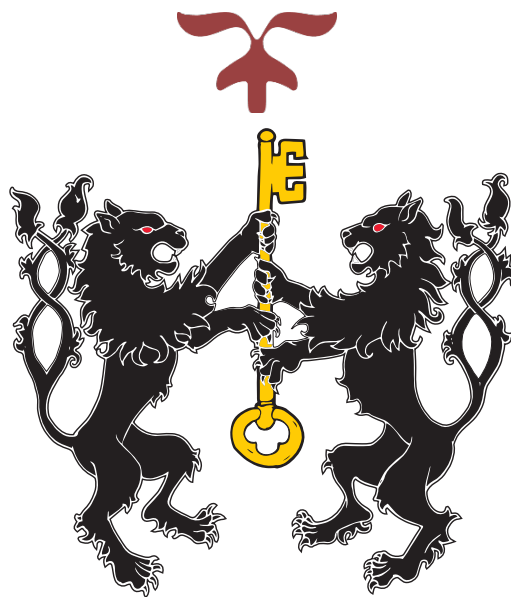


Kingdom of An Tir Seneschal Handbook

A Guide for Branch Seneschals



APRIL 29, 2022

BARONESSA JULIA SEMPRONIA, OL OP

Acknowledgements

This handbook has been a dream of mine since I served as Kingdom Seneschal, yet I and other seneschals both before and after found it too much to take on while serving. Thus, it was a great pleasure to have been tasked with the project by Mistress Attia Prima, OP, the present Kingdom Seneschal, and to her go my thanks for its fruition.

I am indebted to the talents and wisdom of several past branch, regional, Kingdom, and Society Seneschals who have shared their wisdom and experiences in preparing this guide. I would also like to thank the talented former Principality Seneschal Porzia di Corbino Rosso for the title page graphic and Education Deputy Gera Gangolffin, OP for the branch chart graphics.

Thanks also to the Kingdom of Northshield, who shared their handbook, which has been extremely helpful in developing our own An Tir handbook.

In cheerful service,

Baronessa Julia Sempronia,
Seneschal, College of Cranehaven, 2005-06, 2018-19
Seneschal, Kingdom of An Tir, 2015-17

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on choosing to serve as Seneschal, one of the best jobs in the SCA! By volunteering to serve, you are stepping into one of our most important roles, for without you and your fellow Seneschals, no branch could function.

How to Use This Guide

While you certainly can print out this handbook, curl up on your couch with a cup (or several) of coffee and read the entire thing from front to back, this handbook is designed as a reference guide. We want you to pay close attention to the chapters that focus your responsibilities and office functions. Please read them as you begin your office and we expect you'll come back to them during your term.

The Appendix includes background on the SCA and our Kingdom, as well as policies from the *Society Seneschal Handbook* that you should read if and when the subject arises. We're not going to put in each and every policy or resource you'll need into this handbook; there are other documents you certainly should plan to be familiar with, including the *SCA Governing Documents* and *Kingdom Law*. These and other important documents can be found on the *Seneschal Resources Page* on the Kingdom web site. Your task isn't to know each and every facet of the Society, but you certainly will want to know where to find the answers you'll need.

This handbook works best when combined with training opportunities with your fellow seneschals. Our Education Deputy hosts many of these via online classes, some of which have been recorded. Other resources will be invaluable for you as you work, and you should be sure to bookmark the Officers page of the Kingdom Web site (www.antir.org) as well as the Seneschal Resources, which contain documents that you will use in the course of your term (<https://www.antir.org/offices/kingdom-seneschal/>).

Don't overlook one of the greatest resources to tap while serving: your fellow seneschals! From branch, to baronial, to principality, to kingdom, there is a wealth of knowledge and perspective to be found from current and past seneschals! Whether you meet in-person at an event, or through regular seneschal meetings on Microsoft Teams, these people have walked many miles in your shoes and are eager to help, problem-solve, and celebrate your triumphs. If you are a

You are the boss of you! Take care of yourself first. In emergent situations, step away for a breather before responding. Discuss problems with your superior.

Take time out to enjoy our hobby!!

*Dame Brigid Ross, OP
Lion of An Tir, former An Tir Seneschal*

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member of Facebook, you'll find the group *An Tir Branch Seneschals* to be extremely helpful in networking.

One tool we hope you'll rely on is your own common sense. When an issue arises that you find stressful or baffling, if a roadblock is thrown up in projects you're working on, or if a message arrives that's outrageous, set it aside for a bit. Take a walk, have a cup of tea, and give yourself space to reflect. Fewer options are visible in the stress of the moment, and even fewer good decisions are made. Give whatever problem that appears a little space, reflect, come back to this handbook and read up, and we're sure you'll tackle your issues with fresh perspective.

Last, remember that we are a volunteer organization. Everyone has different motivations to donate their time, and we're counting on you to respect their efforts to balance the time they give to your branch with the time needed to be with their families and work. Set reasonable expectations. Volunteering in the SCA can be hard, challenging work. Always show gratitude for their willingness to spend some of their time with us. An inspirational leader will gather more followers than a hard-driving taskmaster.

Again, congratulations! We're delighted you have chosen to serve. Now, let's get to work.

PREPARING FOR THE JOB

Warrant of Office

Your warrant makes you the Seneschal of your branch officially and legally. What does a warrant do? The Society's Officers and Directors insurance covers all warranted officers in the execution of their work on behalf of the Society. It is also vital that Kingdom officers have a current list of warranted branch officers.

Ideally your predecessor initiated the process of filling out your Change of Officer form. Branch officers may not simply appear on rosters, because appointments must be confirmed by their respective Kingdom officer and the Crown.

All branch officers must complete the Change of Officer form located at in the Forms section of the An Tir Library (<https://antir.org/library/>) which must be completed and counter-signed by

The hardest transition for a branch is change of leadership. With the Baronage, the populace is invested through polling. For a Seneschal, it is the people that attend council meetings, the active participants and officers that choose someone that they feel would be a good at bringing them together. Ideally, these people already work together as a team.

*— Duchess Dagrún Stjarna,
Seneschal Wastekeep 2018-20*

all the branch officers and coronets (if any). Send the completed form to the Kingdom Seneschal Warrants Deputy, who will use your information to compile a roster warrant for the entire Kingdom. This will be presented to the Kingdom Seneschal and the Crown for signature at July Coronation and 12TH Night.

Once this roster warrant is signed, it is considered official. Keep a copy of the original Change of Officer form you submitted for your files, and note the expiration date (you will not receive a copy of the roster warrant).

Kingdom Law controls the length of your term of office, which is generally two years, though it may be extended under certain circumstances with permission from the Kingdom Seneschal.

Don't let your warrant expire! Draft a new warrant for yourself or your successor well

before the expiration date. Place a reminder on your calendar as soon as you send your Change of Officer form to renew your warrant—ideally at least two months before it expires.

Assemble a Reference Library, Resources, and Tools

- From online sources you should download and familiarize yourself with:

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- The SCA's Organizational Handbook which includes Corpora, Bylaws, and the Corporate Policies of the SCA
- The An Tir Seneschal's Handbook (this document)
- SCA Branch Financial Policy
- Your own branch's financial policy and bylaws or customary, as well as recent past editions
- Any other current officer handbooks used in An Tir.
- Insurance Ordering Instructions from sca.org
- <http://www.sca.org/docs/library.html#officers> is invaluable.

Avoiding Burnout

No matter how much you like being Seneschal, you are nonetheless in danger of burning out. The rewards are internal and intangible, and the costs in time, money, and peace of mind can be high. Accept that you are at risk and take steps to monitor yourself to avoid the possibility. Be aware when you are in over your head, and look to your fellow officers to monitor signs of burnout.

Classic burnout happens when the sufferer finds their job intolerable and impossibly dear at the same time. The officer may need help but is hesitant to ask for it for fear of appearing incompetent. This should never be the case. Please know that you are encouraged to ask questions, accept help, and delegate when possible and appropriate. Serving as Seneschal can be a demanding job; while it provides benefits and is central to the health of your branch, it should not drive you out of the SCA after your term or cause you to end your term prematurely.

Once you accept the possibility, you can protect yourself. Conserve and refresh yourself as needed, take breaks, and start training a couple of potential successors while you still feel strong enough to go on. Make certain to keep doing the things that help you find the fun in the SCA.

Step down while you are ahead. It is better to regret leaving an office than to keep it so long you regret the day you took it! When your term is up, consider very carefully whether it is appropriate to extend. The health of your branch does not trump your physical and mental health, your modern job, or your family.

BRANCH ADMINISTRATION

Branch Meetings

Meetings are probably not the first activity that SCA participants look forward to, but without regular business meetings nothing would get done. So why have business meetings? Can't we just skip to the fun parts? Keep in mind that the Seneschal's territory is the legal, business side of the Society. Business meetings help ensure that the branch is operating legally: following SCA Corpora, Kingdom Law, and, of course, modern law.

*Regardless how long you
think it would take to
complete a task, plan on
it taking twice as long for
members of your
Council.*

*— HL Taliesin ap Hafgan
Seneschal Shire of Danescombe,
2019-2022, 2013-2016*

There are no “backroom deals” in the SCA: NEVER restrict meeting attendance and ensure that all members learn about officer openings, opportunities to volunteer, the financial health of the group, and review branch and kingdom event bids at your meetings. Meetings also allow members to work collaboratively, comment on activities and constructively criticize proposals. See how important meetings are? And you are in charge!

Every seneschal has a different style in the way they conduct their meetings, but know that you are the key planner and facilitator for these meetings. You are in charge, but be respectful of your fellow branch member's time: they're giving up travel time, sometimes their dinner hour, or time to unwind after work, so it's your job to help them feel like their time is respected.

Meetings can be formal or informal, but every meeting needs to be planned and conducted to help ensure that everybody has an opportunity to participate and, when the meeting is concluded, they leave with a clear action plan and lists of follow-up tasks, feeling that the hour or two they gave to the branch was well-spent.

Your fellow officers, are key players in these meetings. Ensure that they know they are expected not only to attend, but report, and make sure that someone (usually the Chronicler but be sure to assign someone if they cannot be present) takes meeting minutes. At minimum, minutes should include the date/time/location of the meeting, those in attendance, and discussion/action items on each agenda topic. You can help whoever takes minutes by passing out a sign-up sheet before the meeting gets started; just make sure it gets into the hands of the Chronicler. To help ensure transparency, meeting minutes should be posted on the branch web site and/or social media.

Scheduling

Meeting attendance is likely to be far lower if there isn't a regular date, time, and location set for your branch meetings. Ensure that this vital information is published on your branch web site, email list, and social media pages, but don't rely on that static information! As the date draws near send reminders, ideally at least a week before the meeting and a few days before.

The frequency of these meetings depends on how active your branch is. Monthly meetings are a good rule of thumb; if quarterly, active subcommittees will be pretty vital. If a big event is on the horizon, special meetings every two weeks or weekly leading up to the big weekend may be necessary.

Try to ensure that the branch meeting is held in the same location, such as a banquet room in a restaurant (there may be the expectation that people in your group will order a meal) or a meeting room at your local library. Whatever the venue, try to make it reasonably central to your branch, or in a metropolitan area most will travel to, as some branches in our kingdom cover a large area.

Agenda

It can be frustrating and discouraging to attend a meeting where there are no clear expectations of what is important to discuss, where side conversations take place, or people are shouting their suggestions over the top of the event steward's report. Lack of organization is a sure-fire way to make the meeting balloon from an hour or two to 3-4 hours! Set expectations for your meeting by publishing an agenda ahead of time and use the announcements you publish to call upon the branch members for any business or announcements they would like to bring forward.

A good agenda for a monthly business meeting might look like this:

Welcome: your formal welcome of everyone is a sign that the meeting is starting. If you have baronial coronets, it is a courtesy to invite them to share a few words, but they should definitely know that the meeting is yours to lead.

Introductions: always make time for this when there are newcomers present, and it is a kindness to explain the unfamiliar titles that we use.

Officer (and Coronet) Reports: Always let your fellow officers know that they are expected to be present at the meetings and report regularly on the activities of their offices. Listen to what

*ALWAYS praise in public
and criticise in private!!!
If someone does well, give
them public credit loudly
and often. Don't take the
credit—give it to the person
who actually did the work.
This pays off in a big way
over the long term. When
you need to correct a
problem, always take it to
the back room.*

*—Master Aaron Swiftrunner, Former
Society Seneschal*

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they say: several months of “nothing to report” are a warning sign that your branch is not strong in one or more important areas. Officer absences should be the exception rather than the rule, and if an officer is unavoidably absent, make it clear that a written report should be sent to you ahead of the meeting.

Encourage the officers to plan and hold activities outside of the business meeting, such as fighter practice, A&S Nights, archery, and so forth. Activities can be announced during their reports; ideally, they’ll have their own place on the branch calendar.

Old Business: this heading is for everything your branch carried over from previous meetings, such as re-drafting financial policies and customaries, and existing events

Event Steward Reports: help your event stewards out by approaching branch members to

Your greatest gift as a meeting facilitator is to respect people’s time. Be organized yourself, and help people stay on track. Nobody wants to be trapped in a meeting that drags on for eternity.

*—Baronessa Julia Sempronia, OL OP,
Former An Tir Seneschal*

serve on the event subcommittee, which should hold their planning meetings outside of the business meeting. The event steward should brief branch members on the overall progress. Steer suggestions for additions/changes/modifications back to the event committee and resist doing their work at the business meeting. Many will call for volunteers at the meeting. This may result in a few hands raised, but is the least effective way to get help. Encourage officers and event stewards instead to make direct appeals to people they want

on their staff. It’s harder to decline when a branch leader tells a potential volunteer that “I think you’re just the person we need.” The “cattle call” for volunteers at meetings is often ignored by the very people who would accept a personal invitation.

New Business:

This heading is for items that your members have brought up prior to the meeting that they’d like to discuss. It could be a new local event or activity, an opportunity to bid on a Kingdom event. It’s also an opportunity to promote events members plan to attend, and for you to pass around event flyers you may have received.

You could also use this section to showcase individual members, their projects, or have a “Medieval Moment” that helps lighten the mood.

Announcements: at the end of the meeting, leave a little time for announcements: calls for ride shares to a neighbouring event, requests for help inventorying branch property, etc. Get in the habit of calling for these ahead of time and you won’t be blindsided by someone bringing up a huge policy issue just as everyone is gathering their belongings and ready to leave.

Your Role as Facilitator

This is YOUR meeting, and you are in charge! Move through each agenda item, and watch for signs of rabbit holes and detours. Don't be afraid to kindly bring the focus back to the topic currently on the table, and allow everyone an opportunity to participate by nicely cutting off people who can't stop talking or who seem to be dominating the discussion: "in respect of everyone's time, we're going to move along to the next topic." If tempers start to rise or nothing new or productive is being discussed, close that topic and state that it will be placed on the next agenda. If the horse is getting sickly or drops dead, it's time to move on.

Likewise, if there is an agenda topic where key people are missing from the meeting, table it and put it on the next agenda. Be clear, not only with those present, but those who, for whatever reason, are missing from a meeting that you will bring it back at a date and time where sufficient people are present to render a good outcome.

Announcements

Calling for announcements before the meeting, then adding them to the bottom of the agenda helps keep you on track. But what if someone asks to make an announcement that is off topic or inappropriate? You may have to decide on the spot whether such an announcement should be made.

Some guidelines to help you decide:

- How does the proposed announcement relate to group business or activities?
- Is the topic something that will be of general interest to the entire group?
- How likely will the announcement set off an emotional debate, or drag on just as the meeting is supposed to end?

You can decide that the announcement may not be made during the meeting, but afterward as non-SCA business. This way you can avoid having it become part of the group's official business, and anyone who is not interested does not need to stay to avoid missing the rest of the meeting. Either way, it's your call to make.

In Closing

When the meeting is over, say it's over. Formally close the meeting when it's finished, thank everyone for coming, offer up any action or to-do reminders and, if needed, call for the

There is no one way. Be open to suggestion from your people of all ranks. Giving ground gracefully on matters of little and minor impact to you paves the way to gaining compliance on those critical measures you need them all to support.

*—Master Aaron Swiftrunner,
Former Society Seneschal*

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members to help clean up the site by closing time. If discussions are still taking place, nicely move them out to the parking lot—plenty of bonding happens there!

Summary Thoughts

Meetings are *your* territory. You are in charge of their planning and execution, but you're not a one-man band. Keep in mind that you are not in charge of other people, you are especially not in charge of what they say, think, and feel. There may be meetings that are chaotic and unproductive. But if you set clear expectations by having an agenda and find graceful ways to bring people back on topic, your members will feel like their time has been respected and they'll walk away with a clearer idea of what they're expected to do.

No one aspires to do their job poorly. Give people the benefit of the doubt. Help them find the tools to be successful.

*—Viscountess Callista Balgaire, OP,
Former An Tir Seneschal*

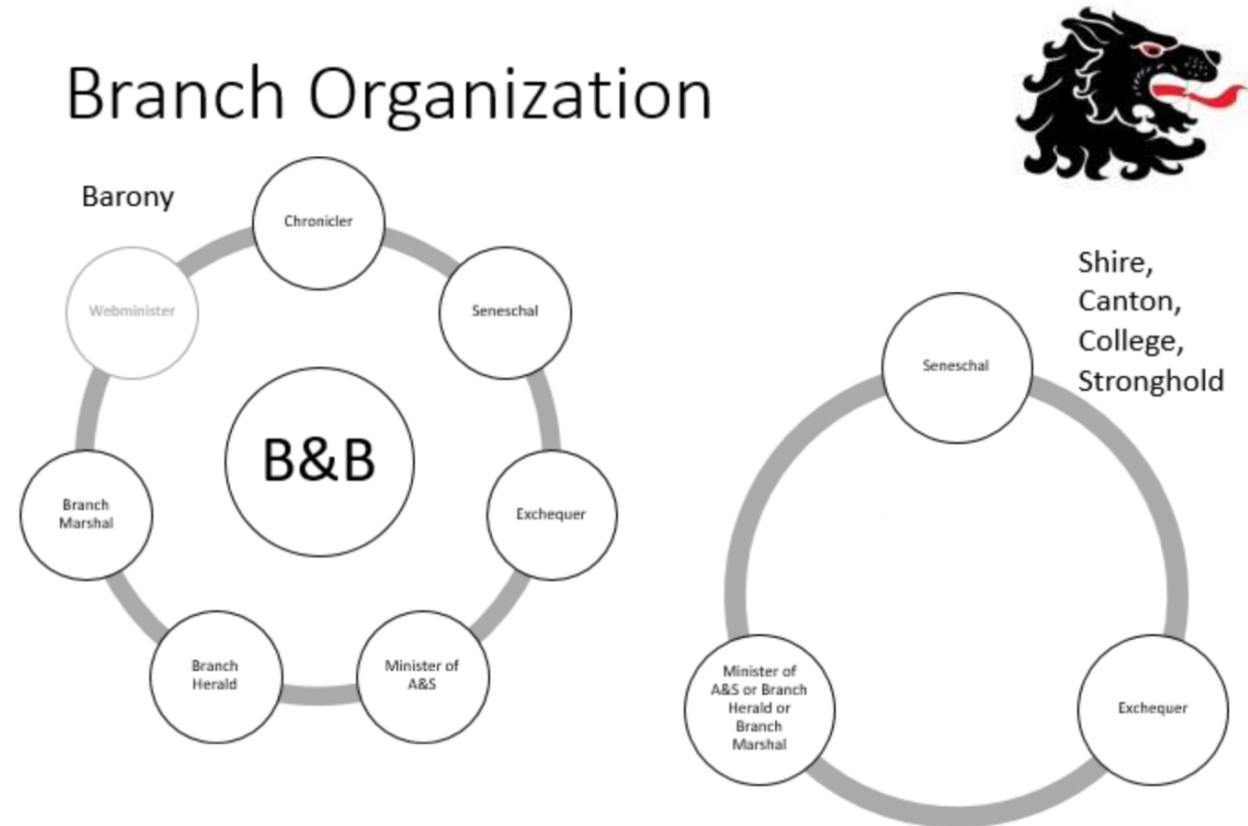
Working with Your Fellow Officers

As seneschal of your branch you are the chief facilitator (the coach, if you will) for all your fellow branch officers. A former Society Seneschal once wrote

“Volunteers are there because they want to be, and can just as easily go away if they feel mistrusted or mistreated, whether they actually have been used and abused or not. If communication fails during the progress of a leader's duties, then they will soon face unrest, lost effort and, eventually, failure.”

The prime directive for you in working with your fellow officers should be “You are not the boss of me.” You are the chief communications officer, the chief facilitator, the “team captain,” the cruise director. You are not the chief executive of your fellow officers, you are their *equal*. You cannot fire branch officers, who are warranted by their respective Kingdom Officers.

Use the team approach when working with officers. As you can see from the chart below, you and your fellow officers communicate laterally, rather than hierarchically. Your role is of overall facilitator, rather than leader. Use a positive tone always, and respect their expertise in their area. If you start dictating or ordering people around, officers will be hard to keep and recruit.



A good rule of thumb in communicating with your fellow officers (and pretty much everyone else) is *Say it, write it, repeat it, reward it*. Tell your officers explicitly what you wish to occur and why. Even if compliance is essential (it's the law!), members like to feel as though they have a choice on when and how to participate. Just be sure that they're aware of the consequences of *not* following the law.

Solicit input from your fellow officers when building the meeting agenda, and get comments in advance from key people who cannot attend a meeting, though you should reinforce the expectation that officers must be at the meetings.

Support Their Work

Your fellow officers drink out of the same firehose that you do: they're responsible for a number of important tasks under their jurisdiction. Help them by being a sounding board for their ideas, always keeping in mind that each of us is full of both good and bad ideas at times. Watch them for signs of burnout: are they getting snappish? Refusing to let an office go? While you're not the chief counselor of your branch, you can help your officers get over the bumps in the road.

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Paperwork & Records

Since the Kingdom migrated to Office 365 several years ago, all officers now have dedicated cloud storage for records generated in the course of their work and these are invaluable, both for collaborating on projects and to help onboard new officers.

However, it's likely that you may have inherited paper files that were generated prior to the Kingdom's adoption of dedicated accounts. These files can range from original charters, packages to advance your branch to baronial status, and other historical records.

No matter the format, files should be organized in such a way that they can easily be found. The following is suggested:

Reference Materials

All seneschals should have copies (or bookmarked URLs of the current location) of the following reference materials, in their most recent printing

- Organizational Handbook of the Society for Creative Anachronism (includes Corpora)
- Kingdom Law
- Seneschal's Handbook
- Other Officers Handbooks
- Local Branch Financial Policy
- Local group policies

Content File

For ease of retrieval, files should be created for the following items. Always, always, always save electronic files to your officer OneDrive.

- Meeting notes
- Correspondence with officers regarding their quarterly reports
- Correspondence you send to people outside your branch
- Correspondence you receive from people outside the group
- Seneschal's reports
- Local member contact list
- Event reports and site contracts
- New member/demo/pr information
- Group inventory (maintained by the exchequer)

Optional Files

If you're really into filing, you might include the following:

- Projects—both in progress and completed
- Items of interest (newspaper articles, book lists, etc)

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- Back issues of your branch newsletters, and any copies of The Crier which feature your branch
- Local order of precedence

File Retention

Officer and Event reports should be kept a minimum of seven years, and ideally longer. If your branch has a lengthy history, it's probable that you may have inherited several boxes of seneschal files, in varying degrees of organization and completeness. If you or another branch member has the technical expertise, scanning these and placing them in your seneschal OneDrive can help save your branch's valuable history – and not take up room in your home.

Reporting

Why Do it?

The Society for Creative Anachronism is a Federally recognized 501(c) (3) tax-exempt educational charitable organization. To maintain our status, the Society is required to file Form 990, as well as employment tax filings, with the Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") annually.

Why Reporting is Important

Information contained in all branch reports is essential reading for the Kingdom Seneschal in preparation of their quarterly report to Society. "From the mountaintop," these reports are a vital part to help them in spotting trends throughout the Kingdom (are there more injuries in branch fighter practices? Is officer recruitment becoming a widespread issue?). This can only be done by careful reading of local branch and principality reports.

What the Kingdom Seneschal does with your reports

The Kingdom Seneschal assesses the overall health of the Kingdom. What is going well? What problems have occurred? If there are problems, are they limited to one branch, or is the region or Kingdom affected?

One month after your branch reports are due, the Kingdom Seneschal must report to Society. The Society – its officers and board of directors – have the 30,000-foot view. From the reports received from all the Kingdoms, the Society spots global issues and trends. Ultimately, it's up to the Board to make adjustments that make the entire Society function better.

Branch reports from throughout the SCA Known World help provide ongoing evidence that the SCA is fulfilling its core mission to provide education through reenactment activities, education, and events.

When to do it

The SCA is on a quarterly reporting schedule. Following are the key dates

1ST Quarter - (January 1 - March 31) *Reports due Apr 15 for Principalities, May 1 for others*

2ND Quarter - (April 1 - June 30) *Reports due July 15 for Principalities, Aug 1 for others*

3RD Quarter - (July 1-September 30) *Reports due Oct 15 for Principalities Nov 1 for others*

4TH Quarter - (October 1 - December 31) *Reports due Jan 15 for Principalities, February 1 for others*

What to include

Every quarter, it's very beneficial to get up on a mental ladder, take a look at your group from above, and assess how the group machine is functioning. Is your branch's chariot rattling happily along life's highway or has a wheel fallen off the wagon?

If you have information on the previous quarter (see "Tips and Techniques" below), filling out the report is the work of a few minutes.

Reporting on individuals: what belongs, What Should be left off

Feel free to include commendations for specific branch members who have made special contributions or gone "above and beyond" what's expected (and remind yourself to write them up for an award). But passages that are critical of individuals in your branch—or worse, your fellow officers or coronets—are exceedingly unwise for several reasons. First and foremost, everyone, *especially* leadership (this means YOU), must know and follow the Society's policies for conduct and behaviour in the SCA. Visit www.sca.org and search for Conduct and Behaviour; read all the documents on the page, with special focus on the Harrassment and Bullying policy and the Sanctions Procedures and policies. All the policies listed in this section will be important for you to know, but these two top the list.

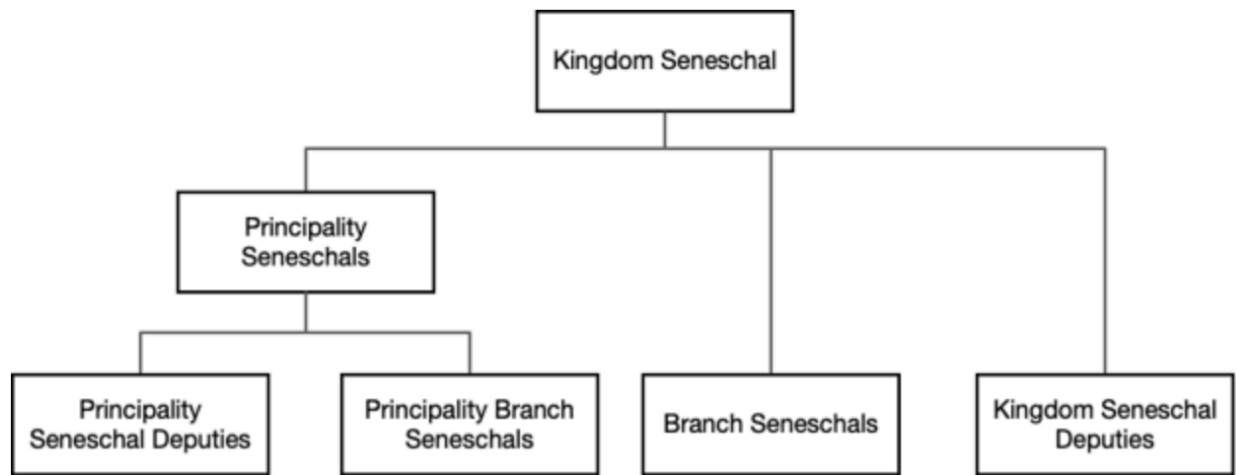
If you aren't adhering to the SCA's core values, nobody else will. It is not your job to attempt to solve squabbles that would probably have been solved by the parties working things out themselves, and don't attempt to make it the Kingdom Seneschal's problem. Going from local squabble to Kingdom will result in an outcome nobody is happy about.

Another extremely important reason to leave negative remarks about individuals out of your reports: they are part of your branch's permanent record. Whoever steps in your shoes when it's time for you to retire will read your quarterly reports, even, possibly, the person you've complained about. Quarterly reports aren't always going to be hearts and flowers. There will be issues you struggle with, and these need to be noted. But keep negative remarks about trending issues and not about individuals.

Reporting...Ultimately, it is your leadership that will be questioned when the reports aren't sent in.

Follow up with your officers and help them if need be. Sometimes the hard decision is to choose another to fill the position. Do it kindly.

*— Duchess Dagrun Stjarna
Seneschal Wastekeep 2018-20*



Who gets copies of your report?

The reporting structure for your branch depends on how it is organized. The chart above shows the general reporting structure for the Seneschallate.

Principality, Territorial Baronies and Local Branch Officer Reporting Structure

The standard Officer Reporting Structure used by Kingdom, Principality, Baronial, Shire and College officers in the Kingdom of An Tir is explained below. Be aware, however, that Royalty and superior officers may also request that an officer send additional copies of their reports to others.

Since open communication is a tenet of the SCA, officers should always err on the side of more communication, rather than less. As a rule: If in doubt, send a copy of the report.

Principality/Baronial

Great Officer reports go to:

1. Prince/Princess or Baron and Baroness
2. Heirs to Coronets
3. Kingdom Officer in their area of responsibility
(*example*: Principality/Baronial Exchequer reports go to Kingdom Exchequer)
4. Principality/Baronial Seneschal

Principality/Baronial

Lesser Officer reports go to:

- Prince/Princess or Baron and Baroness
- Heirs to Coronets
- Kingdom Officer in their area of responsibility (*example*: Principality/Baronial Webminister report go to Kingdom Webminister)
- Principality/Baronial Great Officer to whom their office reports, if any
(*example*: Principality/Baronial Webminister report would go to Principality/Baronial Chronicler)
- Principality/Baronial Seneschal

Cantons

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Cantons are by definition inside the borders of their parent baronies (from *Kingdom Seneschal Handbook*). Cantons function both as local branches, but also report through their parent Barony. The reporting structure reflects this relationship.

Canton Great Officer reports go to:

- Baron and Baroness of their reporting Barony (*example*: Canton of Silverhart reports go to Baron and Baroness of Wealdsmere)
- Heirs to Baronial Coronets of their reporting Barony
- Kingdom Officer in their area of responsibility (*example*: Canton Exchequer reports go to Kingdom Exchequer)
- Baronial Officer in their area of responsibility (*example*: Canton Exchequer reports go to Baronial Exchequer)
- Canton Seneschal

Canton Lesser Officer reports go to:

1. Baron and Baroness of their reporting Barony
2. Heirs to Baronial Coronets of their reporting Barony
3. Kingdom Officer in their area (*example*: College Rapier Marshal report goes to Kingdom Rapier Marshal)
4. Baronial Great Officer to whom their office reports if any (*example*: Canton Webminister report goes to Baronial Chronicler)
5. Canton Seneschal

Shires, Colleges, and other independent local branches

Local branches which are not part of a territorial barony report in a similar fashion to Principalities and Baronies. These branches have the simplest reporting structure.

Shire/College Great Officer reports go to:

1. Kingdom Officer in their area (*example*: Shire Marshal reports go to Kingdom Earl Marshal)
2. Shire Seneschal

Shire /College Lesser Officer reports go to:

1. Kingdom Officer in their area of responsibility (*example*: Shire Rapier Marshal report goes to Kingdom Rapier Marshal)
2. Shire Great Officer to whom their office reports, if any (*example*: Shire Rapier Marshal report go to Shire Marshal)
3. Shire Seneschal

It's good to reflect that, as a historical recreation group, our reports are part of our own history. Reading your branch's past reports can help your branch not only measure its progress, but provide important information to help set your future direction.

In other words, your branch's quarterly reports are an important part of your branch's permanent collection. With them you can...

- Spot trends in your branch:
- Member number increase or decrease
- Changes in activities

- See how far you've come. Real progress comes with time, and reading over past quarterly reports can really highlight both progress and trends in your branch. We are a historical recreation society – keeping your own branch history is extremely valuable!

Tips and Techniques to make Reporting a Breeze

Make sure the reporting deadlines are on your Office 365 Calendar as recurring events (take a look, they may already be there!) If you have your fellow officers' reports, minutes from past meetings, and a well-organised email box, filling your quarterly reports should take no more than 10-15 minutes.

1. Put the reporting deadlines on your calendar. Many electronic calendars allow setting of an alarm at various intervals before the deadline. I recommend setting a reminder at least a week before your quarterly report deadline
2. Ask for your branch's membership numbers. Write reporting.deputy@antir.org
3. Ensure that your fellow branch officers email you copies of their reports – and you should do the same for them. It not only gives you fodder for YOUR report, it ensures that all your branch officers are working as a team. Remember, good communication is courteous!
4. Don't forget: if your branch has vacant officer positions, YOU are responsible for reporting for that office too
5. Set up folders to sort incoming mail pertaining to your branch: e-lists, populace inquiries, etc. Scan through this folder as you prepare your report – it can be a great tool to refresh your memory on the major activities and issues that occurred
6. Store copies of previous reports in a dedicated folder on Outlook and/or OneDrive. Review previous quarters briefly; you may start seeing trends that are important to pass on

Say it, write it, repeat it, reward it. Tell people explicitly what you wish to occur and why. Even if compliance is essential, our members like to feel as though they have a choice on when and how to participate....People who feel they are a part of the decision will take ownership for carrying out the drudge work to make the good result happen. People who feel ignored will sit on the sidelines questioning the intelligence of those who are doing the work.

*—Master Aaron Swiftrunner,
Former Society Seneschal*

Consequences of non-reporting

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Here comes the velvet hammer: reporting is **non-negotiable** – it MUST be done. Failure to report your branch's activities places not only your job in jeopardy, the entire branch may be put into abeyance (a fancy word for suspension) for chronic non-reporting. Lack of reports makes it extremely difficult for Kingdom officers to report to Society, evaluate the impact of Kingdom Law on local branches, and a host of other ills.

Report Format

[Branch Name] Seneschal Report for the Quarter Ending [date]

Branch Information:

[Branch Name]

[Branch Territory Description]

[Quarter Number and Date, i.e., Quarter 4 2021]

2. Seneschal Reporting

[Seneschal Name, including legal name]

[Seneschal Address]

[Seneschal email, i.e., branchname.seneschal@antir.org]

Membership Number [99999999] Exp. [MM/DD/YYYY]

3. Crown Representatives {if any}

[Names]

[Term Ending

4. Branch Population:

Total – [NNN]

Sustaining – [NNN]

Family – [NNN]

Associate – [NNN]

5. Activities

Regular Scheduled Meetings

[Descriptions and dates

Events for the last quarter:

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[Dates and descriptions]

Special occasional meetings or Demos

6. Upcoming Events:

[Dates and descriptions]

7. Roster Changes.

[Officer name(s) and email(s)]

Financials

Balance on the branch Checking accounts for the month ending [date]

[note specific officer/event budgets]

Summary for the Quarter

[Narrative summary. What went well? What needs improvement?]

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Your Role on the Financial Committee

Every single dollar brought into your branch coffers belongs to the Society for Creative Anachronism, a 501(c)(3) educational non-profit. The SCA has policies in place that are uniform for all branches, including the requirement that the seneschal be a member of the Financial Committee. If your branch does not have a Financial Committee, form one immediately!

Your branch exchequer must ensure that the branch seneschal is a signatory on the account and be granted access to review the online bank accounts.

The Society requires that all financial decisions involve more than one person. To accomplish this, each group must have a Financial Committee that consists of the seneschal and the Exchequer at a minimum. Baronies are required to have a Financial Committee. As a member of the Financial Committee, you are responsible for making sure that all expenditures of group funds are in accordance with the law and with SCA guidelines and follow any policies or procedures your group may have for deciding how to spend money. If you have questions about this, you should contact the Kingdom Seneschal or Kingdom Exchequer for more information.

A Branch Financial Committee is comprised of a minimum of three paid members of the SCA: the warranted seneschal, exchequer, and at least one other member. For baronies, the landed coronets will be on the Financial Committee (with a single vote). Other members may be specified in your branch customary.

The primary responsibility of your Financial Committee is to set your branch financial policy and approve all financial activities. Specific roles and functions are described in the Society Exchequer manual, and Society and Kingdom Financial Policy. Your branch financial policies cannot contradict or loosen any Society or Kingdom policies.

As Seneschal, you may be called on to review any changes to your branch financial policy to ensure that they are not in conflict. You are also the only person in your branch who can sign contracts and agreements for building, land rental, merchant agreements, etc.

Staffing Gate

Since nearly all branch revenues will be derived from gate fees, the branch seneschal and exchequer must approve any person working at the gate. Each gate worker must be a paid member and over the age of majority (18 in the US, 19 in British Columbia).

Always be in close touch with gate people: thank them publicly and take private corrective action for those who aren't using good judgment handling cash at gate. Support your gate

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people by handling trespassers, waiver dodgers, or anyone else who refuses to follow gate personnel.

Your job as seneschal is to enforce the site rules or have scofflaws removed.

Theft Resolution

As a former Kingdom Exchequer was fond of saying, “people are funny about money.” Some are tempted for remarkably small amounts, and — no matter if the person suspected of stealing is a close friend, a fellow officer, a peer, or a coronet, the branch seneschal and exchequer are charged with reporting suspected thefts to the Kingdom Seneschal and Exchequer.

Immediate, clear, and confidential communications are essential, and that starts with the branch seneschal and exchequer. Communicate privately, and do not assume that your fellow officer is being kept in the loop by anyone else.

Ensure that the Kingdom officers have all the information they need, once the loss has been reported.

Insurance

Branch Seneschals receive a copy of the Society’s current certificate of insurance coverage at the beginning of the year, and you must always use only the current certificate. This insurance has two functional components: Property and Liability.

Property coverage

Generally, you do not have to do anything special to activate the SCA’s general liability coverage. This is the policy that is activated to cover damage (including fire damage) to sites including buildings, grounds, furnishings, and in some cases automobiles.

The SCA’s insurance provides coverage against damage to property not owned or on long-term lease by SCA members, which is being used for an SCA event. Site owners wanting proof of insurance can be given a copy of the “proof of insurance” letter you received at the beginning of the year. If a site owner requests to be named as an “additional insured,” follow the directions on the SCA web site and order the certificate well in advance. There are additional fees your branch must pay, and significant late fee penalties.

Events can include

- business meetings
- dance practices
- fighter practices
- other activities in addition to what we normally consider “events”

There are also additional fees required for all equestrian events, or events where golf carts are rented. Any event that intends fire arts, including pyrotechnic displays or fireworks, must first

receive a variance from the Society Seneschal in the form of a written letter. Outside insurance covering pyrotechnics must be purchased, and your branch is responsible for 100% of the policy costs.

SCA events may be held on member's property, but the member's own insurance must provide coverage.

Liability

The SCA's Directors & Officers liability insurance covers the corporation and all warranted officers for what's often referred to as "errors and omissions" in the performance of their jobs, which is why the kingdom insists on receiving Change of Officers forms from you and your fellow officers.

Non-Published Event

The Society Seneschal draws a distinction between published events and non-published events. A non-published event is any gathering that is covered by the SCA's insurance. To be covered by the insurance, a meeting, fighter practice, local revel, etc. must:

1. Be open to any person who wishes to attend,
2. Conform to SCA policies, and

Be publicized by whatever means the group customarily uses to publicize such things—i.e., announcements at meetings, details printed on the web page, appearing in the local newsletter, etc.

If it is not open to anyone who wishes to attend, or if it is not related to group business, it is not covered by the SCA's insurance! This means that a birthday party, unless held in conjunction with a demo, tournament, potluck feast, or some such, is not a "covered" event; and an invitation- only fighter practice is not covered by SCA insurance.

Liability coverage

The SCA's liability coverage protects the SCA, its officers and members, while acting within the scope of their duties, against suits arising from actions performed as a legitimate part of SCA activities. This liability coverage includes paid SCA members only, and includes personal injury liability and host liquor liability (but only if we do not sell liquor)

Responsibilities

Our insurance company considers us an acceptable risk because we have rules in place that are designed to make our game reasonably safe, and we put people in charge who have the authority to enforce those rules and who are expected to do so. That's why we limit our definition of covered events to those that are supervised and conducted according to SCA rules.

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Both members and non-members must abide by those rules as a prerequisite to participating in SCA activities of any sort.

We also expect both members and non-members to assume risks arising from their personal participation, in writing (that is, they have to sign waivers).

Officers are responsible for seeing that both Modern and Society laws are followed, to the best of your ability.

If there is damage that occurs at any of your events, notify the Kingdom Seneschal immediately, with full details, including costs. The Kingdom Seneschal will notify the corporate offices.

Trailer Insurance

All trailers purchased and owned by the SCA must be registered and insured by your branch at their own expense. Either you or your exchequer must also send a copy of the registration to the Corporate office within 30 days of registration. Under no circumstances should the group's trailer be registered in the name of an individual or an officer!

If a third party's person or property is damaged as a result of an accident involving a trailer when being towed, the individual towing the trailer bears responsibility for liability and should contact their insurance carrier. Your responsibility as seneschal of the group that owns the trailer is to check to make sure that the tower/driver of said trailer has the appropriate motor vehicle liability insurance BEFORE they take the trailer.

Some groups own a trailer that is used for storage only, i.e., it never moves from the storage site. If such a "stationary" trailer is legally required to be registered, the group is responsible for following the procedure as outlined above.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Background Checks

If your branch expects to conduct youth activities, the volunteers who in charge of the activities are required to first obtain a background check. If your branch already has a Youth Officer or a Youth Armoured Combat Officer, even if they have been serving for some time you should meet with each and carefully review the procedures to obtain a background check or update an existing background check.

Furthermore, per Kingdom Law, “All official or published SCA Youth Activities must have at least two unrelated adults at all times with one adult member who has an SCA approved current background check acting as the official “coordinator” for that SCA Youth Activity. The activity must stop if that number falls below the required two adults.”

There has been longstanding confusion about this process, so you must be absolutely clear with your officers that the Kingdom Seneschal is the only person who can send background check requests to Society, and if those requests do not come through the branch seneschal — or worse, are sent straight to Society — they will be returned without processing, and a 1-2 month wait will be much longer.

You, as the branch seneschal, are the only one authorized to send background check requests on behalf of your branch officers to the Kingdom Seneschal for processing.

For the full background checks policy/procedure, see the Appendix.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communications

Communications is 80-90% of your job, so this section has a great deal of information to help you be a great communicator. You will be writing to and talking to many people both within and outside the SCA organization. You'll be making liberal use of email, telephone calls, texts, and social media messages and posts. Learning how to do it promptly and gracefully will make your job that much easier.

48- to 72-Hour Reply Goal

First, let's set reasonable and courteous expectations on response times. Branch Seneschals should aim for a 48- to 72-hour turnaround on all email and phone communications. A simple "Got your message, I will get back to you" is fine to ensure prompt response to all communications.

Your Deputy Seneschal may respond in times when the Seneschal may be unavailable for 72 hours (business trips, non-SCA vacation, An Tir-West War, etc.).

Unofficial Communications: Telephone, Text, and Instant Messages

Telephone calls, texts, and Instant Messages are not "official" communications, and both you and those you speak with need to be aware that if something major is being decided this way, you will follow it up with a letter or e-mail to confirm what was discussed. However, these instant communications are a necessary and frequent part of the job.

The following are designed for telephone calls, but they can work just as well for instant messages.

1. You are not on 24-hour speed dial. Set your boundaries with branch members so they know when you are available. Let your group members know what hours and days are okay to call you.
2. Call at a reasonable hour. A good general guideline is never to call somebody after 9 p.m., or before 10 a.m., unless you are certain they are willing to take calls at that time. Keep in mind that your intended recipient may not be able to receive personal phone calls during work hours. Also be aware that, while some people set "do not disturb" times on their phones, the chime of an instant message can be jarring in the middle of the night.
3. Use modern names unless you are positive that you are calling a strictly SCA household. If you know it, always ask for people by their modern names. Identify yourself by your modern name, too, especially when leaving a message for a person outside the SCA.

4. Once you have your party on the phone, be pleasant, but get down to business quickly. Ask your question; give your information, or whatever it is you called to do. After the business part of the call is over, you can always chat if the other person is willing. You don't need to be brusque or abrupt, but get the business accomplished quickly, and if you are inclined to chat, be sensitive to whether the other person is also so inclined.
5. If you expect the call might take longer than two or three minutes—for example, if you've got a problem you need to discuss—ask the person if this is a good time to talk. If they say no, ask when would be a better time for you to call. If you are messaging large blocks of text, ask the recipient if they would prefer to get it via email.
6. Leave clear, complete messages on voicemail. And if you don't have voicemail yourself, you should strongly consider getting it (or an answering machine). They aren't expensive and will make you infinitely easier to reach. In addition, make sure your voicemail is not full.
7. Take notes if you're calling for information, and it's a very good idea to write down all the points you want to cover before you dial. If you can't take notes, transcribe the important parts immediately after you hang up. If you are texting or messaging, it is courteous to inform the persons you are communicating with that you will save the conversation for your notes.
8. Receiving calls is a fact of life for a branch seneschal. Be prepared to get a certain number of phone calls from people in your group wanting to vent about something. In this sort of call, your role is mainly to listen and, if you can, be sympathetic. Frequently, people don't really expect the local seneschal to do anything about their complaint or beef. A lot of problems can be solved if the person relating them feels that they have been heard. If the complaint starts to stray into a conflict with another branch member, remind the caller that they need to read and follow the SCA's Conduct and Behaviour policies.

Written Communications: The Official Venue

All formal correspondence for everyone outside of the SCA organization should follow the standard business letter format:

- Date
- Your Legal Name and Address
- Your recipient's Name and Address
- Subject Line, if any
- Body of your letter
- Closing,
- Your Legal Signature and your equivalent title (Branch of XYZ Chapter President)

Official Communications

1. *The Crier* is the official newsletter of the Kingdom of An Tir. It is a freely-available download for both members and non-members via the Society web site.

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2. For any business that takes place in your branch, including but not limited to selection of baronial coronets and the distribution of awards, full copy must be published in *The Crier* in advance.

Emergency Communications

1. Immediately notify the Kingdom Seneschal about any occurrences that made it necessary to call the modern authorities (law enforcement, fire department, emergency medical) to the site of an SCA activity or event. Such emergencies include injuries in which the victim is transported by EMS or ambulance.
2. Immediately notify the Kingdom Seneschal of any threatened lawsuits.
3. Immediately notify the Kingdom Seneschal of any incidents that may produce a claim on SCA insurance.
4. Immediately notify the Kingdom Seneschal and Kingdom Exchequer of any suspected thefts, embezzlements, or other financial irregularities involving Kingdom or branch funds. Never attempt to “make a deal” or negotiate in any way with the alleged perpetrator. Follow the procedures set forth by the Society Exchequer, Kingdom, and branch financial policy for what to do in case of a theft from the SCA.
5. Immediately notify the Kingdom Seneschal if you believe the actions of the Coronets or other branch Officers are violating the rules of the SCA, Inc. or the laws of the jurisdiction under which the branch is located.

Communication within Your Branch

1. Ensure branch, branch officers’ meetings or curiae occur regularly as required by the branch customary.
2. Prepare an agenda before the meeting. Discuss the agenda with the Coronets (if any) in advance of the meeting, and make sure any items they wish to discuss are included on the agenda. Preside over the meeting, keeping things moving and bring the discussion back to the topic at hand when it strays. Share the results with the populace.
3. Encourage members with disagreements to attempt to work it out themselves. If they need a mediator, help arbitrate, where possible. Stay out of feuds yourself.
4. Establish yourself as a source of reliable advice. Refer to your reference library when in any doubt as to an issue or question. Do not rely on your memory of what Kingdom Law or the Governing Documents say; double-check. Answer all questions cheerfully and patiently, with as much substantive information as you can, plus a referral to the officer in charge of the area, if there is one.
 1. Keep the official branch calendar.
 2. Watch for things that need to get done. Keep an eye on the branch as a whole and look for things that the Coronets or any of the officers might initiate to improve the general quality of life in your branch. You are responsible for the proper and efficient management of our “game-side” historical re-enactment, and proactive management is often much more effective and efficient than reactive crisis management.
 3. Listen. You will find that many people want to talk to you, regardless of what you’re doing or what you may be able to do for them. Though listening to the troubles and plans of the populace may eat a lot of time, especially at events, it is a great investment

in proactive management and relationship-building to give an ear to what people have to say to you.

4. **Reach out.** In addition to listening to those who seek you out, you will find it worthwhile to reach out. Call, travel with branch members to a neighbouring event, and/or email people to notice work done well. Remember to thank people; you will feel better, and so will they. Much of the currency of the SCA is in recognition, both official and unofficial. Small words of recognition and encouragement are often at least as important as official awards and will buy both appreciation and goodwill.
5. **Network.** Develop a network of reliable contacts throughout your region. Neighbouring branch seneschals may provide invaluable insights.

Communication with the Coronets

1. **Always treat the Coronets with deference** in public, regardless of the forum. No matter how you feel about some individuals on the thrones, your role on the “game side” of the SCA requires you to behave as though these points are always true:
 - a. The Coronets are central to the “game side” of your barony: they are the Crown’s chosen representatives.
 - b. The Coronets are always worthy of respect. An insult to the coronets is an insult to the Crown.
2. **Treat the Coronets with courtesy at all times.** Address the Coronets (instead of the person wearing it) even when no one is watching. Avoid invoking your prior relationship with the Coronets. There will be times when you can let your hair down, especially with old friends, but let them make the first move, and always in private.
3. **Make the Coronets’ lives as easy as possible:** they have one of the most challenging roles in the SCA. Be their “law giver” and go-to resource on branch customary and Kingdom Law.
4. Work with your branch Exchequer to make sure the Coronets’ **heirs** are fully informed regarding financial and budgetary matters as soon as possible after the Crown notifies the branch of their selection. The new Coronets needs to understand their fiscal responsibilities, what will and will not be paid for under Society, Kingdom, and branch financial policies, the workings of the Branch Financial Committee, and so on.
5. Keep your Coronets and their successors **well-informed** regarding happenings in the Kingdom, including reactions to things they have said and done. Offer all counsel to the Coronets with respect and courtesy.
6. **Deal with disagreement calmly.** If the Coronets seems determined to do something you regard as dangerous for the branch or the SCA, start by talking privately with the baronage. Always seek to understand what they really plan and what they mean (secondhand reports are often misleading) and explain why you believe the action is unwise. If it is against the rules as you read them, quote the specific citation, and point out that you will have to consult the Kingdom Seneschal about it, which may lead to an investigation. Try to find an approach that will accomplish the baronage’s goals without ill effects. Do note, however, that if you believe that there is something going on against either the rules of Kingdom, Society or modern law, and the Coronets will not be deterred, you must contact the Kingdom Seneschal at once!

7. If you cannot deflect the Coronets from something you regard as unwise but not against the rules, first agree with them that they may do as they wish, but explain the probable consequences of their actions. If that doesn't deter them, focus on damage control. On one hand, look for explanations to help people accept the idea, and on the other hand, follow the commands in as neutral a fashion as you can. Have a plan to deal with the fallout, if any.
8. It is the responsibility and honor of the Coronets to establish and present **awards and accolades**, as they shall deem proper, in accordance with Branch customary. Even ill-judged awards have a place, because they establish the reality of landed nobles' power. Advise the Coronets as clearly, soberly, and courteously as you can.
9. The Crown may suspend a territorial Baron and/or Baroness for the duration of the reign, for just cause stated in writing and presented only to the Baron and/or Baroness. Suspension would prohibit the use of the baronial title and arms, the conduct of baronial courts, and the presentation of baronial awards. The Crown may remove a territorial Baron and/or Baroness for just cause stated in writing and presented only to the Baron and/or Baroness; however, the Crown must request a written opinion from the populace of the Barony before taking such action.

Communication with Other Branch Officers

1. You need to know what is going on within your branch in order to do your job, and to work with and through fellow branch officers to do your job effectively. Ask the other branch officers for a courtesy copy of their Change of Officer forms so you can keep track of the date their terms expire, and request copies of their reports to the Coronets and their Kingdom superiors. Send them yours in exchange. Do not take active steps to second-guess another branch officer, unless there is a clear violation of Kingdom Law or Corpora, or a complete loss of function in the office.
2. Make sure the other branch offices stay filled. Be prepared to help find a replacement if another officer fails to do so.
3. Encourage the other branch officers to talk to each other. The effective operation of our "game-side" historical re-enactment within every branch requires all of its officers working smoothly together. The Seneschal plays a vital role in seeing that communications remain clear, so the branch's work is done effectively and efficiently. Regular meetings are one way to ensure that communication happens. Rather than trying to "manage" other officers, try to coordinate and facilitate communications amongst and between you all.

Electronic Communications Policy

1. It is important to remember that, regardless of interpersonal relationships and informal modern communication links that may have been developed, branch Seneschals are the legal representative and, as such, must communicate all official correspondences in a formal manner consistent with that role.
2. Formal communications to and from SCA officers may be directed through electronic means (email) as well as through postal or fax systems. However, messages posted for general attention on any public system may not be regarded as formal communications

to an officer, whether or not the officer is known to participate on the electronic forum, email list or social media site in question.

3. No personal or identifiable information will be sent over email lists or posted on social media unless the individual gives permission to do so. A phone call or postal letter is also an acceptable means of communication.
4. Branch reports will be sent via email through your branch officer Office 365 account.
5. No message posted to unofficial social media sites, general email lists, or other public electronic forums can be considered official communications. Therefore, these messages are not required to be part of your permanent files. However, it is very wise to keep copies of messages if they could help to document a problem, as well as inform your successor on the history of issues in your branch.

Websites and Social Networking Sites (Including Facebook)

1. For a digital site to be recognized by the SCA, it must represent an established branch of the Society and must have a warranted officer responsible for its content. As they do not represent established branches of the Society, the SCA will not recognize sites for households, fan groups and communities. Group officers with a website/channel are responsible for ensuring that the site complies with Society guidelines.
2. Personal information will not be published on any SCA-recognized internet site without first gaining permission from the individuals involved.
3. Email permission to electronically publish personal contact information is acceptable.
4. Permission to electronically publish the contact information of an individual is in effect until that same individual revokes their permission.
5. Event Stewards may grant permission in writing to electronically publish the personal contact information of persons serving as event staff. In this case, it is understood that individuals volunteering to be event staff have granted this permission to the Event Steward.
6. See the Corporate Social Media Policy for more details.

External Communications

The branch Seneschal and Chatelaine will likely have the most contacts with people outside of the SCA, either through negotiating an event site, setting up local demos with schools, librarians, and scout troops (for instance), or answering an inquiry from the media.

When you are communicating with people outside of the SCA, use equivalent titles rather than SCA titles, which convey little meaning to non-participants. Refer to yourself as the branch chapter president, the chatelaine as outreach coordinator, the Coronets as honorary royalty, etc.

Assume that your audience knows nothing about the SCA and its activities, and make extra effort to explain our purpose and activities.

SCA Jargon

“Meet me at the erics in five minutes and we’ll watch the smalls do some boffering. It’s just past the biffies, once you get through Gate. And you might want to visit Gold Key for some garb, so the brass hats won’t catch you walking around naked.”

Imagine hearing such a directive on your first visit to an SCA event. Much of our SCA jargon is a mixture of historical terms and titles, and some words and terms are quite lighthearted and playful. But to a newcomer, it might as well be gibberish.

We’re not alone in having a whole dictionary of words and terms specific to the SCA. Any group

The language we use and the jokes we share can bring us together. But be mindful that they can shut out newcomers. If you become aware that they’re lost, offer to explain. It’s a basic courtesy, too seldom used.

*—Baronessa Julia Sempronia, OL OP
Former An Tir Seneschal*

will, over time, develop its own jargon, inside jokes, or special terms, easily understood by one another, but unintelligible to outsiders or new members.

However, nothing says “you’re not one of us” more clearly than using words or phrases the hearer can’t understand. Forcing them to ask for an interpretation (if he or she is brave enough to do so) can make them feel foolish, and underscores their position as an outsider looking into the charmed circle of players who are “in

the know.”

In the SCA’s half-century of existence, a veritable wall of jargon has grown up between the game and the outside world, and visitors have difficulty peering over that wall. Further, some words carry innuendo, double meanings, or pejorative connotations, and using them in conversation may cause the hearer to jump to conclusions quite at odds with the speaker’s intent. This is one of the reasons that we have scrubbed “autocrat” from our lexicon in favour of “event steward.” The word “mundane” is also insulting to most people outside of the SCA. The term “modern” has far fewer negative connotations.

The Society has been working hard to chip away at this wall of words, in an effort to show that newcomers are welcome and can start playing right away without taking a crash course in SCA linguistics. The same holds true for people who will never go to an event. Your goal in describing the SCA to outsiders requires that you extend our courtesy to them by being absolutely clear about who we are and what we do.

Talking to the Media

Good media exposure (local television, radio, newspaper, weekly magazines, local media web sites) can be extremely helpful in recruiting new members. It also helps with public goodwill, which can be instrumental in gaining access to sites.

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The Office of Society Seneschal/Vice President for Operations have specific guidelines that should guide your interactions with modern media organizations. The SCA 's general policy is to have a unified, professional approach to informing the Media of our purpose, activities, and when necessary, a position on relevant topics and events.

If the media contacts your group to write a story or other media presentation, you must first contact the Kingdom Media Officer. Photographers and videographers should also be informed that any participant may decline to be photographed.

Following this type of contact, a brief report should be emailed to the Kingdom Media Officer for information and possible follow up, if required. An incident report form is listed below. If there is a period of time between when the group is contacted and when the media attends the event, then the Kingdom Media Officer should be contacted in that interim. That way, the Kingdom Officer can provide the local group with Society press materials and rules for film crews, as well as making provisions to attend or appoint an appropriate spokesperson for the event.

If you are fortunate enough to have a member of the media covering your event (and you've cleared it previously with the Kingdom Media Officer), it is very important to scrub your language of our charming, but impenetrable, jargon. Use vocabulary that is both meaningful and palatable to the public" to ensure that the image we project to the public reflects the better angels of our nature.

Your Duties Regarding Media Contacts

Procedure for Media Contacts

1. The local branch seneschal is responsible for all Organized News Media contact at the branch level. Duties may be delegated to members who meet society media relations criteria.
2. The seneschal must:
 - a. Follow Society and Kingdom Media Relations policies, practices, and procedures.
 - b. Utilize approved Society or Kingdom press materials.
 - c. Contact the Kingdom Deputy Seneschal for Media Relations for creation or approval of event specific materials, when desired.
 - d. Report to the Kingdom Deputy Seneschal for Media Relations within seven days of a Reportable Media Event as described in, but not limited to, Society Media Relations policy. Report must include:
 - i. date of activity
 - ii. location
 - iii. modern and society names (if applicable) of all contacts
 - iv. Barony, Canton, and Shire affiliation (if applicable)
 - v. description of activity
3. Unfortunate occurrences that might result in media coverage, including but not limited to, severe Injury or fatality; incident resulting in official law enforcement being summoned to

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an SCA activity; and negative news resulting in the organization being displayed in an unfortunate light: e.g. destruction of property, prominent member retained on criminal charges, etc.; must be reported within seven days to the Kingdom Deputy Seneschal for Media Relations. Report must include, but not limited to:

- a. SCA and modern name of member
- b. specifics on occurrence, and
- c. degree of police and/or media involvement

Word to the Wise

Members of the Media do not require permission to cover an event. If the event is open to the public, members of the media may pay the gate fee and enter the site, and you cannot eject them unless they refuse repeated requests to follow safety instructions.

You also cannot control what is reported. However, if a member of the media contacts you following an emergency that occurred at your event, it is vital that you refer that person to the Kingdom Seneschal and the Kingdom Media officer rather than consent to an interview. Take the reporter's contact information and pass it on to the Kingdom. Tell them that someone at that level will contact them within 48-72 hours.

ARBITRATING THE RULES AND THEIR PRECEDENCE

Guidelines

Modern law and local regulations always take precedence over any organizational requirement or policy, and no “game-side” situation or circumstance should ever hinder or supersede modern law and local regulations. Where modern law differs in different parts of the Kingdom, then the most appropriate jurisdiction should apply – i.e., that which applies where the event or activity itself is held. If in doubt, contact the Society Seneschal.

Within the SCA, Inc., if there is any conflict among the provisions of the Corporate rules listed below, those higher on the list will govern over those lower. Policies and handbooks are guidelines to help facilitate and interpret our rules and governing documents for those responsible for administering our organization and implementing our rules. Ultimately, however, the Board and all Corporate Officers are responsible to modern law and our governing documents.

Kingdoms, Principalities, and Baronies can add local guidelines to govern the running of their lands, which would then not apply in other SCA lands. They may be used to “add to” the procedures and restrictions defined in a document “higher up” in the precedence, as long as they do not contradict or overrule the higher-level rules. Kingdoms can be more restrictive, but not less restrictive, than Society rules. For example, the Crown cannot write a law saying that the Kingdom Financial Committee is comprised of only two individuals (in contravention of the more restrictive SCA financial policy requiring three individuals), or that the Kingdom may allow grappling on the armored combat field, since that violates the more restrictive SCA marshallate rules banning such behavior. The Kingdom could, however, ban thrusting in combat – since that would be more restrictive than SCA level rules which currently allow such behavior.

Order of Precedence

1. Modern Law
2. The By-Laws of the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA, Inc.)
3. The Corporate Policies of the SCA, Inc. (Different policies may apply to affiliates.)
4. The Corpora of the SCA, Inc.
5. Affiliate governing documents, if applicable
6. Interpretations of Corpora by the Society Seneschal, approved by the Board of Directors
7. Corporate Officer Policies and Handbooks
8. Individual Kingdom Financial Policies (Different policies may apply to affiliates.)

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9. Kingdom Law
10. Decisions of the Crown
11. Kingdom Officer Policies and Handbooks
12. Principality Law
13. Decisions of the Coronet
14. Principality Officer Policies and Handbooks

Your Branch Customary

Local branch “best practices” that define your branch’s structure and operations usually describe such things as key officers, the mechanism for filling vacant offices, key events and (for baronies) awards, champions, and sergeants. As Seneschal, you should be closely involved in updating these to ensure that they comply with Society and Kingdom Law. Your members should be aware that, unlike the former, your branch customary or charter does *not* have the force of law.

Resist throwing the kitchen sink into your branch customary. “Cutting and pasting” items from Society governing documents, such as Kingdom Law, Society and Kingdom Financial policies, Society Sanction Guide, Bullying and Harassment Policy, and other documents is discouraged, partly because these documents often change. Incorporate such documents by reference instead. Remember the precedence of law: your branch members are covered by them already, and turning your branch customaries into the Gutenberg Bible will ensure that people won’t bother to read them.

Last, your branch customaries, when revised, must be sent to the Kingdom Seneschal for review and approval to help ensure that they do not conflict with Kingdom and Society Law.

WHEN THINGS GO WRONG

As Seneschal, you will be called on to solve many problems in your branch. Problem-solving is an art, and everyone has different styles to address it. You will be called on to solve problems that are not yours to address, to mediate conflicts, and in worst-case scenarios, to be the “first responder” in emergent situations. We’ll address each of these to help you develop skills to address them, using formulae developed by former An Tir Kingdom Seneschal Viscountess Callista Balgaire, whose work has been adapted.

While conflict almost always raises peoples’ blood pressure, differences of opinion, if handled respectfully, are essential to ensure that the activities and events are successful. In environments where minority opinions are not respected, fatal flaws in an otherwise great event will never be revealed. In meetings, the seneschal is called on to ensure that differences of opinion are listened to and considered, but when the final vote is taken, those with minority opinions must learn to support the will of the group as a whole. Don’t strive to achieve a branch without conflict, but do be aware of your role in listening respectfully and helping others do likewise.

*Your friends are not always right. Your enemies are not always wrong. When solving a conflict keep your mind open and stick to what you **know**, not what you **think** you know.*

*—Viscountess Callista Balgaire, OP,
Former An Tir Seneschal*

Problem-solving is an art, as any interaction with fellow humans is more art than science. Everyone sets priorities differently. Everyone has different hot buttons. Everyone has a personal problem-solving style. Knowing this can help you effectively evaluate the urgency of an issue and provide good leadership in a true crisis.

You and your fellow branch officers must be able to quickly categorize the many issues that will arise. You may meet people who are very animated by what *they* perceive is an urgent situation. It is up to you to determine whether what you’re hearing is truly an emergency: when do you have to react immediately, and when do you have time to sort things out?

So what is *really* urgent? The term “BAMO” started as a way to filter out the real from the perceived emergencies, keeping in mind that some people live in a world of constant crisis and urgency. As seneschal, you can’t afford to. You will burn out, and be completely ineffective when the real emergencies hit.

So, what does BAMO mean?

Bleeding

B- (formerly arterial bleeding). A medical crisis. This is shorthand for any life-threatening medical emergency. Regardless of who is in charge, you should be dialing 9-1-1 in a real medical emergency. Officers must secure the scene and keeping gawkers away. Information-gathering as to victim contact information is also a good idea.

Authorities On Site

A-Authorities on-site. A legal crisis. As a Greater Officer, you should be there when the authorities arrive, especially if you did not call them! Sometimes, it is just a “drive-by,” but police cars and fire trucks are often the heralds for bigger problems. Go check it out. Walk quickly and do not pass “Go.” IMPORTANT: when dealing with authorities (indeed anyone outside of the SCA), ALWAYS use your modern name and modern officer title equivalent (i.e., chapter president) for yourself and everyone else involved.

Money Missing

M-Money Missing. A Financial crisis. It can range from the gate box missing in action to armed robbery. If large sums of money are missing, turn your undivided attention to the matter and notify the Kingdom Seneschal and Kingdom Exchequer immediately.

On Fire (or other natural disaster)

O-On Fire. A Safety crisis. This can be the most literal of all. Something on fire requires immediate action. The same is true for flooding, vandalism in progress, or other natural disaster. Property/safety issues need to be addressed quickly, or else you could end up back at B followed by A, and we do not want to go there – really!

Obviously, there are other urgent issues. A missing child, a potential Amber Alert, needs to be addressed quickly. Things come up that you would never even imagine. But when confronted with an urgent issue, run through the different categories above and decide whether you need to react NOW, or whether you have time to check the facts. I found that the real emergency is rare, and that most problems look better after 24 hours and some fact-finding.

Now we'll take a look at PEPP. These can help you navigate through non-emergent situations.

Procedural

P-Procedural. These are problems that are a direct result of not knowing – or not following – documented procedures. Conflicts between officers performing their office may well focus on procedural issues. If these arise, you may be called on to mediate and recommend solutions.

Procedural issues may include omissions or violations of Kingdom Law, Corpora, or Financial Policy. If the cause is ignorance, you can correct the problem by providing the correct information. If the cause is negligence or refusal, you have a basis for disciplinary action.

Never let them see you sweat. No-one under your leadership should ever see you have a tantrum. Ever. Your leadership is ended once that happens, even if it takes you ages to figure it out.

*—Master Aaron Swiftrunner,
Former Society Seneschal*

Educational

E-Educational. This is more than just a matter of tradition or convention. Some branches codify their traditions, some do not. In the SCA we have philosophies that do not carry the weight of law. Examples: leave the site cleaner than you found it. Treat our equals as our betters and lessers as equals, and so on. This is part of the 'socialization process' for new and old members alike. If undertaken in a non-threatening way, a gentle nudge can help everyone understand what the SCA is all about.

Perceptual

P-Perceptual. Trickier to deal with is this set of problems. We all view the world through unique filters, formed through experiences, our state of health, and state of mind. You will see things differently if you are tired or angry than you will if you just had a relaxing, lovely chat with a good friend.

So, sometimes a problem really isn't a problem at all, but the result of inaccurate perceptions. For example: Squire Bob is convinced that Household UberServ gets preferential treatment for camping at events. What he may not know is that UberServ routinely takes advantage of pre-registration for group camping with event camp-masters.

Perceptual problems can be based on the dreaded...

Personal

P-Personal problems. The trickiest and least objective of all problems to solve. As an officer, you should avoid being in the middle of these like the plague! You are a branch manager, not, as a rule, a personal counselor! Encourage people to talk face-to-face. Pull in Peers who can mediate, if the issue gets too heated. Encourage people to solve the problem at the lowest level of intensity and try not to take sides.

Personal problems are the most time-consuming (and energy-draining) problems to solve. They do not represent the best uses of your time and talent! Seneschals (and coronets, if your branch has them) are sometimes expected to mediate squabbles between branch members. Resist the temptation to facilitate private matters! The Society has extremely clear bullying and harassment procedures. Be sure that you read them and be prepared to steer people to solve their own problems where they're able.

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Beyond BAMO and PEPP

Problem Children. I wish I could distill this issue into a snappy little solution. I can't. This is the nightmare of most branches, and a source of angst for everyone involved.

For people who pose significant behavioral problems, the Kingdom Seneschal is your best resource, but they will require both that the appropriate Society procedures have been followed, and the issues have been thoroughly documented.

Document, document. Try to address issues directly with the individual and write down the results of those encounters. There is no substitute for this. Highly recommended: do this in the presence of another officer or a Peer. If this person has a relationship with a Peer, pull them in immediately. Act early, document fully.

There is nothing more frustrating for a Kingdom Seneschal to discover that someone has been a local problem “for years” with no paper trail of the problems caused. Waiting two years or more to report a problem after it has occurred is far too late.

People who pose a danger or threat must be called to the attention of modern law enforcement – immediately. Modern issues (underage drinking, drug abuse, assault, domestic violence) need to be handled by the police, and investigation by SCA members should not be done. If you or the individuals involved choose not to call modern authorities, know that the SCA does not have a mechanism to address the problem. If you make the call, the problem is handled efficiently. So – modern crimes or infractions, call the cops – it's the law!

Presenting a problem to your Superior Officer

One of the best pieces of advice I ever got was this: if you have the time to identify a problem, take the time to propose a solution. You may not have the solution, but you will have taken an important shift in your thoughts. No-one likes a whiner. Be a problem-solver!

Bullying and Harrassment

The Society and Kingdom takes this subject extremely seriously. The Society defines bullying and harassment as “Bullying is systematic and unwelcome behavior which involves the use of influence, threat, intimidation, or coercion to cause hurt or harm to another person or group of people. When the bullying behavior is based on a protected class, that behavior is defined as harassment. Protected classes include race, sex, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability.”

Branch Seneschals are responsible for ensuring that signage reflecting this policy are prominently posted at all events and in all event copy. Further, the policy directs people reporting bullying and harassment to a seneschal, Society President, or the Kingdom Ombudman. It is very important to read the entire policy and procedures posted on the Kingdom Web site.

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If you are approached by anyone who claims that a violation has taken place, encourage them to make a formal complaint addressed to the Principality or Kingdom Seneschal. Do not attempt to mediate such a complaint, but do maintain confidentiality.

Final Thoughts

As an officer, people look to you for guidance. In general, it is in everyone's best interest to stay calm in the face of adversity. If it is not a genuine emergency, check your facts before you act. Then check them again. Be sure you check them at the source, not through a third party! Try to reserve judgment until you have heard all sides.

To paraphrase Mistress Daphne, former Society Seneschal, “your friends are not always right, and your adversaries are not always wrong.” As a former Kingdom Seneschal I have had some white-knuckled, cotton-mouthed moments. They happen. Being able to triage a situation and act accordingly is a skill that will serve you well both in and out of the SCA. When in doubt, run problems by a trusted Peer, or your Baronial, Principality, or Kingdom Officer. Talking it out sometimes helps present the right solution. Finally, remember that this is a hobby! Try to have fun!

Conflict Management

While conflict almost always raises peoples' blood pressure, differences of opinion, if handled respectfully, are essential to ensure that the activities and events are successful. In environments where minority opinions are not respected, fatal flaws in an otherwise great event will never be revealed. In meetings, the seneschal is called on to ensure that differences of opinion are listened to and considered, but when the final vote is taken, those with minority opinions must learn to support the will of the group as a whole.

Interpersonal Relations

Seneschals (and coronets, if your branch has them) are sometimes expected to mediate squabbles between branch members. Resist the temptation to facilitate private matters! The Society has detailed conduct policies and procedures. Be sure that you read them and be prepared to steer people to solve their own problems.

Issues between Officers

Private grievances between individuals are different than those between officers performing their office. If these arise, you may be called on to mediate and recommend solutions.

When conflicts arise, talk to the person directly. Find out if their issue arises from a misunderstanding or miscommunication (English can be famously prone to these). Use active listening technique: give them verbal feedback on what you understand their issue to be, using neutral language. Don't use pop psychology—accept what people say about themselves, and don't assume you understand what someone else is thinking. Let them tell you. Know the difference between venting and problems—some may just need you to listen.

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In difficult situations,

- utilize respect, courtesy, and patience
- Find a neutral position and stick to it
- Focus on goals rather than fault
- Remember that the best solutions are often those found by the participants
- Suggest alternatives if necessary
- Never assume malice where lack of information could explain the situation
- Focus on needs underlying the messages you hear
- Focus on positive, no one ever deliberately goofs
- If you must criticize, do it privately, never public
- If you must criticize, never criticize someone to another person
- If you are in over your head call for help

Avoiding difficult situations

- Urge people to keep their personal conflicts outside of the SCA
- Avoid giving advice unless asked for it
- Remember that your first duty is to the group. Your friendships come second
- Treat everyone with respect and courtesy
- Be aware of your political beliefs and stay neutral
- Cultivate openness and honesty
- Keep the decision-making processes in the group in the open
- Respect the privacy of others
- Don't engage in or encourage gossip
- Stay informed and control the rumor mill
- Spread good cheer—seek out opportunities to thank and praise others
- Keep your own reactions positive

EVENTS

The biggest undertaking that you and your group will manage are events. Even the smallest event has a number of logistics to manage, and the largest will require all your expertise in managing multiple priorities. As you and your fellow officers plan for events, pay close attention to the number that your branch takes on each year and do your best to encourage your branch to be realistic in the number that you agree to do each year.

As Seneschal, your responsibilities include overseeing and supporting your event stewards, who serve as your deputies, negotiating and signing site contracts, ordering insurance, working with site owners, supervising event stewards, and ensuring that all the moving parts of your events work together. The following is not an exhaustive event planning guide, but rather describes the seneschal's roles and responsibilities in key areas, chief of which is having the bird's-eye view of how all the moving parts fit together.

Reviewing branch event bids

Members of your branch will likely offer ideas for an event that "somebody" should plan. Turn all these ideas back on the proposer, and encourage them to submit a detailed bid; even experienced stewards of longstanding events should routinely present a bid for branch members to approve.

Event bids help you and your fellow officers determine how well-planned the proposed event might be: is the potential event steward qualified to run the event? Have volunteers been recruited to fill key roles? Has a budget, including income and expenses been drawn up? Is it realistic, based on prior years and current costs?

Making your event legit

Society governing documents state that any event where official business takes place, must have copy in the kingdom newsletter. Event Stewards are encouraged, once your council has approved the event, to visit the Kingdom Calendar page and fill out the Kingdom Calendar Event Request Form, available online at the Kingdom calendar page. This form can be used for

*Catch people doing
something right.*

*Make a big fuss over people
who work hard. It is always
a good thing to catch
people doing something
right. A tiny token from a
new baronial seneschal
once transformed a
suspicious opponent into
my most trusted ally.*

*—Master Aaron Swiftrunner,
Former Society Seneschal*

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all events, virtual or in-person, and once it's filled out completely, the event will appear on the Kingdom Calendar.

But to be a legitimate event where awards can be given and other official business transacted, make sure that either you or the event steward completes the Crier—Submit Event Copy online form. Be aware that the newsletter deadlines for publication are the first day of the month falling two months before the event: i.e., submissions for events occurring in January are due by the first of November.

For more information, read files pertaining to the Calendar and events on the Kingdom Calendar page.

Bidding on Kingdom Events

Before your branch decides to bid on a Crown or Kingdom event, your first task is to carefully read the An Tir Crown & Kingdom Event Policy, available on the Kingdom web site, and examine, if possible, data from previous events. Consult with the Kingdom Events Deputy, who can inform you whether there are competing bids being planned for the event your group hopes to take on, as well as technical advice. The Events Deputy page on the Kingdom web site includes all manner of forms that you and your group will need to put together a proposal.

As these events are the chief source of revenue for the Kingdom and fund all its activities, your branch's bid will be closely reviewed by the Kingdom Exchequer once your branch has voted to bid, and the Kingdom Financial Committee will review yours and other competing bids and make the final vote on which branch will be awarded the bid.

During the months leading up to the Crown or Kingdom event, the event steward is expected to provide detailed written reports of the event's progress to the Kingdom Events Deputy, and report in person to Curia leading up to the event and provide a final report to Curia at the conclusion.

Kingdom policy includes financial incentives to help offset the amount of work that your branch undertakes: currently, the revenue split your branch will receive is 40% of the profits, if all reports have been turned in to the Kingdom within 30 days. If your group misses that deadline, only 10% can be retained.

Working with Site Owners

Assume that site owners have never heard of the SCA. Your job is to help educate potential site owners about the SCA and our activities. The Society's publication, *A Guide to Introduce Our Organization to Site Owners and Managers for Potential*

Use of Facilities by the SCA, can help potential site owners understand what your group will be doing on their site, and you are encouraged to provide them with a copy. It's available for download on the Kingdom Events Deputy page.

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Reassure site owners that the SCA carries insurance, and show them a copy of the certificate you received at the beginning of the calendar year. Site owners may request to be named as an additional insured, though you should not offer that unless requested.

Contracts and Agreements

Your group is highly encouraged to draft a rental agreement for every site it uses, as it spells out costs for site rental, terms of occupation. These contracts, which only you can sign, should detail the exact area you are renting and the dates of occupancy. You may be working with site owners who are familiar with the SCA, however, a contract removes any doubts or potential conflicts with the owner or other renters. Contracts are legally binding documents, and though you don't have to be an attorney to read one, you should be aware of certain legal clauses that may kick in under certain circumstances.

Here are some important clauses that often appear on contracts:

Performance/Attrition Clauses

These are common when renting hotels, and often specify numbers of rooms rented, with the group being responsible for unsold rooms. You should know that Kingdom policy does not allow these.

Cancellation Clause

These describe what will happen if the event is cancelled. There are generally two types of clauses: one where the owner cancels, and one if your group cancels. Be aware of any cancellation penalties before you sign the contract.

Liability and Indemnification

Nearly all contracts have language designed to protect the property owner from monetary damages if someone gets hurt. Watch out for language that completely absolves the property owner for "any and all" damages and ask to replace it with language that promises that the SCA will be responsible for our negligence and the property owner will be responsible for their negligence.

Watch for other terms and conditions: will your group be renting the entire site, or just a part of it? Make sure the contract clearly specifies this. Are there other terms, such as janitorial or security staff that the site expects you to pay? Are there restrictions, such as pets or alcohol consumption? If there are, under no circumstances should anyone in your group be permitted to discreetly flout the rules. Disobeying rules clearly stated in your use contract is a good way to lose a site forever.

As Seneschal, you will be the person who signs contracts, and, if you are not familiar with contract elements or negotiating with site owners, you are highly encouraged to watch the video on Contracts and Sanctions, which provides detailed information on the legal parts of

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contracts. The PDF slideshow that accompanies the presentation also has useful information. Both are available on the Seneschal channel of Microsoft Teams.

Search for “An Autocrat’s Guide to Site Rental Contracts— What to watch out for to protect you, your group, and the SCA,” currently available on the Kingdom of Ansteorra’s web site, for more contract do’s and don’ts.

At the Event

At last the weekend has arrived, and all the activities that your event steward and their team have planned for are unfolding. You have encouraged them to plan, report, talk through worst-case scenarios, and be ready to welcome the participants. The gate has opened, and cars and tents are rolling in.

For the duration of your branch’s event, either you or the event steward must be on site as the legal representatives of the group, and either you or your branch chatelaine are the only members who are authorized to speak to the media.

But there’s another valuable function you can perform, that of recognizer in chief. All SCA events occur due to the hundreds of volunteer hours put in, and this is your time to be ready to thank them for all their hard work. You, along with your exchequer, will be monitoring your gate crew, and if they’re working far into the night (and sometimes the morning), you should drop in regularly with a smile on your face to make them feel that their devotion is appreciated. You should also be prepared to exercise all your moderation and facilitation expertise: running events can be stressful, and often people under stress have a hard time envisioning options in a crisis. You should be their voice of reason, helping resolve conflicting visions for activities, advising the weary volunteers to take breaks, including your event steward, who will likely feel the weight of the entire event is on their shoulders.

If you and your team have spent time imaging the worst thing that could possibly happen and discussed options, you will be prepared for those rare times when emergencies hit. If you’ve talked about theoretical situations where a participant starts doing a fire-eating display in the middle of a bone-dry pasture, you’ll all be better prepared to swoop in and trespass them from the site before you have to call the fire department.

After the Event

And now, the moment you have all waited for: the last day and hour are over, your team has encouraged the stragglers to leave site, and your clean-up crew has done a walk-through, collected lost-and-found items, and ensured that the site is cleaner than it was when you arrived. As branch properties that were used are returned to storage, ensure that your team accounts for loss and breakage.

Encourage your steward to have an after-action debriefing with the team soon after the event—within the following week is idea, so memories are fresh. This meeting is a great time for you and your baronial coronets, if any, to thank the team once again for their hard work.

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This meeting should also be the time when your steward and exchequer put the finishing touches on the event final report, which is essential for a Crown or Kingdom event, and important for your branch's future event planning.

Waivers

Signed Participant Waiver sheets for non-members are absolutely essential for each and every in-person events. Roster-style waiver forms are available on the Kingdom web site, and your steward should have a supply of these at Gate, sufficient for the numbers of attendees. They're titled "Consent to Participate and Release Liability," and all adult non-members must sign them before entrance. Children under the age of majority (18 in the US, 19 in British Columbia) are required to have signed waivers from their responsible parent/guardian. Any non-member refusing to sign will be denied entrance.

These signed waivers for adults and youth are stored by the Kingdom, and you must collect and send the package, along with a completed Waiver Submission Cover Letter, to the Kingdom Waiver Secretary, a deputy of the Kingdom Seneschal, soon after the event closes.

APPENDIX

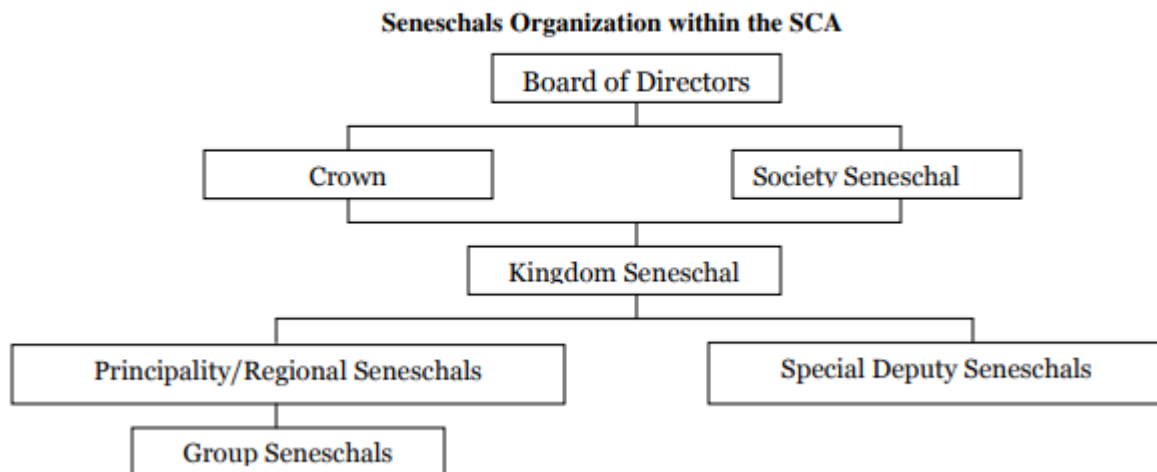
SCA Structure

The Society for Creative Anachronism can be described in two ways: The first is generally what people think of when you say the name: a gathering of people, beautifully dressed in pre-17TH century costume, recreating the martial arts, customs, arts, and pageantry of the medieval world.

But there's another side to the SCA: The Society for Creative Anachronism is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation, based in California, with a board of directors, officers, a small staff, and over 30,000 volunteers, ceremonial royalty, and volunteer officers throughout the world.

You will be joining the ranks of these volunteer officers and, as the legal representative for your branch, you will operate in both what we refer to as the "game side" – the events, ceremonies and pageantry, but you are in charge of the "real world:" the insurance, meeting management, coordination with fellow officers, and reporting.

Following is a simple chart that illustrates the SCA's structure and reporting:



The corporation is overseen by a seven-member board of directors (often abbreviated as "BoD"). As is common with boards of directors, the board makes its decisions collectively. Individual board members have no authority, though most are responsible for communicating with one or more Kingdoms. If you have heard of the term "ombudsman," that person sits on the BoD.

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Reporting to the BoD are several Society officers, generally corresponding to the Kingdom officers listed on the An Tir Web site. These officers include the Society Seneschal (modernly the Vice President for Operations) who is responsible for making policy decisions for the Society, which the BoD ratifies at their meetings.

You may have an opportunity to meet members of the BoD, should you attend an in-person or online meeting, otherwise, you will have little or no contact with this level of the Society. Similarly, interactions with the Society Seneschal should follow the chain of command through the Kingdom Seneschal, unless all other conduct procedures have failed.

Kingdom Structure

An Tir is one of the larger Kingdoms in what we call the Knowne World. The Kingdom includes the modern states of Oregon, Washington, the panhandle of Idaho, a large part of British Columbia, and the Yukon territories. The Kingdom has two Principalities, with Coronets who reign every six months or so, and Principality officers: The Summits, which includes the state of Oregon excepting the Portland metro area, and Tir Righ, which includes most of British Columbia. The Inlands region includes eastern Washington and northern Idaho, and Central An Tir includes western Washington and the Portland metro area. These areas do not have ceremonial royals or officers, but the regions are used to both coordinate events and for reporting.

Kingdom Seneschal

The Kingdom Seneschal (modernly known as the Regional Vice President for Operations) is appointed by the Crown and the Society Seneschal, and generally serves for two years, and is the legal representative of the Kingdom. The Kingdom Seneschal is charged with overseeing the business side of the Kingdom: reviewing and updating Kingdom Law for the Crown's approval and making policy decisions about the Kingdom's day-to-day operations. The Kingdom Seneschal has many deputies to assist with specific tasks and you are likely to communicate with all of them on a regular basis.

Crown

The Crown are completely in charge of what we often call the "game side" aspects of the SCA. They have the sole power to give awards and to change Kingdom Law (although Kingdom Law cannot be changed in such a way as to conflict with modern law or the Society's governing documents, and They must work with the Kingdom Seneschal to make changes to Kingdom Law.

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The Crown also appoints Kingdom Great Officers, together with the appropriate Society Officer. The Kingdom Great Officers are defined in Kingdom Law, but currently consist of the Kingdom Seneschal, Earl Marshal, Black Lion Herald, Minister of Arts and Sciences, Chronicler, and Exchequer.

A great many other things are subject to the Crown's approval. For example, both the Crown and the appropriate Kingdom Officer sign warrant rosters for all officers in the Kingdom (this takes place at July Coronation and 12th Night), and the Crown must be consulted if a warrant is to be revoked.

Policies

Kingdom Events Policy

- 1) All events must be sponsored by a full-status branch of the Kingdom, registered with the seneschal of the sponsoring branch, publicized to the membership of that branch and conducted according to Society rules and Kingdom law.
- 2) Any branch holding an event on lands not within their own designated borders must receive written permission from the Seneschal of those lands or sites before holding an event there.
 - a) If permission is denied, you may appeal the decision to the Crown.
 - b) Baronies do not need to seek permission to utilize lands within their Cantons.
- 3) All events must be registered with the Kingdom Calendar by using the most current Event Information Form. Event Information Forms (EIFs), barring unforeseen and unusual circumstances, should be in the hands of the Kingdom (or Principality) Calendar no less than three (3) months before an event is to take place.
- 4) All branches shall place at least one event per calendar year on the Kingdom calendar with complete copy appearing in The Crier.
- 5) Formal actions and announcements with long-term impact on the Kingdom may only occur at events which have had copy published in The Crier. These include:
 - a) Crown and Coronet Lists.
 - b) Coronations and Investitures.
 - c) Appointment of Principality and Kingdom officers.
 - d) Presentation of awards and titles.
 - e) Proclamations of law.
 - f) Establishment or advancement of branches.
- 6) It is traditionally encouraged, but not required, that branches donate ten percent of the profits of their events to a specific Kingdom fund of their choice, with the general fund being the default.
- 7) All event stewards must be SCA members.
- 8) Owners (in whole or part) of property on which an event is to be held, or their immediate families, may not be the even steward for said event, nor be part of the event steward team.

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- 9) Contracts with landowners for the use of property or land must clearly state a set price for payment of the use of the property or land. This price can be structured either as an amount per attendee, or as a price for the event as a whole.

The following policies are reprinted from the Society Seneschal Handbook, ©2021. They are included in this Handbook to assist you in understanding Society policies on issues likely to arise while performing your office.

Consult www.sca.org for the most recent version of the full Handbook, as the documents stored there are considered official. Further reproduction on other Internet sites is expressly forbidden. Used with permission.

Guidelines to Ethical Decision Making for SCA Seneschals

Always comprehend the nature of your words and actions and how they reflect upon you, your Kingdom and the SCA.

Clarify your goals...what are your short term and long-term goals, i.e., what is the purpose for taking action or not taking action.

Always strive for continuous personal improvement in serving others.

Be aware of your ethical responsibility as an SCA Officer, i.e., without being respectful, caring, trustworthy, responsible, and fair, you cannot fully serve the SCA's participants.

In gathering facts, always attempt to get accurate, first-hand information from each side of a situation or conflict, speak directly to the parties or knowledgeable witnesses, and attempt to obtain complaints or statements in writing.

Always be willing to adjust according to your observations and as such, do not take a position and then back it up with facts; rather let the facts establish your position.

Insurance Matters

SCA, Inc. maintains insurance that covers the corporation and its officers in certain instances. Because the specifics of our insurance policies can and do change from time to time, any specific insurance questions need to be directed to the Corporate Office. They will get answers for you and help you with any processes related to activating insurance or acquiring proof of coverage.

You do not need to do anything special to activate the SCA's general liability insurance. This is the policy that covers, for instance, site damage. If a site owner wants proof of insurance, usually the "proof of insurance" letter available from the Corporate Office will suffice. If the site owner wants to be named as an "additional insured," there is a fee involved and lead time required. Follow the directions on the SCA web site for either of these circumstances or contact the Corporate Office for guidance.

There is also an additional fee and lead time required for equestrian or golf cart insurance. These policies must be activated whenever there will be horses (or similar animals) on site, or if

the SCA is going to use golf carts at the event. Again, contact the Corporate Office for instructions.

When a group rents golf carts, the SCA's Golf Cart Insurance must be activated. All other requirements set forth by the Corporate Office dealing with insurance apply including all pertinent late fees.

If fireworks or fire arts are performed, Society Seneschal approval and outside insurance coverage is required. The local groups are responsible for 100% of the cost and responsibility for this additional policy. Fire Arts, which include but are not limited to firewalking, fire-breathing, explosives, and pyrotechnic displays may not be conducted as an SCA sponsored activity at events, demos, practices, or formally recognized gatherings. Variances must be requested of the Society Seneschal in writing and only take effect when granted in writing by that office. The Event site will pay for any additional insurance needed.

The SCA carries Director and Officer (D&O) liability insurance. The purpose of D&O liability insurance is to provide the SCA and its officers and agents with insurance coverage for legal defense required to respond to lawsuits that name the SCA or its officers. **All warranted officers and their agents are covered by this insurance within the bounds of performing their office in the SCA.** [emphasis added]

If you have reason to believe there will be a claim against the SCA's insurance, you need to notify the Corporate office at once. Do remember that there is a deductible, so small claims for property damage will not meet the deductible.

You can also refer to the instructions on www.sca.org for more information.

Procedure for Reporting the Purchase, Registration, Insurance or Sale of SCA-Owned Trailers

1. Each branch, group, office, guild or other officially recognized entity (hereafter referred to as a "group") of the SCA that owns a trailer that is registered in the name of any SCA group, must send a copy (a copy, not the original) of the current registration to the Corporate Office. The Vice President of Corporate Operations or their designee will retain a copy of the current registration along with a copy of the current "proof of insurance" for our files. This needs to be done within 30 days of acquisition of the trailer.

Maintenance of Records

Each branch, group, office, guild, or other officially recognized entity (hereafter referred to as a "group") of the SCA that owns a trailer that is registered in the name of any SCA group must maintain records of purchases and sales as noted below.

When the vehicle is purchased:

- Retain copies of the title, the current registration and current "proof of insurance" in both the group's Exchequer and Seneschal files. A copy must also be retained in the group's Regalia Officer files, if applicable.

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- Report the purchase of the trailer to the SCA Corporate office by sending a copy of the registration and current “proof of insurance” for the vehicle to the corporate office.
- It is the responsibility of the group to obtain and maintain insurance for the trailer.

When the vehicle is sold:

- Retain the bill of sale in the group’s Exchequer files, with copies in the group’s Seneschal files and Regalia Officer files (if applicable).
- Report the sale of the trailer to the SCA Corporate Office so SCA insurance can be canceled for the trailer. Do this within 30 days of the sale.

Trailer Insurance

All trailers purchased and owned by the SCA must be registered to an SCA group as defined above and must be insured by the SCA group at their own expense. The group must also send a copy of the registration to the Corporate office within 30 days of registration.

Do not register the group’s trailer in the name of an individual or an officer of the group.

If a third party’s person or property is damaged as a result of an accident involving a trailer when being towed, the individual towing the trailer bears responsibility for liability and should contact their insurance carrier. It is the responsibility of the Seneschal of the group that owns the trailer to check to make sure that the tower/driver of said trailer has the appropriate motor vehicle liability insurance.

Some groups own a trailer that is used for storage only, i.e., it never moves from the storage site. If such a “stationary” trailer is legally required to be registered, the group is responsible for following the procedure as outlined above.

Minor/Youth-Related Policies

1. Minors are defined as anyone who has not reached the age of legal majority. This varies between countries, states, and other jurisdictions. Be sure of the age(s) of majority in your area. In the US, it is usually, but not always, 18. [In British Columbia, the age of majority is 19]
2. SCA is a member, family, and youth friendly social organization. SCA children, youth, and teen activities and classes are offered as a positive means of encouraging the participation of minors in the SCA with their families while encouraging fun-focused learning about history and the SCA. Dedicated and/or published youth-oriented activities (SCA Youth Activities) are overseen by warranted Youth Officers at any and all events and activities. These Youth Officers must have successfully passed an SCA approved background check and the Youth Officer must be warranted.
3. Parents or guardians of minors shall have ultimate responsibility for the welfare and behavior of their children at all times. It is the responsibility of the adult who brings a minor to an event to ensure that the minor is safe and not in danger. At events and activities in which youth participate in any way, participating minors must either

have a parent or legal guardian present at the event/activity, or be accompanied by an adult in possession of a properly executed “Medical Authorization Form for Minors.” This Medical Authorization Form must designate an adult present at the event or activity as able to authorize medical treatment in case of emergency. This adult is also responsible for the minor’s welfare and behavior in the absence of the parent or legal guardian.

4. All warranted Youth Officers (deputies who ultimately report up to the Kingdom Seneschal) must have a current SCA membership and an approved, current, and valid background check. “Warranted” is defined as having a signed warrant making the individual in question an official deputy to the Kingdom Youth Officer must likewise be warranted; they must also have passed a current SCA-approved background check.
5. All official or “published” SCA Youth Activities must have one background checked adult member who acts as the official “coordinator” for the SCA Youth Activity. For example, if there are 10 youth A&S classes each in their own separate classroom, each classroom needs to follow the “two-deep rule,” but only one overall youth “coordinator” responsible for all activity in all classrooms is needed. There are many activities of the SCA where informal instruction (mentoring) occurs that are open to attendance by minors, but do not constitute dedicated and/or published SCA Youth Activities. They are known by many names (e.g., Practices, Meetings, and Guilds, and Workshops). A minor’s attendance at an adult A&S class does not mean that class becomes an SCA Youth Activity simply because a youth is in attendance.
6. The “two-deep” rule specifies that for all SCA Youth Activities, a minimum of two adults (at or above the age of legal majority in the state, province or country in which the activity occurs) unrelated to one another by blood, marriage or personal relationship must be present. This policy does not relieve parents of their primary responsibility for the welfare and behavior of their children. One of these two adults may also be acting as the official coordinator for the Youth Activities going on.
7. For any criminal act involving a minor, modern authorities MUST be contacted. Inform the Kingdom Seneschal immediately. The Society Seneschal must also be informed, within 48 hours.
8. Branch and regional Seneschals, Marshals, Marshals-in-Charge, and Exchequers must be at least the age of majority for their jurisdiction. Be aware that the age of majority does vary between jurisdictions; these officers must be of the age of majority in each area that they serve.
9. Minors 15 years of age or older may serve as officers, except as stated above. Minors may serve in the allowed capacities only with the express written approval of the parent or legal guardian and their Kingdom superior, after they are notified of the age of the minor.
10. Minors younger than age 15 may not serve as Head Gatekeeper, Reservationist, etc., for an event. They may assist at the gate collecting funds, making change, etc., under the oversight of an individual permitted by SCA Corporate Policies to serve as an officer, who will be ultimately responsible for the accounting of the funds passing

through the gate. Minors younger than age 15 serving in this capacity may not work unattended at an event gate at any time.

11. Medical treatment of minors is subject to the appropriate laws of the state, territory, province, and/or country where the event is held. In the case of a medical emergency involving a minor, the parent/legal guardian or, in the case of a minor attending with a non-parent/legal guardian, the temporary guardian with the Medical Authorization Treatment Form for Minors must be located. See Section XIII.D of this Handbook.

Background Checks Policy

1. A background check is required for the following officers: Kingdom Seneschals or Youth Coordinators at any level (or any other officer whose responsibility is the oversight of Youth Activities). Furthermore, it is required that when youth activities are held, there must be at least two non-related adults, one of whom must have passed a background check.
2. These rules only apply to groups operating within the US and Canada.

Background Checks Procedure (adapted from forms created by the Kingdom Background Checks Deputy)

Who Must Obtain a Background Check

- Youth and Family Activities Officer
- Youth Armored Combat (YAC) Officer
- Youth Marshal

Step 1 (applies to Americans and Canadians)

Those seeking to be a Youth Armored Combat (YAC) Officer or Youth Marshal, cc the email to your Branch YAC Officer (if you have no Branch YAC Officer, cc the Principality/Regional YAC Officer, and if there is no one at that level, cc the Kingdom YAC Officer)

The request should contain all of the following information

- Full legal name
- SCA name
- SCA membership number and expiration date
- Requestor's e-mail address
- Requestors Branch and Kingdom of Residence

Indicate whether the requestor is seeking to be a branch YouthOfficer -OR- a Youth Armoured Combat (YAC), Youth Officer or Youth Marshal

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Indicate whether or not you can access and print pdf files; if you cannot, then include your residential mailing address.

Step 2 (applies to Americans and Canadians)

The Branch Seneschal forwards that request to the An Tir Background Checks Deputy at backgroundchecks@antir.org, and keeps a copy of the request in their files (keeping a copy of the email is fine - the request does not need to be printed).

Step 3—For Americans

What Happens

The Kingdom Background Checks Deputy sends instructions to the requestor.

If you can access & print pdf files, the forms to fill out will be attached to the e-mail. If you cannot access and/or print pdf files, the Kingdom Background Checks Deputy will send the printed forms to the residential address listed in the original request.

What You Need To Do

1. Fill out the forms and send them *directly to the SCA, Inc.* DO NOT send them to the Kingdom Background Checks Deputy. This is private information that should only be between you and the SCA, Inc.
2. Wait approximately one month. During this time the SCA, Inc. will give your information to Intellicorp, the company it has hired to do the actual checking. Intellicorp will reply back to the SCA with a "PASS" "FAIL" or "HOLD."
3. Receive your "PASS" letter from the SCA, Inc.
4. Show your "PASS" status letter to your Branch Seneschal and your Branch Youth or YAC Officer as appropriate

Step 3—for Canadians

What Happens

The Background Checks Deputy will put your name on a list and forward to the Kingdom Seneschal, who will then forward your information to the corporate office of SCA, Inc.

The SCA, Inc. will notify SterlingBackcheck, the company it has hired to do the actual checking, to send you an e-mail to begin the process. SterlingBackcheck will e-mail you an invitation and a link.

What You Need To Do

1. Log in to SterlingBackcheck to begin the background check process.
2. Wait approximately one month.
3. Receive your "Clear Status" letter from the SCA, Inc.

4. Show your “Clear Status” letter to your Branch Seneschal and (if applicable) your Branch Youth or Youth Armoured Combat (YAC) officers

Demo Policy

A demo (“demonstration”) is an organized educational effort to teach and/or display activities of pre-17th century life, intended to spur historical interest in general, and SCA interest in particular, to the general public. Demos are an important way of introducing ourselves to the community, fulfilling our organizational mission of education, and possibly finding new recruits for the SCA. However, not all demos are the type that result in new members. An elementary school demo is fun, but the likelihood of recruiting new members is low. A university or Renaissance Fair demo is more likely to attract new members but does not necessarily contain the educational community-relations value of a school demo. Both are important, and a group should find a balance between them.

In order to be covered by SCA insurance, demos must be approved by the sponsoring group’s Seneschal, and the branch may restrict who may represent them to the public.

Restricting participation should be done with extreme caution and care. A demo may also be an “event” if it meets the requirements for an event as outlined in Corpora and Corporate Policy. At any demo, at least one paid SCA member must be present and in charge of the demo.

Demos where there are no combat-related activities do not require waivers unless they are held as part of an SCA “event.” Therefore, if there is no combat, and the demo is not held at an SCA event, waivers are not required. When required, waivers may be completed individually, or a roster waiver may be used. It is not required that spectators at demos sign waivers, as long as they don’t become participants.

As with all martial activities, an authorized marshal for whatever forms are being displayed must be present if there is fighting at a demo. SCA combatants must be authorized in that weapons form or style to perform at the demo.

Demo organizers must pay particular attention to site/host restrictions regarding SCA and steel weapons and activities. In general, it is not a good idea to allow the general public to handle steel weapons at a demo, and steel weapons must never be left unattended. SCA weapons must never be left unattended and in plain sight and access of the public. (They may be stored unattended in tents, trucks, etc.)

Since observers of SCA demos are generally not familiar with SCA combat activities, special care for safety must be taken. Boundary ropes are strongly recommended, and sufficient safety personnel must be provided to ensure safety of combatants and observers.

A participant of the SCA may not hit a member of the public with any weapon regardless of whether the member of the public is in armor and gives consent. Adult members of the public who wish to try armored or rapier combat should be referred to the nearest SCA group for instruction.

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With specific safety restrictions, supervised children age 12 and under may hit an armored SCA fighter with foam weapons only, not rattan weapons. Waivers are not needed from the parents of children who take part in “fight-a-knight” activities. Minimum safety standards include keeping unarmored observers at least 10 feet away from the armored fighter and child. Individual Kingdoms may make more restrictive policies.

Whenever a demo is held with children present, a minimum of two unrelated adults must also attend that demo (the “two-deep” rule). “Children” refers to anyone under the age of legal majority.

No one may bring weapons of any kind onto the grounds of a school without prior knowledge and consent of the school officials.

There is no SCA policy that prohibits an SCA group from charging a “demo” fee to the organization requesting the demo. However, most groups accept donations rather than charging a set fee. With either a donation or a “demo” fee, all monies should be in the form of a check, payable to “SCA, Inc., [group name]”. Under no circumstances should an individual receive cash, or a check made out to them personally. SCA site fees may not be charged at a demo unless the demo is held as part of an SCA event. Outside the USA, payment should be made to the branch by the appropriate means if checks are not relevant.

Assuming appropriate safety precautions are in place, and with any necessary instruction, participation is a highly effective method of educating the demo guests—and fun for both the SCA member and guest.

Service Animal Policy

The SCA abides by all national, state, and local regulations regarding service animals. B. For United States entities:

Under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), emotional support, therapy, comfort, or companion animals are not considered service animals. The only service animals permitted under law are dogs and miniature horses, and people with disabilities accompanied by service animals generally must be allowed the same access as those without service animals. Further, per the ADA, only two questions may be asked of the handler of a service animal:

1. Is the animal a service animal required because of a disability?
2. What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

These questions may only be asked if it is not readily apparent what service the animal is performing. Every endeavor should be made to ensure these questions are asked only once, and only by the event steward or their designee (usually the head of gate). No one may ask what the disability is, nor can anyone demand to see the animal perform the task. The answers to these two questions may be noted.

Handlers of service animals must abide by all state and local vaccination and travel requirements for their animals.

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Service animals must always remain under the control of their handler and must be housebroken. A handler assumes all liability for their animals. Dogs must remain on leash unless their duties demand that they be off leash, either for specific tasks or for the handler's disability. The dog must still be under control of the handler.

If a service animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it, the event steward or local (or Kingdom) seneschal may request that the animal be removed from the premises. This removal is to be based on the evaluation of whether the animal is under control, appropriately behaved for public accommodation, and not an evaluation of whether the animal is a service animal. The handler must be allowed back onto the premises after making arrangements for their animal. Removals from site or refusals of entry should be documented carefully with reasoning for why access was denied per SCA rules for removing someone from site.

Additional points:

- Service animals are not required to wear identification, including medallions or other gear.
- No additional fees may be levied against the handler of a service animal
- No paperwork may be required from handlers on their service animal
- No mandatory pre-registration of service animals is allowed

Policy on Religious Ceremonies and Events

Our game encompasses the pre-17th Century world and as such, Corpora's policy on religion is not meant to discourage the study of historical belief systems and their effects on the development of a global culture.

However, the Society, its Kingdoms and local groups, through its officers and participants, are not allowed to give the appearance of establishing, sponsoring or promulgating a religion or belief system.

Likewise, the Society may not prohibit any system of beliefs of its individual participants. As such, the Society is protecting the rights of individual participants by neither imposing any belief system upon its participants, nor banning the practice of any participant's belief system.

The use of aspects of historical accuracy for theatrical emphasis does not violate Corpora; however, a claim of historical accuracy or theatricality does not give the officers and participants of the Society the ability to abrogate the policy on religion as stated in Corpora.

Religious rituals performed in Royal Courts, whether historical, imaginary, or theatrical, violate the Society's Policy on Religion which protects individual participants from being subjected to a religious or quasi-religious ceremony. Forcing participants to observe religious ceremonies by either direct or indirect pressure is prohibited, and Royal Courts must not imply that any particular religious ceremony is authorized, sponsored, or promulgated by the Society.

Prayer in Royal Courts (in English or in a foreign language, ancient or medieval), whether individually spoken, group prayer, or a prayer calling for a response, violates the Society's policy.

Additionally, officers and participants in the Society may not make religious statements in official pronouncements (whether verbal or in writing). Officers and participants in the Society should take care to be respectful of others and to be reasonable in their words and deeds so that their words and deeds do not violate the Society's Policy on Religion.

Harassment and Bullying

The SCA prohibits bullying and harassment of all individual and groups.

Bullying is systematic and unwelcome behavior which involves the use of influence, threat, intimidation, or coercion to cause hurt or harm to another person or group of people. When the bullying behavior is based on a protected class, that behavior is defined as harassment.

Protected classes include race, sex, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

Bullying and harassment may be overt, as in the following non-inclusive list of examples:

- a. Verbal abuse, including using racial, homophobic, transphobic, ableist epithets, etc.
- b. Non-consensual physical contact, violence, or threatening gestures
- c. Displaying material that is offensive, degrading, or threatening to a protected class d. Consistent demeaning remarks or malicious teasing
- d. Stalking or predatory behavior

It may also be covert, as in the following non-inclusive list of examples:

- 1) Spreading rumors or innuendo with malicious intent
- 2) Deliberate exclusion, isolation, or alienation of an individual without just cause
- 3) Using rank, title, or office to intimidate others

Provided that the behavior does not rise to the criteria listed above, bullying and harassment is not:

- a) Single episodes of social rejection, dislike, tactlessness, or forgetfulness
- b) Mutual arguments, disagreements, or fights
- c) The termination, mutual or not, of a romantic relationship or friendship
- d) Reasonable constructive feedback or critique

The test for bullying is the reasonableness of the behavior and the impact of that behavior on the recipient.

Participants engaging in bullying/harassment are subject to appropriate sanctions. If an individual believes they have been subjected to or have witnessed harassment, bullying, or

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retaliation, that person should contact a seneschal, the President of the SCA, or that kingdom's Board Ombudsman.

The following statement must be posted at gate at every SCA event in a size large enough for people to see it as they enter our events. This language must likewise be quoted in ALL site handouts at every event or site where a handout is made available.

THE SCA PROHIBITS HARASSMENT AND BULLYING OF ALL INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS.

Participants engaging in this behavior are subject to appropriate sanctions. If you are subjected to harassment, bullying or retaliation, or if you become aware of anyone being harassed or bullied, contact a seneschal, President of the SCA, or your Kingdom's Board Ombudsman.

Sexual Misconduct Policy

The SCA prohibits all forms of sexual misconduct including, but not limited to, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, and sexual violence. Such conduct violates SCA Core Values and puts the SCA and its participants at risk. In furtherance of this policy, the SCA highlights our Core Values as the code of conduct for participants in any of our activities.

SCA Statement of Core Values

In pursuing its mission, the SCA is committed to excellence in its programs, communications, and activities and to:

- act in accordance with the chivalric virtues of honor and service in all interactions with SCA members and participants;
- be a responsible steward of SCA resources;
- deal fairly with others, and value and respect the worth and dignity of all individuals;
- practice inclusiveness and respect diversity;
- promote a safe and respectful environment for all SCA members and participants;
- act with transparency, fairness, integrity and honesty;
- maintain a harassment-free environment in SCA spaces;
- avoid behavior that reflects adversely on the SCA or other SCA members and participants.

It is the expectation of the SCA that its members and participants, in all events and activities of the SCA, will conduct themselves in accordance with these tenets.

Definitions

Consent means freely and affirmatively communicated willingness to participate in sexual activity, expressed by clear, unambiguous words.

- a. Consent is a clear, verbal, voluntary agreement given by someone able to agree to an act.

- b. Someone may lack the ability to consent, due, for example, to their age, intellectual or other disability, or incapacitation from the use of drugs or alcohol.
- c. We will always view as unwelcome and nonconsensual any sexual activity between an adult and any person below the legal age of consent.
- d. Additionally, because consent is a voluntary agreement to engage in sexual activity:
 - someone who is incapacitated cannot consent;
 - past consent does not imply future consent;
 - consent for one act does not imply consent for another;
 - silence or an absence of resistance does not imply consent;
 - consent to engage in sexual activity with one person does not imply consent to engage in sexual activity with another;
 - consent can be withdrawn at any time during a sexual encounter; and
 - coercion, force, or threat of either invalidates consent.

Sexual Assault is an actual or attempted sexual contact with another person without that person's consent. Sexual assault includes, but is not limited to, acts that constitute sexual assault under state law.

Sexual Harassment is any unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive such that it unreasonably interferes with, limits, or deprives someone of the ability to participate in or benefit from the SCA events and activities. Sexual Harassment includes, but is not limited to, acts that constitute sexual harassment under state law.

Sexual Misconduct is any unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that is committed without consent and/or by force, intimidation, coercion, or manipulation. Sexual misconduct includes, but is not limited to, exposure of reproductive organs, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, and sexual violence. Sexual misconduct also includes, but is not limited to, acts that constitute sexual misconduct under state law.

Stalking means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to

- a) fear for his or her safety or the safety of others, or
- b) suffer substantial emotional distress.

Stalking behavior can include:

- (i) persistent, unwanted communications to the victim by phone, email, and/or other social media;
- (ii) (repeatedly sending the victim unwanted gifts;
- (iii) following or waiting for the victim at home, school, work, or elsewhere; and

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- (iv) direct or indirect threat(s) by the stalker to harm herself or himself, the victim, or the victim's friends and family, or to damage the victim's property. Stalking includes, but is not limited to, acts that constitute stalking under state law.

Firearms Policy

The possession of modern firearms at SCA events is prohibited, except for locations such as Alaska and the Northern Provinces of Canada where bears create issues of safety. 2. This rule does not impact law enforcement officers in the performance of their duties, park rangers, or site staff who maintain firearms in the performance of their duties on a private site owned by a party other than the SCA.

If possession and transport of a firearm is permitted by local, state, or federal law and by site regulations, a firearm may be stored out of sight in a vehicle in accordance with federal, state, and local laws. In addition to said laws, the firearm must be stored in a locked gun box and/or have a trigger lock. At no time may the firearm be removed from a vehicle while at an SCA event site, unless under circumstances described above.

The possession of air or carbon dioxide compressed air rifles or handguns firing pellets, BBs or air-soft pellets is prohibited at SCA events.

Any displays of pre-17th century firearms must be, incapable of discharge, and the barrel must be made of solid material such as a metal rod or wooden dowel.

No ammunition, wadding, or black powder is permitted on site. There is one exception for the Pennsic cannon, which is grandfathered into this regulation. The use of carbonate facsimile "cannons" or other noise making devices will be controlled by the event steward and/or the corresponding seneschal who will determine whether they will be allowed and under what circumstances, with all consideration given to those who might be impacted by the noise.

Policy on Hunting, Slaughtering, and Butchering

The hunting or slaughter of live animals is prohibited at SCA functions. This prohibition does not include fishing, nor does it include necessary actions taken to protect event attendees from dangerous animals. The butchering of animals may be allowed as part of a class, demonstration, or for food preparation; however, all modern health regulations must be followed if the meat is to be prepared or served as part of a feast or other such SCA- sponsored food service. Furthermore, SCA participants are not to be subjected unawares to a scene that would violate reasonable sensitivities.