AN TIR FINANCIAL MEETING -- September Crown 2012 (9/3/12)

Significant Figures Present:

- Her Majesty, Astrid of the Fjordlands
- Her Royal Highness, Caoimhe (Keeva) ingen Domnaille
- Princess of the Summits, Telisia Brutusdottir
- Kingdom Seneschal, Dame Brighid Ross
- Kingdom Exchequer, HL Genevieve Marie Etiennette de Montagne

FINANCIAL REPORT

Exchequer Report by HL Genevieve Marie Etiennette de Montagne:

- There is a total of $108,000 in the Kingdom accounts at this time.
- So far in 2012 the Kingdom has spent $20,000 and has $24,000 remaining in its budget. The largest share of expenses is for travel.
- The budget for the reign of Monarchs Ieuan and Gwyneth Gower was increased by $300 for travel.
- The Raven Travel fund has received $2500 in donations this year. $1600 has been spent from the account for the trip to Estrella War and other events. A total of $7900 remains in the account.

Payment Requests:

- Minister of Family Activities, Madame Jacqueline de Lioncourt, is requesting reimbursement for $46 for supplies she purchased to provide activities at the war. She understood she had a budget of $50 to do so, but the West has declined to pay her. -- Approved.
- Kingdom Earl Marshal,Viscount Matheus Bane, requests for $200 to be added to his budget to pay for a post office box for the Lists Office, rather than continuing to have cards sent to the Lists Mistress' home address. This will also assist with some other changes in officer positions as described in the Curia notes. -- Approved.
- Viscount Matheus also wanted to give the committee notice of a project the marshal's office is working on: The database which currently contains the authorizations for all fighters and marshals was created 10 years ago by Don Ramon de la Vega. He has been hosting it on his private server, and maintaining it in his spare time; but he is no longer able to do so. The system has developed a number of serious failures and new elements are needed to meet the changing needs of the fighting community, but it is not feasible to do this work within the existing program. Viscount Matheus and HL Jenae agreed in August that planning for a new system should begin. HL Steven Desjardin is leading this project in consultation with the Kingdom web team, who will likely create the online user interface, while there are a couple of individuals willing to do the infrastructure programming for no compensation other than a professional letters of reference. The product would belong to the Kingdom and be hosted on a Kingdom server (details to be determined), with the latter being the primary expense. -- Further information will be provided at 12th Night so this can be included in the 2013 budget.

Matters related to An Tir – West War:

- *Note: The bulk of this information was provided by Exchequer Genevieve Marie Etiennette de Montagne and Seneschal Brighid Ross.*
- Lyle, the owner of the war site has now been paid for this year's event. Seneschal Brighid Ross was in communication with him and officers in the West in recent weeks on this matter. The West stated that they sent the check in a timely fashion but it was returned. However when the address was verified it was correct. A second check was subsequently sent and received. Lyle expressed his appreciation for An Tir's support in resolving this matter. However, due to this issue and some improvements he wishes to make on the property, he will be asking for a deposit in advance for the 2013 event.
- One complicating factor is that An Tir and the West have different visions of and for the event: An Tir is very enthusiastic about it, and notes that attendance is remaining steady despite the

economic down-turn that has negatively affected so many other activities. The West is concerned the event is declining.

- An Tir allows royalty to attend the war for free. The West does not. This created some confusion at the gate this year.
- Exchequer Genevieve is consulting with Baron Arontius of Bygelswade and others to lay the foundation to create a separate business entity for An Tir – West War to reduce future problems similar to those above. Hopefully the West will agree to this arrangement. Pensic, Gulf Wars, and a couple of other Inter-Kingdom events already operate this way with the active encouragement of the corporate office. Kingdom Equestrian Deputy, Dame Macha the Determined, stated that this type of arrangement for other events has made it easier for the equestrians to participate, since greater financial stability makes it easier to build relationships with locals willing to rent horses for activities, and can allow for the purchase and storage of common equipment on site, rather than individuals hauling it each year.

Initial information about raising Kingdom event rates:

- A formal presentation will be made at 12th Night, but it has come time to discuss raising the gate fee for Crown events from $15 to $20. Discounted rates for children and the modern family cap would still exist.
- It is costing more and more to rent sites, and to pay for related infrastructure such as toilets and trash. More royalty and officers are requesting reimbursement for permitted expenses because their personal budgets can no longer allow them to donate this to the Kingdom. Raising the rate would off-set some of the decrease in attendance and allow the Kingdom to access more locations, especially in metropolitan areas. The alternative is to cut expenses from the budget, likely starting with the travel reimbursement.
- September Crown 2012 is the only Kingdom event in the past couple of years which exceeded its expected attendance. The others are down 10-20%, and the same is being seen at the branch level and in other Kingdoms. The drop is actually more severe this far into the international recession than when it initially hit: At first people thought the impact would be temporary and attended events anyway; now a meaningful portion can no longer do so.
- The sexual abuse lawsuit cost the Kingdom $38,000 or the equivalent to nearly a year of current operating expenses ($44,000 and rising). The case against the insurance companies for reimbursement is continuing, but could go on for years, and there's no guarantee the SCA will receive money in the end. However, even without the lawsuit penalties, the Kingdom is falling behind in its budget and this conversation needs to occur.
- How other areas are handling this topic:
    - The Principality of the Summits no longer reimburses officers for travel.
    - The Principality of Tir Righ raised the rate for their Coronet, Investiture, and championship occasions to a minimum of $20. A given event can charge more.
    - A large number of branches have raised their rates $2-5 per event.
- Kingdom Officers and other individuals with influence throughout our community are asked to introduce this topic to the populace so as to improve the reception of the ultimate decision. One approach would be to remind them how much other activities cost: a movie or dinner out, camping at a state park in modern circumstances, sporting events, etc.

EVENT BIDS

Summary of decisions to date:

- Fall Crown Council -- No event will be held.
- 12th Night (January 11-13, 2013) -- Barony of Three Mountains. Doubletree hotel in Portland, OR.

- Arts & Sciences and Bardic Championship (March 1-3, 2013) -- Barony of Blatha An Oir. La Quinta Inn & Suites in Tacoma, WA.
- May Crown (May 17-19, 2013) -- No formal bid submitted yet. However, one is under development by the Baronies of Madrone and Vulcanfeldt for a joint operation at a site near Yakima, WA.
- July Coronation (July 19-21, 2013) -- Shire of Midhaven. County park near Arlington, WA.
- September Crown (Aug 30 – Sept 2, 2013) -- Two bids described below.
- 12th Night (January 10-12, 2014) -- Shire of Wyewood. Doubletree hotel in SeaTac, WA.
- Arts & Sciences and Bardic Championship (March 7-9, 2014) -- Bid described below.

September Crown -- Aug 30 – Sept 2, 2013

BID 1 by the Barony of Borealis:

- Event Steward Don Robert of Clan Gunn. [robert.simpson (at) ualberta.ca] Assisted by Countess Inga the Unfettered and Mistress Sadb ingen Thuathail.
- Presentation by Kingdom Events Deputy HL Ysabella Greene and Kingdom Seneschal Brighid Ross. Additional questions addressed by Mistress Sadb ingen Thuathail.
- Location: Whitemud Equestrian Learning Centre in the city of Edmonton, Alberta. http://welca.ca/
- Information from the bid packet:
    - This is a private, fully fenced site, with limited entrances so paid attendance can be enforced. It is secluded in a river valley hiding the fact that it is 10 minutes from hotels and stores, and 25 minutes from the airport.
    - There are 3 arenas on site: one can be used for equestrian activities, one for tournaments, and one for combat archery and thrown weapons. Target archery is prohibited per city ordinances.
    - There is potable water on site, along with a few flush toilets. RV's would be in the parking area on the opposite side of the arenas from general camping.
    - Expected attendance is 700 which is 150 more than they see at Avacal's largest event, Quad War.
    - Site fees would be $15 Canadian for adults. Equestrians would need to pay an additional $30 for stall rentals. Horses would be available for rent for still to be determined amount.
    - Tentative income would be $10,500. Expenses $8965. Profit $1535.
- This event bid has been in process since March. Don Robert of Clan Gunn and his associates have worked very hard on it, but there are still a number of unanswered questions regarding the costs. Examples include those for trash disposal and insurance, whether ACCEPS will be used for pre-registration, and why general expenses are lower and printing costs higher than is normally seen. Mistress Sadb will speak with Exchequer Genevieve and the prospective event team to resolve these items.
- Strengths & Concerns discussed in the meeting:
    - Attendance will be lower than at an event on the I-5 corridor and this will reduce the profit margin for the event and Kingdom at a time when both are facing financial obstacles. However, Crown Princess Caoimhe says that if the other events are in central An Tir and have strong budgets, then it may be appropriate to accept this bid from our more distant citizens and travel to their home, rather than expecting them yet again to shoulder the burden of traveling west and south.
    - Transporting horses across the border -- One individual at the meeting states that it can be difficult and time consuming to obtain all of the necessary health clearances regardless of which direction one is traveling. However, Avacal will make horses familiar with the games available to American riders, just as happens when equestrian events happen in the US.

- Because it is in an urban area, costs for some services such as trash and portable toilets will be lower than at a more remote site.
- Mistress Sadb says that the Avacalan community is willing to offer hospitality to those traveling from further away, in terms of rides to and from the airport, crash space at individual's homes, loans of tents and camping equipment, etc.

BID 2 by the Shire of Fire Mountain Keep

- Event Steward HL Bors the Luscious [bobzhouse (at) yahoo.com]
- Presentation by Kingdom Events Deputy HL Ysabella Greene and by Kingdom Seneschal Brighid Ross.
- Location: Nix Ranch in Chehalis, WA. This is the same site as was used for September Crown 2010 and 2011, and the past 3 Autumn Wars.
- Information from the bid packet:
  - This is an open field with no amenities. It is a significant distance inside private property with very limited access, so public intrusion is not a concern.
  - Expected attendance is 1000 adults and 115 children. Site fees would be $15 US for adults and $7 for school-aged children & teens. There would be no additional costs for equestrians.
  - The bid packet available today does not have the most current financial information. Currently the projected profit is as much as $7200, but additional questions remain about water bearing costs of $150 given there's no water on site, and some other items that Exchequer Genevieve is still verifying.
- Strengths & Concerns discussed in the meeting:
  - This is a known site with ample room for Crown. While it is the first time the Shire will be hosting a Kingdom event, the Barony of Glymm Mere will act as mentors.
  - Attendance and thus earnings will be higher than virtually anywhere else, given that it is roughly in the middle of I-5 corridor An Tir. However, is it fair to the rest of the Kingdom to continue to ask them to travel to this location?
  - There is discussion amongst the organizers of making this a 10 day event with Autumn War the weekend prior, but that is not a factor the Kingdom will use in deciding the bid.

Decision at Financial Meeting -- Given that additional information is needed on both bids, no decision is made today. One will be made in the next 3 weeks however, as the Barony of Borealis must finalize a contract with the equestrian center within 30 days if they are going to obtain the site.

ADDENDUM post event:

- On 9/20/12, the Borealis team submitted a revised bid to Their Majesties, and the Kingdom Seneschal and Exchequer. The Edmonton equestrian center was no longer available for the September Crown dates, but the team had located Haymaker Arena in Thornsby, Alberta, as an alternative. The new site is a flat area with short grass, about 40 minutes from the airport and the nearest city (Leduc). There are 80 permanent stalls, one indoor and one outdoor arena, as well as additional space that can be used for camping and activities. This site would allow archery, has power for RV's, and a few flush toilets. Stall rentals would now be $20 each. Attendance and income were projected to be the same, but costs reduced to $6644, thus increasing the profit to $3856.
- On 9/24/12 Kingdom Equestrian Deputy, Dame Macha the Determined, wrote Curia Clerk Maestra Althaia filia Lazari to say she had discussed the Avacal bid with Don Robert of Clan Gunn, and they were both confident there would be safe and experienced rental horses available at a cost equivalent or less than transporting a horse across the border. They could work together to get all of the arrangements made and the information shared with the equestrian community. Dame Macha suggested the competition be on Sunday to allow for extra practice time with unfamiliar horses. She was enthusiastic about the idea of holding the championship on Canadian territory, as they traditionally have to travel long distances to American events.

- Final Decision -- After reviewing the revised bids and other information in the month following September Crown, Their Majesties decided that September Crown 2013 will be held at Nix Ranch in Chehalis, WA, as proposed by the Shire of Fire Mountain Keep.

Arts & Sciences and Bardic Championship on March 7-9, 2014 -- Barony of Stromgard.

- Event Steward Sir Edward Ean Anderson [ed.carthell (at) Weyerhaeuser.com]
- Dates: In the initial negotiations the Barony said the first weekend in March, thinking Friday 2/28/14 through Sunday 3/2/14. The hotel understood this to be the March 7-9. Unfortunately by the time the error was detected the hotel had already accepted another contract for the 2/28 weekend. Thus the event will need to be March 7-9. Variances like this have been granted before.
- Location: Heathman Lodge in Vancouver, WA. It has the appearance of a German hunting lodge. http://www.heathmanlodge.com/
    - The bid packet has a map of the room arrangements. We will reach the maximum capacity of their public spaces, but should not exceed this.
    - The hotel is 15 minutes from the airport and provides a shuttle for guests. The Vancouver mall with shops and restaurants is 2 blocks away.
    - Room rates are $95 a night for double occupancy, with $10 for additional guests. Parking is free.
    - The hotel will provide 2 suites at the same rate as a regular room: One for Their Majesties and one to use as a hospitality area.
    - A fight practice could take place in the parking lot. The Barony will check about setting up a tent to provide some shelter for the participants.
    - Seneschal Brighid Ross states that arrangements will need to be made for a social area in the evenings in the meeting room section of the hotel, not the sleeping rooms, to avoid disturbing other guests. Sir Edward says this should not be a problem.
- Financial:
    - Attendance is projected to be 300 adults, plus 40 children (given the additional activities planned for them). Also 20 merchants.
    - Facility rental would be $2500, but this would be reduced based on the number of room nights reserved. It could be as low as $1500 with 150 nights. The superb reference a past A&S hotel in Silverdale provided helped greatly in these negotiations.
    - Tentative income would be $4950. Expenses $3443. Profit $1507.
- Decision -- BID ACCEPTED