You Want to Help Out

(but you don't know where to start)

by Kristina Kelly

Many people, whether they have just joined the SCA or have been in for a while, often say "I'd like to help but I don't know what to do?" This question sometimes goes unanswered because the autocrat is too busy or the person is sent to a sign up sheet.

In my experience if you really would like to help out, be specific with what you would like to do. This is a way of showing the hosting group what you are willing to do and grabs their attention better than the general statement "I want to help."

The following is a list of things you could volunteer to do at an event. If you are new to the SCA it would be better for you to start out with the easier jobs, like serving feast, than volunteering to do troll if you have never done it before.

Friday

❧ A lot of events have soup kitchens on Fridays. Offer to help serve.

❧ Offer to check the bathrooms for toilet paper.

❧ Lots of parks require that the gate be kept closed except to let the campers in. Offer to stand security at the gate (this is usually done in pairs).

❧ Can't sleep? Offer to keep the troll company. If you have never worked troll this is a good chance for you to learn how it is done.

Saturday

❧ Learn to be a herald. Help with wake up calls or announce classes, time etc.

❧ Be a water bearer–there never seems to be enough. Please make sure the marshals get water too!

❧ Volunteer to do another toilet paper check.

❧ Work security. At larger events units of two to three people patrol the site maintaining its security, checking for unattended fires or flames, conspicuous mundanes, enforcing quiet hours, etc. I have met a lot of really interesting people working security and it is a lot of fun.

❧ Work the parking lot–sometimes people have a hard time parking correctly.

❧ Help set up for court–there are tents, thrones, stools, tables and other things that need to be set up.

❧ Serve feast.

❧ Wash dishes–not very glamorous but it is a service greatly appreciated.

❧ Sweep the hall for the dancing.

❧ Are you a pyromaniac? Offer to build the bonfire for the bardic circle.

Sunday

❧ Help clean up the site. This involves checking the cabins, campgrounds, trash pick up and so on.

❧ Write a letter to the Crown about the people you saw working at the event.

So the next time you get bored at an event help out. Walk up to the sign up sheet and volunteer your time. Helping others and lightning their load makes everyone happier.

Kristina Kelly is a youth care specialist at an adolescent chemical dependency unit, and a full-time student in public relations. Her favorite PR job is finding new SCA members. **Rosalind O'Maughan** (AoA, Meridian Cross, Silent Steward of Shire Eagle) is a sixteenth-century Irish woman who is married to an Irish Kern. To escape the English churls, they moved to Meridies, where she has discovered Middle Eastern dance, to her husband's delight.