

Cactus Needles

The Monthly Newsletter of the Southwest Costumers Guild
Vol 10 #11, November 2003

Contacts

Southwest Costumers Guild		www.SouthWestCostumersGuild.org
PO Box 39504		www.costume.org
Phoenix AZ 85069-9504		
President Frances Burns	928.284.9860	francesb@sedona.net
Vice President Jean Palmer	623.876.1848	bjeanpalmer@msn.com
Treasurer Kim Martin	623.773.1816	kimlmartin@mindspring.com
Secretary Paula Lary	520.868.5702	jedastarone@yahoo.com
Editor/Webmaster Randall Whitlock	602.995.7514 602.697.0492	randwhit@moirandalls.com
John Autore	480.967.4537	john.autore@asu.edu
Rick Andrews	623.773.1816	Hrafen@cox.net
Stephanie Bannon	602.973.2341	laetitia@doverkeep.com
Jennifer Bohling	602.431.0053	lady_aimi@yahoo.com
Diane Taylor Bunting	602.265.9407	hats@cox.net
Chuck & Tasha Cady	623.582.0540	tasha.cady@honeywell.com
Pat Connors	623.939.7815	pmc@finger-rock.com
Craig Dyer	602.973.2341	dyer@doverkeep.com
Carlos B. Egan	623.487.9518	bright_stallion@yahoo.com
Diane Harris	602.841.1608	Diane.Harris@phoenix.edu
Lyn & David Jeppesen	602.275.3321	rjeppesen7@hotmail.com
Joanne Levee	602.274.2182	crimsonmissline@yahoo.com
Bonnie Love-Svirskas	602.840.2470	robsv@cox.net
Pete Manly	623.876.1848	petemanly@msn.com
Sean Martin	623.773.1816	seansim@mindspring.com
Edouard B. Mesert	602.678.4751	ebmassociates@cox.net
Barbara Stangelo	480.661.0141	herballistic@hotmail.com
Dave Steele	928.535.4993	ldmalcolm@wmonline.com
Maira Whitlock	602.249.0797	moira@moirandalls.com

Please e-mail or mail contact updates to the editor.

Calendar

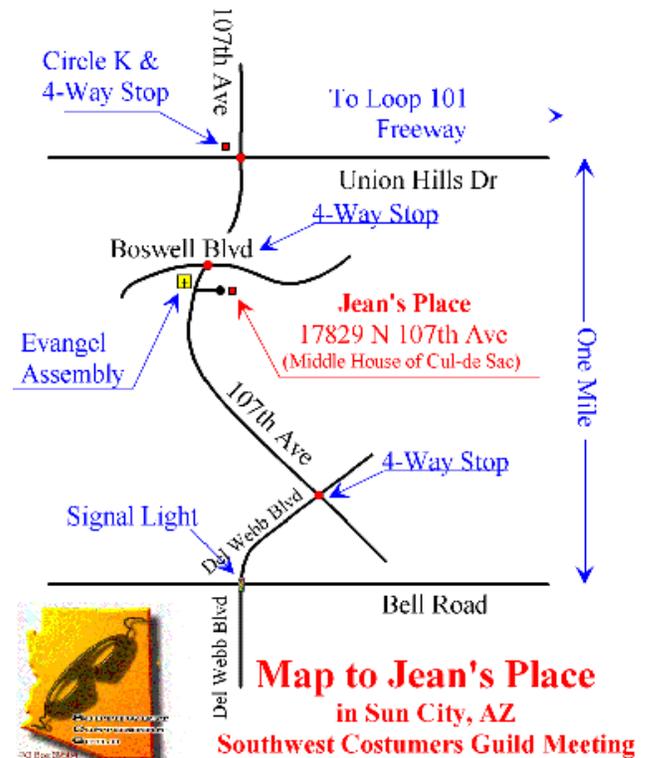
*Indicates an event organized by SWCG. Unless otherwise noted, SWCG meetings begin at 1:00 PM.

November 14-16, 2003 – **TusCon 30** at the Innsuites Hotel Tucson, 475 North Granada Avenue in Tucson. Fan-Organized SF Con featuring GOH Yvonne Navarro, Artist GOH Leslie D'Allesandro Haws, Music GOHs Maya & Jeff Bohnhoff and Toastmaster Edward Bryant. TusCon also features both an evening masquerade and a midnight adults-only masquerade. <http://home.earthlink.net/~basfa/>

November 15, 2003 - April 11, 2004 - **Beauty and Style in 19th Century American Fashion** Exhibit at the Phoenix Art Museum featuring exquisite examples of 19th century dress and accessories drawn from the Museum's comprehensive fashion design collection, this exhibition features the interplay of fashion and identity that created a distinctly American appearance. Exploration of social and artistic trends places these objects in the context of who wore them and why, and how the objects were made.

November 22 & 23, 2003 – **Devonshire Renaissance Faire** at Los Olivos Park, north of 28th Street and Indian School Road in Phoenix. A fine little one-weekend renfaire.

November 30, 2003 – **Duct and Cover*** SWCG workshop at Jean's place. Learn to make a dress form of your body using duct tape and stuffing. See Frances' Article in this issue.



December 14, 2003 – **Once More Into the Breeches*** SWCG workshop at Jean's place. Learn how to prepare custom-fitted stockings, slops and tights. There may be more duct tape involved. Annual officer elections.

Due to instructor schedule conflicts, the December and January workshops have swapped dates.

January 25, 2004 – **Parasol Covering*** SWCG workshop at Stephanie's place. Learn to build a custom parasol over a standard frame.

February 29, 2004 – **Leap Into Leap Year*** SWCG meeting at Stephanie's place. Annual calendar planning.

Mexico Road Trip

by Frances Burns

After driving most of Saturday morning and parking in a lot on this side of the border, we were off to Nogales, Mexico.

A couple of blocks south of the border crossing on the same street is a fabric shop. Don't be appalled by the prices, they are marked in Pesos. At the time the exchange rate was about 10 Pesos per dollar. Example: fabric marked 24.30 would coast about \$2.43 a meter, and a meter is longer than a yard.

Fabric selection is spotty. Most of the fabric is synthetic or a synthetic blend, fairly lightweight, and in bright colors. But if you look you can find some nice stuff. There was a nice selection of colors in the wool blend that I brought back, as well as lots of plaids, and natural linen.

There was a nice selection of gimp trim at about 30 to 40 cents a meter and a fair selection of buttons. They had a huge selection of felt, but many of the colors were appalling.

Suggestion: bring a suitcase on rollers if you are getting a lot of fabric and not driving across the border. Fabric gets very heavy to lug around.

Getting back across the border was not a problem, but the later in the day, the longer the line.

My overall impression was that it is probably not worth making a trip just for fabric, but if you are going there definitely stop at the fabric store.

Duct Tape Dummies

by Frances Burns

Supplies:

2 tight T-shirts and I do mean tight!
2 to 3 rolls duct tape (big ones from a home supply store)
Heavy-duty wood hanger, preferably w/ shaped shoulders
1 or more packages quilt batting
Lots of packing peanuts
Heavy trash scissors for cutting duct tape
Several people to pull and rip/cut tape
A cool/cold place to work
Person who wants to have a dummy made

Step 1:

Cut one T-shirt off under the arms and attach it to the bottom of the other T-shirt. Using the leftover fabric from the cut T-shirt, extend the neck of the other T-shirt so that you have an extra long turtleneck. You will use the extensions to hold in the stuffing when closing the dummy.

Step 2:

Get into the altered T-shirt. Note: If you are a woman, stuff your bra cups, no matter how careful the wrappers are, your bust is going to be a little smooshed.

Step 3:

Start wrapping. Secure the under bust, waist, and where you want the dummy to end with a couple of wraps around the person. Using lengths of duct tape, wrap around the person. Wrap a second layer vertically. Wrap 2 layers diagonally. Make sure the shoulders get plenty of tape.

Step 4:

Let the person out with a cut up the center of the dummy back.

Step 5:

Close the back of the dummy. Insert the clothes hanger. Put a layer of batting next to the T-shirt and start stuffing with packing peanuts. Pack the peanuts tightly. Close the openings and you have your dummy.

Watch points:

The shoulders need extra support; you may want to put in some cardboard when you are stuffing to give them support.

It is extremely easy to crush the bust.

As soon as the form is cut off stuff it!

Left to cook in a car, the tape will bubble.

Suggestion: Air the dummy for a day or two before taking it inside. Duct tape has a definite odor.

ICG Newsletter Exchange

The ICG Newsletter, Fall 2003. President's message, Editor announces ICG Newsletter will now accept paid advertising, Cosplayers Anonymous, Worldcon Masquerade participants and winners, Costume Calendar, Chapters and Dues table,

SiWCG *Virtual Costumer, July 2003.* Features a pictorial from "Flambe Lounge," which was sort of a pre-season event to promote Burning Man. Review of Costumer's Manifesto web site (www.costumes.org), A discussion of 14th century fashion by Sharon Trembley, An account of a social event centered around a 1960s doll house, Member Spotlight on Manly Summerfield, Review of the film "Galaxy Quest."

SiWCG *Virtual Costumer, August/September 2003.* Features Sharon Trembley's discussion of dress reform in the 19th century. For some reason, every religious, health, and temperance movement seemed to advocate short skirts and puffy pants for women. Factoid: "Bloomers" were named for temperance journalist Amelia Bloomer. Review of the Elizabethan Costuming Page at <http://costume.dm.net/>. Member Spotlight on Carole Parker, Film review of "My Fair Lady."

SiWCG *Virtual Costumer, October 2003*. Features a review of www.thisisthat.com – a web site on glue (I couldn't put it down), Carole Parker's shibori dyeing project, member spotlight on Rima McKinzey, pictorial review of Burning Man 2003 with a sidebar about the Boomtown Vegas casino, review of film "Sense and Sensibility."

GBACG *Finery, Nov/Dec 2003*. Farewell from editor Sally Norton, Reprint of a 1932 *Fortune* article on the early history of the haute couture houses of Paris.

Grab the newsletters from Randall at the next meeting

Meeting Highlights



Jean's Italian renaissance cap was seen as a work in progress at the October meeting. The cap is made of brass mesh with beads and trim. More decorations and a braid have been added since.



A burnt offering to Glitziana? Nope, Frances taught us to use burn testing to identify different textile fibers and blends at the October meeting.



Our November 2 fundraiser sewing session at Jean's Sun City Sweatshop yielded seven capes and more than forty hats. Photo by Pete Manly.

The Dryer Trick by Randall Whitlock

This is the text of a handout I give to persons who buy one of our "Dreaded Black Fuzzy" capes.

Many of the garments you will find at MoiRandall's are not suitable for machine washing. These might be made of 100 percent wool fabric (which tends to shrink) or cotton velvet (which loses strength when wet and may pull away from the seams).

Ultimately, these garments will need to dry-cleaned. In the meantime, you can keep them fresh and relatively clean for quite a while using mom's old dryer trick.

Moisten a clean bath towel with water and a splash of liquid fabric softener. The towel should be damp, but not soaked.

Toss the towel and your garment into a dryer. Set the dryer to "fluff" or the equivalent non-heat setting. Set the timer for about 90 minutes and turn it on.

The garment will flop around in the dryer, shaking off the dust and lint. The softener-moistened towel helps absorb odor and reduce static. You might add a dryer fabric softener sheet or a spritz of "Febreze" or an equivalent fabric deodorizer to enhance the effect. More delicate garments might be placed inside a mesh bag. These are available in the laundry aisle of most supermarkets. The moistened towel goes outside the bag.

The dryer trick is particularly effective against dry dust and dead grass (inevitable in Arizona). You will be amazed at the amount of lint that will come off of a wool, corduroy, or velveteen garment. Dried mud should be brushed off as much as possible before you try the dryer trick.

Unfortunately, the dryer trick won't help much with food or chlorophyll stains.

The dryer trick has come of age. "Dryel" and other commercial products based on the principle, backed up with a liquid spot remover, are available in grocery stores. I haven't tried them yet.

New Janet Arnold Costume Book?

Stephanie forwarded your editor a message indicating that a final volume of "Patterns of Fashion" is in preparation, based on previously unpublished material by the late British costume historian Janet Arnold. The book will reportedly focus on Elizabethan fair linen, such as coifs, shirts, ruffs, and collars.

New Local Theatre Company by Diane Harris

Two of my very best friends (we did some very off-Broadway theater in New York) have started up a theater company here in the Valley - I Theatre Collaborative.

Their first production (Bee-Luther-Hatchee) started 10-30-03 and runs through 11-22-03 at HERBERGER THEATER CENTER. The play is by Thomas Gibbons, and is the very powerful story of a book publisher, a 72-year old Southern black woman whom she has never met, and the brother and nephew that she knew very little of.

It is directed by Charles St. Clair (Actor's Theater, Black Theater, ASU West and Broadway). Yours truly costumed the characters.

Doors open at 7:30pm - Thursday, Friday, Saturday night. There is a matinee show 11-16-03 at 1pm.

Tickets and info call - 602-347-1071 or call me if you want more info (x3085).

Hope you can come and enjoy an evening of local theater. This theater company promises to be a driving force in the local theater culture.

In Memory of Diane Elliot

by Randall Whitlock

We lost a very good friend on Sunday morning, November 9, 2003 when Diane Elliot succumbed to a respiratory infection.

Diane was an active member of the Arizona fan community, particularly the United Federation of Phoenix. I first met her in 1989 when we were both students at ASU and I was new to local cons.

Diane was on the official roles of the SWCG in the 1990s and was always a friend and ally. She could be counted on when you needed a model for an over-the-top costume idea. I have fond costume memories of her humorous "Two Band-Aids and a Cork," done on a dare with Jeanne Hilary-Burroughs several years ago, and her modeling of John Wheeler's Tiger Lady face and body paint costume at Coppercon 21. The Tiger Lady was seen in the June, 2003 Cactus Needles.

Most recently, Diane played Daisy in our Best-In-Show winning presentation, "The Dookus of Hazzard" at Coppercon 22.



Funeral or memorial donation arrangements have not been finalized as of this writing.

Left - Diane as Deanna Troi at the 1998 UFP Halloween Party.



Above - It wasn't easy being green, but Diane wowed 'em as a Twi'lek Daisy Dooku at Coppercon 22 in 2002.