

	<h2 style="text-align: center;"><u>Cactus Needles</u></h2> <p style="text-align: center;">20.05 - May 2020</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Southwest Costumers Guild PO box 39504, Phoenix AZ 85069 <a href="http://www.southwestcostumersguild.org">http://www.southwestcostumersguild.org</a></p>
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### Recent Events

None!

Your editor has had some “rough” life / family events going on which combined with Covid stuff has left her ravin’ (a raven is a coRvid ) mad.

See how nutty she gets – that is a terrible not-quite pun.



**Briefs**

**SEND ME MORE!!!**

[Submitted by Mahala - from the BBC.com](#)

Couple dress in period costume for walks during lockdown. A costuming business owner says it has “lifted the spirits” in her village.

What one couple in England is doing during their corona virus lockdown. It's easy to forget that we aren't the only country doing that. Wonder who they are? She owns a professional costume shop somewhere. Could she be ICG





Mucking about the house today, I had a macabre idea.

I shot a picture of the lower half of my face and printed it onto a 7.5-inch square of fabric with my laser printer. I sewed it to a lining layer, applied some garbage bag twist-ties for nose molding, sewed in some pleats, attached straps and voia -- surgeon's mask.

The result is kind of like the end of that Twilight Zone episode, "Eye of the Beholder." You know, the one with Ellie May Clampett?

Should be good for a Mad Scientist hall costume.

Randall – of course Here is the link to the comments he got

<https://www.facebook.com/100006752232504/posts/2812825645619149/?sfnsn=mo>

## **The Corona-19 Virus, Masks, Walmart and Me ... or Life in a Micro ecosystem**

*by Mahala Sweebe*

Back in 1971 (plus or minus a year) Johnny Carson made a joke on his nightly show about a shortage of toilet paper. It was just a joke, but many people believed it and it caused a national panic. In a matter of days there was a run on toilet paper, store shelves were cleaned out, and there was a shortage for many weeks before people stopped panic buying and hoarding it.

Fast forward 50 years. We are in the same situation again, only now it's not just toilet paper, it's also paper towels, cleaning supplies, canned food, etc., etc., and many things that I would not have thought of. Some of them are interesting and intelligent, some are just plain weird.

Mark and I are self-quarantining; he never leaves the house (yes, he is going stir crazy) because he feels he is at high risk. I only go out to Walmart for prescriptions and groceries, also Fry's for groceries and once to the bank. So I feel I can say that I live in a small, closed ecosystem.

In a year or two we will forget most of the details of this time except in a general way. They say we will never completely recover and go back to our previous lifestyles, we will live a new normal. And that's probably true, we will change in little ways that we may not be aware of yet. I don't buy 4-pack rolls of toilet paper any more, I get 12-packs, or mega packs from Costco. Now I wash my hands for a longer time at home. Maybe I'll wear a mask for a longer while. I'm more aware of social distancing and crowds. Who knows what else?

So while we are waiting, I thought I would like to share some observations from what I have seen at Walmart and the news and elsewhere. I am fascinated by the variety of masks everyone is wearing, especially the homemade ones. We've all seen ones that require no sewing, made of a bandana folded five times and lapped over at the ends with two hair rubber bands to go over the ears. It was even demonstrated by the Surgeon General during a press conference with President Trump.

There are other patterns on the internet, YouTube and Etsy have them for free and some pattern companies. Some people are making them and donating them for free, others are selling them from their homes. Some sewers are using fabric and elastic they have at home, others are buying new. I saw one woman wearing a mask that matched her print blouse. Wonder if she has designer masks to match all of her outfits? I've seen prints, polka dots and

stripes, no plaids or tartans yet. One was black and white vertical stripes that looked very stylish (and could be used for steampunk costumes). I've seen little kids wearing them, and pictures of a couple of dogs with them. Mark found out that vets do have small masks that they use during surgery to help with the anesthesia.

Some masks are very creative. The cleverest mask was one that I didn't see but Mark found on Facebook (he didn't save it or print it out but he wants one). It was made out of a pair of blue jeans with the zipper fly in the middle. You can unzip it to take a drink through a straw. I'm tempted to try to make one. Don't know where the waistband goes, top or bottom. The cutest one I've seen was a young woman at a plant nursery wearing a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles print. It may not sound like much but it was really cute.

I heard about the corona-19 virus in early March and every day or so there were new suggestions of what to do protect ourselves. I heard that people were buying lots of toilet paper, disinfectants and cleaning supplies and there was a shortage. On March 14 I went to Walmart to pick up prescriptions and get bread and some groceries. I cruised the store and the T.P. was all gone and some shelves in some aisles were being depleted but not empty.

I decided to check out the fabric section. Fabric and patterns were well stocked. To my surprise, over half of the fat quarters were gone, a quarter of the thread, and most of the sewing machines. Half of the notions aisle was empty, couldn't remember what all had been there, just a few odd size scissors were left and rotary cutting boards. But one aisle over, the crafts section was untouched. Rolls of ribbon, paper, paint, fabric dyes, jewelry makings, and craft kits were well stocked. I thought with school closed that parents would be buying craft supplies for projects to keep their kids busy. I couldn't figure it out.

Four days later I went back to get bread and sauerkraut, among other things. A lot of the over-the-counter cold and flu remedies were completely gone. The food aisles looked like a cloud of locusts had been through. No bread. A lot of the non-perishable food was gone and there was no bottled water. Most of the canned vegetables and fruit were gone. I got the last can of sauerkraut that was hiding at the back of the bottom shelf. Didn't think kraut would be so popular. Go figure. A lot of the dry dog food was gone but the cat food seemed to be better stocked.

Checked out the fabric area to see if they had re-stocked. No. More of the fat quarters were gone, no sewing machines, just two carrying cases left. More thread gone and some of the bias tape next to it. The rolls of ribbon were untouched but the crafts aisle looked like it was starting to get picked over. Just as I left the area, the stockers unloaded a shipment of toilet paper and paper towels so I got a 12-pack. Wow! T.P. and sauerkraut. I was a happy camper. lol

I didn't venture out for another three weeks. Walmart was starting to restock their shelves except for the fabric section. This time, the sewing machine carrying cases were gone, most of the fat squares, and the bolts of cotton fabric were pretty well picked over. The notions section was partially restocked, and the crafts aisle was starting to thin out. Still no idea why the run on sewing stuff, especially fat squares, but thought it had to be quilters. We do have a few quilt shops in the area, and with people having to stay home, it's a good time to start or finish a quilt project.

Still another three weeks later, I went to Walmart again to pick up prescriptions this last Saturday. Cruised the store and found more surprises. This time the bed and bath section looked bare/. Two-thirds of the towels and bathmats were gone, and at least a third of the sheets. I guess with everyone being homebodies, they have decided to upgrade and get the softest, snuggliest whatevers to cocoon with. The housewares were picked over. Crockpots, airfryers, coffeemakers -- more people must be cooking at home. And canning. There were only a few glass canning jars left. But the irons and ironing boards are untouched. Wonder why. 😊

Now in the fabric section, all of the fat squares are completely gone, all of the bolts of cotton fabric are gone except for canvas and flannel. Satin and furry, plush fabrics are still there. Thread and bias tape is mostly gone. In the crafts section, yarn is disappearing, acrylic and fabric paints and dyes are gone.

I'm a little slow on the uptake sometimes but I think I have finally solved the mystery of the disappearing stock in the fabric section. Have you? The clues are there -- disappearing fat quarters, bolts of cotton fabric but not canvas or flannel, thread, bias tape and notions (scissors, pins and needles), sewing machines. What can you make with this besides quilts? I figured it out while writing this story. Masks. It all fits. The fat squares are 12" which is about the right width to cover a face, sold in bundles in contrasting or matching colors and prints so you can sew several layers together to line them or make them reversible without having to cut them out. Pleat the sides, fold over the sides, sew a casing and run elastic or bias tape through it to loop over the ears, and voila, you have a mask. What do you think? Am I right? I would like to know your opinion.

What's happening outside my little micro-ecosystem? I'd like to know what shortages there are in other parts of the country. Are other people making washable hospital gowns or anything else besides masks? Have you seen anything really creative? Is anyone working on any costumes? It seems that even though we are home more, we still have more projects to do that get in the way of sewing. Any guesses what life will be like by next month? Stay tuned to the next thrilling issue of Cactus Needles to find out. Stay safe, stay home and sew.

*Thank you, Randall and Mahala, for content!*

## Minutes

The May meeting was also cancelled

## 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.*

### \*SWCG Meeting – June 7<sup>th</sup> On hold

Contact us for details

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

JOINT STATEMENT FROM WESTERCON 73 AND WESTERCON 74:

WESTERCONS 73 AND 74 POSTPONED FOR ONE YEAR DUE TO COVID-19  
*Due to government orders prohibiting large gatherings having been extended into July 2020, Westercon 73 in SeaTac WA has been obliged to postpone their event. After consultation with Westercon 74 in Tonopah NV and with the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, the two conventions have agreed to postpone both of their events for one year. Westercon 73 will now be held in 2021 and Westercon 74 in 2022. There will be no Westercon held in 2020.*

### \*SWCG Meeting – July 5<sup>th</sup>

On hold - Contact us for details

### Worldcon ConZealand 2020 – July 29 – 2 August ( <http://www.worldcon.org/> )

The 2020 Worldcon, CoNZealand, scheduled for 29 July – 2 August 2020 in Wellington, New Zealand, has announced that they will be a “virtual online convention” only. See the [statement from the CoNZealand committee](#) regarding their current plans.

### CoKoCon, September 4-7, 2020. - Current plans are to hold as stated

a traditional science fiction convention in Phoenix, AZ to be held We'll be hosting guests of honor, an art show, merchant room, gaming, filk, parties, you name it! Author GoH: **Steven Barnes** Local Author GoH: **Linda Addison**, Filk Guest: **S.J. Tucker** more guests to be announced! Venue: Doubletree by Hilton Phoenix Tempe, 2100 S Priest Drive, Tempe AZ **NOTE: This is a DIFFERENT Doubletree than we have been at for the past two years.** . Rooms \$92, Suites \$102. **Memberships limited to 500.** There will be a charity auction and we welcome donations. Please contact our Charity Auction Director thru the website. More info at [www.cokocon.org](http://www.cokocon.org)

## **AZ Haunters Haunted Swap Meet becomes AZ Halloween Marketplace in 2020**

### **Date not firm**

First things first. WE ARE planning to move forward with our event. We are in ongoing discussions with the Metro Center Mall Management about providing more space, more security, and an all around better experience for all involved. Yes, for a number of reasons, this COVID thing is delaying the process, but it's not the only thing, as you'll see.

Second thing -

In an effort to more accurately reflect the quality of vendors and wares offered, and to be clearer in our purpose to the general public, we will be changing the name of the event.

We are going with AZ Halloween Marketplace. We believe it's best to be clear and let prospective attendees know exactly what they are coming for.

[www.AZHalloweenMarketplace.com](http://www.AZHalloweenMarketplace.com) is under construction.

Third thing -

Many participating artisans depend on events for their livelihood. Many of these events are being cancelled or at least postponed. In an effort to help, we have created the AZ Halloween Marketplace Facebook group where our artisans can share pictures of their wares, their websites, online stores, etc.:

[https://www.facebook.com/groups/201088311196058/?source\\_id=183552735013916](https://www.facebook.com/groups/201088311196058/?source_id=183552735013916)

The group is public, so everyone can see the posts and find the stores.

Final thing for now

Phoenix Fan Fusion (AKA Phoenix Comic Con) announced they are moving their event from May to the weekend of Sept 25.

That puts them squarely overlapping with our planned date. Several of our artisans attend PFF and we do not wish to make them choose. With that in mind, we are working with Metro Center to find a date that works for everyone. There are several conflicting factors involved. Please understand our team of volunteers is trying to make this event happen for you in an unusually fluid environment.

There will be questions. We are working to get everything in order and we will let you know more as we have more to share.

Thanks for your support, and Happy Halloween!

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