

'It's somewhere where chivalry and honor are valued... where one's word is important.'

— Catherine Faber

Conrad Hodson, and Reginleif the Unruly, a.k.a. Margaret Weller.

The barony will host a tournament, during Labor Day Weekend, known as the "Egil Skallagrimson Memorial Tournament", or simply as "Egil's." Named after a legendary Norse warrior and wizard, it will feature a number of contests with prizes and a tournament of fighters battling for the grand prize (either a silver-inlaid ax head or a Viking treasure-style chest). Not surprisingly, the focus of the event is on "Norse and Neighbors," which means Northern European cultures; but all are welcome.

Battle, however, is only a small part of the society. Feasts and revels, which are medieval parties, are common, particularly during fall and winter. There also are guilds within the society. These include costumers, lace-makers, metalworkers, brewers and scribes who practice calligraphy.

The Kingdom of An Tir sponsors the "University of Ithra," a series of classes on medieval arts offered at various colleges and universities. As Mark Johnson, a.k.a. Sir Berek Von Langental, says, "If we're going to play the game, we want to know how to do the game well."

Interestingly enough, many of

the SCA's members work in high-technology fields, says Allison Kondo (a.k.a. Kareena de Falco), head of the Corvallis, or Coeur du Val, Costumers Guild. "We have to make almost everything ourselves," Kondo says. "It's a total break from the modern world."

Elizabeth Mead, a University music history major known to fellow SCA'ers as Elizabeth Piper, views the SCA as a place to learn more about her field while simultaneously having fun. She considers the reenactment of events in the society to be far more interesting than other sources of information. "It's a great alternative to museum study," she remarks.

"It has almost as many meanings as there are people playing," Faber says of the society. She adds that to her it is a romantic recreation of a time when certain values were the rule rather than the exception. "It's somewhere where chivalry and honor are valued... where one's word is important," she says. "It's also lots of fun!"

Membership is not required to participate in the SCA — all you have to do is show up in the appropriate garb and behave accordingly.



Photos by Carl Kokensparger

On Saturdays when there are no tournaments at hand you often can see the warriors battling at fighter practice. When it doesn't rain, Hendricks Park is the battle zone; on rainy days the Washington Street Bridge resounds with the booms of their (padded) swords and shields.

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The warriors close in. One bears a five-foot greatsword in both gauntleted hands, the other bears a shield and mace. After a few experimental thrusts, the swordsman suddenly snaps his large blade down, a hollow boom resounding as the sword catches

on the kite-shaped shield. The mace wielder leaps in close, but the swordsman is quick and able to avoid the flailing mace as he struggles to force the other back to a distance where his cumbersome weapon will prove effective. Suddenly the swordsman is on his knees, his feet swept out from under him by the mace.

Another "Boom!" but this time muffled, and the swordsman says, "I'll take that."

He shrugs, then crumples dramatically to the ground.

The man with the mace extends a steel-clad hand and helps him to his feet.

— FINN JOHN

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