



**Monthly Newsletter of the Southwest Costumers Guild
Vol 11 #9 September 2004**

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Please send corrections by e-mail or mail to the editor.

Calendar

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

September 10-12, 2004 – **Coppercon 24** at the Embassy Suites Phoenix North, 2577 W Greenway, Phoenix. GOHs include Alan Dean Foster, Todd Lockwood, Catherine Wells, and Leslie Fish. Featuring a masquerade directed by Edouard Mesert. www.coppercon.org

September 11, 2004, 2PM - First meeting of the new **Arizona Comicbook Association** in the lecture room of the

Phoenix Burton Barr Public Library. Contact Erik Kask (480.580.9329) for more information.



September 26, 2004 – **Buckram Hats II*** SWCG workshop at Carlos' place. Put finishing touches on the hats we started in March.

October 24, 2004, 10 AM – **The Cloaking*** SWCG workshop at Jean's place. We'll build some capes and other items to sell at Devonshire as our annual fundraiser. Bring your sewing tools and try to find some of the "Dreaded Black Fuzzy" fabric. This is a good opportunity to learn a basic half-circle cape pattern.

November 5-7, 2004 – **TusCon 31** at the InnSuites Hotel, 475 N Granada Ave, Tucson. GOHs include Barbara Hambly, Willkima K. Hartmann, and Carol DePriest. <http://home.earthlink.net/~basfa/>

November 20 & 21, 2004 – **Devonshire Renaissance Faire** at Los Olivos Park in Phoenix, Arizona. www.devonshirefaire.com

November 28, 2004 – **Bustle Off to Sedona*** SWCG workshop and potluck at Frances' place in Sedona. Bring food to share. Bustle material list to be posted later.

Saturday, December 18, 2004, 5 PM – **Dickens Walk*** SWCG social at Edouard's place. Assemble in Victorian or other winter costume, then walk the *Christmas at First* festival together.

January 30, 2005 – **Duct Tape Mannequins*** SWCG workshop at Jean's place. Build a custom dresser dummy around your body using the handyman's secret weapon.

February 27, 2004 – **Calendar Girls & Guys*** SWCG meeting at Stephanie’s place. Annual calendar planning.

April 29 - May 2, 2005 - **Costume-Con 23**: Crossroads of Space and Time. A celebration of fabric, design, and performance in Ogden, Utah. Memberships are \$75 US until September 12, 2004. www.crossroadsutah.org/

May 6-8, 2005 – **LepreCon 31** at Carefree Resort, 37220 Mule Train Road, Carefree, AZ GOHs include Kevin J. Anderson, Dave Dorman, Bear Burge, and Sarah Clemens. Featuring an independent film festival and a masquerade directed by Margaret Grady. www.leprecon.org/lep31/

Wild West Goes East

by Randall Whitlock

Wild West Mercantile’s new east valley store is open for business in the Sunvalley Plaza shopping center at 7302 East Main Street, Suite 7 in Mesa, Arizona. (About ½mile east of Power Road).

Wild West Mercantile is an excellent source of ready-to-wear wild west clothing and a sponsor of the Single-Action Shooting Society’s annual Winter Range event. (See back issues of Cactus Needles for reviews of Winter Range.)

Worthy items at the store include boots, holsters and gunbelts, hats, shirts, high-waisted pants, vests, frock coats, Victorian dresses, books, patterns, etc. These are all in proper historical style (real west, not Urban Cowboy), though they have branched out into motorcycle leathers. The new store provides more floor space for a better-organized display.

The bad news is that the Christown location is now closed. I understand from other sources that their former building will be demolished in the next few years to build a station for the new light rail line.

Fun with Swap Meet Tinkertoys

by Randall Whitlock

As reported last month, I’ve been charged by the Central Arizona Speculative Fictions Society (CASFS) to make some improvements on the “Pipe & Drape” portable curtain system we use for masquerades and other fanacs.

Margie and Cinder did some experiments when they used the system for the 2004 LepreCon Masquerade. Their greatest discovery was that the modular galvanized steel sunshade frame parts commonly used by swap meet merchants are compatible with our system. For CASFS, I’ve purchased ten of the round foot modules to replace the old, clumsy “elbow macaroni” feet of the pipe & drape.



The system is simple. Various connector modules in the shapes of T’s, elbows, round feet, etc are socketed to ¾” galvanized steel pipe (electrical conduit). I found a merchant at

Phoenix Park & Swap who sells the connectors for \$2 to \$2.50 each and 10-foot lengths of the pipe for \$4 each. (This guy also sells mannequins and car accessories).

I hadn’t even finished carrying the new pipe & drape feet out to the Redneck Landspeeder before inspiration struck. *These parts could make a great garment display rack for my renaissance faire booth!* I immediately doubled back and bought two more feet, two pipes, and two T connectors.



Back home, I sawed the 10-foot pipes to form two 6-foot vertical supports (high enough to keep capes from dragging the ground, but still short enough to fit inside my truck bed). I obtained some 11-inch diameter particle board disks and bolted the feet to them for a broader base of support. Tent stakes with fender washers will be driven into the ground around the disks for wind resistance at outdoor events.

The verticals socket into the feet and the T’s socket into the verticals. The four feet of pipe left over from one vertical form the horizontal bar, connecting to both T’s. Later, I will paint the pipes and connectors to make them more appealing for a medieval or ren event.

The Muse of Galvanized Steel has not yet departed my fevered brain:

- A set of the garment racks described above could convert any small room or storage unit into a walk-in closet, particularly where the walls are not strong enough to support conventional closet rods or in rented storage space where you aren’t permitted to make modifications.
- One foot unit, a length of pipe, and an elbow or T piece could form an inexpensive lantern pole for your campsite.

- Build your own custom-size pop-up pavilion. So long as you avoid those butt-ugly blue plastic tarps and make a proper, natural-fiber shell, the pavilion will be suitable for SCA events and renaissance faires.

Wig Supplier Recommendation

by Anna Caggiano

I've had to use wigs several times for recent costumes, and I've been very pleased with International Wig (www.internationalwig.com). They have great variety, impressive quality, very attentive customer service, and semi-decent prices on their main website. However, if you shop the eBay auctions linked through their website, you can get some killer deals -- wigs at about a quarter price. I recently purchased a wig worth over \$60 for a little over \$20 and had them dye it just the shade I wanted. Best of all, when I wore it to a costume event, I soon realized that a lot of people had no clue I was wearing a wig. That's good quality.

Store Review

**35th Avenue Sew & Vac/ Sew Arizona/
35th Avenue Fabric World**

by Randall Whitlock

It's one store with three signs. 35th Avenue Sew & Vac, at the northwest corner of 35th Avenue (duh) and Northern in Phoenix has expanded into the adjoining suites of the retail strip center. They now have an extensive selection of unusual sewing machines, including industrial machines, used machines, and some really big embroidery machines. (They almost had me with a blind hem machine – maybe someday.) Unlike most sew & vac stores, their repair operation is in-house.

Their recent expansion added a fabric room and a classroom. These seem to be devoted mainly to quilting. The fabrics are mainly broadcloths in a huge variety of colors and clever prints.

Seeking LepreCon 31 Costume Programming Ideas

Margaret Grady will direct the masquerade at LepreCon 31 on May 7, 2005. In an ongoing e-mail exchange with your editor, Margie has asked for input on costume-related programming ideas to be used throughout the con.

Ideas kicked around so far include:

- A duct tape dummy workshop.
- A "For Sale" table of consigned costume items in the guild costumers' suite. SWCG gets a commission on the sales.
- More Grab Bag Costuming workshops for kids.

- Pattern & sewing machine consulting in the costumers' suite.
- Music library and consulting for masq contestants.
- Panel on basic, versatile costume pieces.
- Make some of the best discussions into web pages after the con.

Please e-mail Margie at mgrady@eigi.com with comments and suggestions.

Cotehardie Resources

by Stephanie Bannon

Stephanie forwarded these links on how to make the distinctively fitted 14th Century tunics and gowns known as "cotehardies."

<http://www.damehelen.com/cotes/index.html>

<http://www.cottesimple.com/index.html>

<http://www.personal.utulsa.edu/~marc-carlson/cloth/bockhome.html>



Lyn models the chemise built at the August workshop.

Awww Inspiring

Moira's kittens will be ready for homes in early October. The two siamese girls are spoken for, but the two white boys and the two blue-gray girls are available. Contact your editor for more information.

