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**Trustee Line for June 2009**

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**A PDF version of this issue to distribute to your rooms, or to print out for easier reading, will be available after 6/30/09.**

**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**

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1.	One Day At A Time Song	6/1/09 6:18 PM	<b>3</b>
2.	Update on May's Item 5	6/11/09 11:25 AM	<b>5</b>
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5.	Local area telephone lists	6/21/09 12:46 PM	<b>4</b>
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**Submit a response to the [Trustee Line](#) because of something you have read in this or any other issue.**

**One Day At A Time Song**

6/1/09 - 12:17 PM  
New Literature  
'One Day At A Time' (Sweet Jesus) Song;

I was able to listen to this agenda item, on Firefox. I'm glad I did. It convinced me more than just reading it, that it has no place in our Program as Literature. To me it's a religious song and would sound nice if sung by a church choir, AMEN. We also need, AGAIN, to look at items that are placed for the Trustee agenda.

So I hope the author removes this item, before the start of the conference in Montreal

Joe B. - Area 6C, North Carolina

6/1/09 - 4:26 PM  
Hello All,

I think having G.A. songs is terrific. I think having G.A. poetry and personal prose and writings is also great. The place for these creative endeavors is in the monthly bulletin, where I read others and enjoy most of them.

The other place for these creative pieces is in conference books published by one of our semi- annual conferences or in a mini-conference publication. So I do not want to be the one to stifle these creative members, I just want them to know that there is no place on a trustee agenda for these individual pieces, songs or poetry or prose. And if the member wants to go out and produce, sell and market a CD made up from their own imagination, so be it. And if Gamblers Anonymous ever wants to make a Greatest Hits Album, I am sure they will invite ALL the talented members in our fellowship to participate.

Thanks for listening,

Richie S. - Area 6, South Florida

6/1/09 - 6:18 PM

I saw this item on the agenda and thought to myself that I should wait for someone to start the category for the Trustee Line on this subject. Although I am not known for holding back, diplomacy is often times also NOT my long suit. People always know where they stand with me and now I'm going to make it excruciatingly clear how I feel about this agenda item/song.

First let me say that the item has every right to be on the agenda and even if there are those who don't agree with it, it is not out of order. If the item is voted down, that is different, but it is a structurally valid agenda item.

Having cleared that up, I am irritated that this item is on the agenda. Let me give you my thoughts on this.

1. - The use of any reference to Jesus is off the scale in the area of inappropriateness. Our literature has the question, 'Is Gamblers Anonymous a religious society?' The answer in our literature is, 'No. Gamblers Anonymous is composed of people from many religious faiths along with agnostics and atheists. Since membership in Gamblers Anonymous requires no particular religious belief as a condition of membership, it cannot be described as a religious society. The Gamblers Anonymous recovery program is based on acceptance of certain spiritual values but the member is free to interpret these principles as he chooses.'

How can anyone explain that this song follows any aspect of this question and answer?

2. - Are we now in the music publishing business? Do we continue to accumulate a library of songs until such time, as Richie said above, we publish a GA Greatest Hits album?

3. - For a single song that has questionable demand, at best, we would now have to enter into the intellectual property rights negotiation with the composer and singer of the song, which is going to chew up legal fees that to me seem outlandish at any time.

4. - Speaking of intellectual property issues, there is a site that list the lyrics of songs, and it shows 22 different albums that have a song incorporating 'One Day At A Time' from 16 different artists. Has anyone thought about the legal costs of defending any issue brought to us in the form of a copyright infringement, if it happens?

5. - Probably the most difficult issue for me is the memory of the Trustee meetings we have and how intense the 2 days are each time. I come to the Trustee meetings to work, not to be distracted by senseless issues that make it to the agenda that haven't been thought out carefully enough, or run past a group of Trustees with divergent positions to see if they were appropriate or not. As harsh as this sounds, this is a motion that doesn't belong on the agenda. I am willing to put a 100% effort into being openminded about virtually any item, even the ones I disagree with. We are going to have sit through a discussion on this item when we could be dealing with something important.

Last conference saw a number of items with absolutely no support getting motions and dying a miserable death. Since we no longer do an actual vote count if the votes are obviously slanted in one direction or another, we can't go back and say this item failed 1-98. These items should never have been on the agenda to begin with. Yet the author(s) will start their countdown timers for 2 years and then reintroduce them for what will most likely be a similar result. LET'S GET THE MESSAGE. The items are failing by an almost unanimous vote. Deal with it and recognize that it is time to move on.

And while I'm on the subject, just because a GA member gives us an agenda item to place on the Trustee agenda, doesn't mean that we turn into deaf-mutes. We have a moral obligation to our GA brothers and sisters when this happens. We can't just sit back and submit these items, we need to talk with these members and ask them questions. Why do you want this item on the agenda? What will be the benefit to the Fellowship? Here are some similar items that have come before the BOT, let's talk about how they have passed or failed. Let's point out deficiencies in the items and how it item comes to the floor in a disadvantaged manor, only setting the stage for failure. Let's work with the GA members to fine tune the item and overcome as many objections as possible before the item hits the floor. Talking to other Trustees about their thoughts on the item before it hits the agenda should be mandatory.

The reality is that this seldom happens and anyone who is a Trustee and can honestly say that they are guilty of this, really needs to think about why they a Trustee. In Kansas City, we passed a lot of new changes to the Trustee Guidelines in the green Information Packet with a first vote. One Trustee is in the middle of putting together a much lengthier pamphlet about the Responsibilities, requirements and guidelines for being a Trustee. Why don't we all step up and do a better job of screening out the items that are so obviously inappropriate BEFORE they are submitted. And if they are submitted, then let's not let our egos get in the way for criticism or constructive comments levied at the author from making changes to the items before the deadline that would improve the quality of the submission.

I believe that this 'upgrading' process of the agenda item would substantially reduce the number of near unanimous failing votes to more 45-50 failures or 50-45 successes, and a higher incidence of heavily positive votes. I don't get any pleasure in voting against poorly constructed items or agenda motions. It's time for all of us to feel that not only did we all put in a Herculean effort to get through the agenda, but that we were highly successful in accomplishing many good things in the passage of numerous well-thought out agenda items that are truly beneficial to the Fellowship.

Songs do not belong in the GA rooms or in our literature. They do not constitute sharing experience, strength and hope. The Trustees don't need to waste any of our precious time on any thing that is laced with so many problems as this item is. The author should realize that although the song may be significant to him, it is very wrong for the Fellowship. I encourage him to withdraw the item, even though it is his right to submit something as bizarre as this.

David M. - Area 12, North New Jersey

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**Update on May's Item 5**

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6/1/09 - 12:00 AM  
Hi everyone,

Re: Item 5 - How to survive the next election of BOT Chairs.

How's this for a simplified election process for the BOT Chair and Co-Chairs?

1. Have nominations for the three positions done at one time.
2. When nominations are closed, put all the names on one ballot.
3. Trustees then select and vote for 3 names on their ballot.
4. Trustee receiving the most votes is elected Chair.
5. Trustee receiving second most votes is 1st Co-Chair.
6. Trustee receiving third most votes is 2nd Co-Chair.

In the event of ties, you would have to conduct a runoff ballot.

Do the nomination process prior to a meal break so that the nominees can do a little electioneering and the election officials can run off copies of a prepared ballot. Then have the election after the meal break.

Just my 2 cents.

Best regards, hope to see you in Montreal!  
Henry I., Past Trustee Area 2A

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6/3/09 - 5:51 PM  
Fellow Trustees:

Would it not be wise to form a group - not necessarily a committee - to recommend an election process to the BOT in Montreal? There are so many, many good ideas - each with merit of its own, and I would hate to see this procedure escalate to the same degree and length that the BOT election came to. Certainly there have been other organizations with the same dilemma which was resolved. Do we not already have one agenda item on this subject? Should we not be discussing the merits of this plan before adding others?

With faith in the Fellowship,

Linda S. - Area 3A Trustee, San Diego

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6/5/09 - 4:05 AM  
Hello everyone,

I have read the many responses to the voting process dilemma of the Executive Board. Just a couple of thoughts to those proposing a process.

Henry I's suggestion to do all three at once on a ballot and take the top three vote getters has one problem as I see it. There are some people that are not willing or ready to take the Chairman's position that are willing to sit as a Co-Chairman.

I believe the two Co-Chairman positions can be handled in that manner however with one election and use the top two vote getters placed accordingly.

Steve R. - Area 2B, Greater Sacramento, California

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6/10/09 - 5:09 AM

I like the idea I have been reading of one vote for the chairs of the BOT. The person with most is chair, then second, and third respectively. It would really eliminate the time. I don't know why there was ever a need for more than 50% of the vote. I figure it started way back when it was feasible that every nominee could get one vote. The vote for the Board of Regents is one vote and those elected are done so by the number of votes received.

Carol K. - Area 9, Michigan

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6/11/09 - 11:25 AM

For any of the Trustees that were in Kansas City, it was painfully obvious that the election process is in need of a major overhaul. Last month I put forth an agenda item that outlines a specific procedure for the elections that will happen again in less than 2 years. It's interesting that the subject has spilled over into this month's Trustee Line, but fortunately for everyone, more opinions have been brought into the discussion for a wider range of

ideas.

The theme that I am catching from the recent entries on this subject is to 'hurry up and just get it over'. This is a dangerous way of thinking. The idea of going through 1 vote and giving the top 3 vote-getters the Chair, 1st Co-Chair and 2nd Co-Chair positions respectively, is a lazy way of doing our elections. Let us not forget that there were over 40 new Trustees elected in which their 1st Trustee meeting was in Houston. Follow that up with halfway through the Kansas City meeting, these Trustees are asked to vote for a new executive board. Does anyone really feel these new Trustees really knew who they were voting for?

Let me tell you about my 1st election meeting in Pittsburgh '01. Although I had been in the program for over 12 years at that meeting, my first meeting in Montreal '00 was completely overwhelming for me. Between the new procedures I was learning and the intensity of the discussions and decisions, I barely had time to remember who anyone was, let alone take the time to figure out who might be a good member of the Executive Board to vote for in Pittsburgh 6 months later.

When it came time to vote, my default thinking was to vote for the incumbents. Everyone who got up to talk about why they wanted to be on the Executive Board gave great speeches, but I had virtually no idea of how these people thought, and that made me uncomfortable to vote for them, unless they were the incumbents. Basically, the new Trustees are in a very disadvantaged position when it comes to voting. The 'one vote - elect them all', way of thinking is very time efficient, but not a diligent way of being responsible to our fellow Trustees and the Fellowship that we represent.

Essentially, what I propose makes the 1st vote a warm-up vote. If someone gets more than 50% of the vote on the first phase, that's wonderful, but the rest of the list nominees has to be 'upgraded', through subsequent ballots. We had 14 nominees for one office and 13 for another. All of those people got some votes, not just the top 3. With what I have read with the '1 vote does it all' thinking, the people who voted for those that were not in the top 3 would have basically have their votes invalidated. That is not the kind of representation we should promote. Additionally, the results of the election could be vastly changed if the Trustees who didn't vote for the top 3 got the chance to vote for them.

The process I laid out in the Montreal rolling agenda allows for a 1st vote to get everyone warmed up for the serious voting that comes as a result of the list being cut to 3 people. This will cause the Trustees to refocus more closely on the candidates. Breaking it down to 3 separate elections for the 3 positions allows all potential nominees to reevaluate the positions more than just once. It is possible that someone might not want to run for Co-Chair because they don't believe the new Chair would be someone they could work with, or many other reasons. It slows down the impulsivity that we as compulsive gamblers live with. It gives us all a chance to 'think twice and act once' instead of acting once and regretting it for 2 years.

Someone has mentioned that the BOR does one vote and elects everyone based on how many votes they get, not using the procedure we use. To that, I would say that just because the BOR is doing it, doesn't make it right. The other thing that is critical is the gross inefficiency of the BOR procedure. We have our Trustees voting for BOR members, 7 of 9 of them required to be from within 200 miles of the ISO office. Speaking for myself, I had no clue who the majority of the nominees were. It's ludicrous to think that a short statement that comes with the ballot about who these nominees are and why they should be on the BOR, is going to have any shred of relevance to an election. These people are just names on a piece of paper.

The Board of Trustees gets the ability to do the 'touchy feely' with the nominees for the BOT Executive Board. We should use every possible opportunity to make sure that the 3 officers are in fact exactly what the Board of Trustees wants. Every Executive Board position's election is serious and should be treated with dignity and respect, not just to be glossed over as an afterthought because Trustees think we are wasting time.

If we have 30 nominees for the next election, after the 1st vote, we will be down to 3 candidates, the same as if we have 6 nominees. The Executive Board sets the tone for our meetings for 2 years. Let's not just trivialize the positions with a quick procedure just to get it out of the way because some people don't want to be stuck in the Trustee meeting for any more time than what we allocate for regular sessions. The new procedure will drastically cut the time we spent electing officers in Kansas City, but it won't be as short as a discussion on an agenda item. Let's be more diligent and efficient with our agenda item submissions then maybe we will not have any concerns for the time it takes to elect officers with this new abbreviated process.

David M. - Area 12, New Jersey

Montreal News

6/2/09 - 5:52 PM  
Greetings from Montreal, Quebec, Canada

There is now a little more than 4 months left until we all meet in Quebec. I really look forward to seeing all of you and sincerely hope you will be coming. As of today, we have over 60% of our room allotment booked and also about 60% of our room nights accounted for.

I am starting to worry that we may not have enough room at the conference rate of Can\$ 140.00 for everybody. Certainly, if you book early, you will be assured of your room in the Sheraton, where the conference will be held. However if you wait until the last few weeks you possibly will end up staying at a nearby hotel at a different rate.

Bottom line: If you are almost certain you are coming, please take the time and book now. You will have the option to cancel anytime up to late September, so you have nothing to lose. If you think we are pushing a little bit, you are correct. The planning committees have to make commitments for rooms, meeting rooms, meals and hospitality, as well as transportation and activities (Tours, and Golf) and it is almost impossible to do without knowing approximately how many people will attend.

For those of you who have already booked, Thank You. We are planning to show everybody what life in a united bi-lingual province is like, so get off your butts and help make our lives a little easier.

See you all in Montreal,

Herb B. - Area 5  
Chairman of the 2009 Fall Conference.

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<b>Topic, Anyone?</b>
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6/3/09 - 5:31 PM  
Hello Again To All,

I have come up with a few ideas that I would like to share in the trustee line.

The first one is to have a TOPIC or two every month. One that we need to talk about. For an example, the election of the 2 co-chairs. We can ALL share our ideas, listen to others, add to them, change them around, and hopefully the result of all the discussion would be a solid agenda item to be voted on. But the agenda item would be a direct result of the trustees in advance, discussing a viable TOPIC.

I know someone is going to ask, Who makes the topic? The answer is ANYONE of us!!

Whatever you might feel is important to discuss, and formulate ideas. This is where I see the value of the trustee line. Not just for someone to post something, and then reading on who agrees and who disagrees. Who is more eloquent and who makes the better case. Like I am watching an episode of The Practice.

So I would like to introduce the FIRST topic:

What are your ideas for electing the 2 co-chairs?

More to come  
Richie S. - Area 6, South Florida

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6/5/09 - 8:42 PM  
I'd like to respond to Richie's "Topic item" about how the elections should be held.

I think that the vote for the position of Chairman should be similar to how it's done currently. But as far as the 1st & 2nd Co-Chair's go, I like the idea of everyone going on one ballot with the 2 getting the most votes becoming the 2 co-chairs from the order that they won the votes. But I think whoever gets the 3rd most votes should be noted as an Alternate co-chair, in case anything happens to either of the co-chairs during their tenure. I also think that the idea that (I think, Henry I.) presented was a good one. That the co-chair vote is done just before a lunch or dinner break, the ballot prepared during the break, and the vote taken directly after the break.

Sincerely, your friend and brother through fellowship,  
Howie C. - Area 3, Las Vegas

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6/6/09 - 1:43 AM  
In his post, Richie S. is looking for ideas to elect the 2 co-chairs.

I like to keep it simple. Put the names of all nominees that have accepted to run for co-chairs on a ballot and take the vote. Trustees vote for only one nominee. The 2 names that get the most votes are elected 1st and 2nd co-chairs respectively. Doesn't matter if they get 50% of the votes or not, they still have more votes than anybody else. If there is a tie for 1st or 2nd place, a second vote with only the ties on the ballot will be run.

Can't be any more simple than that. Time required? Probably less than half an hour.

Hope to see you all in Montreal next October. Remember...register early.

André G. - Area 5B

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<b>Local area telephone lists</b>
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6/10/09 - 9:10 AM  
To My Fellow Trustees:

We are looking for information. From your areas, at what point in recovery do you place a new member on your telephone list? Of course, it depends on whether this is a local (group) phone list, or one originated from Intergroup for the area. Do you place them on immediately (after their first meeting)? Do you place them on after 30 days admitted abstinence and regular attendance at their home meeting?

We would appreciate knowing how other areas handle new members. Thank you.

With faith in the Fellowship

Linda S. - Trustee, Area 3A, San Diego

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6/12/09 - 12:49 PM

In our area, we don't have a specific abstinence requirement, or any requirement at all for that matter, for someone to be put on either the local (group) telephone list or the Intergroup Phone List. We leave it up to the member individually, and let them decide if they would like to or not.

Grateful for the GA program each and every day.

Steve F. - Trustee, Area 1, Los Angeles

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6/12/09 - 1:33 PM

Hi Linda, again..

Most rooms here in Area 6 C, North & South Carolina, will place a new member's phone number on the phone list after their first meeting, and we also remove anyone who has missed five consecutive meetings in my home room in Raleigh. Our room phone list is updated each week.

With the Master listing from Intergroup, they must have 6 months of abstinence and can only be requested to be placed on the list or removed by the rooms' Secretaries, and that is updated every 3 months

Tally-ho for now

Joe B. - Area 6C, North Carolina

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6/17/09 - 3:48 AM

Fellow Trustees,

I hope all is well with all of you.

Regarding the meeting phone lists, my home meeting keeps a blank phone list which we fill out by passing it around to each member to add their name and number whenever a new member comes in or when anyone requests one. This keeps it updated and the new member isn't getting a list of #'s of people who aren't at that first meeting. We feel this cuts down on the confusion for the new member if they have only #'s of people they met. We also all grab the newcomers # and jot it down.

The sheet is like this...

.Monday Night Bowmansville GA meeting

Name.....Phone #.....Availability

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Yours in Recovery,

Matt H. - Area 16, Upstate NY

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6/21/09 - 12:46 PM

Linda, the way we do the telephone list here in Southern Nevada is:

There is no requirement for a new member to be put on the telephone list. It's up to them. We don't even ask them if they want to be on it or not. At some point, they ask us how to get on it, and we tell them to call the person who is doing the lists at that time. (Their name and number for additions and changes is always listed on the phone list.) Generally, when the new member feels comfortable about their involvement in the program, and their trust in the fellowship, they'll ask us about getting on the phone list.

It varies from member to member, but many times a new members telephone number is not put on the list for about 4 to 6 months. (My estimate on this.)

Usually a few members will ask that newcomer for his/her telephone number at their first

meeting so we can call them and encourage them to continue going to meetings, etc.

We use to put everyone's abstinence date on the list, but someone along the way quite a few years ago stopped doing this, and no one has changed that back since. (I mention this, because I know that your area does this. That's where I learned it in my beginning when I made up our early telephone lists.)

If you have any other questions, you have my telephone number, just give me a call and we can talk.

Howie C. - Area 3, Las Vegas

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<b>Update on May's Item 6</b>
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6/12/09 - 7:55 PM

Carol,

I believe that we should give a sponsor to everyone who enters the Gambler Anonymous room.

They do not pick one we give one.

The sponsor can be changed at a later date but the newcomer should have that one person for a lifeline.

I do not understand how a new person can pick someone -when all of their picks up to that point have been bad.

When my sponsor died two years ago, I lost more than a confidant-I lost a friend and a piece of me went with him. Al was not my sponsor from the get-go and 3,000 miles seemed to make us even closer.

Bill B. - Area 15, New York City

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6/14/09 - 11:21 AM

Just thinking back to when a member wrote that she was asked at a workshop "What does a sponsor do?" She seemed at the time to be lost for words? It sure would have been nice to have read and used the more than 8 pages in the Red Book (A New Beginning), on Sponsorship. It says a lot on the subject...

Joe B. - Area 6C, North Carolina

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<b>Looking for Trustee guest speakers</b>
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6/19/09 - 11:50 PM

Hello Folks,

N.C. Greensboro Monday Night Meeting would like to have a guest speaker in the next few months attend our meeting. If anyone is planning on travel to NC or will be passing through the area and would like to be a guest speaker please contact me. My number and e-mail address is in the trustee listing. The date can be worked to your schedule. Greensboro and Winston-Salem groups will provide you with Hotel lodging for the night . Thanks for your consideration and we would love to hear your story and words of recovery and hope.

Thanks, Gary G. - Area 6c, North Carolina

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Area 6C NC/S