



Cactus Needles

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Southwest Costumers Guild, PO Box 39504,
Phoenix AZ 85069

www.southwestcostumersguild.org

Officer Contacts

President Frances Burns
Vice President Nyki Robertson
Treasurer Ros Lyn Jeppesen
Secretary Sharan Hoyle
Editor/Webmaster Randall Whitlock
Archivist Jean Palmer

president@southwestcostumersguild.org
vicepresident@southwestcostumersguild.org
treasurer@southwestcostumersguild.org
secretary@southwestcostumersguild.org
webmaster@southwestcostumersguild.org
archivist@southwestcostumersguild.org

Calendar

*Do you know an event of interest to Arizona costumers? Please contact your editor with the details. **Red text and an asterisk*** designate an SWCG-sponsored event. Unless otherwise noted, our monthly meetings start at 1PM. Green text indicates an event organized by our friends at SunaCosu.*

Third Saturday of Every Month – **Personal Projects Workshops*** at the Glendale Cascade Mobile Home Park community center, 5747 West Missouri Avenue, Glendale. Bring your current project, socialize, pick our brains, Stitch and B. . . . Contact VP Nyki or Secretary Sharan for details.

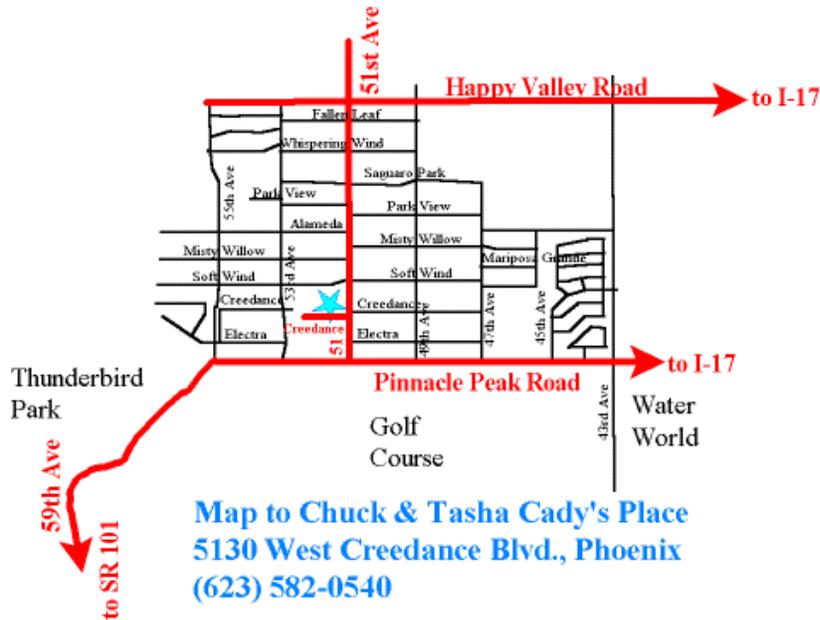
Monday, June 8th from 6-8 p.m. - **Fabric Genealogy** at Bernina Connection, 4219 E Indian School Rd # 103, Phoenix, AZ. Sign up (pay no fee) and join us on to spend time with the owners and designers from **Avlyn Inc.**, one of the premier fabric companies, who are headquartered here in Phoenix. This stuff is so fascinating ... believe me. If you have ever sewn on fabric, you need to know its story. There will be a book signing with Karen Coombs and amazing door prizes. This is one event you don't want to miss!

June 11-15, 2009 - **Highlands War** at Mormon Lake Campground near Flagstaff, Arizona. The Barony of Ered Sul's annual medieval mix-up of combat, arts, and sciences. Look for your editor on Merchant Row. <http://www.highlandswar.org/>

Through July 5 at the Phoenix Art Museum, 1625 North Central in Phoenix **Medievalism: Fashion's Romance With the Middle Ages** Romantic ideas of chivalry and courtly magnificence from the Middle Ages have inspired the use of medieval silhouettes and details in modern fashion design, literature, architecture and art. Featuring over 40 ensembles, accessories and rare books, this exhibition will show medieval influences on fashion designs of the early 19th century through current collections.

June 13, 2009 – [Sunacosu Open Workshop](http://www.sunacosu.com/). at Tempe Pyle Center (Southern & Rural).
<http://www.sunacosu.com/>

June 28, 2009 – **Pool Party*** (at Chuck & Tasha’s place. Our annual soggy social. Per Tasha, this year’s theme is “Over the Hill” in honor of Chuck’s birthday.



July 2-6, 2009 - **FiestaCon** (WesterCon 62) at the Tempe Mission Palms hotel in Tempe, Arizona. Guests so far include author Alan Dean Foster, Analog editor Stanley Schmidt and artist Todd Lockwood. Sponsored by www.fiestacon.org. *The masquerade is early this year, so folks can run up to the hotel roof to watch fireworks afterward.*

July 4-5, 2009 10-6 – **Grand Canyon Renaissance Faire and Mountain Music**

Festival at El Nathan Christian Camp near Flagstaff, Arizona. New renaissance faire features stage shows, music, summer marketplace, Friday night feast and an performance by Vyktoria Pratt Keating of Jethro Tull.

July 26, 2009 – **Beaded Crown*** at the Glendale Cascade Mobile Home Park community center, 5747 West Missouri Avenue, Glendale. Paula will demonstrate a basic and useful beading project.

August 23, 2009 – **Parasol Covering*** (tentative). Diane demonstrates how to alter a parasol for Victorian historical costume.

September 4-7, 2009 - **North American Discworld Convention** in Tempe, Arizona. The first convention in the United States for fans of Terry Pratchett's Discworld, featuring guest of honor **Sir Terry Pratchett** himself. www.nadwcon.org Sponsored by www.leprecon.com. Maskerade information at <http://members.cox.net/maskerade>. Look for Lyn’s “Costume Dungeon” for help with wardrobe malfunctions.

September 27, 2009 – **Happy Feet*** at the Glendale Cascade Mobile Home Park community center, 5747 West Missouri Avenue, Glendale. What do all of those special feet and attachments that came with your sewing machine REALLY do?

October 24, 2009 – **Old Tucson*** (tentative) Guild road trip to Old Tucson Studios to see their annual ghost town-themed Halloween event.

October 30-November 1, 2009 – **Saboten-Con** at the Hilton Phoenix East Mesa Hotel. An anime’ convention for the otaku in you. <http://www.sabotencon.com/>.

November 13-15, 2009 – **TusCon 36** at the InnSuites Hotel in Tucson, Arizona. This year's guest of honor is Stoker Award winning author Weston Ochse. <http://home.earthlink.net/~basfa/>

November 14, 2009 – **Phoenix Faerie Festival** at Estrella Mountain Regional Park in Goodyear, Arizona. A celebration of the myth and fantasy of the enchanted realms of Faerie right here in beautiful Arizona. Features art & craft booths. Stay after dark for Queen Mabb's Dark Courte and the Bad Faerie Masquerade Ball. Tix \$10, Kids under 5 free. <http://www.westerngatesfaierrealms.com/PhoenixFaerieFestival.htm>

November 22, 2009 – **The Clown Wars*** (tentative). Guild demo on the basics of clown costuming.

December 27, 2009 – **Glendale Glitters*** (tentative) Guild outing to the annual Glendale Glitters street festival. Time & day may need to be adjusted according to the festival's schedule.

January 15-17, 2010 – **DarkCon** at the Grace Inn Phoenix, 10827 South 51st, Phoenix. <http://www.darkcon.org/>

Cone Heads

by Randall Whitlock

(With thanks to high fashion models Jean and Gary)

A cone is a very simple shape, circular at the base and pointy at the top. It's the basis for a great many historical and fantasy hats.



The Simple Cone

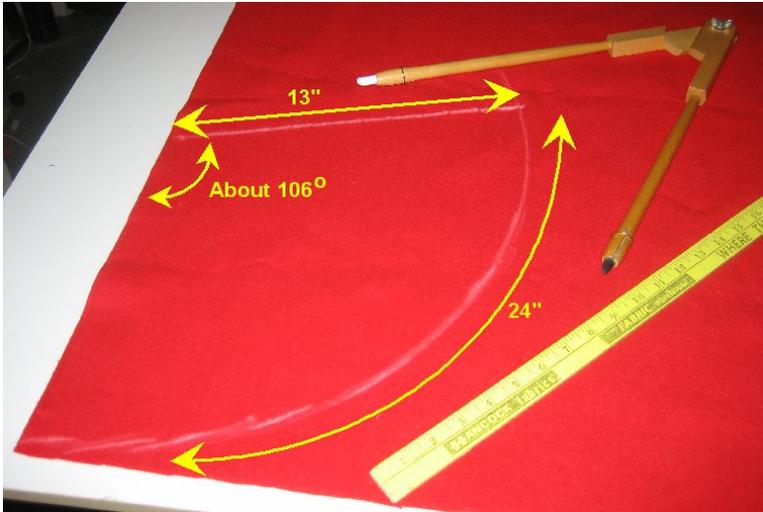
You can make a suitable cone hat pattern by drawing a sector of a circle, something like a broad pie wedge. First, measure the circumference of your forehead with a tape measure, right above the eyebrows. Call this number "L," for no obvious reason. On my own melon, L comes out to 23 inches. Add an inch to L for seam allowance and wearing ease I'll call that L Prime. My L Prime is 24 inches.

Let's call the height of your hat "R" because it is the radius of your circle. The larger the value of R, the taller your hat will be. For myself and most adults, 13 inches makes a good value of R for hats meant to stand up vertical.

You can use much larger values of R for hats meant to droop down your back, like those worn by Link from the "Legend of Zelda" games, a Zoave soldier, or a Canadian Voyageur.

Scribe an arc of radius R and arc length L Prime on your fabric or pattern paper. A blackboard compass is great for this sort of thing, but you can make do with string or a yardstick. You can do math to calculate the apex angle (about 106 degrees) or the chord length, but I find it easier just to run a tape measure along the arc to measure its length.

You now have a pattern for a tall cone. There are all manner of things you can do with it.



Cut two of these cone patterns out of a stiff fabric like craft felt. Sew them together along the arc. Turn the seam right side out and reinforce it with top stitching. Close the hat by folding it over and sewing it closed along the straight line from brim to apex.

You now have what I call the "Simple Cone" hat. It is good for dunces, lawn gnomes, Pagliacci, or Hogwarts firsties. You can make your hat plain, or decorate it with trims, appliques,

rhinestones, etc.



Make a simple cone out of flesh-colored material to be Beldar, Prymatt, or perhaps Conehead the Barbarian.

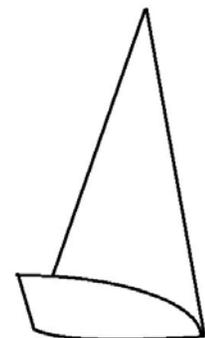
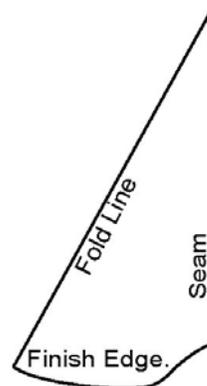
If you wish to make your cone out of thin material, but still have it stand up, you can make a stiff cone out of leather or buckram and slip it inside the hat. You could also hand-baste a bit of corset boning to the inside seam to hold the hat upright.

The Hennin

Hennins are cone-shaped hats which were popular in 15th Century Europe. There are many variations on the theme, with double cones to form horns, truncated (flat-topped) cones favored by gentlemen, etc. A simple cone hennin with a veil or scarf is the image that comes to mind when you think of the Princess in a fairy tale, fractured or otherwise.



Unless your hat is made quite stiff (see suggestions above), it will have trouble supporting the weight of a scarf or veil from the top point. For this reason I worked up my own version of the pattern. It has a rolled up brim with a gap in the back so that a scarf or decorative cord can wrap around the hat at forehead level, then drape down your back. We make these sometimes for Guild fundraisers.



Rolled-up brim forms channel for scarf.

Randall's Hennin Variant.



Brim

I don't know where we get the notion that magic users wear pointy hats, but it goes way back, maybe as far as Sumerian astrologers. Your basic "witch" or "wizard" hat is often portrayed with a brim.

You can make a simple brim pattern by drawing two concentric circles. The inner circle has a circumference of L (not L prime). Find its radius by dividing L by 2π . For me this is $23 \text{ inches} / 3.14 / 2 = 3.65 \text{ inches}$. Set your compass accordingly and draw the circle.

The outer circle has a radius chosen according to how wide and floppy you want the hat to be. Draw the outer circle, then cut it out. Cut out the

inner circle to form a torus I call the "Basic Hat Donut."

A basic hat donut with a six-inch radius (12-inch diameter) will make a brim that's distinctive, but not too floppy to be manageable. It's also great for berets and flatcaps, as I described in 2006 as "The Science of the Round Hat." (See Connotations 16.3 or Cactus Needles 13.6.)

Lay out the hat donut pattern on two layers of fabric, right sides together, and mark the inner and outer circles with chalk. Sew through the outer circle, then trim away the excess fabric about one quarter inch outboard from the seam. Cut out the inner circle and turn the brim right side out through the middle of the donut. Run your fingers around the inside of the donut to stretch out and smooth the outer edge of the brim. You may wish to topstitch to set the shape of the brim.

Sew the inside edge of the donut to the base of your cone to form the brimmed hat. It may take some creative pinning to get the two curves to match up.

If you'd like a wider brim, like the Wicked Witch of the West, you may need to apply wire to its outside edge for support. Milliner's wire is best for this. It's a mild steel wire wrapped in thread and can be purchased from online sewing supplies stores or hat making specialists. I like to start out with a single-thickness hat donut, zigzag stitch the wire to the outer edge of the brim, then cover it with trim.

Basic black is great for fairy tale witches. Embroidered or appliquéd stars, moons and other cereal marshmallow shapes are good for wizards and astrologers.



I like to add a leather headband with buckle to brimmed cone hats. You don't have to sew this in place, just lower it onto the cone.

Variations

There are many other conical variations in the world of fantasy hat making. Cones with hooks on the top are good for Punch and Judy or Christmas elves. Cone-shaped hoods or hoods with "liripipes" were popular in the 14th Century. Short, floppy cones are good for early medieval Phrygian Caps, 18th Century Liberty Caps, Night Caps or Smurfs. Some floppy cones from the high middle ages were so long they could be wrapped around the head once or twice for a turban-like effect. There are Viking and Mongolian winter hats formed of several convergent leather triangles and a fur headband.

Roving Camera

Erica teaches us a thing or two about adjusting patterns to your body form at the May meeting.



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Welcome to our new ICG Officers

President: Rob Himmelsbach
VP: Ann Catelli
Corresponding Secretary: Kelly Lynch
Recording Secretary: Aurora Celeste (Jackie Bowin)
Treasurer: Jeanine Swicke

This Just In from the Phoenix ComiCon Folks:

Hello everyone,

I have been asked to pass along some information to the costuming community by the Phoenix Comicon Programming Director, Joe Boudrie:

For those of you who don't know, Phoenix Comicon has hosted a filmfestival during our convention for several years. We're always looking for new ways to grow and exciting new opportunities and recently we had a chance to sit down and talk with the organizers of the Almost Famous Film Festival. They are also a local group that works very hard to create a forum for creative minds to work on exciting and unique projects and to present a fun, engaging and educational event where professionals, aspiring creators and fans can get together and enjoy their passions.

They have a very exciting new idea for a film challenge project this fall and are interested in talking to creators from the costuming and comic book art communities about getting involved.

They asked us to reach out to our friends in those communities and we're very happy to be able to do that. We also know from our work with local film makers through our own film festival, that Arizona has a lot of great film makers that produce excellent work. I think the opportunity here is very exciting and if you're interested in learning more about it, please contact the Almost Famous Film Festival through Jae Staats at jae@thea3f.net. <http://www.thea3f.net/>

Joe Boudrie
Senior Director of Programming
Phoenix Comicon

Again, if you are interested in more details regarding this project, email Jae Staats at jae@thea3f.net.

Thank you for providing costuming programming to Phoenix Comicon. I hope to count on you for future events.

Thanks,
Cira Peterson
Costuming Director
Phoenix Comicon
costuming@phoenixcomicon.com