

From: Gayla
Sent: Friday, January 16, 2009 6:31 AM
To: 'Kathleen H.'
Cc: 'GSA WS Board'
Subject: Response to Phone Meeting Intergroup Questions

Dear Kathleen:

I am writing with the official response from the GreySheeters Anonymous World Services Board of Trustees to the questions posed by the Phone Meeting Intergroup. First, please know that the Board of Trustees has fully endorsed Grainne's responses to your initial questions. The Board's answers to the additional questions follow.

Q: On what date was the Patent/Trademark issued? The trademark was issued to GreySheeters Anonymous World Services, Inc. on Tuesday, July 8, 2008 and remains in force for ten years.

Q: Is the patent application reflective of the statements posted on the website under our articles of incorporation? Yes. The trademark application reflects the terminology in the articles of incorporation. The name of our fellowship is GreySheeters Anonymous World Services, Inc.. There is no mention of "Cambridge" in the trademark, the service mark or on any of the registration documentation. The official name of our fellowship does not include the word "Cambridge" although the term "Cambridge" appears in item #3 in the articles of incorporation in reference to the food plan, not the name of the fellowship.

Q: Please help our community understand the Board's decision to remove the word Cambridge from every document on the website. The trademark registration makes no mention of the term "Cambridge." A bit of background will help you understand why. The term "Cambridge GreySheet" came into use in some areas of the U.S. after an individual made an arbitrary decision to refer to the GreySheet food plan by that name. No one is sure when this started or who made the decision. Eventually, the practice of calling our food plan the "Cambridge GreySheet" found its way into meeting formats and the use of this terminology spread as GSers started meetings in other parts of the country. In certain regions and on the phone bridge, the fellowship eventually became known by the informal name of the food plan: "Cambridge GreySheet." In other parts of the country—Connecticut and New York, for example—both the fellowship and the food plan have always been known as the GreySheet. The CGS vs. GS issue came before the GSAWS Board in early 2008 when it was in the process of trademarking the fellowship name and service mark. The central issue was this: should the word "Cambridge" be part of the fellowship's official name? After much discussion, the Board decided against it. The use of the term "Cambridge GreySheet" has always been unofficial. After much discussion, the Board decided to register the trademark as GreySheeters Anonymous, not Cambridge GreySheeters Anonymous. In the interest of consistency, the Board voted to change the name of the fellowship to GreySheeters Anonymous in all our communication vehicles, including the website. A few references to the Cambridge GreySheet food plan still remain on the website and GSA webservant is working to remove those references.

Q: Please disclose to the community the changes to the GreySheet Food Plan that will be proposed for acceptance at the 2010 World Service Conference. The Board has not discussed making any changes to the food plan. As the Board prepares for the 2010 World Service Conference, we will be soliciting input from Intergroup reps about issues that need to be addressed at the conference. The food plan may be one of those issues but as yet, no one has suggested that we look at making any changes. In the next few months the Board will be holding pre-conference focus groups for Intergroup reps. These phone bridge meetings will give you the opportunity to help develop the agenda for the conference and determine the future of our fellowship. Look for more information about those focus groups in the next month.

Q: We are now requesting full financial disclosure of funds received and funds expended from 1998 to the present. If the Board is unable to produce that accounting, we would like to request an audit by an independent accounting firm (to be paid for out of the \$30,000 currently held by our fellowship). We are taking your request seriously. The board is considering mechanisms to increase transparency as we work to organize a World Service Conference where GSRs will make decisions about all matters governing our fellowship. When you consider how young our fellowship is and how a handful of people have shouldered the majority of the service work so far, GreySheeters Anonymous has done in just a few years what it took Bill and Dr. Bob a few decades to accomplish for AA. The Board is committed to financial disclosure and has demonstrated that commitment by posting financial reports on the GSA website. The July/August 2008 report is currently posted. The person who has held the Treasurer's position is rotating out of the service job and we are looking for a new person to fill that role. An interim treasurer is currently serving. As to your request for an audit, the Board believes that it is in the best interest of our organization to devote our rather limited resources to the planning and execution of our first conference so GSRs can come together as a group to decide what the financial transparency standards will be for our organization. I think that it is important to keep in mind that our fellowship has existed informally for a long time but as a formal entity, it is in its infancy. I look at it like this: GS is like a division of a large company that has chosen to spin off and begin operating as a separate entity. We're like a start-up company, with start-up expenses and start-up growing pains. During the pre-conference focus groups, Intergroup leaders will have the opportunity to be very involved in the design of the agenda for a World Service Conference that will give GSRs a say in the design of an organization that meets all our needs—and helps us carry the message to those who still suffer.

Q: Can the GSAWS Board share with us the information you obtained by speaking with our lawyer about the nature of changes to our GreySheet necessary to no longer be in violation of OA's request that we no longer use the Plan A Food Plan? OA World Service claims the copyright on the GreySheet food plan and does not want the GreySheet food plan distributed. This is a public decision of OA World Service Board. GSAWS Board was founded to be of service to people who use the GreySheet. GSAWS has no position on other organizations' claims on the GreySheet. Therefore, OA World Service should be contacted regarding their claims of copyright and decisions regarding the GreySheet food plan. The GSAWS Board has hired legal advisors regarding the OA claims of copyright of the GreySheet food plan. We do not currently plan to legally challenge OA's copyright claim. We have not consulted lawyers as regards to making changes to the GreySheet food plan. OA members who used the GreySheet have found it necessary to separate from OA and found another fellowship because the OA Board made the decision to suppress the GreySheet food plan. GSAWS Board does not claim the authority or mandate to make changes in the GreySheet food plan.

Kathleen, I appreciate your thoughtful questions. They are evidence that you and others in the Phone Meeting Intergroup care deeply about the future of GreySheeters Anonymous. I hope that you will participate in the upcoming pre-conference focus groups.

Yours in service...

NMW

Gayla
Secretary
GSA Board of Trustees