



INSPECTOR GENERALS' MISSIVE WEEK 38

Week 38 IG Missive – 10th December 2020



We are all settling down, I hope, towards the relaxation expected around Christmas and have this week arrived at V-day, when a vaccine became available for specified sections of the community. Not a complete panacea yet but at least we seem to be on the way back towards a more congenial “normality” with the resumption of masonic association becoming more likely in due course. It may be somewhat longer before the companionship of the 3rd Point becomes acceptable, but our masters will undoubtedly be offering advice on this in due course. Keep refreshing the red book to be ready - I look forward very much to meeting all of you in person, even without the 3rd Point, and I will then think we have “got through it”; I pray we shall be properly together again soon.

Stephen Knight was back at the front again last week with Nick Wilson and John Stribling just behind.

Here are my answers to last week's questions:

1. Yogi Berra said, “if the world were perfect, it wouldn't be.” He also said many other wise things.
2. In baseball, a “Designated Hitter” is a man formally designated as a hitter while his team is batting so that the pitcher, who spends most of his training throwing rather than hitting and may therefore be a poor hitter, doesn't have to go to bat at all. In some baseball leagues, designated hitters are not permitted but after a few innings it may be useful to remove a tired player and replace him with a better, fresher, hitter for the rest of the game – he is the “Pinch-Hitter”.
3. The conventional vaccine uses a weakened or inactivated form of the bacteria or virus being targeted or perhaps just a very small quantity of it. The body then generates specific antibodies against this weakened invader, overcomes the threat and usually then retains a “memory” of how to deal with a full dose of the bacteria or virus should the body become infected later. Several of the new vaccines (the expensive ones) are called mRNA (messenger RNA) vaccines. These cause the body's cells themselves to produce their own form of the disease agent and then destroy it, generating the same “memory” for future protection.
4. According to some biblical legends, Daniel and 3 friends were taken to Babylon in about 600 BC when Jerusalem was sacked by Nebuchadnezzar II. They were made eunuchs, probably with the intention of extinguishing the line of Davidic Kings; it is therefore unlikely that Daniel, even if he really existed, did have children.
5. If a 3-lane motorway has to be reduced to 2 lanes then, in theory, if every vehicle is forced to increase its speed by 50% in the narrowed portion, traffic flow would be completely smoothed.
6. The letters are “bant” as in Trabant car, Brabant in Belgium, Banter as teasing conversation and Titubant in unsteady staggering (though Stephen Knight's “corybant” works nearly as well)..
7. BMI is recorded in kilos per square metre (Wt/SquareofHt). It was developed as a method of determining obesity in 1832 by Adolphe Quetelet (and called a Quetelet Index) but the name BMI was invented by Ancel Keys in 1972.
8. The Maldives Islands left the Commonwealth in 2016 (and re-joined in February 2020).
9. They are all extremely poisonous unless prepared and cooked very carefully.

10. Samuel Taylor Coleridge died in 1834, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor was born in 1875.

This was, perhaps, a slightly more difficult set of posers so anyone who got better than 5 correct did well.

Here are this week's research subjects:

1. What was the name of England's capital in 950 AD?
2. A well-known professional golfer died this week. What element of his game persuaded him that commentating was a better career than staying on tour?
3. What is supposed to have started the Trojan War and who is supposed to have won?
4. What is the chemical principle under-pinning how water softeners work?
5. How many British Prime Ministers were born in Wales?
6. Why did Lancashire become a central hub of the cotton trade from the late 18th century?
7. Which is the furthest East, Peterhead or Bournemouth?
8. Which 4 "sports" are to be included in the 2024 Olympics in Paris?
9. What mistake did the Scottish FA make in 1885 that led to a current world record?
10. What links Captain Cook with Colin Dexter?

Maintain the mantra - Hands, Face, Space. Take plenty of exercise and Keep Phoning Around.

Stay Safe

Peter Harborne 33°

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