

## Holistic Management

BY JOHN LAING

Whilst on a recent trip to Kenya and the Enonkishu Conservancy, on the northern boundary of the Mara-Serengeti Ecosystem, I came across a newly developed strategy, that includes culture and conservation. Right on the edge of human settlement and arable farmland, the conservancy is used as a demonstration site for sustainable rangeland management. There was much talk about how the conservancy has managed to change perception amongst the Maasai cattle people. An incredible place to go and see for a whole host of reasons.

Over the last five years, cattle have been utilized as a tool to rehabilitate degraded grassland and progress has been monitored. The resilient ecosystem of Enonkishu has responded well to the implementation of mobile bomas, additional artificial water points, efforts to control erosion and a stringent grazing plan designed to maximize available forage for wildlife and livestock.

Enonkishu is a locally led initiative employing a triple bottom line approach; People (Social-community), Profit (Economics-Business) and Planet (Land, Water, Wildlife) with Holistic Management (HM) as the basis of the initiative. All components are interlinked and have an adaptive management style of thinking that uses a "learning by doing" culture within the conservancy.

**"Success starts with a vision, a restless night can result in an overhaul of how we currently do things"**

- Tarquin Wood

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Once over grazed, the future of the Enonkishu area looked bleak, the erosion scars resulting from way too many cattle evident on the open plains. Yet today there is abundant wildlife, the grass is good and the cattle - what cattle? There is one herd of 500 and over grazing is a thing of the past.

With an abundance of predators, human-wildlife conflict has become a challenge that is being addressed by implementing mitigation strategies. The livestock have been upgraded by introducing Boran bulls into the herd with a vision of diversifying the conservancy's revenue ensuring a sustainable model in which Maasai members realize the benefits of conservation in a tangible way.

Okay so everything has to start with finance, or does it? No... everything has to start with a vision, the vision came from Tarquin Wood, a local farmer born in the area. He realised something had to be done, a change was necessary. Now what I found fascinated me, Tarquin is using the Allan Savory Holistic Management model, that of course is a Zimbabwean name!

Allan Savory initially developed Holistic Management to halt the spread of desertification and the human impoverishment that always resulted.

Livestock had long been blamed for creating deserts, but Savory realized it was how those livestock were managed that was the problem, and it was the management that had to change. Savory developed a method for planning livestock grazing that enabled pastoralists to simulate the effects wild herds once produced on the land, and the results were dramatic. But more than grazing, planning had to change in order to transform whole landscapes and keep them healthy. Holistic Management arose from that insight.

Savory developed a new framework for management that enables people to make decisions that satisfy immediate needs without jeopardizing their future well-being, or that of others. Although rooted in a quest to stop the spread of deserts, Holistic Management and its underlying framework, can also be used to better manage any situation that involves a web of social, economic, and environmental complexity.

Take a look at <https://www.enonkishu.org/> & <https://savory.global/what-is-holistic-management/>



## "To burn or not to burn"...or maybe how much to burn?

BY JOHN LAING

Whilst thinking what I should write about in this months newsletter I was trawling through the internet to try and get some inspiration, I came upon this Tripadvisor write-up by a guest visiting the Mara. When I read it, it gave me reason to think and consider the points and angles raised, the original write up says:

"As a regular safari goer, staying in safari lodges, mid-lux camps to the very top end luxury camps in private conservancies, it breaks me when every evening a heap of wood is burnt up in camp fires. Any time I have asked where the wood comes from, I am "dismissed" with it is dead wood collected from around the area. But when I look the source of the dead wood in dry deserts of Samburu, Amboseli, Laikipia, Tsavo and the over built Mara - I don't buy the theory. Note, I (or rather we - family) self drive ourselves on safari, so we know every corner of the parks & conservancies and we never come across the dead wood. At the rate at which camp fires are made are lodges/camps destroying the very habitat that wildlife need for survival? Think of the leopard - without trees where it can place its kill - lack of trees is a definite death. For those safari veterans, along Ewaso Nyiro in Samburu or the heavily built stretch along Tarek River in Mara, is there a possibility that the "death rate" of trees is balanced by a "growth rate" that can justify the camp fires made in each camp at night?"

So like you, I thought how can one fire make a difference, but then I applied what I call the "compound effect" it got me thinking, let us for argument sake suggest that every camp or guest lodge in Zimbabwe burns one wheel barrow of wood a night, I have looked at the Z.T.A. web sight and cannot locate how many lodges that may be, so I am going to assume 100 lodges, that would equate to 100 wheel barrows every night, or 365, 000 wheel barrows per year. Whilst guest occupancies tend to be between 40% & 45% these percentages should not apply to our calculation because a fire is lit irrespective of weather there is one guest or ten.

So how much wood are we actually burning? Different camps have different requirements, some camps burn their camp fires only at night other use the camps fire to make and keep warm breakfast, some camps need to burn wood to boil water though out the day. Averaging out what is used I think a figure of 20kg's could be applied.. that would mean 730, 000kg/730 tones of wood per year is burned specifically at Camp fires never mind hot water boilers and staff cooking.

Okay so we have figured out how much we burn, how much do we replace? Well the argument will be "we only take dead trees", so is there actually a need to replace dead trees? In a wholly natural environment a dead tree would ultimately rot and aid in the fertilization of the soil, of course grasses and other plant material also aid in and with this process, but we are burning a significant amount of plant matter. What we can safely say is that by taking out dead wood soil fertilization is not being done to the same degree and if Zimbabwe is taking away 730 tonnes of wood every year there has to be an effect.

**"Burning 24 30-tonne trucks of wood a year does seem a bit excessive"**





Another important question is "Are natural trees growing, and "dying" at the same rate that we are burning them?", probably a question best asked of and answered by camp staff, how far do they have to go away from camp to collect firewood. When the camp was first built probably a walk around camp sufficed, these days camps have to use tractors and trailers to fetch wood from a considerable distance away.

So there seems to be loads of unanswered questions and I am not a scientist or an ecologist studying the effects of burning fire wood. What I can do is provide a couple ideas that could possibly counter any argument that a future guest may pose:

1) I believe every camp should be looking at either funding a tree planting project or should have their own project, where by at least 20 trees are planted every year, looked after and maintained. Did you know the Z.P.G.A. has embarked on a tree planting initiative aimed at first years school students (grade 1 & Form 1), why don't you get involved in supporting these?

2) Ensure your own camp fire is of "reasonable" size. Fires are usually used for one of three things, ambiance, warmth and cooking

- Ambiance - there is no need for a large fire, the flickering of flames and smell of wood smoke is just as good with a small to moderate fire
- Warmth - consider what your fire is made in, a metal drum works best as it is off the ground and heat radiates better than the traditional on the ground, surrounded by stones, fire
- Cooking - good quality dry wood provide hotter, better coals, less smoke and means a smaller amount of wood is required. Talk to your chefs, all too often a chef arrives at the braai at 16:00, lights an almighty fire and then return at 19:00 to cook for the guests. Your chef is probably busy in the kitchen preparing the evening meal and does not have time to tend to the fire, so a large one is made and three hours later it is still too hot to cook on.

3) Do not burn fires all the way through the day with a single pot of water boiling on the fire, this is just an unnecessary waist of natural resources, a thermos flask normally suffices.

As I said I am not an ecologist but I hope I have "ignited a spark" that will in future raise the question..."do I need to burn that much?".

**"Cooking and eating food outdoors makes it taste infinitely better than the same meal prepared and consumed indoors."**

**- Fennel Hudson -**





## The Gonarezhou National Park

BY ANTHONY KASCHULA

Located in the southeast corner of Zimbabwe, bordering the Mozambican frontier for over one hundred kilometers, is a vast swathe of rugged, spectacularly wild country, cut by wide, sweeping sand rivers, impenetrable ironwood forests, seasonally inundated pans and seemingly endless tracts of Mopane woodland.

Known by the local MaChangana tribe as Gonarezhou, “The Place of Elephants”, it is an area steeped in history and legends here talk of elephant taller than the trees, notorious ivory poachers, colourful characters and ancient civilisations.

It is home to some of the most spectacular Baobab trees found in Southern Africa and has a globally significant population of elephant, which currently number around eleven thousand animals. Following decades of persecution, many of them are not the friendliest of creatures and for good reason, they still maintain a reputation for being very aggressive. Their overall behaviour is slowly changing (for reasons outlined below they are becoming more accustomed to people and less aggressive), however one still needs to regard them with utmost respect! The park’s bird list tallies at around 450 species, whilst 147 species of mammal, 116 species of reptiles and 49 species of fish have been recorded.

Several fish species of marine origin have, over the years, been identified in the lower Save-Runde system within the park; i.e Sawtooth Sawfish, Indo-Pacific Tarpon aka Ox-eye Herring, Three-spot Pompano, Bull Shark and several species of Gobies (which are very common). The lower Save-Runde system is also home to the near-endemic Black Bream (*Oreochromis placidus* – which in Zimbabwe is confined to the lower Save-Runde river systems) and Tigerfish and two species of Killifish are found in some of the park’s seasonal pans.

Gonarezhou was first established as a Game Reserve in 1934 and finally proclaimed as a National Park in 1975. In 2002, it became part of one of the largest conservation areas in the region; the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park, which incorporates Zimbabwe’s Gonarezhou National Park, South Africa’s Kruger National Park and Mozambique’s Limpopo National Park, and covers some 35 000 square kilometers. This concept allows visitors who enter one park to be able to travel cross-border to the other two parks with minimum fuss concerning immigration and customs formalities.





Apart from the park's incredible scenic beauty, diversity of habitats and rich biodiversity, Gonarezhou was Zimbabwe's first example of a large-scale Public-Private Conservation Partnership (PPCP) between ZimParks and a third-party conservation organisation, in this case the Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS).

The success of this project has paved the way for additional PPCPs in Zimbabwe, i.e. Hemmersbach Rhino Force (Rifa Safari Area), Great Plains Conservation (Sapi Safari Area) Zambezi Society (Charara Safari Area and surrounds), International Anti-Poaching Foundation (Makuti and surrounds), Bhejane Trust/National Park Rescue (Chizarira National Park and surrounds) and African Parks recent custodianship of Matusadona National Park, all of which have resulted in significant donor investment in rehabilitating many of these areas which were on the brink of collapse.

With regard to Gonarezhou; the launch of the Gonarezhou Conservation Project in 2007, a joint venture between ZimParks & FZS, set about reversing decades of neglect of park infrastructure and abuse of its wildlife resources into one of hope and possibility. With immediate effect the scourge of 'ration hunting' was put to a stop and an alternative source of protein was provided to park staff, together with significant investment being made into creating a professional, safe and pleasant working environment; i.e. upgrading and renovating of staff housing & ablutions, offices & workshops and the provision of reliable water, electricity, fuel, internet, vehicles and other necessary equipment for effective park management.

Over the period from 2007 – 2017 approximately USD10m was invested in infrastructure and personnel, both within the park and in adjacent communities. Ten years down the line the strengthened relationship between FZS and ZimParks, based largely on mutual trust and co-operation allowed the partnership to evolve into something never before seen in the country's history. In early 2017, following several years of careful consideration between FZS & ZimParks, they implemented an organisation that would be tasked with the challenge of managing Gonarezhou National Park (and the adjacent Malipati Safari Area) for the next 20 years, The Gonarezhou Conservation Trust (GCT).

The progress GCT has made since 2017 has been astounding and Gonarezhou is now arguably one of the most, if not the most, effectively managed protected areas in the country.

Significant investment in infrastructure and personnel since 2007 has not only resulted in the populations of all wildlife species steadily increasing year after year, but surrounding communities have also started to realise significant benefits and plans are at an advanced stage for the re-introduction of black rhino into the park.

**WHERE TO STAY** - Investment in park infrastructure has also carried through to tourism facilities, which are largely aimed towards the local and regional self-drive market and there is a wide range of options available to visitors. The accommodation options range from well-maintained developed & wilderness campsites to self-catering lodges and tented camps. Accommodation options adjacent to the park include Chilo Gorge Safari Lodge located within the Jamanda Community Conservancy and Singita Pamushana Lodge located on the Malilangwe Wildlife Reserve.

For more information on the facilities available to park visitors, do yourself a favour and visit the Friends of Gonarezhou Facebook page where Gus Le Breton's Into The Wild Zimbabwe series of videos showcases all of the park's accommodation options. Further to this, all booking inquiries for Gonarezhou are done through their reservations team based at Chipinda Pools who can be contacted on:

email: [reservations@gonarezhou.org](mailto:reservations@gonarezhou.org)

WhatsApp/telephone: + 263 779 788 811 (their telephone signal isn't great so the most reliable form of communication is via email or WhatsApp)



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Email: [norbert@threechoirs.co.zw](mailto:norbert@threechoirs.co.zw)





## Z.P.G.A. Diary

### APRIL 2021

- Fri 12th - B.V.C. ACE First Aid Training
- Fri 30th - Victoria Falls Enduro

### MAY 2021

- Sat 1st - Sun 2nd - Victoria Falls Enduro
- Mon 3th - Wed 5th - Lower Zambezi Canoe Proficiency
- Wed 5th - Sun 9th - Safari Rally
- Sat 8th - eBird Global Count
- Sun 30th - Shooting Proficiency (#2 Harare)

### JULY

- BLZ Winter Waterfowl Count (Duration of July)

### SEPTEMBER 2021

- Fri 10th - Last date for Learners Registration
- Sun 19th - Shooting Proficiency (#3 Harare)
- Mon 20th - Bulawayo Oral Interviews
- Tues 21st - Bulawayo Learners Exams
- Wed 22nd - Bulawayo Learners Exams
- Thurs 23rd - Marking of Papers

### NOVEMBER 2021

- Mon 1st - Sun 7th - Proficiency Exam
- Thurs 11th - Fun for Rhino (Multiple sport event)
- Mon 15th - Fri 19th - Pan African Ornithological Congress Victoria Falls
- Sat 27th - BLZ Big Birding Day

### DECEMBER 2021

- Sat 11th - AGM & Safari Dinner (Bulawayo) **Provisional**

Members will receive discounted rates on production of a valid Z.P.G.A. member's card

Participating companies include:

- Autoworld 4x4
- Barons Motor Spares
- Courteney Boot Company
- Four Wheels Auto
- Pro 4x4
- SAF Bar
- The Orange Elephant
- Tiger Wheel & Tyre
- Toyota Zimbabwe Pvt Ltd
- Trophy Consultants International (TCI)
- Widency Upholstery

If you would like to see your company name listed here please contact [secretary@zpga.org](mailto:secretary@zpga.org)

**Ethics Are Everything!**





## The Leopard

BY DHARMESH DAYA

The concept of infinity is one that has mesmerized mathematicians for centuries and even today the actual idea of infinity is a mind blowing thought, when one really takes the time to truly understand the power of the word.

So it does come as some surprise, when this word is used to describe the patterns of this magnificent cat. The next time, you have the opportunity to see a leopard take a moment to appreciate the fact that the patterns on this marvelous beast are genuinely unique and that the likelihood of ever seeing that exact pattern on a leopard is near impossible. The rosettes that create the patterns of a leopard, have an infinite number of combinations, that make that particular cat a unique individual!!!

What a wonderful word, used to describe a species of wild cat that has long captured the imagination of humans. I often wonder what it is about leopard that seem to captivate our species. At first the obvious comes to mind, their beauty, but as I mull on the question, more and more facts come in to play in the equation - like their ability to live, mostly undetected on the outskirts of our cities towns and villages. There are some recent photographs on social media that come to mind of a leopard on the fringes of Mumbai, India, a city that has millions living in it. Could it be the way they hunt and their mastery of being able to stalk so close to their prey. Or maybe it's the sheer strength that they have allowing them to hoist their food up a tree and feed in relative relaxation.

In Africa leopard can be found from sea level to over 2000 m and thrive in areas with an average annual rainfall as little as 100 mm to 1200mm. Leopard are considered as a species that is independent of water, getting most of their required moisture from the animals they eat. However, in areas where water is available, they will drink on a regular basis. They are solitary cats, with the exception of the females with juveniles, or when mating. Primarily they are a nocturnal species with as much as 90% of their hunting activities done at night. Leopard virtually always hunt alone. There is very little record of them hunting cooperatively. As with all predators, when opportunity presents itself, they will take full advantage of it, and once food has been stashed in the safety of a tree, they will happily feed during the day. When moving through the bush, leopard never seem to be in any particular rush, walking confidently with very little worry in their stride, if disturbed this casual walk effortlessly changes to a gallop, and should their discomfort with the situation persist, they break into a fast trot heading into some cover, where almost in full site they disappear into the environment.

On safari it is not uncommon to lose visual of a leopard in this way, if the observer is not using binoculars. Even with the aid of these optics, a lapse in concentration can make it difficult to relocate the cat. Using their ability to camouflage so well, leopard will stalk to within 4 metres of their prey, before bursting at them with speed and agility to capture their food. Typically they hunt small to medium sized animals, with impala probably being the dominant species in our part of the world. From a safari perspective, leopard are an important species both for consumptive and non-consumptive tourism, for both sectors the challenges involved in finding them on safari are exciting and keep us, as guides, on our toes.

Photographically, they are the most photogenic of all the cats, even when they are sleeping, their pictures come out looking spectacular.



## Carrying Firearms whilst in a vehicle

by John Laing

Always provide a safety briefing and introduce to your guests the fact you are carrying a firearm and explain why:

- It is important for your guests to understand you are carrying as a precaution, do not make out the safari is a potentially terrifying experience
- Many countries around the world do not allow firearms, so guests may be nervous just seeing them
- Many countries have large scale killings, be understanding of these scenarios

Firearms should be loaded in a safe place away from the vehicle before commencement of a walk

- Never point the firearm at anyone when loading
- Good practice suggest putting your back towards your guests and unloading your firearm, barrel in front and pointing away from you

A firearm should always be stowed on a gun rack or in its gun bag, it should NEVER be left to bounce around a vehicle

- Most game drive vehicles have some arrangement for racking a rifle. It must be remembered that in this situation, the firearm is readily accessible to children and other curious people.
- Do not leave your rifle in an unsafe condition, and never leave it unattended, even for a short while
- Your rifle must not bounce around the vehicle, as it will get damaged or broken
- Rifles should NEVER be stowed butt first in the front foot wells, barrel pointing at the guests whilst driving
- Also remember that a vehicle is neither a safe, nor legal place to store a firearm. Should the firearm, or for that matter the vehicle itself, be stolen, serious charges will be brought against the owner by the police.

Firearms should be unloaded in a safe place away from the vehicle when returning from a walk, that is to say, ensure there is no round in the chamber

- Never point the firearm at anyone when unloading
- Good practice suggest putting your back towards your guests and unloading your firearm, barrel in front and pointing away from you

NEVER take anyone with a firearm in a vehicle without first checking to see that their firearm is clear - for example National Parks game scouts or fellow guides & hunters.

When training with other guides or hunters it is good practice to ensure the last person in the vehicle checks to see that all firearms are clear.

**"My definition of a man's man is a man who knows gun safety, and we all did".**


**- Kurt Vonnegut -**





# Membership Status

It's a collaborative effort

Z.P.G.A. Members Breakdown by Qualification		
Number of Members	Qualification	
28	ASSOCIATE	
19	CUBS	
47	FULL PG	
135	FULL PH	
5	LIFE MEMBER	
60	LPH LICENSE	
4	RESTRICTION	
3	SERVICE PROVIDER	
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The Z.P.G.A. is about to launch its new web page, which is part of our Membership Marketing Strategy. We aim to list all of our members and also their specialties. All members will soon be sent an email outlining this initiative.

Our members will also have an additional option of being showcased for a nominal administration fee per membership year.

In order to achieve both, we have come up with some fun easy to follow logos that we will use for each guiding activity.

"CAN YOU REALLY AFFORD NOT TO BE A MEMBER?"



# Inyankuni Barbel Competition

BY MIKE BLIGNAUT

The weekend of 20-21 March saw four of our members taking part in the annual Toyota sponsored barbel competition at Inyankuni dam near Esigodini.

The dam is nearly at 70% capacity. There were 32 registered, 2-person teams. Weather conditions were great and after a short captains meeting to discuss rules etc. on the Saturday morning the teams took off, heading for their favourite hot spots.

After the compulsory weigh in at 15:30hrs, a few very nice fish were bought to the scales. This competition takes place over 24 hours, with competitors being allowed to fish at night on their boats. After the final weigh in on the Sunday it was obvious that the winners would be, for the second time in a row, Clive Hallamore and his wife Tracey, with a huge bag of barbel (77kgs). Clive also caught the biggest barbel of 11,4kgs. He won the men's individual aggregate too. Mike Blignaut came in third. It was a great weekend, thoroughly enjoyed by all. Quite a few barbel were released. We would like to offer up a huge amount of thanks to Toyota for their sponsorship and making this event possible.



Mike and wife  
Bronwyn

Clive & Tracey

The 4 Z.P.G.A members

Clive with biggest  
barbel



Mike Blignaut





# *Hearty Beef and Port Wine Stew, with Butterbeans*

*Compiled by Rosy Shearing*

## *ingredients*

- 1.5 kg marbled beef (blade, brisket etc.), cubed .You can also use oxtail or game meat (marinated in lacto and worstershire sauce for half a day)
- 2 onions, chopped
- 1 cup chopped leeks
- 1 teaspoon chopped garlic
- 1 cup dry red wine
- 1 cup port
- 1 tin chopped tomatoes
- 1 tablespoon Worstershire sauce
- 2 tablespoons soya sauce
- 3 cups beef or oxtail stock (or a combination of both)
- 1 tablespoon pure honey
- Fresh rosemary and thyme
- 1/4 cup oil
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons barbeque sauce
- 1 tin butterbeans

## *instructions*

- Heat the oven to 180 degrees
- Season the meat with salt, pepper and barbeque sauce
- Brown the meat and then set aside
- Fry the leeks, onions, garlics and fresh herbs together
- Reduce the heat and then add the meat, honey, tinned tomatoes, soya sauce and Worstershire sauce,. Stir gently until the honey has melted.
- Pour in the stock, red wine and port - ensuring that it covers the meat.
- Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat. Cover and allow to simmer for 2 to 3 hours - until the meat is tender.
- Add more stock if necessary.
- When almost cooked, thicken with flour/bisto or brown onion soup and a small amount of water, until suitably thickened.
- Add the butterbeans to the stew and serve with basmati rice



# Members Photo Gallery

A PICTURE CAN TELL A THOUSAND STORIES

A focus on African Elephants







## Contact Us

### SHOULD YOU REQUIRE ANY INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE

The Z.P.G.A. committee is here to assist you. To enable us to answer your questions in a timely manner, please would you firstly contact Jenny VAN DEN BERGH on [secretary@zpga.org](mailto:secretary@zpga.org) and request to be put in touch with one of the following sub-committees and the relevant committee member will gladly assist you.

Below you will find the various sub-committees, a short description of what their role and function is and a contact email address should you want to get in touch.

- Z.P.G.A. – Chairman Rob LURIE - [chairman@zpga.org](mailto:chairman@zpga.org)
- Z.P.G.A. – Vice Chairman John LAING
- Z.P.G.A. – Legal & Ethics - Pete FICK - [legal@zpga.org](mailto:legal@zpga.org)
  - Guiding Code of Conduct
- Z.P.G.A. – Finance - Rob LURIE - [finance@zpga.org](mailto:finance@zpga.org)
  - All payment issues
- Z.P.G.A. – Marketing & Advertising - John LAING - [marketing@zpga.org](mailto:marketing@zpga.org)
  - All branding Membership Cards
  - Membership Discounted Rates Initiative
  - Fundraising
- Z.P.G.A. – Education Training - David CARSON - [education@zpga.com](mailto:education@zpga.com)
  - Study Packs
  - RIFA & SAVE Valley Conservancy initiatives
  - Devil's Gorge Conservancy training program
- Z.P.G.A. – Research - Wayne Van Den BERGH - [research@zpga.org](mailto:research@zpga.org)
  - Ensure compliance with trophy off take in terms of ethics as well as sustainability
  - Cat ageing & Research
  - Attendance to & at quota setting workshops
  - Assistance with any NDF requirements that may come up from time to time
- Z.P.G.A. – Awards - Duncan WATSON - [awards@zpga.org](mailto:awards@zpga.org)
  - To discuss and agree what awards shall be current or pertinent to the industry
  - To look at and agree end of year award nominees
- Z.P.G.A. – A.G.M. & Dinner - Tan BLAKE (2021)

" We would also like to advise our members that we understand mistakes do happen from time to time. If you find yourself in an impossible situation please do call your Executive Committee and ask for advice.

Several stories have recently emerged regarding members where "had they raised the issue" a completely different result may have been the order of the day."



## Z.P.G.A. Sponsors and Supporters Page

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