

Responsible Eventing

aka How you can afford it
by William de Nancy

Every event season you hear the wailing cries of, "I want to GO, but I can't afford it!" wafting through the ether. Whether that "Season" is only the summer, or all year, there are ways to get your fix without breaking the bank. This is written for SCA, Pirate, Faerie and etc groups. In the following paragraphs I will give basic advice on how to get the most out of your Season. These are my OPINIONS. Your results may vary. Etc, etc.

Point One: Pace yourself.

Yes, yes. I want to do ALL THE THINGS!, too. I can't afford it, either in time or money. Job, family, school, lack of cash and etc take away a lot of the time people want to set aside for eventing. Pick and choose what you want to do. REAL Friends will want to spend time with you and may get involved in the things that interest you. Same thing goes for family. Be prepared to have the same happen in reverse. Carpooling is your friend, too.

Point Two: Garb/Gear

By the end of a year, if you study well, you can master the art of Garage Sale Hunting, Foraging in second hand shops, scouring the Sale ads and spotting real deals on Craigslist/Ebay/etc. Get on your local SCA group's e-list or Facebook groups. There are people who leave the Game and sell their stuff cheap, where you can see it and ask questions. Also, the SCA has A&S Nights where you can get help MAKING YOUR OWN STUFF, which is seriously cheaper in upfront costs (cash) than buying it from a Vendor. I can't speak for anyone other than myself, but I appreciate a self-made object, especially if I have made something similar and KNOW what it takes to make it. Also, sharing a tent with a friend/lover/significant other means you can combine costs in some ways, like bedding/bed.

CAUTION You may develop an affliction affectionately called "SCA Disease" where you look at something, know what it takes to make it, and think "I can make that for less". Do not fall into this trap. You can, but you likely will not, unless you are seriously motivated. It is OK to buy things, if you budget for it.

Point Three: Make Friends

It seems obvious, but most people can't seem to get the point that things are easier to do with help. The people who are most willing to help are Friends with mutual interests. Who wants to sit around sewing by themselves, when they can have 2-20 friends over to help? If you turn it into a Potluck (with or without booze), you have an impromptu party with a purpose. I've seen/participated in an assembly line Party where we sewed basic tunics and trousers for 20 people in a weekend (Friday night – Sunday afternoon), with 7 people. It was fun, we got stuff done and helped a bunch of people. Again, carpooling is your friend. As is shared food/drink costs.

Point Four: Save Your Pennies

Really. Save them in a large jar, alongside the rest of the change you get. When you budget for things, round up to the nearest dollar amount and then put the change in the jar. Over the course of a year I have evented out of the penny jar, in the past. That was going to an event (Day or Camping) every other month, on average.

Point Five: Food

Food storage is a bitch at most events. Keeping large amounts of things cold can be a major

hassle. If you pre-plan your meals, you can pre-cook them as well. Cooking them at home saves time at the event, which leads more time to be with friends. It also means, on average, LESS CLEANING. It is a rare individual who says, "I LIKE to do dishes". Mixing eggs, shredded cheese, extras of your choice in a baggie means you can toss the bag in boiling water to make your meal, instead of dirtying a skillet, spatula, knife and cheese shredder. 1 pot, for multiple people, who each get a different breakfast. Mind Blown, right?

Point Six: Volunteer

An event doesn't just magically happen, despite what some people may think. The more people who volunteers, the more that gets done, the more that people have the leisure to enjoy themselves. As a former Event Steward in a couple different groups, I can say I would so much rather turn down offers of help because I have too many volunteers, than have people never want to volunteer again because they worked their asses off when we were short-staffed. Volunteers are often given discounted rates for entry, if not fully compensated (comp'd) because they help make the magic happen. Volunteers also, depending on the venue, get in early. I'd much rather set my stuff up at Hot events in the morning, the day before, so I am not rushing to get things done.

Point Seven: Do Your Research

There is nothing the people of an event, both staff, volunteers and attendees hate more than some jackhole sniping about something post event, when they have no part of a clue about why something is done the way it is done. There is very likely a well thought out plan that complies with insurance/site/state/local laws in place to keep you safe and the event running. ASK in polite terms why something is done X way, instead of Y. You might learn something or a new way of doing something may be adopted.

Point Eight: Policing Ourselves

This point pertains to things like not being a slob and trashing your area, letting someone make rash decisions whether we know them or not, not leaving valuables out where people can walk away with them. The more a site likes us, the less they may charge, which brings down event costs, which can be passed on to the consumer (YOU).

In the SCA, the motto is, "Leave it better than we found it". That is something other groups should embrace. Why? Because venues will want us back every year, or multiple times a year, if we not destroying their area. The boost in income for a town when we event there is measurable, especially during camping season.

If you see someone making passes at someone you know is underage, let them know. Many young men/women these days look 21+ and can be as young as 12. (Saw it. Carded it. Passed it by) If someone is inebriated and says something like, "I'd going to play with (insert dangerous activity/object)", offer them another drink and tell them a story. They might sit down and forget the idiotic thought they had, and you might have save their life.

Bring a tote/box/etc that is lockable. It can be a wooden box or crate with a hasp lock or locking strap, a footlocker with a spot for a lock or whatever, but have a place to store valuables, out of sight, so people are not tempted to steal. Camp furniture, 'mood' pieces or the like are easier to replace than your cellphone, laptop, wallet or the like. If you have the option to lock your tent, awesome. DO IT.