

## — LODGE MEETINGS —

The Grand Exalted Ruler should be brought into the Lodge room and taken before the Altar escorted by a Past Grand Exalted Ruler just ahead. If more than one P.G.E.R. is in attendance, other Past Grand Exalted Rulers should follow him in order of seniority.

For small meetings when there are small mixed groups to be introduced, the Exalted Ruler may introduce them together, in the proper order. As a general rule it is better to introduce the Present and Past Grand Lodge Officers separately from the State Association and Local Lodge groups.

In many cases mass introductions are difficult. To have too many of them, naming all of the titles of each, especially when those to be introduced are well known to the audience, is boring to the Members. On such an occasion the Exalted Ruler may not have anyone escorted in for special introductions except the honored guest or guests. Later on, under Good of the Order, the Exalted Ruler can at that time recognize others who might have had a formal introduction if time would have permitted. If this is the case, the Esquire should see that the guests are seated on the platform to the right and to the left of the Exalted Ruler according to precedence.

The important point of introductions is to have them done in proper form with good etiquette. Make sure that the Esquire knows the proper titles of those persons to be introduced. Many times the Esquire has not been advised or given proper instructions before the meeting about the introductions to be made. It is the duty of the Exalted Ruler to see that the Esquire is properly instructed in advance and discreetly.

When the Esquire conducts a guest into the Lodge room to make an introduction, the guest should be taken directly before the Altar for the introduction, not marched all around the Lodge room before presentation at the Altar.

When the guest being introduced is a Past Grand Exalted Ruler, a Grand Lodge Officer or a District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler, after the introduction, the Exalted Ruler will ask the Members to give Grand Lodge Honors by giving the hailing sign. The honored guest will answer by a wave of the hand. This honor is reserved ONLY for Past Grand Exalted Rulers, Grand Lodge Officers or District Deputy Grand Exalted Rulers, and is not extended to State Association Officers. When leading the Members in the hailing sign, the Esquire should take the same position as occupied when delivering the ritualistic part (*instructions to candidates*).

After any introduction before the Altar the Exalted Ruler should assure the guests a warm and cordial welcome is extended and that the Members are especially happy to have them visit the Lodge.

it is a courtesy to your honored Guest to eliminate other Speeches as these only Lengthen the meetings and detract from the emphasis and importance of your Guest's Speech.

*Who should Make Introductions  
Before the altar*

1. It is the duty of the Esquire to introduce visiting Elks. However, on special occasions, the Exalted Ruler may, in deference to a past official of the visited Lodge, request such past official to introduce the visiting official. This is done in recognition of the service rendered and the high office held by the past official. In the event this procedure is followed, the Esquire will conduct the visiting officer, followed by the past official, before the Altar for introduction. The Esquire will present the past official to the Lodge and in doing so should mention the most important offices the past official has held, and state WHOM THE PAST OFFICIAL WILL INTRODUCE to the Lodge. *For example:*

“Exalted Ruler and Members, it gives me great pleasure to present to you \_\_\_\_\_, a Past Exalted Ruler of this Lodge and a Past District Deputy

Grand Exalted Ruler of this District (*or Past Grand Lodge Officer or Committee*

*Chairperson, if any*) who will introduce to you the present District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler.”

2. The Grand Exalted Ruler should always be introduced by the sponsoring Past Grand Exalted Ruler. If none are present, the introduction should be made by the Senior Grand Lodge Officer or Past Grand Lodge Officer in attendance.
3. Past State Officers should introduce present State Officers.
4. Principal speakers or honored guests:
  - (a) In addition to being introduced before the Altar, the principal speaker is generally introduced just prior to the speech under Good of the Order. This can be done by the Exalted Ruler or a qualified designate. The Exalted Ruler may ask if the speaker has any preference. (*This differs from the formal introduction before the Altar of the Lodge.*) If a gift is to be presented to the guest, present it after the speech is given. The Exalted Ruler should at that time thank the guest for visiting the Lodge and express appreciation for the guest’s work in the Order.

5. A good point to remember is that the visiting guest is the CENTER OF ATTENTION. Past officials are introduced in honorary recognition of the offices they have held and the services they have rendered to the Order and to the Lodge. Nothing should be done to take away the importance of the position or presence of the honored guest. Remember, too, that it is a good idea on such special occasions to eliminate as much unnecessary business as possible until the next Lodge meeting.

## — LODGE PROTOCOL —

While the procedure of conducting a Lodge meeting may not be considered as part of Protocol because it is prescribed in the Ritual, it does, however, deal with the ceremonies and etiquette of the Order. Therefore, your attention is called to the following:

### 1. Ceremony of opening lodge

- (a) Regular form as required in the Ritual.
- (b) Exalted Ruler shall enforce strict adherence to the Ritual.
- (c) Ceremony to be conducted with reverence and dignity at all times. The Exalted Ruler is charged with the responsibility to eliminate any action by any Member to the contrary.

### 2. order of Business

- (a) The Exalted Ruler is required to follow the Order of Business prescribed by the Ritual and our Order's Statutes.
- (b) The Exalted Ruler is required to know and to follow the "Robert's Rules of Order" in conducting the Lodge meeting. It is the duty of the Exalted Ruler to preside with impartiality and to maintain dignity during the meeting.
- (c) Under the heading "Good of the Order" the Exalted Ruler should recognize any Member who has something to say for the good of the Order, but should not recognize a Member whose sole purpose is to bring about "Horse Play" which is below the dignity of the Order and unbecoming an Elk. Off-color stories are distasteful.

### 3. Closing the lodge

- (a) When all of the business of the session is ended, the Exalted Ruler shall proceed to close the Lodge in the regular manner. Closing is a fixed order of business.
- (b) The Members are proud of our Opening and Closing ceremonies, and the forms prescribed by the Ritual should not be deviated from at any time.

### 4. General rules to follow

- (a) Welcoming visiting Elks in the Lodge session should be done in the manner prescribed by the Ritual. In addition the Exalted Ruler should make a few remarks to them to show a friendly attitude and a cordial welcome.

- (b) At many Lodge sessions you may find Members addressing the Exalted Ruler from the sidelines and in doing so they rise to their feet and give the hailing sign. THIS IS NOT CORRECT. The hailing sign should be given ONLY in front of the Altar or when ordered by the Exalted Ruler. However, THE MEMBER SHOULD RISE and should address the Exalted Ruler by the proper title when seeking recognition. It is disrespectful for a Member to address the Chair while seated, and the Exalted Ruler or the Esquire should so inform any Member doing this.
- (c) All Officers should definitely know their duties and responsibilities to the Lodge and to the Order. Many of the Officers take their duties and responsibilities too lightly or they are not interested enough to learn them. They are not good Officers unless they appreciate the dignity of their office and the honor the Members have bestowed upon them. Officers who apparently are not aware of these responsibilities should be informed tactfully by the Exalted Ruler, another designated Officer or a close friend of the newly made Officer. If this fails, the Exalted Ruler should make a special point of it to the Officer and insist upon proper performance.
- (d) All Officers should be properly dressed at each Lodge meeting. The Members will gain greater respect for them and their authority as Officers. Protocol in dress is as important as proper procedure. Locales and temperatures are, of course, to be considered. Many Lodges have a custom of having all Officers in tuxedos, or white dinner jackets, or some type of uniform dress when conducting initiations. This custom will build respect as well as favorably impress the candidates.
- (e) Protocol is especially important for any of the Special Services of the Lodge where the public may be present.

Institutions of Lodges, Installation of Officers and Dedications are best served by some uniformity of dress among Officers and neat appearances of all Members. Special events such as Mother's Day observance, Flag Day, Memorial Services, Funeral Services, and those similar should require proper dress and the Special Services Ritual adhered to strictly. No deviation should be made unless proper authorization is granted by the District Deputy or Grand Exalted Ruler.

### — CONCLUSION —

While portions of this Manual seem to be great in detail, it is presented in this manner to furnish the Officers of Local Lodges, State Associations, and district groups a fully explained guide to follow with correct procedure on the broad subject of Protocol.

If the Officers of Lodges (*or Associations*) will follow the information set forth in this Manual, they will meet the requirements of proper etiquette and avoid any possible embarrassment to themselves or guests.

This Manual on Protocol cannot be effective unless it is read and digested by the Officers and Committees in charge of any particular meeting or

function, AND GOOD PLANNING IN ADVANCE with good taste applied at all times will put it into action. There's no substitute for good advance planning.

