	<h2 style="text-align: center;"><u>Cactus Needles</u></h2> <p style="text-align: center;">20.01 - Jan  <b>The Southwest Costumers Guild</b>  <b>PO box 39504, Phoenix AZ 85069</b>  <a href="http://www.southwestcostumersguild.org">http://www.southwestcostumersguild.org</a></p>
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### **Recent Events**

Things have been a bit quiet over the holidays. Nothing much report on this front.

One of our favorite meeting venues is re-opening. May Coyle's Ice Cream Parlor is now at 2302 N Central Avenue



**Briefs**

**(SEND ME MORE!!! – Always)**

### **Blessed be the Tie**

by Randall Whitlock

Have you seen the recent television mini-series of Sir Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman's "Good Omens?" It is available on DVD and Amazon Prime. It is an amazing adaptation of one of my favorite comedy fantasy novels. For LibCon West and upcoming DragonCons, my friend Anna was inspired to cosplay as the Angel Aziraphale. I was brought aboard to consult on the costume, particularly its distinctive bow tie.

At that point, I realized that despite having cosplayed Dracula in a tuxedo many times, I had never learned to tie a bow tie. I had a closet full of pre-tied ties from formalwear rental company garage sales, but none of the real thing. I resolved to fix this gap in my education.

First, I ordered a proper self-tie bow tie online. Luther Pike offers a line of ties in a suitably shiny microfiber material for about twelve bucks each in pretty much any color you can imagine. These ties have a clever arrangement of buckles and buttonholes for size adjustment.



Next, I had to learn to tie the thing. It really is the same knot you use to tie your shoes, but the shift in perspective is confusing. With shoes, you are looking at the knot from the outside. Around your neck, you are looking out from inside the knot. There are many YouTube videos to show you how, but I found the diagram on the Wikipedia page at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bow\\_tie#/media/File:HowToTieBowtie\\_VersionA.png](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bow_tie#/media/File:HowToTieBowtie_VersionA.png) most useful. In the end, it was easiest to close my eyes and tie the knot by feel, rather than try to follow myself in the mirror.

Then comes, the making. There is an excellent pattern at <https://www.tie-a-tie.net/images/make-a-bow-tie/DIY-Bow-Tie-Pattern.pdf>. This is an Adobe Acrobat file, so any computer can display it. It prints out on a single sheet of paper. Adjust for size as you cut out the pieces. I made one of these from plain off-white muslin for practice. My results were good and I wore the tie on the guild Enchanted Island walk soon thereafter. At left, it is worn over a t-shirt so you can see portions of the tie normally hidden by a collar. The middle of the knot requires quite a bit of adjusting.

For the project, Anna purchased a “fat quarter” of fabric from Spoonflower, printed with the distinctive plaid used in the show. We made a pre-tied tie. I took the middle portion of the Tie-A-Tie pattern and butted it together, removing the neck band portion of the pattern. We placed two thicknesses of the fabric (right sides together), marked the pattern and stitched through the edges.

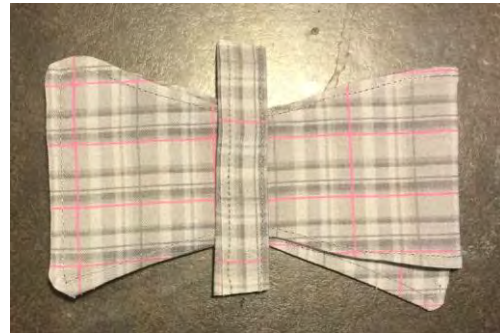


We left a short section of the side unsewn, cut out the piece, and turned it right-side out through the gap.



Once the tie is right-side out, we smoothed the edges into shape with finger pressure and by pushing a pencil tip around the inside. We top-stitched around the edges to fix the shape and close the gap, then ironed the tie. Meanwhile, we formed banding by cutting a strip of fabric long enough to go around the neck and collar, plus a couple of inches of overlap, plus another couple of inches to form the middle of the simulated knot. The fabric strip was four times as wide as the desired band, about 3 inches. We folded the edges in to the middle of the strip, wrong sides together, pressed, then folded the fabric again. We pressed the band and top-stitched the edges to create a strong band.

We folded the tie through the middles of the curved segments, forming three layers. Next, we snipped off a couple inches of the banding and placed it over the middle of the tie. We tacked it down with a couple of stitches in the middle.



We gently pinched the tie beneath the vertical banding, then formed a stitch across the banding on the back side of the tie to form the simulated knot. This stitching will not show, so we were not particularly careful with edge finishing. Snip the extra banding off near the stitching.



We took the rest of the banding and attached Velcro at its ends with enough overlap to allow for some size adjustment, then slid the banding through the back of the tie, underneath the simulated knot. Here is the finished tie.



The costume was very well received at LibCon West.



## Minutes

### SWCG Activity January 5, 2020

As seen by Randall

Paula hosted the first meeting of the year. Due to a variety of coinciding family health issues, the meeting was thinly attended. Present were Paula, Randall and newcomer Perry. Sharan and Mahala checked in briefly by phone.

Lacking a quorum, elections and other formal business were deferred to next month, so this was a social gathering with conversation over beans and lemonade. Conversation naturally involved cats, as well as brainstorming for future activities. It turns out Perry's and Paula's cats are former roommates, adopted from the same shelter. Is there a feline version of "Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon?"

Perry expressed interest in learning historical methods of dyeing and embroidery, both of which sound like excellent ideas for experimental workshops this year. Randall mentioned his recent experiments in making and tying bow ties, expressing the idea that a "bow talks treatment" might make for a workshop session. Paula mentioned this might apply to pets as well as costumed persons. Paula would like to do a sweatshop building pet beds for a local shelter.

Webmaster Randall reported that he has renewed the guild's web hosting for another two years. He should receive the bill for the post office box rental any day now. For show and tell, Randall presented a water bottle scabbard made earlier that day. Randall also shared that Mary Coyle Ice Cream, a favorite guild hangout, has re-opened in a new location across Central Avenue from the Heard Museum .

Paula introduced us to her new van.

In much sadder news, Nola posted that Jean suffered a fall early Sunday morning, sustaining a broken hip. As of this writing (Mon 1/6), Jean is out of surgery and staying at the Abrazo hospital. E-mail the webmaster for details about visiting hours when they become available. We passed around a get well card.

Nominations for the ICG Lifetime Achievement Award are due to the ICG president on January 10. Any ICG member can nominate.

Randall checked the Tempe Public Library web site and sent a query e-mail to the organizers. We do not have a table at this year's Tempe Fan Con on January 25 at the Tempe Public Library, Rural Road and Southern Avenue, but this is a costumed event well worth attending.

Next meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 2 at the Yogurtini yogurt shop, 5870 West Thunderbird Road Suite A3 , Glendale for elections and calendar planning.

## 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.*

### Superhero Saturday – Jan 18th

Comic and cosplay festival. 12pm – 5pm. 2200 N Central Ave. Benefits Childhelp and PPSLA Charities

**Tempe FanCon 2020** Saturday, January 25, 2020 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Comic and cosplay fans grab your capes and superpowers and come to the Tempe Public Library for a celebration of comics and pop culture. Join us for free family fun including costume contests, authors and artists, entertainment, activities for the kids, photo ops with characters, fandom related items for sale, and food trucks.

The guild has had a table for the past few years, but we will not this year . It's a nice little event. Fun to watch all the costumes.

### Saturday, January 25<sup>th</sup> Open House 2020, 30 years of GBACG 2:00pm - 5:30pm

Veteran's Memorial Building, Albany, CA Registration ends January 11th!

Our sister branch – Greater Bay Area Costumers' Guild – sent us an invitation

Once again it's time to reconnect with old friends and make some new ones at our annual Open House.

What is the Open House? As this is our 30th anniversary, the open house is going to be special occasion. We'll have a delicious buffet lunch, a fashion show, a raffle giveaway, a membership drive, our annual meeting, and a great big party all wrapped up in one fine afternoon.

What's it cost? GBACG Members are being asked to reserve a space for a refundable \$15. When you check in the day of the event your cost will be refunded. Non-members pay a refundable \$25 for this event.

Why are we doing this? So we can get a good headcount for our caterer, and will issue refunds after checking in to the Open House.

What to wear? Anything goes. Costumes of all eras will be admired, but aren't required.

Schedule (Please be on time):

2:00 Doors Open

2:15 Buffet Lunch

2:30 - 3:00 Welcome, Event Announcements, Board Reports

3:00 - 3:30 Break

3:30 - 4:15 Fashion Show

4:15 - 4:30 Break

4:45 - 5:00 Raffle

For more information on what's being served, the fashion show, and raffle please follow the button below for all the information. And don't forget our call for volunteers!

[http://www.gbacg.org/current/2020/2020\\_open-house.php](http://www.gbacg.org/current/2020/2020_open-house.php)

### **Indian Fair and Market - Sat Mar 7 & 8**

Artists and cultural performances at the herd Museum – 9am – 5pm

### **The Countess of Melbury's Ball March 14 2020**

I'm the organizer of [The Countess of Melbury's Ball](http://www.countessofmelburysball.com) coming up in Walnut Grove, CA this March 14, 2020 and wanted to spread the word to your talented members if possible! I understand your events calendar is primarily for events near you, but we currently have attendees coming from 7+ states (and we're not too far away!).

Here's a brief description of the event (more info at the link above):

Hosted at a beautiful estate in Walnut Grove, CA, our first annual 18th-century ball will be an unforgettable evening of historic immersion. The setting is 1789 in Georgian Era England and the guests will be invited to a private ball and evening hosted by the Countess of the estate. Arriving in full costume, guests will be taken by horse and carriage up to the estate before they enter an enchanting candle-lit evening featuring a multi-course Georgian meal and beverages, card games and billiards, English Country Dance called by a British Dancemaster, and surprise live performances by skilled artists.

Please let me know what you might need from me to make spreading the word possible. I greatly appreciate it!

Sincerely thanks,

Shannon

**Shannon Portnyagin**

Sartorial Events

<http://www.countessofmelburysball.com>

P.O. Box 671

Roseville, CA 95678

Cell: 916-741-2414

[shannon@sartorialevents.com](mailto:shannon@sartorialevents.com)

### **Experience Africa / Africa Fest – March 28<sup>th</sup>**

11am – 6:30pm Kiwanis Park, Tempe. Culture and entertainment focuses and features fashions.

**Westercon 73, July 2-5, 2020**, Seattle (SeaTac) WA

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