



# Cactus Needles

15.02 – February, 2015

**The Southwest Costumers Guild  
PO Box 39504, Phoenix AZ 85069**

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

*Build a kitty bed out of scrap fabric. See Page 3.*

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## **Lifetime Achievement Award Nominations Open**

From ICG President Philip Gust

Dear fellow costumers,

Nominations for ICG's Lifetime Achievement Award (LAA) are now open. The LAA is ICG's highest honor. It has been presented since 1990 to recognize a body of achievement in the costuming art and service to the costuming community. Chapter presidents and ICG officers select the recipient from among the nominees.

Submit nominations no later March 7, 2015, by email at "laa-nomination@costume.org" and use "LAA Nomination" as the subject line. Candidates may be nominated by any ICG member, chapter, or SIG in good standing.

Your nomination will be acknowledged within 24 hours. If you do not receive one, please send another message to make sure your nomination was received. Allow for this when submitting your nomination.

The award will be presented on Saturday, May 16, 2015, at Costume-Con 33.

Preparing a nomination takes time so start now! Visit "<http://www.costume.org/lifetime>" for qualifications and to read past recipients' citations. Citations are created from recipients' nominations.

Here are some tips for preparing an effective nomination:

- Not all chapter presidents and officers who vote on the award are familiar with the person you are nominating. Give them a good understanding of your nominee's qualifications and accomplishments.
- Start with a one- or two-paragraph "executive summary" that addresses all the qualifications for the award. This is your best chance to make your case, so spend some quality time on this.

- Follow that with some notable accomplishments that support what you said in your "executive summary." A few well-chosen examples are usually enough.
- If you are describing costuming skills, include a couple of URLs to photos in the ICG's International Costumers' Gallery or other photo sites as examples.
- Nominations typically run from several paragraphs to a full page (200-500 words). Quality is more important than quantity.

Thanks to those who submit a nomination for your efforts on behalf of a fellow costumer who deserves this special recognition.

### Briefs



St. Louis Costumers Guild "**Scarlet Letter**" January, 2015 features "Is Cosplay a Sign of a Bad Economy," "How to Reinvigorate Masquerade Costuming? Look to Wearable Art," and pix from a recent 501<sup>st</sup> Legion Star Wars costume workshop. It's hard copy, so catch Randall next meeting to peruse the mag.



**How Should a Suit Fit?** Your Easy-to-Follow Visual Guide (found by Mike) <http://www.artofmanliness.com/2013/09/25/good-fitted-suit-visual/> The "Art of Manliness" web site includes a whole section on style and dress.



**Conductive Thread** Perusing the local Radio Shack, Your editor came upon this pre-loaded bobbin of thin conductive thread, meant for wiring decorative LEDs and other clothing-mounted electronics. It appears you can load it as the lower thread of your machine and stitch it into place. (Flishy-flashy costume workshop anyone?) It's priced around five bucks a bobbin.



### SWCG Activity January 25, 2015 at Chuck & Tasha's house in Glendale, Arizona.

Recorded by Randall Whitlock, SWCG Secretary



We got together to build pet blankets and beds to donate to a local animal shelter, using materials left over from various SWCG group projects and donations over the last few years, as well as some extra fabric and batting brought in by Jean and Mahala. Mahala found a no-sew pattern for a fleece pet comforter made by knotting. We cut out the pieces for these to assemble next meeting. Randall worked up a pattern for an oval pet bed with raised, stuffed rim based on beds he has seen for sale at local pet supply stores and completed two of these.

We assembled for a brief and informal business meeting at 4PM. Attending were Jean, Lyn, David, Mahala, Tasha, Frances and Randall. Blackfeather stopped by for a while to say hello and drop off some fabric he has been storing for SWCG.

Treasurer Tasha gathered dues checks from attendees.

We further discussed the recent donation from the Milly McCloskey estate. The books will be cataloged and added to the SWCG library. Tasha will contact local community theater troupes to see about passing along the sewing tools and notions. (Note: an obituary of Milly emphasizing her academic work as a historian and her career in the Society for Creative Anachronism can be viewed at <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/dailyrecord/obituary.aspx?n=mildred-grace-mccloskey-milly&pid=173403276>.)

Further discussion was made regarding the SWCG library, updating the catalog, and making the catalog known to community theaters and other local public service organizations.

Newsletter Editor Randall ranted regarding the lack of response to the cover e-mail for the January Cactus Needles, which requested a reply from each e-mail subscriber to verify that her address is correct and that she wishes to continue receiving the newsletter. So far, only one person has replied. Randall also mentioned that more than one member has cited trouble with a home printer as a reason not to have read the most recent newsletters. This leads him to wonder why would a digital subscriber need to print a hard copy, rather than just read the newsletter on computer, tablet or phone? This has further led him to the conclusion that some people just don't like to do casual reading on a computer screen and the digital newsletter is not right for everyone. Randall makes the following statement:

**“If you are a member in good standing of SWCG, you are entitled to your choice of e-mail or hard copy newsletter. Please do not hesitate to switch back to the paper option if it will enhance your enjoyment or ease your access to Cactus Needles. Thanks to a donation from Jean, we have plenty of postage stamps.”**

Casual discussion was made regarding the Quilt and Craft Show to be held at the state fairgrounds the following weekend and whether some members would like to travel together to attend the show.

Tasha will bring the silver satin fabric and we will discuss the proposed costuming challenge at the February meeting with an eye toward having the challenge costumes ready for LepreCon in June.

The meeting didn't formally adjourn, but the attendees drifted different directions at 4:40 PM.

### **Randwulf's Kitty Bed**

By Randall Whitlock

In connection with our ongoing project to build pet comforters for local animal shelters, I've worked up a simple pattern algorithm for a small pet bed.

Almost any fabric will do and this is a good way to use up your odd scraps. The bed can be made machine washable if you use a non-shrink fabric, like a cotton-polyester blend. The bed looks good when made with upholstery fabrics, but will be harder to clean.



You will need some material for stuffing. Cotton or poly batting, pre-formed formed into flat, even sheets is easiest to work with. You can also work with foam rubber, used pillow stuffing, or chopped up bits of soft fabric. Again, this is a good way to use up leftover materials from other projects.

The base is a circle, ellipse or rounded rectangle. Size the base to agree with the size of your pet, the piece of scrap fabric you want to use, or the bit of floor/shelf space you want the bed to occupy. 16 by 20 inches makes a good size for cats, but you can go larger or smaller.

Cut two base pieces – one for the top and one for the bottom. The bottom piece does not need to match the color of the top since it will be concealed against the floor.

If using flat batting or foam for the stuffing, cut a mattress to go between the top and bottom pieces of the base. Make it the same shape as these pieces, but about an inch smaller in all directions. If you use loose stuffing, arrange it carefully and evenly over the bottom piece.

Assemble these three layers, pin them carefully and sew them together around the edge. A serger is useful here since it will provide a finished edge. For larger beds, place single hand stitches through all three layers of the base at regular intervals and tie them off on the bottom side. This will keep the stuffing from drifting around.

Form a raised rim for the bed by cutting a strip about 8 inches wide and equal in length to the circumference of the bottom. You'll probably have to do this in two pieces. Pin a layer of stuffing to the underside of the rim. Fold the rim end to end, right sides together and sew them together to form a ring.

Roll the ring over to right sides out and the stuffing inside. Sew and finish the edge with a serger.

Pin the edge of the rim to the outside edge of the base. Sew them together to finish the bed.



## 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.*

February 7-March 29, 2015 (weekends + Presidents' Day) – **Arizona Renaissance Festival** on US 60 east of Gold Canyon, Arizona. <http://www.royalfaires.com/arizona/>

February 7, 2015 – **Dark Ones Winter's End Party** at "House Orobouros," 3209 E. Corrine Dr., Phoenix. Theme: Evil Overlords. Costume Suggestions: Evil overlord from history or fiction, minion/lackey/underling, your DO persona, medieval garb. Site Opens: 6pm. Party Begins: 7pm.

Food Serves: 9pm. Anthem at midnight. Bar Closes: 2am. Site Closes: 3am. Cleanup: Sunday 10am.

February 12-22, 2015 – **Scottsdale Arabian Horse Show & Shopping Expo** at Westworld, 16601 N. Pima Road, Scottsdale. [www.scottsdaleshow.com](http://www.scottsdaleshow.com) (Your editor received a twofer coupon with his cable bill. The coupon is likely available from other sources too.)

February 13-15, 2015 – **Phoenix Chinese Week** at the Chinese Cultural Center, 44<sup>th</sup> Street and the Red Mountain Freeway, Phoenix <http://www.phoenixchineseweek.org/>

February 13-17, 2015 – **Amazing Arizona Comic Con** at the Phoenix Convention Center <http://amazingarizonacomicon.com/>

February 14, 2015 – **Daddy O's Desert Caravan Open Belly Dance & Drum Circle** at Daddy O's, SE Corner of 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Thunderbird, Phoenix. This is one of our own Paula's performance venues. All shows start at 6:30 PM. This month's theme is "Faerie Tails" <https://www.facebook.com/DaddyOsDesertCaravanBellydanceDrumCircle>

February 14, 2015 – **Masquerade Ball** at the Cobre Valley Center for the Arts in Globe, AZ. Cost TBA. Celebrate Valentine's Day, Statehood Day and the installation of an elevator in the Center for the Arts. For more information, call 928-425-0884. *NOTE: Most costume events in the Cobre Valley (Globe-Miami area) begin on Broad Street in Globe. The Center for the Arts is the old Courthouse and is located at the top of the hill on Broad; the train depot is about 2 blocks beyond, at the bottom of the hill.*

February 21-22, 2015 – **Arizona Matsuri** festival of Japan at Heritage and Science Park in downtown Phoenix. <http://azmatsuri.org/>

February 22, 2015 – **War Prep\*** SWCG workshop at Jean's place. Get your costumes in condition for the annual SCA Estrella War.

February 23-March 1, 2015 – **Winter Range** at the Ben Avery Shooting Facility, 4044 W. Black Canyon Blvd., Phoenix, Arizona. The Single-Action Shooting Society's annual cowboy action shooting shindig. First-rate sutler's row to stock up on your wild west/steampunk costume supplies. <http://www.winterrange.com/>

February 24-March 2, 2015 – **Estrella War** at Schnepf Farms, Queen Creek, Arizona. The Society for Creative Anachronism's annual week of medieval arts, sciences and whacking each other with sticks. <http://estrellawar.org/>

March 6-8, 2015 – **Wild Wild West Steampunk Convention 4** at Old Tucson Studios, Tucson AZ. <https://www.wildwestcon.com/>

March 14, 2015 – **Daddy O's Desert Caravan Open Belly Dance & Drum Circle** at Daddy O's, SE Corner of 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Thunderbird, Phoenix. This is one of our own Paula's performance venues. All shows start at 6:30 PM. This month's theme is "Maneater (80s Night)" <https://www.facebook.com/DaddyOsDesertCaravanBellydanceDrumCircle>

March 14, 2015, 10 AM – **St. Patrick's Day Parade** in downtown Phoenix Staging Area Location: 3rd St. from Virginia to Sheridan Route: 3rd St. South from Sheridan to Moreland. <http://stpatricksdaysphoenix.org/>

March 20-22, 2015 – **Con Nichiwa** anime convention at the Tucson Convention Center, 260 S Church Ave Tucson AZ 85701. <http://www.con-nichiwa.com/>

March 21-22, 2015 – **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 21-22, 2015 – **Arizona Scottish Gathering & Highland Games** at Steele Indian School Park, 300 East Indian School Road, Phoenix <http://www.arizonascots.com/05games.shtml>

March 29, 2015 – **Fabric Challenge\*** SWCG workshop at Chuck & Tasha's place. Create a project using the silver satin stash. Maybe something we can appear in together at conventions?

April 4, 2015, 9:30 to 11:30 AM – Sixth Annual **Easter Parade** in Globe, AZ. Cost – Free, Begins at the Globe Train Depot. Here is the PR statement:

*Here is your chance to stroll the sidewalks of Globe in your Easter finery and channel your best Fred Astaire or Ginger Rogers, rain or shine! (For those too young to remember, check out the movie "Top Hat" to see what we mean!) The Easter Parade is based on the classic holiday song and old tradition of taking a stroll to welcome spring. Think hats, parasols, finery and fun for all ages. Of course, you can enter the contest if you think your Easter finery is prize-worthy (NOTE: For any Guildsters who might want attend, it would be fair to warn the sponsors that out-of-town costumers will be joining in. But, local competition will be stiff) Contestants promenade from the Train Depot, down Broad Street, and back to the Center for the Arts. For Information, call the Center for the arts at 928-425-0884*

April 11, 2015 – **Daddy O's Desert Caravan Open Belly Dance & Drum Circle** at Daddy O's, SE Corner of 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Thunderbird, Phoenix. This is one of our own Paula's performance venues. All shows start at 6:30 PM. This month's theme is "Beyond the Sea" <https://www.facebook.com/DaddyOsDesertCaravanBellydanceDrumCircle>

May 9, 2015 – **Daddy O's Desert Caravan Open Belly Dance & Drum Circle** at Daddy O's, SE Corner of 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Thunderbird, Phoenix. This is one of our own Paula's performance venues. All shows start at 6:30 PM. This month's theme is "Retro Rockabilly" <https://www.facebook.com/DaddyOsDesertCaravanBellydanceDrumCircle>

May 15-18, 2015 – **Costume-Con 33** "Buccaneers, Belles & Bootleggers" at the Charleston Plaza Hotel in Charleston, South Carolina <http://cc33charleston.org/wp/>

May 28-31, 2015 – **Phoenix ComiCon** at the Phoenix Convention Center <http://www.phoenixcomicon.com/>

June 4-7, 2015 – **Fangirls** by Manda Leigh Blunt at the Brelby Theater, S of SEC 58<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Glendale Avenue just off the Glendale town square. <http://brelby.com/2015-studio-series/>

*With Comic Con only days away, Lila is shocked to find that her arch nemesis has stolen her idea for the original character contest. She has only four days and her three best friends to help her come up with a brand new idea. Matters aren't helped when Lila's cousin Marcie comes to visit, a budding fashion designer who is nothing like Lila and does not understand her obsession with all things fandom. Throw in a Wonder Woman bedspread, a Dr. Who Sonic Screwdriver, a Benedict Cumberbatch pillow, a Captain Planet salute, Vulcan ears, a lynx costume, a book on potions, a date, a make-over, a betrayal, and light sabers, this is one week that these girls are never going to forget. That is, if they make it Comic Con in one piece.*

June 13, 2015 – **Daddy O's Desert Caravan Open Belly Dance & Drum Circle** at Daddy O's, SE Corner of 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Thunderbird, Phoenix. This is one of our own Paula's performance venues. All shows start at 6:30 PM. This month's theme is "Folkloric Fest"  
<https://www.facebook.com/DaddyOsDesertCaravanBellydanceDrumCircle>

June 25-28, 2015 – **LepreCon 2015** at the Embassy Suites Phoenix North (I-17 & Greenway).  
[www.leprecon.org](http://www.leprecon.org).

July 9-12, 2015 – **Highlands War** near Flagstaff, Arizona. The SCA Barony of Ered Sul's midsummer event moves to a new site near Ashurst Late this year. <http://highlandswar.org/>

July 10-12, 2015 – **Phoenix TARDIS 2015** Dr. Who convention at the Sheraton Crescent Hotel, 2620 W. Dunlap Avenue, Phoenix. <http://www.tardisconventions.com/#!phoenix/cjg9>

October 30 – November 1, 2015 – **TusCon 42** SF convention at the Hotel Tucson City Center in Tucson. This year's con features guests Seanan McGuire and Bridget E. Wilde.  
<http://tusconscificon.com/>

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*A bevy of blue bonnets, ready for a highland-themed wedding. Photo and hats by Randall Whitlock.*