

Originally published on Facebook 6/7/2018

Uncommon East Kingdom Awards: The Order of Gawain

Mistress Eloise of Coulter

And now for another scintillating episode of Uncommon East Kingdom Awards with Mistress Eloise! (Why yes - the reminder popped up.)

Today is a “new” award from 2007. The Order of Gawain.

Here is your refresher:

East Kingdom Law and Policy

IX.D

1. There are Orders of Honor in the East Kingdom, and their recipients are known as Companions of their respective Orders.
 - a. Companions of each Order of Honor will rank equally with Companions of the other Orders of Honor in the Order of Precedence.
 - b. Except as otherwise expressly stated below, scrolls for induction into Orders of Honor are optional.

Remember waaaayyy back when I wrote about the Tyger’s Cub, I said that there are other, more specific children’s awards? This is one of them. Let’s start with the law:

8. The Order of Gawain (established April 22 A.S. 41, 2007, by Gryffith and Aikaterine)
 - a. The Order of Gawain may be awarded by The Crown to honor and recognize those young people, up to and including the age of 17, who have distinguished themselves by acts of valor, honor, chivalry, courtesy, and leadership within a youth martial activity.
 - b. The Crown may, at Their discretion, request comment from the appropriate Marshalate regarding candidates for this award.
 - c. The recipient of this award is entitled to wear on the left arm a green garter charged with a gold mullet.
 - d. The Companions of this Order will be bound, insofar as they are able, to maintain and encourage the standards of the Order within the youth martial community.

This is a pretty straightforward award on the face of it – it is the martial award for children, defined as anyone who is seventeen or younger, and it is all the martial activities lumped together. The obvious parts are youth combat and youth fencing, because they have separate “youth” categories and activities. But I think most agree that it also applies to other martial activities, because remember – the other martial forms allow children to participate with the adults (Under all the appropriate adult and parental supervision, check with your local marshal to see what applies. We are not a baby-sitting service.) Archery allows children to participate (Under appropriate adult and parental supervision... just assume this line in the rest of the conversation, please,) and my daughter Charlotte, at nine, holds a royal round average. Likewise there are aspects of thrown weapons and equestrian that children can participate in.

Honestly, I’m not sure what to make of 8(b), which specifies that the Crown may consult with the appropriate marshalate. I’m sure that the idea behind it is to discover more information regarding

a given youth's comportment in the lists/on the line as is discussed below. But as it is Their Majesties prerogative to consult whomever they want on whatever they want, I'm not sure that I quite follow the purpose.

As an aside, if you have a child who thinks that events are "boring," bring them around to check out the martial activities. The SCA for kids does NOT have to just be coloring books and crafts. And we can also teach them to wash dishes...

But I digress! Notwithstanding the age of the target group, this is most definitely NOT a participation award. Note the language in IX.D.8(a): "who have distinguished themselves by acts of valor, honor, chivalry, courtesy, and leadership within a youth martial activity." Also note the quality that is NOT listed: prowess. So while it is *always* outstanding to work to excel at an activity, this award is written to reward other qualities. A youth can consistently win in the lists, can have a royal round average that an adult would be proud of, can be amazing on horseback or on the thrown weapons range... and if they are "that" kid – the one that the marshals keep an extra eye on, the one that other parents warn their kids off from, the one that makes marshals sigh heavily - they are not qualified for the Order of Gawain.

"Valor, honor, chivalry, courtesy, and leadership." These are the ideals that the Society encourages. These are the virtues that we look for in the people we elevate, these are the qualities we discuss when we discuss (dare I say it in this context?) candidates for the peerages. When the proverbial cup of prowess has been built, these are the things to fill it with. I think it is amazing that we have an award to recognize our martial youth who have begun to walk that path.

We do not have any members of the Order of Gawain who are active in the Barony, but past recipients have included Dan of Barony Beyond the Mountain, Ella Kieransdottir, and Alexandra Krakkensdottir.

The various East Kingdom awards are described here:

<https://seneschal.eastkingdom.org/docs/EKLAW.pdf>, beginning on page 24.

The Order of Precedence may be found here: <https://op.eastkingdom.org/op.php>.

You can recommend people for ANY award here:

<https://surveys.eastkingdom.org/index.php/945932/lang-en>.

#uncommoneastkingdomawards



