

You're the Chancellor Of Minor, Now What?

Lady Aislinn Chiabach
with influence and inspiration from Lady Kassir NiDeoraine

This is meant as brief look, beyond the fuss and bother that has been going on for this office. A discussion of what to do and how to run events. As each event is individual, this document is meant as a guideline to be used by any Chancellor of Minor in consultation with the event steward.

General Thoughts

The activities and programs about to be discussed have been very successful for 5-13 age range. Future thoughts for the CoM include offering evening seminars aimed at teenagers. Including advanced topics akin to the A&S meetings. For example: classes working on embroidering Queen's Favors or other award medallions. Following this they can then present their work in court, creating a full introduction to the SCA. Indeed, some groups have already begun such and have been very successful.

As with any office in the SCA, it is important for the CoM to remember to delegate. They don't have to run the entire event on their own. Inviting guests to run a variety of activities can add a wealth of fun to any given event. Musicians, storytellers, singers, artists, cooks and a variety of other talented people live in the Society and are often honored to be asked to participate. Don't be afraid to do so.

The CoM is not a babysitting service. This has been stated time after time and bears repeating. These activities are provided to answer the need of a growing population of children in the SCA. However it should never be one person's responsibility to oversee an unknown amount of children for the entire event. In fact we cannot. Two people are required at all times at any activity labeled for children. With the current political state of this position there simply cannot be any mistakes in this area.

Food is not recommended at the Children's Activities areas. It can become a difficult issue when taking into consideration possible allergies, parental wants and dietary needs. Providing water in a cooler and cups is a nicety, and especially handy in outdoor events. A box of tissues, napkins and small paper plates have multiple uses at any kind of event.

As with any officer in the SCA, the event steward should not assume that children's activities will magically appear at the event. Prior planning and communication is essential to the CoM making the most of the site available and the enjoyment of our smallest members.

The amount of children coming to an event is almost always a complete unknown. The CoM has no way of knowing in advance how many children will be attending or how many will participate in official activities. An estimate of children's attendance can happen by looking at prior attendance records. On average, it has been found that approximately 10% of general attendance to an event are children. These figures include babes in arms and older teenagers, many of which do not attend activities.

The CoM is a relatively new and undefined office. With support and participation from officers and the parents it can continue to grow. The services and tasks described here are for the betterment of the children of the SCA and as a result, the Society as a whole. Working together with the children, parents, and your group's members we can make the Chancellor of Minors a fun and efficient office in the East Kingdom.

Children's Activities are run separately from Youth Combat but coordination and communication between the two activities are always in order.

Indoor Events

Play Stations

If there is room, have a play station available for very young children. It can be an area, preferably delineated by a small

rug, with wooden blocks, toys and various small items that babies and toddlers could play with. A firmly established group with artisans can make toys and blankets and such or build up a toy supply. Some event sites have rooms available for use. If a separate room is used a warranted CoM either must be present or the room is at parental supervision only.

Coloring Tables

Have a table set up for coloring and drawing. This can include markers, crayons, blank paper and paper with medieval/renaissance themed designs. Markers can be found today with calligraphy angled tips and go over very well. Dover Brand coloring books are copyright free and can be photocopied at will. A coloring table set up separate from the main activity of an event should also have a sign noting that it is by parental supervision only.

Gaming Tables

Have another table set up with board games and cards. There are many period board games available. Having a table set with a variety of them, including a deck of cards, chess, backgammon and alquirks provides a place for children of all ages to entertain themselves during the course of an event. Even if your shire doesn't have these games available, they are easily found online and can be played on paper. This particular table has been very successful in events I have worked.

Event Activities

At small events one main activity is fine. Gauge the general activity toward children between the ages of 5 and 12 years of age. Older and younger children may choose to participate, however, the younger must have parental support. The activities can range in scope and style, see below for suggestions and past activities.

If the event is particularly large or is going to have a royal presence, several activities may be planned. One hour blocks seem to work best and helps in getting volunteers. If there is a court at the event, tying in an activity with a presentation by the children is wonderful. Not only does this introduce children to the process of court, but it gives them something to do and perhaps help relieve the boredom of a long time sitting down.

Camping Events

Camping events provide excellent opportunities for activities that cannot be done in an indoor setting. Candle dipping and cooking Set the activities for set times. Unlike most indoor events there is room for outdoor games of tag, relay races and tug of war.

For a 3 day camping event the main 2 days of the event are best for activities. Scheduling activities for set up and take down can end up being very stressful and fray the edges of anyone's nerves. But by all means if your group can support them, give them a try.

On the main days of camping events. One to two hour blocks between 10:00am and 5:00pm with an hour break in the middle for lunch.

If the camping event is an event with a "war," youth war points can easily be integrated into the event. This has to be done in conjunction and the discretion of the event stewards, but it is usually highly successful. The war point usually works best in a combination of outdoor games; youth combat, races, and puzzle/quiz games.

Events with Royal Courts

An event with Royals in attendance and the inevitable court provides excellent opportunity for Youth Activities. Presenting TRM with a gift from the children provides a concrete and visual way of bringing children into the daily life of the SCA. Coordinate one of the daily activities to create a suitable gift for Their Majesties.

Speak with the head herald. Make sure the children's presentation is early on in court, within the first 3 orders of business. Have the children gather outside of whatever location court is being held in. The waiting period will end up resembling cat herding if the presentation is any later than the third item on the docket.

Quite a few children will be waiting with their parents in the hall, and will join the rest as they are called into court.

Sometimes the Royals have small gifts to give the children at this point in court. Other Royals do not. Communicate with the Royals ahead of time, and figure out if they have something. If they don't, then providing something for the Royals to hand out is a nice way to enhance the children's participation in court.

Awards for Children

I am in the process of starting up an awards system in my local group. I mean for this to be something like baronial level awards. The awards are loosely based on those that any adult member of SCA may be granted. Like the badge systems in other organized children's groups, these awards are earned by completing a list of tasks. This is a work in progress and I always welcome suggestions and input.

This is a direct departure from the nature of most awards in the SCA. Children work differently from adults, requiring discipline and structure. In an effort to introduce them to the values and skills we hold ideal in this Society, these awards provide a structured environment where they can see those ideals at work. These awards were developed to include the basics of participating in the SCA. They also mirror the Baronial, Kingdom and Society level awards.

These awards are not limited to children in the local group; any child who wishes to participate within the shire or barony should be allowed to receive them. Parental support is a necessary part of these awards. All of these awards include details that have to be worked on in the home. Communication with the CoM, the parent and child are essential to the success of these awards. Don't be afraid to tailor any of these awards to the age and interest of the child.

For award presentation, I suggest the following: Pick an image that is symbolic of your barony or shire. If there is a "child version" of the symbol choose that. The best example of this is the East Kingdom's symbol of the tyger is a cub for the Kingdom's Children's award.

The Barony of Concordia of the Snows children's symbol is that of a snow hare, which works in well with the snowflake symbol of their arms. With the heraldic color assigned to each of the awards and present with the ribbon a bauble with the symbol.

Participation

This award was created to emulate the Award of Arms. The color for this award is Argent.

It is a generic award meant to recognize the participation of any child at events. This is the only award not set up with a goal structure and is given at the discretion of the CoM in consultation with the leaders of the group, be they baronial or the seneshal.

Children who consistently come to events, participate in activities and play well with others are deserving of this award. One hopes that the recipient of this award will then be encouraged to look into earning more of the awards. This is also a good award to be bestowed on the younger children who may not be developmentally ready for the other options.

Service

This award was created to emulate the Order of the Pelican. The color for this award is Gules.

- ❖ 10 hours of service dedicated to the shire or barony is needed. The child should keep a log of the service with the assistance of the CoM and the adult in charge of the particular service, i.e. the cook, the event steward, the marshal, the Baron/Baroness etc. The log provides the means to complete the award's goals at a single or series of events. Service hours can consist of serving at a feast, helping to set up an event, clean up after or during an event, helping out in the kitchen, helping the lists, waiting on the queen or Baroness, setting up other's tents, etc. The possibilities are endless and will hopefully give the child insight into all the work that goes into making the SCA function.

- ❖ Next the child shall attend the group's political meeting, be it a general meeting or an officer's meeting where applicable. They should log their impression of the meeting and describe what occurred.
- ❖ The child shall also interview a member of the Order of the Pelican, ask the Peer to describe what their award is, how they achieved it and what it means to them. The interview can be in the form of a series of questions or an essay.

Arts and Sciences

This award was created to emulate the Order of the Laurel. The color for this award is Azure.

Look upon this as a guide as the possibilities in Arts and Sciences are endless. The three areas that chosen below are some of the most visible aspects of the SCA. At any given event we see people in garb, food in one form or another and crafts of various styles either being presented or created. The standards for these activities should depend on whatever developmental level and age of the child.

The research involved in these activities are as important as the final product. Bibliographies, pictures and their logs are all a part of this award.

Garb, food and crafts:

- ❖ Garb: The child shall research and create an item of clothing from a time period within the SCA. This is an excellent opportunity for teaching. Lessons on sewing can be provided, attendance at group meetings for sewing, etc...
- ❖ Food: The child shall research and cook a dish that would have been eaten in a time period within the SCA. This can be anything from a drink to a full course meal.
- ❖ Crafts: The child shall choose a craft, research and create something from a time period within the SCA. This can be a scroll of illumination, a wooden toy, a clay pot, etc...
- ❖ The interview: The child shall interview a member of the order of the Laurel and ask the Peer to describe what their award is, how they achieved it and what it means to them. The interview can be in the form of a series of questions or an essay.

Martial Arts

This award was created to emulate the Order of the Chivalry. The color for this award is Vert.

- ❖ The child shall attend a practice session for each of the following activities: Heavy Weapons, Archery, and the Child's Choice: Fencing, Thrown Weapons, or Siege Engines (depending on what is available in the shire/barony). In their log books, the children shall describe what their experience at the practice entailed and what they think about that martial art.
- ❖ In conjunction with the marshal of each of the disciplines the child shall attend an event and aid the lists. Obviously the child wouldn't be required to spend the entire event in this capacity, but they should spend a significant amount of time on this project. Score keeping, and information logging activities will aid in their understanding of the particular martial art.
- ❖ The child shall interview a member of the order of the Knighthood and ask the Peer to describe what their award is, how they achieved it and what it means to them. The interview can be in the form of a series of questions or an essay.

Royalty

This award was created to learn about the Royal Peers in the SCA. The color for this award is Purple

The SCA is a group that believes in honor. We are living in a mundane society that does not pay much attention to the word, and as a result our children do not learn about it. Here we are giving the children the opportunity to learn what honor means in the Society.

- ❖ The child shall research and log what all forms of coronets and crowns are and how one earns the rights to wear them.
- ❖ Write a one or more page essay explaining what the child thinks of Honor and Chivalry and what their definition of it is.
- ❖ The child shall spend the day in the royal or baronial court. Either doing page duties, or being a part of the enterouge. They shall log what they did and what they thought of the experience.
- ❖ The child shall interview a Royal Peer and ask the Peer to describe what their award is, how they achieved it and what it means to them. The interview can be in the form of a series of questions or an essay

Create your own Award

The color for this award is Or.

The SCA provides many different crafts, skills and arts. This award is to encourage any child to investigate that craft or skill further. This is to be negotiated with the CoM. The possibilities are as endless as the SCA. This is a good award to explore calligraphy, illumination, cooking, sewing, archery, fighting, fencing, poetry, music, theatre, court or any of a plethora of activities they may be interested by.

Then the CoM would come up with the 4 activities for them to accomplish, including the interview assignment.

A few rules about having children attend activities beyond the rules for the CoM

- ❖ **ADULT SUPERVISION:** As per the rules for the CoM, there must be at least two adults and one must be warranted Chancellor of Minors. Beyond this, many sites/locations have their own rules. Be aware of the requirements of the buildings and locations the event is using. Youth rooms may be used only if the child is under the direct supervision of an adult. These rooms are unsupervised and any child found alone will be taken to their parent.
- ❖ **GARB:** Clothing and shoes appropriate to the environment shall be worn at all times. Camping events have unpredictable weather. As such children should be wearing garb suitable for whatever the current weather is. Children in unsuitable garb will be sent back to their camps to change. Besides the weather, the activities often involve scissors, glue and paint and the garb of the children should reflect that.
- ❖ **AGRESSION:** If there is any aggression either verbally or physically, the child will be asked to leave the activity. Should the act of aggression make it necessary the child will be taken to the event steward who will then approach the parents of the child. Repercussions of aggression may be, but are not limited to, the expulsion of the child from the one activity the child was involved in, expulsion from any further of the organized Children's Activities or expulsion from the event. Any of these actions are up to the discretion of the Chancellor of Minor and the event stewards of the event.
- ❖ **MUNDANE TOYS:** Electronic toys of any nature are not welcome to be played in the Children's Activities Areas. Should a child wish to play with such toys, they shall do so in their own encampments.

Building a collection of supplies

There are several supplies that can be built upon over the years of running the office. Brushes and painting supplies can be purchased for a particular event and then saved for future ones. Water coolers, chairs and toys are things that can be slowly purchased over time.

Having smocks available helps to prevent accidents with glue, fabric paint, regular paint and all manner of art supplies especially when a child arrives at your activity in fine court garb. Smocks can be made easily from old pillows and fit most children under the age of ten.

Activities that have been done in the past:

Plays	Making soap	Sing-a-longs
Green Man Masks	Medieval tag	Cooking projects
Swords and shields with cardboard and paint	Relay Races	Making braided circlets
Candle making	Hobby Horse Races	Hay Bale Forts
Butter making	Pomander Balls	Fox Tails
Stained glass painting	Tug-of-War	Spinning
Daisy chains and crowns	Castle building (from cardboard boxes)	Embroidery
Quilting	Marzipan making	Beginning Sewing
Pouch making	Banner making	Beginning Crochet
Jewelry making	Scavenger Hunts	Mask Making
Weaving	Question Quests	Pomander Balls
Scavenger hunt	Storytelling	Necklace making
	Filking	Tassel making

Royal Gifts

Banners
painted chess set
decorated cookies
Homemade Candles (especially good at an event that they can be used at feast)

Final Thought

I first became an officer in a wonderful barony that was very supportive of the Chancellor of Minor's office. As such I realize that this is a fairly ambitious guideline. I hope in the future all groups can be as supportive and provide such wonderful activities and opportunities to the children in the SCA