Names in the Proposed Rules for Submissions

A Preliminary Note: this handout covers the rules for names under the proposed Rules for Submissions; these Rules will not take effect until and unless the Board of Directors approves them.

Introduction

The proposed Rules are available for anyone to read at: http://heraldry.sca.org/laurel/regs.html

They are built around three important ideas:

- These are the standards that Laurel, Wreath, and Pelican use to evaluate submissions.
- Most people interact with the Rules when they are working on a specific submission
- Appendices are awesome

The Rules are not the be-all, end-all of how to create medieval names, so there are other resources:

- Name articles on the Laurel website: http://heraldry.sca.org/laurel/names.html
  Check here first! Articles here are "no photocopy".
- The Academy of St. Gabriel: http://www.s-gabriel.org/names/
  Some items here are duplicated on the Laurel website. Articles here are **not** "no photocopy".
- The Cover Letter for the April 2009 LoAR, about summarizing name documentation:
  http://heraldry.sca.org/loar/2004/09/04-09cl.html

Some Big Categories

Names in the SCA can be broadly divided into two big categories:

- personal names, which are for a single human being
- non-personal names, which are "everything else" and come in four kinds: branch names, household names, awards/orders, and herald's titles

For each of these categories (and armory!), the Rules for Submissions break the standards down:

- Content, the parts that make up names
- Style, how the names are put together
- Conflict, being too close to other names (and you can get permission for)
- Presumption and Offence, making claims that nobody gets to make or are offensive

Several appendices exist to help apply these rules:

- **Appendix A**: Information on name style for many different cultures
- **Appendix B**: Background information on the types of bynames
- **Appendix C**: A listing of the languages in each Regional Group and which Regional Groups they can be combined with
- **Appendix D**: Information on handling non-Latin characters
- **Appendix E**: Information on designators for non-personal names

Personal Names Content and Style

A personal name must be made up of two "name phrases" – a given name and some kind of byname. Some names consist of multiple words, like atte Wode, which is why we use "name phrase". A name phrase must be generally consistent with a single time and place, which means all in one language context. That generally means it is one or more of:

- a complete name phrase that is attested in period
- a complete name phrase constructed from attested pieces
- a translation into modern English of an attested or constructed period name phrase
- follows a pattern of borrowing literary or religious names
- a name phrase in the submitter's legal name
- a currently registered branch name
- eligible for the grandfather clause

The entire name as a whole must fit our standards for overall construction, which means it does all of several things:

- each name phrase matches a period pattern for its grammar and location in the name
- all elements are from in a single regional naming group and within 500 years
  OR all elements are from two compatible regional naming groups and within 300 years
- the name is not "obtrusively modern" – unavoidably dragging us back to the modern world

Regional naming groups are new in these rules – they attempt to simplify the many precedents on which languages can be mixed in a name. For example, the Iberian naming group includes Spanish, Catalan, Portuguese, Basque, and Visigothic, and it is compatible with Arabic, French, and Italian naming groups.

Personal Names Conflict

- It must not be too similar in sound or appearance: in general, differences to any two syllables or a substantial difference to one syllable in a word that is not an article or preposition is sufficient
- It must not claim unmistakably to be the parent, child, or spouse of a protected person
- Either of these can be allowed with written signed permission to conflict with the owner

Personal Names Presumption and Offense

Personal names may not:

- Claim a rank that we protect which the submitter does not possess permanently
- Make an unmistakable claim to be a member of an important family
- Make other claims to rank
- Make a claim to have superhuman or magical powers or imply divine origin
- Claim identity or a relationship with non-SCA individuals who we consider important enough to protect; same standards as for conflict
- Be offensive to a modern audience; the standards are quite high

Non-personal Names Content and Style

A non-personal name must be made up of two parts: designators and substantive elements.

The designator says what kind of name it is and must match it in type. Most non-personal names have standard designators (like Barony, Order, Pursuivant), but some need to be documented.

The substantive element says which one it is. It must be consistent with a single time and place, which means all in one language context. This generally means that it is one (or more) of:
- a complete substantive element attested in period
- a complete substantive element from attested pieces
- a translation into modern English of an attested or constructed period name phrase
- follows a pattern of borrowing literary or religious names
- a name phrase in the submitter's legal name
- contains a currently registered branch name
- eligible for the grandfather clause (branches get some special allowances)

A non-personal name must as a whole be consistent with a single time and place that names of that type were used. Non-personal names may not be "obtrusively modern" – unavoidably drag us back to the modern world.

Non-Personal Names Conflict

- The substantive elements must not be too similar in sound or appearance: in general, differences to two syllables or substantial differences to one syllable in a word that is not an article, a preposition, or a conjunction is sufficient
- It must not unmistakably claim to belong to or be affiliated with any name we protect
- Either of these can be allowed with written signed permission to conflict with the owner. A change to the designator is sufficient in this case, except:
    - Two branch names that only differ by designator
    - Award names, order names, and heraldic titles that only differ by designator

Non-Personal Names Presumption and Offense

Non-personal names may not:
- Claim a rank that we protect which the submitter does not possess permanently
- Use the names of peerage orders or important mundane knightly orders in certain ways
- Use elements that would be presumptuous for individuals
- Make a claim to have superhuman or magical powers or imply divine origin
  Note: an entity may be named for a saint or deity without making such a claim
- Claim identity or be affiliated with non-SCA individuals who we consider important enough to protect; same standards as for conflict
- Be offensive to a modern audience; the standards are quite high