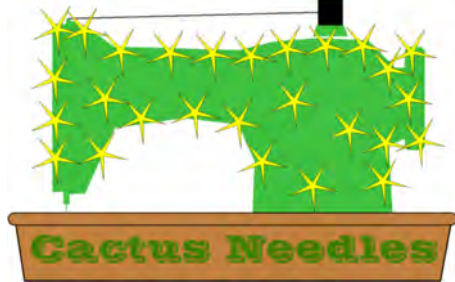


Cactus Needles

25.03 March

The Southwest Costumers Guild
2320 West Seldon Lane, Phoenix AZ 85021
<http://www.southwestcostumersguild.org>



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Recent Events

I Know What You Did This January

Remembered by Randall

When temperatures are moderate in the winter time, Arizonans make the most of it. Of course this includes costumers! Your webdude attended several weekend cosplay-friendly events in January and early February.

Superhero Saturday 1/15/25

This is an annual event hosted by the Phoenix Police Department as a charity fundraiser for Childhelp and Phoenix Police Sergeants and Lieutenants Association. It is an open-air festival held in the parking lot surrounding the Peter Piper Pizza restaurant and other stores in the retail center west of MetroCenter. Cosplay interest booths abound, including Star Wars, Dr. Who and Power Rangers fandom, as well as many civic organizations. There was a masquerade hosted by Amber Skies (who also emceed the Tempe FanCon Masquerade). Randall took a bunch of pictures of masquerade contestants to slide-show for you at an upcoming SWCG meeting.



Come to the dark side. We have public transit.



Morphin' around Superhero Saturday

Arizona Renaissance Festival Fans Garb Market 1/15/25

Right after the Superhero Saturday masquerade, Randall hot-footed it over to Jarrod's Coffee, Tea & Gallery in Mesa. This is an informal get-together for fans and participants of the Arizona Renaissance Festival to swap costume items and vend some art before the faire gets started. The organizers are new to the valley and in a friendly conversation, indicated they hope to make this a regular thing, with maybe another coming in September. I hope to be a participant in that one, nostalgically re-opening the MoiRandalls booth. As it was, I purchased a very interesting simplified Regency coat that needs to be the basis on a whole new costume. Maybe I will experiment with it at our photo shoot workshop in March. Jarrod's is a cool little coffee house with permanent art and jewelry displays. It is worth a visit any time.



Broad view of the participant tents at Arizona Renaissance Festival Fans Garb Market

Tempe FanCon 1/25/25

SWCG, represented by Randall and Paula, set up our meet and greet table at Tempe FanCon, as we have done for several years. This is the largest of the local library conventions and seems still to be growing with cosplayers playing a tremendous variety of superheroes, game characters and furriers wandering about. I shot a bunch of masquerade photos with Paula's camera and the panorama seen below with my phone. We had excellent success with our sign-up sheet. After the con, Paula, Mahala and Randall repaired to Voodoo Donuts and SomeBurros for an early supper.



Panorama of cosplayers at Tempe FanCon

Phoenix Historical Costuming Society 1/26/25

Among the other costume interest groups we met and learned about at Tempe FanCon is the Phoenix Historical Costume Society. Formed recently, they went for an antique crawl at The Brass Armadillo Antique Mall on the Sunday after FanCon. I joined them briefly to introduce our bunch. They seem a friendly group and I hope to see them again soon.

Peoria LibraryCon 2/15/25

The Peoria Public Library hosted their own open-air pop culture convention on February 15, featuring booths from several local authors, artists and educational organizations. I met some old friends there, hearing the latest about the upcoming TusCon from Wendy Trakes and Liz Danforth, saying hello to Duncan from Duncan's Books and catching up with author Janeen O'Kerry.

These Boots are Made For Trekkin'

I even had some time in January to build an upgrade for my Star Trek: Lower Decks cosplay. The command division boots from these uniforms, meant for cartoon characters, are black with bright red soles and tops. I previously tried starting with black boots, but I could not find a red paint that would stick to the soles. This time I worked the problem in reverse. I purchased a pair of red sock-boots and painted the uppers black with Jacquard fabric paint.



February and March are still Festival Season

From Randall

Continuing from my last write-up, I enjoyed more of the winter festival season through February and March.

I attended Arizona Matsuri on February 22 at Steele Indian School Park in downtown Phoenix. This is a Japanese cultural celebration in a form much like other local street fairs (lots of pop-up tents). There were many food booths, merchants with toys, candies and clothing, and on-stage performances. I grabbed an excellent bowl of ramen and kicked back to watch some martial arts demonstrations, dancing and taiko drumming.



This is the place to be if you would like to pick up some contemporary Japanese clothing, such as haori jackets and kimonos, novelty bags or a hoodie with your favorite manga character. There was even a mini swap meet with books in Japanese, used clothing and a variety of kitchen gadgets.

There was an anime-friendly costume contest, but it was held late in the day and I did not stay.



On March first, I marched forth through the Single-Action Shooting Society's annual End of Trail event at the Ben Avery shooting range north of Phoenix. Competitions include ride and shoot, where a horse and rider navigate a staked course at speed, busting balloons with a six-gun firing blanks. The quick-draw competition has six competitors at a time drawing and firing wax bullets at metal targets equipped with a timing device. There is also a walk and shoot event where competitors fire revolvers, lever guns and shotguns at iron targets built into a salon, cavalry fort other backdrop based on a western movie set.

For me, this is a shopping opportunity with many sutlers vending clothing items suitable for upgrading your wild west/Victorian/steampunk costume, as well as shooting supplies. There is a food court with excellent barbecue.

I learned that there is a members' swap meet held on Thursday evening of the event. I will have to check that out next year.



Paula and I attended the Arizona Renaissance Festival on March 8. For me, this is like coming home. I still think about becoming a renfaire merchant crafter as a retirement thing.

Our favorite shows include the birds of prey show and "Cirque du Sewer," Melissa Arleth's circus consisting of two humans, five cats and four rats. Yes, she can actually herd cats. <https://www.cirquedusewershow.com/>.

I don't have any renfaire pictures this year, but Paula took a bunch at the birds of prey show.





Briefs

SEND ME MORE!

Ye editor stumbled across on Facebook this post on an old German spinning machine. Fascinating.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1EZWm6qfLn/>

Phil Gust

A recording of the Silicon Web Costumers' Guild Presents webinar "Working with Faux Fur" with Daren Bost that took place on February 9, 2025 is now available on the Webinars page of the Silicon Web Costumers' Guild website.

<https://www.siwcostumers.org/webinars.html#webinar-2025-02-09>

Please join us for the fifth webinar of the 2024-2025 season. There is no charge for this webinar but capacity is limited, so please register soon. <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/rsiPu8aPSXyQtyjPNRpgSg>

See the [Calendar](#) page of the Silicon Web Costumers' Guild website for information about future webinars in the series.

From Randall

I attended the Silicon Web Costumers Guild's Zoom seminar today, March 9, 2025, about the ICG Press, presented by Phil Gust. Phil presented information about how ICG Press is organized, along with useful nuts and bolts about how to put together a book for publication on paper and in e-book form.

In the course of the Q&A, I asked about a press release for the new edition of *The Masquerade Handbook*. Phil pointed me to the following from Costume.org. I recommend the blurb for publication in an upcoming *Cactus Needles*.

The International Costumers' Guild Press announces the publication of its third title, the second edition of *The Masquerade Handbook*. This work was originally compiled and privately distributed by Janet Wilson Anderson in 1991, and has been out of print since then. With a new layout, typography, and graphics, the second edition makes this classic work available again to members of the costuming community.

This book is available in paperback, hardcover, and e-book versions on March 15, 2025. Visit the [The Masquerade Handbook](#) page for information about this title, and to locate book sellers who offer the book. The ICG Press also sells the paperback and hardcover versions directly through our publication partner, IngramSpark.

Minutes

SWCG Meeting February 15, 2025

Present were Paula, Mahala, Mark, Randall, Tanya

As a follow-up to our public meet and greet at Tempe FanCon last month, we gathered at New Hong Kong Restaurant at 24th Street and Indian School Road for a satisfying meal and even more satisfying conversation. No official business was conducted but we brainstormed a bit about our upcoming meetings for the rest of the spring.

The meeting was made particularly special by the presence of Tanya, whom we just met at Tempe FanCon. Tanya told us about her experiences costuming for herself and with her son. We hope to see a lot more of her.

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.*

March 20-23, Tucson Wild West Steampunk Convention (<https://www.wildwestcon.com/>) -

The convention begins Thursday evening and runs through Sunday at Casino Del Sol in Tucson, Arizona!

Step into the shadows of Steampunk and Halloween at our grand event! Explore a Vendor Hall and Artist Alley teeming with mysterious treasures. Absorb the esoteric knowledge in Panels and Workshops, then lose yourself in the allure of the Drag & Burlesque Show. For thrill-seekers, the NERF dueling grounds offer glory from the misty darkness! Indulge in the elegance of Tea Dueling, where strategy and poise combine. Marvel at the creativity of our Makers & Experts in action. Unwind in the Free Con Suite, a sanctuary of refreshments and relaxation! *...and so much more!*

We offer discounted passes for kids, 8-14 years old! (Kids 7 and below get in free!)

So you can bring your entire group – and we have exciting kid-friendly events, games, N.E.R.F. Dueling, and more! (Standard - \$85 +\$5 fee) , kids (\$10 +\$3 fee) – special events extra

Most of our panels and events are kid-friendly — *18+ events are clearly labeled* on the website and program guide as well as generally being scheduled at night. Online sales end Wednesday, March 19th, 2025 at 8pm

April 22nd - Intro to Pneumatics (Arizona Hunters event – azhunters.com)

So many people are interested in making their stuff move. (more info as we get it)

May 3 - annual Free Comic Book Day Velma Teague Library (7010 N 58th Ave., Glendale)

Hello, all you fabulous cosplayers,

We're inviting you to stop by the **Velma Teague Library (7010 N 58th Ave., Glendale)** on **Saturday, May 3, for our annual Free Comic Book Day event** in collaboration with **Drawn to Comics!** All cosplayers are welcome -- you don't have to tie in with a comic book theme.

The event will run for an hour longer this year, from **10 AM-3 PM**. We'll offer free comic books, 35 vendors, crafts, and games. We'd love to have cosplayers stop by for photo ops and just hang out and have a good time. Come for five hours or fifteen minutes – we'd appreciate any and all support!

The Drawn to Comics shop located across the street from the library (5801 W. Glendale Ave., Glendale) will also be passing out comic books, so feel free to stop by there as well. Their website at <https://drawntocomics.com/> will feature more details about vendors and guests closer to the date. If you want to inquire about being a vendor, contact Ken at drawn2comics@gmail.com.

There will be staff bathrooms available for you to change into and out of your costumes, free bottled water, and some free snacks. If you need to enter the library before 10 AM to change, please call me at 480-295-6124, starting at 9 AM. The parking garage adjacent to the library on 59th Ave. is closed due to City Hall construction, but parking is available on the street or in the nearby free garage on 5835 W. Palmyra Ave.

As always, we ask that your costumes are age-appropriate for an audience including kids and teens. No real weapons will be allowed. Prop weapons are permitted as part of your costume, but may be tagged by security.

Please fill out this short form to let me know if you think you can attend.

<https://form.jotform.com/220935874301152>

We really appreciate you!

Many thanks as always,

Anna Caggiano

May 17th Learn Face Painting (Arizona Hunters event – azhunters.com)

More info as we get it.

June 6-8 2025 - Phoenix Fan Fusion (<https://www.phoenixfanfusion.com/>)-- Phoenix Convention Center

Memberships are only sold online, starting Jan 6th (\$89 early bird)

July 11-13 Phoenix Mad Monster Horror con –(<https://madmonster.com/az25/>) Err on the side of creepy -

Renaissance Phoenix hotel, Glendale 9495 W. Entertainment Blvd., Glendale, AZ 85305

\$80 for 3 days

FRI 6PM-11PM

SAT 11AM-7PM

SUN 11AM-5PM

Ye editor does not have much data further out

PLEASE SEND ME MORE!

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Better yet, send us some content for the next issue. We're always open to costuming news, how to and other feature articles, reviews of events, books, film, television and web, and calendar items of interest to Arizona costumers. Send your submissions to southwestcostumers@gmail.com