



Get Wrapped Up In Cactus Needles

Volume 17, Number 8 – August 2010

Southwest Costumers Guild, PO Box 39504,
Phoenix AZ 85069

<http://www.southwestcostumersguild.org/>

Left: Paula, Rebecca and Tasha build a duct tape dress form around Theresa at our July workshop.

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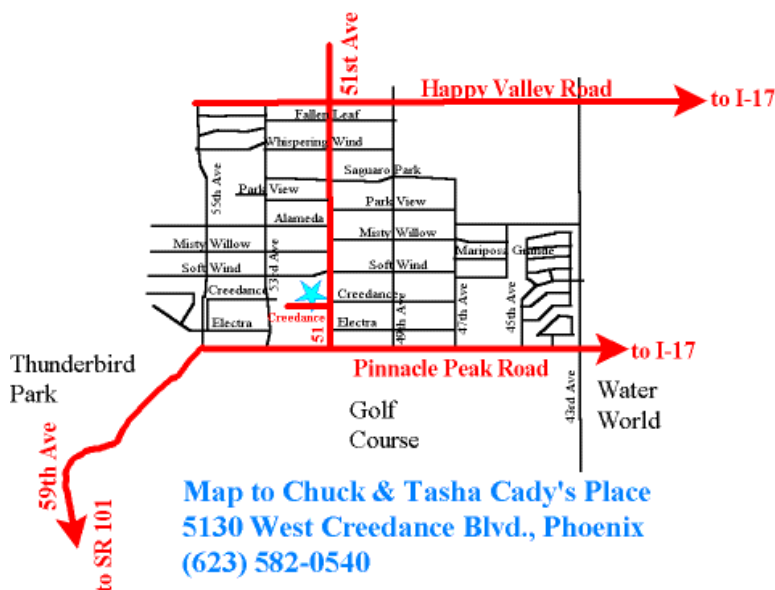
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Calendar

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 hosted by our friends at SunaCosu (<http://www.sunacosu.com/>)

Third Saturday of Every Month, 10 AM – **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 for details.

August 7, 2010, 1-3:45 PM – **Sunacosu Photography Demo** at the Pyle Adult Recreation Center, Rural Road & Southern in Tempe, AZ.



August 29, 2010 – **Pool Party*** - SWCG Social at Chuck & Tasha's place. Our annual costume party by and in the pool. The theme is "**Wet and Wild.**" Think swimmable animal costumes.

September 4-6, 2010 – **CopperCon 2010** at Windemere Hotel and Conference Center 5750 East Main Street in Mesa, Arizona. The Guest of Honor is Stephen R. Donaldson. The con features a masquerade directed by our veep, Nyki.
<http://www.coppercon.org/>.

August 11th, 2010 6:30pm - **Are You A Rosie?** at the Phoenix Art Museum.

To join the workforce, design and create your own 1940s-style head wear. Make chic hair accessories inspired by the current fashion exhibition, "In the Mood". A member of the curatorial staff is on hand to demonstrate the special wig-making process that tops off each of our unique exhibitions. No reservations required; materials provided. Open to visitors 12 years old - adult. Events are included with Museum general admission.

August 20, 2010 – **Tucson's 235th Birthday Celebration** including a ceremony at the Presidio San Augustin presenting the five flags which have flown over Tucson. Check out <http://emol.org/tucson/history/tucsonbirthday.html> for more Tucson birthday celebrations.

September 4-6, 2010, 10-4 - Rendezvous of the Gunfighters in Tombstone, Arizona
<http://www.tombstonechamber.com/Rendezvous-of-Gunfighters>

September 5, 2010 – Submissions Deadline for September Cactus Needles. Tell us about a good materials source.

September 8th, 2010, 12:30pm - **Thing To Wear** (Lecture) at the Phoenix Art Museum

Worn for centuries by women, men, and children, the word "kimono" literally means a "thing to wear" (ki = "wear" and mono = "thing"). On September 8 at 12:30pm, members of the Japanese Cultural Club of Arizona present the evolution of the kimono during the last 150 years. Beautifully preserved wedding and ceremonial kimonos from the mid- to late-19th century and many other exquisite objects from a private collection will be on view for the first time. Presented by the Museum's Arizona Costume Institute. For optional luncheon, call (602) 307-2011.

September 11, 2010, 1PM – **SunaCosu Feather Wing Workshop** at the Pyle Adult Education Center, Southern & Rural in Tempe.

September 19, 2010 – **Can't Stop the Space Pirates** at the MadCap Theater, East of 7th Street & Mill Avenue in Tempe, Arizona.

Did you miss us at Phoenix ComiCon? Then you probably missed the big news! Our Phoenix 2010 Can't Stop the Serenity event is shaping up to be a doozy! With the generosity and support of [Bookmans Entertainment Exchange](#) and [MADCAP Theaters](#), and with the help of the [Arizona Corsairs](#) and the Honorable Society of Phoenix Anachrofuturists, the [Arizona Browncoats](#) proudly present a charity double-feature matinee and musical event we're calling Can't Stop the Space Pirates.

Join us for back-to-back screenings of [Serenity](#), [The Ice Pirates](#), and [Dr. Horrible's Sing-Along Blog](#) with musical performances by [Thunder Stump](#) and [Unwoman](#). It's all happening Sunday, September 19th (Talk Like a Pirate Day!) beginning at noon at MADCAP Theaters in Tempe. Ticket prices and purchase information is coming soon. All proceeds raised by the Arizona Browncoats will go to [Equality Now](#), while the Arizona Corsairs will be donating their proceeds to the [Phoenix Children's Hospital](#). So, mark your calendars and be prepared to get your geek on for this fun-filled day of laughs, camaraderie, and even a few "arrrs" here and there.

For all the details check out our web page at www.azbrowncoats.org/CSTS/Phoenix. Don't have time to check the website regularly? Sign up for our [email list](#) and get a weekly update of everything that's been posted.

September 26, 2010 – **Fabric Swap*** - SWCG meeting at the Glendale Cascade Mobile Home Park community center, 5747 West Missouri Avenue, Glendale. Sure, that piece of fabric, notion, or tool seemed like a good idea at the time, but it's been sitting around for years. Maybe someone else has a better use for it. Maybe they have something you can use. Let's barter!

October - Feb **Tucson Historic Hauntings** a tour of Downtown Tucson's Historic buildings, Hauntings, and Stories costume are welcome make sure to bring camera \$10.00 per person for info and reservations please contact tuazghostgirl@q.com

October 5, 2010 – Submissions Deadline for October Cactus Needles. What are your plans for Halloween?

October 15-17, 2010 – **Wild Western Festival** at Sahuaro Ranch Historical Park, 59th Avenue, north of Olive in Glendale, Arizona. http://www.wildwesternfestival.com/WWF_Home.htm

October 15-17, 2010 – **Helldorado Days** in Tombstone, Arizona. Began as a celebration of Tombstone's 50th anniversary in 1929! Street entertainment, Chili Cookoff, carnival, Live Music, Parade on Sunday. Free <http://www.tombstonechamber.com/Helldorado-Days-81st-Annual>

October 23, 2010 – **State Fair Demo***. From Lyn: “The Guild is scheduled for a whole day at the State Fair, on Saturday, October 23d (second weekend of the Fair). MaryEllen would appreciate us coming in costume to get more attention, and has promised a prime spot for us. Anyone also wanting to work on a project may do so. It is suggested that we do 4 hour shifts so no one has to stay all day. Parking (17th avenue entrance) and admission is free.”

November 7, 2010 – **All Souls Procession** in Tucson, Arizona. Capstone of events surrounding the Dia de Los Muertos celebration. <http://www.allsoulsprocession.org/>

November 12-14, 2010 - **TusCon 37** at Hotel Tucson, 475 N. Granada in Tucson, Arizona. Guest of Honor is Jim Butcher, Author of the Harry Dresden and Codex Alera novels. <http://home.earthlink.net/~basfa/> or <http://www.tusconscificon.com/>.

November 20-21, 2010 – **Phoenix Faerie Festival** at Estrella Mountain Park in Goodyear, Arizona. <http://www.westerngatesfaerierealms.com/PhoenixFaerieFestival.htm>

December 11, 2010 – **Corsair Carnivale II: Raid on le Soiree** at 2915 W. Bell Road Phoenix. Pirate-themed ball for the benefit of Phoenix Children's Hospital. <http://www.corsaircarnivale.com/>

January 6-9, 2011 – **MythosCon** at the Tempe Mission Palms Hotel in downtown Tempe, Arizona. This is a convention for fans of H.P. Lovecraft and his works. <https://www.mythoscon.org/>

January 13-15, 2012 – **DarkCon 2012**. www.darkcon.org

January 22, 2011 - **Dillinger Days** at the Hotel Congress in Tucson, Arizona. See where 1930s public enemy John Dillinger and his gang were nabbed in Tucson, with historical reenactments. <http://www.hotelcongress.com/>

March 4-6, 2011 – **Wild Wild West Steampunk Convention** at Old Tucson Studios, Tucson, Arizona. Arizona's first steampunk convention. <http://wildwildwestcon.com/>

March 12-13, 2011 – **Tucson Festival of Books** on the University of Arizona campus in Tucson, Arizona. <http://tucsonfestivalofbooks.org/>

March 20, 2011, 10AM – **131st Railroad Silver Spike Festival** at the Southern Arizona Transportation Museum, 414 N. Toole Avenue in Tucson, Arizona. Celebrate the coming of the railroad in 1880. <http://www.tucsonhistoricdepot.org/>

May, 2012 – **Costume-Con 30*** "Sands of Time" Location and exact dates to be announced. <http://www.costumecon30.org/>

Confirmation Masquerade (WesterCon, Pasadena, 2010)

Reviewed by Tasha Cady

The MC was Paul Kwinn. Judges were Janet Anderson (workmanship), Joni Dashoff, Kevin Roche and Espana Sheriff. Sandy Manning was director. As (alas) too often happens lately she was scratching / pleading to get entries.

There was one youth entry. Anna Maria Hansen was a darling little fairy.

A couple of novices. One yours truly clothed and choreographed. Sherri Benoun did not-too-effective sorceress who only manages to turn her feet into leopard feet. I hope this encourages her to enter more masquerades.

Carol Parker did her normal lovely dye job, and a cute presentation of a butterfly attracted to a flash light beam.

Chet Cady entered as a novice. He's won numerous awards as a child, and some where he was a part of a group where others made the costumes. This time he did 95+% of the work – including all the leather work and tooling that got him a workmanship award. His Jedi Knight of the Old Republic was "Most Faithful to the Source"

Tasha and Chuck Cady did a costume inspired by Gail Carriger's Alexia Tarabotti (Parasol Protectorate) novels. Tasha, as Alexia's friend Ivy in one of her signature atrocious hats scaring off a vampire (Chuck). I'll bring said hat to a meeting and you can see just how outrageous it is.

Dr. Who's Mother (Lin Danial) was amusing with oversized knitting needles in her hair and new scarf she was making him.

Vicki Glover did superb job as a 'dragon fly', quite masterful.

Sandy got one of the dealers to show off with three display only steam punk outfits. Our own local Nora Rankin was one of the models. Use the link below to see all the photos Andrew Trembley took after the show. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/bovil/sets/72157624297888373/>

Vintage Clothing Fashion Show at Matilda's Closet

6950 N 57th Drive, Glendale AZ (623.847.1847)

Photos by Ed Sharpe, used by permission. See The Glendale Daily Planet at www.glendadedailyplanet.com for the full story and many more (higher res) pictures.



Left: 30 ladies crepe dress w/ hat , gloves and alligator shoes. Jennifer Suppon with David in 30s brown houndstooth suit w/ spectator shoes and fedora. Middle: Stephanie Walton in 50's 2 pc brown cotton "squaw" or patio dress with sisters Sarah and Sandy in pink corduroy and blue crepe squaw dresses. Right: Christi Kelly in 70s polyester 2 pc bell bottoms and tie on crop top with corded ribbon decoration.

Save Your Sole

with this Tip from Cat Devereaux

Fab trick I learned from someone who did Cali's Ren and Victorian Fairs but didn't want to break the bank on "period" shoes....

Buy something in a regular store that's as close to the style as you want, then take them into an old fashion shoe store and have them attach a full 1/4 sole to the brand new shoe. Have them use rubber, not leather. (Better grip and cheaper.) And while they're there, have the stretched a bit to help w/ the break-in.

This works much better than jamming in insoles that won't stay stable and it totally absorbs the rocks.

The sole modification isn't so extreme that you can't wear them for regular as well. I used to keep one set of boots and one set of "Victorian" laceups fixed like that.

The biggest trick is finding a shoe store that's more like a "cobbler" than so of these modern places that don't want to do custom work. Maybe someone local can share their favorite folks. I would, but my guy in West Hollywood wouldn't do anyone much good, and who does these modification, can make a difference.

For local shoe repair shops, Gail suggests Lamb's Shoe Repair at 28 S MacDonald in Mesa. Frances suggests Tony's Shoe Repair, with locations in Christown Mall, at 3110 N Central in Phoenix and 7062 E Indian School in Scottsdale. – Ed.

Grand Canyon Renaissance Faire and Medieval Mayhem

Reviewed by Randall Whitlock.

In northern Arizona, July means renaissance faires. I scoped out two faires this year with an eye toward participating as a merchant/crafter next year.



The Grand Canyon Renaissance Faire (<http://www.gcrenfaire.com>) was held over the Independence Day weekend at the El Nathan Christian Camp, a children's summer camp right across old Route 66 from Flagstaff Mall. It's at the foot of Elden Mountain, which makes for a commanding view but perpetual wind.

I carpoled to the faire with Marsi, the newest member of SWCG (left), who snapped this picture of me enjoying a Navajo taco at the food stand operated by volunteers from the camp (right).



The Grand Canyon faire is run by some of the same folks who used to bring us Renaissance in the Pines, so there were many familiar faces among the merchants and entertainers. There was a high density of entertainment for a faire this size, with musicians, falconers, dancers and Shakespearian players.

Medieval Mayhem (<http://www.azmayhem.com/>) moved from Show Low to Lakeside, Arizona this year and is now situated in a pleasant small city park. The weather did not cooperate, with the first of the year's monsoon storms dropping some inconvenient rain. As an oven-roasted Phoenician, I found this refreshing.



Due to the distance (a four-hour drive each way), I did not get to stay long to enjoy the entertainments, but I got the impression of an intimately friendly small event. Being in Lakeside, the merchantry tended toward the metaphysical, with a few flavors of readers and incense vendors. Strangely, not too much in the way of basic garb. MoiRandall's should fit right in next year.

Begin the Biggin

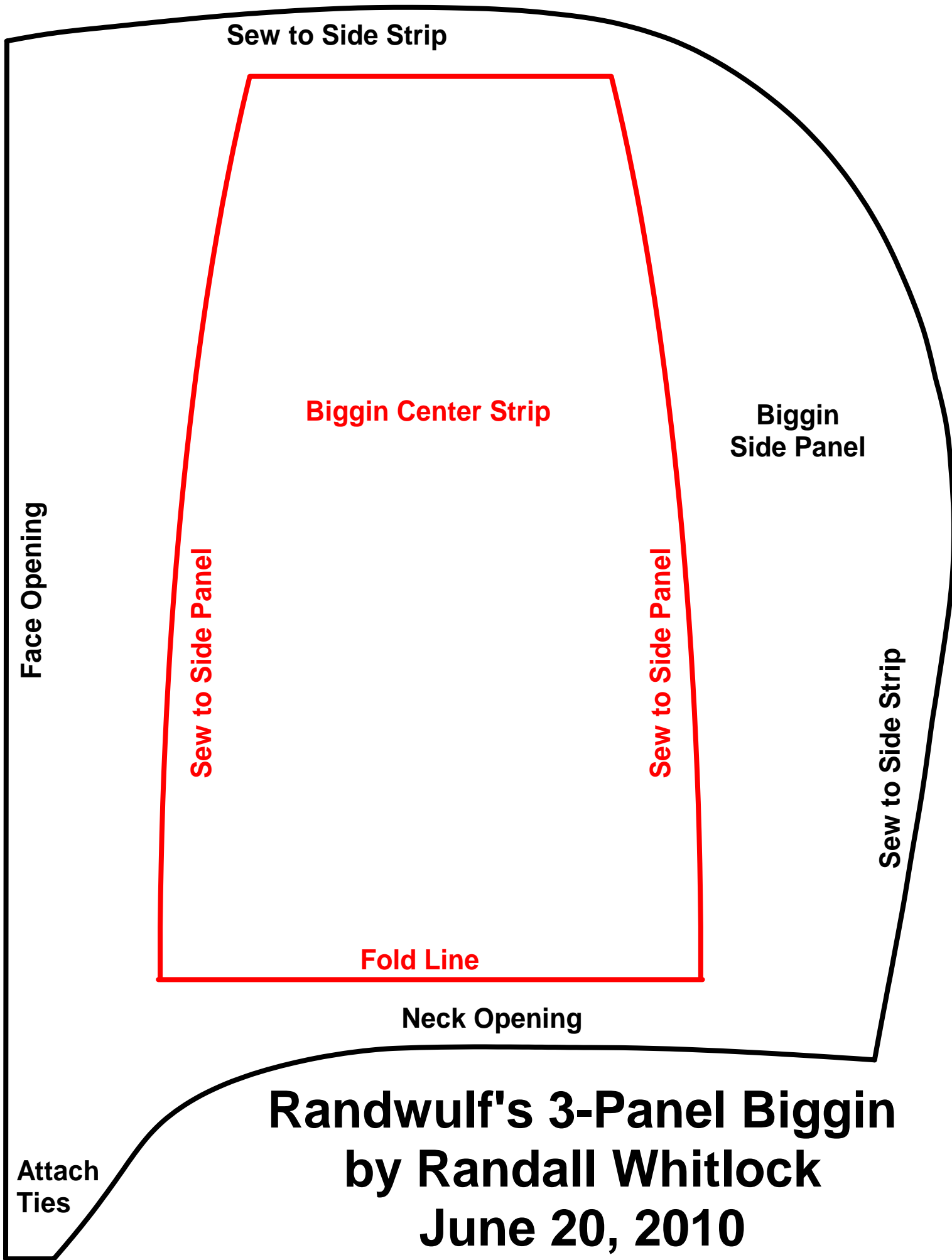
by Randall Whitlock



A biggin is a close-fitting hood or skullcap that covers the ears. It ties under the chin. These caps are very popular among medieval and renaissance reenactors, worn by men, women and children as a simple, practical cap for insulation or sun protection. Watch the background characters in “Monty Python and the Holy Grail” for many variations.

“Biggin” is a 17th-century word derived from the “Beguines,” a lay sisterhood within the Roman Catholic Church who were active in northern Europe from the middle ages through the 1600s. They may have worn a similar cap. The name has nothing to do with the ballroom dance or the Cole Porter song it is danced to. I just couldn't resist the pun for my title.

The name may be 17th century, but the basic shape of the hat goes back more than a thousand years. Two-panel biggins have been found in archaeological digs at 10th century Norse settlements near Coppergate, England. Not surprisingly, these are called “coppergate caps” among the reenactor culture.



Sew to Side Strip

Biggin Center Strip

Biggin Side Panel

Face Opening

Sew to Side Panel

Sew to Side Panel

Sew to Side Strip

Fold Line

Neck Opening

Attach Ties

**Randwulf's 3-Panel Biggin
by Randall Whitlock
June 20, 2010**

The pattern presented on the previous page makes a simple, close-fitting biggin in three panels. The center strip is a long ellipse truncated at the ends. The center strip pattern is shown projected across a fold line so it will fit onto 8.5 by 11-inch paper. It is sewn to two side panels that follow the sides of your head. The base more or less follows your jaw line. I've printed the center strip pattern in red surrounded by the side panel pattern in black to save space.

The pattern is based on my head size, which is about 23 inches around the forehead. It works fine for smaller heads, with a looser fit. You can scale the pattern up or down if needed.

This pattern will work with all manner of fabrics. Lightweight muslins and linens are good for summer. Felted wool is good for heavy winter caps. Fleece works fine if you aren't constrained to look very "period." Lightweight leather will work too.

If your fabric has a right and wrong side, be sure that the two side panels are mirror images of each other. The center strip is symmetrical end for end and side to side, so you can't mess up. If your fabric has a direction of stretch, it should run sideways, not up and down. Do not cut on the bias.

Cut two side panels and one center strip. Pin the edges of the center strip to the curved edges of the side panels. If you have cut and pinned carefully, the seam length should match up perfectly. Adjust by moving your pins if needed.

Sew the side panels to the center strip using a 1/4-inch seam allowance. An overlock serger works very well for this.

Cut a few inches of macramé cord, shoestring or narrow grosgrain ribbon for ties and attach these to the lower portion of the face opening.

Finish the edges of the face opening and neck opening by turning under and sewing. I like to run a serge around the edge first. If you intend to serge the edges, do it before you apply the ties and turn under.

You can make a lining for your biggin or make your biggin reversible. Just make two biggins as described above and pin them together, right sides together and seams facing outward. Sew the lining to the shell by stitching around the edge. Leave a couple of inches at the back of the neck unsewn. Turn the biggin rightside out by pulling it through this unsewn opening. Smooth out the edges and topstitch to finish the edges and close the gap in back.

This three-panel shape has many applications. Besides the medieval biggin, it can form the sides of a billed cap or a leather aviator helmet. The Apollo astronauts wore something similar under their space helmets, with communications headsets sewn into the fabric.

On the Web

Grow Fabric in your Bathtub? (found by Cat and Anna). Cool pictures. <http://www.ecouterre.com/20103/u-k-designer-grows-an-entire-wardrobe-from-tea-fermenting-bacteria/>

YIPE! Volume 2, Issue 7, "Dregs," is now available for free download from <http://www.yipezine.com> in both high-resolution and lower-resolution formats.



Right: A fully vulcanized Jim Strait officiated the ceremony. Photo by Randall.

Live Long and Prosper

Dr. Kim Smith and Dr. Dave Williams celebrated their Star Trek-themed wedding, before their friends from the United Federation of Phoenix (<http://www.u-f-p.org/>) at the Kiwanis Park Recreation Center in Tempe, Arizona on July 24, 2010. Your editor was honored to serve as best man. Left to right: Toni Moore, Kim Smith, Dave Williams, Randall Whitlock. Photo by David Bluestein.



Grand Canyon University Costume Shop Rebuild

Four years ago, I worked at Grand Canyon University as their Costume Designer. About the time I quit to go to graduate school, GCU was having severe financial difficulties. The new owners decided to cut any program that did not bring in money (or lost money) to the school. Thus the theater department, art department and music department programs were all shut down. Everything from these departments was sold to make some quick cash for the school that was severely in debt.

Today, GCU is back in the black and is doing a thriving business with their online classes. They have decided to bring back the Theater Department. I have been hired to re-build their costume shop and to design their first show, *Pirates of Penzance*. Of course the costume shop has nothing. And while I was given a budget to buy a lot of the shop basics to get us started we still have a ways to get back to where we should be as a functioning shop. So I am looking for donations... So if you (or anyone you know) is cleaning out your sewing room and want to get rid of some things, or if you would be willing to donate to the cause here are some of the things on my wish list:

misc craft supplies	fabric	trim	large pots for dyeing
electric burner	couch	comfy chairs	wooden spoons
towels	measuring cups	fold up drying rack	wall hooks
thread holder	thread	pins	safety pins
scissors	butcher paper	masking tape	scotch tape

yard sticks	buttons	snaps	hooks
dress forms (any size or style)	ironing board	racks	washing machine & dryer
shelving bins w/ small drawers (the kind from Home Depot that you might store nails in)			

Please contact me at nola@designbynola.com if you can assist with re-building the costume shop. Thanks so much! -- Nola Yergen-Jennings

SWCG Meeting Minutes for June 27, 2010

Submitted by Jean Palmer

The meeting was called to order @ 1:20 PM

Randall reported on Highland War sales of SWCG items from his booth=est \$300. (exact figure \$334 – ed.)

NOTE: Correction re # of CC30 memberships sold @ LepreCon –1 less than originally reported.

Margaret reported: The proposed by-laws are out of committee. Some discussion ensued—procedures and terms were defined, monthly meetings –meet several times a year. Some copies were passed out for us to peruse and comment on i.e., Yes OK or back to committee to re-do.???

Discussed July meeting plans [duct-tape dummies] & what we should bring—2 skin-tight T-shirts, 2 rolls duct tape, & pillow stuffing,

We have a new member = Marsi She is into Civil War & Rev War reenactments. She makes the garb as historically correct as possible, fabric sewing methods, trim, accessories, etc. Got her first sewing machine @ 5.

Talked about CC30 possible dates. & hotel—almost done—[will probably be Mother’s Day weekend] the hotel contract has gone out to Con Com.

Chat, snacks, gone by 5PM

Minutes of the July 25, 2010 meeting of the Southwest Costumers Guild

Submitted by Theresa Contos

Duct Tape Dummies - 12 Noon to 5PM

Business meeting called to order @ 5:05 PM

Guests: Elaine M., Rebecca Hayes, Marsi Millonzi, Dan Imvised, Amanda Pardo, Sean Martin, Corrina Lentz

Reports

Treasurer: Current account balance as of 6/30/2010 is \$2882.38

Secretary: Not in attendance at the June meeting minutes were taken by Jean and will be available when she locates them.

Bylaw Committee: A draft copy of the new bylaws is available from the Yahoo Groups site.
The plan is to review and vote on the new bylaws at the August meeting.

Old Business: No old business

New Business:

The webmaster points out that the guild needs a standalone website of its own.
An investigation of the cost(s) associated with hosting services shall ensue.

Announcements:

Jean mentions that Nola has found the condition of the Grand Canyon University costume shop to considerably less than optimal and is requesting donations to help restore it back to some semblance of functionality. Their upcoming production is Gilbert and Sullivan's "*The Pirates of Penzance*". Currently the greatest need is for costumes and material that would in aid of this production.

Meeting closed at 5:30 PM

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