

## PARLIAMENTARY INFORMATION

The terms "Parliamentary Procedure" and "By-Laws" generally will bring groans from members and race the hearts of parliamentarians. This area is the least desirable aspect of any organization and yet it is the most important.

Parliamentary procedure is an accepted set of rules by means of which all deliberative assemblies are governed. The dictionary defines parliamentary as ... "In accordance with the rules ..." Every ESA member should have a correct understanding of Parliamentary Law and it's purpose.

There are four principles that are all-important to the democratic running of your chapter. These principles are the guarantee of your rights. Learn them and they will help you to understand the parliamentary procedure and rules. Live by them and your rights will be insured and at the same time, you will be protecting the rights of your ESA sisters.

1. **The Wish of the Majority Must be Followed:** You cannot have your own way. You may want to go on a boat ride and your friends may want to go on a hike. You cannot have a boat ride and hike at the same time. As a chapter, you have to "go along." You have to give a little to get a little.
2. **The Rights of Minority Must be Protected:** People see things from different angles. That is why there are so many paintings of the same subject and why there are so many political parties. Sometimes you will find that you are in disagreement with the majority and you feel convinced that you are right. To feel this way is only human. Members should be able to agree to disagree on matters from time to time. Parliamentary procedure in a group meeting assures that all members have a chance to express their opinions. Further, it assures their right to disagree. It is no disgrace to be in the minority. Often it is the role of bravery.
3. **Respect for the Dignity of All Members Must be Assumed:** You gain dignity by showing dignity to others. When you respect the right of others, you protect your own rights. When you are courteous, you receive courtesy. When you listen attentively and treat others' opinions with respect, you will be listened to ... **REMEMBER ...** Every member has rights equal to those of every other member. When you become a chapter member, you accept this contract. Membership means that you are willing to join a group of equal partners. Everyone has the same rights. To break this rule will make your chapter a fighting group. The chapter will get nothing done and will eventually break up. Instead of this, work creatively to make friends; have the joy of getting things done; and reward yourself with a joyful experience of a chapter that is GREAT!!!
4. **An Order of Business Must be Established:** The house that is in order, the person who is in order, and the daily program that is in order makes for a happier life. In like manner, disorder creates distress and unhappiness among human beings. In running a chapter, the need for order is important because a chapter involves many people. To be a good chapter member, you must agree to follow a way of getting things done. Otherwise the chapter will spend its time in endless wrangling. When you follow the four principles, you will get more out of an active membership in your chapter.

### REMEMBER

1. Rules of Order are only to expedite the meeting in fairness.
2. Prepare an agenda - carefully.
3. Keep your meeting friendly and informal.
4. The role of the Chair is neutral.
5. Courtesy is important.
6. Be familiar with your by-laws and follow them.

Making a motion is part of the Parliamentary Law and can be simple if the eight essential steps in obtaining action on a main motion are followed:

#### Member:

1. Rises and addresses the Chair.
2. Receives recognition from the Chair.
3. Introduces motion.
4. Another member seconds the motion.

## **PARLIAMENTARY INFORMATION (Continued)**

### **Chair (or Presiding Officer):**

1. States the motion.
2. Calls for discussion.
3. Takes the vote.
4. Announces the result of the vote.

### **Purpose of Motions:**

Main Motion: Brings questions before the group for consideration.

Subsidiary Motion: Modifies or disposes main motions under discussion.

Privileged Motion: Has no connection with the main motion but is of importance and demands consideration.

Incidental Motion: Miscellaneous motion which cannot be placed in any of the three groups listed.

### **Ranks of motions:**

Specific main motions have no precedence. No two main motions may be pending at the same time. Incidental motions have no order of precedence among themselves.

Parliamentary procedure is nothing more than the application of the "Golden Rule" ... "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

This touches on only a small part of parliamentary information. If you need more detailed information as to parliamentary procedure, please feel free to contact your State Parliamentarian. She will assist you in any way possible, and if she does not have an answer for you, she will get in touch with someone who does.

**GOOD LUCK AND HAVE A GREAT YEAR**