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The Society of American Fight Directors

6-2000

The Cutting Edge, June-August 2000, Vol. 11 Issue 3

The Society of American Fight Directors

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The Cutting Edge

DEDICATED TO IMPROVING THE QUALITY & SAFETY OF STAGE COMBAT



WWW.SAFD.ORG

SAFD Announces new Scholarship

The 2001 National Stage Combat Workshop (NSCW) will mark the beginning of a new SAFD scholarship. This new grant will provide full tuition and housing for an SAFD member to attend the NSCW.

The scholarship will be applicable to the Actor/Combatant Workshop, Intermediate Actor/Combatant Workshop or Advanced Actor/Combatant Workshop.

A candidate for this scholarship must be a dues paying Actor/Combatant or Advanced

Actor/Combatant for a minimum of one year.

In addition, they must demonstrate an aptitude toward, and a strong desire to learn the skills and performance styles of the

stage combative arts. Applicants need demonstrate a need (not necessarily financial) for said scholarship and be pursuant of, or have received an undergraduate degree in, performance studies (or other such equivalent training).

To be selected for this grant, the A/C or

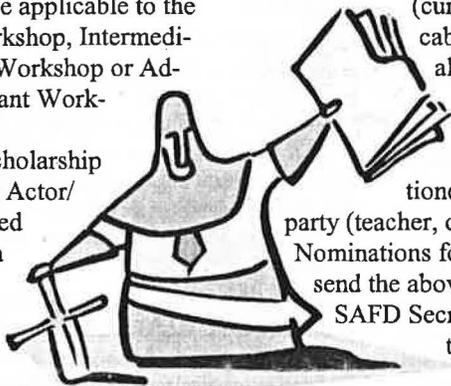
AA/C must be nominated by a member of the SAFD Governing Body, Fight Master, Fight Director or Certified Teacher. Nomination materials should include the candidate's resume

(curriculum vitae if applicable), copies of any and all SAFD certificates, proof of membership, a letter of recommendation from their petitioner and from one other party (teacher, director, etc.).

Nominations for the scholarship must send the above materials to the

SAFD Secretary who shall submit them for review by the Governing Body. All nomination materials must be submitted to the Secretary by the

first of April of the given NSCW year to be considered. The secretary will notify the recipient no later than the first of May. If no candidate is deemed worthy of the scholarship, the Governing Body has the right to withhold the scholarship for that year.



Have heart, yea of few pennies!

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MOVING MEMBERS

Angela Bonacasa, SAFD Secretary (see related story page #2) is now residing in Chicago, IL. 6321 N. Lakewood Chicago, IL 60660 (773) 764-3825 Goodhouse@hotmail.com

Julia Rupkalvis, SAFD Treasurer, has a new e-mail and web page. Check it out! Ripper@flashcom.net www.axeofcourage.bizland.com

SAFD Fight Master David Woolley has moved to the sunny side of the street: 3315 W. Sunnyside #2B Chicago, IL 60625 Smen@interaccess.com or dwoolley@popmail.colum.edu

NEWS From around the SAFD...

Election Results are IN!

The membership representative elections were conducted via the SAFD web page this year in order to complete the elections in time for the governing body meetings preceding the NSCW this July in Las Vegas, Nevada. Elected for new terms are Erik Fredricksen - Fight Master rep, Johnny Bellomo - Certified Teacher rep, Rikki Ravitts - Fight Director rep and Geoffrey

Kent - Actor/Combatant Friend rep. Please contact your representatives via e-mail or phone (contact info located at www.safd.org) and keep them up to date on your concerns and issues so they can represent your voice in the SAFD governing body.

Also, look inside this issue for letters of introduction from Erik Fredricksen and Geoffrey Kent. Next issue will introduce Rikki Ravitts and Johnny Bellomo.

Calling for entries!

The Cutting Edge is looking for a few good combatants turned writers, cartoonists, etc. If you think you have something to offer and are interested in lending a hand with future issues, please contact the editor, Geoff Kent, via e-mail (kentge@msn.com) or phone (303-877-2670). Any and all help is certainly appreciated.

Meet new SAFD Secretary: Angela Bonacasa

This issue of the Cutting Edge, our spotlight on the SAFD officers continues with a look at SAFD Secretary Angela Bonacasa.

When asked how she plans to tackle all the requisite paper work that the job of SAFD Secretary entails, Angela replied, "being unemployed helps." Currently Ms Bonacasa is organizing a Microsoft Access database with SAFD Treasurer Julia Rupkalvis. "Our hope is to keep all the information on the membership in one easily accessed place as opposed to different files on different computers. I want the



Angela Bonacasa pre-NSCW 2000

membership to know what is happening in the SAFD today and what we are planning to do for them tomorrow. In addition I plan to get this job streamlined so it can continue to be effective as it is passed to the next secretary and the next."

A self described "Air Force Brat," Bonacasa started out in Lubbock, Texas. She spent her early years hopping from base to base including California, South Carolina and Germany. In her senior year of high school she performed in her first play but Angela's focus at the time was pre-med. It wasn't until an almost accidental audition for AMDA in her freshman year of college that she was hooked on theatre. "A friend had recommended to

AMDA that I audition for the program. They approached me and I wasn't exactly enthralled with my current major so I went."

Not long afterwards Angela was living in New York City and attending the school full time. "I got a lot out of the current program there and learned a helluva lot."

Her path to stage combat took a more circuitous route. Angela's first class was a brief one week affair which, "we mostly spent falling down." It was not until January of 1994 when a friend suggested she take a public class taught in the city that Angela caught the bug. "After my first unarmed class with Fight Director Mike Chin (monkey walks and all) I knew this was the thing for me." Classes in rapier and dagger with Fight Director David Brimmer and broadsword with Certified Teacher Ralph Anderson followed and Angela completed her first SAFD skills proficiency test (SPT), adjudicated by Fight Master Allen Suddeth, that spring.

A few SPT's later Angela worked a production of Richard III with Al Foote III (our current SAFD webmaster). She was *lucky* to land a fight partner that was a method actor and, "never knew exactly where he was emotionally from night to night."

Angela survived and headed up to the Celebration Barn Actor & Fight Director workshop in the summer of 1996; She has since attended the Barn for five consecutive years in different roles. "Every year has a different vibe and different people. The barn offers something that many workshops cannot - The opportunity to immerse yourself in acting and fight directing with no distractions."

Bonacasa currently resides in Chicago and works with SAFD Fight Director Chuck Coyl. Working with Chuck, Angela has assisted on substituting classes at De Paul University and countless SPT's at the Actor's Gymnasium. In addition she has worked on the violence for several productions including Escape from Happiness and Lower Depths.

Introduction of new Member Representatives

PART ONE: FIGHT MASTER & A/C FRIEND REPS

Erik Fredricksen, Fight Master Representative:

Greetings dear colleagues and fellow believers of the blade. As many of you know, my time with the SAFD predates me... a lot... It appears that in this most recent, highly volatile election process, that I have been asked to represent the members of the Fight Master rank. I, like John McCain, bear no hostility toward any of the Fight Masters who sought to defame me through negative ad campaigns in their attempts to win election to this coveted status. As the incomparable Dan Yang once said at the closing of a Colorado Shakespeare Festival season, "I would like to work with... most... of you again."

However, as Henny Youngman said a million times, "...but seriously." For the membership at large, I will do my best to remain accessible to all of you in regards to this small segment of the SAFD population for whom some may feel it difficult to reach. By that, I mean to encourage all of you to let me know your thoughts and feelings as to how this small group may better interact with you, the Fight Directors, Teachers, actor combatants, and friends.

To my colleagues in the Fight Master category - I hope to be there as the *SECOND OLDEST* member of our rank. I hope to provide what guidance and advice I can from my own beginnings with the Society, my experience in the profession and my ongoing work in the *academy*. An *academy* focus that sorely and frequently challenges my feeble attempts toward openness, equanimity, and humor.

We have a wonderful organization that has grown and prospered enormously and is doing so under the current leadership. It's a pleasure and honor to work among you.

Geoffrey Kent, Actor/Combatant & Friend Representative:

It is an honor to be elected to represent such a large and diverse population of the membership. As an actor/combatant for seven years I am excited to voice our concerns and ideas to the SAFD governing body. I have several items I plan to start on ASAP.

At the meetings this summer I hope to help clarify the Advanced Actor/Combatant status. Several members have already contacted me with confusion on this issue: How do I become one? What weapons need to be current? How long does it last? Look to future issues of the Cutting Edge to address these questions.

I also hope to find ways for some of the membership to join in and participate more actively in the SAFD. This could include anything from volunteering for various SAFD committees and projects to donating equipment, space, time, etc. Many of you have requested a list of some kind that will let you know what you can do to help. Fellow A/C's Angela Bonacasa, Julia Rupkalvis and I are working to outline just such a plan.

As the largest membership body in the SAFD you are bound to have ideas, concerns, issues, etc. Please don't hesitate to contact me by e-mail or phone with anything that comes to you. I look forward to representing you in this term and helping to shape the future of the SAFD with the A/C and friend in mind.

Regional Roundup: Words from around the SAFD

ALASKA

Sorry to report that this region has little going on in the way of stage combat. Alaska has only a few members as it is and very few opportunities for performance of or training in the area of stage combat. Next year there will be some classes offered and hopefully some shows with the opera and at the university that will have some stage combat in them. If I can answer any questions about stage combat in Alaska please feel free to contact me.

-Dominique Goldbar

CALIFORNIA, NORTHERN

Earlier this year Regional Reps Gregory Hoffman, Richard Lane and Fight Director Dexter Fidler joined forces to present the first SAFD Northern California Regional Workshop. A one-day affair, thirty participants participated in a free sharing of *Fencing Theory for Stage Combat*, *Movement for Swords* and *Two on One*. This workshop was also open to non-SAFD friends in an effort to introduce them to the Society and turn them into dues paying members. Future workshops of this nature are in the planning stages.

Many of our SAFD members are active in the Northern California theatre community. Additionally many active folks are actually from outside the region but working here. Jonathan Williams, from Southern California, is currently performing *The Duke of Buckingham* in American Musical Theatre's workshop of *The Three Musketeers*. This production will go full bore in the spring and Jonathan is hoping to spring-board his role and position as Fight Captain into a role with more stage time (and fighting). Another SAFD Fight Captain, Brian Herndon, was recently cast in musical production of *Romeo & Juliet* at the Theatre on San Pedro Square in San Jose (choreography by Fight Director Richard Lane). Brian found his way to the West Coast via his training with Drew Fraser in Alabama. Jyl Hewston reports that she choreographed the fights for *As Bees in Honey Drown* for Redwood Curtain Theatre in Eureka (that's seriously northern California!) in February

Dexter Fidler would like to announce, first and foremost, Laurel Katherine Fidler was born April 2nd to Rose Hauer and Dexter. She's doing great and at this point looks like she might be a kick-boxer. Recently Dexter assisted Marty Pistone on SF Ballet's *R&J* and then did the fights for Western Ballet's premiere of *Romeo and Juliet*. Dexter has kept active doing a workshop for ComedySportz, San Jose, and is back teaching SF Ballet's Youth Academy this summer.

Actor/Combatant Robert Borwick choreographed the musical version of *The Three*

Musketeers mentioned above and has been assisting Fight Director Richard Lane on numerous projects. Bob will be heading to Blue Lake this fall to attend the yearlong training program at The Dell Arte School of Physical Theatre.

Jonathan Rider choreographed *Don Giovanni* for San Francisco Opera and is currently teaching in the Merola Training Program at the Opera.



Richard Lane choreographed the ballet of *Romeo & Juliet* for Sacramento Opera and also played the role of Lord Montague. He also choreographed *Fences*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *As Bees in Honey Drown* and *Violet* for TheatreWorks where he is resident Fight Director.

The University of Nevada, Reno brought in Richard Lane & Bob Borwick to choreograph their production of *A Clockwork Orange* and San Francisco Shakespeare Festival used their services on the school tour of *The Taming of the Shrew*. This summer Richard is choreographing *Cyrano* for Marin Shakespeare Festival and, as luck would have it, found another SAFD transplant. This time it was Larry Friedland, who trained with FD David Doersch and FD Jeff A. R. Jones, working as an Assistant Stage Manager and Weapons Master.

-Gregory Hoffman & Richard Lane

CALIFORNIA, SOUTHERN

Although the SAFD still has yet to make a major impact in the TV and Film industries, our visibility and credibility has grown - even in the three short years I have been out here, directors are seeing the results of trained actors and now expect more for their productions. Much of this work is in actor showcases, 99 seat equity waver productions and live stunt shows, but it is a palatable growth.

The Los Angeles area has many members that are interested in continuing study, and a number

of places are available to them with which to train. Active members who are working professionals within the Television and Film industries such as Bob Chapin, Robert Goodwin and Anthony Delongis are actively promoting the SAFD in their classes and workshops. Many members are working in the theme park live stunt show industry, our treasurer - Julia Rupkalvis recently was the technical advisor for Universal Studios T2 show and continues to work in the Stunt/military advisement area.

SAFD member Nick Erickson works with Diavolo Dance Theatre - a very physical dance troupe - and is touring across the country. The Los Angeles Fight Academy (Payson Burt and Julia Rupkalvis are on the faculty) will be offering a series of Proficiency Skills Test classes and re-upping classes in the late summer/early fall. This represents one of the only local skills test opportunities in the Southern, CA area. SAFD Certified Teacher Paul Steger and member Sarah Bucy will be moving to Norman, Oklahoma this month where Paul will be serving on the faculty of University of Oklahoma.

-Payson Burt

OREGON

Not too much goes on here in terms of SAFD workshops or courses. Chris DuVal, Regional Representative for Oregon, is an actor at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and is currently serving as the fight captain for *Hamlet* and *Twelfth Night*.

-Christopher DuVal

UTAH

From June '99 - Jan '00, three members of the Utah region, SAFD Certified Teacher D. C. Wright, Joel Wallin, and Cristian Bell (plus SAFD member Christina Traister from California) went to Taiwan and participated in a Wild West stunt show at Leo Foo's World Adventure amusement park. D.C.'s wife, fellow Actor/Combatant Heather came with us too. Fight Director Greg Hoffman produced the show and CT's Ted Sharon and DC Wright directed. We fell from high places, were set on fire, rode zip lines, shot guns and exchanged countless kicks to the groin (funny in any language). We also learned how to say, "I farted" in Chinese. It was a challenge to bring our western mind set to the east and deal with a very different way of doing things but the show itself was a good one and very fun to do

Since coming home, D.C. has worked on a commercial and a couple local films that needed some fight co-ordination, including a Star Wars Fan Film (participating in his first Light Saber fight).

-D.C. Wright

NEWS From around the SAFD cont'd

Philly Cheese Steak Workshop

Announcing the first annual Philadelphia stage combat workshop. Located in the heart of Philadelphia and held this September 16th and 17th. For registration and pricing, contact SAFD Certified Teacher Johnny Bellomo by phone (888-979-6937) or e-mail (bellomoland@sprintmail.com).

Viva La France!

Members Eric and Florence from France want to announce to the membership that the World Championship Competition in Artistic Fencing will be held at the end of the summer in their hometown of Vichy. Competitors vie for prizes in several categories, both historical (Medieval, Renaissance, Restoration) and in a Fantasy category. Teams may be from any country, and can comprise duos

or teams. Material may be serious or comedic, and there are strict time limits and safety rules. Participants must be costumed and music may be used to enhance a performance.

Linda McCollum attended a few years ago, and wrote an article in the Fight Master about her experiences there. More information may be had on the host organization's website at (www.escrime-artistique.com/aaf.html) or you can contact Eric via e-mail (Morgane@nat.fr).

He challenges the SAFD to attend and win the grand prize!

Cutting Edge Deadlines

Please remember submit your Regional Representative reports, news-worthy items, workshop announcements, articles, reviews, etc. by September 1st to be considered for the next issue.

The Cutting Edge

Is concocted bimonthly
by:
Geoffrey Kent

The Cutting Edge
is a publication of the
SAFD

Send submissions to:
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