



RITE NOTES

Membership and Recruiting
Grand York Rite Bodies of Florida
15 June 2019

The Mystery Visitor

Companions and Sir Knights,

In the previous Rite Notes, we learned "What Drives People Away" from organizations. In this writing, we are going to focus on your York Rite Body to see what its problems are, and how to begin solving them.

It should be remembered that each York Rite Body is unique. Your approach must be tailored for your particular group. The basic problem that plague organizations can easily be categorized, and with knowledge, you and your York Rite Body can develop a plan to overcome them.

Information is power. The more information you have the better the decisions you make.

How do you determine what kinds of problems your York Rite Body has? It might be best to get an outside opinion.

The Mystery Visitor

In the corporate world, they realize that problems in their presentation to the world are sometimes hard to see. As a group, we are friendly -- to each other. But how does a new or potential customer see the store and its staff?

Enter the mystery shopper. Mystery shoppers arrive unannounced, posing as customers and evaluate staff friendliness and customer service. When they leave the store, the staff has no clue as to who they were. They rarely announce themselves. Instead, they submit a report of their experiences, and management is able to review it and make recommendations.

In the fraternity, all York Rite Bodies are friendly--to each other. It's how they receive a new member and a visitor really reflects the character of an organization.

Most York Rite Bodies that have had no new members in many years have become introverted. Their focus has turned inward, and they have fallen into a rut? And what is a rut? one definition of a rut I heard years ago is that a rut is a grave with the ends kicked out. trying to move laterally rather than vertically.

A mystery visitor gives their impression of your Body. Their observation can give you an opinion of your strengths and weaknesses.

How can a person fairly size up your masonic Body in a single visit? It's called first impression.

It has long been said that we never have a second chance to make a first impression. First impressions are how most people judge us. Right or wrong they offer us some kind of criteria in which to judge.

Who can be a "mystery visitor"? Choose someone who isn't known to your members. They may be a contact of yours, but should know no one else there.

Contact someone you know that is a Mason (or member of your appendant body) and ask them to come and visit. Set up what day they are coming. It would be a good idea to make it a night of regular communication. Those nights generally reveal the true nature of your Body.

That person should be able to enter your meeting without you vouching for them. Remember, no one is to know that you have invited them. This person is to experience your meeting as a stranger would they arrived that night.

Give the mystery person the basic details of your York Rite Body. What time does it meet? Does it have a dress code and preferable dress for its members? Is there a dinner before the meeting?

The mystery visitor should arrive about 20-30 minutes before the meeting. This will give him time to be examined, and to see what kind of reception they receive. Specifically, they should be looking for the following:

- * Are they greeted by the presiding East?
- * Does someone write down his name for introduction?
- * Does the sentinel greet them?
- * How are they examined? Are they treated with respect or are they treated like some kind of intruder?
- * Do other people come and greet them, or must they take the initiative?
- * If the visitor must take the initiative to meet the members, what is the member's reaction to them.

During the meeting, the mystery visitor should not ritualistic work, and undercurrents in the meeting, and if he is received and introduced in their proper form. Are they ever given a chance to speak and/or bring greetings? All these things should be noted.

After the meeting, the mystery visitor should linger around at least 20 minutes. Is there coffee afterwards, or is everyone looking to make a hasty retreat? Do people come and talk to the visitor, or is he simply ignored?

Within 30 days, the mystery visitor should submit a copy to his contact within the Masonic Body. This report should include the above information, plus some additional ones.

The additional information should include the following:

- * How easy was it to find the meeting place?
- * What condition was the regalia in?
- * What condition are the bathrooms in?
- * Did they feel safe in that neighborhood?
- * Any other comments that might be helpful.

Once you've received the report, it is not to be brandished as some kind of message from on high. It is information that can be used for positive change.

Not everyone will appreciate the comments. Change, except for a baby, is not easy. And, it is one person's opinion. Should the report come back quite negative, it might be good to have two or three more mystery visitors come to your meeting and see what the reports have in common.

Once you have had one mystery visitor, it might be wise to carefully share the information with the presiding East privately. The purpose of the exercise is not to divide the group but to improve it.

The mystery visitor is a good way to learn how an outsider sees your particular York Rite Body. Their opinions may not be 100% accurate. But they are an opinion, based on their impressions of their visit. And their information can be very valuable.

There is no substitute for an all-out campaign to strengthen and build our membership.

New Membership by District for 2019:

DISTRICT	LOCATION	#	DISTRICT	LOCATION	#
1	West Palm Beach		6	Cocoa	
	Fort Lauderdale	2		Melbourne	
	Miami	3		Fort Pierce	3
	Florida Keys				
2	Manatee/Bradenton/Trinity		7	Jacksonville	
	Sarasota/Venice/Trinity	5		Fernandina	
	Everglades			St Augustine	
	Fort Myers			Palatka	
3	Tampa (Ivanhoe)		8	Lake City	
	St. Petersburg (Sunshine)			Middleburg	
	Clearwater (Springtime)			Gainesville	
				Inverness (Ocala)	
4	Lakeland		9	Tallahassee	
	Plant City			Marianna	5
	Sebring (Highlands)	1		Panama City	
5	Daytona (Halifax)		10	Fort Walton Beach	2
	Lake Sumter			Crestview	
	Sanford			Pensacola	1
	Orlando				

REGARDING THE GRAND ENCAMPMENT CONSTITUTION:

SECTION 223: Officers - Resignation - Filling - Vacancies - Retention of Rank

If a member objects, no member of another Commandery can be admitted into the Asylum unless he visits in an official capacity. The objection may be made openly in the Commandery or privately to the Commander, and in neither case can the objector be required to disclose the reason for his objection.

These filings shall not be effective until accepted by the specified Commanderies.

DECISIONS FROM THE GRAND MASTER:

The right to object to the presence of a visiting Sir Knight does not apply to an honorary member may not be objected to. (1913. p.40, No. 4, Melish)

The statute on right of objection to a visitor only applies to Commanderies, In the case of objection to a visitor to a Grand Commandery it would have to be determined by a vote of the Grand Commandery. (1925, p. 105 & 416, No. 42, Newby)

AS YOU SEE ON THE TABLE BELOW, WE HAVE BROUGHT IN VERY FEW NEW KNIGHTS. THIS IS BECAUSE THE COMMANDERY RECORDER OR FESTIVAL COORDINATOR DOES NOT REPORT THE NUMBERS KNIGHTED. IF YOU WANT YOUR NEW MEMBERSHIP TO COUNT, IT IS INCUMBANT OF YOU TO CONTACT SK HENRY ADAMS.

A REMINDER: GRAND ENCAMPMENT RULES STATE THAT NEW SIR KNIGHTS NEED TO BE PLACED IN MMS WITHIN 15 DAYS.

New Membership by York Rite Body 2019:

DISTRICT	DATE	LOCATION	KNIGHTED
1	3/30/19		
2	3/30/19		
3			
4	3/30/19	Ft Pierce, Sebring(1)	1
5			
6	3/30/19	Ft Pierce 3, Ft Laud. 2, Miami 3, Sarasota 5	13
7			
8			
9			
10	3/23/19	Ft Walton Beach 2, Pensacola(1),Marianna(3)	6

TOTAL 2019 KNIGHTINGS	20
TOTAL 2018 KNIGHTINGS	101

If any of the above dates are incorrect OR if you have dates or numbers that should be changed, please let me know. Also, as soon as your area determines the dates for the Fall Festival, PLEASE let me know so they may be included.

Fraternally,

Henry A Adams

HENRY A. ADAMS, PGC, KYGCH, KCT
 Chairman, Grand York Rite Membership Program
 Chairman, Grand Encampment Membership Committee

Every Christian Mason Should Be A Knight Templar"

Some excerpts, from Guidelines for Membership, published by the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States, reprint from Aug 2009, intro. and Grand Commandery of Florida, Baderstadt, Jon L. The Mystery Visitor, 2005, pg 41-46, and from the Grand Commanders Handbook given to the Grand Line Officers. Membership Development, Grand Encampment, 2003-2006

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