

# The Newcastle Courant

*It's a new season! Let's play!*

St. Matthew's Guild

February 2002

## President's Message

I love the first guild meeting of the year! Seeing everyone after the holiday hiatus, catching up, the choosing of the fairs that we will attend this season, planning the new gigs and improving on the old. It is such an exciting and exhilarating meeting! We have such a great year to look forward to, with two new fairs that are nearby, potential new guild members, and a new and improved workshop schedule. I can hardly wait to get started. I would like to start by saying how thrilled I am with where our guild is today. We all get along, which can be very difficult in a group of creative A-types. We work well together and we play well together. These are all important attributes in a volunteer organization. This is supposed to be fun. I for one, am always willing to work harder at play than I do at my day job! I feel that one of my duties as President is to help plan activities that will (hopefully) be fun while giving us the chance to improve our skills as reenactors. In this vein, we are planning to hold a workshop at every guild meeting and host an intensive 2 day guild-a-thon the third weekend in April! There will be speakers from other guilds, as well as workshops in ren-speake, gigging, court etiquette, and much more. This will be a great build-up for the faire season and should launch us full force into frantic fair fun! I hope that all of you share my excitement. I'll try not to bounce off the walls too much! But I hope you all join me in my enthusiasm. Here's to a great season.

### 2002 Fair Season

*Mark your calendars now!*

April 20 & 21	Workshop weekend
May 18 & 19	Placerville May Faire
June 1 & 2 and 8 & 9	Valhalla Fair
June 22 & 23	Fair Oaks Fair
July 6 & 7	New Discovery Park Fair
August 10 &/or 11	Pittsburgh Fair (maybe)
September 28 - October 14	New Patterson family faire in Novato (maybe)
October 5 & 6	Hanford Faire (maybe)
October 16-21 (including set up and tear down)	2002 Folsom Faire!!

## December Banquet

Wow!! On behalf of the members of St. Mathew's Guild that were present at the December Banquet, wow!!

The food and fellowship were fantastic. All members present went to great length to provide tasty treats for the celebration and Liz had done a fabulous job creating a delightfully festive atmosphere in her home for us to enjoy our evening. The Christmas tree and decorations were beautiful.

The festivities began with the gathering of the members in the family room and reminiscing about the year past. And what a year!! A year highlighted with new members and new friends, lots and lots of faires, the occasional crisis, and alas, Folsom Faire.

After enjoying some delightful cuisine, including weenies and sauce, fresh fruit and veggie trays, freshly baked bruschetta, sushi, wines and an assortment of incredible desserts, the group reconvened in the living room for a gift exchange.

What fun!! The gift exchange was arranged so that a gift could be "stolen" up to 3 times. In one instance, a member's gift was stolen 3 times in a row! It was quite funny. The gifts were donated by members and included such niceties as blankets, hand carved wooden spoons, wines, bath gift baskets, Italian food gift baskets and fun things like plastic swords and Bop-its. I am sure everyone will agree that it was a good time for all.

After the gift exchange and some friendly heckling over the distribution of gifts, we migrated back to the feeding grounds for some final snacking at which point Michael and Wendy announced their engagement to be married. Yes, to each other!



### From Arizona

Hi St Matt's!

Miss you all so much here in Arizona. Mom sent my my ren costume, and I'm getting excited about faire. There is a big one coming up, it sounds like the Northern Faire back home. The Rows are going to be working it. They offered me a position to work their booth next weekend. I think I want to do it. Wristbands, baby!

I have made some friends and have a new boyfriend named Denver. Tempe is really nice. The city is well planned and most of the buildings look new and modern. The air is really dirty and dusty. Right now the temperature is so nice, but soon it is going to be so hot. I'm afraid. :)

Classes are going well right now. My teacher is awesome! I have already started animating. I will be sending a tape home soon with some of my work so you all can view it at the next meeting.

Miss everyone tons, and hopefully I will get to come home for Valhalla. I might bring some friends if they decide they like Faire. (How could they NOT!?)

Miss everyone! Yvonne

## Costume Committee

Not too much happening in the costume committee this month, but there are some hot plans for the future. Liz plans to hold a pattern drafting/fitting workshop in the spring, for one—learn how to get that bodice to fit right the first time! If you have suggestions for other costume workshops, let Rebecca know. A side note: Margo Anderson, a very well-respected Renaissance fair costumer (and creator of those gorgeous new women's dress patterns you may have seen for sale), will be holding a workshop at the end of February. The cost is \$40; contact Liz if you are interested. And as always, if you want to make a new costume this season, be sure to clear your plans and material choices with the committee before you purchase anything. Happy sewing!



## Directors' Meeting 1/26/02

At the Directors' Meeting-within-a-meeting, held during the Masters' meeting at Liz and Nathan's house, the Directors gave the green light to the purchase of another large storage box. The Directors then engaged in a round of self-congratulations for conducting all necessary business in less than thirty seconds and adjourned to eat more chicken sate.



### From the Treasurer

Greetings to all of you:

Your treasurer would like to thank all of you for being so patient with me during the faire and for letting Steve step in and handle things in my place. For all of you who did that extra step for him at the faire we appreciate it. As you all know Steve is not always the most patient person especially to sit and wait.

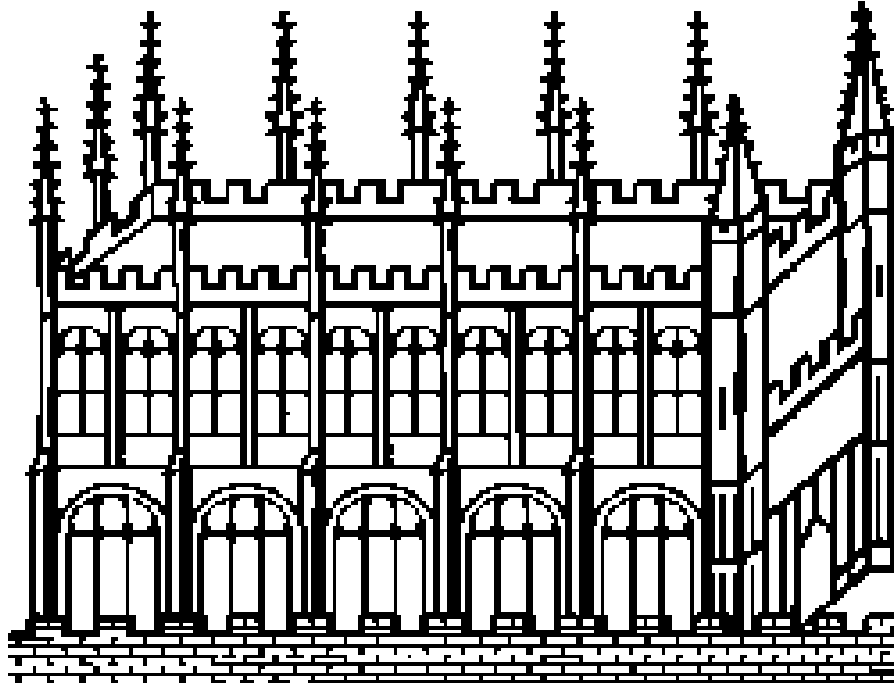
Anyway the check has arrived from the City of Folsom and all is good. The check amount was \$7202.00, which is right up there in the right ballpark. A big plus over last year's flood.

I will be leaving for Arizona to do an event with our Pastie Booth and when I return I will finish up the financial accounting for Folsom Faire so I can pass on what the statistics are.

If any of you have receipts still out for Folsom please mail them to me or get them to me so that I may show an accurate account of all Folsom expenses.

Thanks again for all your support.

Cathy Rowe



## Wanted-Advertisements

### **WANTED: VICE-PRESIDENT**

Being VP is an easy job for a politician in St. Matt's. The VP runs guild meetings when the president is unavailable, which at this point is practically never and Liz has assigned developing the year end/Folsom awards to the VP. That's it. Oh and as a "master" you get to have your vote count regarding journeyman requests.

Anyone interested in the position should notify one of the three directors, either Dan Lewis, Nathan Schmidt or Rebecca Bocchicchio.

### **WOODLAND HIGHLAND GAMES**

The Highland Dancers are requesting volunteers to sell beer in their booth at the Woodland Games to be held April 27 and 28. Those working a four-hour shift will be provided admittance to the Games that day as well as a parking pass. Contact Lola if you can help out.

### **COMMITTEE HEAD WANTED - EDUCATION**

Rhonda Rumrey, Education Goddess, must retire from the position due to time constraints. Please contact Liz if you are interested in filling the position of coordinating our educational presentations. This is a very important position as it fulfills our charter purpose.

## St. Matthew's Rejoins CIRGA

As those of you who attended the last Guild meeting already know, St. Matt's has rejoined CIRGA, the California Independent Renaissance Guilds Association. CIRGA's membership includes both faire boards that produce and acting guilds that participate in the faires of the California independent renaissance faire circuit. Since St. Matt's does both, we have joined in both categories. The happy result is that we will have two votes!

Liz and I attended the first CIRGA meeting of 2002 in Fresno on January 13th. We were both pleasantly surprised by the professionalism and efficiency of the meeting and the high caliber of the discussion on the issues on the agenda. Despite my initial reluctance to attend, I even ended up volunteering to participate on a committee to develop a weapons policy for playtrons. I think you'll all be happy to know that St. Matt's application to renew its membership was unanimously approved when it came up on the agenda and we were made to feel very welcome. The big news of the day was the announcement of two new faires in our area, one in Placerville in May and one at Discovery Park in July. Another upcoming event that was announced was a CIRGA workshop day in Fair Oaks Park on May 4, 2002. More details on that will follow.

Unless someone else has a burning desire to attend, Liz and I plan to represent St. Matt's at the next CIRGA meeting in Antioch on April 14. Until then, that's the CIRGA news.

Nathan Schmidt



## Twelfth Night Sacramento

12th Night - Sacramento was a huge success with all of society in attendance. Some present at the Hilton location include the Mayor of Newcastle and his wife, the Alderman of Newcastle, Thomas and Mrs. Gray, and the fairest of all guests, the Queen herself.

Okay, so this didn't really happen but it could! St. Matthews is a delightfully large and active guild in the Sacramento area with many supporters and friends including St. Ambrose, Santa Maria, St. Sebastian's, and Studium just to name a "couple" right off the top of my head. Additionally, our tally of local faires and shows has increased substantially this year.

So what does it all mean, you may ask. And I am glad you asked. It means this! If St Matthew's Guild decided to sponsor a 12th Night in this area I believe it would be very well received. I believe we would have the support and attendance of most every guild and group from South Lake Tahoe to San Francisco and from Redding to Lodi. Why would they come? Because St. Matthews invited them, that's why! Also because Sacramento is a closer drive than Fresno by a couple of hours and everyone knows that the people St. Matthew's know how to party with class and style.

It could go something like this: rent a hall, send out invitations to our 12th night banquet and potluck, decorate the hall with a theme such as "the joust," "the inauguration," "the Queen's ball," or "the masquerade." You get the idea, right? We can arrange some silly yet educational games, give recognition to some of the other guilds for outstanding historical representation, etcetera, etcetera.

Hey, it is still in the design phase. Throw me a bone here.

If you like the idea, then great! I want to hear from you! If you don't like it then make a suggestion and let's make this thing happen for year 2003.

Wendy Zampardi

## Archery

Sunday, January 20, the St. Matts Archery Contingent met at the Maya range to do damage unto hay bales, paper, and the odd wooden frame. The contingent consisted of Mike, Rebecca, and Gabby Bocchicchio, Nathan Schmidt and Liz Martin, Scott Stephen, and Ken, Pam, and Chase Thompson.

We headed off, en masse, to the long target down by the river. Lining up at 30 yards, we all proceeded to do damage to said hay, paper, and wood. And arrows. Robin Hood isn't all that worried, however, not a bad lot of archers, we. :-) Nathan managed to put a couple in the aforementioned river, but they were retrieved without much hassle. Except for the one that was in pieces. There were a few other arrow casualties, here and there, as well.

After a few shoots there, the guys (including Chase) hoofed it over to another target, and left the girls (including Gabby) there to shoot at 30 yards. We walked over to another range to shoot at 65 and 50 yards at a target with a bigger backstop (which was artfully crafted out of someone's old garage door, complete with the locks on the side and handle in the middle). A few went flying over it, and had to be searched for, but all in all a good time was had. We, I think, shot a little better at 65 yards than at 50, probably because we were getting tired by the time we moved up.

Meanwhile the girls continued to shoot at 30 yards until they got tired and sat down on a blanket to chat. After a rousing snack of sunflower seeds, some cranberry-chocolate-nut bar thing, and water, they started shooting again just in time to impress the returning guys with their fortitude (the girls neglecting to mention the, ahem, short break).

There were a few more shattered or lost arrows, but it was a fine shoot.

Ken Thompson, Rebecca Bocchicchio

## Web Site Update

It may have been awhile since some of you have visited our guild web site at [www.stmatthewsguild.org](http://www.stmatthewsguild.org). Lola has been working hard on the pages but she needs your help with updates. All committee heads could send a description of their committee, as well as any plans for the upcoming faire season and meeting dates, to Lola at [pandora@softcom.net](mailto:pandora@softcom.net). See the Sitcom or Plague Rat pages for good examples.



# Committee Updates

## Sitcom Update

Hey folks, for all those who missed the SIT Com meeting on Tuesday, Let me explain....no, there is too much. Let me sum up. We went over Mel's somewhat lofty goals for the year, which include coming up with gigs we all can play at faire- at the front gate for meet and greet, at our encampment, and about the shire. In addition, this year we want to develop a cohesive self propelling gig for Folsom faire that would require low St Matthew's members participation as we all run around like chickens with our heads cut off. Such a gig would be more like the theme of the Shire, i.e. St Crispin's day, October festival, etc. And finally to work at practicing the gigs and honing improvisational skills so that the members of SIT Com can then, in turn, become emissaries, spreading the love of gigging and improving to all members of St Matt's.

Now, for all those who missed this meeting, it is not too late to join our happy crew of idea people. Our next meeting will be February 19, 2002 at 6:30 p.m.. at Mel's house. We will be working on part one of the SIT Com checklist: stuff to do at faire that entertains our audience while entertaining us.

Love,

Your chief Self-Indulgent Thespian, Melinda

## Plague Rat Dancers

The Plague Rat Dancers are St. Matthew's Guild's English and Scottish Country dance troupe. Good news, we're coming off of hiatus. Now don't worry if you've never danced before; experience is not required. All that is required is the ability to count to four and the willing to show up and participate at practice. The group will be meeting on Thursday nights 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at Lola's house, starting on February 21st. At the first meeting we will decide how often to meet: weekly, every other week, etc. We will also cover the basics: setting, siding, arming, up a double, etc. Our goal for the coming Faire season is to be able to perform a street set or two at each of the Faires that we attend. So hope to see you there! If you need directions please call me at (916) 863-0837 or email me at [pandora@softcom.net](mailto:pandora@softcom.net).

Cheers, Lola

## Of the Scottish Sort

Anyone interested in filling out details of their Scottish character, or working on a Scottish costume, please contact Lola Pudinski.



## LET'S GET READY TO { BUILD }

Ha, ha, loses something in the translation. It also requires labor instead of vegging. Hey; who signed up for this labor stuff, acting, socializing and being historical that's what Ren's about. Fooled ya; too late to back out now! he he he (muttly sounds)

Well, again we have an aggressive construction agenda. Had a break last year and now it's hammer time. Yes, I have the poor punning talent. Buck up! you will survive, less a little skin and some blood maybe a whelp or few. So batten down those band aids and woman your tools ( deference to the last construction chief).

1. Paint the out side of big stage; requires coordination with Steve for borrowing his generator.
2. Rebuild the Shady Grove stage (kid's area stage, in case you didn't know).
3. Fence for the encampment. This will require special tools to be bought, a mortising jig for a drill press. Anyone have a drill press or equivalent? Jig will make square holes instead of round ones, approx. \$60.00 cost.
4. Add a shelf to the ticket booth (on site at Folsom).
5. Better secure the shade cover to the information booth (on site at Folsom).
6. Add drop down wheels to the ticket booth before destroyed from all the dragging (this will be done at Folsom).
7. Some new type of back drops that will require decorative painting after they have been built.
8. More benches ( at least 4 ) and the tables need to be strengthened.
9. AS ALWAYS, VARIOUS OTHER REPAIRS AND NEW IDEAS .

We have our work cut out for us. There will be lots to do and hopefully lots of you to do it. OK, ok! I'll help but it's your fingers, toes, and other parts at risk (not nether parts) so no excuses--well, some excuses.

Looking forward to being in labor with all of you! Ugh! poor puns again! THANKS!

Mike Nunes

### A Pirate's Life

An able-bodied seaman meets a pirate in a bar, and they take turns recounting their adventures at sea. Noting the pirate's peg-leg, hook, and eye patch the seaman asks, "So, how did you end up with the peg-leg?" The pirate replies, "We was caught in a monster storm off the cape and a giant wave swept me overboard. Just as they were pullin' me out a school of sharks appeared and one of 'em bit me leg off."

"Blimey!" said the seaman. "What about the hook?"

"Ahhhh..." mused the pirate, "we were boardin' a trader ship, pistols blastin' and

swords swingin` this way and that. In the fracas me hand got chopped off."

"Zounds!" remarked the seaman. "And how came ye by the eye patch?"

"A seagull droppin` fell into me eye," answered the pirate.

"You lost your eye to a seagull dropping?" the sailor asked incredulously.

"Well..." said the pirate, "...it was me first day with the hook..."

Submitted by Liz Martin

## FIVE QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT YOUR CHARACTER

1. What is your name? (Your name is very important because people will start referring to you as Master Smithy or whatever. Your real name to those outside of the guild will be forsaken, hehe.) If you have trouble with first names, names of the Bible are a good reference. In addition, I believe someone in St. Matthew's has a list of good English names. Only on very rare occasions did people (mostly nobles) have a middle name and they were always for a purpose. Your last name could reflect the type of job you do, i.e. Lord Fletcher of St. Sebastian's is an arrow smith. Or the town your family originated from, i.e. Hastings, Upton, ect. (Pick a name you will be happy with; you will be stuck with it for a while.)

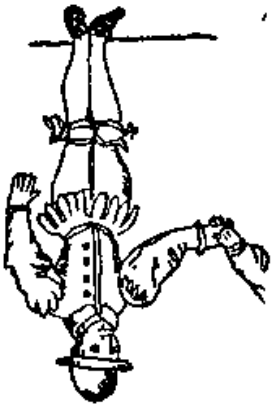
2. Who are you? (What is your station in life? What is your job? Are you married, single? Do you have children?)

3. Think of three characteristics that describe yourself. (For example, are you a wit, do you have a temper, are you optimistic, pessimistic, jovial, a grump etc.?) Remember to pick something you can play; i.e. if your character is a flirt and you personally are not comfortable with flirting it probably would not work. I suggest you go to extremes, either like your own personality or the exact opposite. (This is very theatrical; your characteristics should be played bigger than normal so that the audience gets what's going on) It is also good to have a few quirks in mind that you can play consistently; for example my character has a bag on her person that she is extremely overprotective of.

4. What is your personal history? (Who are your mother and father? And no they do not have to be dead! If fact, it is much more interesting if they are alive.) Are you originally from Newcastle or some other town, and if so, why did you come to Newcastle? What events have thus far shaped your life? Having one or two to talk about always makes a great gig; for example, there was this time when the baker Peter Wheatly was baking the bread when a fire erupted. It took the whole town a day to put it out, etc. And remember the older you are the more stories you would have.

5. Who do you know? (Do you have friends? Enemies? Who are your employers? Do you admire anybody? etc.)

These five things are guidelines to help you start thinking of your character for the character workshop at the next guild meeting. They will be further expanded on so that your character can be fleshed out and easy for you to play.



St. Matthew's Guild  
P.O. Box 601362  
Sacramento, CA 95860

## *Next Guild Meeting :*

Saturday, February 16

**NOTE ---> 10:00 a.m.**

Liz and Nathan's House  
*(Watch for an email update  
with more details!)*