



Cactus Needles

Monthly Newsletter of the Southwest Costumers Guild

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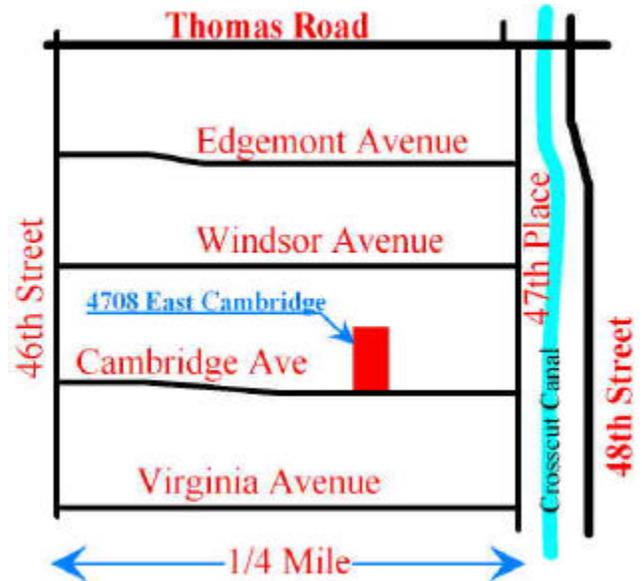
Calendar

Know of an upcoming costumed event in Arizona? Please tell your editor. *Indicates an event organized by SWCG. Unless otherwise noted, SWCG meetings begin at 1 PM.

October 21-23, 2005 – **International Horror Film Festival** at the Harkins Centrepoint and Valley Art theaters in Tempe, Arizona. Events feature a fashion show/costume bash directed by guildster Margaret Grady. <http://www.horrorscifi.com/> See the write-up in this issue.

October 30, 2005 – **Project Workshop*** SWCG workshop at Frances' Mom's Place, 4708 E Cambridge, Phoenix. Bring along your work in progress (like the frock coats) for

show and tell and some help and advice on finishing it Workshop begins at 10 AM, business meeting at 1PM.



November 12, 2006 through April 2, 2006 – **The Fabric of Jazz** at the Mesa Southwest Museum, 53 North MacDonald, Mesa, Arizona. This exhibition features quilts, fabric wall hangings and poetry inspired by jazz musicians and their work.

www.mesasouthwestmuseum.com

Saturday November 12, 2005, 10Am – **Sweatshop*** SWCG workshop at Frances' Mom's Place, 4708 E Cambridge, Phoenix. We'll build some capes and other items to sell at Devonshire as our semi-annual fundraiser. Bring your sewing tools.

November 18-20, 2005 – **TusCon 32** at the Innsuites Hotel Tucson. Fan-run SF Con featuring guests of honor David Brin, Theresa Mather, Edward Bryant, and Bill Winski. <http://home.earthlink.net/~basfa/>

November 19-20, 2005 10 AM-6PM – **Devonshire Renaissance Faire** at Los Olivos Park, north of the northeast corner of 28th Street and Indian School Road in Phoenix. www.devonshirefaire.com

Saturday, December 17, 2005 5PM – **Dickens Walk*** SWCG outing. We'll meet at Edouard's townhouse in Victorian or other holiday-appropriate clothing and walk to the "Christmas at First" holiday celebration. www.christmasatfirst.org

Saturday, January 14, 2006 – **Glendale Glitters and Glows*** SWCG field trip. We'll meet at the Pete's Fish & Chips on Glendale Avenue at 4:30 PM for a light and greasy supper, then tour the street festival. Costume encouraged.

January 29, 2005, 3PM – **Calendar*** SWCG business meeting at the Bookman’s Book Store at the northwest corner of 19th Ave & Northern in Phoenix. We’ll do our annual officer elections and plan out guild activities for 2006. Bring ideas. www.bookmans.com

April 14-16, 2006 – **AniZona 2** at the Embassy Suites Phoenix North (SEC Greenway Road & I-17) Arizona’s own Anime and Manga convention www.anizona.org.

May 5-7, 2006 – **LepreCon 32** at the Embassy Suites Phoenix North (SEC Greenway Road & I-17) Fan-run SF Con featuring guests of honor Alan M. Clark, John Vornholt and Bill Blair. www.leprecon.org.

Coppercon 25 Masquerade Wrap-up
by Randall Whitlock

Thanks to one and all who helped bring off a successful masquerade at Coppercon 25 on September 10, 2005. Thanks to Oscar at Mardi Gras Costume for donation of the velvet beaded and feathered mask for the Best in Show prize. Special thanks indeed to the Guild for the grant that allowed us to build prizes and cover other expenses for supplies.



Here are some of the particulars:

The masq was hosted by Michael R. Mennenga and Evo Terra of the Dragon Page and Slice of Sci Fi podcasts. Fully plug & play, these gentleman gave a fine performance as though they’d been hosting local masquerades forever.

Photo by David Jeppesen

Our judging panel included Artist Guest of Honor Mark Greenawalt, AniZona Masquerade Director C.J. “Kyo” Sellards and author Janeen O’Kerry. The judging panel worked together like a well-oiled machine. Heck, part of the machine even got a new paint job.



Photo by David Jeppesen

We had 23 persons on stage as 17 costumed presentations:

Young Fen

- Trevor Lewis - Shippo Chan from Inuyasha
- Kira, Raylon and Nolan Golay - Pirates and Their Treasure
- Tim Langholz – First Year Student at Hogwarts
- Filicia Langholz – The Sugarplum Fairy
- Emilio Ruiz (with a special guest appearance by Dr. Dave Williams) – The Imperial Rap
- Eris Young – Andromeda
- Clay Dudash – Imperial Pilot

Several of the Young Fen costumes were generated at the “Rip & Tear” workshop earlier in the day.



Performance Only

Brook English – Lady Fox

Novice

- Shane Bryner – Larva (Special Award for Anime or Manga-Inspired Costume)
- Catherine Chambers (Tabbicat) – Pirate Wench
- Trevor Leitner – Captain Lord
- Trevor (Best Novice)
- Shauna Sonnenwald and Maureen Jones – Women of the Past
- Wade Stimson – Vash (Best in Show)

Left – Wade Stimson as Vash from the anime series “Trigun.”
Photo by Mike Cassidy



Experienced

Mark Teifert –
Construction Trooper
(Best Experienced)

Frances Burns, Diane
Harris and Jerry Shrader
– Dax’s Diner
William Warner –
Coruscant Guard

*Left – Mark Teifert as
Construction Trooper.
Photo by Mike Cassidy.*

Special Appearance

Courtney Black as
Coppernica, the
convention
spokesmodel with
special makeup by Mark
Greenawalt.

The talent level was
high all around and all
of the presentations
received some

recognition, including Judges’ Special Mention rosette
ribbons and certificates.

I’ll some of the pictures to my masquerade web site at
<http://members.aol.com/coppermask25/> . Look soon
because my AOL account may be going away in the next
couple of months.

I’ll gladly burn a CD of the documentation photos and other
CopperCon 25 pictures for any of the contestants or crew. I
can be reached at
editor@southwestcostumersguild.org.

And it’s once more into the breach my friends. Chairman
Mark Boniece has talked me into directing the CopperCon
26 Masquerade. Stay tuned.

From the Mailbox

GBACG *Finery*, September/October 2005 features Words
of Wisdom on How To Run an Event, Easy Steps to a
Fitting Dress Dummy, Upcoming Events, Workshops and
Clinics.

Beyond Reality Costumers Guild *Notions*, Fall, 2005
features Kate McLure’s review of Costume College and
nearby museums, Minutes of recent meetings, Costumers in
Action with photos from a recent production of “Once Upon

A Mattress,” and Kelly J. Nary’s review of “French
Fashion Illustrations of the Twenties.”

Take a gander at these publications at the next SWCG
meeting.

The Costume Closet
The Jedi Belt Project
By Randall Whitlock

Dr. Dave and I had a long conversation this spring about
upgrading our Jedi hall costumes. Dave and I are both
what you might call “Unorganized Jedi.” We do the
costumes and the persona to some extent, but aren’t
connected with any of the established Star Wars re-
creation groups. Consequently, we had no local costume
gurus to turn to, and were left to do our own research.

Unlike Old Ben in the original trilogy, who appeared to be
using World War II surplus equipment, the Jedi of the
prequel trilogy wear a very distinctive utility belt. Up to
this point Dave had been using a molded latex-and-Velcro
belt purchased from a studio-authorized manufacturer
while I had put together various combinations of vinyl
belting and ribbon, which tended to slip and slide a lot. We
decided to build something durable out of proper leather.

First, the research: Dave’s molded belt, based on the one
worn by Qui-Gon Jinn, was helpful. It provided the basic
dimensions and shape.

There are clear photographs of the various heroes’ belts in
the “Star Wars Visual Dictionaries,” with a particularly
good picture of Anakin’s belt in the Visual Dictionary for
“Attack of the Clones.” It doesn’t hurt to watch the movies
a few dozen times.

The Jedi belt is really two belts in one. It has a three-inch
inner belt, surrounded by a one-inch outer belt. The outer
belt overlaps itself through a loop in back. The loop is held
to the belt by four rivets. The belt passes through the inside
aspect of the loop, so its end is concealed when worn.
Since I was working with a very thick leather stock, I did
not overlap the edges of the loop. I stitched them together
with waxed sinew. It is not obvious from the molded belt
or the Visual Dictionary images whether the outer belt
passes above or beneath this loop.

In some of my early, quick & dirty, vinyl belts, I used the
back loop to conceal a large conventional buckle or
Velcro. This let me use nonfunctional one-piece
ornamental buckles in the front of the outer belt while the
outer belt was stitched firmly in place.

The outer belt is centered on the inner belt with four pairs
of metal studs as guides. These studs are called “Sam
Browne Buttons” after the 20th Century military and police

pistol belt style for which they were designed. These studs are shaped sort of like a trailer hitch ball and are held in place by a rivet driven from the back side of the belt.

The outer belt is closed in the middle of the front with a clasp buckle (a buckle that divides into two parts). No two Jedi buckles worn in the films are exactly alike, so you have a great deal of freedom here. Appropriate clasp buckles can be found in fabric stores or hiking stores. I chose a buckle commonly used on backpacks and readily available in fabric stores. It is made of plastic with a faux metal finish.

Hidden away in a drawer, I have a brass-coated buckle in the shape of a circle that breaks into halves along an S-shaped line to form the “Yin and Yang” symbol. Since some of the concepts of The Force were inspired by Taoism, this might make a very appropriate buckle to use on a later belt.

The outer belt bends back on itself on either side of the buckle through leather keeper rings. These rings allow for size adjustment. The same appearance can be achieved by binding the outer belt with leather thong. It is not obvious from the Visual Dictionary images whether the inner and outer belts are actually attached to each other. For convenience, I chose to attach the two belts with a single rivet on one side of the buckle.

I used cowhide for belt material since it was available in the extra-wide size I wanted for the inner belt. It comes with a plain, natural tan finish which I modified with mahogany leather dye. I left the inside undyed since I feared the dye might rub off onto my sash and tunics (Fear leads to the Dark Side). The cowhide proved to be very thick and stiff. If I try this project again, I will probably use latigo leather, which comes already dyed and oiled. It's a bit thinner and much more supple than the plain cowhide.

All of the leather supplies described above can be purchased off the shelf at Tandy/Leather Factory stores. There are three of them in Phoenix and Tempe and I visited all three during this project. The shopkeepers were enthusiastic about my project and very helpful. At full retail, you can expect to pay about fifty bucks for the parts. Deep discounts, however, are available for professionals and members of the store's sponsored hobby clubs. The latter are easy to sign up for.



You can bring the price down significantly by using vinyl belting in place of leather, with a commensurate loss in durability and appearance. I made one of these as a proof-of-concept piece while I was experimenting with different kinds of studs and buckles. Vinyl belt strapping can be found at the SAS fabric stores (two locations in Phoenix, one in Tempe, one in Tucson). Examine the strapping material closely before buying. It can lose strength and crack when kept too long on store shelves.

Late in the project, I found [The Padawan's Guide](http://www.padowansguide.com) online at www.padowansguide.com. This is an amazing resource for Star Wars costumers, with lots of pictures, discussions, and instructions. I graciously tip my Jedi hood to Maggie, the webmaster! The site includes an article at www.padowansguide.com/belt.shtml on several ways to build a Jedi Belt, including one using thrift store resources. This could work very well, but may require a great deal of legwork to find used leather belts wide enough and in good condition. The online article also includes a link to a source for authentic Anakin-style buckles.



The Jedi belt is meant as a tool belt for the active hero. Items seen attached to Jedi belts in the films include utility pouches, little cylinders of various colors, and of course, the lightsaber. The pouches appear to be made of molded leather with a pattern of diagonal lines. Reproductions of the pouches can be found on eBay. These pouches presumably house the comlink (made from a Gillette brand razor handle) and the emergency breather seen in the films. Eventually, I'll make a couple of these for cell phone and camera cases.

The cylinders are labeled as "food concentrate" in the Visual Dictionaries, but I'm not entirely satisfied with this explanation. Why carry six or eight meals worth of trail rations if you don't have a water flask? Who cares, they look way cool! I'm told by Wade Stimson (winner of Best in Show at the Coppercon 25 Masquerade) that these were made from the caps of Staedtler brand pens bonded to a plastic ball to seal up the base.

The prequel trilogy lightsabers were slung from Covertec brand pager clips. (Remember pagers?) I haven't found a local source for these, so I'm currently using a cell phone clip kit that can be found at local dollar stores. Like the Covertec clip, these clips have a slot which engages a plastic button. The button is easily attached to your lightsaber with the included adhesive patches. The adhesive eventually wore out, so I reattached the button to my lightsaber with 5-minute epoxy.

The International Horror and Sci-Fi Film Festival

by Margaret Grady

COSTUME OPPORTUNITY!

(and Sci Fi and Horror movies too)

Your chance to see independent horror and sci-fi films, and meet the man behind the mask, Peter Mayhew (Chewbacca from Star Wars) -- right here in town. Check out the website: <http://www.horrorscifi.com/>

THE INTERNATIONAL HORROR AND SCI-FI FILM FESTIVAL - the largest cross-genre cult festival in North America invades Tempe, Arizona at Harkins Centerpoint 11, 730 South Mill Avenue, Tempe, AZ 85281, (480) 966-2244 and the Harkins Valley Art, 505 South Mill Ave, Tempe, AZ 85281, (480) 446-7272 from October 21-23, 2005

This year's confirmed guests: LLOYD KAUFMAN - Founder of Troma Entertainment ("Toxic Avenger" series) and PETER MAYHEW - Chewbacca the Wookiee from Star Wars!

The Costume Bash and Fashion Show will be held Saturday night, from 9pm-2am, on Mill Avenue (entrance through My Big Fat Greek Restaurant).

Admission will be **free to anyone who volunteers** to wear a sci-fi or horror costume in the Fashion Show, plus you'll get 4 free passes to any of the movies in the Festival. **To get Festival Movie tickets, you must "sign up" in advance either to me directly (mgrady@eigi.com), or to volunteers@phxfilm.com.** (If you're not in the Fashion Show, it's a \$10 admission, or \$5 with Festival movie stub.)

There will be both a live band and a DJ for your dancing pleasure, and discounted beer. It is possible we will even have a bit of Vampire Ballet....

Grand Canyon University Ethington Theatre Schedule for 2005-2006 Season

Sent in by Jean Palmer

The Costume Designer is our own Nola Yergen-Jennings.

October 28 & 29 & November 4th & 5th will be 'Vanessa' An Opera by Samuel Barber. Vanessa is a fading beauty, fearful of mirrors, who has waited 20 years for the return of her lover. When a dashing male figure appears, it is not the long awaited Anatol (who has died) but his son, whose curiosity about the woman who had captivated his father leads him to Vanessa's enshrouded home. He courts both Vanessa and her niece, Erika, creating a love triangle that leads to passion, hope and finally despair.

December 9th & 10th & 11th and Dec 16th & 17th & 18th will be 'Arms and the Man' A comedy by George Bernard Shaw.

February 17th & 18th & 19th and Feb 24th , 25th , 26th will be 'The Three Sisters' A drama by Anton Chekhov.

April 21st, 22nd , 23rd and 28th , 29th , 30th will be "The Robber Bridegroom". A musical by Alfred Uhry.

If anyone is interested Jean has blurbs on all the plays. For tickets call Box Office at 602-589-2871 OR contact Nola.

Grand Canyon University's Ethington Theatre is near 35th Avenue on the north side of Camelback Road. Mail address: P.O. Box 11097, Phoenix AZ 85061-1097.

New Theatre to Open at PVCC
by Jean Palmer

I went to Paradise Valley Community College Thursday 10-6-05. The play 'Hall of Flame' will have performances Wed 10-12-05 and Thursday 10/13, & Friday 10/14 [invitation only Black tie], & Sat 10/15 [general public]. It is a brand new theatre & this will be the first performance in new facility. The play is about England/Europe in 1660's with plague and ships and I'm not sure what all. From dress rehearsal it looks like they are doing a good job. [Great Costumes].

Editor's Note: These costumes are more of Nola's work.

In Memory of Barry Bard
by Randall Whitlock

Barry Bard passed away October 7, 2005, succumbing at last to the pancreatic cancer he had fought for many months.



Photo by Carol DePriest from her TusCon archives at <http://www.dakotacom.net/~depriest/index.htm>

Barry was an institution among southwestern fen and SCA folk, who remember him as a convention chair, book dealer, and film promotion agent. Somehow, he always had that special costume book nobody else could find. Barry left us with shelves full of books, walls full of posters, drawers full of T-shirts, and hearts full of memories.

Seen at the October SWCG meeting at Bookman's.
Photos by Randall Whitlock



Lyn, Tasha, Jean



Kathleen