

# Cactus Needles

The Monthly Newsletter of the Southwest Costumers Guild  
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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.

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](http://www.devonshirefaire.com)

November 28, 2004 – **Bustle Off to Sedona\*** SWCG workshop and potluck at Frances' place in Sedona. Bring food to share.

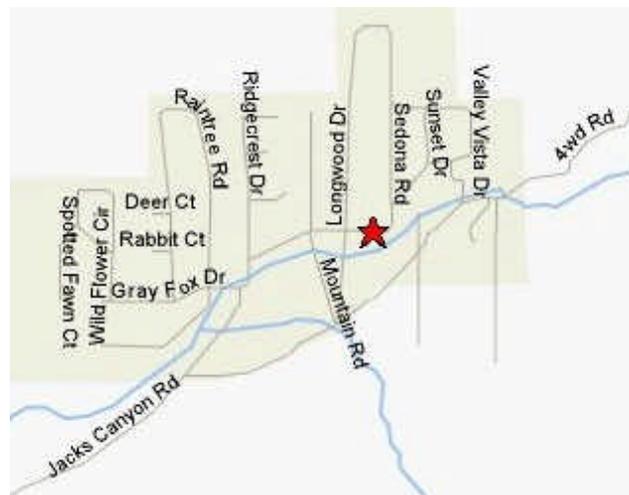
## Materials List for Bustle Workshop

by Frances Burns

- 1/2 yard cloth - cotton suggested
- 1/4 pkg stuffing - we will most likely have some already there
- 2 to 3 yards of -inch grosgrain ribbon - the ribbon should be long enough to wrap around your waist twice and tie in a bow
- Optional 1/2 yard 2 to 4-inch wide gathered ribbon
- Basic sewing equipment, sewing machine useful but not required.

We will be making small Victorian Bustles and/or Elizabethan bum rolls. If you want to make one of each bring an additional 2 to 3 yards of grosgrain ribbon.

Also if you need to set any 00 grommets - bring your pre-marked garments, grommets and awl, and use my grommet setting machine to set your grommets. You will be amazed at how fast it goes.



## Directions

- Take I-17 N toward FLAGSTAFF. Go past Camp Verde and McGuireville/Lake Montezuma.
- Take the AZ-179 exit (EXIT 298) toward SEDONA/OAK CREEK CANYON.
- At the second light, by the outlets, turn RIGHT onto JACKS CANYON RD.
- Follow Jacks Canyon Rd past the 90-degree turn.
- Jacks Canyon Rd splits off from Lee Mountain Rd. There is a sign pointing to La Barranca at the split.
- Turn right and continue on Jacks Canyon Rd until it ends in a T.
- Turn RIGHT onto GREY FOX RD.
- GREY FOX RD becomes RIDGECREST DR.
- Turn RIGHT onto VALLEY VISTA DR.

- The house is on the right hand side of Valley Vista Dr before it makes a 90-degree turn.
- There will be a couple of blue vehicles in the driveway.
- The address is **3040 VALLEY VISTA DR.**
- Phone 928-284-9860 or 602-616-7320

If anyone wants to come up the day before I have 1 spare bedroom and lots of crash space. I can also borrow a couple of aero-beds if I know they are needed.

Suggested field trip is to visit a fine woolens shop in Sedona. It has wonderful woolens that demonstrate how fine and non-scratchy a woolen can be. Including large woolen scarves that are fine enough to be pulled through a ring.

### Calendar Continued

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.

March 25-27, 2005 – **AniZona:** Arizona's first Anime convention at the Embassy Suites North, SEC, I-17 & Greenway in Phoenix. [www.anizona.org](http://www.anizona.org)

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/](http://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/](http://www.leprecon.org/lep31/)

### Natacha Rambova at Phoenix Art Museum

Edouard describes the "Fashion Career of Natacha Rambova" exhibit at the Phoenix Art Museum as wonderful. Ms. Rambova is remembered as an actress and an ex of Rudolf Valentino, as well as a clothing designer. The exhibit runs through February 6, 2005.

### From the Mailbox

#### The ICG Newsletter November/December 2004

From the President, How the Spider Spun the Silicon Web, Unhealthy Fashion, Favorite Places to Shop, Costume Calendar, Chapter Information, From the Editor, Frances' Duct Tape Dummies instructions, Randall's Duct Tape Tights Pattern directions, Bruce the Lesser's Impromptu Costume Survey, Treasurer's Report, Contact Us. (Big Issue this time!)

#### GBACG Finery November/December 2004

Notes on the Chinese *Cheung Sam*, GBACG Day at Dickens Faire, Upcoming Events.

*Your Editor carries these newsletters to meetings in his dilapidated army surplus map case.*



### Capes & Caps

Our October fundraiser workshop yielded 4 velvet capes, 10 velvet flatcaps; 6 felt Robin Hood hats and 5 particolored Jester hats. Photo by Pete Manly.

### The Worldcon Masquerade

by Anna Caggiano

I went to Noreascon 4 with one purpose in mind: to stalk - I mean, meet -- Terry Pratchett. Still, I did achieve some other fannish milestones in between evading those pesky restraining orders: The Museum of Science's *Lord of the Rings* exhibit; my first Regency dance; and my *first ever* masquerade. Yes, you read that phrase correctly. When I joined the audience in the Hynes Center Auditorium on Sunday night, I was a bona-fide masquerade virgin.

Fully five hours and forty-seven entrants later, I was most emphatically, thoroughly, and exhaustedly *not*.

I hadn't really known what to expect, aside from high-quality costumes and a prevalence of Pratchett. HarperCollins had contributed a \$500 award for the three winning Discworld entries, which Terry had supplemented

with \$100 of his own, plus a special trophy. I recall at least ten Discworld entries, all of which were wonderfully skewed. "Inside the Mind" took third place with a Terry look-alike typing on his laptop to the accompaniment of a Discworld voiceover, while some poor unfortunate squashed inside an A'Tuin turtle costume lurched across the stage behind him. The second place "A Pale Rider" featured a glowing-eyed Death on a motorcycle pursuing Rincewind the wizard and an amazingly animated remote-controlled Luggage. First place went to the hilarious "Not the Usual Unusual," which portrayed the conquest of the Discworld by the unstoppable sex appeal of singer Tom Jones.

Although I loved the Discworld entries, my description treats them more as comic sketches than as costumes, a microcosm of my overall impression of the masquerade. I'd heard about the Worldcon's heavy theatrical emphasis, but wasn't quite prepared for full-on Andrew Lloyd Webber-style extravaganzas, in which the costuming seemed rivaled by the spectacle. As entertaining as it was, I'm still a bit ambivalent. Many entries proved that placing a costume in a proper context can enrich them both, and make a more holistic work of art. However, it can also lead to long and pointless dog-and-pony shows put on by people ill-equipped to do so. Since I have the approximate theatrical ability of a dead parrot, I cringed in sympathy as more than one impressive costume sank into a pit of turgid melodrama. Philistine newbie that I am, I found myself wishing masquerades would borrow something from the world of fanfiction: stories emphasizing character, atmosphere, or just plain fun with language often bear the designation "PWP", or "Plot? What Plot?" Might there be a similar advantage to a lesser-status, pure costuming category entitled: "Presentation? What Presentation?"

As it was, the extensive skits, elaborate stage set-up and prop preparation, and two protracted rounds of judging (both Discworld and regular, which took rather longer to decide than the 2000 presidential election), turned the night into a fashion-conscious ironman triathlon, lightened by a succession of cryptic sheep jokes from the unflappable emcee, Susan de Guardiola. When the conclusion of the halftime show (the amiably goofy "One-Man Star Wars Trilogy") still left a significant expanse of dead air during deliberations, I calculated the odds of sneaking in the green room to see the entries up close. Given my gargantuan glow-in-the dark Labyrinth gown, those odds were decidedly crappy. On the plus side, I enjoyed the ego trip of spectators photographing me to pass the time, as well as a lovely compliment from the long-suffering Terry "Oh good God, it's you again" Pratchett.

By 1:30 am, only a tiny handful of spectators had endured until the bitter end, most of whom were far too comatose to care if they had named George Bush the Best in Show. Looking half-dead, Terry Pratchett stumbled off in search of

a bathroom, beer, and bed, while the contestants stripped and fled the green room. So much for any hope of seeing all their stunning work up close. Instead, I talked with Susan de Guardiola for a minute, curious to hear her opinion on my dress. She was very kind, encouraging me to participate in future Worldcons, which, in light of the whole dead parrot impairment, is unlikely. Still, it was another Happy Ego Moment.

In the end, despite the crash-and-burn conclusion, I remained incredibly impressed by the level of craftsmanship and creativity upon the masquerade stage. Outclassing anything I could imagine, let alone hope to achieve, it made for a very memorable first time.

Even if they weren't gentle with me. ; )

For a list of winners:

<http://www.noreascon.org/masquerade/masquerade-results.html>

For photographs of the participants, and random costumed audience members (including me on page 16!):

<http://www.photorelect.com/scripts/prsm.dll?EventFrame?event=08FQ000506>

*Emerald City's* Masquerade report:

<http://www.emcit.com/emcit109.shtml>

Details of Constructing "A Pale Rider":

[www.valhallaarms.com/wyvern/costuming/index.htm](http://www.valhallaarms.com/wyvern/costuming/index.htm)