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The Society of American Fight Directors

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The Cutting Edge

CALL FOR NEW MEMBERSHIP REPRESENTATIVE NOMINATIONS!

It's hard to believe that three years have passed so quickly, but we are nearing the end of another term for our membership representatives. This means that four opportunities to serve our great organization need to be filled through another round of elections. All representatives will serve on the Governing Body and its various committees as well as help to shape the growth of the SAFD over the next three years. They are expected to participate in monthly conference calls, respond quickly to email communication, and travel biannually to onsite meetings. Our current membership representatives will conclude their terms on December 31, 2009, and new nominees are needed by August 1, 2009. The following positions will be available:

- Friend/Actor Combatant/Advanced Actor Combatant Representative**
- Certified Teacher Representative**
- Fight Director Representative**
- Fight Master Representative**

If you are interested in nominating an individual, please contact Willie Meybohm, Secretary, at secretary@safd.org. Nominees will be contacted by the Secretary for acceptance of their nomination and be asked to submit a brief statement pertaining to who they are and what they hope to achieve in the position. All nominees who accept will have their introduction statement printed in the Sept/Oct issue of *The Cutting Edge*. We hope that you take a moment to nominate someone, possibly yourself, for one these vital positions.



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The Pen is Mightier Than the Sword...

Michael Mueller - Editor-in-Chief

It has been a year since we announced the decision of *The Cutting Edge's* transition to an electronic format, and I feel that it is important to share a brief review of how we have done. While the majority of the transition is complete, we are still making adjustments and working with the new webmaster to streamline our ability to bring you the most current and complete information.

Our new electronic version has allowed us to expand our content and drastically improve our deadlines. Reducing the time needed to turn an issue around has provided more current information to be presented in each issue. We have also increased membership presence in *The Cutting Edge* by including every region in our regional report section. Overall, the feedback has been very positive from both the Governing Body and the membership, but it is the outpouring of support from both that has really made this transition a success.

Successful is a relative term because we are a long way from reaching perfection. We continue to battle the file size issue as well as research methods of making the publication more interactive. As we are expanding, we are also focusing on defining areas that suffered in the past. This issue features work from our new editors, so please let us know your thoughts on the material presented.

Through it all we are still fallible. In the last issue, we neglected to catch a typo in the Footlight that suggested that Bob Borwick has two wives. Bob is not a polygamist, and we send our apologies to both he and his only wife, Kelly.

With the coming issues ahead we are very excited about optimizing our operations and providing more esthetically pleasing features for your viewing pleasure. Knowledge and reporting is our main goal, so please let us know what we can do better.

This issue has more vital GB information, reports from two regional workshops, more tools of the trade, plus a new comic and book review. Many thanks to all the contributors for this issue. To date we have more contributors for this issue than ever before. You make this publication what it is through your contributions, so our success really belongs to the whole membership. Keep up the great work, and contact us if you would like to contribute ideas, thoughts, articles, or constructive criticism. We love it all.

Michael Mueller

Please send all submissions,
comments and questions to:

cuttingedge@safd.org

The Cutting Edge Mission Statement

The Cutting Edge, a bimonthly newsletter written exclusively by and for the membership of the Society of American Fight Directors (SAFD), provides its readers with resources to stay involved and always on the cutting edge of stage combat.

Our publication aims to:

- ♦ Keep the membership informed about SAFD events, policies, opportunities, membership activities and useful industry information
- ♦ Provide the membership with a forum for open discourse
- ♦ Welcome new members and engage current members



Editor-in-Chief: Michael Mueller

Associate Editors

Governing Body Liaison: Eero Laine

Layout / Footlight: Katie Mueller

Regional Reports: Darrell Rushton

Regional Workshops: Dan Granke

Governing Body Advisor: John Tovar

The Cutting Edge Submission Deadlines

Issue	Due Date
Jan. / Feb. 2009	Dec. 1, 2008
March / April 2009	Feb. 1, 2009
May / June 2009	April 1, 2009
July / Aug. 2009	June 1, 2009
Sept. / Oct. 2009	Aug. 1, 2009
Nov. / Dec. 2009	Oct. 1, 2009

Regional Reports to Regional Reps.

Issue	Due Date
Jan. / Feb. 2009	Nov. 15, 2008
March / April 2009	Jan. 15, 2009
May / June 2009	Mar. 15, 2009
July / Aug. 2009	May 15, 2009
Sept. / Oct. 2009	July 15, 2009
Nov. / Dec. 2009	Sept. 15, 2009

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From the Governing Body

FD Membership Representative Report



As Fight Director Rep., I'd like to give you all a brief summary of what's been going on in the Governing Body, from my end.

1) We believe this year's NSCW is in good shape so far, and we are hoping to hold a Fight Director's Workshop as part of our 2011 NSCW. We successfully train fighters and teachers, and now hope to include fight director training as well. Many fighters and fight directors reflect on their experience's at "the Barn" as

some of their best training ever, and we hope, with FM J. Allen Suddeth's help to make this workshop just as strong.

2) Union negotiations are underway, and SAFD representatives are joining with non-SAFD fight directors to further these negotiations. Official affiliations with SSD&C and/or AGMA would mean greater professional respect, guidelines regarding pay scales, protection of artistic property, and other benefits. Of course this would also mean paperwork and dues! This is still a negotiation. If anyone has any input on this topic, please send it to me, and I'll see that it gets forwarded to our task force leaders.

3) Also regarding professional respect, I have been asked to lead a task force, looking into national theatre awards. It is not uncommon in theatre awards for fight direction to be lumped in with dance choreography, or to not be recognized at all. This task force will look to amend this, by first compiling a list of regional theatre awards - identifying those that recognize fight direction and those that don't - and then begin to solicit those that don't, working our way up the Tony Awards.

If you know of a theatre award in your area, please let me know about it. Anyone with an interest in being on this task force, or experience in this area, please contact me.

This is the FD news for now. Have a great summer, fight safe, and feel free to contact me at cheatham@uwp.edu.

Jamie Cheatham

Friend/AC/AAC Membership Representative Report



I recently returned from the Governing Body meeting in Denver and wanted to keep you updated on what's going on with the Society.

1) First and Foremost, I'm hearing LOTS of feedback about the new testing system. The bottom line is that it seems to be working and most recent SPTs and SPRs have gone

swimmingly. Look for a joint letter from all the member reps. to clarify the new system. Meanwhile, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either me or your CT for clarification.

2) The new website is up and running! Whaddya think? For those of you more computer savvy than I, you know how these things take time to get up to speed, and ours was no exception. We'll be working hard to improve the website during the coming year, but if you have thoughts, praise, or constructive criticism, send it my way and I'll pass it on to the ones behind the curtain.

3) I've also been hearing from some folks about the possibility of fight choreographers joining a union (not just the SAFD rank, but all working choreographers). This issue has been on our agenda for quite awhile and we seem to be making some progress. The big question is what exactly do we want from union representation? If you're up on your union-speak and have thoughts, please pass 'em on to me!

4) Membership: Don't forget to renew your membership, and miss out on all the cool stuff the SAFD has to offer (including getting a profile on that swanky new website).

5) Got summer plans? It's not too late to sign up for the NSCW in N.C. This year we're offering the ISC (learn the basics of all eight weapons in three weeks), the ACW (test in three weapons after three weeks), and the AACW (you only need to be current in three weapons to qualify).

6) Finally, I would like to say that it has been an honor and a privilege to serve as your member representative. Although I would like to continue to serve, I feel strongly that the member rep. should be someone from the F/AC/AAC rank (I became a CT in 2007). If you have a desire to serve, I can assure you it is an extremely rewarding position and a great opportunity to make a difference with an organization that has done so much for us all.

Fight safe,

Ted deChatelet

Virginia Beach Bash Report

By: Colin Bressie

In these harsh economic times it often is hard to keep a positive outlook on the future. Nationwide, we've seen countless businesses and organizations struggle to keep a float and survive turbulent economic waters. It is encouraging however, to see our organization continue to host a variety of weekend workshops, giving students of theatre nationwide opportunities to grow as actors. I was fortunate to have the privilege of interning this year at the Virginia Beach Bash, hosted at gorgeous Regent University in Virginia Beach, Va. This is the second time I've made the cross country trek to be a part of the Bash. The first time was back in 2007, when I was a student at the Bash. This was the first time I'd been a part of the staff at a SAFD workshop and I hope it won't be my last!

This year's Bash staff was headed up by Workshop Coordinator Dr. Michael Kirkland and Assistant Coordinator Gregg Lloyd. The teaching staff consisted of FMs Michael Chin and Dale Girard, and CTs Michael Kirkland, Gregg Lloyd, Jill Matarelli-Carlson, and JP Scheidler. Originally, FM Richard Ryan was scheduled to teach at this year's workshop. However, for those of you who don't know what happens when Dr. Kirkland asks Ryan to come teach, he of course lands a job on a film. So it would seem that Richard would owe Dr. Kirkland a lot of money. This year's bold intern staff included Casey Kaleba (Head Intern), Sara Hodges (Assistant Head Intern), Alec Barbour, Collin Bressie, Josh Hopkins and John O'Malley.

The workshop had approximately 40 attendees, who had a variety of classes to choose from, ranging from the basic to the advanced skill levels. Bash students were exposed to some unique weapon work with Maestro Chin's Shaolin Staff Fighting and Maestro Girard's Kumdo: Samurai Swashbuckling class. JP's Shave and A Haircut: R&D class offered everyone an opportunity to explore different rhythms within their individual fights. Students also had the option to get some on camera choreography with Girard's Two on One Swashbuckling, which was filmed, edited and reviewed by Girard and his students. Gregg showed us that a little martial arts flair can go a long way with his If Keanu Can Do It...You Can:



They all a little crazy down in Virginia

Unarmed class. Jill Matrelli-Carlson had us examine different fighting styles and how that can affect the nature of a scene in her Fighting with Style: Unarmed class. Kirkland and Lloyd's Angelo, McBane & Mix'n It Up: Smallsword class gave its students a look at two very different styles and demonstrated what a fight between the two might have looked like. JP got a bunch of students "cracking" (sorry, couldn't resist) in his Beginning Whip course. Chin

challenged students with a never ending fight in his Mismatched Weapons: R&D vs. Broadsword class. By the end of class students quickly learned the speed of the rapier and dagger combined with the power of the broadsword equals an awesome fight.

At the end of the first day we all had a chance to sit down and hear about Dale Girard's role as the Fight Director and Stunt Coordinator on the upcoming film *Eyeborgs*. Dale and his crew meticulously documented the seven story fall (which Dale himself performed) and gave us an in depth look at how his team prepared for such a large stunt. Afterwards, students picked the brain of the FM and were able to learn more about the stunts in the realm of motion pictures. At the conclusion of the workshop students also had the chance to sit down and have a Q&A session with the entire teaching staff.

For me, the Bash will always hold a special place in my heart. It was my very first SAFD sanctioned workshop; indeed it served as my "gateway workshop" into the organization. Since then the desire to learn and grow more as an actor, artist and individual has not ceased. The Bash and every SAFD workshop I've attended has challenged me and brought forth new ideas and methods on how I approach my craft; not to mention the countless friends and mentors I've met along the way, which have been a true blessing in my life. The beauty about all of this is that no one person will have the same experience at a workshop like the Bash. Every individual takes away something unique. So, if you're ready to begin, or continue what you've already started, pack your bags with your favorite workout shirt (mine is a Ghostbusters T-Shirt), pick a workshop and go. I look forward to meeting new faces and reminiscing with familiar ones at next year's Bash. See ya there!

Photos courtesy of Sara Hodges

Casey Kaleba and FM Dale Girard do Kumdo



FM Michael Chin coaches students through a small sword routine with the help of Colin Bressie

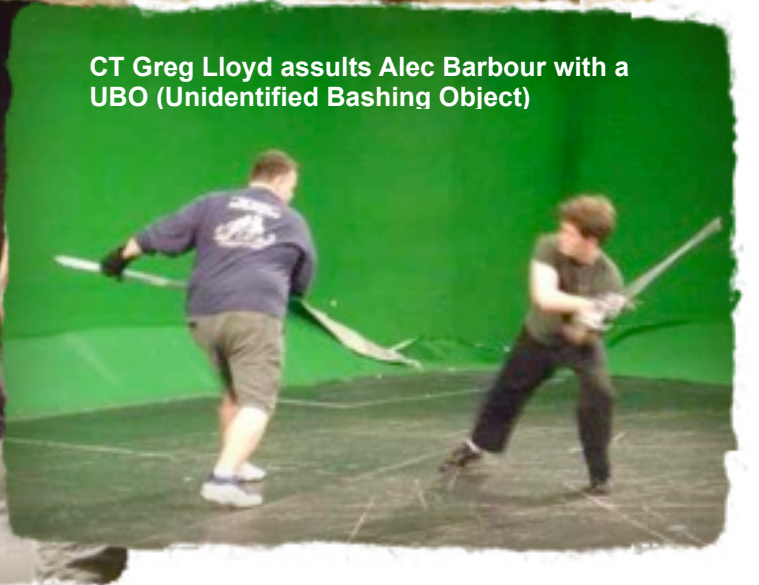
FM Mike the Emperor Chin prepares to launch an attack on Sara Hodges



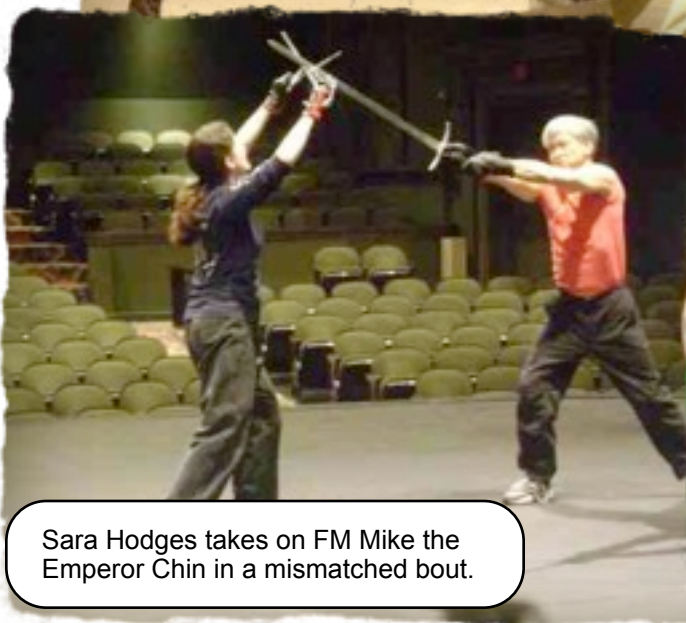
Sara Hodges watches as James P. Henry IV and Alec Barbour work mixed weapons



CT Greg Lloyd assults Alec Barbour with a UBO (Unidentified Bashing Object)



Sara Hodges takes on FM Mike the Emperor Chin in a mismatched bout.



"I Can't - I Have Rehearsal"

(Rehearsal Guidelines & Techniques with Fight Scene Work)



By: T. Fulton Burns

The rehearsal process often contains excitement, uncertainty, and, at times, stress for all involved. It is at this stage of the process where the culmination of skills acquired (research, character study, and embodying choreography) all come together. The following guidelines and techniques are aimed toward helping the actor address and conquer both acting and fight needs during the rehearsal process.

Partnering Skills

1. R-E-S-P-E-C-T

Whether a partner has been chosen, or assigned by a fight instructor, it is important not to overlook the actor to actor relationship. Working well with a partner is the most important requirement for a successful skills test or performance. The reasons are limitless for developing this relationship, but ultimately the main objectives are to create a less stressful environment and gain one another's respect. Consider the following guidelines when seeking to establish, and/or enhance, respectful work in the rehearsal process:

Establish a dialogue between partners for effective communication. By working together, and not against one another, the responsibilities and needs of the fight will be shared. Often actors are advised against directing one another in a scene or giving notes regarding fight techniques. These ideas apply here as well; however, a proactive way to approach this is to share ideas through effective communication with one another. One approach to effective communication involves collaborative questions. Such as the following:

What do you think about...?
Could we try...?
How do you feel about...?
When "X" occurs could we try...?

The idea of collaborative questions allows for open dialogue and avoids negativity found with comments like "I want you to..." or "You should do...", which at times may feel like an attack on a performer's work rather than a suggestion for improvement. This tool of effective and collaborative dialogue is one of the most important when working in theatre.

Establish rehearsal times and dates, and meet at those predetermined times. Time is precious and needs to be respected. Missing rehearsal or being late only reduces respect and increases stress. Even under dire circumstances, a phone call should be made in order to avoid wasting the time of a partner.

Warm-up time needs to be determined too. Physical and vocal warm-ups need to occur prior to the established rehearsal time to make the most of the rehearsal time together.

Memorized lines are also extremely important. Each partnership should decide when the lines should be memorized within the rehearsal process. Once choice is to come into the rehearsals memorized. Another option can be to work with lines while rehearsing the fight. Regardless, there should be a fixed date as to when memorization will be complete. No matter what the date, both must respect the deadline established through this verbal contract and come to the rehearsal with lines memorized upon the agreed date. Again, time is precious!

If there is one certainty, it is that one, if not both partners, may have a bad day of rehearsal. Support your partner if this happens. Pointing out the foibles of another only adds to the problem, and speaking negatively about a partner to others can cause serious problems. If it is a safety issue, then it should be brought to the attention of the fight instructor. Speaking with classmates only weakens the actor to actor relationship. Always, keep in mind that everyone is likely to develop stress in this process, so be prepared to listen and support one another when the time comes.

The largest things to remember is that everyone wishes to pass their skills test, and that the fight taking place will be a fake one. In showing one another respect from beginning to end, the best scenario has been established for achieving a strong fight scene through excellent partnership.

2. Slow Down Speed Racer

An effective speed for rehearsal is important for a number of reasons. First, let's consider safety as the number one guideline for any work in stage combat. The foreword in William Hobbs book *Fight Direction* by Lawrence Olivier (also located in *Combat Mime: A Non-Violent approach to Stage Violence* by J.D. Martinez) that details how he has endured countless injuries should be included in every

single stage combat text on the planet! An injury or scar is not a right of passage but a mark of a major mistake made during the stage combat process. Trust is an important element in any actor training, rehearsal process, or performance. Once this trust is broken it is extremely tough to rebuild, if possible at all.

The second reason for an effective speed in rehearsal is to get the moves correct. We have heard the old adage that “practice makes perfect”, but CT Lacy Altwine thinks a more appropriate quote for our work is that “practice makes permanent...not perfect.” Going slowly helps to correctly learn the choreography. The idea is similar to changing lines written by the playwright. Our job is to use and perform the choreography, not change it.

Third, the speed may be too much for an audience to handle. There are times when two combatants are so well trained that they can perform techniques at blinding speeds. The problem is that the audience doesn't get to enjoy the fight. If an actor says their words too quickly, then the words get lost and so does the story line. This issue is similar to the moments in a fight. Just as some words need more emphasis than others in the text, so do certain moves in a fight. Give every word and move its fair chance.

Finally, slowing down does not make for a poor stage combatant, but instead makes a better and smarter actor combatant.

3. Give me a Break!

Yes Virginia, it is possible to over rehearse a scene every bit as much as it is to under rehearse. During the design process there is time set aside as an incubation period; this is often placed after the research has occurred and prior to the implementation of their artistic ideas. The purpose is to allow new ideas to arise. Making sure that there is time to relax and get away from the work is a very important step in the fight rehearsal process. While the body may be willing the mind needs a vacation from time to time and vice versa. Water, food, or mental breaks may be just the cure.

Another great way to approach a break is table work. This can occur before, during and even after the rehearsal process. Sitting down to discuss the scene and character needs is always a positive move. Actors might even take a night off after having rehearsed a scene several times to give themselves their own incubation. Table work is a great time to share compliments on things that work well. Sharing ways that partners have affected each other during the fight scene will help to improve acting intentions and confidence.

The benefits of planning, and taking breaks during the rehearsal process are immeasurable. This can help the rehearsal process to stay on track, or perhaps get back on it. So take a break!

Character Needs in the Rehearsal

1. Dress the Part

Combining costume needs into a fight rehearsal is not commonly taught; but this tool can raise fight skills to a new level. Costumes can place a fight in the context of the scene and its needs. This technique is used at the Fight Director's Workshop to help in the acting training, and FM Brian Byrnes has been an advocate of costume usage for several years. In some ways this part of the process is similar to sense memory recall work.

The use of costumes makes such a positive difference in the rehearsal for any production. The best way to accomplish costuming needs is to seek out a Costume Department for advice. If they have the means to allow rentals or borrowing pieces, then go for it. If no resources are available, then the next choice is to get close to what is needed.

Many instructors of period style movement require their students to wear pieces that are close to the time period for the sake of rehearsal. Hard soled shoes feel different than sports shoes, a skirt does not move the same as a pair of athletic shorts, and a button down shirt is more restrictive than a t-shirt. Find the costume that is close to the character to strengthen the fight scene work.

2. Where's My Prop?

Our training in much of stage combat is simply training with props. Like with costumes, not all fight instructors incorporate the need for properties, beyond that of the fight world, in the rehearsal process. Unlike with costumes, excluding props may be for safety or due to the element of time. If safety and/or time are not concerning factors, then placing the right prop in a scene can make all the difference. A fight or scuffle over a letter, and who ends up with this item during the scene, let's the audience see the objective beyond the element of fisticuffs. Also, props such as chairs or tables during a single sword fight may add more depth and strength to the swash buckling effect. Consider the needs of a property in the scene and how it relates to character work.

3. Let's Make Up

Wearing make up for some is complicated, but for others it is quite simple. The visual change for partners and audience can be an effective technique with great results. Scars, tattoos, or a prosthetic nose can help to create a new world.

Still, adding something like a prosthetic piece may cause more problems than benefits. As with all the options in this section, it is best to make these decisions early in the rehearsal process to give time to adjust to the new elements.

Analysis of your Work

1. T.T.F.N. (Take the "Friggin" Note)

Criticism is a fact and necessary part of theatre life. If an instructor stops to watch a fight scene and offers a suggestion (i.e.. asks that it slow down), then the note should never be taken as a personal attack. Instead actor combatants should view this as an opportunity to better their skills. Unfortunately, some students wish to point out flaws with the instructor's notes or respond by deflecting the problem away from them. The true opportunity for the actor is to accept the challenge in their own work and seek ways to solve the problem. Remember that actors who take a note and the initiative to correct issues are the ones that are hired most often in our business.

Also, keep in mind that an instructor rarely gives notes just to be heard. They provide notes to enhance opportunities for the student's success. No greater satisfaction comes to a fight instructor than to see someone learn from their teaching and succeed in using the techniques in the form of a skills proficiency test. A student's success in their test or performance is a success of the instructor's abilities to teach those skills. Take advantage of this information because, not only are these instructor's knowledgeable in how to teach these techniques, but they know from first hand experience what it is like to participate in a skills test. Frequently, instructors are sharing their own fight scene mistakes in order to help their student's to succeed. So, take the notes they wish to share.

2. Hi MOM! Look at Me!

Performing in front of a class helps in a number of ways. First, friends and instructors can provide feedback. If certain moves are supposed to be hidden from the audience, (i.e. a punch or blade tip goes too far past a target) then this can be noted and adjusted before the final test.

Another big benefit is in preparing the body and mind for the adrenaline rush that occurs when performing in front of an audience. The more often this event takes place, the more prepared students will be when the skills test is placed in front of an adjudicator.

3. Smile - You're on Not-So Candid Camera!

Filming a fight scene will not lie. Some actors are sensitive at first with performing in front of an audience of classmates. With a video camera during a private rehearsal, the pressure can be reduced. Be certain to place the camera at the optimum location, perhaps where the Fight Master will be on the test day. Targeting lines will be revealed in the action, but this method also provides the opportunity to view and hear the scene as it will appear to the adjudicator. This technique will highlight areas in need of improvement while also showcasing the

things that work. It also provides more time to strengthen effective communication with a partner.

Please Note: Do not equate the level of speed observed on the video with what a live audience will see. Filming a fight may slow down the action, so please keep this idea in mind when you observe the tapes/dvds.

Final Thoughts

During this part of the process improvements will be made in both acting and fight skills. All of the previous work in script, character, and scene analysis will help jump start the rehearsal process, but now the rewards of all this hard work will begin to show as the work becomes stronger and more believable. The best way to ensure progress is to always work safely and respectfully while playing with a fight scene.

Special thanks to CT Lacy Altwine & CT Jill Matarelli Carlson for their contributions to this article.

Fulton Burns is an Advanced Actor Combatant and the Director of Acting & Performance at the University of South Alabama's Department of Dramatic Arts



The Cutting Edge welcomes all article submissions and appreciates feedback on what is presented in each issue. If you would like to contribute either with an original article or a counter point to an article presented, please contact Michael Mueller at thecuttingedge@safd.org to discuss your ideas. With your help this publication will continue to be one of the strongest sources of information, communication, and inspiration the Society of American Fight Directors provides.

Tools of the Trade

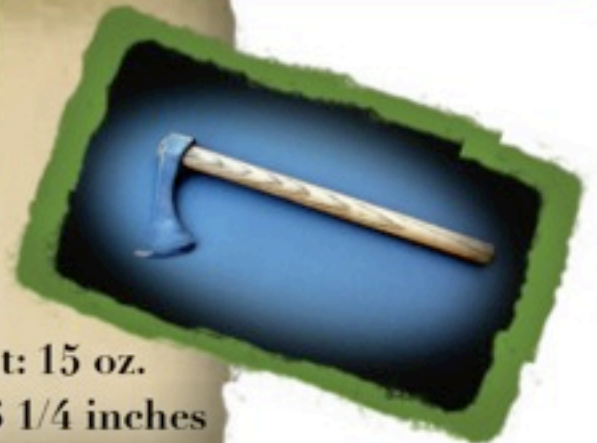
Francisca Throwing Ax



"The throwing ax was popular with the Germanic warriors who fought against Rome in its later years. It was used in a similar way to the javelin - thrown before contact with the enemy to create gaps in their battle lines." - *Weapon, A Visual History of Arms and Armor.*

Date: 400-500 CE
Origin: Europe

Weight: 15 oz.
Length: 6 1/4 inches



"The little axe was used as both a psychological weapon as much as a physical one that, when thrown, the axe had a tendency to ricochet off of the ground in any random direction. The axe served many purposes as well as it could be used to chop at enemy appendages, shatter a wooden shield or cut wood for fires when needed. For the Franks, their francisca became a national symbol and is still most closely related to their use than any other group.

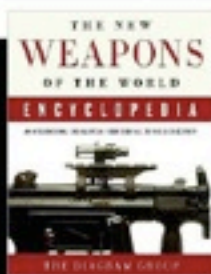
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The francisca is most identified by the curved axe head made of iron, pointed at top and bottom and broader at the blade than the weighted back end. From a top-down view, the bladed portion was of the tear-drop shape. Overall, the axe was designed to be thick and mounted on the to-most end of the handle and sharp in ever regard and featured a short wooden handle.

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Carnage and Culture
Victor Davis Hanson



The New Weapons of the World
The Diagram Group



The Scorpion King
2002



Kung fu Hustle
2004

Rumble in the Rockies Report

By: Dan Granke



I told my friends I was going to Colorado to shoot the president . . . of the SAFD . . . with a fake gun. I was excited about the 8th Rumble in the Rockies for two reasons; the new more intimate

format of the Rumble, and the opportunity to take the newly christened SAFD basic theatrical firearms course. The Rumble began its life as a small SAFD sanctioned regional workshop, like many others, with the "menu buffet style." To create a more intimate, focused workshop and to differentiate the Rumble from other workshops, workshop coordinator, and SAFD president, CT/FD Geoff Kent shifted the format in 2005. Rather than offer classes on a variety of different topics, a format that Geoff "also loves," he decided to focus the workshop on one topic each time. He felt this years theme of guns "seemed appropriate with the new (SAFD) theatrical firearms safety course" and because "a blank fire (gun) is more commonly used than most types of blade play for stage."

The workshop was incredibly intimate with only nine participants ranging from CTs to novice combatants. The staff was equally small, with interns Erin Ramsey and Kat Michels, Coordinator Kent, and Instructor CT/FD Scot Mann with his assistant Kelly Martin.

This was the second time the new SAFD theatrical firearms workshop was taught. The format involved one day of basics. We began in a semi circle, and listened while Scot and Geoff shared horror stories about near disasters in the field, and gave us a good grounding in the terminology used by gun wranglers to talk about prop guns. We were then given practical demonstrations of venting (The release of gas and debris from a blank fire

gun) and allowed to load and fire several revolvers and semi-automatic pistols. Afterward, we all got our hands dirty and learned to clean them. When we broke for the day and headed out to eat as a group in downtown Denver we were told to "be ready to move tomorrow."

The next day brought the opportunity to take the basics we learned on day one and apply it to some actual staging. Scot talked about firing lanes and tracking before we broke into groups and worked on some actual theatrical fire fights. Half of the workshop worked on a simulation of a drug bust as imagined for film with Scot, while the other half staged the end of *Lieutenant of Inishmore* with Geoff. We shared our work with each other and then gathered to work some gun disarms, struggles, and switches (where a non-firing prop gun used in a struggle is exchanged for a blank fire). The workshop began to wind down and we took our practical and written tests for the course, which everyone passed. The brief weekend over, old and new friends cleaned

guns and said goodbyes. President Kent and CT Lee Soroko stayed an extra day to take a portion for those who want to teach the course.

When asked about the progress of the SAFD gun workshop, Scot Mann had this to say: "as we continue to develop this curriculum, it is the focus and commitment of the participants that

make it possible for us to improve the material. The students at the Rumble were terrific and the staff and assistants of the workshop helped make the event safe, informative, and fun."

I left Colorado happy and excited about my new skills and knowledge; I was also excited to go back. The small group of dedicated students and focused instruction made for a singular workshop experience. Geoff suggests that the format is working and, while he's not sure what next year's focus will be, I'm sure it will be well worth the trek to Colorado. Hopefully, I'll see you there.



Earl Kim working on perfection

Photos courtesy of: Jeff Bull and Kat Michaels



Loading Practice



Melissa Ruchong in a pedagogical moment

Choose your weapons



Demonstration of venting



Dan Granke is Hit!

Erin Ramsey empties a clip



L to R: Kaleb Kohart, Lee Soroko, Earl Kim, and Jeff Bull fire the automatics



L to R: Dan Granke, Melissa Ruchong, Jordan Arrick, Kat Michaels, Erin Ramsey, Jeff Bull, and Kaleb unwind after day one



The entire workshop loads blank rounds





In the Footlight

With Darrell Rushton



If you are interested in being featured or would like to nominate another member, please contact Layout Editor, Katie Mueller - Perchance2dream6@aol.com



SAFD: What has been your most challenging experience with staged violence as an actor, director, choreographer, etc.?

DARRELL: Truthfully? Failing my R&D renewal in 2003. Now, I realize that it's not the end of the world, but at that moment I was miserable because I felt like I had failed all my teachers.

SAFD: How has your involvement with the SAFD benefited your career?

DARRELL: I have been extremely fortunate to have had excellent mentorship and friends throughout my entire career because of my connection to the society. I have also traveled a lot and worked with an amazing variety of people.

SAFD: Using what you have learned so far on your journey, what advice would you give to someone just becoming interested in the SAFD?

DARRELL: Get to the National Workshop as much as you possibly can.

SAFD: How did you first get involved with the SAFD?

DARRELL: I had a great teacher in college, Dan Carter (he's now the head of Penn State's Theatre Department) who taught us Broadsword, Quarterstaff and Unarmed. I was completely hooked the first class, and Dan used to tell us all over and over again that if we really wanted to improve our skills, the Nationals were the best place to do it. I was 21 then, and didn't make it to the NSCW until I was 30, but Dan was my first contact.

SAFD: What's your favorite weapon and why?

DARRELL: Knife. Because you can't hide behind the prop. I think that more than any other weapon, if your acting intentions are not crystal clear, and your targets are not clean, then the fight simply won't sell.

SAFD: What other movement forms have you studied?

DARRELL: I've dabbled in a lot, including some mime in grad. school, Grotowski, LeCoq, and some Laban. I studied some Aikido in college, and I'm currently getting ready to test for blue belt in TKD.

SAFD: Any future plans for further academic training?

DARRELL: I consider Tae Kwan Do part of my academic training. One of the best things about it for me has been sparring, as much as I dislike it. It's really made me aware of how violence (albeit in a controlled environment) works. Also, it's just a great workout, and is keeping me flexible and in shape as I hit middle age...

SAFD: Who has helped you the most in your SAFD training?

DARRELL: There is no way for me to list one, as there have been so many. I have had excellent mentors throughout the years, including David Leong in grad. school, J. Allen Suddeth at The Barn and during my TTW, Chuck Coyl when I attended The Barn and when I was an intern, Michael Hood when I was getting ready to apply to the TTW. DC Wright, for teaching me Smallsword. Johnny Mac, Aaron Anderson, MJ, Jefe, Angela, and Dale Girard helped me as I moved forward, mostly through support and teaching opportunities. Mike Mahaffey and Jack Young were really fantastic during my TTW, as were David Woolley and Richard Raether. John Tovar, Don Preston and David Brimmer were my suite-mates one year in Vegas, and I owe them a lot. If Deb Fialkow hadn't given me the shot to teach at the first Seattle Sockeye, I don't think I would be a Certified Teacher. She's too modest to say so, but there's at least four of us that were there that first year who have gone on to the TTW. And of course, Mike Chin; six of seven interns my year in Vegas went on to become CT's, and since then Mike has supported me a lot by adjudicating and teaching workshops here, plus letting me assist him on a show with Mike Hood. I hope I didn't leave anyone out...

SAFD: What is in your pockets right now?

DARRELL: Nothing. Really, I teach acting and physical movement all day, and I hate having stuff in my pockets, so I leave it all in my coat. I don't even like to wear any jewelry, because I know I will have to take it off and stick it in my pockets. I resent even having a watch. But if you asked me two weeks ago, when I took my son to Disney World, I would have said chapstick, camera, keys, hotel cards, wallet, my gloves, my hat, my sunglasses and sunscreen. You kind of have to carry everything you need all day!

Regional Reports

A Look At Our Membership Around the World

East Central Region:

Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C.



By: Ray Rodriguez
e: ECRegRep@safd.org

AC J. Alex Cordaro just served as Fight Director for a production of *Hamlet*, with The Lantern Theater Company, and the Philadelphia Premiere of *Made in China* with the Inis Nua Theater Company. Both shows were great fun and very well received. Alex would like to send special thanks to CT/FD Ian Rose for throwing him around the Dojo for an afternoon in preparation for *Made in China*. The rest of the summer holds trips to the beach, mountains, and the Y for swimming lessons with three year old Thomas.

AC Alexandra Devin is going back to school to study creative/ expressive arts therapy with a focus on movement. She has also taken up Wing Tsun, studying with CT Mike Yahn, among others at City Wing Tsun in NYC.

CT Al Foote III put his acting pants on and played Berkley in *Delphinium Mansion* by Libby Leonard at the 15th Annual 15 Minute Play Festival at the American

Globe Theatre. The play won Series A Audience Favorite. Libby took home the Alan Minieri Memorial Playwriting Award and both were honorable mention for best play and best director.

CT Michael Hood is directing *Macbeth3* for Unseam'd Shakespeare in Pittsburgh, an adaptation of Shakespeare's tragedy performed by just three actors, (2 women and 1 man). As per the script, the man plays Lady Macbeth.

Friend Jared Kirby started the year teaching several classes, including a Master Class on Italian Rapier, at the Paddy Crean Art of the Sword Workshop (www.iosp.org) in Banff, Canada. He then taught a Spanish Rapier workshop in Milwaukee, Wis. before heading to Fla. and Calif. for various sword events. Jared did a reading of *Othello* as Iago for the Instant Shakespeare Company in May, and most recently finished up coordinating and teaching at ISMAC (<http://www.theismac.org/>) in Detroit, Mich. This summer promises to be

busy as he is the Fight Director for a *Hamlet* in New York City and starts rehearsal for *Taming of the Shrew* after that. In August, Jared is very excited to be teaching at the Art of Stage Combat Workshop (<http://www.artofcombat.org/Workshops/nyc.htm>) in New York City. This intensive workshop offers over 60 hours of training and culminates in a performance, so keep an eye out for the shows Aug 14 and 15.

CT/FD Ian Rose continues to teach at Temple University, and to stage fights locally. Ian recently finished directing fights for *A Funeral Farce*, *Chicken* and *The Stone Carver*, in Philadelphia. He also recently finished working on *The Last Airbender*, the new M. Night Shamalan film, where he is a Northern Water Tribe Elder. Though he was not allowed to fight, several of his students were. Ian and Charles are already working on this year's Tenth Anniversary Philadelphia Stage Combat Workshop. For more information check our website: www.philascw.org



Lewis Shaw teaching a shield wall In photo: Ann Rossman, Shelly Riggs, AJ Gagliardi, Zachery Dorsey, London Summers, Mark Binder and CT Mike Yahn. Photo courtesy of Shelly Riggs

AAC Margarita Ruiz gave birth to Cecilia Louise Moncher on May 15, 2009. Alas, she did not exit in an Aikido roll as expected, but there is plenty of time for future stage combat.



Photo of Cecilia taken by Leigh Moncher

CT Darrell Rushton hosted FM J. Allen Suddeth for a fantastic Paddy Crean Single Sword master class, which included fighting over, under and on tables and chairs. He was also proud that all six of his Rapier and Dagger students passed their SPT recommended. This summer he heads out to Winston-Salem to assist FM Michael Chin, and work with old and new friends at the National Stage Combat Workshop.

AAC Matthew R. Wilson is fight directing and playing the villain Rochefort in the DC Fringe Festival's upcoming *The Fifth Musketeer* as well as playing a modern-day Orpheus, a singer/songwriter with a short memory, in *The Rough Guide to the Underworld* at CHAW. He is teaching acting over the summer at George Mason University and in August will return to Italy for his sixth year as an instructor at Antonio Fava's Commedia dell'Arte school www.commediabyfava.it. You can find him at: www.matthewrwilson.com.

International:



By: Bret Yount
e: IntlRegRep@safd.org

A report was not submitted for this issue

Great Lakes Region:

Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio,
Wisconsin



By: Jim Stark
e: GLRegRep@safd.org

Babes With Blades, with SAFD FM David Woolley, announces Arthur M. Jolly (former SAFD member and Actor Combatant) as the 2009-10 winner of *Joining Sword and Pen*, their playwriting competition devoted to increasing the number of quality scripts featuring fighting roles for women. Jolly's script is a drama titled *Tjurjaga* (pronounced Tyoor-YAH-gah, Russian slang for jail), which is set in an inmates' bunkhouse of a Siberian gulag in 1949 post-war Soviet Union. The winning script was inspired by, and must incorporate the image *Film Noir* by Chicago artist Kristine Borcz (pictured at www.babeswithblades.org/competition.htm).

Jolly will receive a \$1,000 cash prize, and a full production of the script in spring 2010.

Friend Mary Shen Barnidge, observer of all things theatrically violent, reports that Geoff Coates will be receiving a special fight award for *The Mark of Zorro* at the Joseph Jefferson Awards ceremonies in June (his third one to date).

After playing Jake in *Jake's Women* with the South Milwaukee Players, and acting as Webmaster for Chicago's Winter Wonderland Workshop, **AC Christopher Elst** then attended the UWSP Single Sword Workshop and the Eureka College Stage Combat Workshop under CTs DC Wright and H. Russ Brown. In addition, he extended his stay in Eureka and attended the Unrehearsed Shakespeare Workshop. He choreographed mass battle scenes for *The Hobbit* at Dare to Dream Theatre in Manitowoc, Wis. in June, and now looks forward to several summer roles, including an ensemble role in *Sweeney Todd* at Off-the-Wall Theatre in Milwaukee.

FM Erik Fredricksen will participate in the Birankai International Aikido Seminar, featuring visiting shihans from US, Europe, and Japan in June. Presuming survival, Erik will teach at the SAFD National Workshop at North Carolina School for the Arts in July.

Mark Hardiman directed and choreographed stage combat, (Unarmed and Quarterstaff) for Dominican University's (River Forest, Ill.), production of *Lysistrata*. He also choreographed stage violence for Elgin Community College's production of *All My Sons*, and was recently hired to develop a new theatre program for Lincoln Land Community College.

CT Brian LeTraunik is one year away from getting his MFA in acting from Western Illinois University! In addition to his academic endeavors, he will be serving as a TA at the 2009 NSCW.

AAC Sarah Pitard recently directed fights for the new play *Anna Is Saved* for Leapfest 6 at Stage Left Theatre in Chicago. Her new play *Le Bonhomme Mysterieux: A Comic Romance* is having its first public reading at Boho Theatre's Heartland Studio in June, sponsored by Ouroboros Theatre Company where she is an Artistic Associate. The play is jam packed full of sword fights...or it would be if it weren't just a reading. In the fall she is moving to London, England where she will be receiving an M.A. in Playwriting.

CT/FD Nick Sandys is currently directing (and fight directing) *Macbeth* for First Folio Theatre in Oakbrook, Ill., where he is an Artistic Associate. He'll then play Higgins in *My Fair Lady* for Light Opera Works. He recently finished a run of Pinter's *Old Times* for Remy Bumpo Theatre; directed *thinktank '09: American Ethnic* for the same company; and designed fights for both *Ghostwritten* and *Boleros For The Disenchanted* at The Goodman Theatre, as well as *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* at Northlight Theatre. He continues to teach and choreograph at The Theatre School at DePaul University, where he has just had a second set of successful SPTs for the year.

AC Steven Schwall attended the Central Illinois Regional Workshop, and played the Duke of Exeter in the Unrehearsed Shakespeare production of *Henry V* at the workshop. He will be summering as the Technical Director/Designer for Camp Laurel in Readfield, Maine.

CT Jim Stark recently directed *Machinal* for the Hanover College Theatre, and is now working as dramaturge on *AD* for the Riverrun Theatre Company's presentation at the Capitol Fringe Festival in Washington, D.C. He is also serving as Casting Consultant for the South Carolina Repertory Company, and has been appointed Associate Director for Culture at the Rivers Institute, Hanover College.

CT John Tovar finished his Smallsword SPT class at Elgin Community College in May (all eleven students passed), taught

a Broadsword SPT (both students passed), and will be starting a Knife SPT class in June through Noble Fool Theatricals in St. Charles, Ill. John choreographed the Steppenwolf for Young Audiences' production of *Of Mice and Men* and worked on Buffalo Theatre Ensemble's production of *A Coupla White Chicks Sitting Around Talking*, which opened in July. John will be teaching an Unarmed SPT class at Elgin Community College and at College of DuPage this fall.

AAC Jason Whicker has been running around the country choreographing flying of all sorts, from *Beauty and the Beast* to *Peter Pan* and back again. He has had the fortune of choreographing many a fight scene in air as well as learning the technical side of putting up equipment. His next events include holding The National Flying with Fighting workshop June 11-14 with FM k. Jenny Jones. After that, Jason will be heading up the National Flying with Dance Workshop Aug 6-9, during which he will be working on the Green Day Musical *American Idiot* at Berkely Rep Directed by Michael Mayer. If you want to fly....drop him a line at jwhicker@zfxflying.com

FM David Woolley is still an Artist in Residence at Columbia College Chicago, where he choreographed 9 productions this year, and played Major General Stanley in *Pirates of Penzance* as a guest artist. He is in his 20th season performing at the Bristol and Ohio Fairs as Guido in *Dirk and Guido: the Swordsmen!* July through October, 2009 (DVDs available...www.theswordsmen.com)

CT DC Wright has been in a teaching frenzy the last few months. He has taught a three weapon SPT (UA, BS, R&D) at Brigham Young University in Utah, a two weapon SPT (KN, SiS) for his WIU students, an SPT (SiS) in Steven's Point Wisconsin, as well as just wrapped up three weeks at the Central Illinois Stage Combat Workshop with two other SPTs (S&S). He went to Western Kentucky University to teach a weekend workshop, and to Denver, to fulfill his new duties as the SAFD Certified Teacher Rep.

Somehow during this time he also found a way to direct fights for the WIU production of *Samurai*, and to stay married.

Mid-America Region:

Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota



By: Mike Speck
e: MARegRep@safd.org

AC Jennifer Allton will be choreographing the violence for *Full Frontal: a Tale of Love and Lobotomies* for the Minnesota Fringe Festival this summer.

Friend Richard Buswell choreographed fights for *Fight Night* (formerly known as *Rigged*) which was released on DVD on April 14. The website is www.riggedthefilm.com.

AC Justin Gamerl goes to California this summer to purify water for the Marine Corps, before attending USA Stunt School in July. www.stuntschool.com

Friend Kurt Heinlein will direct *The Miss Firecracker Contest* at Tent Theatre and coordinate stunts for a TV pilot called *Belay*. The film *Albino Farm*, for which Kurt served as a location stunt coordinator, now has a distributor and is due out in the fall.

AC Karla Kash is directing and choreographing *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolored Dream Coat* for Tent Theatre, fight directing and choreographing *Twelfth Night* for Repertory Theatre of Iowa, and directing/choreographing *Forbidden*

Broadway for StageWest Theatre Company. She will also be working on Carnage in the Corn II.

Friend Donald Lillie arranged a battle chess match for his fencing salle.

AC Michael Monsey is staging violence for two children's shows: *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* and *Beauty and the Beast*. He is also playing bass guitar for a production of *The Rocky Horror Show*.

AC David Schneider choreographed violence for the Minn. Fringe Festival production of *Bard Fiction*, a retelling of *Pulp Fiction* in Elizabethan times.

Regional Rep Mike Speck is creating the role of John Wilkes Booth (and others) in the world premiere of *Lincoln: Upon the Altar of Freedom* at the Lincoln Amphitheatre, Ind. With CT Ian Borden, he also coordinated a mass SPR in Lincoln, Neb. this past spring and, with AC Karla Kash, is laying the groundwork for the second helping of Carnage in the Corn. In the fall, Mike heads back to grad school at St. Mary's University of Minnesota, studying Arts & Cultural Management and Project Management.

New England Region:

Connecticut, Maine,
Massachusetts, New
Hampshire, Rhode Island,
Vermont



By: Rob Najarian
e: NERegRep@safd.org

Friend Mark Bedell continues his duties running the Maine Academy of Staged Combat and being the new father of a five month old. Along with his myriad of teaching responsibilities, Mark recently directed a pirate show in Framingham, Mass.

Friend Chris Cardoni taught a stage combat course at Curry College in Milton, Mass. in the fall semester, and will stage fights for *Romeo and Juliet* at Curry this coming fall. Chris recently presented one-day Introduction to Stage Combat workshops at Kingswood Regional High School and Perform It! Young People's Stage Company, in Wolfeboro, N.H., and staged fights for *Born Yesterday* at Vokes Players, *True West* at Quannapowitt Players, and *Second* at Hovey Players. Chris also directed and played the leading role in *The Lady's Not for Burning* at Vokes Players this past May.

Friend Kim Carrell spent spring of 2009 choreographing fights for the touring production *The Greek Heroes* with Hampstead Stage (N.H.), the Boston Conservatory production of the Handel opera *Serse*, and the Concord Players production of *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

He was then off to Montana to direct *The Wiz* for the Bigfork Summer Playhouse and choreograph the Dueling Cavaliers sword fight for BSP's production of *Singing in the Rain*. Afterwards he returned to Massachusetts to direct and choreograph fights for *Treasure Island* for Stoneham Theatre's summer program.

Mike Cassidy has been working with a youth Shakespeare company in a production of *Macbeth*. There is a newly formed Renaissance Fair in Oxford, Conn. (dates are July 18, 19, 25, 26 and August 1, 2) that Carlos Cortez and he have built fights for the Chess game. Carlos Cortez and he are continuing to teach classes twice a week (Sunday and Monday nights) in stage combat. The class participants will be performing at the Renaissance faire in Oxford, Conn.

Anne Foldeak reports that while there is no work at the moment, she just welcomed her latest production into the world; Devlyn David Foldeak was born on April 2009.

AC Meron Langsner fight directed a new translation of *Spring Awakening* with Zeitgeist Stage at the Boston Center for the Arts and *Burn This* with Yellow Taxi Productions in Nashua, N.H. His play about fencing in the Italian Renaissance, *Seeing the Devil's Face*, was given a staged reading at the Comparative Drama Conference in Los Angeles, Calif. He continues to work on his doctoral dissertation on the representation of martial arts on the American stage at Tufts University, where he will be teaching Introduction to Acting this summer.

CT/Regional Rep. Robert Najarian had a great spring that included appearing as Sagredo, an Astronomer, a Mathematician, and Clerk #2 in Brecht's *The Life of Galileo* directed by David Wheeler at the Central Square Theatre in Cambridge, Mass. He was also able to spend some time in State College, Pa. where he visited with the director of Penn State Theatre Department FD Dan Carter and dropped in on a few classes being taught by FM Drew Fracher. At the



Photo of Devlyn Foldeak

end of March, FM J. Allen Suddeth adjudicated an SPT at the American Repertory Theatre that included students from ART, Brandeis University and Bay State Fencers all taught by both Robert and CT Robert Walsh. All 26 students passed with a good representation of recommended passes.

AC Mark Rosenthal just got back from doing an autism benefit show in Boca Raton, Fla. called *Breaking Free* with the theatre company Wake Up Marconi and Autism Speaks. It was a great success. They raised over \$25,000 and got to work with several classes of autistic children.

AC Noah Tuleja just finished choreographing *An Absolute Turkey* by Feydeau for the St. George's School in Newport, R.I. Next year he will be a Visiting Assistant Professor at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pa., teaching Acting, Directing some stage combat and directing the fall production, which will be a new production of *Don Quixote* by New York playwright Jonathan Yukich.

J.T. Turner, of Ipswich, Mass., choreographed all the fights for the Open Road Theater's production of *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, as well as Disney's *Mulan* at Moonlight Productions.

Friend Paul Ugalde just completed a run in *Prelude to a Kiss* that featured Malachy McCourt until he broke his leg in the second week of the run. The director stepped in to the role and we didn't miss a show. Last summer, Paul did some last minute tweaking and coaching for a production of *Cyrano* when their choreographer broke his leg. He doesn't say "break a leg" anymore. He is about to begin rehearsals directing a workshop production of *Danny and the Deep Blue Sea*. This fall, he will be choreographing a production of *Pirates of Penzance*.

CT Ted deChatalet enjoying time with his daughter, Dolan. Photo by: Janet Gupton

Northwest Region:

Washington, Alaska, Oregon



By: Heidi Wolf
e: NWRegRep@safd.org

CT Bob Borwick choreographed *Hamlet(ish)* for a Seattle Repertory Theatre educational production. He wishes to thank the Seattle community for a wonderful seven years. Special thanks to Deb Fialkow, Geof Alm, the *real* Seattle Bob, Evan Whitfield, Brynna Jourden, and Heidi Wolf. Tennessee beckons, although you will never be replaced.

AAC/CT Jonathan Cole has had a busy semester choreographing and teaching at Willamette University. He just finished SPT classes in Smallsword, Sword & Shield and Knife, with AAC Michael Mueller coming down to train and test with the WU crew over the course of the spring semester. Jon has now taught all eight weapons, and lived through the experience! He is also proud to announce that two of his students now have all eight



weapons: AAC Tara McLaughlan and AAC Matt Romein just passed SPTs at Recommended level in their last two weapons with FM Geof Alm. A good time was had by all.

AC Chris DuVal has just accepted a tenure track position at the University of Idaho, teaching Acting, Voice/Speech, and Stage Combat. He was an actor in a production of *UP* at Syracuse Stage earlier this year and has also enjoyed guest teaching Shakespeare and stage combat workshops/residencies at Stanford University, San Jose State University, California State University Fresno, and Linn Benton College. In addition, he is serving as the Associate Fight Director at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival: assisting on *Macbeth* and *Henry VIII* and fight directing *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, *Paradise Lost*, and *All's Well That Ends Well*. Chris recently very much enjoyed studying and completing his 8 weapons in Single Sword, Quarterstaff and Sword and Shield with CT Jon Cole in Salem, Ore., and CT/FD Geoffrey Kent in Boulder, Colo. Most recently, Chris was honored to be promoted to Senior Level Instructor with Dueling Arts International, and is currently serving as Secretary of the DAI's Governing Body. He will be teaching Dueling Arts Skills Tests to the actors at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival this summer.

AAC Kevin Inouye is enjoying taking Single Sword with Geof Alm, and further augmenting his studies with a Chinese Broadsword workshop, tai chi classes, and attending the International Swordfighting and Martial Arts Convention over Memorial Day weekend – the latter thanks in large part to the generosity of the Brad Waller scholarship. At the time of submission, he's just wrapped shooting on one internet video pilot, is about to start shooting his own action short starring FM Geoffrey Alm, and has recently taught a firearms workshop for a group of video game animators. The props rentals are busy, sleep is scarce, and the twins are due in the fall.

From **AAC/Regional Rep. Heidi Wolf**: Congratulations and a warm welcome to all the new Actor Combatants and Advanced Actor Combatants in WA and OR. And to those in AK, traveling heroic distances for renewals. We in the Lower 48 salute you!

Pacific West Region:

California, Nevada, Arizona,
Hawaii



By: Robert Hamilton
e: PWRegRep@safd.org

AC Collin Bressie is pleased to report he has been very busy as of late. This semester he assisted Tony Carreiro, his school's stage combat professor, in teaching a beginning level single rapier course. Collin also had the privilege of interning at this year's Virginia Beach Bash back in late March, which he hopes to make a habit. With the help of his good friend and fellow students, he directed, choreographed, produced and acted in a very successful stage combat variety fundraiser entitled *Shanks & Giggles*. All proceeds from that event raised money to purchase new theatrical weapons and expand the school's armory. He would like to thank everyone for the support and to all the fighters who helped make it possible.

Honorary Member Anthony De Longis has been keeping busy auditioning, teaching, training to stay performance sharp and overseeing the construction on his school at Rancho Indalo. He appeared in Spike TV's William Wallace vs Shaka Zulu episode of *Deadliest Warrior* as a weapons

expert and test cutter for the five foot claymore. His wife, Dr. Mary, just edited the highlights from his appearance on History Channel's *More Extreme Marksmen*, but also found a link to the entire episode, displaying challenges with candles, flowers, wine goblets and galloping horses. (Full Episode 10:01 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYwKFTOB0bc> and 3:12 edited version <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y9LfTw6K2XU>). He also co-starred on a new series called *Leverage* in "The Wedding Job" playing "the butcher of Kiev" that's currently in re-runs. He also shot live ammo from a galloping horse for History Channel's *Lock and Load* and filmed a new episode for *The Hunted*. In addition, he had a dozen Aussies train with him at the ranch over the course of two weekends from May 18-28. Finally, he filmed a new Small Sword DVD at the ranch with the Maestros Martinez June 14-18.

AC Durand Garcia, who's Fight Action Associates enters its third year, has choreographed San Francisco State University's *Streetcar Named Desire*, and *Chairs* (a suicide leap), assisted Fight Choreographer Andrea Weber, and was Fight Captain for *An Affair of Honor* for Exit Theatre's Diva Fest. In addition, he choreographed Piedmont High School's *St. Joan* and a stair fall for their *Noises Off* last fall. He has choreographed movement and battle sequences in Purcell's *Dioclesian* for San Francisco Cabaret Opera and fights for Washington High School's *Romeo and Juliet*. He has also choreographed violence for two short films: Frog Band Productions' *The Experiment* (on which he did some second unit directing) and Biting Snake Productions *Blood Tie*. Next he is slated to coordinate violence for Elizabeth Appell's 15 minute short *Easy Made Hard*. He was Gregory Hoffman's teaching assistant for Stage Combat this spring at the American Conservatory Theatre's Acting Conservatory. Durand has also just completed his fourth semester toward his Master's degree in Drama at San Francisco State University, where he is a member of the Academy of Art

University's faculty and teaches Contemporary and Historic Theatrical Violence.

CT Robert Hamilton just returned from Hassloch, Germany where he directed and Stunt Coordinated the Holiday Park Water Ski Stunt show *Jim Pond, the Sea is not Enough*. Robert is the Chair of the Stage Combat at the American Musical and Dramatic Academy: Los Angeles campus, where this past spring he co-taught SPTs in Unarmed and Rapier & Dagger with fellow CT Lacy Altwine. All students passed. Robert has also been developing the extended studies of the Stage Combat Department at the LA campus, which has recently received accreditation for Bachelor degree programs, including a concentration in Stage Combat. Robert is currently co-teaching a Quarterstaff SPT with fellow CTs Mike Mahaffey and Lacy Altwine.

CT Mike Mahaffey has been busy this year. This spring, Mike taught SPTs in Unarmed, Rapier & Dagger and Singlesword at the American Musical and Dramatic Academy; all students passed. He is currently co-teaching a MONSTER Quarterstaff SPT class (over 20 students) with fellow CTs Lacy Altwine and Robert Hamilton. As a stunt person, Mike has done stunts for a pair of commercials this spring as well as doubling Curtis Armstrong in *The Gold Retrievers*. He recently Fight Directed a production of *Gem of the Ocean*, which won six LA Drama Critics Awards, coordinated a short film entitled *Brothers to the Bone* about two brothers in a fight to the death, and several AMDA student short films. He did ADR / voice acting on *Dead Air* and is currently in preproduction for *Threadbare Living*, a pilot for a series he (hopefully!) will be directing for Comedy Central. He is also trying his hand at writing, and is currently creating a miniseries based on the oncoming Zombie apocalypse. Mike has also taken an interest in tactical handgun shooting, and has completed course work with American Defense Enterprises. He has NOT however, completed his taxes.

Dave Maier has not been idle. He has been named the resident Fight Director for California Shakespeare Theatre. Recent fight direction credits include: *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* (Berkeley Rep), *Sweeney Todd* (St. Mary's College), *Audacious Artifacts* (Thrillpeddlers), *Dead Man's Cell Phone* (SF Playhouse), *Mauritius* (Magic Theatre) and *Romeo & Juliet* (California Shakespeare Theatre). He is currently a Full Instructor for Dueling Arts International and serves as the company's treasurer. He is teaching combat related courses at St. Mary's College of California and Berkeley Rep School of Theatre. Mr. Maier is proud to be a founding member of Dueling Arts San Francisco.

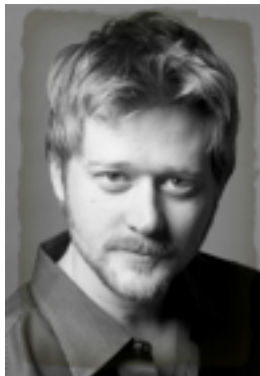
AAC Andrea Robertson has had another busy year; the heat in Phoenix hasn't slowed her down a bit (alright maybe a little). During the fall she directed *Lend Me a Tenor* and *Miracle on 34th St.* as well as taught several classes including Unarmed, Quarterstaff and Knife. Spring semester she did a ten-week run playing Agnes in the two person musical *I Do, I Do*, the fight direction for Glendale High's production of *The Princess Bride*, and then directed a children's show for the Arizona Jewish Theatre. Besides her work in the theatre she taught five classes at three different schools, two of which were

Unarmed/Single Sword classes. This summer she hopes to survive a nine-week kid's theatre camp.

ACC Kevin Wetmore did the fight choreography for *The Balcony* and *The Mystery Plays* at Loyola Marymount University, where he is the resident fight choreographer. He also did the fight direction of *The Pirates of Penzance* for the Frank Sinatra Opera Workshop and served as the stunt coordinator for the film *Centurion Soldier*. He continues to teach courses in Single Sword and Broadsword to undergraduates.

Rocky Mountain Region:

Idaho, Montana, Colorado,
Utah, Wyoming



By: Benaiah Anderson
e: RMRegRep@safd.org

complete his Knife SPT. He partnered with Amanda Washko, and both passed with recommendation. This was the sixth weapon Michael has tested with, and he is looking forward to continuing his training at the AACW this summer. He considers himself very fortunate to have been awarded the Douglas Fairbanks Jr. Scholarship. He sends his deepest gratitude to the SAFD Governing Body for their support. On the home front, Michael has been working with the Idaho Shakespeare Festival as an Actor and Teacher, performing in *The Comedy of Errors* and directing a student production of *Cymbeline*. He will also be teaching stage combat workshops for the Idaho Shakespeare Festival and the Treasure Valley Institute of Children's Arts.

South East Region:

Alabama, Florida, Georgia,
Kentucky, Mississippi, North
Carolina, South Carolina,
Tennessee, Virginia, West
Virginia



By: John Cashman
e: SERegRep@safd.org

AAC Terry Kroenung's swashbuckling fantasy novel *Brimstone And Lily*, featuring a wisecracking, shape-shifting talking sword, will be published this summer. It's already available on Kindle through Amazon.com. Terry will also be inaugurating YouTube Fight Club this summer, teaching stage combat to high school students in Longmont, CO and then filming fight scenes with full costume, sets, and dialogue. Look for them at NiwotSwashbucklers on YouTube.com.

Greetings from the South East Region! Not many chimed in for the report this go around. Admittedly, I'm still struggling to get the regions' roster off the new website, but please update any spam filters to accept mail from me (johncashman@clf.rr.com) or anything with SAFD in the subject line.

AAC Michael Mueller traveled to Salem, Ore. this past May to train with CT Jonathan Cole and

After moving to Savannah from Orange County, Calif. **CT Martin Noyes** has been busy fight directing



AC Amanda Washko, AAC Michael Mueller, and FM Geof Alm working through some Knife choreography. Photo by: Anthony Scott Harvey

over ten shows and teaching full time at Savannah College of Art and Design. He has been fortunate enough to have taught at both the National Stage Combat Workshop East last year and again at the Winter Wonderland Workshop in January. He just completed his second SPT with the wonderful result of all students passing with five recommendations. Martin is looking forward to Directing *Animal Farm* next spring.

South West Region:

New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma,
Arkansas, Louisiana



By: Ann Candler Harlan
e: SWRegRep@safd.org

A report was not submitted for this issue

Upcoming SPT's/SPR's

The SAFD membership is eager for opportunities to train, and *The Cutting Edge* is proud to keep you updated with the latest SPT/SPR events around the country. In addition to testing dates, we have also included information for classes being offered that will lead up to an SPT or provide an opportunity for an SPR. These classes can be through a college, university, private session or independent organization.

The structure of the information we request can be seen in the listings below. TBAs/TBDs are fine as long as there is contact information, however we do require an estimated date rather than listing a class as "on-going". This helps to prevent information from becoming stagnant or outdated. It doesn't matter how far ahead the dates may be. We will continue to print the information you send us in each issue until the date of your SPT/SPR has passed. As you find out more details, please update us so that we can maintain current information for the membership.

Helping the membership to find more training opportunities and assisting those providing these opportunities to spread the word is our primary goal with this section. Please email your events, suggestions and thoughts to cuttingedge@safd.org.

When: May, 2010
Where: New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, N.M.
(undergrad)
What: SPT: UA, R&D, TBA
Class Info: September to May, 2010
CT: Tim Pinnow
Adjudicator: TBA
Contact: Tim Pinnow, (505) 646-4517 tpinnow@nmsu.edu





National Stage Combat Workshop 2009!

HELD AT - THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

DATES:

July 5th - 24th

Introduction to Stage Combat!

\$1250 - College/Professional
\$1350 - High School
\$830 - Room & Board

**Actor Combatant
Workshop!**

\$1500 - Tuition
\$830 - Room & Board

**Advanced Actor Combatant
Workshop!**

\$2150 - Tuition
\$830 - Room & Board

Discounts available for all SAFD members - For more information visit: www.safd.org



FIGHTS⁴ | NYC



Summer Sling 12

The New York Regional Stage Combat Workshop

www.fights4.com

Date: August 13-16, 2009

Location: New York, NY

Cost: \$300 (\$75 per day)

\$270 (\$70 per day) SAFD or Union Discount

Register: www.fights4.com

Join Fights4 and their friends for the return of one of the crown jewels of the SAFD regional workshops! Four days of fist fighting, staff swinging and, of course, steel slinging!

Hosted by The Atlantic Theatre Company

The Texas Intensive Stage Combat Workshop & The Fight Directors Forum Labor Day Weekend 2009

A Society of American Fight Directors Sanctioned Event

The Texas Intensive Stage Combat Workshop

9am-6:30pm, Saturday and Sunday, September 5th & 6th, 2009 (Labor Day Weekend)

Applying performance principles of stage combat in a variety of classes for beginner to advanced level actor/fighters. *Skills Proficiency Renewals (SPR) offered on Monday, Sept. 7th. Additional fees apply.*

The Fight Directors Forum

7:00-9:00pm Friday, September 4th, 2009

Start the weekend off with "a special seminar in fundamental principles of stage fighting from a fight director's point of view". This event is open to the public and free of charge.



Workshop Fee: \$175.00 T-shirt and food included!

Pre-registration is highly recommended. 10% discount for - S.A.F.D. members -or- groups of six or more! One discount per participant.

Send a copy of current S.A.F.D. membership card -or- send your group's registration forms together to qualify for a discount.

Send fees with contact information to: Frowbiz, 5041 Nina Lee Lane, Houston, TX 77092 or Fax with a credit card# 713-683-0467

* For Registration form or inquiries write to Ann C. Harlan, Sponsor, via SWRegRep@safd.org or call 713-419-9321 *

Philadelphia Stage Combat Workshop!

www.philascw.org

Date: October 3-4, 2009

Location: Philadelphia, PA

Cost: \$250 or \$175 if SAFD by 9/1/09

Register: (215) 802-3885

*Your tuition includes continental breakfast, cheese steak lunch and a weekend of classes.

Instructors:

SAFD CT/FD John Bellomo

SAFD CT/FD Charles Conwell

SAFD CT/FD Ian Rose

FD J. Alex Cordaro

Discounts:

10% SAFD at the door

\$225 SAFD & Student ID at the door

\$275 at the door



Past Classes:

Cavalry Sabre
Melee vs. Duel
Skirts, Heels, & Swords
Unarmed vs. Knife
Motion Capture
Fascinatin' Rhythm
Rifle & Bayonet
Athletic Smallsword
Twirling Sticks of Doom
Classes in all 8 SAFD Disciplines

Hosted by the University of the Arts
See pictures from last year on our Myspace account:
<http://www.myspace.com/phillyfightworkshop>

Workshop Ad Requirements:

Please look at the following *Cutting Edge* ad specifications. Sending us your ad in the proper format will ensure that it will be entered in the upcoming issue.

What you put in the ad is entirely up to you, however, the following criteria must be met:

- The workshop must be sanctioned by the SAFD
- The ad must be 7.75" wide by 4.5" high
- The ad must be submitted in either .tif, .jpg, .eps, or .pdf format
- When sending us a file, please include the fonts you use
- We will accept ads up to one year before the date of your workshop

If your ad does not meet the following criteria, your ad will either not be placed in the publication or will be adjusted to specification at the *Cutting Edge* editor's discretion.

We are always available to answer any questions you might have as well as help you through the process. If you have further questions, contact us at:

cuttingedge@safd.org

SAFD

THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS



MERCHANDISE AVAILABLE ON-LINE!



T-shirts
Hoodies
Swordbags
Sweatpants
Ladies-wear
& more!



www.companycasuals.com/SAFD

Historical Photo #1:

Michael Donahue, Geoffrey Kent, FMJ. Allen Suddeth



1994

NSCW - Las Vegas

Historical Photo #2:

J. Allen Suddeth teaching Sword and Shield



2000

NSCW - Las Vegas

Call For Historical Information!

The Cutting Edge is seeking additional historical information on the Society of American Fight Directors (SAFD). We are looking to update the website and establish a more concrete system of record keeping to preserve the legacy that was started by our founders (SAFD). We are looking for the following:

1. Photos from past SAFD events with captions
 - a. Please send photos as .jpg, .tif, or .eps files
 - b. We accept black & white as well as color photos - but color is preferred
 - c. 300 dpi is preferred, but contact us if you are having problems
 - d. Please include name of photographer, subjects' names and membership levels.
2. Lists of attendees for any and all SAFD sanctioned events
3. Detailed examples of how the SAFD has assisted you as an artist, an educator, and/or choreographer

Please send submissions and any questions to our email, cuttingedge@safd.org. This is a tremendous opportunity to share your favorite memories and inspire new generations of members. We hope that you will find the time to take advantage of this opportunity.

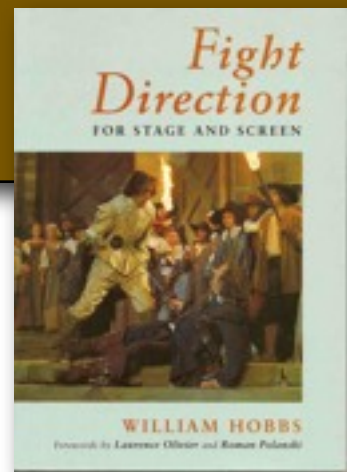


Book Review

By: Ryan McIntyre

William Hobbs is considered by many to be the grandfather of modern filmed and theatrical combat. In his book *Fight Direction For Stage and Screen* the reasons for his accolades are clear. The book is well laid out and thoughtful, chapters are planned and concise, and it is overall a quick, easy read. Hobbs explores the history of theatrical fighting from the Victorian era through recent times with anecdotes from films and

productions he has worked on. The great worth of the book lies in that it may truly be used as a manual for fighters and fight directors alike. The chapters on safety, fight orchestration, and technique are wonderful for either the beginner or seasoned fight director. Special attention is paid toward finding both the acting intention and the unexpected through the fight choreography, giving emphasis to the reciprocal nature of fight choreography and character development. Hobbs' method of fight notation and a small number of safety precautions may not mesh perfectly with the standards within the SAFD, but his book is a gold mine of information, technique, and inspiration. *Fight Direction For Stage and Screen* can be found online relatively inexpensively, and is a must have for any stage combatant's bookshelf.



Originally from St. Louis, Mo., Ryan is a graduate of the University of Central Missouri and Regent University, earning his Bachelor's of Fine arts and Masters of Fine Arts respectively. He is the co-founder of the Big Stick Theatre Company, a production company working out of Portland, Ore., and Virginia Beach, Va. Ryan has been a member of the SAFD since 2003, attended national and regional workshops, and had the great pleasure of working with many of the talented instructors. He has acted as fight choreographer, stunt arranger, and instructor at Regent University, the University of Central Missouri, Summer Arts Camp, and for various independent film companies. Ryan currently lives in Virginia Beach, Va. working professionally for stage and film as an actor, instructor, and choreographer.

2009 SAFD Membership Application/Annual Dues Form

Please complete the entire form. In order for the SAFD to maintain accurate records, it is important that all of your information in our database be current. You can mail your payment with this form, or you may pay online with a credit card at www.safd.org.

Reasons to join the SAFD:

- Subscription to **The Fight Master**, a journal published twice yearly
- Subscription to **The Cutting Edge**, our bimonthly online newsletter
- Access to back issues of both publications and online discussions in the members only section at www.safd.org
- Discounts to national and regional stage combat workshops
- The right to vote for members of the Executive Committee and Governing Body
- A free T-Shirt (Available to new and renewing members)
- And much, much more...

Status (Check one): New Member Current Renewing Member Lapsed Renewing Member Gift*

*If giving a membership as a gift, please print your name here _____

Please fill in the information for the gift receiver below.

Amount Enclosed (\$45.00/year USA, \$55.00/year Outside USA) \$ _____ **.00**

Payment Method (please check one): Paid online via Credit Card (please include copy of online receipt) Paid via enclosed Check Check # _____

General Information

Membership Level (please check one):

Organization Friend Actor/Combatant Advanced Actor/Combatant Certified Teacher Fight Director

Name (First, MI, Last): _____

Home Phone: _____

Home Address: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Work Address: _____

Email: _____

Website: _____

Union Affiliations (SAG, AEA, etc.): _____

Materials should be mailed to (please check one):

Home Work

T-Shirt Size (please check one):

S M L XL XXL

Please check the following:

- I would like to receive information regarding SAFD sanctioned workshops: YES NO
- I would like to receive information regarding non-sanctioned workshops: YES NO
- I would like to receive information regarding SAFD classes in my area: YES NO
- I would like to receive information regarding SAFD merchandise: YES NO

Current Skills Proficiency Test Results (Please list most recent SPT for each weapon)

WEAPON	Month/Year	Instructor	Adjudicator
Broadsword			
Knife			
Quarterstaff			
Rapier & Dagger			
Single Sword			
Smallsword			
Sword & Shield			
Unarmed			

Photocopy & Mail with payment or receipt to: SAFD, 1350 East Flamingo Road #25, Las Vegas, NV. 89119



Word of the Issue:

SAFD Definition:

Roversi

(It.) a.) A sixteenth century term for a cutting attack delivered from one's left to the opponent's right side.
b.) In theatrical . rapier play; a cutting attack delivered from the left side, the hand in pronation, delivered to the opponent's right.



WHY SHOULD YOU JOIN THE SAFD?

Save

If you join on the day of your spt (skills proficiency test), you join at a 33% discount. Pay only \$30 instead of \$45 for your first year of membership.

Network

Become a member of a close-knit organization within a close-knit industry. We think we're a pretty friendly bunch and we're always happy to meet more new members.

Discounts

Attend future SAFD workshops at a discounted rate. National and regional workshops offer big savings once you're an SAFD member.

Access

Get listed on the new and improved SAFD website that gives you access to member info across the nation. If you move or are working out of town, you'll be able to contact local SAFD members more easily.

Opportunities

The new and improved SAFD website will also allow directors, fight directors, casting directors and other employers an easy way to find you and other qualified fighters in your neck of the woods.