

A I P COMMUNICATOR

WINTER 2019



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Being a Parliamentarian is Like Fly Fishing

By Al Gage, CPP, PRP, PAP



Hello all! I know many of you will think I am crazy based on this title, but even if you don't have an interest in the sport, I encourage you to continue reading for a peek into my philosophy about being a parliamentarian. For those of you who don't know me, I am an avid (that does not mean skilled or successful; just that I try to go a lot) fly fisherman. I want to start with a disclaimer that sometimes, unlike our parliamentary clients, all the fish in attendance were released unharmed.

The genesis of this article occurred when I was fly fishing in New Mexico on a windy day in September. During the transition between my back cast and forward cast, I slapped my rod with my two tiny flies, a weight smaller than you can see, and an indicator. The resultant massive tangle made me stop and announce to my partner and our guide that I had just tied the perfect "Gordian Knot." Now fly fishermen, and certainly guides, are obsessed with new knots, and neither had ever heard of this one, so they both ushered over for a look. The guide took one look at my mess and said, "we have to start over" and proceeded to clip everything off and start from the beginning while I explained what a "Gordian Knot" was in parliamentary terms. For those of you who don't know, "cutting the Gordian Knot" is a form of suspending the rules where you eliminate every motion on the floor and start over because the parliamentary situation is so confusing that the body does not understand what is happening. The guide with a slight grimace on his face proceeded to start over with my rig.

This "Gordian Knot" scenario got me thinking about what other similarities there might be between my two obsessions. Here is my list of similarities, some of which might put into perspective what it takes to be a good parliamentarian:

MOST ARE SELF TAUGHT

Most fly fishermen, like most parliamentarians, are, at least initially, self-taught--or at the very least taught by a non-professional. I have spent days trying to unlearn bad casting techniques that I had picked up from a "buddy."

In the parliamentary field, I was also self-taught. In fact, I had never met a professional parliamentarian until 2008, and was never taught by a professional until I attended my first Training Conference in 2012. During that preparation to receive a credential from NAP, it took me much longer to un-learn the improper wording I was accustomed to than it did to learn the new material that I was required to know. Sadly, I too passed along this errant information to the very first team I put in competition back in 2002. I had mistakenly taught them an incorrect use of the motion "Fix Time to Which to Adjourn." That team placed 10th out of 10 teams at the state level. If only we could all be taught by a professional from the beginning!

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BOTH REQUIRE A HUGE AMOUNT OF KNOWLEDGE

You may not know, but in fly-fishing, flies imitate aquatic or terrestrial bugs that trout eat (along with an occasional mammal or amphibian). You must be somewhat of an amateur entomologist to figure out what bug, in what stage of life, they are currently feasting on.

The parallel in parliamentary law is that you must have an intricate knowledge of at least one parliamentary authority, and its supporting opinions, to practice or receive a credential, and in the case of an AIP credential, you must be an expert on at least two or three parliamentary authorities! Not just being familiar with them...I am talking about knowing them! Many, many clients will hire you based on your knowledge or reputation.

EVERY STREAM IS DIFFERENT-HIRE A GUIDE

One of the fundamentals of fly-fishing is that every stream is different and what works on one stream will be totally rejected at another. The solution to this problem is to always hire a guide with local knowledge. The phrase we use in fly fishing is "Match the Hatch" which means, "make your fly match what is happening in the water."

In parliamentary terms, every organization is different. They have different customs, rules and levels of formality. We as professionals should honor those customs as much as we can while still protecting the rights of the minority and individuals. I have always found it better to make an Organization's Bylaws match what the members know and feel comfortable with rather than making the members comply with bylaws that don't "match the hatch" with what they are doing or want to do. Of course, they must comply with the current bylaws until the change can be made.

MENDING THE LINE

In fly fishing terms, mending the line means adjusting the line in the water to avoid two things: One is getting so much line in the water so that the current drags the line, and thereby the fly, unnaturally. The line can be adjusted by flipping the excess upstream or downstream to take tension off the line and allow the fly to drift naturally. The second thing to avoid is having too much slack in the line so that even when a fish takes your fly you can't effectively set the hook. This is remedied by stripping in excess line. The two represent a fine balance and require many years on the river to achieve a perfect balance.

We must as professional parliamentarians, resist the urge to proffer advice on every technicality, to display our infinite knowledge. You may be 100% correct, and yet not asked to return. This over-enforcing of the rules represents not mending your line. As long as no member's rights are being infringed upon, you can let go that the secretary signed the minutes "respectfully submitted, Susie Smith" even though you know that it is an error. That being said, you must also remain in contact with the rules as a meeting progresses so that if need be, you can advise the chairman to set the hook! I have been in many meetings where I anticipated things going wrong slightly before they did and was able to stave off or minimize the trouble by preparing the chairman before they were bombarded.

REACTION TIME

In fly fishing, sometimes the only way you can tell that a fish has bitten your fly is the slightest hesitation in your fly line or indicator. You must maintain your vigilance and be ready to react.

Knowing the parliamentary authorities and being able to quickly suggest the appropriate advice are sometimes two very different things. Like many parliamentarians, I review the governing documents and meeting materials to try to anticipate trouble spots before they happen. I try to play the meeting out in my mind and let the paranoia flow with the things that could happen. If you do that, you will be ready when/if a bad scenario happens.

THE FISH DON'T ALWAYS COOPERATE

Sometimes, despite the fact that you have done everything right, the fish just will not bite. You have hired a guide, chosen the correct fly, cast perfectly, mended the line, remained vigilant and the fish just will not cooperate.

In the parliamentary world, sometimes you offer the perfect advice and the chair or the body just will not accept it. They are determined to do what they want to do the way they want to do it. In most cases, check your ego. This is fine if it happens occasionally or over inconsequential items. If it happens consistently or involves the violation of a member's rights, then I suggest you respectfully find another place to fish. Of course, you cannot ethically leave a client in the middle of a meeting, but you can certainly ask them to not have you back if they are not going to follow your advice.

CONTINUE YOUR EDUCATION

I submit to all of you, whether you are a beginner or an expert, that the pursuit of knowledge in either sport is a worthwhile endeavor. I know that many of you have no interest in fly-fishing and will never try it, but if you do, you'll discover that it's a sport where continued learning is a must. This is also true in parliamentary procedure: Keep striving to achieve that next credential or complete that next correspondence course, or simply strive to attend an event or otherwise improve your knowledge base.



Sincerely with a tight line,

Al Gage, CPP, PRP, PAP

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Additional information regarding dates and registration will be available on the AIP website at aipparl.org as they become available.

West Coast Practicum

House of Delegates, Conventions, and Annual Sessions
January 16 - 18, 2020
Alexis Park All Suite Resort
Las Vegas, Nevada

East Coast Practicum

The Book Stops Here – But the Meeting Must Go On
June 18 - 20, 2020
The Conference Center at the Maritime Institute
Linthicum Heights, Maryland

Annual Session

July 29 - August 1, 2020
Hilton Charlotte Executive Park
Charlotte, North Carolina

Deadline Dates for the “Communicator”

February 15, 2020	Spring 2020 Issue
May 15, 2020	Summer 2020 Issue
August 15, 2020	Fall 2020 Issue
November 15, 2020	Winter 2020 Issue

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FFA REPORT

By Nilda Rivera, Esq., PRP

As I headed to Indianapolis, Indiana, for the National FFA Convention and Expo, I wasn't really sure what to expect. FFA provides leadership, personal growth and career success training in the science, business and technology of agriculture through agricultural education to 700,170 student members belonging to 8,612 local FFA chapters throughout the United States, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. Their foundational motto is: Learning to Do. Doing to Learn. Earning to Live. Living to Serve. With this in mind, I ventured between the two hotels that were hosting the events that I was scheduled to judge.

The first thing to grab my attention was the sea of blue and gold jackets worn by the 68,000 middle and high school youth to represent their respective state teams. Luckily for us, we only had to judge a small fraction of that number in the FFA Convention's Career and Leadership Development Events – Conduct of Chapter Meetings (CCM) and Parliamentary Procedure (Parli-Pro) competitions. AIP had many volunteers assist judging the Future Farmers of America (FFA) Conduct of Chapter Meetings (CCM) and Parliamentary Procedure events in Indianapolis, IN. AIP had a mix of experienced and new judges: Al Gage, Kay Crews, Daniel Ivey-Soto, Roger Hanshaw, Atul Kapur, CJ Cavin, Valoree Althoff and myself.

Once the students began to role-play their chapter meetings in either the CCM (middle school) or Parli-Pro (high school) presentations, I was immediately impressed with the level of enthusiasm, professionalism and skill on display. Each student on the team was given one minute to review a card with required motions. Watching the students act out the motions provided, while keeping track of the number and substance of their own and each other's debates, was a sight to see!

Several times, I caught myself wondering how a team of credentialed parliamentarians might perform under similar circumstances. I couldn't ponder on that thought long since I had to judge each team and individual on Opening/Closing Ceremonies (CCM), quality of debate on the motions (and presiding skills for the chair), team poise and confidence, as well as their response to Individual Questions testing their parliamentary knowledge.

In addition, I had the pleasure of judging the two teams from Puerto Rico who competed in Spanish. If you think that Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised is tough, imagine competing without the benefit of an official Spanish translation of RONR! In spite of this, the teams from Puerto Rico have been improving over the years and this year's Parli-Pro team came away with a Silver plaque!

I left the FFA Career and Leadership Development Events impressed with the parliamentary skills that are being imparted and displayed by these youth from across the country. I highly recommend our credentialed members to become involved and volunteer their time to judge one or both of these competitions. This display of parliamentary knowledge and skill is surely an example of what we would like to see replicated in our (and our clients') meetings and conventions.

Judging these competitions is one of the most challenging, yet gratifying, opportunities to help further the knowledge and use of parliamentary procedure in our future generations.

2019 CCM Winners Barrington Middle FFA:



CCM Judges: Al Gage, Atul Kapur, Nilda Rivera, CJ Cavin and Valoree Althoff



“HOUSE OF DELEGATES, CONVENTIONS, AND ANNUAL SESSIONS”

By Dollie McPartlin, CP-T, PRP, General Coordinator

The 39th Annual AIP West Coast Practicum, January 16 - 18, 2020, in Las Vegas will utilize both the American Institute of Parliamentarians Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure and Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised to fully explore everything you wanted to know about House of Delegates, Conventions and Annual Sessions.

- ✓ Should every member have the right to debate issues in the House?
- ✓ Should the delegates be able to suspend the rules of the House, if so, what rules can be suspended?
- ✓ If you are the delegate, can you give your credentials to the alternate delegate if you must leave early?
- ✓ How can the speaker of the house limit or extend debate on any issue?
- ✓ Can the speaker of the house change the printed agenda, if so, how?
- ✓ Does your House of Delegates wait until the following House of Delegates to approve the minutes?
- ✓ And any other questions you have will be explored.

Instructors:

- ✓ **Barry Glazer**, MD, CPP-T was Speaker of the House for the American Society of Anesthesiologist for four years.
- ✓ **Glen Hall**, DDS, CP served as Speaker of the House for the American Dental Association for seven years and Speaker of the House for the Texas Dental Association for 12 years.
- ✓ 2019 Class President **David Jackson**, DHSc, PA-C, PRP will present two cameos.

Curriculum Director Mary Remson, CPP-T, PRP has brought these health care professionals together because they have insights and experiences to share that we are unlikely to find in any other setting!

The Alexis Park All Suite Resort in Las Vegas, Nevada, will again be the venue for the 39th Annual AIP West Coast Practicum. The hotel is conveniently located about one mile off the Las Vegas Strip and a little less than two miles from McCarran International Airport where a shuttle will take you to and from the airport. Room rates vary (six levels available) based on the suite level and the night of the week reserved. Rates range from \$59 - \$129 on Wednesday and Thursday nights to \$99 - \$189 plus tax on Friday and Saturday nights plus a resort fee of \$14 per night per room. Even with the resort fee, the room rate is reasonable. The resort fee includes free local phone calls from guest suites, open signal Wi-Fi in the hotel public areas as well as guest suites, access to all recreational facilities, and hotel shuttle to and from the airport and mid Strip. To reserve your room, call (702) 796-3322 and identify yourself as belonging to “AIP-West Coast Practicum 2020” before December 15, 2019.

As always, this practicum will offer presiding sessions designed to assist attendees with the opportunity to improve their presiding skills many times over. AIP practicums always provide a safe environment to learn and practice parliamentary skills. Join us in Las Vegas!

[Register HERE!](#)

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American Institute of Parliamentarians
Teacher Certification Course
14-15 January 2020 – Las Vegas, NV



The American Institute of Parliamentarians will offer a fully revamped Teacher Certification Course on 14-15 January 2020, immediately preceding the West Coast Practicum at the Alexis Park Resort. The course will begin 8:00 am on Tuesday, 14 January, and will end at 5:00 pm on Wednesday, 15 January. Any certified member of AIP (CP, CP-T, CPP, CPP-T) or registered member of NAP (RP or PRP) is eligible to take the course. Registration materials will be available the first part of December. At least eight students will need to have registered for the course by 15 December in order for it to be conducted.

The Teacher Certification course is recommended for:

- Any certified member of AIP who wishes to become Teacher Certified. Following successful completion of the course, it will also be necessary to earn “service points” demonstrating continued teaching in the field.
- Any member of AIP who was previously “grandfathered” as a Certified Teacher who wishes to earn continuing education credit. Successful completion of the Teacher Certification course is one of several ways that a Certified Teacher can extend their period of certification
- Any certified member of AIP or registered member of NAP who, even though not a candidate for Teacher Certification, wishes to improve teaching skills in a controlled nonthreatening environment.

Contact **Joe Theobald**, CP-T, Education Director, at education@aipparl.org if you have any questions.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS OF AIP

Welcome new members of AIP through December 4, 2019. Be a supportive member and contact any who live near you.

Wyatt Acey Perryville, KY	Tyler Day Arcade, NY	Gabe Higgins Freedom, NY	Yanet Padron Tuscumbia, AL	Adrian Stratton New York, NY
Enma Alexander Tonasket, WA	Boyd de Larios South San Francisco, CA	Kim Chuan HOW Kuala Lumpur Malaysia	Mary Claire Payne Athens, GA	Thomas Strong Millerstown, PA
Raegan Alvey Atoka, TN	Kyla Dean Cherokee, AL	Savannah Humphries Tifton, GA	Tristen Payne Olney, IL	Matthew Syrotiak Bethlehem, CT
Marshall Baker Stillwater, OK	Matthew Deebach Tonasket, WA	Jana Hunter Salemberg, NC	Kenneth Pearson Las Vegas, NV	Richard L. Taczkowski Buffalo, NY
Macki Bilbrey Texico, NM	Janelle D. DeFrees Leavenworth, KS	Jaxon Inge Texico, NM	Elizabeth Perdue Kingfisher, OK	Eric Thibert Fargo, ND
Lilly Bolen Jeromesville, OH	Claire Demers Watertown, CT	Alexandra Jablon Middlebury, CT	Owen Petrich Green Bay, WI	Riley Thompson Portales, NM
Noël Braudt Chandler, AZ	Raven Dorio-Howard Sumter, SC	Megan Johnston Danville, KY	Nicholas Prestly Cassopolis, MI	Bridgette Tillman Upper Marlboro, MD
Solomon Brown Tonasket, WA	Scott Erickson Galesburg, IL	Miles Kerstein Litchfield, MN	Trenace Pyles Atlanta, GA	Marissa Uva Middlebury, CT
Cade Burkholder Boerne, TX	Rory Etienne Irving, TX	Logan Klaudt Menno, SD	Brinn Reeves Clovis, NM	Thomas Vaughn Duluth, MN
Braden Burns Kingfisher, OK	Anna Euerle Litchfield, MN	Kara Kochis Millsboro, DE	Katherine Reiley Helotes, TX	Alexandria Veibell Vernal, UT
Parker Carlino Winnfield, LA	Ryan Foor Seward, NE	Nelson Leany Chandler, AZ	Alexis Richmond Imperial, NE	Emma Vines Winnfield, LA
Michaela Carpenter Perryville, KY	Alexis Franklin Cherokee, AL	Peyton Little Winnfield, LA	Charles Robinson Salemberg, NC	Katelyn Waldschmidt Dowagiac, MI
Daniel Carroll Bulverde, TX	Matthew Fry Brookfield, CT	Christina Lusk, JD Panama City Beach, FL	Shanda Ross Morrow, GA	Sydney Waller Clovis, NM
Dylan Cepeda Sunnyside, NY	Victoria Gerken MS Cashion, OK	Joseph Manzella Jr Setauket, NY	Walt Sanders Tifton, GA	Abbey Wanek Denmark, WI
Gabriel Childers Albin, WY	Kaylee Gilpin Danville, KY	Sydney Maynard Sumter, SC	Eisley Saylor Menno, SD	Gloria Watson Clinton, NC
Yushu Chou San Marino, CA	Mario Giron Blanco Chandler, AZ	Abigail McConnell Munford, TN	Sadie Schaap Clovis, NM	Sara Weston Las Vegas, NV
Brooklyn Christensen Imperial, NE	Addison Griffin Cottondale, FL	Lindsey Mendenhall Imperial, NE	Jozie Schilke Imperial, NE	Rebekah White Brookings, SD
Jacob Clay Helotes, TX	Jesse James Gutierrez Schertz, TX	Benjamin Moldovsky Lafayette Hill, PA	Lyndzi Scott Tonasket, WA	Derek Widerburg Rexburg, ID
Kinsley Cole Cherokee, AL	Max Hartman Dover, OK	Richard Month Philadelphia, PA	Josh Scurlock Cottondale, FL	Roland Williams Brooklyn, NY
Gage Collins Cassopolis, MI	Jason Haughn Dartmouth, Nova Scotia Canada	Caleb Murawski Jeromesville, OH	William Seabolt Purcellville, VA	Fashika Willis Dallas, TX
Sandra Cook Clayton, NC	James Haymore Gilbert, AZ	Ryan Ng Newtown, CT	Daniel Simmons Winnfield, LA	Angelina Wilson Tonasket, WA
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James Crisp Atoka, TN	Danielle Herrick Bliss, NY	Courtney Odens Imperial, NE	Cheyenne Stirek Tonasket, WA	Carl Young Jr Marianna, FL



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AIP has two separate ways we earn money from Amazon: through the **AmazonSmile** program and through items in the AIP bookstore at our website.

Items purchased through the bookstore pay us a higher rebate, but only if the item is actually listed in the bookstore. For that reason, some “gavel” items (jewelry, clothes, and um, gavels) are going into the AIP bookstore.

Put higher priced purchases and gifts into the AIP bookstore and purchase them through the bookstore for a higher donation to AIP. Anyone who would like to coordinate that type of activity need only contact President Al Gage for help!

This is “free money” for AIP, and anyone who supports these programs is also supporting our professional organization!!!