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**Trustee Line for October 2013**

A PDF version of this issue to distribute to your rooms, or to print out for easier reading, will be available after 10/31/13.

**Thoughts From The Trustees - Current and Past**

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

Item	Subject	Last Entry	Entries
1.	<a href="#">Thoughts To Ponder</a>	10/1/13 12:01 AM	1
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**Thoughts To Ponder**

10/1/13 - 12:00 AM  
DEAR G.A. BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN RECOVERY

Sincere wishes for freedom and joy in today's recovery which is enhanced by faithfully attending as many meetings as possible per week, by abstinence from gambling, "One Day At A Time", by giving recovery time and patience to work, and by working the Programs of Recovery and Unity on a daily basis to the best of our abilities will build a better productive non-gambling today which builds the bridge to a hoped for recovery tomorrow. We are the architects of our recoveries because we are the construction workers with the responsibility to build the strongest foundation for continued growth and progress in all our lives.

In our quest for recovery, we are reminded of the battle Sir Percival fought to find The Holy Grail- -to never give up the quest for recovery no matter the slings and arrows of criticism, doubt, or injustice we have to face. God will give us the strength to face our foes including our worst foe which in our gambling daze had been ourselves.

We, as recovering compulsive gamblers, have to look into the mirror of our souls and not turn away in anger, resentment, frustration, or worry or think that returning to evil ways (gambling) would be an answer to the everyday problems of life. We now face life with courage not run from life in fear.

In conclusion, I wish all Gamblers Anonymous members, new or old, the best thoughts, faith, and hope for all our recovery efforts, now and in our future. If we choose, there is nothing we cannot accomplish for our lives. We must desire as our highest priority the reversal of our past lives which experienced pain, misery, suffering, debt, and destruction from gambling with all our hearts, our souls, and all our strength, inspiration, and purpose we bring to our individual recoveries... as well as assisting in the recovery efforts of our fellow members.

My hope for the upcoming Trustee meeting in Orlando is that Board of Trustee members honor the spiritual principles of kindness, generosity, honesty, humility, compassion, love, and tolerance as they make decisions that affect Gamblers Anonymous as a whole. The assembled Board of Trustee members as outlined in the Guidance Code of Gamblers Anonymous are elected to be the

guardians of the Twelve Steps of Recovery and Unity (not the changers) and that they are to be guided by those precepts in making all their decisions. I believe that the proposed change to Unity Step Eleven would be harmful to our Fellowship as well as the proposed use of the word "mandatory" that would create much disunity to our common welfare. Of course, these are only the opinions of an individual Gamblers Anonymous and not meant to offend the opinions of any other Gamblers Anonymous member. The GA Guidance Code also proclaims that no one is more important than the individual member that he or she has no ruler or superior but may elect (Trustee) to represent his or her rights within the Fellowship. I am that individual member the Guidance Code is referring to.

Your Brother in Recovery,

George W. - Watertown, NY, Area 16

God Bless Us All.

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### **15 Steps on How to Take a Good Idea and Turn it into Trash**

10/6/13 - 12:06 PM

Much has transpired with the Trustee Line since Vancouver. The entire subject of the Trustee Line will be under scrutiny in Orlando. Hopefully, the wisdom of the Board of Trustees will prevail and we will move into a new version of what should be.

The decision on how to posture oneself on an issue for the Trustee Line should not have to be done with diligent deliberation. If you like something and want to share it with people on the Trustee Line, then by all means make it happen. Nobody has a problem with such a stance on anything.

Where it becomes a problem is when someone speaks about something in a negative manner on items or issues that are created by other members, especially Trustees. Opposing such things is taken as a derogatory statement, by some. But bringing up the problem is almost like a cardinal sin. Such a position is also deemed to be an outright negative and that such viewpoints have no place in any part of the program. In other words, if it's good, we should talk about it. If it's not good, we should ignore it. That's not how it works for me and many other Trustees. Additionally, if you have something to say that is negative, then say it directly to that person. Well, that just ain't gonna happen with this posting, because this issue has been plastered all over the Trustee community.

What I want to know is this. When will it ever end? When will people think about the principles instead of what feels good? When will the mere look of impropriety be enough to stop an action, or at the very least, cause such people to check to see what is wrong? I suppose I will just have to live in hope, and die in despair.

Evidently, all the current Trustees got an email last weekend about an 'International Speakers Meeting' in a room in the Tampa area of 6B. The meeting concept is a great idea, but that's where this specific 'special meeting' goes completely off the tracks.

Point #1 – The meeting is a fundraiser

Why would any kind of fund raising situation go out to the Trustees attending the Orlando Conference, or any other International Conference for a fundraiser? The mere thought of poaching the Trustees coming to the Orlando Conference for money for a local area fundraiser, especially in another area, most of whom are not fully funded themselves, is a red flag.

Point #2 - Undisclosed purpose on the email and the flyer

Even a local area fundraiser not involving Trustees must disclose the purpose of the money. Not doing so is misleading because it leaves the door open for any allocation of monies collected. Possibilities of which might not be agreeable to those contributing, if the exact sources were announced in advance. Another red flag.

Point #3 - Taking this 'special meeting' off site from the Orlando Conference  
Although there is no language in the Conference Booklet against this, it is completely inappropriate for another area to even consider arranging any

activity that takes the Trustees, and any other early attending members, away from the Conference facilities. Such activities steal the thunder from the Conferences. There should be a 48 or 72-hour blackout period before the conference, prohibiting any such activities by areas and rooms outside the Conference Area. Another red flag.

Point #4 - Saying that a room with 5 members had this idea  
I personally find it highly questionable that a room with only 5 members would think of this International Speakers Meeting on their own and intentionally pulling people away from another conference area. Also, to expect that Trustees would come to the room to bolster their treasury. If we are to really believe that this is the individual room's idea, clearly this couldn't be executed without the direct intervention of the area's Trustees. Where is the supervision and guidance to help the room 'do the right things'? How can all these issues be rationalized or justified, especially from Trustees who are supposed to be the Guardians of the Recovery and Unity Steps? This one is a series of red flags.

The idea of the 'special meeting' should be done on the hotel site as part of a Conference function. In fact, it is my recommendation that the Conference Committee conduct a similar such meeting with other International Trustees, with just a simple collection being taken for the overall contributions to the ISO. I would hope that a meeting onsite gets the full endorsement of the BOT, The International Relations Committee and all members of the Executive Board and the Board of Regent members who will attend Orlando.

Point #5 - Sending an email to the Trustees for the benefit of a room  
The line has been crossed with such a procedure. This was done by one of the Trustees from the 6B area. There was nothing in the email that indicated anything about an invitation from the members of the room, signed by the Secretary of the room. This does nothing other than add more suspicion regarding the true intentions of this entire event and its origins not coming from the members of the room, but the Trustees. Another red flag.

Point #6 - All 3 Trustees signing off on the email  
Clearly this is a full commitment from the Trustees. Again, there is no appearance of any of the Trusted Servants from the room in which this meeting will be held. This makes the responsibility and accountability for this email and event all on the 3 Trustees. Another red flag.

Point #7 - Misuse of the Confidential Trustee Listing  
The Confidential Trustee Listing is not designed or intended for such uses, especially when this did not get any approvals from the Conference Committee for Orlando or any of the members of the Executive Board. This is the very reason why such information is not to be used like this. Another red flag.

Point #8 - No notices of this 'special meeting' have been circulated to the other rooms in the Tampa Area 6B rooms until this past Thursday.  
Adding to the already doubtful circumstances of how this event came about, why wouldn't the rooms in the Tampa area get any notification about this special event prior to the email being sent last week to the Trustees? Why wouldn't the Intergroup get notice of this event or even be aware of its pending existence before the fact? This adds weight to the question of whether the 3 Trustees are poaching the Conference Trustees and attendees for other inappropriate purposes, involved in the fundraiser. Another red flag.

Point #9 - One of the Trustees stating to the Orlando Conference Committee Chair that the funds to be raised would be for the speaking Trustees  
This brings to mind that the funds are going to just 2 Trustees. What's so special about these 2 Trustees that they should get money and other Trustees shouldn't? What possible justification could there be to pay any GA member, let alone a Trustee, for speaking at any meeting involving any GA function or speaking engagement? There is none and doing so is a moral violation of all that is pure about the Unity Program and Gamblers Anonymous as a whole. Another red flag.

Point #10 - Another Trustee stating to the Chair of the BOT that the funds were to be raised for the room, the area Intergroup, International Trustee Funding, and ISO  
How is it this even possible that 2 of the 3 people signing the email have different answers as to what the fund raising is all about? Could it be to de-emphasize the real use of the money – to raise money for the 2 Trustees speaking in the 'special meeting'. Another red flag.

Point #11 - Further need for clarification through another email regarding the

use of funds and the same sources are cited.

Luckily, the BOT Chair intervened in the issue to make sure that if the message was being sent, whether inappropriate or not, that the Trustees should accurately be told what the fund raising was actually for. Another red flag.

Point #12 - A BOT Co-Chair asks for more detail regarding the term 'International Trustee Funding', receiving an answer that the Trustees speaking will get the money, if they accept. This is possibly the most troubling of the issues that have presented themselves because of this 'special event'. This information was not updated to the Trustees who were part of the original series of email, just this BOT Co-Chair. Now those who go to this meeting don't have the clear picture of what the fundraiser is really about. If the speaking Trustees don't accept the money, then the fundraiser turns out to be about raising money for the room, the area's Intergroup (bringing in money to help provide other monies for the current Trustees) and maybe ISO. Another red flag.

Point #13 - Circling back, one of the 2 'International Trustees' speaking is one of the people who signed the original email regarding the speaking event. How incredibly self-serving. I couldn't imagine putting my name to an email requesting other Trustees to contribute to pay me for speaking to others in the effort of Unity Step 5. And if I don't accept the money directly, then the money goes to Intergroup so I get money through funds available for funding the Trustees in my area. This is actually shameful. My Intergroup has fundraisers but the message is delivered to the rooms in my area. Some of the money obviously goes to the Trustees, but that is an Intergroup sponsored event, not something I put together without Intergroup. Another red flag.

Point #14 - The area 6B Intergroup still owes funding monies to its Trustees from the Vancouver Conference. Could this be a primary motivation for having this 'special meeting' in the Tampa area, so that money can be directed to the Trustees who sent the email? Clearly there can't be monies paid to the Trustees for Orlando, who deserve reimbursement from the area for their expenses, if they are still owed monies from Vancouver 6 months ago. This paints a really ugly picture, even to have something like that considered by any Trustee. Another red flag.

Point #15 - The room supposedly responsible for this 'special meeting' will make the decision on how to split the monies after the meeting. This amazes me that the room will be in control of the monies and how it is disbursed without any notification of where it will go. I'm not talking about exact dollars, if this were at all appropriate, but this is a fluid situation. What about the room covering its costs for the night and then what the percentages are for all the areas of contribution? Why can't the issue of whether or not the speaking Trustees are actually going to accept the money raised from the fund raising effort? This is all very shady and unbecoming of any area, Intergroup, members and especially the Trustees involved. Another red flag.

So here is the package in a nutshell. What started out looking like a great idea, has splintered into something that is wrong at every angle possible. Trustees are behind this entire event, irrespective of what might be said that the room got this off the ground. If that is even remotely true, why has no other room been advised of this event? Why didn't the Trustees involved, step up and put a stop to it because of how wrong it is?

I find it offensive that an area would look to capitalize on the twice yearly gathering of 100+ current Trustees and other attending members to an International Conference for the purpose of raising money for any 'cause' that is not directly connected to the Conference. Why was it necessary to have this in a meeting in a different area from Orlando? Why drag people 42 miles each way, away from the meetings that could really benefit from the attendance of the Trustees to the conference?

Again, I'm doing this via the Trustee Line because this has to be exposed and I would not abuse the Confidential Trustee Listing for such purposes. The idea of having a special International Trustee Speakers meeting is a great idea, but this pathway chosen by the responsible parties in area 6B have turned this into some perversion that should leave a very bad taste in all the mouths of the members of the Board of Trustees and members of Gamblers Anonymous. And by the way, for the benefit of the Trustees responsible for this meeting in Tampa, along with the flyer and the email to the Trustees who evidently wanted to highlight the 'International' aspect of the speakers meeting because of who the speakers will be, the Board of Trustees members are ALL

International Trustees, as per a decision by the BOT 4 years ago, most notably signified in the Information Packet under the 17 Responsibilities for International Trustees. Marco is an 'overseas' Trustee and William is not, unless the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico just declared its independence recently.

As I stated under point #4, the Orlando Conference Committee should arrange an Overseas Trustee speakers meeting in the hotel. In the spirit of sharing our experience, strength and hope, let those who attend that meeting in the hotel, give to a NORMAL room collection for the benefit of Gamblers Anonymous. Hopefully, the meeting in the Tampa area will be canceled because of how wrong it is for so many reasons. If that is not the decision, then I hope that the Trustees attending the Orlando Conference make the right decision and attend the Conference sponsored Overseas Speakers Meeting. Any other event off site and out of the Orlando area should be ignored.

I am relying on the other Trustees to respond to this thread to give it some additional weighting, so that the people responsible for this travesty will maybe get the point and cancel this farce.

David M. – Area 12, New Jersey

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10/7/13 - 6:14 PM

David,

I have been giving this some thought for a few days now and I will weigh in with my opinion. For lack of a better word, this is just tacky. Orlando has been working hard to put together an International Conference that can be enjoyed by all. They found a great hotel and a great price, planned activities for the Trustees and others who will be traveling to this conference as well throwing a weekend of recovery for all to enjoy. To try and take anything away from Orlando to begin with is wrong. To hold a fundraiser for 2 trustees who live 45 minutes away is deplorable. What makes these 2 trustees any better than those who travel hundreds of miles to get there?

The idea of having an International Trustee speaker meeting is a great one. What makes it tacky is taking it to another area and then asking said Trustees for money to support that area. I and my co-trustee are fortunate in that our area fully supports us with these conferences. I know many who are not so fortunate. Money will come from their own pocket to come forward and do the work of the BOT. To ask these people for money for trustees that are so close they could drive home every night is tacky! Instead of using the sitting BOT for their 'fundraiser' idea, perhaps they should be looking at their area and asking why that area is not more supportive of these trustees?

It also bothers me that the Confidential Trustee List was used to get the word out for this 'fundraiser'. That list is meant solely for the business of the BOT and this is not even close! Thanks David for once again having the courage to state the obvious!

Your Sister in Recovery,

Karen E. - Area 8A, Minnesota

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10/7/13 - 8:36 PM

Thank you David for bringing up this meeting being sponsored by a room in Area 6B during the Conference being held by Area 6. I thought it was a very nice idea until I heard the details.

Not knowing the details or the geography of the area, I just assumed that the meeting was being run by a room in Area 6 (at or near the hotel) not 43 miles away. I don't mind driving to a meeting but not to another Area during an International Conference. Quite frankly, this seems very insulting and disrespectful to the hosts of the conference. In my humble opinion, this would have been a very good idea if the meeting was held by Area 6 at the hotel.

I did plan on attending this meeting until I heard the details. I will not be attending and hope to go to a local meeting at the hotel or in a GA room in Orlando.

I would personally like to thank Area 6 in advance for all their hard work and dedication that they have put forth in putting together this conference. It seems like it will be a very fun and productive event.

**Put Your Thinking Caps On**

10/13/13 - 8:56 AM

As you settle into your chair at the BOT meeting next week, please think about our agenda development process. We have 22 committee reports and 134 agenda items to get through in about 22 hours. I hope everyone will do their best to keep things moving, and I hope you will all be asking yourselves if there is a better way to keep our agenda down to a manageable level. Ask yourself "What can we do to get through our agenda by Friday afternoon?" I'd love to hear your answers after the BOT meeting.

In patient service to our fellowship,  
Paul S. - Area 17, Trustee, Connecticut

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