

Kingdom of Ansteorra



Office of the Hospitaler

Hospitaler Handbook

2016

HL Goldward of St. Goliath

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3	Retention.....	17
Job Descriptions & Responsibilities.....	3	Publications.....	17
Local Hospitalers.....	4	Media.....	17
Regional Hospitaler.....	5	Responsibilities:.....	18
Kingdom Deputy Hospitaler.....	6	Our image:.....	18
Kingdom Hospitaler.....	7	Unscheduled Media Contact:.....	19
Applying for an Office.....	9	Pursuing Media Coverage:.....	19
Taking Office.....	10	Preparing and Issuing a Press Release/Press Kit:.....	19
Leaving Office.....	10	Hosting the Media at an Event:.....	20
Gold Key.....	11	Conclusion.....	21
Educational Classes.....	11	Appendix.....	22
Reporting.....	12	Appendix A: Reporting Schedule.....	22
Recruitment and Retention.....	13	Appendix B: Resources.....	22
Overview.....	13	Appendix C: Sample Press Release.....	23
Demos.....	14		

This is the Ansteorra Hospitaler Handbook, a publication of the Hospitaler's office of Ansteorra, Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. Additional copies are available from the Kingdom Hospitaler. This is not a corporate publication of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc., and does not delineate SCA policy.

Material in this handbook is specifically intended for use by Hospitalers within Ansteorra in the performance of their office, by their deputies, and by Seneschals for groups that do not have a Hospitaler. This handbook is not intended for newcomers.

Information for newcomers about the Society for Creative Anachronism can be found at <http://welcome.sca.org/>, <http://sca.org/officers/chatelain/newcomers.html>, and <http://hospitaler.ansteorra.org>. This Handbook was last updated December 2016

Introduction

A hospitaler is a link between the SCA and the everyday world. Welcome to the Office of Hospitaler of Ansteorra. With this commitment, you have become the face of the SCA in Ansteorra for newcomers and for all those new to our Kingdom. Thank you for your commitment and service. This handbook is intended to assist you in your position as a hospitaler. It contains valuable information to help meet your local group's needs with recruitment, retention, education, development, and reporting, as well as ultimately assisting newcomers. It is a very exciting and challenging office, but it is also one of utmost importance since it helps our Society to prosper and grow.

Everyone is a hospitaler for the Kingdom. Whether your interests lie in arts and sciences, heavy weapons, fencing, archery, or any of the many other diverse activities, your enthusiasm is contagious and a magnet for new members.

Recruitment is crucial to the survival of the Kingdom and the SCA. A positive attitude and warm welcome go a long way in helping newcomers become potential members. Change and growth are good. They keep the group healthy as new members contribute their ideas. Always conduct yourself in a courteous and chivalrous manner, and remember that "we were all new, once."

As Hospitaler, you must also be comfortable with and willing to greet and speak to strangers about the SCA, or you must delegate this task to a more outgoing deputy. The Hospitaler is the person that explains, in everyday terms to bystanders, what is happening. The hospitaler should make sure that a new member is taking everything they need to an event. You hand out flyers one day and help newcomers understand our terminology and traditions the next. You will need a strong understanding of the Society and the ability to explain everything in terms that anyone can understand.

Job Descriptions & Responsibilities

The Hospitaler's primary function within the SCA is to welcome newcomers and help them become familiar with the SCA's and Kingdom's customs and traditions. Like the Seneschal, the Hospitaler serves as a bridge between the modern world and the Current Middle Ages.

You are often one of the first contacts that a new member makes, so it is very important that you be as welcoming and helpful as possible. You should be proactive about seeking out new members and

offer to help them find the information they need to make the SCA an enjoyable experience. You should be able to inform new members about the activities available in the area, introduce them to local members, especially guild heads and officers, and help them borrow or acquire appropriate gear. Use common language when communicating with newcomers. Avoid Society specific terms except when explaining these terms. Be knowledgeable about resources useful to newcomers, such as local sources for fabric or feast gear. The Hospitaller must also work with the established members of the local SCA community to ensure that newcomers are welcomed and included in the group. The Hospitaller will typically coordinate demos, educational classes and Gold Key for newcomers.

In Ansteorra, the Hospitaller position is a Greater Office of State. Baronies and Provinces are required to have a Hospitaller. Other groups are not required to have a Hospitaller. However, given the importance of recruiting and retaining new members, it is highly recommended that every local group in Ansteorra have a hospitaller. In groups that have no hospitaller, the responsibilities of the Hospitaller belong to the group seneschal. Generally the term of office is two years.

The responsibilities of a Hospitaller vary somewhat from group to group, but the job description above covers the basic expectations of the office. Check with the previous Hospitaller or other local officers if you have any questions or concerns about the Hospitaller's role in your group.

As an officer in the SCA and of Ansteorra, as well as the first point of contact for those new to the SCA, you are expected to read and uphold Society Law, the Society Media and Demo policies, Ansteorra Kingdom Law and the policies of the office of Hospitaller. You are expected to read and familiarize yourself with the Ansteorra Kingdom Hospitaller Handbook.

Local Hospitalers

Responsibilities

- Assist and mentor both new and relocated members with the customs of the SCA, Ansteorra, and your local group.
- All communication which occurs under the auspices of your office is to remain courteous

- Groups with an active hospitaler are required to maintain an ansteorra.org email address. Please contact the Ansteorra Kingdom Webminister regarding access to the email account (if it is not already configured that way for your group.)
- Every effort should be made to maintain an up-to-date and newcomer friendly website for your local group. Work closely with your group's Webminister to accomplish this.
- Plan a strategy for newcomer recruitment and a strategy for retention. Review and reevaluate each plan annually.
- Attend your local group's officer meetings.
- You are encouraged to join the Ansteorra Hospitaler group email list. This is the primary method in use by the Kingdom Hospitaler to send group reminders or notifications. If you do not join this group, you are responsible for keeping up-to-date on policy changes, reporting deadlines, etc. Although not mandatory, you are also encouraged to join the Hospitaler's Facebook page.

Deputies

The job of Hospitaler can be overwhelming at times. Consider taking deputies to assist you. Often this is a great way for someone who is not quite ready to take on an office of their own to learn about being an officer in the SCA. Deputies can be either assigned to a specific function (as demos and Gold Key fall under the auspices of the office of Hospitaler, these coordinators are by default always a deputy of the Hospitaler), or they can be general helpers who assist you when there may be too many newcomers to handle alone. Remember to send thank you notes to those people who are especially helpful – it makes them feel appreciated and much more likely to be willing to help you in the future! You may appoint deputies to your office as needed.

If Hospitaler is a required office for your group, then you should have a deputy to mentor and train for the office. If Hospitaler is not a required office for your group, it is still strongly suggested that you appoint a deputy.

Reports

Reports are due the 1st of each month The form can be found at hospitaler.ansteorra.org/hospitalers.html

Regional Hospitaler

Regional Hospitalers are appointed by the Kingdom Hospitaler. They must familiarize themselves with Corpora, the Society Media and Demo policies, Kingdom Law, and the Policies of the

office of Hospitaler. There are three regions in Ansteorra, each with its own Regional Deputy Hospitaler: North, Central, and South.

Responsibilities:

The responsibilities of a Regional Deputy Hospitaler include, but are not limited to:

- Approve appointments of Local Hospitalers.
- At least twice annually, regional deputies should hold meetings in their region for local Hospitalers, preferably in the spring and fall, at a large event in your region.
- Mentor and support the local Hospitalers
- Communicate at least quarterly with the local Hospitalers.
- Submit a quarterly report of the summary of activity in your region. Regional reports are due by the 5th of March, June, September, and December. They will contain the following:
 - Problems or conflicts
 - Your recommendations
 - A record of all reports received late
 - A record of any groups failing to report
 - Your contact information including mailing address, email address, phone number, legal name, society name, membership number and expiration date
 - A roster for local hospitalers including group name , mailing address, email address, phone number, legal name, society name, membership number and expiration date

Kingdom Deputy Hospitaler

The Kingdom Deputy Hospitaler is appointed by the Kingdom Hospitaler. He/she will be rostered, and will provide to the Kingdom Hospitaler contact information including mailing address, email address, phone number, legal name, society name, membership number, and expiration date. Term of office will end when the Kingdom Hospitaler leaves office, but may be renewed by the incoming Kingdom Hospitaler; however, s/he may resign by written notice.

The duties of the Kingdom Deputy Hospitaler are to assist the Kingdom Hospitaler and train for the office of Kingdom Hospitaler should the need to take over arise. S/he must familiarize him/herself with Corpora, the Society Media social media and demo policies, Ansteorra Kingdom law, and the policies of the office of Ansteorra Hospitaler.

Kingdom Hospitaler

Just as you have certain responsibilities to your local group and to Ansteorra, the Kingdom Hospitaler has certain obligations to all the local Hospitalers as well as to the Society.

The Kingdom Hospitaler is a resource for materials and information. However, this sort of information sharing can be a two way street – if you develop new materials or a strategic plan to attract and/or retain member, please be willing to share with the all the Hospitalers. Sharing good ideas, success stories, and even mentioning things that didn't work can be valuable information when passed along to the other Hospitalers in Ansteorra.

The Kingdom Hospitaler can also answer questions about your position or help you problem solve if any issues arise that you are not comfortable handling personally. If needed, the Kingdom Hospitaler can direct you to other resources to help resolve problems or questions.

The Kingdom Hospitaler will periodically hold meetings to converse with Hospitalers face-to-face. During these meetings, the Hospitalers will discuss common concerns and strategies for welcoming newcomers. In addition to these meetings, an email list is available so that branch Hospitalers may use one another as resources throughout the year.

The office is also expected to coordinate with the Kingdom Media Deputy and the Seneschal's Office in dealing with the media. The Kingdom Hospitaler's guidance and leadership can influence attitudes or initiate policies that will strongly impact the growth and well-being of Ansteorra. The duties of the Ansteorra Kingdom Hospitaler include, but are not limited to:

Laws and Policies:

As Kingdom Hospitaler, it is your responsibility to thoroughly understand the Ansteorra Kingdom Laws and Policies that specifically address the duties and responsibilities of Hospitalers at all levels. You should also be familiar with Corpora. Be familiar and compliant with Society Seneschal Policy as delineated in the Seneschal Handbook. Ansteorra Kingdom Law defines the duties of Kingdom Hospitaler under Article II Section 11. If you feel that it needs revision, work with the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal to formulate a description of your duties for incorporation into Ansteorra Kingdom Law. You should also review or develop policies for your deputies, regional, principality and local officers; again, submit them to the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal for incorporation into the Ansteorra Kingdom's documents.

Maintain Officer Roster:

Communication within the Hospitaler Hierarchy:

The Kingdom Hospitaler reports quarterly to the Society Chatalaine and a Round Table Report to the kingdom in June and December. This report should include:

- Status of Office and current contact information.
- Newcomers for the Kingdom during the previous quarter
- Major problems being dealt with. Any problems or issues which garner unsolicited media attention need to be immediately brought to the attention of the kingdom seneschal and the kingdom media officer.
- Major “Good Things” to report
- What you did last quarter
- What you plan to do next quarter
- Any questions or areas where help is needed
- Current Kingdom Population

Round Table reports should include, besides the above, the full roster of all warranted hospitalers in the kingdom. This roster must be completed by red tape for warrants to be signed for the next 6 months.

Compilation or Development of Materials:

There is considerable information for newcomers to the SCA which is available both in traditional print sources and on the Internet. You should choose informational articles of particular importance and insure that all local Hospitalers have, at a minimum, this material to select from for distribution to newcomers. You should also assure that up-to-date and accurate, newcomer-related information is presented by the East on the Internet. At a minimum the Ansteorra Kingdom site should include links to the newcomer and Hospitaler-related materials found on the www.sca.org site. You should also assure that kingdom e-mail address is available for contact for those inquiring about the SCA in Ansteorra.

Demos:

Help your local Hospitalers to find demos or to have an assistant in charge of demos. The official SCA Demo Policy is online (from the Society Seneschal’s Handbook, Appendix E).

Coordinating with the Kingdom Media Liaison; Fostering Public Relations:

You should work with the Media Liaison of the Kingdom Seneschal to help maintain positive publicity throughout the Ansteorra for the SCA, Inc. Local officers should be provided with the SCA media kit, policies and contact information for the Kingdom’s Media Liaison as well as educated about proper methods of dealing with the media. In addition, local groups should be encouraged to utilize the local media for publicity to develop membership. If a negative article or newsworthy negative event

concerning an SCA member arises, contact the Society Media Liaison immediately, both by e-mail (media@sca.org) and by phone, as well as the Kingdom's Media Liaison and the Kingdom Seneschal. You should under no circumstances make any statements to the media on behalf of the SCA. You should, instead, refer members of the media to the Society Media Liaison for any statements. The Society Policy for Media Relations is at <http://www.sca.org/docs/mediapolicy.pdf>.

Applying for an Office

All applicants for any office must apply using the kingdom officer form.

Who to submit form to

Local- Regional Hospitaler, CC Kingdom Hospitaler, local seneschal, and baron/ess if applicable.

Regional Hospitaler - Send application to Kingdom Hospitaler

Kingdom Hospitaler - Send application to Kingdom Hospitaler with a CC to crown and Kingdom Seneschal.

Requirements

- You must be 18 years of age to hold the office of Hospitaler.
- You must hold a current membership in the SCA and maintain this membership without a lapse for the duration of your term of office.
- You must have a valid mailing address and phone number, and keep the Kingdom Hospitaler and your branch Seneschal apprised of any changes.
- You must reside within the boundaries of the branch you serve, defined by the current Ansteorra postal code list maintained by the office of the Kingdom Seneschal.

Appointment

- Local Hospitalers are appointed by the Regional Hospitaler with input from the local Seneschal, Baron/ess and Kingdom Hospitaler.
- Regional Hospitaler - Appointments are made by the Kingdom Hospitaler
- Kingdom Hospitaler - Appointments are made by the Crown with input from Kingdom Hospitaler and Kingdom Seneschal.

Taking Office

Every organization requires a steady stream of new members to bring in new ideas and enthusiasm, as well as to replace members who may have moved or are no longer able to participate. This simple fact makes the role of Hospitaler extremely important to the well-being and continued existence of the Society.

When you first take the office, there are a number of things that you must do.

- Send a letter, either via email or via postal mail (email being the preferred method) to the Regional Hospitaler, copying the Deputy Kingdom Hospitaler, Kingdom Hospitaler, and your local Seneschal, stating you have taken office.
 - Include your contact information including mailing address, email address, phone number, legal name, society name, and membership number and expiration date.
 - You will then be placed on the roster. If your local group does not have a hospitaler the roster will list the seneschal's name, with the notation "Seneschal" until that position is filled.
- Verify all inventory records and correct any discrepancies between inventory sheets and existing Inventory.

Leaving Office

Remember when you were new to the office and how it felt. Consider working with the person(s) interested in the position prior to your departure or with a deputy. It is a good opportunity to train a replacement before you step down. Once you have decided to leave the office of Hospitaler, you still have several important duties. As with the Taking Office section, this may not be a complete list, so check with other local officers if you have any questions about local customs and expectations. Your written resignation should be sent to your local Seneschal, the Kingdom Hospitaler, the Kingdom Deputy Hospitaler, and to your Regional Deputy Hospitaler, so that your name can be removed from the roster.

You may be removed from office for any of the following reasons:

- Failing to maintain membership requirements
- Failing to Meet Reporting Requirements
- Infractions against the Ansteorra Kingdom Hospitaler Policies, Kingdom Law or Corpora.

- Or by your branch according to their custom and Kingdom Law.

If your membership lapses, you will have one month to renew. Your deputy or the branch Seneschal will be responsible for Chatelaine duties until your membership is current, and at that time you will be reinstated. Failure to renew after one month will result in your removal from office. You will be given warnings for failing to report or infractions against Law and Policy as set forth above.

When you leave the office make sure that all of your records, demo materials, Gold Key items, and promotional materials are all inventoried and in order for the new Hospitaler. Have your replacement and/or deputy help with reports, demos, contacts etc. so they are ready to step in when you are ready to step down.

Gold Key

Many groups maintain a collection of garb that is available for newcomers to borrow and use until they get their own, often called the “loaner garb” or “gold key.” You will endeavor to build and maintain a Gold Key collection of loaner garb and gear. Gold Key Coordinator is an optional deputy position, to assist the Hospitaler with the handling and maintenance of loaner garb.

Ideally, your Gold Key should contain garb in a variety of sizes for both sexes. It should be clean and in good repair. Organize your Gold Key and keep a written inventory of what you have. Update the inventory every time you get rid of items or add to it. It is also helpful to put at least a rough idea of sizes on the inventory. This will make it easy to tell what you have at a glance. If you find that you are using more of certain sizes than others you may need to adjust your inventory accordingly. Consider a group sewing day to make more or solicit donations from current members who may no longer need some things in their closet. It is also useful to have feast gear as part of the Gold Key.

Educational Classes

As the Hospitaler, one of your duties is to provide educational classes to newcomers to introduce them to the laws and customs of our society. These classes should include topics on:

- History
- Rules
- Awards, Rank structure, and etiquette
- What to bring and wear
- Persona Development
- SCA Combat

- Attending you first event

In Ansteorra we have an excellent resource for newcomers “A Guiding Hand” this newcomer handbook explains in great detail about our society.

Reporting

Without reports from you, the Kingdom officers will not know the state of your office or your group. Reminders are sent out to the Hospitaler group list prior to the due date. If your report is not received by the 20th day of the reporting month, you will receive a personal email reminding you to send in your report. On the 25th day if your report has still not been received, a late notice will be sent to your Seneschal. If three reports have not been received by the end of the reporting quarter, your group will be listed as non-reporting to the Kingdom Chatelaine, who will then report your non-compliance to the Crown and the Kingdom Seneschal.

Branches that fail to file two consecutive monthly reports will be considered delinquent and the following actions will be taken:

Branch Seneschal will be informed of the branch’s delinquent status.

The branch may file a late report within one week of notification from the Kingdom Chantlain to provide a late report, A report from the Seneschal’s office will suffice.

If the branch is unable to provide a late report, the branch will have until the next quarterly report is due to select a new Hospitaler.

If the branch fails to comply after the second consecutive quarterly report, the officer will be removed and/or the branch may be suspended.

Recruitment and Retention

The primary duty of the Hospitaler is in recruitment and retention. You are effectively the “Welcome Wagon” for your group

Overview

Spreading the Word:

There are several ways to help publicize the SCA and attract new members.

Verbal:Talk to the newcomer, provide them with a brief verbal explanation of what is going on and answer their questions.

Written: Give the newcomer a written handout that covers basic information about the SCA and provides contact information for the local group.

Electronic: Social Media, videos, websites,

Personal: Introduce the newcomer to local members who share their interests. This is by far the best way to communicate with a newcomer.

Developing a Strategic Plan

Recruitment a lot of work and it is the responsibility of the entire populace to help.

Brainstorming session:

Ask meeting attendees to make suggestions for demos, advertising etc. At this point, the feasibility of the idea should not be discussed. Simply record all suggestions for discussion later.

Discuss and refine ideas:

Once everyone has had a chance to make suggestions, discuss each idea. Consider what resources your branch will need (people, time, money, materials, equipment, site, etc.) for a recruitment activity. Come to consensus on activities that are within your branch's abilities. Make sure you don't overextend your group to the point of burnout. Demos are NOT events and should not be treated as such.

Develop a plan:

For each major activity, your plan should include the various tasks required; the target completion dates for those and the name of the person who agreed to complete the various tasks.

Get support:

Before you put your plan into action, you must pass it in council and have the support of the populace. Discuss your plans at your meeting; publish the plan in your newsletter, on your web page; and send it out to your branch mailing list. Make sure you provide an opportunity for members to provide feedback. Review feedback and revise your plan as needed.

Implement the plan:

While the Hospitaler or their deputy must be present at recruitment activities, you do not have to be the one organizing it. Your demo coordinator or qualified volunteer may organize an activity.

Assessing success:

Remember, whenever you stage a recruitment activity that you will not always gain/retain new members. You will, however, give your branch important exposure to your local community and plant seeds in interested minds who may attend at a later date. It is also important to review what worked, what didn't and why so that changes can be made for future activities.

Demos

Demos are the number one way of introducing and finding new recruits for the SCA. The type of demo to focus upon becomes a vital question. A major cause of Hospitaler burn-out is doing too many demos. Yes, doing an elementary school demo is fun and rewarding but the likelihood of recruiting new members may be low. On the other hand a demo at a college, Renaissance Fair, or Hobby store is ripe with new recruits.

Types of Demos

There are three main types of Demos: Recruitment, Educational and Publicity

Recruitment: (ex: out in public) These demos should have a variety of activities and people who are available to talk to the public. Your focus is having contact with the public and increasing their interest in the SCA. Hold a mock tourney; have an arts and sciences display; perform a dance or a play. Use whatever you can to attract your audience's attention. While the fighters do their combat, explain how our combat works, the rules, who is a knight, a squire, how everything relates. Flyers and other handouts with contact information are important to distribute. A good way to do this is to have a table set up with all of your information available. Try to have cards, bookmarks, flyers, coloring pages for kids, etc. at your table. Give them something they can put in their hand and take home.

Educational: (ex: schools/scouts) This demo will most likely have a specific subject or program that will focus on history and medieval culture. You may leave a few handouts with teachers, but recruitment is not the focus. Coloring pages to give out to kids can be a nice "take home" flyer.

Publicity: (ex: theater lobbies) These types of demos can be used to recruit or teach, but most likely they will be part of another program (a parade or festival) and you may have to follow the greater structure of your community event. Good public relations in your community is very important.

Planning for the Demonstration:

Determine the following information about the demo site

- Size
- Location
- Times and dates
- Special site rules
- Number of expected attendees

- Age range of attendees
- Name and contact information for site coordinators
- Examine your printed resources. If they are not up to date or in limited supply, resupply!
- Contact all participants in the area for help with the demo.
- Contact demo site and determine any additional needs or changes.

During the Demonstration

- Be courteous and chivalrous at all times and to everyone. Do not allow personal issues to affect your demo.
- If you want to visit with friends, step away from the main demo area. Even better, make time after the demo to visit.
- Do not try to sell anything at a demo. This includes promoting private business either verbally or with business cards. The Society is not a business but a non-profit educational organization.
- All blatantly modern items should either be kept out of view or disguised. Keep your gear contained and unobtrusive
- Bring a period looking drinking vessel. If your armour is obviously modern, wear a tabard or surcote to disguise it
- Wear your most accurate and nicest garb.
- Leave personal possessions at home, if possible. The demo coordinator and host group are not responsible for loss or theft.
- Fighters: Have fun! Make it look good. It doesn't matter who wins or loses, just keep the fighting going.
- Bring small projects such as embroidery or tablet weaving, etc. This will not only give you something to do, but something to talk about.
- For projects larger than 'lap sized', check with the host group to ensure the space needed can be accommodated.
- Everyone has a role to play in the demos, even those who are shy. Often, much set up work, waterbearing and clean up are necessary and people who do not want to speak can still add to the ambience of a demo.
- Spectators never ask stupid questions. Be patient and respectful of your audience. Do not invent 'facts'. If you do not know the answer, say so. Encourage research!
- Refer media presence, event hosts and other officials directly to the demo coordinator, Seneschal or Hospitaler.

- Requests for information on the SCA should be directed to the Chatelaine.
- Be aware of your surroundings and the spectators. Even a child brought up in the SCA will run through a list field if not supervised.
- No live steel at any demo. With many people around, you cannot control who or what happens.
- If possible familiarize yourself with the demo site before you go. Find phones, restrooms and nearest water source.
- Bring a First Aid kit to all demos where there will be fighting. Having one cell phone on site is recommended for dealing with any emergencies (Turn it off when not in use to call 911).
- A guestbook with contact information is helpful in creating follow ups to spectators.

Follow Up

- Contact those who signed the guestbook to give them more information.
- Archive for you report the following details
 - number present
 - participants (Current members)
 - Strengths – What you did well
 - Weaknesses – What you could improve on
 - Opportunities – Ability to do more demos
 - Threats – Issues that may hinder a future demonstration
- Thank your participants for their assistance
- Return any equipment you may have used during the demonstration

Retention

Retention is as much if not more important than recruitment. Any loss of a currently active member for whatever reason is a detriment to the society as a whole. Work to keep active members who may be slipping away and striving to include fringe players. Members stop playing for a number of reasons from political to financial or health concerns. When a person stops attending for an extended period of time, reach out to them see there is a way you may assist them.

Members who relocate from a different area may not be familiar with local and kingdom customs. Help to integrate them into your local group by introducing them to local players and inviting them to local and regional events.

Publications

In order to pursue a more professional image, the kingdom of Ansteorra has developed a publications program to generate promotional materials. All promotional materials intended for distribution to the general public must be approved by the Kingdom Hospitaler and Media Liaison

The following text is to be considered the standard introduction statement for the SCA Ansteorra and your group for all publications

The Kingdom of Ansteorra, which includes Texas and Oklahoma, is part of the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA), an international non-profit group that researches and recreates the arts and sciences of pre-17th century Europe. The (Group name) is the local chapter of the SCA and covers the area of (Location).

Media

Please refer to current Society and Kingdom Media Policy, before following this information .

Whenever a media contact is made you must report that contact to your local Seneschal, Hospitaler upline if it is through your office and the Kingdom Media Liaison. If the media contacts you first, please notify the Media Liaison as soon as possible. Also send a copy of any article or link to the news story, if possible.

Responsibilities:

While the official media contact for any SCA branch is the Seneschal, you are the usually the first person to be contacted. Your Seneschal may specifically ask you to serve in this capacity. Technically, every member of the SCA is a representative. This is why our behaviour at SCA events and demos is so important. Honorable and courteous behaviour are traits that we hold dear, and all of us are called upon to serve as an example of the SCA to newcomers and the media. You may be required to chaperone reporters at local events. If your Seneschal chooses to handle these obligations him/herself, or designate a deputy specifically for this task, that is their right as the head of your branch. No matter what your Seneschal decides, **do not assume that you are automatically the Media Liaison for your branch. This section is intended to prepare you for that task should it arise, not assign it to you.**

Our image:

The image we wish to portray to the outside world should reflect our goals, purpose for existence and the finer aspects of achievement. To this end, people asked to speak to the media should show the best of:

- Clean-cut image

- Professional style
- Knowledge of the rules, purpose, and policies of the Society For Creative Anachronism
- Skill at avoiding unfortunate topics
- Skill as a public speaker
- Use vocabulary that is both meaningful and palatable to the public
 - Avoid the word “Mundane.” Never use it with the media—its patronizing and insulting. A better term is “Modern-era.”
 - Never discuss the following topics with the media
 - Religion
 - Lewd behavior that can be perceived as a form of sexual harassment
 - Alcohol making, preparation, studies, distribution, sale, etc.
 - Households

Unscheduled Media Contact:

If you are approached by someone representing themselves with media, immediately direct them to the Seneschal or authorized representative. Follow up with a report to the kingdom Media Liaison.

Pursuing Media Coverage:

Having the media at an event or public demonstration is a double-edged sword and should be carefully considered before you actively court such attention. Always discuss this coverage fully with your seneschal, the autocrat of an event or demo coordinator. You should always discuss a media presence with your entire branch before any invitations to the media are issued.

In the case of an event, media coverage should probably be discouraged unless the event is of a fairly large size such as a major war or charity event. For more typical SCA events, the media can be an unpleasant intrusion, disturbing event organizers and attendees equally. Remember, events are staged primarily for the benefit of our membership. The major focus should not be on advertising your branch, but on providing an opportunity for SCA members to exercise their hobby by creating a period atmosphere.

Demonstrations are the most comfortable venue to court media attention and may even be set up in advance by the organization for which you are holding the demo. In this case, make sure you know in advance that media coverage has been planned, so you can be sure that your demo volunteers are informed and prepared for this type of exposure. Should your branch actively pursue media coverage, you may wish to arrange either a specific interview or a "media day" at a meeting, event, or demo. There are three main groups to approach: newspaper, radio and television. You could also consider

contacting various magazines. Dealing with any one of them can be intimidating, but a little advanced planning can make it easier and more effective for you.

1. Define your goal. • It should be nothing more elaborate than getting a reporter to show your branch and the SCA in the most positive light; reporting what YOU want them to say about your branch. Preparing written background information (such as a press kit for the media representative) will help you achieve this goal.

2. Send out a press release and/or invitation to a specific media representative. • It is unwise to send a press release or invitation to cover an SCA activity to “the editor”. Call ahead and get a name for an actual person such as the Calendar Editor, Community Affairs Editor or Features Editor. Calendar sections in magazines are usually published months in advance, so be prepared. Newspapers and cable stations have much shorter lead-time.

Preparing and Issuing a Press Release/Press Kit:

The Press Kit:

• A press kit serves as an introduction "information package" intended to provide information to the press about the SCA and can serve as a basis for any public relations campaign. Press kits are normally kept in a folder with a press release, a fact sheet, a photo and any pertinent background information that you wish to include. A sample press release is included in the appendix.

Timing:

Send out your first press release/press kit approximately 4 - 6 weeks before you want the media to attend. Too early and you may get lost in the shuffle, too late and you miss the deadline for coverage. You may want to send another release about two weeks later if you have any new information to impart.

Follow-up:

A week or so after the release is sent (or a second release if one is sent) or a few weeks prior to the event, call and ask if they received the release and confirm their attendance. Remember to run all press releases by your Seneschal, and the Autocrat/organizer prior to release.

Hosting the Media at an Event:

• If you have arranged to host people from the media at an event, meet them at gate at a predetermined time. Be sure to find out ahead of time just how many people will be in their party so you can be sure to have sufficient garb available. The garb can be as simple as a tabard, but garb is required in accordance with Corpora. Be sure to let them know 20 ahead of time that they are expected to wear garb and that you are willing to provide loaner garb for them. Explain that the attempt to create a period appearance in our populace is one of our primary mandates. Also, be sure to have them sign a site waiver and let the event registration staff know in advance that there should be no site fee for members of the media.

• One of your primary goals when escorting a member of the media around at an event is to make certain that the SCA is putting our best foot forward. If you think it will enliven their visit, you may

consider asking additional people to interact with the media representatives. Choose people who are personable, knowledgeable and responsible. Remember that religion is a private matter and does not fall within our organizational parameters. Also, avoid discussing personal SCA politics! For interviewing purposes, try to expose the media only to people who you know will focus on the positive aspects of the society. Be sure that the individuals being interviewed actually want to be interviewed. Clear potential interviews with the interviewees ahead of time!

Never leave a media representative free to wander at an event site alone. While this probably won't be an issue at most SCA events, it does allow the potential for some embarrassing situations for you and your branch. • When speaking with media representatives, you must always remember that you are acting as spokesperson for our organizations. As such, your private opinions are just that: private. Stick to the facts about the SCA, its goals and structure. Try to avoid statements that need clarification. They are the easiest to have misquoted. Keep in mind that while you are accustomed to the SCA and its practices, members of the media are not. After the event/interview, send a personalized thank you note.

Should some sort of “disaster” occur while the media is present (i.e. a combat injury, false alarms, etc.) escort them away from the area and tell them that an official statement will be prepared for their information. Keep apprised of the situation and report it as best you can. DO NOT dramatize or embellish. This includes using 'forsooth' language. Move on to the next activity as quickly as possible

Conclusion

The office of Hospitaler is one of the most important roles in the Society in which we play. Hospitalers are given the task of greeting and nurturing the future Kings, Queens, Knights, Pelicans, Laurels, Dons, and other notables of our game. The Hospitaler's efforts can have a profoundly positive effect on the very fiber of our Society; at the same time, untrained or misinformed officers can also produce, sometimes unknowingly, negative effects within our Society. With proper training and support, being a Hospitaler can be a very rewarding experience, for both the Hospitaler and the newcomers they help.

Always remember that a truly good Hospitaler is not just about greeting newcomers, it is also about training the Hospitalers of the future. They are your legacy.

Appendix

Appendix A: Reporting Schedule

Local Hospitaler Reports 1st of the month Local Hospitaler reports

Regional Hospitaler reports: 5th of March, June, September, and December.

Kingdom Hospitaler Reports to Society Hospitaler: 20th of March, June, September, and December.

Round Table Report: June 20 (January-June) December 20 (Jul-December)

Appendix B: Resources

Society Demo Policy: <http://www.sca.org/officers/chatelain/demopolicy.html>

Society Social Media Policy: <http://www.sca.org/docs/pdf/SCASocialMediaPolicy.pdf>

Society Media Policy: <http://www.sca.org/docs/pdf/SCASocialMediaPolicy.pdf>

Demo Guide from Seneschal handbook:

<http://seneschal.ansteorra.org/forms/Seneschalhandbook2012.pdf>

Kingdom of Avacal Demo handbook: http://www.avacal.org/chatelaine/Shared%20Documents/principality_demo_handbook.pdf

Newcomers Guides

“New Members Guide” <http://www.sca.org/officers/chatelain/pdf/NewcomersGuidePages-hi.pdf>

“A Guiding Hand” <http://www.lochruadh.org/dl/GuidingHand.pdf>

Appendix C: Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE BARONY OF BRYN GWLAD TO HOLD MEDIEVAL FAIR DEMO

By James Downey

August 10, 2016

Austin, TX – The Barony of Bryn Gwlad along with the Austin Public Library will be holding a medieval fair demo. This demo will showcase a variety of activities including armored combat, Medieval arts and sciences and a set of Medieval dances. The Demo will be held at the Yarborough Branch of the Austin Public Library on September 21, 2016 from 10 am to 2 pm. The Demo will be free and open to the public.

About The Barony of Bryn Gwlad

Bryn Gwlad is the local chapter of the Society for Creative Anachronism. The group serves the Austin Texas area and surrounding communities. The Barony holds a variety of activities each month throughout the year. For more information about Bryn Gwlad and it's other activities please visit <http://bryn-gwlad.ansteorra.org>

About The Society for Creative Anachronism

The SCA or Society for Creative Anachronism was incorporated in 1968 as a 501(c)3, not-for-profit educational organization. It is part of the "living history" movement, which means that SCA members have a "hands-on" approach to history, engaging in activities that help them to explore the culture, activities, arts, and sciences of ages past. The SCA's time period encompasses pre-17th century Western Europe, with an emphasis on the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

The SCA and it's 50,000 participants span the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, and parts of Asia and Africa. It is divided into geographic regions called Kingdoms. In the US there are 21 Kingdoms and within each are local chapters known as cantons, shires, baronies, provinces, or principalities depending on their size and location. Texas and Oklahoma comprise the Kingdom of Ansteorra.

Contact

To learn more about this event, please contact

John Doe, Hospitaler

123Main St., Austin TX 78777

Office: (512) 555-1212

hospitaler@bryn-gwlad.ansteorra.org

You may also contact our media coordinator at media@ansteorra.org

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