



Cactus Needles

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Southwest Costumers Guild, PO Box 39504

Phoenix AZ 85069

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

Learn to make Vambraces, like this pair from Chet Cady.

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On the Web

Check out Mike Contos's photographs from the **2014 Palm Springs Modernism Week Fashion Show** at <http://flic.kr/s/aHsjTzKxZZ>.

From Our War Correspondent

I just got back from Estrella War. It's interesting how in the SCA nobility and royalty tend to set the fashion trends. The Tyr Ysgithyr Baron and Baroness had gone Greco-Roman, so I saw a lot of short tunics on men and chitons on women. A lot of them were very nicely done, and so practical for the Arizona climate. On the other hand, one gentleman was wandering around in a Russian boyar's coat trimmed in real wolf skin. Tak krasivii! I LOVE War! - Tasha

Meeting Minutes February 23, 2014

At Jean Palmer's Home

Recorded by Randall

Attending – Jean, Mahala, Paula, David, Randall

Meeting Social Activity – We installed curtain rods and towel racks and performed other small-scale tasks to help Jean settle into her new house. We made lemonade from her tree. Mahala baked and brought some excellent herb bread made with rosemary from Jean's Sun City garden.

Called to order at 3:46 PM. No formal reading of minutes.

No formal Treasurer's report. Checkbook has been passed from Margie to Tasha via Randall and Mahala.

The Vice President would like all members to send her their current telephone numbers and mailing addresses for meeting reminders and potential carpool coordination.

Newsletter, Webmaster discussion – Randall will try some adjustments to deal with e-mail forward and Yahoo Groups problems being experienced by Mahala and Tasha.

A Thank-You card for Elisabeth Cook was passed around for signing. Bethy recently gifted a stack of zippered garment bags to the membership.

An informal discussion of possible meeting topics for this year ensued. Possible carpooling to Winter Range, Arizona Renaissance Festival and Estrella War were considered.

Paula recommends a thrift store/antique clothing store/SAS crawl around greater Tempe. This would need to be on a Saturday since SAS is closed Sundays.

Traveling together to the Phoenix Art Museum for the Hollywood Costume exhibit was discussed. A suggestion was made to attend on a Wednesday when museum admission is free. (Subsequent e-mail discussion between the Secretary Randall and SWCG/Museum member Anna, however, has revealed that a Hollywood Costume ticket also confers access to all other exhibits, so this point is moot.)

The topic for the April 27 SWCG meeting is tentatively a library sorting and cataloging session at Jean's place. (Margie verified that there is an SWCG Assets Google Docs spreadsheet to use as a basis for the library catalog.)

VP Mahala would like guild support for a "Friday Night Inevitable" social she will propose to this year's LepreCon committee.

Mahala also bounced an idea for a group costume off of the assembled company. It's magically delicious.

Meeting adjourned 5:30 PM.

Vambraces



Vambraces are long wrist and forearm covers worn as armor or decoration. In SF, they take on additional uses as foundations for high-tech gadgets and weapons. Think Space Ghost, Syndrome from "The Incredibles," or Leela from "Futurama." A bracelet is just a very short vambrace.

The basics of vambraces were the topic of January's SWCG Workshop. Take a look at Tasha's basic instruction set handout on the following page.

Above is Randall's work in progress, a pattern for a lace-up vambrace for mounting an iPod and maybe a steampunked laser pointer. This mockup is done in foam. The finished product would be leather or painted canvas. Chet's armor-grade leather vambraces with two-buckle closure are seen in this issue's masthead.

Vambraces

A vambrace is basically a forearm cover. Historically, it was protective. It could, however, be decorative as well. A vambrace can cover some to all of the forearm. It can fasten with laces or straps and buckles (or, for modern, purely decorative vambraces, Velcro – you need to overlap the sides of the vambrace for this.). Vambraces are usually made of a protective material – metal, or leather. For a fashion-statement vambrace, you can use any fairly stiff material, including craft-foam sheets.

How to size a vambrace

- 1) Measure around your wrist. Determine how much of a gap, if any, you want between the two sides of the vambrace. This is measurement a.
- 2) Along the inside of your forearm, measure how long you want this part of the vambrace. It can be (considerably) shorter than the length of the vambrace on the outside of the arm. This is measurement b.
- 3) At the length measured in step 2, measure around your forearm. Determine how much of a gap, if any, you want between the two sides of the vambrace. This is measurement c.
- 4) Draw a truncated triangle as shown. Draw a. Mark the midpoint. Draw b. Draw c so that the midpoint is at the end of line b. Connect the endpoints of lines a and c with lines d. You will cut out along a,d,c,d,

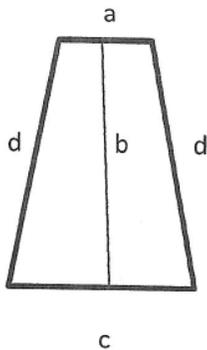


Figure 1

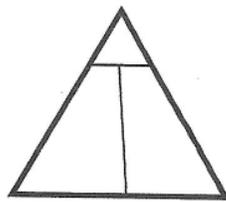


Figure 2

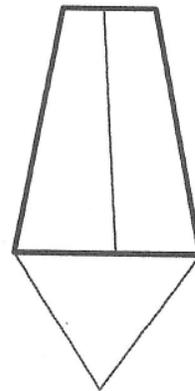


Figure 3

Figure 1 is a basic, functional vambrace.

You can punch holes, with or without grommets, along both d lines and lace the vambrace. You can add straps and buckles, usually 3 to 5 depending on the length of the vambrace. The straps can go all the way around the forearm, or be just long enough to attach to the sides of the vambrace and close it around the arm

If you want something fancier, you can extend the vambrace. Extending it as shown in figure 2 will give you a point over the hand. Extending it as shown in figure 3 gives a point over the elbow. You can get as fanciful and imaginative as the material you are using will allow.

Meet Your Officers
Vice President Mahala Sweebe

Hello. Most of you know me, but for those of you who don't, I was asked to write something about myself. Since Randall always needs material, I thought I would give you the long version, which I have never done before.

Like most of you, when I was a kid in small town Kansas I loved dressing up in costumes for Halloween and Christmas pageants. I don't know whether to say I never grew up -- or I never outgrew my love of costuming -- both are true.

I moved to Phoenix in 1970 and moved in with my sister Darlene and brother-in-law Jim Rutherford, both heavy science fiction readers. Jim had been on the edge of fandom in Chicago in the '50s as a kid and told me once or twice that there was a fandom and conventions out there somewhere. Darlene's best friend Julie Douglas also knew something about fandom. She had an aunt who lived in California and in the late 40's or early 50's, was dating a sci fi author who invited her to fly with him to the East Coast for a WorldCon. She was so excited that she made costumes for both of them, and that was the first year that people wore costumes to the convention.

After hearing these stories I was determined to find fandom in Phoenix, I was sure it had to exist somewhere, but where? While searching for it I found the SCA as it was forming in Tucson in 1973 and attended the Firebird Festival at the Phoenix Main Library with Darlene and Julie. We saw all kinds of people in costume and were hooked. We raced home and started researching costumes and shortly after Julie formed House Blackwater and we became The Three Weird Sisters. We started making costumes and attending events and loved it.

Meanwhile, fandom was starting to form in Phoenix and organize the first LepreCon. I attended it and was starry-eyed, but everyone disappeared afterwards. I attended the next two years and wore SCA garb (now considered hall costumes) but I had to wait until 1976 when I attended LA WesterCon at the urging of Chuck and Tasha Cady and several other people, when I finally contacted Phoenix fandom and found that they were holding Friday Night Inevitables only two blocks away from where I lived.

I showed up the next week, scared and shy, but finally found friends that I fit in with. After that, I started dating and then married Curt Stubbs (aka Captain Coors). We hosted a lot of Inevitables, I dragged Curt into the SCA and made a lot of costumes for both of us, both SCA-ish and fan-ish. I made bad pun costumes for Curt and he won several masquerades, and it was heaven.

Some time later (and I really don't remember when), the Southwest Costumers Guild formed and I joined -- sometime in the early 80's. Patti Cook was the president. After several years I was elected vice president and served for maybe four Years? Eventually, Curt and I divorced, and I married Mark who had a three year old daughter, for whom I happily sewed Halloween costumes the next dozen years until she was "too grown up." At the same time my mother moved to Glendale, became increasingly older and in poor health, I had to start taking care of her, and eventually dropped out of fandom and the Guild.

While I was vice president, I took it upon myself to become the contact person (pre-internet) and phone reminder for the members of when the next meeting was and any events or news of importance. I would like to continue that tradition and ask your help in doing so. I would like some information from everyone so I can contact you as needed. I don't think anyone in our group has a complete list of names, phone numbers and emails.

What I would like is -- whether you are a member, ex-member or just a friend -- (1) your name, street address & zip code, (2) email address, (3) home phone and cell number, (4) which one I should call first, and (5) what hours I can call you.

Why all this? No, none of this is mandatory, but whatever you care to share with me would be very helpful. I would like to email all of you about a week before each meeting as a reminder if you have email. I may call some of you a few days after that, especially if I know you are having computer trouble. If you need a ride to an event, I may be able to help coordinate carpooling if I know what area you live in. If a meeting gets canceled on short notice or moved, it may be necessary to talk to you in person to make sure you know. Or maybe ask if you have any ideas you want to talk about at the next meeting. Or maybe to coordinate a potluck so everyone doesn't bring the potato salad or whatever.

So, if you are willing, please come to the next meeting and give me your contact info or email me at: vicepresident@southwestcostumersguild.org or home, sweebeclan@aol.com

Thanks very much, and look forward to seeing you on Sunday, March 23 at 1 p.m. at Chuck & Tasha's new home, 14601 N. 55th Avenue, Glendale, for a Victorian Tea, croquet and bocce ball. My croquet skills are rusty (practically non-existent) but I'm looking forward to learning how to play bocce ball. Sounds like fun. Everyone should have a ball!

Leathercraft Classes at Tandy **19th Avenue Location**

March 8, 2014

Holster Workshop: Learn the correct way to design, pattern and construct your own "pancake" style holster. Wet molding techniques will be taught to get the best fit possible. Fee: \$40

March 15, 2014

Bring Your Project Day: One of our resident master craftsmen will be on hand today to help you wherever possible with your projects. Bring them, your tools and a want to learn! This workshop is a no fee workshop.

March 22, 2014

Swivel Knife Finesse Workshop: Learn how to properly sharpen and take care of your swivel knife as well as some great practice to help you master the "cut." Fee: \$15

Please contact the store for additional information:

Phoenix007@tandyleather.com Phone: 602-271-4088, Toll Free: 800-332-2203
425 N. 19th Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85009

Tempe Location

(Still in business, just moved to the west side of town.)

1st & 3rd Saturdays, 9:30am-11am • Wednesdays, 2:pm-3:30pm

Basic Tooling and Stamping: Everybody has to start somewhere, and this class will teach you the valuable basics of leather stamping and carving. You'll learn about casing leather, the proper use of stamping tools and the swivel knife, plus a few other handy tips and tricks! Tools necessary for the basic class: swivel knife, camouflage, pear shader, beveller, veiner, seeder, backgrounder, and mallet. Student must supply tools. \$50.00 Tuition*

* Fee can be waived through the purchase of a Wholesale Club Membership or the purchase of a Basic, Deluxe, or Ultimate Starter Kit.

2nd & 4th Saturdays, 9:30am-10:30am

Swivel Knife 101: Optional class included with the purchase of a Basic Tooling and Stamping Class. Swivel knife work is the foundation of your tooling, so it can make or break your project. Learn the basics of the all-important swivel knife; how to use and take care of it! Student must supply tools.

1st & 3rd Saturdays, 1:30pm-2:30pm

Swivel Knife 202: Free with the purchase of a #82009-01 or -02 Pro Swivel Knife. You've got the basics down, now it's time to learn finesse! Student must supply tools.

Wednesdays, 3:30pm-5:30pm

Open Workshop: Bring your tools and project(s), etc. No fee! Assistance and advice is free.

By Appointment Only

Leather Feather Class: Learn how to make a realistic-looking feather made entirely from leather! Student must supply tools and materials. \$50.00 Tuition

Please contact the store for additional information:

Tempe115@tandy.com Phone: 480-966-4151 Toll Free: 800-668-5174
2245 W University Dr, Ste 6 Tempe, AZ 85281

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.*

November 23, 2013 - April 20, 2014 - **Read My Pins: The Madeleine Albright Collection** exhibit at the Phoenix Art Museum. Throughout her career as UN Ambassador and Secretary of State under the Clinton Administration, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright used the colorful, attention-grabbing pins she had amassed to quietly communicate volumes. Now, that incredible collection of pins, including antiques and fine jewelry pieces alongside costume jewelry by unknown designers, is on display at Phoenix Art Museum. <http://www.visitphoenix.com/things-to-do/1016/phoenix-art-museum/details.aspx>

February 8-March 30, 2014 (weekends + Presidents' Day) – **Arizona Renaissance Festival** on US 60 east of Gold Canyon, Arizona. <http://www.royalfaires.com/arizona/>

March 7, 2014, 6-9:00 PM - **First Friday at Rosson House** Take a teaser tour of the Rosson House in Heritage Square (7th Street and Monroe, Phoenix) and explore the history of Victorian undergarments with Heritage Square's newest exhibit **Victorian Secrets**, a Glimpse of the Unmentionable (with a special First Friday PG-13 twist) at a discounted rate. First Friday Discounted Rates: Rosson House Teaser Tour and Victorian Secrets First Friday PG-13 Night \$3 Victorian Secrets First Friday PG-13 Night \$1. <http://www.rossonhousemuseum.org/calendar/>

March 7-9, 2014 – **Chandler Ostrich Festival** at Tumbleweed Park (McQueen & Germann). www.ostrichfestival.com

March 7-9, 2014 – **Wild Wild West Steampunk Convention** at Old Tucson Studios, Tucson, Arizona. <http://wwwc3.com/>

March 8-9, 2014 – **Arizona Aloha Festival** at Tempe Beach Park. www.azalohafest.org

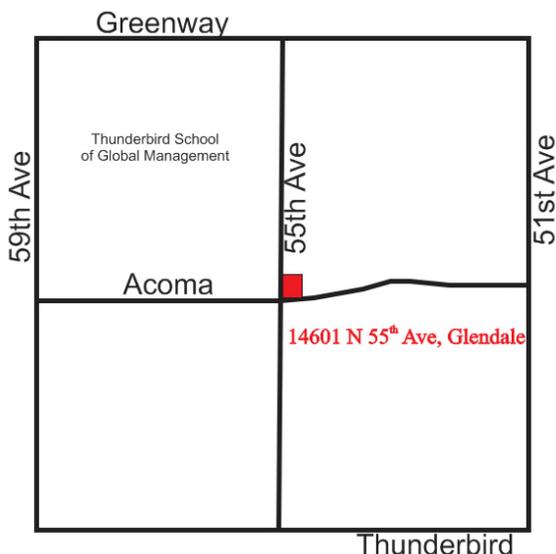
March 8, 2014 – **A Night in the 1940s** Big Band Dance and WWII Music Show at Falcon Field's Commemorative Air Force Hangar, 2017 N Greenfield Road, Mesa AZ <http://www.azcaf.org/bbd/index.html>

March 15-16, 2014 – **Tucson Festival of Books** on the University of Arizona campus. <https://tucsonfestivalofbooks.org/>

March 15-16, 2012 – **Battle of Picacho Peak** at Picacho Peak State Park, I-10 between Casa Grande and Tucson - reenactment of Arizona's only Civil War battle. <http://azstateparks.com/parks/pipe/events.html>

March 15, 2015 – **St. Patrick's Day Parade and Irish Faire** at Margaret Hance Park, Phoenix. www.stpatricksdaysphoenix.org

March 21-23, 2014 – **Con-Nichiwa** anime convention in at the Tucson Convention Center, Tucson, AZ. <http://www.con-nichiwa.com>



March 22-23, 2014 – **Arizona Highland Games and Celtic Gathering** at Steele Indian School Park, 300 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix AZ. <http://www.arizonascots.com/05games.shtml>

March 23, 2014 – **Victorian Tea*** - SWCG social at Chuck & Tasha's place, 14601 N 55th Avenue, Glendale. Join us this fine spring day for some tea, croquet and bocce ball. Costume highly encouraged.

March 26 – July 6, 2014 – **Hollywood Costume** exhibit at the Phoenix Art Museum, Central Avenue & McDowell Road. Bringing together

more than 100 of the most iconic movie costumes from across a century of film-making, this will be a rare opportunity to see the clothes worn by unforgettable characters from films such as *The Wizard of Oz*, *My Fair Lady*, *Superman*, *Titanic*, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, and *The Dark Knight Rises*. **Hollywood Costume** will explore the central role costume design plays in cinema storytelling. The exhibition contains costumes that have never left private and archival collections in California, and most have never been publicly displayed or seen beyond the secure walls of studio archives. <http://www.phxart.org/exhibition/hollywoodcostume>

April 25-28, 2014 – **Costume-Con 32** “Myths, Monsters & Legends” at the Sheraton Hotel in Toronto. <http://costumecon32.com/>

May 8-11, 2014 – **LepreCon 2014: 50 Shades of Green** SF convention at the Phoenix Mesa Marriot, 200 North Centennial Way, Mesa AZ. Author GOH Gail Carriger <http://leprecon.org/lep40/>

June 2-8, 2014 – **Highlands War** SCA event 14 miles south of Alpine, Arizona. <http://highlandswar.org/>

June 5-8, 2014 – **Phoenix ComiCon** at the Phoenix Convention Center. <http://www.phoenixcomicon.com/>

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