

CACTUS NEEDLES

Monthly Newsletter of the Southwest Costumers Guild

Volume 14 Number 1 – January/February 2007

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Calendar

This is provided as general news. Please verify times and locations with the organizer of each event. Know of an upcoming costumed event in Arizona? Please tell your editor. Unless otherwise noted, SWCG meetings begin at 1 PM.

***Indicates an event organized by SWCG.**

February 10 - April 1, 2007 (Saturdays, Sundays and President's Day) - **Arizona Renaissance Festival and Artisans' Marketplace** near Gold Canyon, Arizona. www.royalfaires.com/ARIZONA/.

February 27, 2007, 7 PM - **Dressing Dutch** at the Phoenix Art Museum. Learn how a costumer goes about

recreating the appearance of an earlier age, and watch as a model is dressed in a costume created to replicate one worn in a 17th century Dutch portrait. Included with Museum general admission.

March 7-11, 2007 - Wild West Mercantile's **Winter Range** at Ben Avery Shooting Facility, I-17 and Carefree Highway, north of Phoenix, Arizona. The Single-Action Shooting Society's national championship of cowboy action shooting. Features a costume contest and a first-rate sutler's row. www.winterrange.com/.

March 10-11, 2007 - **Battle of Picacho Peak** at Picacho Peak State Park, Interstate 10 between Casa Grande & Tucson. Reenactment of Arizona's only Civil War battle.

March 10-11, 11AM-5PM, 2007 - **Korean Arirang Festival** at Heritage Square and Science Park, 115 N. 6th St. Phoenix, AZ. Free admission. For more details, please contact the Korean Cultural Center at 602-264-6646 or e-mail kccaz@msn.com

March 15-18, 2007 - **Festival of the West** at Rawhide (Wild Horse Pass exit, I-10 and Loop 202, south of Phoenix). www.festivalofthewest.com/

March 30 - April 2, 2007 - **Costume-Con 25** at the Holiday Inn Southwest & Viking Conference Center South St. Louis County, Missouri. www.cc25.net/

March 25, 2007, 10 AM - **Arizona Renaissance Festival*** SWCG visit to the Ren Festival. Meet at the gardens outside the gates, just before first cannon [10 AM]. We will discuss car pooling at January or February guild meeting. Wear your Turkish Court costume if it's finished.

April 5-8, 2007 - **AniZona 3** at the Phoenix Marriott Mesa and Convention Center in Mesa. Arizona's own Anime and Manga convention. www.anizona.org

April 7-8, 2007 - **Phoenix Faerie Festival** at Schnepf Farm near Queen Creek, Arizona. <http://www.westerngatesfaerierealm.com/PhoenixFaerieFestival.htm>

April 29, 2007, 1 PM - **Duct Tape Dummies*** SWCG Workshop at Jean's place. We have packing material, bring your own duct tape and 2 sacrificial T-shirts. Already have a dummy? - come help wrap! See photo in [Guild Activities](#) section of this page to see what a Duct Tape Dummy looks like.

May 11-13, 2007 - **LepreCon 33** at the Phoenix Marriott Mesa, 200 N Centennial, Mesa AZ. Fan-run SF Con featuring guests of honor author Nancy Traviss and artist Jael. www.leprecon.org

May 20, 2007, 11 AM - **French Drape*** SWCG Workshop. Location to be determined. How to drape a pattern on your body for best fit.

May 20, 2007, 11 AM - **Corset Lacing*** SWCG Workshop. Location to be determined. Know how to single-strand lace and double-strand lace a corset? How to lace yourself into one without help? Come learn.

June 23-24, 2007 - **Renaissance in the Pines** at Fort Tuthill County Park near Flagstaff, Arizona www.renaissanceinthepinesinc.com

September 7-9, 2007 - **CopperCon 27** at Embassy Suites (I-17 and Greenway Road, Phoenix). Fan-run SF Con featuring guests of honor Author Charlaine Harris, Artist Sean Martin, and Musicians Heather Stern and Alison Stern. www.casfs.org/cucon/index.html

SWCG Special Workshops - Saturday Mornings at Bookman's book store, NWC 19th Avenue & Northern in Phoenix. Come on in and join us for stitching and conversation.

3-10-07	9-5
3-24-07	4-9 PM
4-14-07	1-9 PM
5-26-07	9-2
6-30-07	9-2
7-28-07	9-2
8-25-07	9-2
9-29-07	9-2
10-27-07	9-2
11-24-07	9-2
12-29-07	9-2

Stitcher's Gathering in June

From Kim Andrews

I saw this ad in the Jan/Feb 2007 issue of Piecework magazine, and thought that there may be members of SWCG interested:

A Stutters' Gathering

The nation's premiere seminar for women with a passion for stitching

June 8-10th, 2007 - Scottsdale, AZ

Rae Iverson (Moss Creek Designs), Betsy Morgan (Willing Hands Designs), Ann Pettit (Brightneedle Designs)

Your 3-day weekend includes 4-hour classes with each teacher, class kits, meals & room. This is truly a fabulous weekend of fun and learning for those with the passion!

Limited to 84 participants.

For registration and additional information: www.mosscreekdesigns or call 480-595-5625

From the SWCG President

Well hello again, it appears that I am president for the coming year. I am happy that we have some new members and hope that they enjoy the SWCG. I would like to see you develop a fun and interesting schedule for the coming year. Please be thinking about what you would like to see the guild doing and what you want to be learning in the coming year.

There are a few things that I would like to propose for the coming year. Going to a tea-shop or someplace else in costume as an event outside our normal meetings. Doing something for a charity during the year - maybe making layettes for premature babies or simple hats for patients who have gone through chemotherapy or something else that you suggest. In creating our contacts with other groups that include costuming activities. Getting incorporated as a 501-C organization.

I am hoping that with your input we can make the guild what you want it to be, because the members make the guild. --Diane Harris

From the New Cactus Needles Editor

December's SWCG meeting brought a couple of changes in the officer slate. Diane is President once again and, following a secret backroom deal that everybody knew about, I took over as *Cactus Needles* Editor. Randall left me a fine foundation to build upon. You will notice that I have retained most of his basic layout. I will do my best to match his record of on-time newsletters. (not so good my first issue)

Cactus Needles Anniversary

Hey, This is Volume 14, Issue 1. That makes this Cactus Needles 14th Anniversary Issue! Can you believe it? Here's a toast to emeritus editors Jean, Stephanie and Randall (clink of glasses).

We need content! Please send news items, even if they are just one-sentence leads about something you've seen, done, read, or heard about. E-mails, hard copy, gum wrappers - it's all good. Personal announcements are very welcome, as are upcoming public events, questions for the peanut gallery, etc. Lets try to get four or five pages of content per issue!

Submission Deadline for *Cactus Needles* will continue to be the 5th of the month and the newsletter will theoretically be printed on the 10th. Anything received after the 5th will probably go into the next month's issue.

Copyright Policy: Copyright for *Cactus Needles* as a whole belongs to Southwest Costumers Guild. Signed articles belong to their authors. Anything in the general news sections may be reproduced in the newsletters of the International Costume Guild and its chapters. ICG chapter editors should contact the *Cactus Needles* editor regarding use of individual signed articles.

Sharing Policy A hard copy of *Cactus Needles* will be sent to any ICG chapter that sends SWCG a hard copy of their own newsletter. After distribution to our local members, a .pdf copy of the newsletter will be posted to www.southwestcostumersguild.org for the enjoyment of everyone.

Easy Cutting Table

By Lyn Jeppesen

Another one thanks to my brilliant spouse:

Easy cutting table.

We had an old wooden table 3X6, with wobbly legs. David braced the legs and we bought a sheet of Wallboard to go on top. Wallboard is easily cleaned and perfectly smooth. We had to cut one end off so we could get out the door of our available space, but it's still 6.5 feet long and 4 feet wide. And if it gets damaged, any lumber supply has more of them. Problem: NOT portable unless you have a truck larger than my Toyota. Our fold-up tables are still a major asset to the Guild.



Randall and Paula are seen at the SWCG Middy in the Garden get-together at the Desert Botanical Gardens.

Period-Acceptable Knitting Needles **(Inexpensive, With a Little Work)**

by Lyn Jeppesen

I've checked and double pointed needles of any material are no longer made in any length other than for knitting stockings (6-8 inches)

.
Ace Hardware has 48-inch wooden dowels of varying diameters. The smallest one makes size 4 knitting needles. With a tin snip or fine hacksaw blade, one 48-cent (includes tax) dowel will make 3 16-inch knitting needles (further instructions follow), 4 12-inch, or 6 8-inch (or 8 6-inch). With the smaller diameters a good old-fashioned hand-cranked pencil sharpener will put a fairly good point on one or both ends. Our electric doesn't even recognize something so small. Thorough sanding with fine sandpaper is next and is a critical step. In fact, fine sandpaper should be added to your other knitting hardware kit for occasional touchups. If any kind of splinter is left it will catch the yarn and create major problems. Of course it's economical and easy enough to replace the needles, but your work may suffer more permanent damage. I bought two dowels, and therefore have 6 16-inch double pointed knitting needles. I'm currently working on a Scottish fisherman's sweater, which is done with three needles holding the work (in the round) and a fourth for knitting. And finally (got to get back to it), caveat - I did not check the price on the larger diameter dowels.

Randwulf's Swag Bag

by Randall Whitlock

One of the coolest things about SF conventions is FREE STUFF! There are books, comics, posters, T-shirts, and collectible cards out on tables for the taking. Add that to your purchases from the dealer room and art show, and it does not take long for your arms to be overloaded.

Back in the 1970s, one could find small collapsible backpacks that would fold up into a pocket set into their back panels. I haven't seen a new one in years, though I grab them whenever they turn up at garage sales.

Earlier this year, I was given a clever promotional item. It's a simple, flat drawstring bag, printed with the logo for the company that makes my employer's stationery supplies. The drawstrings extend beyond the sides of the bag and terminate at its lower corners. When the bag is closed, these drawstrings form straps that allow the bag to be worn as a backpack.

These bags are two ideas that belong together.

Presenting Randwulf's Swag Bag:

You'll need

--One-half yard of fabric. The fabric should be strong enough to carry your swag, but thin enough to fold up tightly. The fabric should not have significant stretch. Nylon is a good choice. Trouser-weight twills and poplins will work too. The bolt width should be at least 45 inches.

--Four yards of cordage. Since the drawstrings will double as pack straps, a thick macramé cord is best.

--About two inches of Velcro.

--Thread (Match the fabric color).

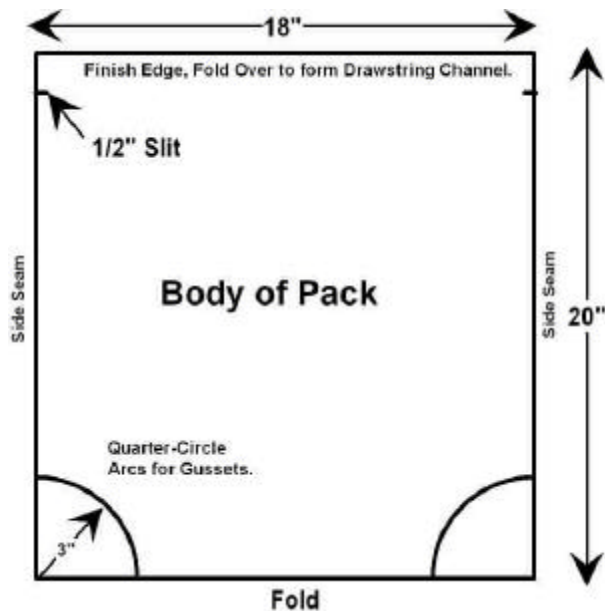
Directions:

Cut out a rectangle of fabric about 40 inches long and 18 inches wide. Fold the fabric in half to form an 18 by 20-inch rectangle. You can adjust this size and proportion for different-sized bags. I chose this size for a good fit to my back.

Scribe two quarter-circles, each three inches in radius and centered at the ends of the fold.

Form drawstring channels by folding over about 1.5 inches of the top edges of the bag and sewing them down.

Your bag will be more durable if you finish the ends and edges of the drawstring channels by tucking under the raw edges. You may need to cut one-half inch slits at the ends of the channels to enable the fold-under. Use quarter-inch seam allowances for the rest of the pattern.



The back pocket will consist of two overlapping half-circles.

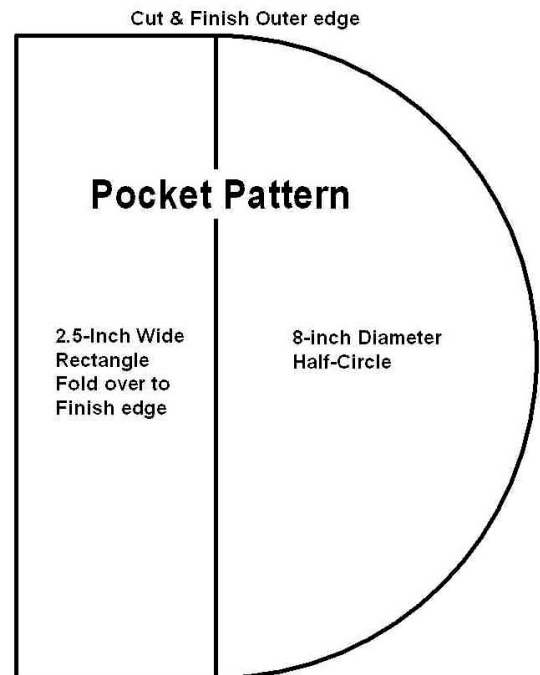
Make your pocket pattern by scribing an 8-inch diameter half-circle, then extending the flat side 2.5 inches away from the half circle. Cut out two of these D-shapes of fabric. Turn under and sew one inch of the flat edge of the D.

Apply the Velcro to the middle of each finished flat edge. The hook side of the Velcro goes on one panel while the loop side goes on the other. The Velcro wraps completely over the edge. This way, it will be able to close the pocket in both unfolded backpack and folded pocket configurations.

Place the two half-circles together so their flat sides overlap by one inch and the Velcro patches match up. Finish the outer edges of the circle. I use a serger for this, but you can simply turn the edges under.

Attach the circle to the middle of the back panel of the pack (the side that will face outward from your back when worn) by sewing all around the circle. If you finished its edge by turning under, run a second row of stitching inside from the edge to conceal the raw edge when the pack is in the folded pocket configuration.

You can sew a loop of cord into the outer seam of the pocket. When the pack is folded up, this will provide a convenient carrying strap. When the pack is unfolded, this strap will be inside the pocket.



Sew up the sides of the pack.

Install the two drawstrings in the drawstring channels. Each string passes into one end of the channel, out the opposite end, then back through the other channel to wind up back where it started.

The quarter-circle arcs cut out of the lower corners of the bag are gussets to provide fullness to the pack bottom. pull on the opposite sides of the arc to collapse it into single, straight line with the pack's side seam in the middle. Insert the ends of the pack strap/drawstring into the end of this line. Choose the end that will be toward your back when the pack is worn. Sew along the line to close the gusset. This seam takes quite a bit of tension when the backpack is carried, so make the seam extra strong by double-sewing it.

Your pack is finished. For storage, turn the pack inside out through the opening in the pocket.



This space is vacant.

Would you like to help fill it?

Send stuff to your editor.

Editor@southwestcostumersguild.org