

Section  
**12** Club Visits

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District Visitations

Hosting a Guest

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*“We can do no great things —  
only small things with great love.”*

— Mother Teresa —

## DISTRICT VISITATIONS

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Visits by the Governor or her/his appointed representative are one of the most important personal services Districts provide their clubs. District visitors come as consultants to help the club appraise its entire operation, answer members' questions, and bring the club into a closer relationship with the District and International. In many cases, her/his visit is the only contact the members of the club may have with District personnel.

Ideally, visits should include a meeting with the club's Board of Directors, either before or after the club meeting. The club meeting may be open to guests. This decision should be made by the club president in consultation with the District visitor.

As you begin preparations for the club visit, read the section entitled **District Visitors** in the *Altrusa International Encyclopedia*.

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### Purpose

To foster mutual understanding between local clubs, District and the International organization. They enhance the club's conception of Altrusa as a service organization, commend members on their achievements, and point out areas in which improvements may be made.

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### Scheduling the visit

**The Governor assigns District Board members to each club.** As soon as those assignments are made, the District visitor will contact the president in order to arrange a mutually agreeable date, time, and location for the visitation.

In some cases, it may be necessary for the visit to be on a date other than your club's regular meeting date. If this should happen, prepare your membership in a very positive manner and encourage them to attend this important meeting.

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### Prior preparation

**Return your club survey form promptly.** This gives the District visitor some prior insight into your club and assists her/him in their preparation. Survey forms include a place for you to indicate special subjects you would like covered during the visitation.

In some Districts, the visitor will request your previous year's Club Activity Report, current budget, strategic plan, etc., prior to the visit. If so, fill the request promptly. The more insight the District visitor has into your club previous to the visit, the more help she/he can be.

**Ask your District visitor if she/he will require overnight accommodations.** Districts usually pay for all travel expenses; however, many District visitors appreciate the opportunity to get better acquainted through an overnight stay with a member. No matter what type of arrangements need to be made, it is your responsibility to make them.

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**What should be included?**

The visit should be the meeting. **Do not have** another speaker. This only takes away from the time allowed for the District visitor. Districts vary in what they expect to accomplish at a visit; however, in general most official District visitors expect:

- A Board meeting.
- A business meeting with oral and written Committee reports.
- Ample time for a presentation. Allow 20 to 45 minutes, depending on your District visitor's request. Some District representatives do a workshop type presentation and may require more time.

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**Helpful hints**

Ask a club member to write down the information and/or materials the District visitor offers to send to your club. Give this to her/him following the presentation. It is a thoughtful and very helpful gesture.

**Healthy clubs mean a healthy District!** Help make your visit meaningful. As each member becomes involved in the visit, a stronger rapport will develop.

## HOSTING A GUEST

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Whether your guest is a District Officer, community dignitary, guest speaker, or a prospective member, you want them to feel welcome and comfortable at your meeting.

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### **This list of questions will help you prepare**

- u If an invitation has been sent, have you included directions to find the location easily?
- u Has your membership been notified that a special guest will be present?
- u Do you have a “greeter” assigned to introduce the guest to your members?
- u Is a seating arrangement planned?
- u Do you have name tags that include a title for everyone?
- u Have you informed your guest of the menu, if applicable, and if there is a cost factor?
- u Is it appropriate to pay for a guest’s meal?
- u Do you always remember to introduce guests by appropriate titles?
- u Does your guest have a clear understanding of what she/he needs to do if part of the program?
- u Have you considered a thank-you gift? In the case of the District visitor, many clubs are getting away from this practice. A small donation in the name of the District visitor to the International Foundation is always a nice gesture.
- u Do you have a way for the guest to be excused easily, especially if travel is involved?
- u After the visit—have the club secretary or another person send a thank-you note.

Remember, these simple gestures will make your meeting run smoothly and your guest will be grateful for the kindness.