

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](#)
[42 - Items](#)

[Submit an Agenda Item](#)

BOT Committees

[Current Committees](#)

**Trustee Line & Other
Features**

[Trustee Line Home Page](#)
[Trustee Orientation](#)
[Local Area Help Flyer](#)
[Board of Regents News Page](#)
[Intergroup Trustee Funding](#)
[Public Relations Area Ideas](#)

Future Conferences

[Upcoming Conferences](#)

&t

Trustee Line for September 2007

Rate this issue of the Trustee Line:

11 votes

Your Rating

If you would like a PDF version of this issue to distribute to your rooms, or to print out for easier reading, [click here](#). (this link will become active after 9/30/07 midnight)

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

;/tr>

Item	Subject	Last Entry
1.	Why do Past Trustees have privileges that regular G.A. members do not have?	9/18/07 9:42 AM
2.	Unity Step 11 - Promotion and Attraction	9/14/07 7:35 AM
3.	Is the Combo Book a 'Living Document' or not?	8/26/07 8:38 PM
4.	Groups that are independent from GA	8/28/07 11:55 PM
5.	Concerns regarding agenda item #52	9/6/07 12:46 AM
6.	International Walk-A-Thon Month	9/18/07 4:25 PM
7.	Trustee Area Coverage	9/13/07 4:06 AM
8.	Pressure Relief and the New Bankruptcy Laws	9/13/07 3:29 PM
9.	Does Pressure Relief Operate in a Grey Area of the Law?	9/13/07 7:51 PM
10.	Acceptable Amounts for Intergroup Treasuries	9/17/07 11:25 PM

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

Why do Past Trustees have privileges that regular G.A. members do not have?

8/26/07 - 4:46 PM

Hello my brothers and sisters,

After months and months of procrastination, I finally post my first comments in the Trustee Line.

Since my first BOT meeting (Boston 2006), I have been asking myself this question: Why do Past Trustees have privileges that regular G.A. members do not have?

I will tell you my thoughts about this subject and I would appreciate to receive your comments also. Including the ones from the Past Trustees ☺

We are all equal in G.A. I always tell members in my area who tend to be impressed because I am a trustee that I am only a trusted servant and that my job as a trustee is not more nor less important than the member who prepares the coffee and the room for a G.A. meeting. I was elected by the groups in my area to SERVE them during this two year mandate. When this mandate will be over, if I am not re-elected to represent and serve my area, why should I be allowed to speak at the BOT meeting?

As it is clearly stated in the Guidance Code in Article VIII, Section 7:

The Board of Trustees primary function shall be to insure the most effective exchange of

thoughts and ideas between all Gamblers Anonymous groups and to act for our Fellowship in an official and executive capacity on all matters affecting Gamblers Anonymous as a whole, except matters coming under the jurisdiction of the Board of Regents or International Executive Secretary.

Persons who are not elected to represent groups should not be allowed to speak. A Past trustee represents only himself.

Please understand me right, I have lots of respect and gratitude for the Past trustees, their dedication, their wisdoms and some of them are even close friends. But, one day at a time, I am trying to place principles before personalities.

And also, one day at a time, I try to be open-minded. So, please send me your thoughts by e-mail, or even better we might have the opportunity and the pleasure to discuss this in LA.

Thank you
Robert I. - Trustee, Area 5B

8/26/07 - 8:11 PM
In response to Robert I.

I think this is a very interesting point.

First I would like to present my short list of the pros and cons.

Pros:
Similar to previous government officials, past experience comes in handy to the "new blood".

Cons:
Similar to previous government officials, past experience can cloud/influence the "new blood".

Seriously though....

Not allowing a past Trustee to speak at Trustee meetings could open up the possibilities for current Trustees to say to a past Trustee, "I will take your view in consideration equally with all other members' views." (as Robert has alluded). Further, it may well shorten the Trustee meetings such that we can easily conclude our business in the allotted time "every time" (barring agendas of 70+ items).

One other consideration that Robert did not address: If it is determined that a past Trustee is not allowed to speak at Trustee meetings, should they be allowed to submit agenda items? Why not simply have them submit their items to a current Trustee (like and equal G.A. member)?

My bottom line opinion is that past Trustees are indeed G.A. members with a voice but we should take a strong look (in Portland?) at whether they should be allowed to both speak at Trustee meetings and submit Agenda Items.

With Serenity,
Ed K. - Trustee Area 1

8/27/07 - 12:07 AM
Greetings, Fellow Trustees (present AND past)
I'd like to respond briefly to Robert I's comments regarding participation by past trustees.

Until I was drafted into the Marine Corps in 1965, I had no real idea of the effect serving would have on my entire life. The lessons learned during my tour of duty have remained with me throughout my life. My service also gave me a deep and abiding respect and love for the fellowship that is 'The Corps'.

Until I was elected a trustee in 2004, I had no real idea of the effect serving Gamblers Anonymous at this level would have on my recovery. The lessons learned thus far as a trustee have only added to my respect and love for my fellowship. Additionally, they have forged within me a desire and sense of responsibility to do whatever I can to preserve, protect, and possibly improve our program. Once ignited, I believe this flame, if nourished, can burn for a lifetime.

I believe that once having served, a past trustee would want only to continue serving in whatever way possible, to the betterment of Gamblers Anonymous as a whole. We would be foolish not to take advantage of their desire to share their experience, strength and hope at the trustee level.

Although not allowed to vote, they should be entitled to a voice.

Your friend in recovery,
John B. - Area 13

9/18/07 - 9:42 AM

I have a few answers that I would like to present, in no particular order.

First as a member of G.A and a Past Trustee, I have always found the collective wisdom of Past Trustees extremely helpful in making decisions as a Trustee. Knowing all that went into making a decision before my time was NOT influential but important to me so I could weigh the pros and cons and also to keep with the historical references that were made before I became a Trustee.

Second, being a Past Trustee allows one the right to speak at a Trustee meeting. A past trustee does not vote, make motions, amend motions, etc, so they really do not take up any measurable time from a trustee meeting. As a Past Trustee we can also submit agenda items to the Chair to be put on the upcoming agenda. For me just because I am not a current Trustee does not stop me in any way from upholding the Guidance Code, something I hold very dear to me, in being a member of this fellowship and in being a Past Trustee.

On a lighter note the current Trustees voted to put 3 Past Trustees on the executive committee for the next 2 years. It would be a little hard to run the Trustee meeting if we did not have the ability to speak at the Trustee meeting.

And on another note I believe the Past Trustees have earned the right to speak at Trustee Meetings, by putting in their time and service to this fellowship. And for that I will always be grateful for all their efforts.

But I also believe that G.A. members ought to have open access to past and current Trustees. and they are always welcome at all trustee meetings. And I believe in the principle of rotation, so that one day these G.A. members can in fact become Trustees,[when they meet the requirements,] and uphold the guidance code, do their service, heighten their recovery, and then pass it on so the fellowship remains strong and in good hands.

Thanks for hearing me out. See you all in L.A.

Yours in recovery

Richie S. - 1st Co-Chair, BOT

Area 6

Unity Step 11 - Promotion and Attraction

8/26/07 - 8:28 PM

I am writing regarding our Unity Step about Promotion and Attraction. I have some trouble with these two. I was told at a National Conference that it is OK to put up notices in Public places.....such as: IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW HAS A GAMBLING PROBLEM, CALL.....I would like to hear other comments from members. After all, if we don't put our name out there, how are people to know about us? We are not Promoting it; we are making our organization known for those who need the help. I am waiting for some feedback on this subject.....

Past Trustee Cindie T Area 2 A (Edmonton, Alberta)

8/27/07 - 9:59 AM

Hi All,

I am writing in response to what Cindi T of Area 2A wrote about Promotion and Attraction -

I lived in Denver Colorado until July of 2006 and was able to attend a meeting everyday of the week. Then I moved about 60 miles north of Denver to Fort Collins CO and now there is only one meeting a week. This meeting is between two to five members including myself [sometimes just myself] and I have been considering the use of the public service announcement for our meeting. I am going to use one of the announcements that are in the green 'Information Packet' and place it in the bulletin of churches or in the local newspaper. I believe there is nothing wrong with letting others know that help is available through our meetings. The use of this material is approved literature and I have used it before when I was in Denver. Further, I am grateful that I can still drive into Denver and attend other meetings of which I do.

For me Promotion is when we, as a Fellowship or as a member choose to go beyond these Public Service announcements of just simply saying there is HELP and begin to make statements or claims or take action that promote our Fellowship. These statements, claims or action of Promotion, for me, have been in the form of:

- 1. Members breaking their anonymity by going before the public [Unity Step 11] and

promoting themselves. Thus, the focus is on the person rather than the principles of our Fellowship and that is dangerous.

- 2. We as a Fellowship beginning to associate ourselves with other well attended organizations in an effort to help those problem gamblers who are still suffering [I know for me how easy that can happen and I have to be very careful of that]

By letting all know there is HELP through the use of these public service announcements we allow the principles of our Fellowship, including our Higher Power, to take the lead and we humbly follow.

Best - See you in LA...
Lou W. - Area 3B

8/28/07 - 3:07 PM
In response to Cindie T Area 2A.

I agree with you we have to get our name out there! So hopefully we can pass #11 under New Business at LA and put a cover on this can of worms once and for all. Ending this attraction rather than promotion nonsense!

Ronny W. - Area 17

9/14/07 - 7:35 AM
Hi all,

Please find the following that has been put together here in Area 18 to clarify the attraction v's promotion discussion. Had beenthinking of submitting through the Literature committee what are your thoughts?

Anonymity v's Secrecy

In Gamblers Anonymous, anonymity ensures confidentiality and privacy. It does not mean secrecy, which suggests hidden. The following comments on anonymity are from the approved literature, GA's Sharing Recovery Through Gamblers Anonymous: "Gamblers Anonymous does not compare itself to any other group, nor does it boast of its accomplishments and abilities to the public. However, Gamblers Anonymous does make itself available to anyone interested in the fellowship or in the gambling problem."

At the level of press, radio, films and television, 'anonymity is carefully preserved because the fellowship of Gamblers Anonymous is more important than any one member. By maintaining this policy, any problems that accrue to an individual member cannot harm the fellowship. Similarly, any achievements attained by individuals working in the program benefit the group as a whole. This step is a constant and practical reminder that personal ambition has no place within the fellowship's public relation's program.'

To this end, when speaking as a GA member at the level of the media only first names and pseudonyms are used. In photographs for publication and TV appearances, faces are profiled or backlit.

Also remember that 'the fellowship does not glorify the name of Gamblers Anonymous or its merit as a group, rather it works to encourage compulsive gamblers to attend the fellowship's meetings.'

Attraction and Co-operation v's Promotion and Affiliation

For Gamblers Anonymous to continue to exist, it must continue to grow. If the fellowship is continuing to grow, it is fulfilling its primary purpose to carry the message to suffering compulsive gamblers who need our help. There are many compulsive gamblers unaware of our existence who need to know help is available through Gamblers Anonymous. The fellowship's principles suggest we must achieve our purposes by attraction not promotion and co-operation not affiliation. What does this mean?

To *attract* is to invite, to draw to, to cause to approach without any sense of coercion or compulsion.

To *promote* is to push forward, to advance in the sense of a business venture. It implies 'hard sell'.

To *co-operate* implies the coming together of two or more entities to work together for a common benefit or to deal with a common problem.

To *affiliate* suggests a close connection or union. It implies some form of nominal legal or financial association.

Gamblers Anonymous **attracts** when it tells the community why and who we are, what we do and how, and when and where we are available, if and when help is needed. Gamblers Anonymous **co-operates** when it works with others to get the fellowship's message across. In cooperation with others, our scope is increased and we reach more of those in need.

Facts v's Opinions

Most people have opinions, but Gamblers anonymous, as a whole, does not. Individual members may have opinions, but they are the individual's opinions not the opinions of Gamblers Anonymous. When it comes to Public Relations or community co-operation, individuals should never confuse the two.

A fact is something that has actually happened or a truth known by some form of authentic experience.

An opinion is a judgement, impression or belief that is less than positive knowledge.

In dealing with outside organizations, or individuals, members should stick to the facts as expressed in GA approved literature. We need always remember 'we are neither reformers nor do-gooders. We have no axe to grind. Traditionally, we neither endorse nor oppose any causes. The world of gambling in general is no concern of ours.' In addition, 'the work of Gamblers Anonymous Fellowship is with people who want to stop gambling, not with those who should.' Gamblers Anonymous, 3rd Edition.

David McA. - Area 18

Is the Combo Book a 'Living Document' or not?

8/26/07 - 8:38 PM

Hello my fellow Trustees,

This is an item that has been on my mind for some time and I was unable to bring it up in my first two Trustee meetings.

I seem to hear a strong voice that says the Combo Book should not be changed.

Some of the reasons are:

1. It's not broke, don't fix it.
2. It's a waste of time to debate a one word change where both words mean the "same thing"
3. It says what it needs to say.
4. It does not need to be changed (i.e. I like it the way it is).

Here are my thoughts on the Combo Book.

1. It is THE MOST WIDELY (not wildly) READ DOCUMENT IN GA. Yes, I shouted that because I am emphatic about this concept.
2. It is written in a voice that is sometimes:
 - a) old fashioned
 - b) too intellectual (if not \$50 or \$20 words, a good many \$15 words) or too mature (in my experience your average 20-30 year old does not 'grasp' the meanings of many of the words)

I strongly feel that the level of writing in the Combo Book approaches at least college level. In business they always say to 'write below' the audience level. Many new members are younger and younger. This is my experience. And when I have to explain what reluctant, expenditures, accrue, matching for a cup of coffee or penny ante game means I feel we may well have already lost the individual. Further, I don't know how many times new (and even older) people in the program don't know how to pronounce accrue, pathetically or many other words in the Combo Book. (somewhat) Finally, how many new members have ever shared that their dream world actually consisted of mink coats, yachts and penthouses?

I am sure that if we want to, we can, as experienced members, clarify and justify what the intent of every word, sentence or paragraph means. But, if many of us have to do that more than once a year, I say the Combo Book is in need of some upgrading to a modern way of speaking.

My subject of this post is to ask if the Combo Book is a 'living document'. I think it should be. My sponsor (and the program itself) teaches me to be Honest, Open-minded and Willing. If we stick to the four reasons I outlined above HOW will we ever keep up with the times?

With Serenity,
Ed K. - Trustee Area 1

Groups that are independent from GA

8/26/07 - 11:04 PM

Fellow Trustees,

Are GA groups allowed as totally independent meetings from any given area? Can a group establish its own format, refuse any connection with its Intergroup area, and

communicate only with the ISO for literature needs? Does the ISO support direct communications with its office from a group, by-passing the Intergroup? We seem to have occurrences of this in our area. It does not promote GA Unity as I understand it. What experience do other groups have on this matter and how do you deal with it?

Bob C. - Trustee Area 2A, Northern Alberta

8/28/07 - 11:55PM

Hopefully I can shed some light on this issue of wayward meetings.

Groups are not totally independent from GA. The current guidance code outlines what comprises a GA meeting. Guidance Code, Article VII, Section 1 states: 'Whenever two or more persons with a desire to stop gambling meet together on a regular, weekly scheduled basis to discuss their gambling problem, they will be known as a group, only if they apply themselves to follow Gamblers Anonymous' Guidance Code and limit their use to only approved Gamblers Anonymous literature. They are also to notify the International Service Office (I.S.O.) of their existence.'

In LA, we will be voting for the 2nd time to change this section and make it more comprehensive with the passage of this: Replace the word 'apply' with 'commit' and add the following: ... display and distribution ... and appropriate ...

New version: Whenever two or more persons with a desire to stop gambling meet together on a regular, weekly scheduled basis to discuss their gambling problems, they will be known as a group, only if they commit themselves to follow Gamblers Anonymous' Guidance Code and limit their use, display and distribution to only approved and appropriate Gamblers Anonymous literature. They are also to notify the International Service Office (I.S.O.) of their existence.

This passed 69-18 in Chicago.

We have another item going for the 2nd vote: Guidance Code, Article VII, New Section 6 or first available new section number.

Gamblers Anonymous approved literature is any publication or item that has been approved by the Board if Trustees and is sold or distributed by the International Service Office (I.S.O.) and/or any Regional Service Office (R.S.O.). Foreign language translations of Gamblers Anonymous approved literature are deemed to be approved if the final product has followed the necessary steps outlined by the Board of Trustees.

This passed unanimously by a vote of 85-0

The 3rd in the series is also coming up for its 2nd vote: Guidance Code, Article VII, New Section 7 or first available new section number.

Gamblers Anonymous appropriate literature is limited to local area member telephone lists, meeting and direction lists, flyers regarding events sponsored by the local room(s), Intergroup(s), surrounding area(s), or conference committees. Other appropriate material must be designated as such by the Board of Trustees.

This passed 80-12 in Chicago

Passing these 3 in LA will add more muscle to what a GA room is; however, the issues you mention are within a group's right.

We have GA approved literature that outlines the 'suggested' meeting procedures and 'suggested' room format. There should be some uniformity from one room to another because we also operate under Unity Step 4, which states: 'EACH GROUP SHOULD BE SELF-GOVERNING EXCEPT IN MATTERS AFFECTING OTHER GROUPS OR GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS AS A WHOLE.'

The Red Book continues with: 'Each Gamblers Anonymous group has great latitude to conduct its affairs within the framework of the Fellowship. This preserves the freedom of choice that is so important to the group conscience. The conduct of each group is limited only to the extent that its actions would conflict with the Guidance Code of Gamblers Anonymous.'

What type of meeting, how long the meeting lasts, break or no break, etc. affects no one but those at that meeting. However, the breaking of anonymity is something that affects others and is not a group choice.'

A very smart person in the program with less time in than I have, really drilled home Recovery Step 3 with me. 'Made a decision to turn out will and out lives over to the care of this Power of our own understanding.'

When I was gambling, it was all about exercising my will to the exclusion of all else. This sounds to me like these rooms are the rebels in your area. Members have not kept Unity Step 1 in mind and it is distinctly possible that they have also taken their will(s) back and feel they know what is best for them. If so then you have a bigger problem than you

highlight in this issue of the Trustee Line. Not having any more facts, I would recommend a good old-fashioned East Coast Moderated Sitdown. Have the Trusteed Servants of the room get together with the Trustees and make a ledger sheet of the pros and cons of their defiant attitude. You may find it more revealing that you have said in your submission above. It may be the group's way of sending a subliminal message to your Intergroup that its wheels have come off the GA tracks. Disagree if you must, but preservation of Group Unity is not just about unity within the individual meetings, but also at the Intergroup and International level. If you are unfamiliar with the concept of a 'sitdown', contact me for some helpful suggestions on how to run a sitdown. It works for us in NJ very nicely.

David M. - Area 12 (NJ)

Concerns regarding agenda item #52

8/30/07 - 9:30 AM

Hi All,

This letter to the Trustees is as a result of my choosing to use the Trustee Line to view my concerns and I am very appreciative of Line's existence. I understand that the below topic is not in line with the suggested topics for the current month. However, I believe it is important enough and at this time should be addressed since it is fresh on my mind. Thus, maybe one of the purposes of the Trustee Line

Agenda Item #52 for LA BOT Meeting - "CD entitled 'Introduction to the Twelve Steps' - Ralph D Area 6A

I received in the mail yesterday a packet from our ISO office in LA. Obviously, as a Trustee I take very seriously any package received from the ISO office [the inside address was from our PO BOX 17173] and immediately opened the package. The package also was sent using \$.97 in postage stamps. Much to my surprise when I opened the package there was a CD inside. That really sparked my curiosity. It was not until I read the enclosed slip of paper placed with the CD that my concerns began to rise. The letter was from our Chairman of the BOT, Tom M, addressing the CD and item number 52 of the LA BOT Agenda.

The letter asked us as Trustees to take the time to listen to the CD in preparation of the LA meeting and the presentation of Agenda item number 52. As of the time of this letter I have listened to the first two steps presented on the CD. The CD is some 70 minutes in length. The presentation is very informative as well as done by an anonymous man and woman and I look forward to the presentation in LA. I plan to listen to the rest of the CD before the LA BOT meeting so as to be prepared. Thank you Ralph D for taking the time and interest to present this CD on the Agenda for LA

HERE ARE MY CONCERNS IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER:

--- Why are we using our ISO office to send out unapproved literature as part of a BOT Agenda item? I am concerned this will set precedence for any future Agenda items???

--- My perception is that our ISO assisted in sending this package out to the Trustees and thus resources are being used for purposes other than what I believe the ISO office should be used for?

--- Who paid for the \$.97 in stamps placed on each of the some 100 Trustee envelopes? I hope the ISO did not spend the money?

--- Why is the enclosed slip of paper from our Chairman of the Board Tom M and not from Ralph D the Trustee who is presenting the Agenda item number 52?

--- The use of the Office of Chairman of the Board to present any Agenda item [by using the 'Office of Chairman' on the inside paper] is an abuse of this position and should not take place. The association with the Agenda item number 52 already presents to the Trustees an implied perception of affirmation on this Agenda item by the Chairman and an implied importance. It tells me as a Trustee this Agenda item is more important than any other Agenda item and that cannot be the case!!

--- Why did not the enclosed piece of paper come from Ralph D, the Trustee presenter? Where is he in this process? Again, I think the CD has some very good information that should be heard but it does not need to be associated with the Office of the Chairman of the Board of the Trustees - as is the case!!

--- This use of the Office of the Chairman of the BOT to address this Agenda item creates a very bad precedence for the future. The Office of the Chairman of the Board of Trustees should be not used for this purpose or for any similar purpose no matter how tempting or warranted it maybe. THIS IS ABOUT PERCEPTION AND IMPLIED AUTHORITY TO THOSE WHO RECEIVE THE INFORMATION!

Thank you and any other Trustee comments are very welcome...

Lou W - Trustee Area 3B

8/31/07 - 7:26 AM

Dear fellow Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to comment on the content of agenda item #52. I may have received a bad copy of the cd since my copy gets static and inaudible around step 9 and beyond. There are times in the beginning that the volume has to be adjusted to hear the speakers. If at all possible, I would like to receive an additional copy to listen to steps 9 through 12. Hopefully all that can be addressed if the item passes. I found the content to be helpful and informative. It explained a few things a little better for me and I think it would benefit any and all members. A new member in our group asked to explain the part of step 9 that says "except when to do so would injure them or others." I was definitely enlightened with the explanation on the cd.

I am in favor of this agenda item so far.

Looking forward to seeing everyone in LA.
Kevin M. - Area 6B

9/6/07 - 12:46AM

In reference to Lou W. and his comments regarding the sending out of the CD. Let me first assure you that was not done with expenses that were under the control of the ISO but were from literature expenses. I had spoken with Ralph and since he was not a current trustee he could not get that out to the trustees because he was not entitled to the list. For the information of all he paid for those CD'S out of his own pocket and the mailing was out of the literature fund. If this is a serious concern I for one would be happy if there were not attachments to the agenda and each presenter would be responsible for passing out the attachment at the meeting this would save much time for me and everyone else.

Just wanted to set that fact straight and assure everyone that I am not endorsing any item on the agenda just trying to facilitate the agenda so it moves along quickly. As one of our esteemed past chairman once did is he went through a piece of literature paragraph by paragraph and the meetings went till 3 AM. If this board decides to do this I am also fine with that. I only feel the better informed each of you are the better chance we have of being efficient but as in the past I know some people do their homework and some do not.

I hope this helps clear up the misconception.

Tom M. - Chairman Board of Trustees
Area 2

International Walk-A-Thon Month
--

9/5/07 - 10:42 AM

Hello my fellow Trustees,

As September is International Walk-A-Thon month and the specified purpose is to help fund the International Hotline, I wanted to point out a simple equation.

The International Hotline costs the ISO \$1,600.00 per month. That is \$19,200.00 per year.

If 100 Trustees each raised \$192 in September of every year, the International Hotline would be fully funded for the next 12 months.

\$192 is my personal goal. How about you?

With Serenity,
Ed K. - Trustee Area 1

9/5/07 - 1:01 PM

The Trustee Line is meant to be an open exchange for the Trustees, both current and past, to get their thoughts and ideas out for the rest of the Trustees to consider. Hopefully, it is a platform to work out the kinks with agenda items well before the group hears what might be controversial items before the Trustee meetings.

What bothers me is when items and thoughts are posted that reflect improper facts. Obviously, I am referring to what Ed K. wrote just above, which is why it appears in this section of the Trustee Line. The purpose of the designation of September as Walk-A-Thon month is not to fund the National Hotline. I would ask that anyone who is reading this review the minutes of the Chicago Trustee Agenda, item #29.

To designate the month of September as, 'International Gamblers Annual Walk-a-Thon Month'. All areas worldwide will be encouraged to host a walk-a-thon fundraiser one day in September of each year through which the International Service Office will use the proceeds to continue its efforts in maintaining service to our Fellowship and increase service and programming that will benefit the entire International

community of Gamblers Anonymous.

My Intergroup was told that 'we had an obligation to ISO to raise money for it.' That kind of overt pressure done under false assertions is inexcusable and clearly nowhere in the item that was passed in Chicago. Let's face it, the hotline is a US-only situation, which doesn't include Canada, to the best of my understanding, and can hardly fall under the item that was passed as it relates to benefiting 'the entire International community of Gamblers Anonymous.' We have numerous issues that need to be resolved for the benefit of the global picture of GA.

The International Relations Committee has opened a can of worms by being extremely efficient and making the connections to so many other countries. We are out of control as a fellowship because we are totally unprepared for this next phase of accommodating these new countries. It can't be just about getting new countries to join our fellowship. It requires much more than that. We don't have a standardized process for giving the literature the proper translations for all the languages that are part of GA now or will be in the future. So many of the items on our agendas are directed to the Combo Book. Does anyone realize the gargantuan task of updating all the translated issues to remain in step without 'bold this', or 'add a comma here' craziness? I would venture to say that the translated issues are not being updated in harmony with the English versions. What about all the new languages for these countries? ISO is clearly overworked and understaffed now and certainly won't be able to efficiently handle the demands from all the other countries and languages.

Although I personally don't believe in the Walk-A-Thon concept because of what it represents to a compulsive gambler and the definition of gambling, it is still being done and evidently has gained the support of the fellowship. I am only a voice in the very minute minority, so I have to move on and accept that I cannot support it.

My point to all of this is that in addition to the International issues I cite above, we have many more projects and functions that truly need additional money. The Hotline is just a slice of the functions that ISO helps to provide. Maybe it's time we looked more deeply into what is really going on behind the scenes rather than the glitz and glamour of the hotline. Maybe it's time for ISO to give us all a list of what projects and issues they are dealing with and what needs attention to more effectively get the message out to the compulsive gambler that still suffers.

As Sgt. Joe Friday used to say on the TV show 'Dragnet'...'Just the facts, ma'am, just the facts please.'

David M. - Area 12

9/5/07 - 3:27 PM

To all fellow Trustees,

In the spirit of Step 10 I must make amends for my recent posting regarding the Walk-A-Thon month.

In my haste I did not check the facts, nor did I remember the exact wording of the motion passed. Further, I relied on another Trustee's email regarding the purpose of the funds raised in the September Walk-A-Thon.

I stand corrected and for that I am grateful.

With Serenity,
Ed K. - Trustee Area 1.

9/18/07 - 4:25 PM

We in Chicago took up a Special Collection on September 13, 2007 at every Thursday meeting. . We are turning in a separate check for this very special collection. One of our Trustees has already turned in over \$3,000.00 for the ISO L. A. Walkathon. She has attended all but 5 meetings in our Intergroup area, and has asked for funds for the ISO. For this reason we decided to handle our National Walkathon Differently.

One of the Trustees asked how we divide up visiting the meetings in our area. I have attended all the Illinois Meetings, many in Indiana and some in Wisconsin. At Portland we will ask to be realigned. Four Trustees and we cover 144 meetings. We have two gentlemen who are willing to do the state of Wisconsin. They live up there. The closest meeting in Wisconsin is almost 2 hours away. Wisconsin has 60 meetings, some as far away as 8 hours.. This is in response to Ed S' submission last month. Thank you.

Kathy H. - Trustee Area 8

Trustee Area Coverage

This section has been revived because of the submission sent in from David McA. from Australia. The item to which he responded is listed just below.

8/16/07 - 8:34 PM

I was wondering how Trustees attempt to get "coverage" of the meetings in your area. Do you attend every meeting in your area? How often? Do you divide up your area amongst all Trustees? How?

I am one of 6 Trustees and our Intergroup has over 80 meetings covering an almost 300 mile radius. So, I am interested in your input especially if your area has three or more Trustees. But, do feel free to comment regardless of how many Trustees you have in your Intergroup or area.

Respectfully,
Ed K. - Area 1

P.S. I am so looking forward to the October '07 Conference. See you all there.

9/13/07 - 4:06 AM

Hi Sisters and Brothers,

Since becoming one of the Area 18 (Australia) Trustees I have tried to live to the spirit of the position of Trusted Servant. Area 18 roughly covers the size of 75% of the USA. It currently has in excess of 150 groups. Since the commencement of this term as a trusted servant I have tried to visit as many groups as I physically can. So far this has led me to travel some 21 000 km's and I have only so far visited about 41 of the groups within Area 18. I have travelled by plane, trains and automobiles (sound familiar). Thankfully many members have been generous with time, accommodation and have travelled some of these distances with me.

Now most of this has been done in the last 9 months and as you can read I have still many groups to visit, oh by the way 3 of them are a 12000km round trip from location, hello Western Australia. These trips have been very rewarding with me meeting many new friends. There has also been four new meetings so far come out of these trips with more to come hopefully. Oh by the way I am in my final year of study at University and I do not have any permanent work. Life can get very busy some days, weeks and months though my sponsor keeps telling me that my higher power doesn't put anything in my path that he thinks I can't handle.

Unfortunately with finishing my final exams a week before the LA Conference and my poor student status I am unable to attend though I wish all well and hope that the spirit of Fellowship continues to be spread through the message.

Yours in fellowship
David McA, Aussie Brother - Area 18 Trustee

Pressure Relief and the New Bankruptcy Laws
--

9/13/07 - 10:48 AM

I have a very sensitive problem that I believe the fellowship needs to deal with, but appears to be very set on keeping its collective head in the sand. That problem is how the changes in the Federal Bankruptcy laws that will be 2 years old next month have completely changed the landscape of the repayment segment of the Pressure Relief process. I don't want to get into particulars about the details of these changes, but to try to deal with this hot potato on a more global perspective.

Aside from the fact that Pressure Relief is still one of the biggest mysteries in GA because so few member, rooms and areas use it, it is the only process in our recovery program where non- professionals (GA members) are dealing in a world where guidance is given that butts right up against the world of attorneys. The reparation of the usually splintered financials each GA member has once the new members come into the fellowship is heralded as a cornerstone of recovery. Our Combo Book clearly says that compulsive gambling is not a financial problem, but it doesn't mean that the illness doesn't create a financial cesspool for the member to try and clean up. The assertion that it is not a financial problem means that having money does not 'fix', 'cure' or 'remove' the problem of compulsive gambling.

As we help our other members restore their lives to a normal way of thinking and living, the untangling of their financials takes on a life of its own. The difficulty is that we do this process in somewhat of a 'seat of the pants' process and most of that is pulled down from traditions that have existed virtually unchanged for many decades. Unfortunately, on 10/16/05 the financial world changed. As strong as we feel about bankruptcy being a bailout and as passionate as we are about it being detrimental to a member's recovery, we are getting pulled into a world that may put the member into financial and legal quicksand.

Don't get me wrong, I am a staunch opponent of bankruptcy and looking for the quick fix, but we as a fellowship cannot rely on the procedures and guidance of 'the old days'. For the last 2 years, the credit card industry has become stronger as a result of the new legislation. I can hear it now.....'Bankruptcy laws are an outside issue.' We need to

rethink that stance because as I said earlier, we have people running the financial end of the Pressure Relief process that have no idea what kind of harm they are creating because they tell these members how to repay debt. It's time to wake up from our information coma and recognize that people are going to lose their houses and many other things because we are operating in a totally uninformed way and subjecting the members to legal risks that ironically that could be the basis of modifying our recovery Step 9. 'Made direct amends to such creditors wherever possible, except when to do so would injure the member.'

We have numerous CPAs in the fellowship and no doubt tax attorneys also. I would really like to hear from them about how this new set of laws could really injure the new member. If we continue on this path of ignoring the power of the credit card companies and the financial abyss that we can create for the member, the day will come when something really bad happens to a member as a result of improper guidance and then someone get sued. What about all the members of a Pressure Relief Group getting sued? What about GA as a whole? You can argue that we have no liability in this process, but nobody signs any waivers with this process and even if we are not liable for our egregious mistakes, does anyone need the cost of defending such a move?

Impossible you say? I used to think that nothing bad would happen to me when I was gambling and because of that thinking, I almost landed myself in jail. I have long since learned that I need to think twice and act once and that even though I sometimes need to take it one day at a time, I can't run my life without thinking about the future in the decisions I make for myself, my family that are all part of my recovery.

Some how, some way, we need some of our CPAs and attorneys in the fellowship to step up to the plate and help us take our heads out of the sand. We can't continue to have the members with many years in the program that did their Pressure Relief Group meeting in the pre- bankruptcy law change years. Like much of what we do in the fellowship, we only deal with problems when they are in our faces. We need some pre-emptive thinking to not only properly advise our members more accurately on the Pressure Relief Group financial process, but to protect ourselves from the potential problems of our own stubbornness.

David M. - Area 12

PS - Happy 50th, GA. Does anyone have a 50-year pin to give GA in Los Angeles?

A reply to David M. Pressure Relief Problem

I agree with your thoughts of revamping our pressure relief procedures, but what do we do in the meantime? As you are well aware our members come to us with many problems, financial being one of them. Many members are in need of Marital, Legal and personal issues. We cannot make them wait until we figure this out or wait until we make new procedures. Maybe we should take this issue outside G.A. and let professional people handle the financial issues. You bring up an excellent point. We must act soon to correct this problem. I do many Pressure Relief Meetings and I would really like to continue to help fellow brothers and sisters through this period.

I am more concerned with giving someone sound advice than worrying about Legal ramifications, both are very important. I hope you can somehow speak on this at the upcoming conference and get the ball started.

Andy D. - Area 12

Does Pressure Relief Operate in a Grey Area of the Law?
--

9/13/07 - 7:51 PM

I have been looking at the Agenda items for the LA Conference. I have a concern regarding the Pressure Relief information. My concern is this I have had two lawyers (Aust) here tell me that for a community organisation there is a grey area in the law to be providing financial information. Whilst I have not obtained written confirmation from them or legal opinion a member in our fellowship who is an accountant also shared the same concerns.

Has the BOT considered the ramifications for the fellowship as a whole? Does this focus on the Pressure Relief aspect actually contradict our literature, as in "Is Compulsive Gambling a financial problem?" "No we believe it to be an emotional illness."

We here in Australia have stopped doing Pressure Relief work due to the grey area in the law. We suggest to members finding financial challenges to access support that is available within the community.

Feel free to forward this message to other Trustees for feed back to myself.

Aussie Brother David McA. - Area 18

Acceptable Amounts for Intergroup Treasuries

9/17/07 - 11:25 PM

What is an acceptable amount of money for a large Intergroup to have in their account?

It seems our hottest discussions at our Intergroup meetings is over Money.

Kathy H. - Trustee Area 8
