

The long-awaited, never truly complete, much-  
desired, and lovingly created

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# Autocrat's Sandbox

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A compendium of information for those who desire  
to learn or to know more about Autocratting in  
the Society for Creative Anacronism.

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Edited by Vrouw Odriana vander Brugghe

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## **Introduction/Acknowledgements**

By definition, an Autocrat is (from dictionary.com):

1. A ruler having unlimited power; a despot.
2. A person with unlimited power or authority: *a corporate autocrat.*

In the context of the SCA, it may be more accurate to call this person an “event coordinator”, because that is what this person does.

Without those willing to create and execute events, we in The Society for Creative Anachronisms would not have the opportunity to share time, ideas, information, skills, or social interactions in a forum that is not specifically Guild or Administration oriented. Events are absolutely essential to our interactions as Medievalists. This is true whether it be a 25 person mini-schola or a 400 person Coronation.

Many people find the idea of Autocratting quite daunting, and I’m here to tell you that although Autocratting is not necessarily for everyone, it is not complicated or difficult as long as you have the ability to organize. If you can organize, you can run an event. Autocratting at its most basic level is organization and planning.

As nothing I do is done entirely alone, I would like to thank the following gentles whose contributions make up this handbook:

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This is by no means the final word on what information you will need to autocrat an event in the BMDL. If you find a section of this handbook lacking, please contact me at JennS@cmu.edu or send hard copy to: Jennifer Strobel, 5552 Camelia Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15201. Please include your Society and Modern names along with contact information in case I have any questions.

In Service to All,

Vrouw Odriana vander Brugghe, ed.

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## **Budgeting for an Event**

-Baroness Ts'vee'a bas Tseepora Levi

### **Why Budget?**

Making an event budget means identifying all of the costs associated with the event. These costs are then used to calculate what the fees for the event need to be. The budget helps the officers to determine whether to approve the event bid.

It is important to try to figure out all of the costs involved and price the event accurately so that the event will break even or make a little money for the Barony. Events and fundraising activities are the major ways the Barony makes money to buy stuff like fencing and archery equipment, baronial regalia, and new pots for the larder.

In a perfect world, we could always determine exactly how much to charge for an event. To deal with real-life surprises and cost changes, it is customary in the Debatable Lands to estimate attendance conservatively and set a low number of people needed to break even.

### **Coming Up With the Fee**

Event costs come in two types: fixed and variable. A fixed cost is the same no matter how many people show up. The fee for the site is usually a fixed cost, or money for road signs. Variable costs will change with the number of people expected, such as site tokens or food for the feast. Fixed and variable costs can both be either large or small amounts.

There are two ways to budget for an event. One is to estimate the total dollars you will spend on everything, and make that the upper limit for spending. The other is to estimate a variable cost for an estimated amount of people. The second is most often used in the Debatable Lands because it protects against spending too much money if fewer people are expected.

#### **1. Identify costs**

The first thing to do is identify all of the items that will require money from event revenue. If an item will be donated, you don't need to count it. Costs could include:

- Site rental
- Materials for each activity, such as hay bales for archery, children's activities supplies, table/chair rental for the feast, etc.
- Decorations for the hall, feast tables, field, or other areas
- General supplies, such as poster-board for a seating chart or signs, toilet paper, table coverings, site tokens or non-perishable items such as road signs or list ropes/banners.

You can go out and price everything in advance, or wing it with a ballpark amount. Many people will price high-cost items (such as the hall) and list a general amount for smaller items.

Some items cannot be paid for out of event revenue. If you want to provide these items at your event, you will need to make other arrangements, such as donations, to cover these expenses. Check with the exchequer to determine what the current regulations are.

Many expenses can be provided by alternative arrangements if desired. An autocrat who does not wish to include Non-Member Surcharge (see below) can pay for the site from donations, fundraising, or a free site rather than charging a site fee. Don't want to pay for feast? Some smaller events have a pot-luck feast where everyone brings a contribution in order to eat.

## **2. Estimate attendance**

In order to know how much to charge each person so the event will break even, you need an estimate of how many people will attend. Lots of things can impact attendance, including how many people your hall can hold, royal attendance, weather, other events held on or near the same weekend, and what kinds of activities are being held. The local Exchequer or past autocrats can help identify how to estimate attendance for a particular event and time of year.

### *Discounts and Complementary Attendees*

Discounts are not required for anyone, though it is customary to provide Royalty with complementary attendance and feast. It is up to the autocrat to decide which attendees should receive discounts.

Do you want to offer the Royalty, Baron/ess, head cook, featured teacher, clean-up staff, seniors, students, or children a lower fee or even free entrance? Be sure to reduce the number of total attendees by the number of discounts or freebies. While you could calculate discounted attendees by a percentage (i.e. each half-price person equals 50% of a fee), it is easier to reduce the total attendance and include only people who are paying full price in your estimate.

Guess low. That way if a blizzard hits your event, or the king decides to give a peerage at the event 2 hours away, your event will not suffer too much.

Factoid: in 2003, an average of 20 children under age 12 attended each Debatable Lands event, approximately 7-8 of which were under age 6.

## **3. Identify cost per (full-price) person**

First split your list into fixed and variable costs. Variable costs are already identified per person. Divide the fixed costs by the number of attendees expected to convert these costs into a per person amount. Add these per person fixed costs to the variable costs to get the required price to break even on the event.

## **4. Fundraising**

It is common, but not required, to add an additional \$1 to the fee to raise funds for the barony. If the event is a Kingdom event such as Coronation, Crown Tourney, or Twelfth Night, the event is

expected to raise funds for the Kingdom. This is a good way to ensure that the event will make money.

Sometimes, unfortunately, this extra dollar is needed to help cover unexpected event costs. (What do you mean, we need to provide our own porta-johns?)

## 5. Add them up

Add up all of the costs and divide them by a conservative attendance estimate to get per person costs.

The costs for everything but food add up to the site fee (usually called ‘**out-board**’). This is a good option to offer in case the lunch runs out due to more attendees than expected.

Site fee and lunch is usually called ‘**off-board**.’ If no lunch is offered, this option is excluded.

Site fee, lunch, and feast added together are called ‘**on-board**,’ which includes all costs of the event divided.

### Non-Member Surcharge (NMS)

The SCA requires that event attendees show proof of corporate SCA membership or pay an additional \$3 fee for all events that have a site fee. Children under 18 who receive a discount to attend the event do not have to pay the fee. This NMS should be listed as a separate fee or otherwise noted in any announcements.

## Checking up on how you did

After the event, it is a good idea to compare the actual expenses with the budgeted expenses and identify any errors in budgeting. Look at the difference between your budgeted costs and your actual costs and attendance. Negative variances show where you guessed too low. There are lots of reasons for a variance. Here are a couple of fun ones: the cook spent (less/more) than budgeted, lots of extra off-board people showed up because it was a beautiful day, we accidentally broke a table and had to pay for the replacement. The results of this analysis help make future planning more accurate.

There is a Budget Analysis Table in the appendix that you can use to help analyze the expenditures you will have for an event.

This is a lot of words to describe a simple process, but going through the effort is worthwhile. The information from putting together a complete budget helps make the event run smoothly.



## Reservations and Troll

-Lady Hildarun Hugelman

**To the Autocrat:** What follows is an explanation of the duties of your Reservations Clerk and Head Troll of your event. Please keep in mind that there are many ways to perform these functions. This is only one way, but it is a common and (I hope) relatively organized way. As autocrat, your main responsibility is to choose your staff wisely. The positions of reservations clerk and head troll should be held by someone who is at least marginally organized and pretty detail oriented. They need not be the same person, but should you have different people for the two positions, they should be in close communication immediately before the event at least.

### **Some notes to keep in mind:**

1. Whatever is said here should not override any Society, Kingdom, or Baronial Law. Where there are inconsistencies between this writing and current Law, you should always follow the Law.
2. Sometimes the Reservations Clerk and the Head Troll are the same person. Sometimes (especially for small events) the Reservations Clerk and the Autocrat are the same person. The Autocrat and the Troll should NOT be the same person because the autocrat should be free to deal with problems that may arise during the day or weekend.
3. Our society is a game based on chivalry and courtesy and a wonderful dream that you are helping to bring to life. It is, however, a game that really does exist in the real world.  
**Reservations Clerk and Head Troll are going to be dealing with people's real money, and the problems and responsibilities that working with money entails.**

I will first outline the responsibilities of the reservations clerk, then head troll, and also the autocrat's responsibilities in relation to the two.

### Reservations Clerk:

When people pay money for an event, usually the autocrat allows them to pre-register. This means they have an option to pay in advance instead of at the door. Someone accepts money (usually cash and checks) through the mail and in person before the event, and takes down the names of the people pre-reserving and the amounts they pay.

### **The Clerk should:**

1. Keep a record of the names of the people who are coming (SCA and mundane, or mundane only),
2. Keep a record of how much they have paid and in what category (i.e.: on-board adult, out-board child, etc), *including those people who are coming for free* (i.e.: royalty or babies),
3. Make sure the Head Troll has all these records before the event opens, and
4. Periodically give funds collected (checks and/or cash) to the Exchequer, who will deposit said funds into the Baronial bank account. This is important because when someone writes you a check, it rude to hold it for months and months, making it annoying or difficult for the check-writer to balance their checkbook.

### **The Autocrat should:**

1. Decide (with the Clerk) whether to take unpaid reservations (I believe this to be a Bad Idea that can cause mass confusion, misunderstandings, and general unhappiness),
2. Make sure the correct pricing information is published in newsletters and on-line (including whether the price goes up after a certain date, clear age and food price categories, and whether the Non-member Surcharge may be included with the reservation),
3. Make sure correct contact information is published in newsletters and on-line (DO NOT publish email addresses or phone numbers of your staff unless they give you express permission!), and
4. Keep all lines of communication open among the autocrat, cook(s), Exchequer, and Troll.

Notes: It does not matter HOW the records are kept, as long as it is clear, logical, and easily decipherable by anyone looking at them. I prefer to use a spreadsheet (like Excel) since it is easy to alphabetize names and otherwise sort information. Some people put names on separate index cards. This is very organized, but it can slow down your Troll, and it makes it *much* harder for the Exchequer to put together an event report. I have also found the best way to organize the list of people pre-registered is by mundane last name. Everyone has one and knows what it is and how to spell it, which is not always the case with an SCA name. Plus a mundane name is usually required for the event report.

### **Variations:**

- Sometimes you cannot pre-register for an event and all fees are collected at the door (in which case you do not need Reservations Clerk).
- Sometimes there is a discount in the event fee if you pre-register, and prices go up if you pay at the door.
- You could also make it a requirement that people or a subset of people (like merchants) pre-register, and no fees are collected at the door.
- If you are running an event where people do not have to pay, you could have a person whose job it is to collect donations, or someone who is keeping track of who is bringing what to the potluck. There are many possibilities, but the bottom line is that either you have someone keeping track of who is coming, or you don't.

### **Head Troll:**

The Head Troll is the person in charge of checking people into an event. The Troll will organize other people to sit at the check-in table (Troll) and check people in. As of this writing, there must always be two people sitting at the troll table while it is open, and they may not live in the same household, be family members or significant others. This is because the people working troll are dealing with other people's money. Please educate yourself as to the specific Laws pertaining to troll that exist during your time.

### **The Head Troll should:**

1. Make sure all the people working at the troll table (including Him/Herself) do the following:
2. Keep a *careful* record of the names of not pre-registered people who check in (SCA and mundane, or mundane only),

3. Keep a *careful* record of how much not pre-registered people have paid and in what category (i.e.: on-board adult, out-board child, etc), *including those people who are coming for free* (i.e.: royalty or babies),
4. Check off the names of the pre-registered people who come in,
5. Check proof of membership of everyone who comes to the event,
6. Collect the Non-member Surcharge from people who are not members of the SCA,
7. Make sure all non-members, people with white membership cards and parents with children sign waivers (some sites require that ALL people who enter must sign a waiver, regardless of membership),
8. Count the cash you have collected every single time you change shifts (i.e.: when one or both people working at troll leave and have someone else take over their place),
9. Hand out site pamphlets and tokens as necessary,
10. Keep a feast space waiting list as necessary,
11. Sell said feast spaces at the designated time (see below),
12. Keep a careful count of how many people have paid for on and off-board spaces for the cooks, and
13. Give the money (cash and checks) and records to the Exchequer or Autocrat at the end of the event so that they may make the event report.

#### **The Autocrat should:**

1. NOT overload the troll with complicated site pamphlets and tokens to hand out (PLEASE do not expect the people working troll to collate or fold or otherwise put together pamphlets or site tokens. The duty of troll is to collect money and keep records for you. If you need something to be assembled, find some bored-looking people to do it),
2. Decide when the troll table should open and close,
3. If necessary, send a herald around to make sure everyone has checked in (this may not be possible at very large events),
4. Decide when to sell feast spaces of people that have paid but not shown up to people who may be on the feast waiting list,
5. Keep the cook(s) updated on how many people are on site who are on and off-board,
6. Solve any problems that may arise, and
7. Make sure the Head Troll has enough change and adult and children's waivers. It does not matter who provides these things, but the Autocrat must make sure some sort of arrangement is made so that Troll has them.

#### **Important Notes:**

1. Make sure you have plenty of one-dollar bills and quarters if you need them. Depending on the size of the event and the event fees, troll should be equipped with at least \$50 in ones, unless the site fees are multiples of five. If you are expecting more than 100 people, or the site fees will engender giving lots of ones as change, troll should have at least \$100 or more in ones. Use common sense. Expect that most people will pay with twenties and estimate how many people will come. Plan your change accordingly. It is better to have too much change than not enough.
2. NEVER, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, LEAVE MONEY UNATTENDED!

3. If you have a lot of cash, you may wish to give some of it to the Exchequer in the middle of the day.
4. At events where feast space is limited, you may sell out of feast space. For example, say there are 100 feast spaces, and 30 people are pre-registered on-board. That means you can sell 70 feast spaces. *Be sure to include children and babies that will need seats in that number! Be clear about whether people sitting at High Table are included in that number.* The 71<sup>st</sup> person and subsequent people who want to eat feast may be put on a waiting list. That person will pay the off-board price and come back later and pay the rest if a feast space is available. You can tell people to come back at a specific time and check, or you may send someone to find them if space becomes available.
5. Feast space may become available if someone who is pre-registered for feast does not show up, or decides to leave, or if the cook and autocrat decide to allow another table.
6. **REFUNDS MAY NOT BE GIVEN OUT AT TROLL.** If someone requests a refund, for any reason, the matter must be taken up directly with the Exchequer. Have the Autocrat take the person's name, number and the reason for the request, and have the Exchequer contact them.

**End Note:** Remember to have FUN! Responsibly.



### **Finding the Right Site for Your Event**

-Vrouw Odriana vander Brugghe

When you are building your event bid, one of the first things you will need to determine is where you will hold your event. The site is very much activity dependant, as well as money dependant. In the Barony Marche of the Debatable Lands, at this writing, there are some sites that have become frequently used due to their accessibility, cost effectiveness, and convenience. However, this does not mean that you can not use new locations that are better suited to your comfortability level (perhaps it's your church or school that you've found will rent to you) or to the event that you're having.

You must consider the kind of event you are having, and the time of year that you're having it. There are special needs for events that involve heavy-weapons fighting, fencing, thrown weapons, archery, hound coursing, equestrian activities, classes, and Royalty (See the section on page 24 for more detailed information about martial activities and their individual site requirements. *-Ed.*). Each of these things requires extra rooms (if there is no outdoor space) or outdoor space (with potential for indoor space if the weather doesn't cooperate). There are also requirements that Heavy Weapons Fighting and Fencing have as to how large of a space they will require. Talk with your local Marshall to get this information so that you are sure that you choose a site that will accommodate the activities you would like to have.

Overall, finding a site is a very "form follows function" activity. In Appendix B of this handbook, there is information on some of our more frequently used sites, including contact information.



## **The Care and Feeding of Your Feastocrat**

- Lady Illadore de Bedegrayne

So, you're autocratting an event! Wonderful. Now it's time to talk about how to get along with your Feastocrat. Communication is the keystone to a good working relationship. Your Feastocrat will be spending a large amount of money (sometimes the biggest expense of the event) and it is paramount that good communication lines are open. If you do not, there could be a bad feast, cost overruns, accidents, no food at all, cats and dogs living together - mass hysteria.

Here are some questions that both you and your Feastocrat should be able to answer collectively:

### **Budget:**

1. What is the maximum amount of people for feast? (This number should be written in stone.)
2. What is the cost of the feast? How much per person?
3. What "extras" are involved in the cost of the feast? Is breakfast and lunch being served? Are drinks going to be served? Does Gatorade for the fighters come out of the feast budget? What about hall decorations? What about cleaning supplies?
4. Are there any "comp" dinners? (High table, servers, kitchen staff...)
5. When will the Feastocrat receive money to purchase food and other items?
6. What will happen if there is a cost overrun?
7. How will feast sales be monitored to know for how many the Feastocrat should cook?
8. Does the Feastocrat have a tax-exempt letter so food can be purchased for the feast without paying tax?
9. Does the Feastocrat know the deadlines for turning in receipts?
10. Is there money in the budget for recipe booklets?

### **Menu Planning:**

1. What level of formality, period-correctness and elaborateness is appropriate for the feast?
2. Is there a theme for the feast?
3. What food items should not be served? Is alcohol allowed in cooked dishes? How will allergies/other food issues be handled?
4. How is the feast to be served: buffet, servers or some other method?
5. When is the feast to be served? Before or After Court?
6. When will the menu be announced? When will an accurate and complete ingredient list for each dish be available?
7. What will happen with leftover food? Shall it be given to the populace or given to a food shelter?

### **The Kitchen:**

1. What is the kitchen like? Can the Feastocrat go and see the kitchen first?
2. Are there any issues with the kitchen itself? Does all the ovens work? Are there enough outlets? (The list can be near endless. Letting the Feastocrat visit the site will take care much of these issues.)
3. Are there serving utensils available at the kitchen? Who will get the larder if there are not?

4. When will the Feastocrat be able to get into the kitchen? Is someone else using it for breakfast or lunch or anything else that day?
5. When does the kitchen/site close?
6. Will the Feastocrat be able to park near the kitchen? How much parking will be available for the Feastocrat and any assistants?
7. Are there cleaning supplies at the site, including brooms and mops?
8. Does the site's trash service cover all the extra garbage the feast will generate? If not, will there be an extra fee or will you have to haul it away?
9. How much refrigerator/freezer space is available at the site?
10. Is there a place for guests to wash their own dishes?
11. Where is the nearest grocery store and will there be a runner?

### **Other people:**

1. If this is the Feastocrat's first event as feastocrat, who is the Mentor?
2. Who is the Deputy Feastocrat and can they step in if a bus hits the Feastocrat the day before?
3. Who is in charge of the clean-up crew and will the Feastocrat be required to clean if they do not show?
4. Who is in charge of serving?
5. Is there a site representative available in case of stoves going out, fans not working, etc.?
6. Who is the Royalty Liaison and are any specific Royalty needs known?

As you can see, there are many details that need to be communicated to the Feastocrat to make sure there is a successful feast. This checklist just scratches the surface. Anything odd or unusual about the feast or the kitchen should be told to the Feastocrat as soon as possible to keep problems to a minimum. The Feastocrat, in turn, should also let the Autocrat know if there are any issues with the feast itself.

Good luck and have a good feast!



### **The Importance of Auxiliary Staff at Events**

- Vrouw Odriana vander Brugghe

You've most likely heard the adage "many hands make light work", and I can honestly say that this is very true in the case of Autocratting. I define "auxiliary staff" as the staff that is not necessarily required to identify at the time that you write up your event bid (the required people are: the Autocrat, Head Cook (Feastocrat), Tollner (Troll), and Reservationist (who can be the same person as the Tollner, in fact, I'd actually recommend it)). Some of these other people can be specifically arranged, such as someone to delegate finding Hall Clean-Up Staff, or Kitchen Clean-Up Staff, or asking your friendly local herald to make announcements throughout the day so you don't have to run around looking for one when you absolutely have to have one \*now\*, or any number of little things that are absolutely essential to making your event run smoothly and keeping you from tearing out your hair by the end of the day. There are also the random people who just pitch in to work in the kitchen, or to sweep a bit before they head to the post-revel, or someone who offers to find out

just who has the key to the closet with the toilet paper in it before that last roll in the men's room is about to run out. Without these "many hands", your event would simply not run as smoothly.

The Auxiliary Staff that you should definitely engineer are the following:

**Kitchen Clean-Up Coordinator**

**Head Dishwasher**

**Hall Clean-Up Coordinator**

**Head Server** (if you are having a feast, not an all-day sideboard)

**Children's Activity Coordinator** (this can, but doesn't have to, be your local Minister of Youth)

Depending on the type of event you are running, the following people may also be good to have. This is a *very* complete list, do not be daunted, I'm allowing for every eventuality I can come up with in this section. There is no significance to the order they are listed:

**Musician Coordinator** (for arranging musicians to play during court)

**Performance Coordinator** (liaison between you and your local choir/consort/other)

**Royalty Liaison** (someone that is a single point of contact for the Royalty, who also makes sure that the site has all of the necessary rooms/staff/etc. for them at the event – please see the section entitled "Royalty at Events" for more details.)

**Marshall-in-Charge** (heavy weapons, fencing, thrown weapons, youth fighting, equestrian activities, and archery all need their own Marshals)

**Master/Mistress of the List** (for Heavy Weapons)

**Class Coordinator** (if you are holding any classes)

**A&S Coordinator** (A&S Displays/Competitions or Artisan's Forums)

**Heraldic Consult Table**

**Games Coordinator** (anywhere from someone to make sure that some board games make it to the event, to someone to coordinate a full-scale competition)

**Merchant Coordinator**

The other auxiliary staff person that I was recommended to include (thank you, She'era) is the "keeper of the brain cell". It is someone that you can lean on when you become overstressed and your focus is harder to attain. This can be a spouse, significant other, best friend, mentor, Peer, or someone that you trust to help you re-focus when you need it. This person can also help you when you are too close to the process of making the event happen and offer an objective viewpoint, catch something you may have missed, or schedule a massage – all at just the right time.

When you have determined your Staff, they can then go off and do their thing and you will just need to check in with them periodically to make sure that all is going smoothly. My recommendation is making contact monthly until two months before the event, then every two weeks until two weeks before the event, then every week. Obviously this can and should be modified depending on how things are going. If there are pre-event "challenges", being more available and touching base more often will help avoid them becoming Event Chaos.

There are several ways to persuade people to help you with these tasks that are mutually beneficial. These things are different for every event, for example:

- To ensure that you have more than one person washing dishes during the entire event, offering either a “comp” (they don’t have to pay anything), or a “site-fee only” charge is a nice way to encourage someone to spend their day getting a steam facial and grease driven under their nails.
- You can offer a discounted entrance fee for people who volunteer to be servers.

There are also other “trade offs” that aren’t expensive and will make things easier for everyone, be creative. However, keep in mind that comps must be included in your Event Bid and added into your break even. Since these things must be determined prior to your event bid, it is important that you talk with your Head Cook so that you know just how much help they will need in the kitchen, and since you know the maximum number of people that can attend a feast, you can plan for the correct number of servers.

I also recommend that you make sure that your Hall Clean-Up Coordinator sits down at some point while clean-up is happening to get everyone who is helping’s name down. Same with your Head Cook and Head Server. Then, send a nice Thank You letter, mentioning them all by name, as well as allowing that someone may have been missed, to your local newsletter for their next issue as a way of showing your appreciation.

If you are gracious with people’s help, treat your staff well, and reciprocate when one of them is Autocratting an event (or Staffing an event and need help) you can pretty much guarantee yourself a strong and skilled staff for every event you run and every event that they run. It’s all about reciprocation and well-expressed gratitude.



### **Writing Event Announcements to Win Friends and Influence People**

-Baroness Margaret Makafee

An effective event announcement serves two purposes: it provides advertising to entice people to come to an event, and it provides the information they need to successfully attend. Both purposes are important to the health of an event. This article provides one method for writing an effective event announcement.

#### **Know the rules**

The Kingdom Chronicler has policies regarding event announcements and when they will be published. The Chronicler policies are available at <http://www.aethelmearc.org>. Read them before you start.

#### **Make a list**

When you're ready to start writing your announcement, make a checklist of all the information that needs to go into that announcement. Here's one such list. An asterix (\*) next to an item marks information that must be included for the event to be "official" -- an official event is one where official business, such as courts or changes in office, may be done. These items are also the basic information for an event, so be sure to include them in any event announcement..

The name of the event

\*The date of the event

- \*When the site opens and when it closes
- \*The site name and full mailing/street address for the site
- \*The name of the hosting group, and the group sponsor if the group is incipient
- \*The name, mailing address and phone number of the autocrat
- \* Event prices and price schedules
- \* Who to make checks out to
- Name and address of the person taking reservations
- Reservation cutoff dates (if any)
- Important site rules and information such as
  - Site alcohol policy
  - Handicapped accessibility of the site
  - Site pet policy
  - Site policy on open flames
  - Any other important site rules
- Information about the feast schedule
  - All day, dinner only, or lunch and dinner
  - Name and contact information for the head cook
- Activities
  - What will happen at the event
  - What time will time sensitive events happen (such as armor inspection, closing time for A&S contest entries, etc)
- Directions to the site

Also make a list of less important information you want to include in the announcement, like what type of food will be served at the feast or non-time sensitive activities happening at your event.

### **Decide on a hook**

A hook is a way to get people interested in your event. It is one or two sentences that draw the reader in and make them want to read more of your event announcement. The hook sets the tone for the event -- is the event about solemn ceremony, dancing and music, battles well fought and won, or comedy? Your hook should reflect this. Here's a wonderful hook from the St Nicholas day event: "Come celebrate the child in us all at the Barony Marche of the Debatable Land's Feast of St Nicholas." The hook lets you know that this will be a children's oriented event and that the tone of the day will be light and fun. Another good example comes from the Master's Tourney at Mill Creek: "Have you got all the skills you need to be a knight? Are you sure? Find out at the Master's Tourney at Mill Creek" This hook promises lots of fighting as well as other knightly activities; it promises a full day for all attendees.

### **Organize your announcement**

Most event announcements can be written in 6 paragraphs:

**Paragraph 1:** Basic event information. This paragraph should include the hook, the event name, date, and street address of the site.

**Paragraph 2:** Activities. This paragraph tells people why they should come to your event.

**Paragraph 3.** Site Policies. Make sure people know the restrictions and freedoms of the site.

**Paragraph 4.** Food. Everyone's got to eat, so let them know what to expect foodwise. Also let them know who to contact if they need to know whether they can eat the feast.

**Paragraph 5.** Reservations. What's the fee schedule, the price structures (on, off, and outboard), who to write the check to, and where to send it. This is a good place for the autocrat's name and contact info, too.

**Paragraph 6.** Directions. This is pretty much self explanatory. Don't forget to play test your site directions; you don't want people getting lost on the way to your event.

### **Take your announcement and check it twice**

Take your checklist and read your announcement. When you find an item on your checklist, check it off. When you're done, look for any unchecked items. Don't have any? Wonderful, you've got a complete announcement. If you have missing items, plug the missing information into the appropriate paragraph.

Now, check it again. Is your announcement clear? Is the grammar correct? Does the information flow well and is it presented in an interesting manner? This is important, since clarity and flow of information is what keeps people reading.

When you've checked your announcement twice, have someone else check it. Often, A second pair of eyes will catch things you missed and notice errors that weren't apparent to you.

### **Submit!**

Once your announcement is written, complete, and double-checked, it's time to submit it. Such an announcement will generate interest in your event and help give it the success it deserves.



### **Royalty at Events**

- Countess Genevieve du Vent Argent

The royalty (King and Queen or Prince and Princess) will often have a Chamberlain or head retainer or some other person serving them in an administrative capacity, who coordinates their schedule and who serves as their contact person. This person may be the one to contact the autocrat (or sometimes the Baron and Baroness), to let them know that the royalty are planning to attend the event. The Baron and Baroness of your Barony may also like to have some of these things, but on a smaller scale, and will often fend for themselves (or have someone appointed to take care of them).

If your event is very large or if you are uncomfortable or would prefer to have someone else contact the royalty, you could appoint a "royalty liaison" for your event. This person should be one of the older, more experienced members of the group, who might even already know the royalty or their chamberlain/head retainer. (If this is a Kingdom event, you might want to ask your Baron and Baroness for their advice on whom to select for this responsibility.)

The royalty liaison should ask the contact person what the royalty will need for the event. Typical things that are needed may include: a "royalty room", a place to hold court, a "high table" at feast, people to serve as retainers. The idea is to show your group's generosity by providing hospitality to the royalty; however, don't promise more than your group can deliver.

**Royalty room:** usually a small room (or other private space, like a tent or pavilion), where the royalty can change clothes and leave their belongings. They may also need space to sign scrolls (if

they are holding court at the event), or a place to meet with people privately. They may also just need a place to relax or "hide out" for a few minutes to take a break during the day. The amount and type of space you should provide will depend on the nature of the event. If it is a big Kingdom event, such as Coronation, Crown Tourney, or Kingdom Twelfth night, you should try to provide a larger room (such as a classroom or conference room, or a large pavilion if no room is available), so that the royalty have the space to do everything listed above. If it is a smaller event, they may just need a private place to change clothes and leave their belongings in a secure location, so a smaller room will do.

**Court:** Ask the contact person whether or not the royalty will have a head retainer traveling with them or attending the event. If so, this person usually will coordinate the court setup at the event and the retainers needed to serve during court. You should contact this person (ahead of time if possible) to see what sort of space is needed for court. In general, you should have an auditorium or a room where the thrones can be set up and chairs can be set up auditorium-style (in rows, facing the thrones, with an aisle down the center). Find out if the site allows banners to be hung on the walls or if a banner stand will be needed. Court could also be held outside; if so, it is nice to have some sort of sunshade for at least the royalty. If there is a large outdoor picnic pavilion where everyone can sit in the shade, even better. The royalty usually have a herald already arranged (usually the Kingdom herald or Baronial herald if it is a Baronial court), but if not they may ask if the local herald is available to serve. The royalty will work out their court business with their herald; the autocrat does not need to get involved. If there are announcements to be made, such as winners of competitions or other event-related announcements, this information should be given to the person collecting business for the royalty's court (usually their herald).

**High Table:** There is another section in this book talking about how to serve high table. Usually, depending on the nature of the event (large or small, local or Kingdom-level), you will need to provide a high table. It should sit anywhere between 6-12 people, usually at the front of the hall, with space for everyone to sit on one side, facing the rest of the tables (as though they were on a stage); usually this would be two tables put end-to-end. If it is a local event, the Baron and Baroness will choose who sits at high table, and if it is a Kingdom-level event, then the King and Queen or Prince and Princess will choose who sits there. Out of courtesy, these parties will usually invite each other to sit at their high table. Usually this table is specially decorated with nice tablecloths, some candlesticks, and maybe some other nice things such as salt cellars or nice water pitchers. The royalty may have their own table decorations or may be traveling "light" and only bring their feast gear. Some royalty have their own people decorate the table as well as set out their feast gear, others may just have people set out their feast gear for them. If you have a royalty liaison for your event, they can find some of this out ahead of time, and can be put in charge of coordinating this activity (or delegating it) for the day. It is also nice (though not necessary) to have someone designated to wash the royalty's dishes, or to allow the royalty's retainers access to the kitchen to wash their dishes.

**Food for High Table:** Feast cooks will often add some extra dishes or special dishes or subtleties to serve to high table. Sometimes the cooks worry about having enough food to serve the high table, so they may ask how many chairs will be at high table. It is often the case that those sitting at high table will often not eat everything set in front of them (sometimes out of exhaustion from a busy day or because of the excitement of the day), so unless you know ahead of time that there will be more than 12 people up there, don't worry, just tell the cooks to plan for a regular table of 8 or so people, and to just add a couple of special dishes. The servers can always bring up more food if it is needed (based on what is not eaten at other tables). The most important thing to find out ahead of

time is whether or not the royalty have any food allergies or other dietary concerns, since the cooks may need to prepare special dishes. The royalty liaison should ask about this ahead of time, and make sure that the information is communicated to the head cook.

**Retainers:** If there is a head retainer in attendance at the event (especially at a Kingdom event), they will probably be the person coordinating volunteers to serve as retainers to the royalty. If not, the royalty may ask for a couple of volunteers to serve during the day. You should probably have an experienced person from your group serving as royalty liaison to coordinate this. Usually one or two people are needed to stay with the royalty all day long, to fetch & carry things, deliver messages, and run errands.

**Other things that are not required but which are very nice to provide:**

**Speedy check-in at Troll:** If you know that royalty are coming to your event, it would be good to let the people who are working at troll know about this, and if possible, to make it very easy for the royalty to "jump the line" and check-in quickly, especially if they are running late, or if it is a Kingdom event and they have little time to spare.

**Someone to meet the royalty at the Troll:** This would be a perfect thing for the person serving as royalty liaison to do. They can direct the royalty to their royalty room or changing room, give them a copy of the schedule for the day, find out any last-minute needs, etc.

**People to help unload and load the royalty's car:** Not required, but very nice, especially if they royalty are traveling without their own staff. If they already do have a head retainer or a household, the people willing to help should just offer to help out, but not dive in if things seem like they are under control. Usually, people are willing to accept offers of help. If this is to be done, have the person serving as royalty liaison coordinate it.

**Lunch:** Have the cooks (or someone specifically assigned to do this) make up a lunch tray for the royalty. This could be delivered to the royalty room or to wherever the royalty will be during lunchtime. If the royalty are traveling with a head retainer, this person may either collect lunch for them or assign someone to do it. If you have already provided the lunch ahead of time, it will be a simple matter of having someone collect it from the cooks.

**A sunshade or pavilion for outdoor activities:** If your event will have a lot of outdoor activities, such as a tournament or other martial competitions, you should consider setting up a sunshade or pavilion for the royalty to sit under during the day. If the event is a Kingdom event such as Coronation or Crown Tourney, the royalty may need a place to "sit in state" (where people give oaths of fealty or give gifts, or where the royalty can receive visitors), so an outdoor pavilion may be just the thing. You or the royalty liaison should ask the Crown's contact person whether or not the royalty are planning to bring a sunshade or pavilion with them.

The main thing is that you want the royalty to feel welcome, and to enjoy your event.



## How to be a Head-Server

-Lady Rua MacAodh

1. Take plate
2. Put head on plate
3. Serve

The most important thing when you are head-server is organization and people skills. Coordinate with the cooks by asking these pertinent questions:

1. What are the names of the dishes and which are in each remove.
2. Are there any known vegetarians/allergic people eating feast? Where are they sitting?
3. How many tables need to be set up? How many people per table?
4. Are there going to be special dishes and/or serving platters for high table?
5. Are the cooks and the kitchen staff okay? Do they need more help, less help, or dish dogs\*?

Once you have the answers to these questions, you are ready! When you get to the event, this is your basic timetable.

**Arrive** – put sign up sheet for servers at troll and bribe/threaten the herald to occasionally announce the need for servers. (you will need –at least- one server to two tables. Preferable is one server per table, but you can do it with less).

**1 hour before feast** – help get out and wash the serving platters and bowls to be used, ask your questions from the cooks when they are not doing something that requires their full attention (good chance to make them sit down for 5 minutes and drink some water!). About this time you can also start helping set up the tables and making sure the table chart is out for people to sign and that folk understand how many may sit at each table.

**15 minutes before feast** – gather your servers and explain where the dishes will be set out or handed to them, how many they may carry at a time (two small or one big platter/bowl), in what order the food will be coming out, and the names of the dishes. (if there is a vegetarian/allergic person at one servers table, make sure they know who it is and what dishes they need to be warned about.)

**During feast** – serve the head table first for every remove. Announce, and have your servers announce, what the dish is. Replenish the water pitchers on every table as they go empty. (this is an amazingly necessary job as each table will go through 3-4 pitchers in a feast.) Make sure the servers eat, they will have long periods of inactivity followed by brief spurts of dashing about, getting the dishes to the table. Patrol the tables towards the end of each remove, and gather the empty serving platters/bowls. Not only will this open up space on the tables, many times the dishes need to be washed and used again during the feast.

That’s about it. I’d be more than happy to assist anyone with more questions, or who would like to “reserve” me as head-server for a feast. Thank you for your interest!

\*Dish dogs – those wonderful gentles that are willing to do the nasty job of washing the amazingly prolific dishes produced during the preparation of the feast.

## Serving High Table

-Countess Genevieve du Vent Argent

Usually, depending on the nature of the event (large or small, local or Kingdom-level), you will need to provide a "High Table" or "Head Table". This is the table where the Royalty (King & Queen, Prince & Princess) or Baron & Baroness or other ranking nobles of the Kingdom (or important visitors or their other guests) will sit. It should be able to seat anywhere between 6-12 people, usually at the front of the hall, with space for everyone to sit on one side, facing the rest of the tables (as though they were on a stage). This is usually achieved by putting two tables put end-to-end to make one long table.

The high table serves as a "place of honor", and feast cooks will often add some extra dishes or special dishes or subtleties (special, decorated dishes) to be served to the high table. If the event is a local Baronial event, then the Baron & Baroness will usually choose who sits at high table, and if it is a Kingdom-level event, then the King & Queen or Prince & Princess will choose who sits there. Out of courtesy, these parties will usually invite each other to sit at their high table. Usually this table is specially decorated with nice tablecloths, some candlesticks, and maybe some other nice things such as salt cellars or nice water pitchers. The royalty may have their own table decorations or may be traveling "light" and only bring their feast gear. Some royalty have their own people decorate the table as well as set out their feast gear, others may just have people set out their feast gear for them. If you have a royalty liaison for your event, they can find some of this out ahead of time, and can be put in charge of coordinating this activity (or delegating it to someone else) for the day.

Who should serve High Table? Many people feel that it is an honor to serve the high table. People of high rank or peers of the realm may volunteer for this duty. The Baron & Baroness may sometimes feel that it is important to serve the high table themselves, especially if it is a Kingdom event, or they may wish to participate in the serving process in some way, since they are serving as the "hosts" for the event being held in their Barony, and the royalty are their guests. (It is a good idea to ask the Baron & Baroness ahead of time what their thoughts are on this subject, and find out how they would prefer it to be handled at your event.)

It is a good idea to have at least two servers specifically assigned to serve the high table and nothing else. This way they can focus their entire attention on making sure that the people at the high table have everything they need. It is important that at least one of the pair of servers has had prior experience at serving high table, or that they be one of the older members of the group. If there are two very new people who really want to serve high table, assign an extra experience person to work with them, even if only the new people take the dishes up to the table itself.

### **Important Considerations:**

- Since the high table is the "place of honor", dishes for each course should be delivered to the high table first, before delivering to the other tables.
- Make sure that water pitchers and those of other beverages are replenished regularly.
- Make sure that dishes of food are cleared from the table regularly, such as between courses, but ask the head of the table if everyone is done with a certain dish before removing it.
- Pay attention to whether the serving spoons in the dishes were provided by the kitchen, or whether they belong to someone sitting at the high table. (I have lost more serving spoons

while sitting at high table than I care to recall!) It is a nice idea for the kitchen to provide serving spoons with each dish going to high table, but this doesn't always happen.

- Pay attention to what is going on at the high table. If someone is speaking with Their Majesties or Their Highnesses or Their Excellencies, do not interrupt them, but wait until the conversation is finished before serving food. If the conversation is taking a long time, the servers should stand at attention, at the back of the hall, and the head server should send an old, experienced person up to high table to quietly inquire if it would be alright to serve the next course. This will subtly get things moving. Do not interrupt someone who is giving a toast; wait until the cries of "Vivat" are finished, then serve.
- Do not interrupt entertainment by serving a course, wait until the performance is done. It is alright to quietly clear away serving dishes or to replenish water pitchers, as long as it does not draw too much attention away from the entertainment. Use your best judgment.
- Subtleties (special, often elaborately decorated dishes) are usually served towards the end of a feast, and are announced with some fanfare. The subtlety is usually presented to the high table for their approval first, and then sometimes paraded about the feast hall so everyone can see it before it is placed on a sideboard to be cut up and served, or placed on the high table itself. (This depends on the nature and size of the subtlety and how the dessert course is being handled, whether it is a served dessert or a sideboard after feast.)
- After the feast is over, it is also nice (though not necessary) to have someone designated to wash the royalty's dishes, or to allow the royalty's retainers access to the kitchen to wash their dishes.

**"One From Each Table" Serving:** Some feasts do not have people who are designated to serve food. These are usually at smaller events, and are more informal feasts, where the feasters will be asked to have one person from each table to come up and pick up the food from the kitchen for the people at their table. If there is a high table with the Royalty or Baron & Baroness sitting there, someone (or two people) should be specifically designated to serve the high table (the high table should not be expected to ask one person sitting there to fetch the food).

The main thing is that you want the royalty to feel welcome, and for them to enjoy your event. You also want to make the Barony look good by providing hospitality.



### **Short People**

-Baroness Graidhne ni Ruaidh

Many autocrats have asked what the needs are for children's activities at an event. Others have wondered what on earth they would do if anyone asked them to run children's activities at an event. I have tried to answer those questions here.

### **The Space**

At an indoor event, children's activities should be near the main activity area. This allows parents to take part in the event, and yet keep an eye on their young ones as well. It gives those young ones a sense of being part of the activities, rather than hidden away in a far corner. The space should have tables and chairs for more children than are expected (there are always more children than are expected!), as well as a little room for parents and other adults to work with them. The space should be defined; one excellent chancellor minor I know has had success with a space set off by benches,

so that during active games, the adults are actually sitting around the edge watching and cheering them on. I have had more success with rectangular tables instead of round ones; round tables leave the little ones just out of reach, so you can't quite get there before they smear the (glitter glue, paint, purple frosting, etc.) on their new garb. The space should be near the restrooms; the adult in charge should feel able to send kids to the restroom without fearing that they will be lost, and remember that even five and six year olds can become so focused on their activity that they don't notice that they have to go until it's almost too late.

An outdoor space must have sufficient shade. Tables and chairs are nice if craft sorts of activities are planned, but frequently an outdoor site will lend itself to more active and messy games that won't need the same sort of furniture. Still, at least one table makes the whole thing more flexible, and gives the adults in charge more options. This space should not be right next to the archery range or the thrown weapons range, and should be far enough from the list area that you can catch the little one before she crosses the ropes to give her fighter-daddy a big hug.

If some sort of space is set up for children's activities during court, it should be near the space where court will be held. Proximity to court will allow parents to pop in and out, share time keeping an eye on the short people, sneak out of the boring parts...

### **Kinds of Activities**

When there is a theme for the event, try to suit the activities to that theme. It helps make the short people feel more a part of things, helps them to learn, and it's distinctly more fun. I try for a blend of activities, with some active games, some sit-down crafts, some storytelling, and something that they learn. I always aim for something that they can take away with them; a new game that they've made, a gift for their parents, a toy they made themselves, a craft item. I also try to put together a craft that the short people can present to the king and queen or the baron and baroness in court; the more often that they are in front of people and on their best behavior, the more quickly our children will become acculturated to this game we love so much.

I try to provide activities that can be adapted to more than one age group; the six to eight year olds will produce a far different painting project from the ones provided by the ten to twelve year olds. Frequently, I bring a puzzle or other project that is geared toward the older kids, something that they can work on their own if I know an older crowd will be there (painting scroll blanks and putting together a 3-D castle are among the things I've had for teens).

### **Miscellaneous needs**

Is there a budget for the children's activities? I generally spend about \$25 on consumables for each event. That includes juice boxes, some kind of kid-friendly snack (fruit snacks, peanut butter crackers, apples, oranges, occasionally candy), paper, bubble fluid, craft items. There are also craft materials available in the children's activities box, including crayons, markers, origami paper (and books), paints. One or two appropriate kids' books that can be read aloud are useful as well.

A sign up sheet at troll is often a good idea, though I don't always have one. There should never be fewer than two adults at children's activities; can you say "out-numbered?" I knew you could! Realistically, this means you shouldn't have fewer than three, because if you need to go find a parent, or the littlest one starts wailing that she \*can't\* possibly go to the bathroom by herself, or you need

to find the appropriate diaper-changing parent \*right now\*, you will still have the required two adults present. (This one is a Society level requirement, and a wise one at that.)

Accept any and all offers of help. When Edmundo offers to teach juggling, or Brion offers to tell stories, or Antoinette offers to teach whitework, go for it! This doesn't mean time off from the activity, but it does mean more adults present, a possible bathroom break, a little time to focus on the next activity, a little clean-up time from the last activity.

Set a definite start-up and close-down time for activities. Post these at troll, as well as a schedule for any special activities you might be doing that might be a draw for the older kids. If you have an older-kid-activity that they can work on themselves, salt the mine: get one or two skills...er, interested helpers... to sit down and start working on it. Others will join them.

## **Meals**

If activities start before lunch and lunch is provided, it is very useful to have someone bring a tray of kid-friendly foods to the children's activities space. Bread, cheese, fruit, cut veggies, are all things most short people will eat. Will there be a children's feast? Plan it out carefully; will it be simultaneous with the adult feast? Will kids be seated separately from the adult feast? If so, who will be with them? What will they do when they (inevitably) finish before the adults do?

Or, (in jest) we could chop them all up finely, put them in a big stewpot with rosemary for remembrance, simmer until tender....



## **Tournament Lists**

- THL Karana Yabokchi

*What every marshal-in-charge must know;*  
*What every marshal and combatant should know;*  
*What curious spectators may want to know.*

You have just agreed to be marshal-in-charge for an upcoming event. Now what?

### **Preparation:**

1. Does the event have a theme? Does the autocrat have any specific martial arts activities in mind?
  - Example: Holmgangr tourney at a Viking event.
  - Example: Mongolian combat archery.
2. Are there hosts for the martial activity?
  - Example: The Baron and Baroness are choosing their new Baronial Champions.
  - Example: Their Highnesses request a Swiss tourney for their Coronation.
  - Example: The Company of the Southern Watch sponsors a tournament.
3. Tourney format
  - Single elimination, double elimination, round robin, tavern brawl, weapons proficiency, Swiss tourney, Bear Pit, alley fight, Holmganger, Atlantian speed tourney, challenge, etc.

- If there are hosts, they are involved in the tournament selection if they want to be. If not, the decisions are made by the marshal-in-charge, the autocrat, and others if needed.
4. Supporting staff needed/available?
    - Other marshals
    - MOL
    - Chirurgeon
    - Herald
    - Judges
    - List runners
    - Water bearers

Before the Event:

1. If tourney format is non-standard, prepare a written description and list of rules.
2. Discuss with supporting staff.
3. Determine who is bringing what supplies (water/Gatorade), shade, list ropes, etc.).
4. Coordinate the timing of the day's martial events with the autocrat's master schedule.

The Day of the Event:

1. Arrive before the list opens and begin to set up the list field.
  - List ropes, layout, etc.
2. Assist/direct the placement of spectator pavilions, etc.
3. Coordinate with the MOL to begin check-in of combatants.
  - Authorization cards
  - Waivers
  - Judgment calls
4. Conduct weapons inspections.
5. Tournament begins.
6. Tournament ends.
7. Results are announced.
  - Court, announcement to the populace, etc.
8. MOL files report.
  - Tournament trees, waivers, list of combatants, etc.
9. Chirurgeon files report.
  - In the absence of a chirurgeon, the autocrat files the report.



**Martial Activities at Events: A Guide for Autocrats**

- THL Karana Yabokchi

***Introduction***

There are five types of martial activities that can occur at events, with heavy weapons, fencing, archery, and thrown weapons as the most common. Equestrian activities are also a possibility, but the equestrian community is very small in Aethelmearc at this time (January 2004). Martial activities can be divided into two general classes, those that involve hand-to-hand combat, and those that

involve competition to achieve the highest score. Heavy weapons and fencing belong to the former category, and archery and thrown weapons belong to the later. In Aethelmearc, equestrian activities do not involve actual combat between horses and riders. Games of skill on horseback predominate and the high score usually determines the eventual winner.

### ***Event Bid and Site Considerations***

To prepare an event bid, an autocrat must first determine if martial activities will occur. For some events, martial activities are primary, and for others they're secondary or non-existent. If an event has a theme, the theme may determine what will occur. Examples include a Holmgangr heavy weapons tourney at a Viking event, multiple archery ranges at an event with an archery theme, etc. Hosts of events can also determine what, if any, martial activities will occur. Their reigning Majesties host the semi-annual Crown and Kingdom Rapier tournaments, and landed nobility can host tournaments to choose their Champions. There are certain space requirements for each martial activity, and these must be taken into consideration when selecting a site. If an event site has been used previously for martial activities, staff from the former event can tell the autocrat what would be feasible. The primary four, heavy weapons, fencing, archery, and thrown weapons, can all occur in a space the size of a standard high school football field. Fortunately for autocrats, a single large space is not required, and individual areas are actually preferred. The following are approximate space requirements, and may vary depending upon the specific tournaments involved. Heavy weapons and fencing lists occupy about 900 square yards each (30 yards by 30 yards). An archery range would require 600 square yards (10 yards by 60 yards), which allows for a 40-yard range and an off-limits area behind the targets. A thrown weapons range would require a 300 square yard area (10 yards by 30 yards). If equestrian activities occur, the site would have to give permission, and areas for horse activities would need to be clearly identified and separated from spectators. In addition, a separate area such as a barn or a portable shelter would be needed to give the horses shade and an area to rest, drink and relax away from spectators.

### ***Staff***

Each martial activity will need a marshal-in-charge and additional support staff as required. The autocrat should identify certain key staff members, and then let them choose the remaining. Of course, if an event is not hosting a specific martial activity, staff for that activity is not required.

#### Key staff members:

Archery marshal-in-charge

Equestrian marshal-in-charge

Fencing marshal-in-charge

Heavy weapons marshal-in-charge

Thrown weapons marshal-in-charge

Minister of the list (primarily for heavy weapons and fencing tournaments)

Chirurgeon (highly recommended for heavy weapons and/or fencing tournaments)

Herald-in-charge (Kingdom)

#### Additional staff members:

Marshals (assistants to the marshal-in-charge)

Heralds (assistants to the herald-in-charge)

List runners (messengers)

Waterbearers  
Judges (for specific tourney formats)

### ***Tournaments by Type***

#### Archery

The archery marshal-in-charge will determine what types of archery activities will occur at the event in consultation with the autocrat and the hosts, if any. An archery range consists of targets typically spaced at 20, 30, and 40 yards. These targets can be standard archery targets for royal round shoots, or novelty targets that challenge the archers. Some of these targets can be stationary or they can be mobile, depending upon the inventiveness of the archery staff. A roving range involves a series of targets or any type set up along a walking path. The available space at a site will determine the types of archery contests that can occur.

#### Equestrian

The equestrian marshal-in-charge will determine what types of equestrian activities will occur at the event in consultation with the autocrat and the hosts, if any. Races between horse/rider combinations and tests of agility and accuracy are the most common. The available space at a site will determine the types of equestrian contests that can occur.

#### Fencing

The fencing marshal-in-charge will determine what types of fencing activities will occur at the event in consultation with the autocrat and the hosts, if any. Round robin tournaments, where every participant fights every other participant, are most common. Simulated indoor fights and challenge tournaments are also popular. The available space at a site will determine the types of fencing contests that can occur.

#### Heavy Weapons

The heavy weapons marshal-in-charge will determine what types of heavy weapons activities will occur at the event in consultation with the autocrat and the hosts, if any. Double elimination tournaments, where participants who lose twice are eliminated, are the preferred format for certain events (e.g. Crown). There are many other types of tournaments, and the available space at a site will determine the types of heavy weapons contests that can occur.

#### Thrown Weapons

The thrown weapons marshal-in-charge will determine what types of thrown weapons activities will occur at the event in consultation with the autocrat and the hosts, if any. A thrown weapons range consists of targets spaced at 20 yards or less. Participants can throw at standard targets or at novelty targets that challenge the thrower. The available space at the site will determine the types of thrown weapons contests that can occur.

### ***Additional Key Points for Autocrats***

In addition to the providing a site for martial activities, there are also a number of other points that the autocrat may wish to consider. The autocrat in consultation with the martial staff determines the overall layout of the outdoor events. This includes the layout for pavilions for the royalty and spectators. Also the autocrat determines the overall schedule of events. The layout and the schedule must be communicated to the entire martial staff. The martial staff (marshals, MOL, chirurgion) may provide their own shade, tables and chairs, but the autocrat should confirm this. Water and Gatorade are typically provided by the chirurgion, but the autocrat may be asked to purchase the Gatorade, cups, trash bags, etc., and/or help locate five-gallon containers. Marshals-in-charge typically provide the equipment necessary for their particular activity, but the autocrat may wish to confirm all arrangements with all key martial staff approximately 2 weeks before the event. Martial staff will not be able to leave the field to go to the hall for lunch. Depending upon the importance of the tournaments, many of the spectators will not leave either. The autocrat may wish to coordinate with the lunch staff to bring lunch outside. If lunch is brought to the fields, please provide separate tables for the food. The martial staff will be closely following the action on the field and should not have to deal with the crush caused by lunch.



## Appendix A

### Event Checklist

-Vrouw Odriana vander Brugghe

**Note:** This checklist is as complete as I could make it, and I'm sure that I've missed something. This checklist does not include any "how-to" information.

- What is the theme of your event?
- Who will be cooking your feast?
- If this is your first time autocrating, you will need a mentor, who will that be?
- Who will be taking reservations?
- Who will be running the Troll for the event?
- Who will be coordinating Hall Clean Up?
- Who will be coordinating Kitchen Clean Up?
- What kinds of activities would you like to have?
- If you have fighting/fencing/thrown weapons/archery do you have the correct marshals for these activities?
- If you are going to have any A&S activities, would you prefer to have an A&S Display, and Artisan's Forum, or an A&S Competition.
- If you have a Competition, do you have a judge?
  - Will the judge need to provide a prize or prizes?
  - Are you going to have Children's Activities?
- Do you wish to have merchanting?
  - Who would the merchants contact to vend at the event?
  - How much space do you have for vendors?
  - Is there a table fee for merchanting at the event?
  - Is this fee applicable whether or not they bring their own tables?
  - How much space do you have for merchants?
- Will there be performances at this event?
  - Choral performance?
  - Instrumental performance?
- Will there be court/courts?
  - Baronial Court?
  - Royal Court?
  - Both?
- Will you need musicians for court?
  - Who would be best to coordinate these people?
- Do you have a copy of a blank event bid?
  - Local event bid?
  - Kingdom event bid?
- Have you double checked the requirements for what is needed for different types of event bids?
- Have you double checked your cost analysis so that you will cover your costs for this event?
- Did you include enough for site tokens?
  - Decorations?
  - Site book?

- Feast book? (if not in the feast budget, if separate from the site book)
- Prizes for any competitions?
- Have you made enough copies of the event bid for Officer's Meeting?
- Have you written an Event Announcement?

*After the event bid has been approved:*

If **any** expenditure has increased over \$50, you must go back to the Officers and request an increase in your event budget.

## **Appendix B**

### **Oft-used Event Sites in the Barony Marche of the Debatable Lands**

This is a list of the sites most commonly used by the BMDL at this time. This does not mean that we are only permitted to use these sites, just that we use them a lot. If you find a site that is useful, then by all means, use it and pass along the information so that other Autocrats can use them later.

#### **Mt. Lebanon Christian Church**

(frequently called, “Creador’s Mom’s Church”)

Cedar Boulevard at Hollycrest

Mt. Lebanon, PA 15228

Telephone : (412) 531-8554

FAX: (412) 531-4155

This is a BONE DRY site. There is no alcohol allowed anywhere near the premises. Creador is wonderful about making himself available for set-up and clean-up. His mother is the secretary for this church and he has a very vested interest in how we take care of this site.

The site has many rooms that can be used, and it has been used for scolas, large events, and small events. This site is not well-suited for fighting of any variety. You are really restricted to indoor activities.

The site costs \$400 and requires a signed Usage Agreement and Proof of Insurance from SCA, Inc.

#### **Dorseyville Fire Hall**

100 Charles Street

Pittsburgh PA. 15238

This is a wet site. This site is excellent for outdoor fighting, there is a large field near to a large open area behind the main building. The main building is really only one large room, but it is a lovely site even with that limitation. There is a small room off of the main room that can be used for a Royalty Room (to sign scrolls, etc before court), or a scriptorium, or for scroll signing/changing for Their Excellencies. The kitchen is small, but there is another washing-up area on the opposite end of the hall that is perfect for washing feast gear/doing some food prep.

The site cost includes a cleaning deposit that we typically have returned.

#### **Carnegie Mellon University**

5000 Forbes Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15213

This is a free site where a great number of meetings and special events are held. The site is dry and we only typically use this site for all day social events (like a sewing circle, an informal pot-luck event, or something equally low-key). In order to find out room availability and to find out any restrictions that the campus may have, you would contact the CMU Rooms Liaison, who at this writing is Vrouw Odriana vander Brugghe (JennS@cmu.edu).

## **Appendix C**

### **Mentor Contact Listing**

If you are autocratting your first event, you will need a mentor. Here is a listing of experienced Autocrats that you can contact (alphabetical listing):

Baroness Arianna of Wynthrope  
Karen Kasper  
arianna\_wyn@yahoo.com

THL Hrefna in Heppna Thorgrimsdottir  
'Raven' Fagelson  
412-361-6874  
HraefnN@yahoo.com

Lady Odriana vander Brugghe  
Jennifer Strobel  
412/784-1307 (before 9:00 p.m. only)  
JennS@cmu.edu

Baroness Ts'vee'a bas Tseepora Levi  
Gail Lefkowitz  
Please see Dark Pages for contact information

## Appendix D

### Budget Analysis Table

<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Analysis (why did this happen?)</b>
	(a)	(b)	(a-b)	
	#	#	#	

#### Attendance

Adults on-board			
Adults off-board			
Adults out-board			
Children & babies			
Complementary (freebies)			

#### General

	\$	\$	\$
Occupancy			
Equipment rental			
Supplies			
Printing			
Other			
<b>TOTAL</b>			

#### Lunch

	\$	\$	\$
Food			
Supplies			
Other			
<b>TOTAL</b>			

Budget per actual attendance is: \_\_\_\_  
 (total lunch cost divided by paid on- and off-board adults)

#### Feast

	\$	\$	\$
Food			
Supplies			
Other			
<b>TOTAL</b>			

Budget per actual attendance is: \_\_\_\_  
 (total feast cost divided by paid on-board adults)

#### Financial results

	\$	\$	\$
Total Revenue			
Total Expenses			
Income			

(Revenue less expenses)

## Appendix E

### BMDL Event Bid Form (worksheet)

This is available electronically in both .pdf and .rtf formats on the Debatable Lands website (URL: <http://www.debatablelands.org/evntplcy.html>). This is included here as a worksheet, not as a full-fledged bid form, and should not be used as such.

Name of Proposed Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Backup Date, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

Site opening time: \_\_\_\_\_ Site closing time: \_\_\_\_\_ Wet, Damp or Dry site: \_\_\_\_\_

Site Name & Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Theme of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Capacity of site for feast: \_\_\_\_\_ Total site capacity: \_\_\_\_\_ Expected number of attendees: \_\_\_\_\_

Planned Activities: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Personnel** (SCA & Mundane names for Autocrat & Head Cook)

Autocrat: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor, if needed: \_\_\_\_\_

Head Cook: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor, if needed: \_\_\_\_\_

Reservations: \_\_\_\_\_ Troll: \_\_\_\_\_

Setup: \_\_\_\_\_ Hall Cleanup: \_\_\_\_\_

Kitchen Cleanup: \_\_\_\_\_ Head Server: \_\_\_\_\_

Others as applicable (Marshals, List & Chirurgeon for tourneys; Archery Captain; Dance master; Class Coordinator; Children's Activities; Herald; Arts Exhibit; Merchants; Security for larger events) \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Budget**

Cost of Site:	\$ _____	
Cost of Supplies:	\$ _____	(Attach list if over \$50)
Other:	\$ _____	(Attach List of items)
<i>Add above numbers= Subtotal</i>	\$ _____	
<i>Divide by</i> Number of people to break even	_____	(Should be 5-20% smaller
<i>Equals</i> Site fee per person	\$ _____	than expected attendance)
Cost of Lunch per person:	\$ _____	
Cost of Feast per person:	\$ _____	
Proposed Fees: On-board ( <i>site fee + lunch + feast</i> )	\$ _____	
( <i>Round up</i> ) Off-board ( <i>site fee + lunch</i> )	\$ _____	
Children's discounts, if any	_____	
(Typically, age 6-12 half price, 5 and under free, but use your best judgment)		

(Please use a separate sheet for alternative fee schedules, like camping fees, outboard, etc.)



Edited by Jennifer Strobel, known in the Society as Odriana vander Brugghe  
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