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## Trustee Line for July 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.	To the new, returning and former Trustees	7/1/08 12:01 AM
2.	Houston agenda item 25	7/21/08 9:31 PM
3.	Walk-A-Thons	7/19/08 6:55 PM

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

#### To the New, returning and former Trustees

7/1/08 - 12:01 AM

Hello To All Trustees,  
New Trustees, Returning Trustees, and Former Trustees

I have a few thoughts to get out, and what better place and time, the Trustee Line and on the cusp of our nations Independence.

First I want to thank ALL the Outgoing Trustees and Former Trustees for ALL their hard work and dedication. Your Service to this Fellowship does not go unnoticed. It gets applauded by me and it also sets the standard for all the subsequent Trustees to follow. Thanks again.

Now to the New Trustees, WELCOME!!!! You are now entering a new phase in your recovery , and I for one know first hand the new and wonderful chapters of recovery that await you. Your thoughts and ideas are welcome from the start. And now you will really see how the principles of the program WORK! And the fellowship just gets stronger and stronger with your participation and your open mindedness.

And last but not least, the Returning Trustees, THANKS for taking on this challenge again. I appreciate your continual service to this fellowship and your willingness to put the Program First. You set a terrific example for all to admire. The principle before personality part of this program is seen in its highest form.

OK, so lets get started, the agenda will be closing in 57 days and now is the time to finalize and form the agenda items YOU and YOUR members want to be discussed and voted on. It is also the time for the committees to continue to make strides in their work. It is also the time to get your deposits in to the Houston Conference. It is going to be another terrific Conference, and I for one know how hard the committee is working and looking forward to welcoming all of us.

Even though July is upon us, I would like to remind all the Trustees that September is the International Walk-A-Thon month for the Fellowship of Gamblers Anonymous. It started last year in conjunction with our 50th Anniversary and it was intended to be an annual fundraiser. So now would be a good time for all area inter-groups to start planning their annual walk. And wouldn't it be nice to see more areas participate and raise more money for this terrific fellowship. Here in Area 6 we are in the planning stage and hope to raise more than we did last year.

Remember we are self-supporting and we decline outside contributions. So it is up to ALL OF US!!!!

I hope everyone has a great 4th. And I am looking forward to seeing everyone in Houston, especially my brother Sal. It has been a long time.

Yours in recovery,  
Richie S - Area 6  
1st Co-Chair, Board of Trustees

#### Houston agenda item 25

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7/13/08 - 12:49 PM

Hello all,

After several weeks of thinking, I have decided to run again for the trustee's job in our Area 5B and I was just advised that I have been elected for the next two years. I was concerned with the rotation principle until I had a discussion in Portland with a more experienced trustee who told me that it was up to the groups in our area to decide if it's time for me to leave or not. So, you will have to cope with me for another 2 years.

Reviewing the Houston agenda, I saw under item 25 that it is proposed to discuss 'continuing or not the Trustee Line due to negative postings and/or lack of use'. I want to take this opportunity to express my opinion on this item about the Trustee Line.

Since June of 2006, there were over 400 postings to the trustee line. It is not, in my opinion, a 'lack of use'. I don't know how many trustees and members read these 400 postings but it surely adds up to several hundreds, if not thousands, of members keeping in touch with the Fellowship through the trustee line. 'Use' of the trustee line is not only posting but also 'reading'.

The item also speaks about 'negative postings'. What is a negative posting? Is it a posting that is opposed to my own vision of a situation? Is it a posting on something that I would have preferred to be kept unpublished? In my opinion, there is no such thing as a negative posting, as long as it is not a personal attack against another member. The trustee line is an open forum allowing trustees and past trustees to express their opinion on a multitude of subjects and allowing hundreds of members to read the postings. In an open forum, there will be postings that I agree with and there will be postings that will rub me the wrong way. If it does affect me, I have to question myself why I am disturbed by the posting and what character defect of mine it is reaching. If the message disturbs, don't kill the messenger.

On several occasions, I was able to better make an opinion on an agenda item after reading postings on it in the trustee line. I was able to see pros and cons of a given situation that would have otherwise escaped my mind.

For that, the trustee line is an essential tool for all trustees to use and must be kept alive.

André G. - Area 5B

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7/13/08 - 2:01 PM

I have read in the past and now again, with an item on the agenda for Houston about doing away with the Trustee line....Tom M wrote something along these lines in the June issue...I for one would like to see it continue as it is...we have guidelines...which are for airing out opinions on a subject someone wrote about in the Trustee Line, or after returning from a International Conference to reply to something that had happen there. We cannot always do that, and I can understand why, at the time of the conference. But by allowing me or others to express it in a written form where it can be read by all and anybody in the fellowship, is Good. As also stated in the Guidelines of this format..its a platform for greater level of focus on ANY pertinent issue, which may be seem to be negative, but after I do it, I do feel better, getting things off one chest. The world is not always rosy, and sometimes I need more than making a phone call to air how I Feel and would rather see this type of use of the Trustee Line, than what I have seen before after a conference with submission, by the Executive table, all placing a Good Job By All etc.

So my vote is YES to continue the Trustee Line, if there is going to be one, and as for Guidelines, we have them already and if the postings are all negative postings, that means that something is wrong some where.

Joe B. - Area 6

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7/13/08 - 10:17 PM

In the 1989 movie 'Road House,' with Patrick Swayze, he gets criticism from his doctor about how he conducts his personal affairs. His answer was very simply, 'Opinions vary.'

That is the essence of Houston agenda item 25 and many others on this agenda, all the previous agendas and quite probably all the future ones too. Gary S. has an opinion regarding the Trustee Line that he once referred to as the 'Wash Woman Line'. Evidently others do not agree with him, including me. However, I will defend Gary's right to present that opinion regarding the Trustee Line and any other agenda item. This is not just about Gary's items, but anyone's.

I think the most appropriate starting point for me is to cite Joe B's reference to there being 'something wrong somewhere' if the postings were viewed by some as negative. Speaking for myself, I can give anyone who is interested chapter and verse regarding numerous issues that we of concern to me and how the situations were NOT being dealt with by the responsible parties once they were identified. Yes Joe, there are many things that are wrong, as you know, but problems only get acknowledged as problems when they are identified as problems. Speaking about them is meant to galvanize others into understanding that something has to be done. Once that happens, it becomes inexcusable if the responsible people stonewall those who bring up the problems with answers that don't address the issues. But as they say on TV, that's a different show.

Let's also look at the history of the Trustee Line and understand how the changes to its

structure have caused more meaningful issues to be raised and thrown into the ring for an interactive exchanges of ideas. Originally, the Trustee Line was sent via mail to the Trustees maybe once or twice between Trustee meetings. People put down their thoughts, which weren't always the 'feel good - do good' postings that are being sought with Houston agenda item 25. The problem was that when the Trustees got the mailing, the time between publishing dates made forgetting, an operative phrase in responding to certain items in the next issue, whenever that would be.

Along came the Trustee website and the Trustee Line was reborn. Now we get to do this electronically without any concern for space needed on printed material. Gone are the costs for printing, envelopes and stamps, even if ISO paid for everything. Now, the Trustee Line was being published on the 20th of each month. Items would be sent into the website admin and added to the site, but the issue would not be released for viewing until the 20th. No one had any idea what the other people were thinking about until after the issue for that month was posted.

Someone complained about that format saying that the website admin had 'an unfair advantage' in seeing what was posted. Yes, I know, we go from the ridiculous to the sublime sometimes. After that revelation, the current version of the hotline was created. Now what we have is a live document that is opened for submissions on the 1st of each month. All Trustees can not only have their thoughts on any GA relevant issue posted, but any past or present Trustee can respond to a posting just as soon as they have been read. This is what is happening with this subject. I liked what both Andre and Joe had to say and therein lies the basis for what I have written here today.

Regarding Gary's agenda item 25, I will be sure to speak about my opposition to it in Houston, but I encourage others to submit their thoughts about this subject, either pro or con to the Trustee Line for everyone to see. Being a Trustee is about openmindedness. You may think that any agenda item is completely absurd, or you may believe any agenda item is motivated by personalities instead of principles. Whatever the case, please have the courtesy to listen to both sides and then vote your conscience on what is commonly referred to as 'doing the right thing'.

David M. - Area 12  
Trustee Website Admin

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7/16/08 - 11:46 PM  
Hello all-

In response to this debate with regard to Item #25, I am totally in favor of continuing the Trustee Line in an electronic format. Prior to this format, a former Trustee from our area would share with me the printed version of the Trustee Line. However, it was with the understanding that this was not to be shared with others....only with other Trustees. I never quite understood the reasoning provided, and hence, was thrilled at the prospect of an open forum for all to view...not just the Trustees.

I'm also in agreement with Andre' and his perspective on 'negative opinions'. Although I have been relatively 'quiet' over the last few months, I could not sit back and allow a few people to take away a phenomenal tool for communication in-between our National Conferences. It would be even better to hear from some Trustees (past or new) that never seem to speak up at BOT meetings or within this format.....Or is everything just great in your GA world????

Respectfully, Karen L. - Area 3, Past Trustee

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7/17/08 - 3:25 PM  
To my fellow Trustees (past, present & new),

I am fully in favor of retaining the Trustee Line in it's present form. I feel that it serves its purpose even better now that it is 'live'.

As for the lack of use: I would say that like any tool it will not and can not be used 100% of the time by 100% of the community. That is not a negative as far as I am concerned. Whether or not any past or present Trustee posts here is of no concern to me. To declare otherwise would be a return to my controlling self by sitting in judgement of others. In my recovery, I choose to not 'guilt' others into doing something they are not prepared to do.

Lastly, for what it's worth, I noticed that there are two item 25's on the Agenda (Group Handbook and this item).

With Serenity,  
Ed K. - Area 1 Trustee

Note from website admin: Ed, thanks for the heads up on the numbering error. The current agenda is not organized in category order yet. It is called a 'rolling agenda' and is arranged in the order in which the items are submitted. However, the mistake has been corrected and the items in the rolling agenda have been adjusted. Keep in mind that the final agenda, available 45 days before the Trustee meeting, will have a re-numbering of the items as a result of the category sorting.

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7/21/08 - 9:31 PM  
Dear Trustees,

I am so glad to finally have the chance to sit down and respond to the trustee line. I think that those that responded to agenda item 25 were right on. Andre, you couldn't have said it better.

I began to think that maybe I didn't need to respond since many people have already taken the same position that I am taking, but I thought what the heck, I will just make it feel like we were at the trustee meeting listening to 20 people taking the same stand on an item.

So, here is my opinion...I have been saying for quite sometime that our program teaches us to try and be open-minded. Being open-minded means that at times we are not going to agree with each other, however, that does not mean that we shouldn't listen. As a matter of fact, it means just the opposite. At this point we should listen, gather our thoughts and then have the opportunity to express our own opinions. The trustee line is a great format for this. The fact that this is a live document and we have the opportunity to discuss our different viewpoints makes this an excellent tool. We should not just sit back and decide that I don't like the negativity in what someone stated and whine and complain about it. First of all, if you think it is negative, that is your opinion and you are entitled to that opinion. However, take the opportunity to express your thoughts and why it is that you might be in disagreement with someone else's opinion.

The concern about how many people are actually utilizing this tool...I think that is nonsense. I can only speak for me, but it helps me out tremendously. I have many of times read something or posted something and received feedback from another member that has helped me in my situation. Maybe not everyone is utilizing this, but the facts are, not everyone utilizes all the tools that our program has to offer. This is just another tool to help out whoever chooses to use it. I know that this is set up primarily for the trustees to communicate, but that doesn't mean that another member can't read this and get help. Also, if we used this to communicate about situations instead of reading a submission and then complaining that it is so negative, maybe it would get a lot more use and stop so much of the behind the scenes drama.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone in Houston.

Dina P. - Area 6B

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<b>Walk-A-Thons</b>
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7/19/08 - 6:55 PM

Hello To All.

I rarely ever make more than one entry to the Trustee Line, But this month I will make an exception.

Last year we as Trustees declared September as International Walk-a-Thon month for the good and welfare of G.A. And many areas got involved and raised some much needed dollars for I.S.O. This year being our 51st I have not heard anything from the various Inter-Groups.

Here in Area 6 we will hold our 2nd annual on Sept 21 2008 at 8 a.m.

I would like to hear from other areas what there plans are.  
Please post it here on the Trustee Line for all to see.

Thanks for your support,

Yours in recovery  
Richie S - Area 6  
1st Co-Chair, Board of Trustees

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