

Majesties, Highnesses, fellow citizens of Ponte Alto,

We, the Lady Symone de la Rochelle, Provost of the Academie d'Espee and Sir Joselin d'outremer, OL, send you greetings and notice of our wish and intent to be considered for Baron and Baroness of Ponte Alto, our shared home.

We are looking to do this because the Society deserves good stewardship, especially in challenging times. People interested in history, arts, and combat have many choices available to them: historical re-enactment, Steampunk, cosplay, LARP, online communities. If people want to swing a sword, dress like a Landsknecht, or spin wool, there are a lot of places they can do that. The SCA is special. It asks us to become our better selves, to support others, and to share the work of creating a safe, diverse space that fosters personal growth. The SCA has helped us grow into better people than we would have been without it, and we will work to ensure that Ponte Alto and this Kingdom can continue to influence people for good.

We want to help the Barony become a place where people with different interests can play together and learn from one another. It is our hope that we can have regular practices or work nights in which armored, rapier, and A & S can all do their thing in the same location. Some of the most successful recruiting in Atlantia is happening as a result of just such places. Making newcomers feel welcome and helping them find their passion(s) in the Society is significantly easier when they can see lots of people doing different cool things at the same time.

The SCA can be a divisive place sometimes. Especially here in the greater DC area, members of the Society not only have a broad range of interests, but also represent the full political spectrum. One of the great things about the SCA is its ability to attract this diversity, and we're fortunate to have made friends with people far outside of our normal workday orbits. Indeed, we consider it one of the most special aspects of the SCA – not just the ability to find friends who are like you, but to make friends with people who in many ways are NOT like you. Electronic communication can make polite discourse among such a diverse group especially challenging; in fact, it can make it an uphill climb. We commit to all of you that we will do everything in our power to foster diversity and a culture of civility in the Barony and the Kingdom.

So how will we do this, grow membership, encourage people? We bring substantial leadership skills to the role. Both of us have real-world jobs as managers and leaders of diverse populations, and have (and continue to) actively train(ed) for leadership positions. Perhaps a little to our surprise, we're good at it—we move people, make things happen, resolve crises on a weekly basis. We're also accustomed to leadership in the SCA, Rochelle as a Provost and Jos in Kingdom-level Deputy Earl Marshal positions, as an order principal, and a Peer. We train fighters, advise artisans, teach about concussion. You've seen us lead on the field, rallying troops, inspiring them, caring for their needs.

We also bring long and broad experience in the SCA. We're active members of the artistic, armored, and rapier communities, and pledge ourselves to learning and promoting those areas

in which we've not played in the past, such as archery, thrown weapons, and equestrian. We understand the importance of recognizing the dedication and talent of the Barony's citizens, both at the local and Kingdom level, and will do all within our power to showcase people's good works.

We'll always be honest and transparent with all of you—so strange as it may seem, here is where we provide you with some background that might make you decide we're not a good fit for the Baronage. We both have intense, time-consuming real-world jobs, and Symone has mentees/students in that job to whom she has a primary responsibility (even at off-hours). We will be 100-percent committed to this Barony and will take the job seriously, but sometimes we both may not be able to attend a specific event or meeting. Sometimes neither of us will be able to go, particularly to events more than four hours from Northern Virginia—we just can't always get the time off. We expect that the fact that we are experienced, thorough planners will help mitigate any issues that might arise. Second, we are still growing ourselves in the SCA, and while we devote time to the Barony, we also will be devoting time to becoming better fighters and artisans. We plan on fighting in Crown on a regular basis. If we win, we'll listen to what all of you have to say and come up with a plan that ensures what's best for the Barony. Third, we won't be camping with the Barony at Pennsic. We have an established camp with long-time friends, and we can't give that up. We will commit to helping organize the baronial camp, whether through finding a Camp Steward or some other mechanism, and we will commit to being present and being available, even if we are not sleeping there.

As you can tell, the decision to write this Letter of Intent is not one we have made lightly. We care deeply about the Society and the good people of this Barony. We feel it's time that we offer our talents and skills and labor to help it thrive.