston Conference Info](#)

- [Agenda Information](#)
- [Unfinished Business](#)
- [Committee Related Issues](#)
- [Request for New Committees](#)
- [Steps](#)
- [Literature Changes](#)
- [New Literature](#)
- [Procedures](#)
- [2-Conference Bids](#)
- [Overseas Areas](#)

[Houston Rolling Agenda
18 - Items](#)

[Submit an Agenda Item](#)

BOT Committees

[Current Committees](#)

**Trustee Line & Other
Features**

- [Trustee Line Home Page](#)
- [Board of Regents News Page](#)
- [Intergroup Trustee Funding](#)

Future Conferences

[Upcoming Conferences](#)

Trustee Line for April 2008

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From The Trustees

The subjects listed below are just a listing of 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
1.	Elimination of the Confidential Trustee Listing	4/7/08 12:06 PM
2.	Not so secret, secret election	4/18/08 12:30 PM
3.	Keeping GA room collections separate from Gam-Anon room collections	4/22/08 4:33 PM
4.	Accepting grants to cover the cost of the hotline	4/23/08 11:42 AM
5.	Dealing with disruptive members in a meeting	4/24/08 1:04 PM
6.	Potential problems with the Houston agenda	4/26/08 8:23 PM

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

Elimination of the Confidential Trustee Listing

4/2/08 - 10:34 PM

It has been suggested that the Confidential Trustee Listing is being used for unrelated bulk emails. As a remedy, it has been threatened that this listing cease to be published.

As a Trustee since 2001, I wish to convey that this listing serves the purpose of maintaining communication within the group. Without this communication, there most certainly would be misunderstandings, misinterpretations and a lack of familiarity within the group. This could lead to further dissension in the ranks, and ultimately the ruin of the group.

Since no reference was given as to which emails do not conform to the business of GA, I can only address the ones that I have personally received within the last month. I have only received 3 of these bulk e-mails. They all concerned with events that concern the Trustees:

- 1) National Hotline
- 2) Voting for the Board of Regents
- 3) Roommate search for the Portland trip to save money.

There is nothing wrong with any of these issues. To even suggest of eliminating the listing would be extremely detrimental to GA as a whole! As an option, I would suggest the greater usage of the Trustee Line.

Just some thoughts to get off my chest
Ian S - Area 6D

4/7/08 - 12:06 PM

Greetings All,

I am looking forward to our meeting in Portland and to serving another two years as a Trustee for Area 1 effective July 1, 2008.

In response to Ian and to the issue of misuse of the Confidential Trustee Listing (CTL), I will say that abuse should not be tolerated.

What concerned me about the recent communication regarding this issue was the decision to ask that all mailings using the CTL should be presented thru the BOT Chair for (an implied) approval.

First and foremost I want to clearly state that my opinion expressed here is based upon principles and not personalities.

This was, in my opinion, a bad decision. This was not handled on at BOT level. It was not an emergency decision that needed to be made circumventing the process of motion, vote and execution.

The concern of the BOT Chair is about abuse of the list. I too share that concern, if the list is being abused. What is currently lacking, in my opinion, is the definition of abuse.

Common sense would say that non GA and/or Trustee business is abuse.

Unfortunately, we were not informed of what the alleged abuse was. That felt a bit too secretive to me. I'm not about airing dirty laundry in public, but the BOT Chair did a mass (i.e. private) email to all Trustees, yet chose not disclose the nature of alleged abuse(s).

Why was there a lack of transparency on the issue? I don't know and don't care to speculate, but I do believe that we as elected Trustees should be made aware of what prompted the email to all of us so that we can make an informed opinion on the BOT Chair's decision/request and respond/act accordingly.

Some might say that the motion, vote and execution process extends/creates a 'G.A. Police' philosophy. Many say we don't need that. That may or may not be true. However, a unilateral decision by the BOT Chair on a non-emergency issue is, in my opinion, not the answer to the as yet undefined 'problem'.

It may be said that this sounds like I propose a 'free for all' on the use of the CTL. I must stress that this is absolutely not true. I for one would not like my personal information misused by any member of the BOT.

Like Ian, I can only recall the three instances he cited as mass emails to Trustees. I for one do not feel that these three items were abuses of the CTL. If there were more mass mailings to the Trustees, I for one did not receive them.

With Serenity,
Ed K. - Area 1 Trustee

Not so secret, secret election

4/17/08 - 9:34 PM
Hello Fellow Trustees,

It was great to see everyone in Portland. I hope everyone is getting caught up with his or her everyday life and that things are going well. I can only speak for myself, but I always return home exhausted and I finally feel like I am getting back on track. So on to the important stuff...

Folks, I think we have a problem! Why is it that people are talking about the election count after the election is over???? During a conversation that I was having with a member reference was made about the fact that numerous people voted for just Denis M. and no one else. Can someone please tell me how anyone other than the three people counting the votes knows how many people voted for anyone??? This is NOT the first time we have had a situation like this. If my memory serves me correct, I believe there was also some talk after the last chair and co-chair election. This is not the way things are supposed to be.

So, do we think that maybe it is time to hire an outside firm to calculate our votes? Or maybe it is possible that since we are people that are working on honesty and integrity we can trust each other to count the votes and keep it to ourselves. Better yet why don't we forget the whole ballot process and just do a roll call vote out loud? This way we can avoid all the gossiping talk and everyone will know whom everyone else votes for.

In all sincerity, I don't believe that any of those options other than counting the votes and keeping it to us is an option. We are supposed to be a fellowship of unity and all this gossiping and division of people that are striving for the same thing in life is appalling. We are all here (or at least I know why I am here) and that is to stay stopped from gambling and develop a better way of life.

I don't claim to be perfect and I sure don't claim to know everything, but I do understand the principles of the fellowship that I have been taught. As I have shared with many, sometimes I may not agree with the principles, but as a member of this fellowship I must abide by those principles. If I truly feel it is not right, then it is up to me to bring it before all of you. That is the purpose of this letter. I feel very strongly that the last two voting procedures were handled completely inappropriately. I personally don't want to know who voted for who or how much someone won an election by or lost by. This is not my concern and all it does is create problems when there is a SECRET election and then the results are being talked about.

It has to stop or we need to go to an open election. If people feel the need to discuss results, then put on the agenda for Houston that all election processes are done through a roll call vote. This way we can at least get away from the gossip about the results.

I'd like to close by saying that I will see and talk to you all in Houston, but I pretty sure that this will not be my last letter to the Trustee Line for the next six months. So, I will just close by saying that in the next six months I hope we can all really try to put the principles of our fellowship first and foremost. Together we can accomplish a lot, divided we shall fail! (I know the saying goes something like that)

Love,
Dina P. - Area 6B

4/18/08 - 12:30 PM
Damn, I feel as if I was left out, just after reading Dina P submission to the April Trustee Line, I had heard rumors, on some of the election, but I didn't hear them all, I can't find in writing the amount of votes each candidate received can't be announced. We all know that BOR is changing the wording in the By-Laws, on the Voting section, and also removing the section on the Nominations. We as Trustee will be also changing in the Guidance Code those areas that pertain to their changes, so why not at the same time

make a change that not only will the results be given out but also the number of votes that each received, this will cut the BS . I agree with Dina NO MORE SECRETS.

Joe B. - Area 6C

Keeping GA room collections separate from Gam-Anon room collections

4/22/08 - 4:33 PM

Dear Trustees,

In my area we have a meeting that, I guess they call themselves a combined modified meeting. I have never seen this type of meeting anywhere in any of our literature. The meeting is GA and Gam-Anon and it is also open to anyone. So, I guess you could consider it an open meeting.

The format of the meeting is not my concern. Recently another member asked me if contributions to the room were also from the Gam-Anon members. At the time I was not really sure, but later found out that yes, Gam-Anon members were putting a dollar in the basket. I was also informed that twice a year the room would purchase Gam-Anon material (if needed) not to exceed \$50.00.

Well, I really believed that first of all, this in violation of unity step 7:GA is fully self supporting, declining all outside contributions. Secondly, I really believe that it is not proper that this group would be purchasing literature for Gam-Anon, even though Gam-anon members are contributing to the room collection. I guess the collection is where the problem begins.

So, I brought my beliefs to the attention of the room and I really got a lot of negative responses from the members. I heard, "this is the way it has always been done." I also heard, "that unity step is referring to large donations from outside organizations" I spoke with a few members and received some feedback. I also spoke to Karen H. and Tom M and received feedback. I am now bringing this question up here on the trustee line to get more feedback.

I understood the viewpoint of the members of the room and my suggestion to them was, if they don't like the way the unity step is written, then we can create an agenda item to try and change it. My question to all of you is, do you think that in a combined meeting it is ok to have one collection with any person in the room contributing to that collection? The collection would then go to the room and they would use it for rent, supplies, intergroup, and then ISO. I guess I'm really curious to see if any other areas have had issues like this and how your area handled it.

I may not be one that always agrees with the principles, but I always try to uphold them even if my opinion differs. I am really tired of hearing from people, "this is the way it has always been done." If that is the way people feel then maybe they should go back to gamblin, because that is the way it was always done. I guess I believe that I am here for a change and even though sometimes I disagree, I have been learning that my way is not always the right way.

I would really appreciate any input on this subject matter even if it does not agree with the way that I handled the situation. I believe it is always good to hear differing opinions.

Love,
Dina P. - Area 6B

Accepting grants to cover the cost of the hotline

4/23/08 - 11:42 AM

Greeting all.

We had our Intergroup meeting this week and I covered all of the important issues and changes that occurred during our Trustee meeting. During discussion, our Phone Service coordinator asked a question about the funding of the phone service. Since we are looking for other bids to provide the service, Is it possible for GA to apply for grants to cover the cost of this service? What has been our policy in the past?

Our coordinator feels there may be money out there in the form of grants from organizations that want to help service organizations like GA. Is this something we could do or does this fall into Unity step 6 (...endorse, finance or lend the Gamblers Anonymous name....) or Unity Step 10 (Gamblers Anonymous has no opinions on outside issues....).

I look forward to comments from those of you who have been around for a while and my have come across this type of question.

Best regards,
Tom D. - Area 8

Dealing with disruptive members in a meeting

4/23/08 - 2:01 PM

Fellow Trustees,

I turn to you for guidance in a matter that has been brought to me by one of the groups in area 16. There is a member who has been stirring trouble at this one meeting in particular arguing with the members and giving negative, very negative comments to the members after their therapy. At their group conscious meeting he starts arguments and

carries on. I have tried to talk with both him and the trusted servants of the room with no results. It seems as though he goes just to stir controversy. The group ask me if they can tell him by group conscious vote not to come to their meeting any more. After reading the entire Guidance Code and Past Trustees Decision Booklet I find no help. PLEASE share your opinions on where I go from here.

Sincerely,

Your Brother Through Fellowship,
Matt H. - Area 16

4/24/08 - 1:04 PM

In response to Matt's email I would like to offer my opinion on this situation. Matt is right as there are no GA guidelines on this that I know of but here is what I would do.

- 1-Try one more sit down with the disruptive member and include their sponsor (if they have a sponsor). Let them know that the meeting can and will bar them from the room.
- 2-If the member continues to be disruptive and the room has taken a group conscience to bar that member from the room the police can be called to remove the member from the room. This has been done before. Some members might say that those having a problem with the disruptive member should attend a different meeting but my feeling is some of these members might have been attending that meeting for many years and I see no reason they should be put out and forced to attend a different meeting.
- 3-If the member continues to attend the meeting and continues to be disruptive an agenda item can be put on the Trustee agenda to bar the member from all GA meetings for being detrimental to GA. This also has been done before.

Bob W. - Area 1

Potential problems with the Houston agenda

4/24/08 - 2:27 PM

Hey:

Just looking at the rolling agenda for the Houston Conference. There are already 16 items for the agenda - 12 of the items have nothing to do with being a representative of an areas; but are concerned with the way the trustee meetings are run. As a past trustee (effective July 1), I will look at the agenda to see if it is worth my time and MONEY going to the Houston. If the BOT is going to focus its attention on the Rules and Procedures manual instead of ways and means to help the compulsive gambler than the meetings will be useless. It will also give a bad taste to the many new trustees. Let's re-focus on what is important when adding things to the agenda and give something to the new trustees to say positive about their experience at their first meeting.

Richard C. - Past Trustee, Area 2K
Southern Alberta

4/26/08 - 8:23 PM

I'm sorry to read how a current Trustee feels about what needs to be on the agenda with regards to the items that are on the agenda on the Rules & Procedures Manual. We have waited over a year for this Manual, and the Committee put a lot of time & effort. This is something that sure was needed and will help SAVE TIME AND MONEY for all the Trusteees in the future. I do feel with these Rules & Procedures will reduce the TIME it takes to answer the Point of Information and the Point of Order questions. The Trustee meetings won't change as they have in the past when the mic changers hands, from Chair to Chair during the meeting, nor will we hear as we have, "I'm running the meeting now, NOT you. We all know change sometimes takes TIME but the TIME it takes will be well worth it. Let's get it done.

Joe B. - Area 6C
