Distinguished Guests

2025-2026

Congratulations on being appointed to be your unit or district Distinguished Guest Chairman. When we have guests attending an event (meeting, dinner or other special event) in our unit or district we all have questions concerning proper protocol. Following is information that will help everyone to do the proper thing.

- As soon as a decision has been made to hold a program, write or call your guest(s) inviting them. Invitations should be sent at least 30 days prior to the event. Be sure to give them the date, time and place of the event. Include an RSVP phone number, address or email to which they may respond. The invitation should include all the information the guest will need to participate in your event including the date, time and place along with what you would like them to do – are they the main speaker or a guest who will give brief remarks. Also, let them know if they are expected to stay for the entire event or if they may leave after they have spoken.

- You should arrive at the place where the event is being held 30-45 minutes prior to the scheduled starting time in order to make sure everything is in order – enough chairs are set out, microphone is working (if it is a portable one make sure you have extra batteries). If you are using name cards now is the time to place them. Go over the agenda with the presiding officer to be sure everything will run smoothly.

- The guest(s) should be met at the door by you or someone you have asked to meet them. If they are to be escorted to the front of the room have them be seated in the back of the room until time to escort them.

- After the guest(s) have arrived ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to notify the presiding officer that they have arrived.

- If there is to be a receiving line for the guest – the Distinguished Guest Chairman should be first to introduce the people to the President who will in turn will present them to the Honored Guest standing on her other side.

- When seating will be at a head table, the President sits at the center with the honored guest seated to her right. Other guests are seated to the President's left. The honored guest

is always introduced by the President who should be prepared to give brief but important facts about the guest.

- If food is served as a buffet, the honored guest will go first, followed by the President and the rest of the head table.

- When presenting officers for a bow – start with the highest ranking officer and go down the line, if they will speak start with the lowest ranking and go up the line. Thus, the highest ranking officer or honored guest will be the last to speak. This will generally be the District or Department President**. Remember - no one speaks nor is business conducted after the District or Department President has spoken. If the event is a meeting, the presiding officer proceeds to close the meeting in proper form.**

- When presenting the guests you **introduce** the people who are not known to those present and you **present** those that are known to those in attendance.

- The membership always rises in recognition of the National, Department or District President and the National, Department or District Commander, when they are introduced or presented.

- When escorting guests you offer your right arm to the guest. If you are escorting more than one guest, offer your arm to the most honored guest and the other guests follow behind him/her.

- At you unit or district meetings be sure to welcome new members, introduce them to others. If people feel welcome they will return to future meetings.

- The most important thing is to be courteous to all. And if you make a mistake - keep going, don't bring attention to it. Most people will never even realize that a mistake was made. Just remember not to make the mistake in the future.

Lydia DeGumbia

Department Distinguished Guest Chairman