

See the City on a Scavenger Hunt

Test your downtown knowledge on a hunt for mysterious clues
By Steven Spenser



The Gangbusters, dressed up in FBI costumes were the winning team in a Halloween scavenger hunt held last year.
Photo Courtesy: Debbie Woodbury

So, you think you know Seattle pretty well? Terry Seidler (aka the ClueMaster) can convince you otherwise. Seidler, Owner of See Seattle Walking Tours & Events, runs two different organization sponsored scavenger hunts. One, held downtown, is called Mystery & Scavenger Hunt and the other, called a Scramble, takes place at Seattle Center. Both combine history and trivia that even locals have trouble solving.

Scavenger hunts are great, Seidler says, because they pull people out of their ordinary routines. No matter what else may be confronting people in their lives, Seidler thinks the organized hunts are a chance to have "pure unadulterated fun."

In Mystery & Scavenger Hunts, teams of six to eight people in limousines or on foot search 16 downtown areas for answers to questions and riddles and try to find unusual objects without spending money or bartering. Out of a possible 333 points, no team ever has scored more than 164. Technological advantages, such as searching the Internet or calling the Library's Quick Information Line, are not permitted.

Part team-building exercise and part social ice breaker, Mystery & Scavenger Hunts are challenging, highly competitive, educational and humbling.

Match Wits with the ClueMaster!

"Many of us realized how much we didn't know about Seattle history," says Marylee Avila, an administrator with Microsoft. "(Even) being a Seattle native ... I didn't know half of (the answers)."

"We had a tough time getting out of Westlake Center because everyone wanted to window shop," says Amy

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Event	Mystery & Scavenger Hunt	Scramble
What?	Sleuthing contests in downtown Seattle with teams in chauffeured limousines or on foot.	Sleuthing contests on Seattle Center's 74 acre campus with teams on foot.
Who?	Corporate groups and special occasions.	Corporate groups, special occasions and school groups.
Where?	Area restaurant, hotel or company facility. Small groups may improvise.	Seattle Center meeting room. Small and school groups may improvise.
When?	Any day or evening year-round. Typical event takes 3¼ to 4½ hours.	Any day or evening year-round. Typical event takes 3¼ to 4 hours.
How Much?	\$20 per person, \$400 minimum + tax.	\$20 pp, \$400 minimum + tax; school groups \$15 pp, \$200 minimum + tax.

Good Ideas: Check out these events on See-Seattle.com and ask the ClueMaster for tips on restaurants, limos and getting ready.

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Smith, an administrative assistant with Microsoft. "Seeing Seattle (that way) was fun and interesting. I learned a lot."

Hard-to-find items on the hunt include a postcard with a canceled stamp from somewhere other than the United States or Canada and an unused napkin with "Since 1938" printed on it.

"You feel like a kid again," says Kerri Goodman, the Seattle publisher of Coffee Talk magazine. "We had corporate presidents going through garbage cans to find an empty bottle of shoe polish." One prim and quiet staffer became so caught up in the hunt for a local team schedule, she ran into a bar and ripped a poster right off the wall.

Avila summed up her experience on the hunt. "You just don't realize how much there is to know until you get out there there. It's a big place."



Hammering Man is one stop on the ClueMaster's scavenger hunt. No, it's not good enough just to find him, but the question is simple: How many times does he hammer per minute? Could your team find the dude with the sword and get his name?

We asked scavenger hunt impresario Terry Seidler to share some of his most challenging puzzlers. How many of these mysteries can you solve? (To learn the answers you'll have to go on Seidler's hunt.)

- 1. Bell Street Pier search area** - The marina walkway rises and falls about 22 feet with the high and low tides. The metal pilings with the pointed white caps secure the walkway in place. How many of these pilings are there? (Hint: to see them all, you can't stand in one position -- you have to move around.)
- 2. Pike Place Market search area** - The Perennial Tea Room sells the blend of tea that was thrown overboard at the Boston Tea Party. What name do they sell it under?
- 3. Freeway Park & Convention Center search area** - According to one electronic "moving" message on the walls of the International Meeting Place in the Convention Center, "Emotional Responses Are As Valuable As....."?
- 4. Pioneer Square search area** - What is the name of Chief Seattle's native language?
- 5. International District search area** - What is the real name of a fruit often found in Asian grocery stores nicknamed "stinkfruit"?