

Life-Line Bulletin

Select Language | ▼

[Life-Line Bulletin](#)

Main Menu

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

Phoenix, Arizona - Spring 2016  
Information Section

[Phoenix Conference Info](#)

**Rolling Agenda**

- [Phoenix Absentee Ballots](#)
- [Agenda Information](#)
- [Conference Bids](#)

**Submit an Agenda Item**

BOT Committees

[Monthly Committee Reports](#)

- [Blue Book Revision](#)
- [BOR/BOT Revenue Review](#)
- [Conference Oversight](#)
- [Digital Media](#)
- [Hotline Implementation](#)
- [Hotline Files](#)
- [Intergroup](#)
- [International Relations](#)
- [Literature](#)
- [Pressure Relief](#)
- [Prison - Canada](#)
- [Prison - US](#)
- [Public Relations](#)
- [RSO](#)
- [Telephone Conference Call](#)
- [Trustee Election Guidelines](#)
- [Trustee Removal Merit Panel](#)
- [Trustee Website](#)
- [Video Meeting Format](#)

International Areas

- [Africa](#)
- [Australia](#)
- [Eastern Asia](#)
- [Europe](#)
- [Pacific Rim](#)
- [South America and Mexico](#)

[International Event Flyers](#)

Trustee Line & Other Features

- [Trustee Line Home Page](#)
- [Login For The Trustee Poll](#)
- [Trustee Poll](#)
- [>>Trustee Information Update<<](#)
- [Trustee Website Tutorial](#)
- [Area Event Flyers](#)
- [Local Area Questions & Answers](#)
- [Local Area Website Guidelines](#)
- [Local Area Help Flyer](#)
- [New Area/Trustee Accommodation Fund](#)
- [Board of Regents News Page](#)
- [Trustee Memorial Honor Roll](#)

Future Conferences

[Upcoming Conferences](#)

## Trustee Line for March 2016

A PDF version of this issue to distribute to your rooms, or to print out for easier reading, will be available after 3/31/16.

## Questions and Answers Involving Individual BOT Committees

Any GA member can contact the Chairs of the Committees listed below with any questions or concerns they might have. The Chairs will answer the emails and the resulting issues will be posted under each committee involved in the email. This will serve as help for other members, Intergroups or areas, who may be going through the same situations. The emails will not breach anonymity and will be redacted to make sure names and areas are not included in this section. You are also invited to click the individual committee links on the left margin, for more information.

- [Blue Book Revision](#)
- [BOR/BOT Revenue Review](#)
- [Conference Oversight](#)
- [Digital Media](#)
- [Hotline Implementation](#)
- [Intergroup](#)
- [International Relations](#)
- [Literature](#)
- [Pressure Relief](#)
- [Prisons - Canada](#)
- [Prisons - US](#)
- [Public Relations](#)
- [RSO - Regional Service Offices](#)
- [Telephone Meeting Conference Calls](#)
- [Trustee Election Guidelines](#)
- [Trustee Removal Merit Panel](#)
- [Trustee Website](#)
- [Video Meeting Format](#)

## Thoughts From The Trustees - Current and Past

**Disclaimer - The Trustee Line is a function of the Board of Trustees of Gamblers Anonymous. It is intended solely as a forum for members of the Board of Trustees to share opinions on issues related to Gamblers Anonymous. Any postings in this or any other edition of the Trustee Line are not to be construed as the opinion of Gamblers Anonymous, as a whole. The publication of any items on the Trustee Line do not constitute an endorsement or statement of approval or acknowledgement by Gamblers Anonymous of what the contents are.**

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

Subjects that receive submissions from at least 13 different people, will trigger an email blast to all the current and past Trustees, signifying a 'Hot Topic Alert' on the Trustee Line.

Item	Subject	Last Entry	Entries
1.	<a href="#">Trustee Poll #5</a>	3/5 7:15 AM	2
2.	<a href="#">Unity Step 2 Discussion</a>	3/5 6:07 PM	2
3.	<a href="#">GA Approved Literature</a>	3/12 1:38 PM	4

## Trustee Poll #5

3/2/16 - 2:46 AM

Regarding trustee poll Item #5. I see no reference to Gam Anon who co-hosts conferences with GA from time to time and certainly have rooms available for their workshops and business meetings. Any profits in these conferences benefit both fellowships. Reading what has been written here seems to exclude giving Gam Anon any rooms at all? Can the author address this please.

Steve R. - Area 2B. Sacramento, CA

---

3/5/16 - 7:15 AM

Steve,

That poll item was not about GamAnon. I hope that someone will put an agenda item in for Phoenix for language to be inserted in the Hosting an International Conference booklet.

A few conferences ago, I mounted an effort to remove pages from 2 of our publications about GamAnon, as I and many other see that our relationship with GamAnon as a Unity Step 6 violation. They passed the first vote, but not the second vote. Although I still believe that the purity of the Unity Steps is being trivialized by our 'looking the other way' when it comes to GamAnon, the Trustee Poll item was not added with the inclusion of GamAnon.

We continue to do conferences with them and trying to change that is like trying to dig a tunnel under a mountain with a teaspoon. The reasoning of the Trustee poll item is directly centered on Unity Step 6. We should not create any environment for other 12 step programs to be part of the conference. Of course, with the exception of GamAnon.

David M. - Area 12, New Jersey

I modified the poll item to address GamAnon. Good catch on your part.

---

## Unity Step 2 Discussion

3/2/16 - 2:46 AM

“Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”

What does this Unity Step mean to you? How does it apply to you as a Trustee? Based on some of the agenda items for the Phoenix meeting, I feel we are at a crossroads in our fellowship. Either we allow the groups to govern themselves or we remove Unity Step 2 from our program.

To tell a group what guidelines it can or cannot make or to dictate how it must run (in accordance with the Guidance Code) is an act of governing our groups. That any piece of literature used in a group must be approved by the BOT, or that a group member cannot share a prayer or reading that is important to their personal recovery are both acts of a governing body. Too often I hear the justification that we need these rules for group unity where I think it is an issue of personalities over principles – two or more people have a disagreement and they write up an agenda item for the BOT meeting.

Another example is that an Area cannot remove a Trustee without a vote of the BOT (see the Guidance Code Article VIII, section 4). Each Area has the responsibility of electing their Trustee, why do we take away their right to remove them? That right rests with the groups that elected them, in my opinion.

Do we need to take a step back and reevaluate the Guidance Code? Is the BOT crossing the line and becoming a governing body? Or are we already there and we need to delete or modify Unity Step 2 to match the BOT's true intent? I know I have an opinion, but I would like to hear yours.

Paul S. - Trustee, Area 17, Connecticut

---

3/5/16 - 6:07

Hi Paul,

Thanks for starting this topic. I think the BOT has already become a governing body as a result of the guidance code. The guidance code and the unity steps just aren't compatible. Our trusted leaders are suppose to be servants not senators. We spend a lot of money to send trustees to these BOT meetings to try better our fellowship by tweaking the guidance code, unity program, recovery program, etc. yet we are shrinking as a fellowship. We are having trouble being fully self supporting on a national level. Even if we have a 1% retention rate year after year

that should still equate to consistent growth. If the guidance code is for the betterment of the fellowship and its growth and survival why are we shrinking? I personally think our survival depends more on the unity steps than the guidance code. I'm pretty sure GA was flourishing before the guidance codes inception and have no reason to believe that GA would not have stayed on that path had the guidance code never been implemented.

It will take forever to explain the inverted pyramid to this fellowship. I believed you've tried already Paul. I will just say that local intergroups, the BOT, and ISO are supported by the groups. Don't ever forget that. The groups don't serve Intergroup, the BOT, Or the ISO. I'm pretty sure the groups would survive if Intergroup, the BOT, ISO didn't exist. Would local intergroups, the BOT, or ISO survive without the groups? Want GA to flourish? We can start by upholding the unity steps and give groups back their autonomy.

Joe T. - Former Trustee, Area 2, Northern California

---

<b>GA Approved Literature</b>
-------------------------------

3/6/16 - 12:56 PM

I hope all is well. I was looking for some feedback. At our Intergroup meeting in February, a member that has been in program for many years stated that their room does Pressure Relief Group Meetings with their own forms that the room created as opposed to using the GA approved PRGM forms. One of the the Trustees in attendance stated that the PRGM forms that ISO provides need to be used and to not use literature (or forms) that are not GA approved. I think the issue of using GA approved literature needs to be addressed and I was looking for any and all feedback that the Trustees may provide.

Thank you.

Tom Z. - Trustee, Area 15, New York

---

3/6/16 - 11:26 PM

Tom,

This is a simple situation, one that should be an issue with any room in Gamblers Anonymous. It sounds like you are talking about a room dominated by a few people who have decided to take back their will, in direct defiance of Recovery Step 3.

It starts with the Guidance Code, Article VII, Section I, the very definition of a group

"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 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."

The room has 2 options. 1) - Fall into complete compliance with the Guidance Code regarding this item and discontinue the use of the non-GA approved literature, or 2) - Be removed as a recognized room, from ISO, NYIG and all meeting lists, worldwide.

If you put that simple equation before these people, and I would get your Intergroup Chair and as many of the other Trustees as possible to come to that meeting, that they have this choice and they choose to ignore you, then the room has made 2 fatal decisions. The first being that they cannot vote to violate the Guidance Code and the second, that they are voting to be removed as a recognized room.

I should be done calmly and directly, ignore the GA Police threats, and present it as a matter of fact. By the way, the GA Police whining is always the immediate comeback by those who are the ones doing the wrong thing. It's a flawed argument and one that is mounted when people have no defense for doing the wrong thing(s). They don't need time to make this decision, other than maybe waiting until the next meeting, so they can discuss it without the Trustees being present, but someone has to be in contact with the room Secretary the next day, to hear what has happened.

Keep in mind that the Trustees have very specific obligations to the Fellowship at large. The Trustee Guidelines that are involved with this are:

3. - Uphold the Guidance Code, and all decisions made by the Board of Trustees (not fulfilling this affects G.A. as a whole).
5. - Be available to all members and groups in your Trustee area for advice and guidance. Work with the trusted servants to correct the issues that do not

conform with the Guidance Code and all decisions of the Board of Trustees (not fulfilling this affects G.A. as a whole).

7. - Offer assistance to any group that has a problem.

It's interesting that the prior topic speaks to dropping the Guidance Code and just abiding by the Unity Steps, with specific reference to changing Unity Step 4 from Self- Governing to Autonomous. Strange how the second half of that step is seldom mentioned in conjunction with that argument. I believe it bears mentioning..."except in matters affection Gamblers Anonymous as a whole. What these people are doing with the non-GA approved material absolutely DOES affect GA as a whole.

Anarchy prevails when we don't have structure. People who advocate doing what they think is right that violates what is in the Guidance Code, erodes the very foundation of what we strive to achieve in GA. Have these people turn to page 54 of the Red Book and read the text about Unity Step 1. Although I suck at handicapping, I would say that the involved parties would deny what is written, regarding individual ambitions and super egos.

David M. - Area 12, New Jersey

---

3/7/16 - 11:16 AM

I share David's frustration with groups that don't follow the Guidance Code but perhaps we are going about this the wrong way. David mentions two options, fall into complete compliance with the Guidance Code or be removed as a recognized room. The problem with either of the options is that it presupposes that the perpetrators even understand that such a thing as a Guidance Code even exists. I've been regularly attending meetings going on 29 years and of all the GA-related literature that is on the table in front of the Secretary, I have never seen a copy of the Guidance Code. In fact, I have never even seen a copy of the Guidance Code in the Secretary's notebook that can be referenced when questions come up. I know that when I have attended meetings as a Trustee and a question comes up about protocol and I start my answer with "...according to the Guidance Code", I sometimes get a blank stare followed by "...oh, so there IS a formal Guidance Code...interesting!" (I've never had someone say "show me where it says that" but I'm sure that is not far behind either). Perhaps before we attempt to enforce the Guidance Code at the local level, we need to educate the members that such a code, in fact, exists, that it was developed in a democratic fashion by the Trustees, and that what we are telling them is not simply our opinion on what constitutes a best practice.

Jack R. - Area 1A, Orange County, California

---

3/12/16 - 1:38 PM

Thank you Tom for bringing up this very important issue. I agree with David and Jack. The person who brought this up was advised that there are GA approved PRGM forms. They were also informed that if they wanted to add/change the forms they should bring it to the attention of the BOT and Literature committee.

Regards,

Joe B. - Area 15, New York

---