

An Update on GOAL, The Foundation, and TOM

by Jim Finnerty (As originally posted on Northeastshooters.com)

Now that I've been a GOAL 'insider' (general member of the GOAL Board of Directors) for a few months, I've learned a lot more about the complex relationship that existed between GOAL, the confusingly-named GOAL Foundation, and The Outdoor Message. I've also found that there is still a lot of confusion among GOAL's members and affiliated clubs about the past and current relationships between these three entities.

I'm starting this thread to answer some of the more frequently asked questions, and to provide you all with an update on where GOAL is headed, and why it had to separate from the Foundation/TOM. Please keep in mind that while I am on the GOAL Board of Directors, this is not a statement issued by the BoD, but rather my own observations.

First, some background on the three players in this little drama:

GOAL was founded in 1974 as a non-profit organization supported by its members. GOAL protects the right to keep and bear arms for lawful purposes in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We are recognized as the state's premier gun rights association. Visit the website (GOAL.org) to find out more about all we do. While you're there, be sure to **look at the training schedule** and note that there are 40 classes scheduled between now and the end of the year.

The GOAL Foundation is non profit tax-exempt corporation established in 1990 to help promote the shooting sports through education, especially among young people. Since The Foundation is a tax exempt organization (501c3), donations to the Foundation are tax-deductable. Through the generosity of shooters in Massachusetts (and a low interest loan from the NRA), The Foundation was able to purchase the building at 37 Pierce St, a portion of which was rented to GOAL until recently. The GOAL Foundation does not have members the way GOAL has members. Since the spilt with GOAL, the Foundation has been billing itself as "the leader in Firearms Safety Education in Massachusetts". Here's their website: <http://thegoalfoundation.org/> (Be sure to check out **their course**

[schedule](#)). The GOAL Foundation has recently changed its name to The Massachusetts Shooters Foundation. The former Director of GOAL - Michael D Yacino – is an officer (both Treasurer and Clerk) of The Foundation.

The GOAL Foundation sponsored the classes held and promoted by GOAL. All of the revenue from the classes went to The Foundation. Revenue from the classes averaged \$42K per year over the last two years (according to income reported by The Foundation). The busiest instructor for these classes was GOAL's Training Director, whose salary was paid by GOAL.

Let me go over that one more time... The Foundation kept the money from the classes, but GOAL paid the most prolific instructor.

When outside instructors were used, they primarily dealt with GOAL's training director and not somebody from the foundation. If there's any doubt about this, look at the training schedules linked above to see where the instructors' loyalties lie.

In addition, other staffers paid by GOAL took care of much of the billing, answered the questions from members, and handled enrollment and other administrative tasks associated with the classes. The Foundation hired a part time employee in May of 2011 to assist, but even after that, the full time GOAL staff was heavily involved. Again, the Foundation kept the money while GOAL paid most of the staff.

GOAL also spent over \$4K per year to provide photocopies of course materials for The Foundation.

Since The Foundation owns the building at 37 Pierce St, GOAL also paid rent to The Foundation.

[The Outdoor Message](#) is a for-profit cooperative that publishes a monthly newspaper for sportsmen. It is not "GOAL's Newspaper" and never was. It was originally formed by a group of several sporting-related associations, of which only GOAL, and The Goal Foundation remain. Recently, the RI State Rifle and Revolver Association was added to (and given voting rights in) the co-operative. Until then, GOAL and The Goal Foundation each controlled 50% of the shares of The Outdoor

Message. The former director of GOAL – Michael D Yacino – is also the Treasurer of The Outdoor Message Cooperative Inc. His daughter Michelle Siudit is the Secretary of the corporation. Ms. Siudit is also the editor of the newspaper.

In the last year, GOAL paid The Outdoor Message \$85K. After payroll, it was GOAL’s single biggest expense. For this, GOAL got about 4 pages per month in the paper, and every GOAL member was entitled to a copy. All advertising revenue went to The Outdoor Message Cooperative Inc. GOAL did not have any editorial control over the content of the paper. The paper was print-only, and there was no provision for members to receive the paper electronically, which would have been much less expensive.

The original intent was that The Goal Foundation (through tax-deductable donations) and The Outdoor Message would assist and support GOAL in its fight for our 2A rights. After a while, it became very clear that GOAL was ‘supporting’ them, at least financially. While, on paper, The Outdoor Message, Inc. and The GOAL Foundation are separate entities; it’s not hard to imagine how a single individual could heavily influence both organizations.

Why The Split?

About a year ago, concerned GOAL member Bob Pepi (Bob P on NES) attended a GOAL Board of Directors meeting with questions about the finances of the three entities. Specifically, how much was GOAL spending to support the other two entities, what benefits was it realizing, and could costs be reduced and the money spent elsewhere to better effect. A lively debate ensued for the next several months, with the BoD often going into ‘executive session’ (behind closed doors). Over time, the GOAL BoD split into two factions: One that wanted to keep the status quo, and another that wished to reduce costs and provide more electronic communication options for the members.

During this time, the editorials in The Outdoor Message became increasingly hostile towards GOAL. When GOAL asked for editorial control over their investment, they were refused; so the BoD voted to end GOAL’s relationship with The Outdoor Message. Coincidentally, shortly

after the GOAL BoD voted to end the relationship with TOM, The Foundation raised the rent charged to GOAL for the Pierce Street building from \$950 per month to over \$2600 per month – retroactive to January 2012. At this point it became clear that GOAL’s interests and those of The Foundation /Outdoor Message had diverged enough so that a clean break would benefit all parties involved.

So, how are things working out for GOAL now?

In a word: Excellent. It has been a busy few months. Here are some highlights:

In April, GOAL moved into a more modern single-level facility on West Main St in Northboro.

Almost miraculously, and without increasing staffing levels, GOAL was able to begin publishing its own member newspaper in one month’s time to rave reviews. Mike Sweeney has done a great job both with the paper’s content and layout, as well as signing up advertisers. Between advertising revenue and the members opting for the less costly electronic distribution option, GOAL expects that by the end of the year the paper will be ‘paying for itself’, saving the organization \$85K per year.

GOAL started up training classes at the new facility in May, which have since has raised over \$17K in revenue! This projects to an annual contribution of \$68K, which is surprising because The Foundation reported an average of ‘only’ \$42K over the last two years.

Here’s a before and after look at the money:

Before the Split

Paid to the newspaper = **\$85K**
Revenue from classes = \$0

After the Split

Paid to the newspaper = \$0
Revenue from classes = **\$68K**

The Bottom Line

Additional funds now available to GOAL = \$153K

Wouldn't it have been better to use the money spent on moving and rent to further our cause instead of 'giving' it to strangers?

No. Sometimes you have to spend money to make money, and the BoD decided that this investment was necessary and would result in a better organization. They were right.

The moving costs were kept low. All of the furniture and fixtures were either purchased used at auction or generously donated by members (including many of you here). The money raised by the training classes in the last three months alone have more than paid for the moving expenses. Publishing our own paper and doing our own classes will make an additional \$153K available to increase our lobbying efforts and provide even more benefits to our members.

Stay tuned everybody. This is going to be fun.

Sounds great! What can we do to help?

If you are not a GOAL member, join. If you are a GOAL member, please consider getting your monthly newspaper electronically rather than as a printed copy. To get your paper electronically, just send an email to Tara - tara@goal.org - and put "Paperless" in the subject line. Include your name and address (or member number if you know it).

Finally, based on phone calls, emails, and other inquiries, there still seems to be a lot of confusion as to the role of each of the three formerly linked organizations. Go to your next club meeting and use the talking points in this post to clarify where everybody stands, and to let our members know that GOAL is stronger now than it has ever been.