

### Chapter 3: Arts and Sciences Activities in the Middle Kingdom

As a Minister of Arts and Sciences you will want to coordinate activities for your group and make your group aware of Kingdom or Regional level activities that people can participate in. There are no age or membership requirements for participation in Arts and Sciences activities with the exception of Equestrian activities, where all requirements listed in the Knight Marshal's Handbook should be met and the judging of brewing and vintning entries, where all federal and state laws regarding the age of consumption must be met.

**Arts and Sciences Faires:** The A & S Faires are judged competitions. Entries in an A & S Faire compete against and are scored against written criteria with the highest possible score being 30 points. A & S Faire entries are not scored against each other, so it is feasible to have a number of First, Second, etc. place winners within a category. An entry must have written documentation to accompany it. The documentation describes how the entry was made, how items like the entry were made during the Middle Ages or Renaissance and, if the entrant did not use Middle Ages/Renaissance (called "period") techniques to create the entry, how and why they deviated from period norm. The A & S Faire is an excellent venue to receive feedback. Each judge is required to place their name and contact information on the score sheet, so the entrant may contact them. Traditionally A & S Faires are held during the spring, but can be held at other times of the year. There is one Faire per Region. *Any entry scoring a First or Second place is eligible to advance to the Kingdom A & S Faire held on the Saturday of the Memorial Day weekend in conjunction with Spring Crown Tournament.* For a complete listing of the participation rules, general guidelines, judges rules, and individual category criteria, consult the Middle Kingdom Arts and Sciences Faire Judging Criteria available from the Middle Kingdom Information Officer or the MOAS pages at <http://www.midrealm.org>.

**Middle Kingdom Craftperson Faire:** The Middle Kingdom Craftperson Faire is a venue for artists at any level of development to display their work and discuss how to create similar items. The MKCF is for showing off "period adaptive" items such as cooler covers, portable furniture, and a host of other things that are made to enhance our enjoyment of the Society. It can also be a good venue to discuss and display "a body of work." Documentation is not required. The entrant's name, address and other such information may appear on the flyer. Many artisans like to remain with their entry to discuss how the entry was made. The MKCF is an excellent venue for artists at any level of development. It is not a competition so the atmosphere is different from the A & S Faire. The Middle Kingdom Craftperson Faire is held in conjunction with the Fall Crown Tournament. Regional MOASs may also opt to hold a regional version of the MKCF in their region.

**Middle Kingdom Authentic Artifact Showcase:** The Middle Kingdom Authentic Artifact Showcase (MKAAS) is a display of recreations of Middle Ages/Renaissance period artifacts. This venue is perfect for the person who wishes to thoroughly research and recreate an actual artifact that existed in period. Entrants are required to produce written documentation, including a picture of the actual period artifact they are reproducing, for general distribution. The documentation should include a description of the period artifact, construction techniques used to make the reproduction and a list of works consulted. The entrant's name, address and other such information may appear on the documentation. The Middle Kingdom Authentic Artifact Showcase is held in conjunction with Kingdom Twelfth Night in January. The Crown decides which event will be Kingdom Twelfth Night. Regional MOASs may also opt to hold a regional version of the MKAAS in their region.

**Arts and Sciences Displays:** There are various forms of the A & S Display. These include general displays such as works by members of the populace, a traveling display of works sponsored by a private household, works by members of the Order of the Laurel (ranging from beginning to master works), works by members of the Order of the Evergreen, the Order of the

Willow and the Order of the Silver Oak and works done on a particular theme. The Kingdom MOAS might also invite the participants in the Kingdom A & S Faire to display their entries on the day of the Spring Crown Exhibition for the enjoyment of the populace. Any group may hold a display. When planning a display, be sure to include non-static arts and sciences such as music, cooking, dance, etc.

**Token Count Contests:** A token count contest is run by asking entrants to place their entries on a table with a small cup. The populace is given a token such as a bead or coin to place in the cup by the entry they like best. It is advisable to avoid using edible tokens. Token counts are an excellent activity for a local group to have as part of an event or group function. The entry or entries with the most tokens at the end of the day may be given special recognition by the administrator of the contest.

**Laurel Prize Exhibitions:** A Laurel Prize Exhibition is a token count with a twist. The entrants are sponsored into the Exhibition by a Laurel. The sponsoring Laurel should make a special token for the entrant they have sponsored and the Exhibition Organizer should have a token for each entrant as a gesture of appreciation for entering the Exhibition. It is a good idea to have entrants pre-register with the Exhibition Organizers so that they can attempt to provide the entrant with the appropriate space that may be needed. The entries are viewed by members of the populace; typically members of the Laurel give a token to the entries they like best. Often the entrants have a book or pad of paper for Laurels to comment on the entries. This type of activity is an excellent way to introduce Laurels to the artistic community and vice versa.

**Baronial A & S Championship:** Many baronies hold a championship to determine the Arts and Sciences Champion of the Barony. This can be done by a token count, a small A & S Faire type competition, or other ways as the baron/ess determines.

**Inter-Group Contests:** A challenge can be issued between groups within a fairly close physical distance to hold an inter-group challenge. This can take the form of an A & S Faire but the scores are counted towards a group total. The group with the largest total becomes the Arts and Sciences Champions of the area. Another option is to choose a few categories and ask group members to compete in an A & S Faire venue but under limited categories. This is an excellent way to introduce people to how an A & S Faire works and often fosters group unity.

**Collegiums:** A collegium is a group of classes usually held over an entire day. A collegium is best done as part of an event, but they can be an event themselves if they are large enough. A collegium can cover a variety of topics or can be limited in scope such as a costuming collegium or a Norse culture collegium. Collegiums can include roundtable discussions, hands-on classes, and traditional teacher-student classes. A collegium is a wonderful way to introduce members of your group to new ideas. The Judges Coordinator, Regional MOAS, Kingdom MOAS and the Royal University of the Midrealm (RUM) Regent can help you locate teachers.

**Arts & Sciences Night:** Many local groups hold a gathering at least once a month for the pursuit of the Arts and Sciences. This can be as simple as a gathering of folk at a private home or library meeting room. A & S Nights can have a theme, such as costume or armoring nights. Some larger groups may have a number of activities throughout the month that members can attend. A & S Nights are a great way to work on group projects, like banners or shields for a shield wall.

This chapter has offered some of the activities available within the Middle Kingdom and serves as a starting point for the Minister of Arts and Sciences to plan activities for their group.