

Adding Pizzazz to Chapter Meetings, by Excellent Edward Tooma

Now don't get the word pizzazz confused with pizza, although both words can be attractive in their own right. My own definition of pizzazz is to add some sparkle to those (sometimes) dull meetings that cause many on the sidelines to nod the meeting away. We certainly don't want that to happen. For starters, set up a program roster and do a little assigning to Companions to come up with ideas to make the meeting nights come alive. You'd be surprised at what a good program can do, if you put some effort into it. I've said this before, programs do not have to be Lodge- or Chapter-related or have anything to do with Masonry or its appendant bodies. But, if you can research something that is related to our Ancient Order that would open some eyes, why not go for it?

When I prepare a program, I use various sources. One that I like a lot is Reader's Digest. This little booklet has some amazing stories that can be used for an informative and entertaining talk. Your nearby library also has shelves of material for your research, and if you have access to a computer, you literally have the world in your hands to do wonders. When you choose a topic from any given article and put it together in your own form to make the presentation fit your style of delivery, always remember to credit the source.

Another good avenue to explore is your local newspaper. I recently read an article about tire safety and found it to be very informative. The article covered purchasing tires, proper rotation, checking tire pressure, tire tread, balancing, and alignment. Now this is something that applies to each and every one of us. Needless to say, I packaged all the information into a 10-minute talk and titled it: "Our Life Depends On The Rubber That Meets The Road." This life saving talk was well-received.

It's a good idea to plan ahead on what talks you have coming up so you can pass this information on at each meeting. It gives our Companions something to look forward to. Also put the same information in the Trestleboard, or send out an email notification a few days before each meeting letting everyone know the highlight of the evening. You may want consider inviting the Mayor, Chief of Police, Fire Department Chief, or an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) to give a talk at your meeting. Doing this has a double incentive. You receive firsthand information about your community, and the guest speaker gets to see what Royal Arch Masonry is all about.

There is another excellent source of information you should explore. Go to the Grand Chapter website: <https://virginiaroyalarch.org/>. When you open the page, click on Education on the left side and you will find a variety of talks. On the other

side of the coin, if you are extra talented, and can do a magic act, or even a tap dance routine - that'll surely pack the house and keep those eyes and ears on the sidelines wide open. All in all, we really need to make attending Chapter something to look forward to. Adding some pizzazz to the menu and serving it well can do wonders for that monthly night out. And, for refreshments, pizza will be just fine.

My hope is that you enjoy reading these articles, find them helpful, and that implementing them will serve your Chapter well. My fellow Companions, we're all in this together, and if we're going to be "Soaring To New Heights", the theme for this year's Grand High Priest, we need to be a cohesive team. So Mote It Be!

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