

SECTION V -- FIELD AND DUTY HERALDING

7) Morning Announcements

(January, XXV)

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Abstract: A biased, but practical, collection of information and considerations on collecting, organizing, and giving morning announcements including some solutions on dealing with the poor PR associated with morning announcements.

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MORNING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Andrew Silverhill (January XXV)

The morning call is unique. Unlike other shouts, the herald must find the information, as opposed to waiting for the information to find him. In addition to informing the populace of the schedule of the day, it is the West Kingdom's alarm clock.

As the Kingdom's alarm clock, remember to be timely. Unless the royalty, or the Herald-in-charge, wants you to make your announcements at a certain time, most of the populace expect the morning call at 8am. Please be on time. Many of the populace expect the herald to wake them in time for them to have breakfast before meetings or court. If you are late, so are they.

Avoid starting too early. While some people expect to be woken up by the morning call, some people want to sleep in and not be disturbed. You need to be sure everyone who wants to hear the announcements can hear them. However, the morning call should not be so closely spaced that someone who wants to sleep in hears the announcements several times. Sound travels better in the quiet mornings than in the noisy afternoons.

Try to keep the morning announcements short. Many people will not be awake enough to remember the list of items in a raffle. Morning announcements should be limited to schedule information occurring before court, announcements that the royalty (or Herald-in-charge) want included and information about fighter preparations. If someone asks you to announce something you are not sure of, ask a Senior Staff Herald.

Which leads into the next topic: what to announce and how to get the information. When the Herald-in-Charge asks you to be responsible for the 8am shout, ask the herald if there will be a herald's meeting (usually at 9am) in the morning. The answer will almost always be yes. The key word is *almost*. Be sure by asking. Next, ask if the herald has any other announcements to include in the morning call. Write them all down. Do not trust your memory with morning announcements. Hunt down the Marshal, Chirurgion, Seneschal, Lists and Constable. Ask them if they will be having a meeting in the morning. If so, ask them when and where it will be. Write them down on the same piece of paper. Go find the royalty. Get the schedule for the day from them.

When you approach the royalty for the schedule, ask about the following:

On a Saturday of a tourney, ask about:

- List sign-up (when does it open? Close? Where is it?)
- Armor inspection (When does it open? Close?)
- Court (When is it scheduled to begin?)
- Invocation (When is it scheduled to begin?)
- Fighting (When is it scheduled to begin?)
- Does the royal pavilion need setting up? If so, when should the guard be called to do it?

On a Sunday of a tourney, ask about:

- Does the royalty wish to speak with the members of the Orders?
- If so, when and in what order?
- Court (When is it scheduled to begin?)
- Does the royalty have any special announcements?

Some Royalty plan the entire schedule. Others leave the planning to the officers. Nearly all Royalty want to know what the schedule is, whether they planned it or not. By speaking with the officers first, you will not need to disturb the Royalty more than once. If the Royalty plan a schedule different than what the officers expect, the Royalty's schedule is the official schedule and the officers need to be informed.

When should you gather the information? The evening before. Officers are more difficult to find when they are asleep. They may not be awake enough to be articulate. You have enough to do in the morning without organizing the morning shout. Besides, waking up any officer at 7am without Royal Command is impolite. Except for emergencies or Royal Request, there is no reason to wake the Royalty before the morning shout.

Once you have the list of announcements, get another piece of paper. Organize your announcements in the order they will be presented. I use a chronological order for most information. I feel most people can assimilate the information better that way. Put the paper with your tabard and watch, then go to bed. You have to wake up before eight without the benefit of the heraldic alarm clock.

Be sure to wake up early enough to be prepared for 8am.

Warm up your voice with humming and yawning, starting quietly. Several hours have passed since you last used your voice. Drink some lukewarm water. Wear a warm cloak. Go over the list of announcements. If you are lucky enough to see the Royalty awake and about before 8am, confirm the announcements with them. Walk the entire camp before 8am to decide how many shouts you will need, and where you should make them. Try not to stand too close to a pavilion when you make your announcements. The people inside might have wanted to sleep in.

A typical Saturday morning shout at a Crown tourney might sound like the following:

“Oyez! Oyez! Good morning! These are your 8am morning announcements.

Heralds, there is a heralds' meeting at 9 at the heralds' point.

The Earl Marshal wants to meet with all marshals at 9:30 on the Eric.

Fighters, list sign-up open at 9 and close at 10:30. List sign-ups are being taken at the black and white pavilion on the Eric. Armor inspection begins at 9 and closes when court begins.

Court will be at 10:30.

Invocation will be at 11 with fighting at 11:30.

And last, Her Majesty calls for the Queen's Guard. All members of the Queen's Guard are to meet at the Royal pavilion now.

Those are your 8am morning announcements.

Thank you.”

Once you have made your announcements, return to the herald's pavilion. If it is Saturday morning, make a map of the site with information on where encampments are. The herald-in-charge will appreciate the information. By this time, it will be almost 9am. Get something to eat and hurry back for the heralds' meeting.

Any article on morning call would be remiss without a word or two on the bad PR morning announcements have received. The reasons for the bad PR are many. We, as heralds, are partly to blame for it. We have joked about using the morning call to retaliate against the people who kept us up all night. (Now stand REAL CLOSE to that pavilion and do your morning shout into it.) The populace often forgets the importance of the morning call. For people who are night owls and not morning doves, anything that interferes with their sleeping is an abuse to them.

You have very few solutions to the problem. If the topic appears while you are doing the morning call, *politely* remind them that many people need the information. If the offended individual has a better solution for informing the populace in general, please mention it to the Royalty or a Senior Staff Herald. Then remind them that you are unable to talk further about it now since you are busy and politely bid them a good day. Offer to talk with them later, when they are up and about. **DO NOT ARGUE:** You do not improve the image of morning announcements or heralds in general, nor do you get your work done. If someone is particularly offensive, and you feel you have tried to reason with them, let the Herald-In-Charge know. One of the obligations a Senior Staff Herald accepts when they take the position is to help working heralds work.

And finally, remember, this is *fun*. Really!