

July Coronation 2006 Event Report Part 2

What Challenges did you face with this event

1. The site space is tight for a crown event - not unreasonably so, but it did have to be closely managed.
2. The on-site steward and the park steward are 2 different people who do not communicate with each other to any reasonable degree.
3. The parking lot for the park is managed separately from the park itself - which was not communicated to me by anyone associated with the company managing the park. I had written guarantees that the parking lot was reserved for our event months before the event date. I discovered the park steward and his boss do not have the authority to give that guarantee. We lost half of our outer parking lot to a motorcycle class. I was notified of this as I was <literally> driving to site for set up.
4. The on-site steward was treated very rudely twice by groups of SCAers while he was cleaning the bathrooms. To be clear, he was fixing a full, clogged toilet when people started harassing him. Having an on-site steward for one of the few large sites in our area harassed while he is cleaning up after us is unacceptable behavior.
5. It is unclear what precisely kingdom officers will do in association with the event even after repeated requests for information. There appeared to be an assumption that autocrats should know what each officer currently in the position will and will not do at a kingdom event. This occurred even after contacting each officer months prior to the event and striving for clarity.
6. I rented 2 gators to assist with moving peoples gear from parking to their campsites. Only one of the gators worked consistently. The other died after an hour. A second working gator would have moved a lot more gear to/from people's campsites quickly.

How would you avoid these challenges

1. The camp master and merchant coordinator worked closely together to manage the space for all the large camping groups.
2. Every time I got a piece of information from either steward, I called the other person and verified every point. The park steward also responded to email and I verified as much as possible with him through email so I could print out what he had agreed to. I had phone numbers for each person programmed into my phone and used them regularly leading up to and during the event.
3. This is an internal corporate issue at PGE. Track down the agency that manages the scheduling of the parking lot. Neither the site steward nor the park steward was forthcoming with this information. It will have to be tracked down some other way.
4. I don't have a good answer for preventing this circumstance. I was more than a little surprised it happened at all.
5. Explicit guidelines of what each officer is responsible for specifically at crown events. I've spoken to the kingdom seneschal and I'm working on a guide for kingdom event stewards to more clearly define what each office needs, expects and is responsible for on the ground at events.

6. This isn't something that can be reasonably planned for. I had the company come out to the site to repair the gator on Saturday. That gator died again Sunday morning. I called the company that morning and got a full refund for that gator.

What worked well at this event

- The volunteers were exceptional. They took initiative to fix things when they could and kept me informed. When they didn't see an immediate answer, they sought me out.
- Having the Virgin Countess Inn feed the staff throughout the weekend was invaluable
- Tight management of the camping area was the only way we got that many people into the central space.
- Having the gators available to move gear cut down on the 'no driving on the grass' complaints.
- Getting permission from the site for the merchants to drive on the grass to unload their shops before the general site opened.

What would you do differently

- Announce in court the location of the dumpster. It was in site copy, the morning town cry and visible from all the main camping areas, but that was clearly not sufficient.
- Get the baronial radios from the storage unit a full month before the event so I can verify that they work in sufficient numbers.

Notes on the site

- There are 2 flushing toilet facilities on site; however, they run on a local septic system that is not overly robust. Order enough BIFs to cover the total number of people/usages on site so there isn't a problem if the Bathrooms need to be closed.
- The ability to drive on the grass is problematic at this site. It's dependant on the weather and the decisions of the site steward and/or the park steward. If the weather has been recently wet (the weeks just prior to the event date), we cannot drive on the grass. This causes some complexity in planning.
- There are a lot of mosquitoes on the site. Encourage people to bring bug spray.

Suggestions for next time

- Have all the garbage cans except those in the bathrooms removed before the event. The mess caused by people overloading the garbage cans and being unwilling to use the nearby dumpster was appalling.