

Hanseatic League Statement of Purpose and Code of Conduct

Voss Kontor

The Hanseatic League is a historical reenactment group, portraying a merchant caravan operating out of the Bergen Kontor (offices), the Scandinavian hub of the world's first and largest merchants guild. As a group, we attempt to portray a plausible portrayal of life in a merchant caravan during the scope of the Hanseatic league (11th century to 17th century) but primarily focus on the 16th century. The pursuit of our passion takes us to Renaissance Festivals, local pub sings, and various reenactment and social events, where we portray characters and perform duties common to our occupation and the time period. By replicating such activities as weaving, spinning, blacksmithing, cooking, needlework and other such duties, we hope to learn and grow as individuals and historians, to entertain, and to perhaps spread a little knowledge among those who come into contact with us.

In order to maintain cohesion and clarity among vastly disparate individuals, the Hanseatic League sets forth an explanation of our strict, yet mutable structure of responsibility, obligation and rights. Please read through this document and, if you are agreed to our laws and framework, sign at the appropriate point.

❖ Structure

The Hanseatic League is run by its Founder (and president), John Carlsen and his Advisory Council, comprised of all Hansgrafs, the Vice-President, Treasurer, and Scribe.

President~ This position is responsible for the day to day running of the group and ultimate decisions. The president will present ideas for vote whenever possible. The president is the sole point of contact for faire or other outside agencies, unless another is appointed by him for that role. This position is also custodian of Hanseatic League property, is solely authorized to enter into agreements with outside agencies for the group, approves or vetoes proposals, and supervises the sponsorship program. This position is FOR LIFE or until such a time as the president chooses to retire.

Hansgraf - The Hansgraf position has all the duties and responsibilities of the president in relation to their particular local chapter. Hansgrafs also have a voice in Advisory Council. This position is FOR LIFE or until such a time as the hansgraf chooses to retire.

Vice-President ~ This elected position will assume responsibilities of the Presidency if the President is unable to perform them including running group meetings. Also, the VP is 'Camp Boss' at faire, organizing duty rosters, seeing to smooth operation and running of camp. Further, the vice-president facilitates the constant flow of communication between management and the rest of group during faire season. This position will be elected by a simple majority vote every three years or at any such time as is necessary due to resignation or retirement.

Treasurer: The Treasurer handles all funds, collects dues, makes bank deposits, and maintains the checking account. Further, the treasurer advises the Council and the President on financial matters related to group and prepares annual financial report. This position will be elected by a simple majority vote every three years or at any such time as is necessary due to resignation or retirement.

Scribe: The Scribe is in charge of communications. This position handles notes of the meetings, written communications, off-season contact with group, phone calls, general updates, and basic secretarial duties. This position will be elected by a simple majority vote every three years or at any such time as is necessary due to resignation or retirement.

Voting council: The voting council is made up of full members in good standing. Sponserees have the right to attend voting sessions, but cannot vote themselves.

❖ **Code of Conduct**

All members have the obligation to conduct themselves in a mature and responsible fashion, taking seriously several points that we, as the Hanseatic League, will enforce with great stringency.

All members of the Hanseatic League are expected to keep their 'relations' and social interactions no more racy than PG-13, at least in public. We flirt, we joke, we make innuendos...but remember, we are in the patron's eye, and there are minors in camp. Keep it clean.

Any member removed by faire security for intoxication or drug use, fighting or other unacceptable behavior will be barred from further participation in the faire for the remainder of the season, and will have their membership reviewed by the Council and the rest of the full membership.

Every member of the Hanseatic League is charged with treating each other with respect and dignity. We may not always agree with each other, or see eye to eye, but courtesy to each other is mandatory. This includes patrons and other faire personnel. We may be heavily tried on occasion, and the impulse may be to respond to a situation with sarcastic wit and humor, but remember that we are here to inform, instruct and entertain, not demean.

❖ **Management Rights and Responsibilities**

The Council and any other appointed 'management' is charged with ensuring safe and enjoyable atmosphere for our members and visiting patrons. Management is also obligated to ensure compliance with rules, regulations of various organizations we are associated with, and organize events; to hold themselves to a standard of behavior considered exemplary, maintain their cool even when others are losing their heads, and to treat each individual with fairness and dignity.

❖ **Member Rights and Responsibilities**

Must attend at least six meetings a year, and contribute to projects for the group. Meetings are held once a month, at such a time as will be determined by the group, and usually entail a work detail combined with a sit down meeting to discuss concerns, upcoming events, and ideas for improvement. Additional gatherings will take place to complete projects as needed. These projects usually involve building or repairing items for general encampment use or improvement. Members are expected to participate and aid in project completion. Meeting times and locations are announced well in advance, and we attempt to accommodate the needs of all our members.

The Hanseatic League is a dues paying club. Each member is responsible for paying his or her dues each month. A balloon payment for the entire year is allowed at the beginning of the fiscal year. Each member is also responsible for his or her camping fees if applicable. (See Fiscal Matters for more information on dues, payments and accountability.)

Each member of the group is agreed to assume certain responsibilities and duties during the period of their membership. Parts of these responsibilities include a mandatory stay of at least 3 hours per day within the camp walls, interacting with patrons and/or other camp members; taking part in the chores and tasks associated with the camp's smooth operation; aiding in encampment set up and take down at faire. (see Setup/Take down for more info)

❖ **Children & Parental Responsibilities**

- Upon reaching the age of thirteen, children will be obligated to accept duties and work details within the encampment. Children under 13 are not allowed in the firepit at any time. No exceptions. Children under 16 are not to carry live steel, and members between 16 and 18 must have their weapons peace-tied at all times. Acceptable peace ties are nylon zip-ties. Broken or altered Zip ties will result in loss of weapons privilege. Children under 16 may not train with live steel. Under 18 must use protective equipment (such as a facemask) when training with live steel.

- Parents are required to provide supervision for their minor children at all times. Per Hanseatic Policy, children under the age of 15 are not permitted to leave the encampment without an adult escort. However, we do not intend to infringe on the rights of a parent in deciding when a child is mature enough to exercise his or her independence. We will take the wishes of the parent and the demonstrated character of each individual child into consideration when approving liberty. Members 15 and over may walk about faire freely, and, with the approval of parents, may provide escort for other, younger, children. This is not to be considered a babysitting service, merely a courtesy that may be extended for brief periods of time.

- Backstage camping and parking areas are off limits to unescorted minors. Any minor who causes a disturbance or commits a gross breach of faire or Hanseatic rules will be restricted to the confines of the encampment for the duration of faire.

❖ Spouses/ Significant Others

Joining the Hanseatic League does not confer special privilege upon a member's spouse or significant other. Spouses or SOs wishing to stay after hours at faire must apply for a pass from the faire office via the President of the club prior to start of faire. Members who wish to share the camping experience with a SO or a spouse may do so with restrictions. At our home faire, FLARF, non-member camping may take place on either the three day weekend (President's Day weekend) OR any two individual nights throughout the run of faire. The member is responsible for covering the cost of foods as well as camping fees for their guest. As with most situations however, we realize that every situation is different, and are willing to review each case on it's own merits. Members are responsible for the conduct of their Spouse or Significant Other. Any Spouse or Significant Other enjoying the succor of our encampment MUST follow the same rules and guidelines laid out in this document, as well as all rules imposed by the Faire office. Failure to do so will result in the termination of their welcome in our perimeter, and revocation of any and all passes granted them by the Hanseatic League.

❖ Guest Policy

Extending the comfort of the encampment for lengthy periods of time is a privilege reserved only for full members of the group. The host member is responsible for the conduct of their guest, including ensuring compliance with all Hanseatic and faire guidelines and rules. Only guests with proper authorization may enter through the participant's entrance. Bringing guests through the participant's entrance to avoid paying for a ticket is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Patron guests must be off faire grounds by close of faire, unless granted dispensation by faire office via President of the Hanseatic League. Participant guests must be off faire grounds by 11pm unless they hold their own camping pass. Members are required to escort their guests off faire grounds at the end of their visit.

❖ Camp Law

- 1) Membership is maintained by regular, up to date payment of dues as well as attending a minimum of six meetings a year. Attending project meetings is strongly recommended, and aids in building individual pride in the group.
- 2) Our purpose is to portray a working merchant caravan of the 16th century or other time period as may be appropriate at the event. To this end we must ban the display, use, or intrusion of any anachronisms while at faire. Unless you are attending as a ticket-toting patron, please leave behind or mute all cell phones, beepers, sunglasses or modern smoking paraphernalia. Smoking should be done out of the public eye, in the green area or backstage. Clothing should be in accordance with faire policy, with some leeway granted for creativity and fun. This is faire, after all. Any items required medically, such as eyeglasses or inhalers are permitted, but do try to mask the intrusion as much as possible.
- 3) The Hanseatic League does not condone the use of illegal drugs. Any person found in possession of illegal drugs will be turned over to the appropriate authorities. No member of the Hanseatic League

is to be found inebriated at any time during faire hours, unless they have purchased a ticket and are attending as a patron.

- 3) Hanseatic League members are not to handle security issues themselves. Try and contact one of the group officers unless it's an issue involving personal safety or property. In that case, go directly to either faire or camp security for any problems requiring assistance. Camp security officers are posted in the green area.
- 4) Hanseatic League members are expected to sign in to the camp attendance roster. If found on site without having signed in, and without having purchased a ticket at the gate, the offender will face possible suspension of privileges.
- 5) Every member, be they probationary or full members, MUST spend no less than three hours a day within the camp walls, taking part in camp routine and interacting with patrons. The three hours may be broken up into parts of no less than one hour rotations, but at the end of the day, you must have spent your time in camp.
- 6) All members are expected to abide by the rules and guidelines set forth in these bylaws. If at any time faire law and camp law conflict, faire rules are the final say.

Camp Set Up/ Take Down

All members participating in faire are required to aid in general encampment set up, and work must be completed by Sunday evening the weekend prior to opening day. Similarly, all members participating in faire are expected to aid in tearing down our camp. (This includes both loading truck at storage site and unloading at end of faire) Transportation and set up of personal property and effects are each individual's responsibility. We must have the encampment broken down and removed from park property within three days of close of faire. Any personal items left behind, unclaimed, will be considered abandoned and will be adopted for general camp use. All trash absolutely MUST be removed and disposed of within three days of close of faire, or else the Hanseatic League will suffer a substantial fine imposed by the faire office. If for some reason a member is unable to aid in setup or tear down, they must have notified, and received clearance from, an officer of the group.

❖ Joining the Hanseatic League

Membership in the group is voluntary and a privilege. The Hanseatic League is a private organization, and is not required to accept all petitioners. New members are considered only if nominated and sponsored by a full member in good standing. Minors are not considered, unless accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or other responsible adult WITH written permission from the parent. Each new member starts out on probationary status for up to one year, the successful completion of faire season, or until a majority decision of the voting council is reached. At that point, either full member status is awarded or the individual is bid farewell. There is a one-time Membership fee of \$25, which covers the startup package.

❖ Fiscal Matters

- The Hanseatic League is a dues paying, private organization. Membership is voluntary, but the payment of dues is mandatory. Dues may be paid in one lump sum, or monthly at each meeting. The amount is set by a general vote annually, and currently rests at \$15 a month, or \$180 for the year. Children under the age of 15 are exempt from dues. 15 and over must pay the same dues as other members. This amount is subject to change at the agreement of the majority of the membership.

A special dispensation may be made for unemployed or partially employed current members, for whom the paying of dues would cause undue hardship. This dispensation is reliant on the honor system and each member's own good faith, and will be determined on a case by case basis by the Advisory Council, with all respect and consideration given to each member's privacy.

- Any monies collected or earned by the Hanseatic League will not be used for personal profit by any of the members. Any and all money collected or earned by the Hanseatic League will be used internally to better the group as a whole, by purchasing new equipment, improving upon the old, supplying adequate food budgets during faire, and funding the occasional group party.

•Financial records are available for review by any of the members upon request, allowing a reasonable period of time for production of documents. Funds are maintained in a Hanseatic League account, administered by the Treasurer. All checks must have at least two signatures from the Advisory Council. Any expenditure over \$100 must be put to a vote by the full membership. Special assessments may, at times, be required to help defray operating expenses.

•Falling behind in dues is a potentially serious breach. We require funds to be available for operation and improvement of the club. This is a continual process, and therefore the payments of dues should never be considered as optional. When a member falls behind in payment of his or her dues, that member is entered into a Financial Review. An informal inquiry is made, requesting payment. At three months past due, an official notification is given by an officer of the club, requesting at least half the past due amount within thirty days, arrangements made to catch up the balance and suspension of club privileges until such time as the matter has been resolved. If no satisfactory agreement can be reached, the matter will be given a Hearing among the members in good standing. Several outcomes are possible, up to and including expulsion from the group. PAY YOUR DUES!

❖ **Conflicts**

Conflicts within the group are always a possibility. We are each strong-willed and opinionated individuals, and we may not always get along. Physical confrontations are absolutely forbidden. Work to maintain a conversational tone in all disputes. If desired, the group may form a quorum to help arbitrate the disagreement. Any conflict that becomes disruptive to the cohesion and functioning of the group may invite Managerial intervention, with all possible outcomes considered, up to and including expulsion from the group.

❖ **Disciplinary Actions**

The Hanseatic League is a relatively low-pressure organization. You do your job, meet your obligations, and uphold the minimal standards of behavior, and there should never be any problems. However, we do reserve the right to, when occasion warrants it, mete out disciplinary actions to members who breach these guidelines. Such actions include but are not limited to: suspensions of member privileges, confinement to camp surroundings, suspension from group, and expulsion.

There is always a great deal of discussion among the management before any discipline is decided on; it's not a process we enjoy. We do try to keep any problems private, out of respect for our members. In other words, be assured that if there is an issue warranting our attention, it will be handled quietly, without the majority of the club being aware of it. Any member who feels he/ she has been judged unfairly, however, has the right to call for a full vote on the issue, and to be heard and judged by the full membership.

These rules and regulations ARE a fluid compact made between us, the Hanseatic League and you, the member. It is a living document, meaning that modifications to the guidelines (both permanent and temporary), allowances and special circumstances are considered in any situation that may arise. We want this to be a fun and fulfilling experience for each of our members, and we will work to ensure that it is so.

That's it. If you have any questions, now is the time to ask. Otherwise, sign below that you have read and understood our rules and regulations, and agree to abide by them. Welcome to the Hanseatic League!

Signature: _____

Date: _____
