

A Checklist for Autocrats

(A SCA newsletter article written by Zubeydah Jamilla al-Badawiyah, 2004.)

* Do you have a Waterbearer in Charge?

Yes: Excellent.

No: Well, that's not so good. If you have a Chirurgeon In Charge, they may be able to assist you in arranging a waterbearer for you, or you can arrange for one on your own, or you can contact the Regional or Kingdom Waterbearer for help. The Waterbearer In Charge will work under and with the Chirurgeon in Charge, and they can then can arrange for additional staffing needs.

* Does my site have running, drinkable water?

Yes: You've just gotten past a huge hurdle. How close is the water source to the areas where there will be combat or organized activities? Are there multiple sources? Your waterbearer needs to know this in advance of the event. It's best to place your field as close as possible to the water source, to save time and energy better spent on providing the water, rather than toting it.

No: Let all attendees know this in event flyers and notifications. Contact your Chirurgeon and Waterbearer (C&W) specifically, and ensure they are aware of this. The quantity of water they will need to bring will fluctuate based on the activities planned for the event. Your local group may have supplies of coolers and other containers for water. This is extremely urgent information.

* Does my event have a budget line item for Waterbearing?

Yes: Darn, you're good!

No: Please reconsider. Would you assume that your Feast Steward handle the cost of the meals being served out of pocket? While it's on a smaller scale, there are many things that are needed to provide good waterbearing service. This falls under the adage that an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. Waterbearing doesn't cost a lot, and can make or break the experience of an event for participants. No idea what to budget for? Talk to your C&W. At minimum, certain supplies are needed, and may need to be purchased if your group does not have them available. (The list below is not all-inclusive by any means, but is simply an indicator of the types of things you will need to budget for.)

- ◆ 5 gallon water coolers – usually a minimum of three. One for Gatorade, one for iced water, and one for un-chilled water.
- ◆ Water dispensing containers with non-contract ‘straws’ or squeeze/squirt top bottles
- ◆ Cooler chest for spoilable items & ice
- ◆ Long spoons for stirring up drink mix, trash bags for cleanup of area
- ◆ Gatorade or Sports drink mix – a bare minimum of two containers, should not be flavors that are clear or red in color to avoid confusion with water or blood.
- ◆ Extras: pickles, olives, carrots, celery, cherry or grape tomatoes, fighter biscuits, etc., dishes, cutlery, cutting boards, etc for preparation of these items.
- ◆ Hand sanitizer.

* Does my event plan include space for waterbearing?

- **Yes:** Wow, you're 4 for 4!
- **No:** All too often, waterbearing is an afterthought when it comes to space planning. There's a cooler chest plopped on one end of the list mistress's table, and that's about it. But food preparation, vital sanitation, and efficient work flow at the WB station really requires more than 3 square feet of space at the end of a crowded table. Please consider setting aside an entire tent for the use of your W&C, as well as planning for at least large table, ideally more, and a chair or two. It needs to have clear egress to the list fields, and near a source of potable water. If it is also being used by the Chirurgeonate, it would be useful to have a cot available at the station.

Other things your Waterbearer In Charge needs to know / needs to plan for:

- How many fields of combat will be going on simultaneously? This includes archery, KAS, light and heavy weapons. How many individuals (estimated) will be participating?
- If the event is of unusual (500+ people) size, will you have a golf cart and/or walkie-talkies available for your waterbearers & surgeons to utilize? Their job is to safeguard the well being of your attendees, and second to the autocrat themselves, they need access to communication and transportation.

Addendum: This document was written prior to the disbanding of all Kingdom-Sponsored Waterbearing Guilds by the SCA Board of Directors. While the majority of it still holds true from an organizational standpoint, but it does refer to some of the guidelines that were in place in the Kingdom of Ansteorra at the time of its writing in 2004.