

Imperial Ministry Handbook

This work compiled in the year A.I. XVII, being 2007 in the Vulgar

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Imperial Ministry Handbook, a work designed to aid a member of the ECS i Ministry.; Ministry can cover a wide range of activities within our organization. This Manual has been written to make the daunting tasks inherent in Ministry a bit easier to understand and perform.

The Manual is divided into four sections.

Part One: Ministry as Nobility, covers the Estates system within the ECS and how it effects both the individual members of those Estates as well as the organization as a whole. As the Estates system is how we record the accomplishments of the members in the Ministry ranks, a guide to Ministry point awards is also provided.

Part Two: Ministry as Service covers the service aspect of Ministry. from being an officer (from Imperial to Households) to Autocrating (coordinator of events) on every size. For those holders of such events, the Autocrat's Packet is detailed and described for the procedure of filing for the event.

Part Three: Ministry Projects explains how a member should propose as Ministry Project, as well as how it should be judged. While the true definition of a Project is at the discretion of a Kingdom's Ministry Peerage, this section will give good advice regarding one of the criteria for achieving a Ministry Knighthood.

An Autocrat Primer has also been attached as an appendix to this Handbook to aide those who wish to hold an event.

We hope that this work will be of benefit to you in your search for enjoyment of the Empire and our activities!

Earl Sir Siegfried von Lubeck, KCv

Contessa Dame Damaris Lockewood von Lubeck, KMn

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PART ONE: MINISTRY AS NOBILITY

Estates Constructor Set:

The fundamental building block for the creation and maintenance of nobility within the Empire is the **Estate**. An estate, like a fief, is defined as a grant of land or manor from a superior noble. Within the ECS, estates are the basis for representation and structure for regions and territories. Estates are the foundation of the Empire for the governing of kingdoms and subject territories, and the creation of titles in order to represent the feel of an actual feudal system. In the era we are trying to re-create, local feudal lords with their own estate were often more or less independent of the actual Sovereign of a land, and bound only to the Ruler by an oath of fealty, or vassalage. Therefore, most nobles had to see to the welfare of their own estates with little or no help from the Sovereign of the land. This article will give advice and information regarding the duties and prerogatives of landed nobility, or estate holders, within the Empire.

To begin, let's start with the Household. A Household is formed by at least 5 paid members who agree to band together and choose one of their number to be the Lord of the estate. A Household is officially created in a court of a territorial ruler, or his representative. In a basic formation ceremony, the Lord calls the Household-to-be forward to swear an oath of fealty to the Lord/Lady, the Household, and the Territorial Ruler if desired. Such an oath is determined by the estate-to-be beforehand, and is as binding or as general as the members of the proposed estate wish it. Also, if the Lord of the Household changes during a one year period, the oath should be re-taken by the Household.

The formation of Baronies and Counties are similar to the creation of Households, with the exception that the Baron takes an oath of fealty from the Household nobles of the houses within the Barony and the Count receives fealty from the Barons of the constituent Baronies of the County. Just because enough Households exist to form a Barony, or enough Baronies to form a County, one cannot be formed unless the various Households or Baronies all agree to swear fealty to the larger estate. Also, Households, Baronies, and Counties may only be created from members within the same Kingdom. If members from these landed estates reside in different subject territories, the estates vote goes to whichever subject territory where the majority of the estate's members reside.

Geographic estates (Kingdoms and their subject territories) are different than Households, Baronies, and Counties because their members are determined by location. Kingdoms are territories that have 125 paid members in residence within the borders set by that Kingdom and approved by the Imperial Estates. The Sovereign, or Crown, is the ruler of a Kingdom. The subject territories that lie under the purview of the Kingdom include Marquisates, Duchies, and Principalities which are led by the Marquis, Duke, or Prince. The borders of a subject territory are geographically distinct and defined by

the Kingdom. Marquisates are territories that have between 25 and 49 paid members, Duchies have between 50 and 124 paid members, and Principalities have 125 members or more. A Principality that has been in good standing for over a year has the potential to become its own Kingdom if approved by the Imperial Estates. Please note the Imperial Manual of Heraldry for regalia of all Estate holders and the Leges Imperium for the rights and prerogatives of all Estate Holders.

All Estate heads, be they in charge of a Kingdom, subject territory, Household, Barony, or County, have a vote upon the **Estates General**, the body of nobles including rulers, Knights of the second rank, and non-landed noble titles that possess an inherent vote (Viscount/Viscountess and Earl/Contessa, that create and/or validates laws for the territory. Please check the bylaws of the territory you reside in for details as to how Estate meetings are held.

If a Household grows to twice its required membership (more than 9 members), it gains an additional vote for the estate. This addition of extra votes continues for every 9 members the Household increases in membership, though at 25 members it is recommended that the Household reform into a Barony to insure a representative vote for every 5-7 members. Since no Estate Holder may hold more than one vote upon the Estates General, they must give the second vote to another member of their estate, also known as a Steward or Castellan. A Steward must be appointed in Court, and a black chain necklace presented to him to represent his new station. This member then gains the right to attend Estate meetings and vote upon provisions placed before the Estates. The second vote holder may only hold the vote for as long as the noble of his estate wishes. This may be revoked by the actual estate holder at any time at a public Court.

In situations where desired, the 'Title' and 'vote' inherent in an Estate title may be separated, with the Estate Holder holding the title of the Estate and another member of the Estate holding the vote. In such a case, the latter person takes the title of the second vote holder as defined by the Kingdom of residence. Please check the Kingdom Bylaws of whatever Kingdom you reside in for this title.

The duties of an estate holder are to see to the needs of the various members of their Estate, to vote upon the Estates General, and to award Ministry points to deserving members of their estate. The first duty, seeing to the needs of the estate members, is the most important of the duties. If your estate members aren't having fun, then they may drop out and endanger the status of your fief. Seeing to the needs of the estate does not mean the noble should overwhelm himself trying to cater to every whim of his populace. It means that the noble should at least try to get his members in contact with officers, skilled artisans, etc. in order to help the member get the things he needs on his own. Also, it is a good idea for the noble to listen to the problems and opinions of the various members of the estate, and to do everything in his power to see that those opinions are heard at the highest levels possible.

Once the estate is formed, then the noble has an obligation to represent his members by casting his vote upon the **Estates General**. The noble should try to attend as many meetings of the Estates General as possible, and vote according to the wishes of his Estate, even if it goes against the personal opinions of the noble. The noble should strive to keep the members of his estate informed of issues that may come up for a vote in an Estates meeting and get their opinions on said issues. Once a consensus is determined, the noble should vote accordingly.

In these meetings, a motion is passed by a majority vote of the Estates (50% +1), while changes or additions to bylaws require a 2/3rds majority. Votes may only be cast by the actual estate holder,

unless a proxy is used. A proxy is a person chosen by the landed noble to represent him at an Estate meeting, and carries the written opinion and signature of the noble whose estate they represent. The noble may select from one of three types of proxies: restricted, limited, and open. A restricted proxy carefully specifies each item and what the vote of the estate will be on the item. A limited proxy does specify items, but notes if the Estate Holder will allow some leeway to the decision of the proxy holder in writing. An open proxy is the signed, notarized statement of the noble that they are 'temporarily' granting the right to the proxy holder to vote in whatever way they feel best in the name of that estate for the duration of the meeting.

Once determined, the decisions of the Estates are published and distributed among the populace of the territory. The Estates should make decisions not just on bylaws, but on other things that affect the territory. Items such as treaties, decisions of conflicts, and spending of territorial funds are all matters that an Estates General should decide upon. Individual chapters (Marquisates, Duchies, etc.) may have meetings of their own nobles to determine local matters (with voting requirements remaining the same as an Estates General meeting), but any decisions are only valid within that Estate. Decisions made in a territorial meeting may be appealed to a Kingdom Estates meeting if necessary.

The final duty of an estate holder is to award Ministry points to any deserving members of their populace. In many groups, activities such as holding an office, doing paperwork, assisting in or holding events, and generally aiding in the betterment of the group, get little reward for the effort. The Empire of Chivalry and Steel is one of the exceptions in that the ECS awards Ministry points for such activities, and even awards a Peer title (Knight Minister) for such efforts. This is entirely justified since such activities, from Charlemagne's Seneschals to the English Chamberlains, have historically been both valued and well regarded. These individuals were usually rewarded with money and lands, something a non-profit organization like the ECS is lacking, but Ministry points try to fill this void.

Awarding Ministry points are the purview of the Rulers and landed nobility in the Empire. If a member performs an action, office, or activity that benefits the ECS, whether on a local level or nationally, Ministry points are eligible to be earned. Each noble has a 'pool' of points that they may use each month to award to deserving members of their populace who have shown dedication and service to the estate or realm. The awarding of points start at a member's Household (if he belongs to any). The Lord of the household should fill out a Ministry Point Award Form (located in appendix of the Imperial Manual of Ministry) each month on the membership of the Household. He should award points to the members who he feels is deserving. After this is done, the form should be sent to the higher level. If the Household is part of a Barony, then it should be sent to the Baron). He will then add from their pool of points any further points that might be deserving (0-10) to the total (if more feel to be warranted), and then send the form up to the next level. The Count will then repeat the Baronial procedure and then send the form to the Ruler (Marquis, Duke, Prince, or King). If no Counties or Baronies formed, the Noble skips that particular step and proceeds to the next higher level. If a member does not belong to an estate at all, then the Ruler is the one to award the member points as deserved. The appointment of Castellans (heads of Provinces) are deputies in this regard for a Ruler. They cannot award points themselves, but can recommend points to any members not in Estates so that the Ruler is kept updated on their efforts. Sovereign Rulers (King/Queens) and event autocrats are different in that their Ministry points for their are awarded by a vote of the Estates General rather than the "chain" of Estates. After the Ruler has given any

points that he/she feels are deserved, the data is sent to the Territorial or Minister of Rolls/Lists, who keeps track of all points for the region.

Each landed noble has in their pool of awardable points up to 10 points per member as deserved. Rulers can award higher point totals (0-25), but this should be awarded sparingly. Autocrats of events are similar to nobles in that they may award those who perform activities during an event from a pool of 0-10 points. Autocrats may recommend to their ruler that additional points be awarded, but any additional points must be approved by the Ruler.

Don't feel that somehow you must award points every month. On slow months, some people will earn no ministry points at all! At no time should people be given points "just because." This is no better than giving a fighter combat points without fighting, or an Artisan arts points without creating/doing anything. For example, just because someone holds an event does not mean they get points. A person who holds an event/demo/workshop/etc., but doesn't plan or do anything (i.e. just shows up and waits to see what happens) should receive no points at all. After all, it is apparent that they did no work or spend any time developing or planning the event.

As a final rule of thumb, just award points in proportion to the amount of work you think the person did on/for the activity. By keeping this rule in mind, the awarding of Ministry points should go smoothly!

*****NOTE:** Points are cumulative, but no one can earn more than 50 points per month.

PART TWO: MINISTRY AS SERVICE:

"In Service to the Empire":

Ministry as 'service' to the ECS, namely the rigors of holding offices, events, and demonstrations could be considered the backbone of the Empire. Without those willing to hold events, no points would be earned. Without those to hold offices, no points would be recorded or published. Without demonstrations, we could not achieve our status as a non-profit educational organization by educating the general public about the ideals and culture of our time period. Thus, the service aspect of the Ministry tier is vital to the organization's being, and the following will elaborate on the various aspects described above.

Holding an Office in the ECS:

Offices are the glue that holds a group together, be they Imperial, Kingdom, Territorial, or House offices. Such persons willing to dedicate the time and energy to fulfill these needed positions are vital if any group is to succeed.

First, two types of officers exist: official and unofficial. All Imperial officers are official, as are the Crown deputies of said officers. The Kingdom officers may subsequently have deputies in smaller

Estates, but are not in the chain of authority. The duties of the Imperial Officers are listed in detail along with the qualifications in Section IV of the Leges Imperium.

In order for any office to be obtained, a Letter of Intent must be submitted to the proper authority deciding on the function of that office. As this can vary widely, the list below will show the proper authority of an office.

<u>Office Desired</u>	<u>Authority</u>
Imperial Officer	The Imperial Estates
Sovereign	Estates General of that Crown Territory.
Crown Officer	Sovereign of the Kingdom
Estate Officer	The head of that Estate and the Crown Officer of that office (if any).

A Letter of Intent can be compared to a "Medieval Resume," which is reviewed by the authority to determine a candidate's eligibility for an office. Such letters can be quite elaborate, but the sample letter below shows the minimum information required of such a letter.

* * *

Unto (Authority being petitioned) does (your Persona name and any relevant titles) send Greetings:

My Lord/Lady,

I am writing to you this day to announce my intention to be considered for the office of (office being applied for). In my time with the ECS, I have performed the following duties:

(Offices and positions relevant to the applied for office are to be listed here, if any)

In addition to my ECS qualifications, I have the following mundane qualifications for the office:

(Any real life qualifications relevant to the applied for office are to be listed here, if any)

I thank you for the consideration of this letter and I look forward to hearing from you in this regard.

In Service to the Imperium,

(your Persona Name)

(your Mundane Name)

* * *

Warranting of Deputies:

Very few officers can handle the duties inherent in the various functions of an ECS chapter by themselves, so sometimes, deputies are needed. It is not enough to simply verbally approve and disapprove officers.; officers must be warranted. The warranting form in the Appendix of the Imperial Manual of Ministry should be given to any deputy the officer wishes to authorize, although a copy should be kept for the officer's records. Warrants of office are held for one year, although the Imperial Estates may warrant officers for longer terms. All other officers may be warranted for shorter terms, but never longer than one year at any single time.

Events and Demonstrations:

Being the autocrat of an event or demonstration can be exacting work, but a few simple hints will speed up the process. If public exposure is the goal, then advertise! Newspapers and local TV stations are usually willing to give some coverage to an activity as unusual as the events the ECS tends to hold. This is doubly true for demonstrations. Sometimes, a regular event can become a demonstration simply by drawing the attention of several bystanders. Whether the goal is to educate, to recruit, or just to have a good time; positive public exposure won't ever hurt an ECS chapter!

An official ECS Event is any meeting of the membership which is sanctioned by the Territorial Ruler prior to publication, is sponsored by a chartered subdivision, and is announced to the membership through official publication no less than 14 calendar days in advance of the event. Estates Meetings, demonstrations and Courts are official events that are exempt from the above requirements, but are subject to other conditions stated in the Events section of the Leges Imperium. Any events not meeting the specifications above are unofficial, and no official ECS business may be conducted at them.

A few examples of ECS events include, but are not limited to:

Feast Event: Any event where the predominant event is advertised to be a feast for the populace.

War Event: Any event advertised as a War that has at least 25 participants or 70% (10+ paid members) of a Subject Territory

Art or combat competition: Any tournament held specifically for combat activities, arts activities or both.

Demonstration: To be an official demonstration this event requires 10 persons (members or not) in attendants at least 3 paid members of the ECS.

The event must have as its primary focus either recruitment, education of the public, or both. Demonstrations (as well as other public events) must center on the cultural history of Europe between the years 800-1650 CE. IF non-European culture is to be exhibited in any way such must be documented as having resided within geographic Europe as per our mission statement. NOTE: Demos may be combined with other events as necessary. Unlike other events, Demonstrations are exempt from the 14 day publication requirement.

Collegium: This is an event consisting on classes that reflect issues of interest and education to our group. They may be held on a specific theme, or for general education. Collegiums may be held up to twice a year. Ideally, they should have 1-3 classes covering the three tiers of achievement (Ministry, Arts, and Combat).

When getting a site for an event or demo, be sure to reserve your site with the local parks and recreation bureau if your event is to be held at a park or similar public area. Also be sure to check with the site to insure that any activities you have planned (i.e. rapier and/or steel fighting, etc.) are legal to conduct in the area. If you are unsure whether anything you wish to do would be questionable, ask. If permits are required for anything, do the necessary paperwork and get them. If certain rules or guidelines are stipulated to perform any activities, keep them firmly in mind and be certain all attending populace members are informed of them.

As noted in the Leges Imperium, Event Autocrats shall complete and submit the Autocrat's Event Packet found in the Imperial Manual of Ministry to the Territorial Rolls Officer, by the due date set by the Territory. The Autocrat Packet should consist of the following:

- *Event Sign in Sheet, with printed Waiver
- *Autocrat Financial Form
- *Ministry Point Award Form
- *Combat Point Award Form
- *Parental Consent Form
- *Arts & Sciences Award form

The Event Sign-in Sheet is the form that attendees of the event sign to participate and pay their

fees. The ECS Waiver of Liability is part of this document so that liability is released from the ECS, Inc. for activities at the event. On the form are blanks for Mundane and Persona names, fees to be collected, and the date and name of the event. This should be kept to insure accuracy of head counts and fee collection by the Exchequer.

The Autocrat Financial Form should be filled out once fees are collected and expenses covered. After completion, the form should be copied and a copy given to the Exchequer of the territory. This officer will then insure the totals and accounting are accurate and file the form in the Exchequer's files for tax purposes.

In The Event Point Award Form, Ministry points can be given to members who aided the autocrat in the performance of the event. Combat and arts points should also be recorded on this form. After completion, the form should be copied and a copy given to the Ruler of the territory. The Ruler will then add points if appropriate, and deliver the form to the Minister of Rolls. The Autocrat should keep a copy of the form themselves for their records.

The Parental Consent Form is for the authorizing of those below the age of consent (usually 18) to participate in the fighting arts of the Empire. Such forms are to be completed, and a copy given to the Crown Marshall of the territory. This officer will then insure the form is kept on file with the Marshallate.

All of the above forms should be completed after an event is over and turned in to the appropriate officers within 15 days of the event. In certain cases, Crown Officers may grant extensions if sufficient need is shown. This may seem like a burden on the already overtaxed Autocrat, but such paperwork is necessary if the points and fees are to be properly recorded for both the membership on an individual basis and the chapter as a whole.

For more information on Autocrating an event, please see the Basic Autocrat Primer that has been included as an appendix to this document.

PART THREE: MINISTRY PROJECTS

A Ministry Project

To achieve Knighthoods within the Empire of Chivalry and Steel, a merit based method of point awards is granted to gauge a member's progress towards the skill level appropriate to a Knight of the field they are striving in. But if one is a member of the ECS long enough, one can accumulate the 350 points just by doing the bare minimum and showing little skill. So, the idea of the 'act of skill' is part of each Knighthood. In this act, a Knight shows they not only have spent the time and effort in their craft, but can exemplify the skill expected of a Knight. In the Combat arts, this is victory in a Knightly List; for the Arts, it is the completion of a Masterwork; for Ministry it is the Ministry Project.

The Ministry Project is, in its way, rather more difficult to define than the other two acts of skill. A Knightly list is rather obvious! An Arts Masterwork, while more vague, still is based in the chosen art of the candidate and is usually a tangible item since five of the six Arts categories are 'items' rather than intangibles such as performance (the sixth category) and service.

So, what exactly is a Ministry Project? There is no concise definition to this. It is generally stated in the Leges Imperium as '... defined as a sanctioned, documented service to the Empire judged to be sufficient by the Sovereign, the Ministry Peerage of the Crown Territory, and the judges assigned to grade the project' (paraphrased). But some basic guidelines are needed if the persons assigned to make this decision are to approve the project properly.

To summarize, a project is any service, event, or work that is of considerable benefit to the ECS in general or the Crown Territory in particular. These services can be anything from at least 6 months reign as sovereign or Imperial or Crown officer, or even autocrat of a collegium, feast, war, or demonstrations. The average event, decent demo, or adequate service as an officer should not apply! Something over and above the ordinary is sought for here to be worthy of the term Ministry Project.

Procedure for Judging a Ministry Project:

The method for putting forward a Ministry Project is as follows: First, before a member begins a project, he should document what he wants to do, and speak with the Sovereign and Ministry Peerage of Knights. With their approval of the project, judges will be chosen. The Sovereign will choose a judge, the Ministry Peerage chooses a judge, and the member putting the project forward chooses a judge. Naturally, the more experienced the judge in the area being made a project (events, offices, etc.), the better to insure a fair and objective judging. Judges with personal ties to the member, such as a family member, ought to be avoided if possible to insure an unbiased judging.

When the member feels the project is done, the Sovereign and the Senior Knight Minister is informed, and the judges are then polled for their decision. For offices and events, there are appropriate forms in the Imperial Manual of Ministry to aid in the judging process. The project is on a pass/fail basis, and if passage is made by at least two out of the three judges, an amount of 35-50 Ministry points are determined by a poll of the Estates General. Even if the project failed the judging, it may still be awarded Ministry points by the Estates General or the Sovereign. Even a failed project usually is of much worth

and assistance to the organization!

Offices or Estates Holding as Projects:

Any crown Office or titled Estate holding can be used as a Ministry Project (if accepted by the Ministry Peers). The only requirements must be that they hold the office or title for at least six months. Remember that officers and Estate Holders get Ministry points each month for their basic service of the office, so if someone wishes the position to be a project, one ought to have some specific goals above and beyond the norm to qualify. When the project is announced and accepted by the Ministry Peerage, the project applicant should be sure to give them an overview of what is planned for the term as an officer. This is not an absolute list; most people will not be able to achieve every single one of their goals for an office! This does, however, allow the judges to see that the applicant has goals, and are able check the progress of the office at the end of the term in order to determine if the project is truly 'above average'.

But what of monthly Ministry points for officers? Isn't getting monthly Ministry points **and** a potential project out of an office considered 'double dipping?' Any Ministry points an officer earns during a term of office that is to be judged as a Ministry Project is to be recorded by the Minister of Rolls separately from the member's total. If the project passes, all these monthly points are discarded in favor of the points awarded for the Project. If the Ministry Project does not pass, then the monthly points are added in to the member's Ministry total. This way, a failed office project will still earn points for the member, even if the project does not pass.

Sovereigns may put forward their reigns as projects, but the previous Sovereign chooses the Sovereign's choice for a judge. If this is impossible or unreasonable, then the Estates General will choose in lieu of the Sovereign's choice. The incoming Sovereign planning for a 'project quality' reign still gets their personal choice of a judge, but a member should never choose more than one of his own judges for his project.

Any Imperial level office may constitute a project, but they are dealt with somewhat differently. If one serves as an Imperial Officer or performs an activity for the entire Imperium, that member should have the project judged as an Imperial Project. The requirements are the same, but instead of the choosing of judges by the Sovereign/Ministry Peerage/Member, the project is judged by the entire Imperial Estates. A simple majority vote is sufficient to approve a project, but the Imperial Estates must be notified for approval of the project idea beforehand as noted earlier in standard Ministry Projects.

Events as Projects:

The most usual way for Ministry Projects to be earned is by holding events; more specifically, one autocrats a War, Feast, or Collegium event with at least 25 paid members in attendance. This is mitigated somewhat for outlying territories, for they must only have either 25 paid members or 70% of their total populace in attendance (whichever is lower), but at least ten paid members.

As events usually do not last over 3-4 days, an event Ministry Project allows the most concise and intensive activity in a relative short amount of time for determination as a project. Events can be

adversely affected by vagaries such as weather or lack of participants, which is a drawback. If the member is autocrating he wishes to have judged as a project, he must be the sole autocrat. Delegating to others is allowed, but the judges must see a significant amount of work on the part of the autocrat either in documentation, or in physical activity at the event.

All three judges must be in attendance for the duration of the event. If one must leave, it must be for a short time only. It is difficult to judge an event if the judge was not in attendance. At some time after the event, each judge should judge the event privately from the other judges, and turn in their form to the Senior Knight Minister or the Sovereign. The Senior Knight Minister or Sovereign will inform the autocrat if the event passed as a project. If it passed, the Crown Minister of Rolls will be informed.

Other activities as Ministry Projects:

Essentially, if the activity aids the ECS and/or the Crown Territory then it can be considered a project as long as the Sovereign and the Ministry Peer Circle consider it to be admissible. Project ideas like holding demonstrations, writing manuals, making TV commercials for the group, etc. can all be submitted as a project. If one comes up with an idea for a project, he should ask the Sovereign and the Ministry Peerage if they consider it project material before it is started. It would be quite depressing to put significant work into a project and have it be deemed insufficient to qualify as a potential project.

How to judge a Ministry Project:

Judging a Ministry Project can be daunting in itself, especially if this is the first time the member has judged a project. The forms in the Imperial Manual of Ministry are a good overview for judging offices and events. Please remember that a score of '0' for each item is AVERAGE. Once the questions are answered, and a total is determined, the judge decides if the project passed. The total of +4 or better denotes passage of the project. Judges of a failed project must provide reasons for their scores, and how the scores could be improved.

Appendix: Basic Autocrat Primer

By Sine as Monadh of Kyrbyr

What is an Autocrat?

By Primer, I mean this is a basic introduction, and not at all intended to be the final authority, nor globally encompass all the information one needs to run an event!

By Autocrat, I mean one who has shown insufficient reluctance, and thus has begun the road to madness by volunteering to organize and hold an event!

Let us discuss this term in a little more detail!

The event, and the function of the autocrat. A simple enough line of words, but they can mean many things to many people! By definition, an autocrat holds absolute power, in reality, there are various stages, or degrees to this power.

Lets look at a few!

Your sovereigns approach you and says-"YOU!-We like your stuff, autocrat a coronation for us please"- now it hits, that fog of praise- the heady feeling of future adoration from the populace- "Certainly" you respond! {What do they mean by that? You think in fear}

Find us a site? Make up the decorations? Set up a Feast? DO the Feast? Hold the contests?...As you see, this job can be simple or complex!

How do you plan this? Where do you start? What do you do?...read on!

What do you do?

ASK Questions! (Take notes) You must find out what you are expected to do! Especially find out what level of authority you have at the event. In many instances, since the Autocrat has signed the papers, and dealt with the local officials, they alone hold more power than their sovereign does at an event. Find out if this will be the case. Make sure the royals agree to this and make it known. You will have the authority to remove anyone who breaks the rules, causes problems, or endangers the site, or people in attendance.

Regardless of how they think they outrank you. Get the details on this matter early.

Spend time talking with others who have been autocrats before you, they know much, and will usually share it!

You are about to have a party, for maybe a whole lot of people, you want it to go smoothly!

You might consider one of the checklists included in the appendices to this missive as a starting point to help get things going.

Remember in school, when you made a little newspaper-you had the five 'W's':

Who; What; Where; When; Why?(You, and what you DO- are the *How*, by the way!) Use them!

The Event:-the What, When, and Why

What is the event?-indoors or out? feast, tourney, war, workshop, lecture, demo, meeting, mercantile, practice, competition, coronation, party, vacation? It doesn't matter. They all have many basic traits in common. Do you have a theme? Feast to celebrate a place, event or person? Focused foods or activity? Is there a special day or time needed?

Be sure to ask the questions to get a clear focus of your task

What is your role?-part of the Who and Why, and a little When

This is the most important question you can ask! What is expected of you? What authority do you have?

Sometimes this is a function of what you are willing to do; sometimes you don't have much choice. In a coronation event, the royals may have a schedule they will want followed (one of the perks of being a royal), so dinner, or other activities will be scheduled around THEM! There will be other officers who will let you know what their needs are, or will be for

the event. There may be activities that are required to occur, and you will have no input, other than informing the ministers or officials involved as to where their designated areas are. Don't forget, if something is not right, or gets messed up, your name will be called for a solution, so take a little time to try and head things off! Just in case they forget to tell you what they might need... YOU make it a point to ask them, during your planning phase, what they will need!

Know up front that people will readily complain. It is a fact of the creature! This is sometimes the "role" of the attendee. Also know that the old phrase "Them who can-Do!" is true. You as an autocrat, and a successful one, will be joining a unique group of people, without which, the organization, as a whole would not exist! Do you enjoy participating in events? Would you like to see more of them? What would you like to see done differently? This is your chance! This is YOUR "Role".

People will forget to say thank you, or that they had a good time, but later, at other events, around the fire, or as they describe the fun they have had over the years, you will hear your events talked about. And you can be proud of your work! Now! Go ask some more questions!

Find out how many people you expect, how big a site you will need. The little things!

The Site:-The Where and part of the When

What is available, on your chosen dates, in your price range, in your geographic area, in the size you need, with the facilities you need (kitchen, electrical outlets, lectern, audio visual access, parking, nearby services, tables, chairs, physically challenged access, etc) Do you NEED all the amenities the site has? Or would they just be "nice"?

Will you need copies of the insurance certificate? Or the NON-Profit statement from the IRS to get the site? Be sure to allow time for these documents to get to you! Sometimes, there is a fee to get the insurance paperwork, check on exactly what you will need to present to the site manager/owner.

It seems easy enough, a phone call, a quick drive past on the way home, but, things may be deceptive! ALWAYS, always, always, inspect the site before agreeing to the terms! You *absolutely* need to know what is, or is not available! GET IT IN WRITING! We have had events where the staff- or manager- changed one month before the event, and the new staff didn't know who we were. I have held, or attended events where the site had a full kitchen, but the power was locked out to the room.

Result? No food could not be prepared.

Another time, the décor was in place, it looked beautiful, and the fire marshal said, take it down, this isn't an approved flame resistant material!

It was a sight to behold, the feast had begun, and someone broke out in an allergic reaction.

Many long miles up a windy road-everyone arrived at the campsite to find, the location had no potties!

There are always too many things that can go wrong. Here I hope to provide some help on heading them off.

When selecting a site, find out what is included in the price, and what other items or options are available to your group. Is there a security or cleaning deposit? Is there an extra charge for tables or chairs? Do you have to pay for a security guard? Is there a charge for parking at or near the site? Are there rules you need to know about, like recycling? Container limits? Alcohol? Smoking? Children? Rules for activities, like merchants, or selling things)?

Do you need permits, for merchants? To have music or dancing? From the Fire Marshall?

It is too easy to get excited when you know you have found the perfect site! Try to take another person with you to help ask those pesky questions!

Places to talk to about sites...-More on the Where

This list is intended as a starting place to look for sites. Use the phone book, and friends or family, they may have connections you don't know about.

- *Campgrounds*
 - They might have a recreation center or gathering area that is covered, or enclosed.
- *Parks*
 - You may have a local large or regional park that has a group camping area they don't advertise about, or that is only available to groups. Some places try to make their group areas open only to youth groups-this can be against local laws, but be careful, you don't want to anger the local officials-
- *Churches*
 - They may have halls that they will rent, or make available if someone in your group is a member
- *Organizations*
 - Elks, Oddfellows, Eagles, and others.
- *County fairgrounds*
 - You can rent fair buildings, or maybe get them at a discount, if you or your group participate in your annual fair event.
- *Local visitors and convention folks*
 - Have a number of locations available that you can rent, or get a discount on if you meet certain goals-have XX number of out of town people stay at local area hotels, etc.
- *People*
 - Someone in your group might know a local person with a large barn or area they would make available to you.
- *Hotels*
 - Will make conference rooms available if you book and fill a block of rooms.

As you look around, you might find that locations are not always easy to find! For this reason it is imperative that you make sure you work WITH the site manager or owner to leave a good impression. If the site is dusty and you need to clean it up before you use it, don't whine about it, just leave as clean as you can when you are done, it might make it easier to get the next time you need it!

Local Officials-Part of the Where, and the Who you might not think about!

What's that you say? Never heard of this guy who wants to take the temperature of your roast at the feast? Well, you will sometimes have to be inspected by the folks from the health department, if you are serving food or beverages. The fire marshal: who will look for; open flames (candles)- life safety (over the safe number of people)- aisle space (between tables or chairs)- fire safety, (are the decorations flame resistant), and things of this nature.

The site owner or manager may "drop by" to make sure you are following the rules. The police may come by (calls or reports of people carrying swords? And strangely dressed). If you have never held an event before, it is a nice idea to meet these people first! It helps prevent unpleasant surprises later! We have even invited these local officials to join us, and given them complimentary tickets to get in.

Keeping a site!

This is an important part of being an autocrat. Do what you can to stay on good terms with the people whose site you are using. Sure, you may be paying rent, or a fee, but doing a little extra, can insure that you get the site when you want or need it, and maybe even a discount on the rates!

Are you done yet?

That depends. Did you agree to hold the feast? Set the schedule for all the activities, set up the merchants, arrange for the courts, and other announcement type things. Do you need to set aside space or areas for- Arts and Science displays, children's activities, peerage meetings, theme rooms, quiet space for the autocrat?

Is someone else in charge of cleaning up, returning keys, and filling out the paperwork¹?

¹ See ECS Imperial manual of Ministry, & Imperial manual of Arts

Very Special Section-Part of the How

You do NOT have to do this alone! If your group is planning a large event, you will probably be in charge of a number of committees. This can be good, or it can be not so good. Your job, as Autocrat, is to make it good! You are in charge, and must make things happen, but if you use committees, they do most of the work, under your direction and guidance. This means tell them what you want or need, and let them do it. Check in with them from time to time to make sure they have all the information they need. As an example: Make sure the decorating group knows the budget, and rules about flames, color scheme, fire-proofing, preferences of the Royalty, etc.

Rare is the event that you can do without assistance from anyone else. As a minimum, you will need to draft people to do tasks at the event. Work the gate collecting money and waivers, cook or serve the feast, be the gopher for the Royalty, etc. You really cannot be in more than one place at a time. Do not be afraid to ask for, or accept help. Make sure that people helping you know what they need to know. Be sure to explain what their tasks or duties are, and any other information about their job they might need. Also make sure people have the authority to enforce any rules you have them in charge of. A brand spanking newbie at the back door needs to know that YOU will back them if they refuse entrance to someone who is higher up, but not supposed to use that entrance. You need to know that the Royalty will back you, even if it is one of them who are pressing the issue!

The Final "Final word" - More of the How

Your Autocrat report forms for the Empire will need to be completed and sent in. Look to the manual of Ministry for the forms and how to fill them out. For some forms you will need to transfer the information onto a single "summary sheet". Do be sure to keep a copy of the forms for yourself, or rather your local area event file. Just in case things get lost or misplaced, you still want folks to get their points for the event. And don't forget, if you are going to try for a ministry project, you need to let the appropriate people know IN ADVANCE so they can select the judges!

The checklists:

Let's look at some specific events, and what areas "I" might look at, or try to remember to attend to! There are, as always, those essentials, without which your event simply will not happen. Then there are the little details that make it special, memorable, and talked about for years to come (in a Good Way, we hope!!)! These are not complete, and I don't claim to have all the answers or details, you will have to do a little work to get your event happening! Go through the checklists, in the appendices, and use them as a jumping off place to set up your event plan!

Setting Fees

Unless your group holds major fundraisers, or has a wealthy patron, you will need to pay for things. This can be scary, if, as you plan your event, you find that it will be \$400 or more, for all the food and items you need! It is expected that the event will charge enough to cover its costs.

Fear not; divide that \$400 by the 50 people you will be feeding, and that is less than \$10 per person. Create your own checklist to insure that you are not hit with hidden costs that you will need to pay for up-front.

Remember, the monies you collect belong to the organization. They must all be turned in to the group, and any checks for the event should be made payable to the ECS-(group name). You MUST save your receipts to get reimbursed. Use the forms from the Ministry manual to help track the \$\$!

Consider where you might trim the budget if people balk at the price.

If this is NOT a feast, you might be dividing this cost by 100 or more! Much more affordable.

Set the RSVP date, and allow time for funds for the event to get to you enough in advance to avoid high out of pocket expenditures. Also, having people pay up front with a reservation better insures their attendance!

Some locations, like campgrounds, may require a deposit, to hold your sites. Check to see if you are “stuck paying” if the number of attendees is not what you had hoped- do this BEFORE the event!

Never be afraid to charge what is needed to cover the cost for an event. If your group has the funds, and wishes to have a no fee event, GREAT, but this is not always the situation.

You can check with local businesses, sometimes they will offer a discount, or donate items for local nonprofit groups. Sometimes the site can be at a discount if they know you are non-profit, OR if you provide a service to the site (I have held first aid classes for rec. center staff, and so gotten a hall for free!)

Cost for site	Cost for equipment (usually at site-tables, etc, may need to rent.)
Cost for site security (sometimes required)	Cost for food, snacks
Cost for Decorations	Cost for equipment-rentals, purchase, pots, etc.
Cost for signs, materials, etc.	Misc. Costs
10% emergency cost calculation for unforeseen items!	Total expected attendance?

Announcement information

Location	Date
Site fee per person	RSVP Deadline
Autocrat	Other
Attendance limit	

Feast O'crat Checklist

Site	Facilities	
Site Contact #'s	- Water-drinking	
Emergency #'s	- Bathrooms Change areas	
Total expected	- Water, Washing	
People Limits, max allowed	Off limit areas?	
Map of area	Site costs	
Site fees	Parking costs	
Activities allowed? I.E. weapons use or possession	Site layout: locations for event activities : i.e. court	
Fire issues, controls, aisle space, flameproof, open flame rules	Health department issues, food serving? Temperature, permits...	
Parking area	Disabled access, or accommodations	
Garbage provisions	Site rules-noise, etc	
Site / event tokens	Parking tokens	
Exit-re-entry rules	Local lodging if overnight.	
Gate location, entry points	Maps and direction signs	
Activity person	Schedule for events	
Announcement methods-heralds	Marshall, door troll person	

Complementary invitations or list		Local transportation information, airports, bus etc.	
Local lodging		Key pick up/return	
Supplies you should have on Hand (Trash bags, TP, etc.)		Tokens or hand stamp	
Will there be merchants?			

Feast Cook Checklist

Site		Facilities	
Site Contact #'s		- Water-drinking	
Emergency #'s		- Bathrooms Change areas	
Total expected		- Water, Washing	
People Limits, max allowed		Off limit areas?	
Map of area		Site costs	
Site fees Comp. tickets		Parking costs	
Activities at the feast? Court, A&S, etc.		Site layout: locations for event activities : i.e. court	
Fire issues, controls, aisle space, flameproof, open flame rules		Health department issues, food serving? Temperature, permits...Inspectors	
MENU planning, Dishes, courses or removes		Seating layout, table layout	
Cooking or kitchen facilities		Utilities, ovens, cleanup, sinks, etc	
Recipes: ingredients, allergy issues, vegetarian consideration		Cooking supplies: pots pans	
Décor, Theme? Linen service, etc.		Grocery list: quantity shopping	
Lighting candles? Allowed?		Grocery storage	
Time schedules- hint: always plan to have food ready 1/2 hour before you say it will be!		Food prep areas Who is cooking? How many cooks? Food choppers? Etc.	
Announcements, what will people need to bring? Feast gear? Etc.		Serving needs, platters, utensils, etc.	
Will there be entertainment?		Helpers, servers, cleaners.	

Sine's Feast hints!

Have your recipes and ingredient lists available at the door so people with food allergies can be warned.

Have a total serving number in mind, and set a cutoff date to allow for shopping and logistics issues.

Consider at least one or two vegetarian dishes for people who might not eat meat, or have dietary restrictions, (pork, etc.) If you do this, think through all your ingredients, spices, oils or butter, lard, etc.

Don't forget to plan for food for your helpers, and, a special treat for your cleaners will mean you won't have to do it alone!

To help keep soups warm while being served, take an old clean army blanket, and fold up to make a pot wrap. Use a lid. Use more than one soup pot to serve quickly. Large squash (non-period-pumpkins) make great tureens, and are well insulated, keeping the soup hot longer, as well as being decorative on a table.

Scout your local “Dollar” store for serving utensils, make a feast box and keep all the bits in it.

Local food supply places sell silverware by the box of 25 or so for reasonable \$, keep them in your feast box for the out of towners, or new folks who don’t have gear yet.

Use a cart if available to bring heavy food items to the table. No cart? Make a stretcher board, carried by two, attended by one or two to serve.

Have one or two servers who “tend the tables” keeping beverages filled, bringing empty trays to the kitchen, fetching more bread, etc. Perhaps a single server dedicated to the high table.

Plant a “stooge” or two to tip or praise your servers and help. This will encourage others to do the same! Tips can be simple, Hershey kisses, or small items.

Allow the children of your group so “sell” small items or candies to use for thank you’s or tips. A child with a basket of trinkets for a dime each, or quarter each...naturally you supply the trinkets and baskets!

Keeps the kids busy wandering about, learning to count, and being good little merchants!

We have created a wonderful impact and atmosphere by renting tablecloths and napkins that match, and pre-laid the tables with these. Fresh greenery from someone’s garden or shrubs or trees adds a nice touch with a few flowers for color.

Consider finger food or hors-d’ovres being ready to place them after most of the guests arrive, to keep them busy and happy. (It is a sad statement that people, who have not experienced a good event, have thought my appetizer course was the feast! Then came the four big removes, the soup, and then desert and teas!)

Having a few table games placed around will give guests an activity to occupy them, Chess, or Merels, Tafl, etc.

Having the Arts & sciences displayed on side tables is nice, perhaps a bead or token to vote for the “Peoples choice” item.

Camping-

This can be a War, a Tourney, or just an outdoor event to get people used to camping and related activities.

Site		Facilities	
Site Contact #'s		- Water-drinking	
Emergency #'s		- Bathrooms	
Total expected		- Water, Washing	
People Limits, max allowed		- Safety- lifeguards, etc	
Map of area		Site costs	
Site fees		Parking costs	
Activities allowed? I.e. weapons use or possession		Site layout: period Vs non period area, G Vs R rated zones	
Fire issues, controls		Wildlife issue	
Parking area		Disabled access, or	

		accommodations	
Garbage provisions		Site rules-noise, etc.	
Site / event tokens		Parking tokens	
Exit-re-entry rules		Local shopping; ice, food, etc.	
Gate location		Maps and direction signs	
Activity person		Schedule for events	
Announcement methods-heralds		Prizes or awards	

Sine's Camping hints:

This is not all- inclusive by any means. Some of the additional actions we have taken as various events include:

Confirm with the various officers how much space is needed for each event-Fighting fields, Queens tea, A&S, etc.

Rules on gathering firewood,- (we supply firewood from local builders scrap bins.)

Make sure to provide buckets with some 10% bleach water near the potties, tack up a hand towel, and have extra rolls of TP, just in case. We also have battery, or Cylume® lights for the potties at night.

Park cars at a distance from the actual camping area after unloading. This maintains the feel and look of the event.

Pre-map out the period and non-period camp areas. Use a screening device such as a large period tent or pavilion, fabric screen, or reed screening to maintain the zones.

Provide an area and some basic games for the children, make it a No-Pokemon© zone if you have to!

Give everyone a trash bag when they arrive, tell them all trash must go out in those bags. Have extras if needed. This prevents a messy trash area, and makes life for the site people easier.²

Take a rake to clear areas near fire pits. Take extra buckets painted black or brown to go at each fire pit. Make burlap covers for the fire bucket.

Make burlap covers for water coolers and ice chests you are using. Have water available in the fighting areas Keep all non-period items covered, or put away. Set the example!

Have a couple of large water containers or coolers located around for people to stay hydrated.

Post the schedule- and don't get uptight if time runs over, or something you plan for does not get done! Try to have fun!

Have someone available to help people unload so they can move their car quickly, a young person with little money can do this in exchange for a site fee, or meals. Some wagons or a handcart helps too.

Maps of the site layout, or a large map for folks to indicate where they are camped so friends can find them is often welcome. Post at the Troll booth or entrance

² see earlier comments about keeping the site!

Don't forget to include copying costs in your fee estimating! Ask people to evaluate the site and event for future use, and to help you hold a better event.

An end of event contest for picking up trash and litter with a prize for XX number of pounds will help keep you from doing all the work!

Sample Event Plan and Checklist

EVENT:	Kyrbyr Collegium
Location:	Dania Hall , Livermore California
Dates:	June 20/21 2001
Autocrat:	Sine (Kay Tracy)
Feast:	Yes
Site fee (deposit)	400 (100)
Feast cost per person	6
Ins. Certificate?	YES
Wheel chair access?	Downstairs only
Permits from City needed	No
Sleeping overnight at site?	Ok
Facility checklist:	
Bathrooms	2 with change area
Kitchen	2 stoves, dbl sink, refrigerator, counters, outlets
Hall	Tables/chairs, cart
Utensils	We provide
Number area/rooms for classes	1 lg, 1 small room downstairs 1 large, 3 small rooms upstairs outdoor area in back, (parking or other)
Parking	Street, and back of building nominal space for 20 cars, plus street parking
Nearest airports	Oakland, SFO
Occupancy limit	150-200
Feast committee:	Valdis, Thorbjorg, Finna, Sine
Schedule Committee:	Michele, Ranulf,
Course committee:	Sigmund, Sine, Ranulf, Ottar
Site fee, per person based on 40 people	\$20 for the weekend
Merchant fees	Site fee, + \$10 for 8' table front

There will be a feast, snacks and breakfast on Sunday morning. Local food sources are nearby.

You can check into a local hotel/motel, or bring a bag and sleep at the hall.

There will be a small merchant row

There are four tracks of classes to choose from every two hours.

There will be Arts and Sciences judging.

After dinner entertainment (movie night! & period dancing lessons)

Sample feast menu and meal planning:

During the day: Site helpers (keeping the water filled, emptying trash, etc, get free dinner)

Large bowl of slices oranges and apples in each classroom

1 case each oranges/apples \$20

Water dispensers, two upstairs, two downstairs: burlap covered, one each Iced tea upstairs and downstairs, covered and labeled.

Saturday Dinner: Middle eastern style food for 40 + helpers and servers (total 50)

Appetizers:

Stuffed Grape leaves, Olives, Turkish Eggs, Herbs and Nuts, Falafel, Pita and Hummus, Figs, vinegar onions
Need: 10 platters, 10 egg dishes, 10 small serving dishes, 10 baskets for Pita, 10 bowls

Courses:

Roast Lamb, Honey glaze chicken, Couscous
Need: Spit and grills (2), Roasting pans, 10(2 birds per), Large steamer pot, 20 platters

Vegetables:

Cucumbers in yogurt, Carrot soup, Lentils with Eggplant
Need: Slicer, large bowl, 2-large pots and food processor, eggplants lentils, yoghurt, carrots, garlic.

Beverages:

Mint water, Iced Tea, Hot Tea, Turkish Coffee
Need: 4 carboys, two tea dispensers, 2-1g coffee pots

Desert

Fruit ices
Need: Ice Shaver, Freezer containers

Sunday Breakfast: Nordic style food for 40

Pea Porridge with Turnips and Leeks, Oat porridge, Flat bread with fruit spreads, Herring in vine sauce,
Hard eggs, juice.
Need: 2 lg pots, 1g basket for bread, three bowls for spreads, clay server for fish, pitchers for juice.

Sample shopping list:

3 jars grape leaves	5# rice	2-#10 cans olives	1/2 # Cardamom seeds	1/2 # star anise
20 # figs	2# walnuts	2# Almonds	1-#10 can Apricots	1-#10 can Plums
15 dz eggs	1 # yellow onion skin paper	5# yellow onions	1/2 gal. Cider vinegar	
12 bags Pita bread	5# falafel mix	1 gal corn oil	2-#10 cans garbanzo beans	
5 Lemons	Paprika	Olive oil	4# tomatoes	2 bn parsley
20 # chicken	1 lamb (40# cut wt)	2# honey	sesame seeds	
5# couscous grain	10 # carrots	10 lg cucumbers	1 qt plain yogurt	3# lentils
8 lg eggplants	6 bn fresh mint	4 cloves garlic	Mumtaz® tea	2# turkish grind
2 # dried peas	2# turnips	4 Leeks	2# Oatmeal	8 -2# jars herring
Orange Juice	Red punch juice			

NOTE:, there are four fig trees in my neighborhood- we buy the lambs at auction- we have a lemon tree available- Herring from COSTCO®- I make the falafel mix from Favas, Garbanzos, and seasoning. In short, we do seasonal menus with what grows locally to help reduce costs!

Course schedule Sat

Time	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5/outside
0900-1100	Felt making	Viking necklaces	Basic autocrating	War tactics of the Saxons	Carving soapstone \$2
1230-1430	Basic tablet weaving \$4	Making Shinai shields	Making chain mail	Woodwork of the Norse	Making cordage or rope
1500-1700	Making Vegetable tanned leather	Throwing a feast, and Period foods	How to be an Arts/Sciences judge	Tablet weaving patterns	Making a life mask \$2

List of instructors for each class, materials or copying fees, fees the students will need to pay, if any should be sent out well before the event so people can decide which class they wish to attend.

Do the instructors have a class size limit?

Does the instructor need Audio Visual materials? Overhead projector? VCR / TV?

Will they be using tools?

Do they need power-extension cords?

Is noise a factor?

Is there safety equipment needed?

Do they need to do their class outside?

Do they print their own handouts?

Do you have extra power cords if needed?

Did you ask for a copy of all class handouts? For your file.

Did you bring a camera to capture the moments with?

If the instructor sells any items, (books, supplies, etc) did you give them some merchant space or a table?

If you have attendees with access problems, can you accommodate? Or re-arrange a classroom?

To do list:

Make directional signs so folks can find you?

Borrow Cots from Travis AFB-20 ea

Borrow overhead from Sq 72, bring 2nd overhead from home

Bring TV/VCR (& tapes for movie night)

Bring CD/Tape boom box

Bring feast napkin bag (50 cloth napkins, and 20 kitchen towels)

Bring feast table cover bag (8 ea 4 yard fabric lengths for tables)

3x5 cards for door signs, merchant table labels, etc.

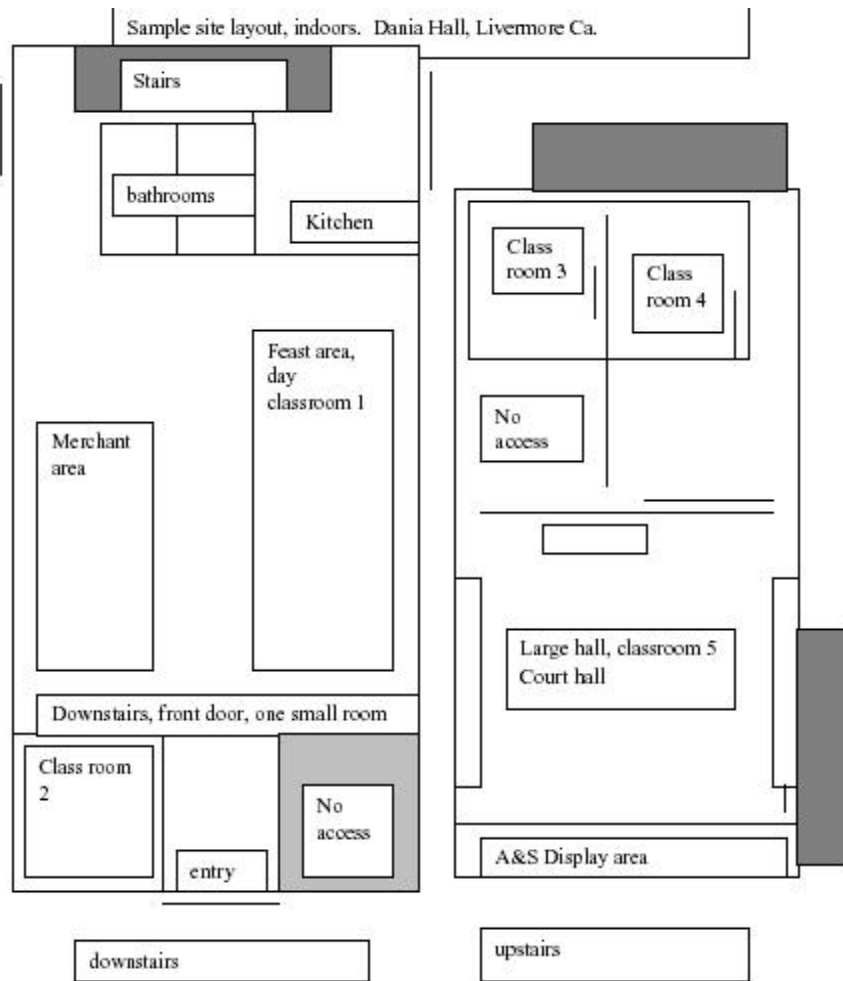
Bring event box with Troll binder-A&S Binders, etc.

Large poster of class schedules and easel to post signs

Extra trash bags

Boxes for recycle

Etc.



I hope this helps you to hold great events in your area. I have chosen some examples to try and give you an overview of some of the planning. That can go into an event. Not every event needs to be so complex, but next time something is being planned for your group...ask the autocrat if you can help! Make it an event YOU will want to be at!

Stuff that won't fit elsewhere!

A nice thing to do for your local group is to set up a set or box of binders, if they do not already exist, for each area at your event.

- The Troll door/gate binder has all the forms, and plenty of them for sign in's, a few pens, and a bag or box for cash or tokens, a holder for group, or ECS flyers, and a flashlight or lantern for after dark needs.
- The A&S judges might be picked at the event. You know there will be three (make up a fourth in case of judge/project conflict) Make up the binders with the judging forms, difficulty charts, cards for comments, and pens, ready to go. Have a clipboard for the sign in sheets, and a calculator (a \$1-2 one is fine).
- For those fighting events? Same thing, have those items ready to go, bring out that box and binders so your event runs smoothly, in case the officers forgot something!

MERCHANTS

Merchants at an event can be a good draw! Merchants usually pay a fee to attend and sell their wares.

These fees can be by the foot of frontage of their booth? A flat fee, or an item for local prize or auction/raffle use. Be aware, some localities require your merchants to have re-sale permits, or other Tax related documents³.

In exchange for this fee, merchants expect a couple of things:

- A merchant row with good exposure to the populace
- Ability to drive next to, or nearby for loading/unloading
- Reasonably close access to water and potties.

If this is an indoor event:

- Who provides tables? Chairs
- Do they need electricity?
- Allow a little extra aisle space for people movement (this would be beyond what the fire marshal requires)
- Is there a location or neighbor preference? If you send out a map, I suggest going with first come first served based on postage date.
- Signs directing the populace to the merchants

Merchants may not get much chance to leave their tables, so a nice touch is to provide a few passes during the day of sliced oranges or apples. Or have a helper who will give them a booth break for five minutes at a time every couple hours. Cost? Part of their merchant fee, say \$1-2 per booth goes to pay for the fruit.

The merchant fee should include their site fee. Helpers are usually given a reduced fee, for the first one at least (i.e. site fee 15\$....Merchant fee 20\$(includes one person entry)-helper (Limit-1) 10\$)

SIGNS

Don't forget direction signs for parking, and getting to the event. If you do not want cars parked in an area, specify the loading locations and times. Have a helper directing and keeping vehicles in their designated areas. Have people fill out a 3x5 card at the gate with their name and car license number in case they park too long you can track them down! (Loaders with carts to help folks can reduce this problem)

HANDOUTS

Many people won't read the handouts you give them, but give them out anyway. Site rules, Schedules, other issues they should be aware of. If it is important, there should be a large notice at the gate, and they should get a verbal notice from the gate person. Don't forget a site evaluation. They can be returned in a timely manner with some small inducement, a cool beverage or treat for the drive home if you turn in your evaluation sheet filled out, etc⁴.

³ Some choose to do this as a don't ask, no foul situation. This can cause problems, especially at a public event or demo. I suggest finding out what your local laws are regarding "garage sales" and tell your merchants, if they are in fact a business, they must bring their re-sale permit. If they are a Hobby or small crafter, suggest they look into the local G-sale requirements (in our area, you can have four garage sales a year without needing a re-sale permit.)

⁴ Alas, it is true, Sine at least is not above the small bribe, I mean inducement, to get the populace to co-operate!