

# Warriors clash in battle for honor, glory, fun

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Staff Writer

The sounds of sword on shield fill the air as the two armies clash on the battlefield. Archers, barbarians, fighting monks and mystical druids join in battle armed with swords, axes, pole-arms and their wits. As the dust settles, a victor is left standing and a new champion is crowned.

No, it's not the opening sequence to *Gladiator*. It's an Amtgard battle game. Amtgard is a non-profit organization that provides a safe environment to practice medieval warfare and Live Action Role-Playing (LARP).

"We like to call ourselves a medieval reenactment society," said former Clackamas student Casey Skoog, who is the Baroness of the local holding of Amtgard, 'Sapphire Shores'.

Members of Amtgard assume a persona or character that they act out during meetings. Skoog's main persona's name is Caliegh. Amtgard gatherings consist of various events including tailoring, poetry, theatrics, and of course sword fighting.

"Being able to hit each other with padded swords is a plus," said Clackamas student Justin Orzechowski, or "Orgy," in his Amtgard persona. "You definitely learn the art of sword fighting."

Weapons in Amtgard are commonly referred to as boffer weapons, due to the padding put on during construction. The padding protects participants from injury to eyes and body.

Amtgard is open to the public and people from all walks of life are welcome.

"Anyone can go," explained Caliegh. "College students, high school teachers-- we've even had a minister attend before."

Amtgard refrains from "mundane discrimination" according to Caliegh.

"Even if you're the lowest man on the totem pole in real life, you

can be a king in Amtgard," expanded Orgy.

Having little to no out of pocket cost makes Amtgard even more open to all walks of life.

"If you just want to play, it doesn't cost anything," informed Caliegh. "Dues-paying members can vote on official business concerning the kingdom and holding."

Amtgard is also involved in the community.

"We help the community by taking care of Gladstone/Oregon City parks," said Orgy.

Amtgard teamed up with the Marines last Christmas to help with the Toys for Tots toy drive and assisted the American Heart Association in previous fundraisers.

Sapphire Shores is part of the Kingdom of the Valley of the Silver Rains, which has holdings in SW Washington, NW Oregon and Montana. There are a total of ten kingdoms across the U.S. with holdings all over the world, including Croatia, Germany and Russia. The original Kingdom, Burning Lands, was founded in El Paso Texas in 1983.

Sapphire Shores meets at Meldrum Bar Park Saturdays and Sundays at noon. Campouts and other events happen all summer long. For more information on Amtgard or Sapphire Shores, contact Casey Skoog at 794-0734 or visit the Amtgard web site at [www.amtgard.com](http://www.amtgard.com).



[top] Orgy fights against a Vancouver combatant in the Single Sword event. Fighters square off for battle during the Weapons Master Tournament in Vancouver, Washington. There were five events in all.



ALL PHOTOS BY JASON LINGEL

[top] Friends Duncan Gray and Sir Doomsday battle it out during the Dual Sword event.

[left] The costume is a large part of assuming the Amtgard persona. Awards are given for outstanding self-tailored costumes.



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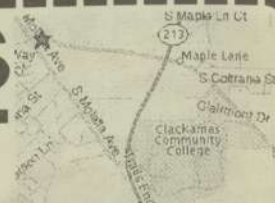
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