



A.C.L.C.

A tax-exempt, non-profit corporation

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Fourth Quarter Newsletter

Here we are, already in July, I hope this newsletter finds you all doing well. Looks like it will be a long haul sheltering in place, I miss your faces.

Our board has been very busy taking care of the changes needed to move forward with the bylaws and policy so in the future we can begin expanding membership to Northern California. We are looking into cross promotion with Mendocino Pride Alliance to reach out to leather folks in the North Bay. If you have cross promotion possibilities in your area, please reach out to them. We have put together a new membership guideline that is available on the website or from any board member. If you are a current paid member you should have received an email with bylaws changes for review. We are researching ways to do online membership voting in case a general meeting in person isn't possible in September.

The club has achieved our expenses for this year, and we are looking for ideas to raise funds for the upcoming year to cover expenses. We did a successful online charity event with Ms. San Francisco leather and sent a check to Project open hand for \$562. If you have ideas for social distance get togethers or fundraising possibilities or are interested in being on next year's board now is the time to reach out, we will begin taking nominations for the upcoming year with voting in September.

We as a board want to reach out and send condolences to Den Caulkins on the recent loss of his mother and Christy Busch on the loss of her long time partner Kiska, Kiska was a personal friend and supporter of our club for years and she will be missed. It's a difficult time, reach out to your friends and club members, keep in touch and stay safe.

In leather service,

Joan Norry

ACLC President

Treasurer's Report:

3Q Board April, May, June 2020

Income	\$ 588.43
Expenses.....\$568.43

This Quarter:

Income: \$0
 Donations - \$562.00 to Project OpenHand
 Balance: \$5,746.47

\$6.43 expense for Venmo fees. All other expenses paid year to date: PO Box, Storage, and Insurance.

P.O. Box 20759
Castro Valley CA
94546

Board of Directors
2019-2020

Joan Norry
President

Caity Lynch
Vice President

Andrew Johnson
Secretary

Nyna Kaiser
Treasurer

Laurie Aguinaga
Member At Large

On behalf of the Board:

Alta California Leather Corps stands in solidarity with our Black members and friends of the club as an adversary to the racial violence plaguing our country. We mourn the deaths of Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, George Floyd, and Ahmaud Arbery, among countless other lives lost.

This past quarter, a time we associate with Pride, you have heard that Black Lives Matter and we are one voice among them, remembering 50 years after the first San Francisco Pride, that there is still work to be done in the shared fight for equity. A.C.L.C. would be nothing without our Black titleholders, judges, volunteers, members, and friends, who serve as a cornerstone of who we are today and who we will become in our shared future.

In solidarity and leather,

Alta California Leather Corps

In Loving Memory of Kiska



Education: The Compleat Spit Shine by Bootdog

One of the most common things any leatherfolk owns is a pair of boots. Some own several. As of this writing, I currently own nineteen pairs. Discounting suede, rubber, and other “non-polishable” boots, I have eleven pairs of

varying colors, styles, and leather types. You better believe that they're all polished, dammit.

You don't have to be a fiend for boots to keep the ones you have in good shape, though. In spite of all the products, tools, and techniques that exist for the purpose of boot care, the act of keep them looking good is actually not that difficult. In this article, I'll be describing a way of keeping your boots looking like you're as obsessive-compulsive about them as I am.

Before we start, it is important to note that certain boots are made with what is known as oil-tanned leather. These boots will not take a shine and will, in fact, become extraordinarily sticky if you put polish on them. Oil-tanned boots are generally identifiable by their matte finish and slightly greasy feel.

Applying the polish

Polish can be applied by three methods: by dauber, by cloth, and by hand. A dauber (a round brush with medium-hardness bristles and a handle) is particularly useful to get polish into tight spaces like the welt (the crease between the leather and the sole). However, controlling the amount of polish that gets applied as well as where the polish goes is somewhat difficult with a dauber, so I prefer to use a cloth, particularly for paste wax. Wrap the cloth around your first two fingers and hold the rest of the cloth wadded in your palm. Circle the cloth-covered tips of your fingers in the polish to get the polish onto the cloth, and then simply rub the polish onto the leather. Or you could just throw caution to the wind and use your bare fingers. You get a lot more control and a better "connection" to the leather. Cleaning polish off one's skin is generally a matter of a bit of soap and a lot of scrubbing. However, brown polish may stain your skin.

A thin coat of polish is good for most boots. Go over the boot section by section, making sure to cover the area evenly. Polish goes on with a matte finish, so by holding the boot under a light you can see where you have

missed spots. Allow the polish to dry briefly. Simply letting one boot sit while you apply the polish to the other is sufficient dry-time.

Brushing

Brushes in bootblacking work kind of like sandpaper. The bristles smooth out the surface of the polish as well as reduce the amount of polish on the surface (which is easier to buff into a high-shine). The one uses should be of reasonably rigid horsehair. These days, it can be tough finding well made shoe brushes, so a lot of bootblacks (myself included) look at antique stores for some supplies. A sixty year old brush is often significantly more durable than a new brush.

When brushing, the first thing to practice is feathering the strokes of the brush. Sweep the bristles across the surface and don't stop the movement of the stroke until the bristles are no longer in contact with the leather. Think of it like dusting your hands off. This leads to the second point, brush briskly. This is primarily focused on getting excess polish off the boot, so more brisk strokes will be more effective. Finally, vary the angle and direction of the brush strokes. This will allow the bristles to get in contact with leather that might be partially shielded by seams or the shape of the boot itself.

Buffing

The process of buffing requires two things to happen. 1) The polish has to be compressed into a smooth surface. 2) The polish actually has to remain on

the leather. I prefer to use one of two options. If I am polishing a pair of boots “in-hand” (that is, without someone wearing them), I polish very similarly to the way I outlined apply the polish to the leather above. This allows you to adjust the amount of force you exert while polishing, meaning you can create a thinner (and thus smoother) surface, which will be glossier. Mechanical buffers can only withstand a certain amount of pressure before the increased friction causes the motors to slow or stall, and brush bristles will flatten under high pressure. If you want to and are able to exert a lot of pressure using a cloth, you will be rewarded with a much more mirror-like polish job.

If I’m polishing a pair of boots being worn, I usually use a more traditional two-handed grip for polishing the shaft and upper, briskly pulling the cloth back and forth across the leather, returning to the finger-in-cloth method for spots that the flat cloth may miss (for example, the instep of each foot). The two-handed method requires a bit of practice to get the rhythm and pressure right,

but it covers a large surface area quickly and is also, frankly, more engaging for the client.

Part of the “spit shine” process is the use of moisture on the buffing cloth. The cloth will absorb less polish when it is wet (polish, being wax-based, doesn’t mix with water), leaving the polish where it’s supposed to be, on the boot. Spit is not necessary, however. Water applied to either the cloth or the leather via a spray bottle is quite effective as well. Furthermore, if you have eaten anything in the preceding half-hour, DO NOT USE SPIT. Do you really want cookie crumbs (or what have you) smeared onto your boots? No, you don’t. (At least not in this context. How you use the boots afterwards is your business; just remember that chicken and fish go best with white wine and combat boots.) Generally, the use of water will necessitate a little more buffing than dry buffing, because too much water gets onto the cloth initially, and the heat from the friction created by rubbing is dissipated before it can melt the polish. Just keep buffing. The ideal amount of moisture will eventually be reached and the shine will suddenly “happen.”

So you buff and buff and buff. What you’re doing here is creating friction, which melts the polish, and pressure, which flattens it. This is the same basic concept as hot asphalt and a steam roller, but on a microscopic level. Keep an eye on your cloth. Even with the water, it will pick up some polish. With the two-finger method, when the cloth becomes saturated with polish, its ability to produce a smooth finish will degrade. Simply move to a clean part of the cloth, wrap it around your fingers again, and re-moisten it. The two-hand method will not need that sort of adjustment.

Finishing

At this point, the job is pretty much done. However, there is an extra bit that can improve even a superior polishing job. Some of my more butch readers may be dismayed to learn that this requires (shudder) buying pantyhose. For reasons that I have never had adequately explained, a second buffing with a piece of nylon (such as that used in hosiery) will often give a pair of boots an even more mirror-like finish. I can only begin to guess why this is (I suspect it has to do with the nylon being even less prone to absorb polish than cloth).

For this, you will actually need a knee-high nylon (there’s simply too much fabric in a pair of pantyhose, my flippant remark above notwithstanding). You

can buy the cheap ones at the grocery store; they'll work just as well. Buy light colored ones, they show up polish better so you can find an unused section later. Stick your hand into the stocking and pull it taut. Then go over the entire boot with a firm buffing motion. The shine should be subtly, but noticeably stronger.

Conclusion

I hope this has been enlightening. If you are interested in learning more about bootblacking, please check out <http://anyonecanshine.com>

Catch the Patch: ACLC Represented

On Sunday, 28 June: A.C.L.C. Board Members Joan Norry, Mistress Nyna, and Caity Lynch attended the People's March & Rally: Unite to Fight! along the original 1970 Polk Street route for the first San Francisco Pride in 1970. The march was organized as a call to action by Alex U. Inn and Juanita Moore to "roar our voices in solidarity with our Black, Brown, Indigenous Trans and Queer family, friends, lovers, and neighbors. We stand in protest of racial injustice, police violence, unjust healthcare, and inadequate unemployment relief. We demand changes!"



We want to hear from you! We know you're out there, volunteering, misbehaving, and most of all, Representing. Take a (street legal) photo in your finest ACLC patch, pin, or other assorted swag and send to info@acleather.org. We would love to feature you in our next newsletter!

Upcoming Events:

Please join us on the ACLC facebook group, "ACLC – Alameda County Leather Corps" at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/47216094228/> We'll be posting future opportunities to join Zoom chats and stay connected with your club!

ACLC Zoom Call - 12 August at 7pm. Touch base as a club, connect with each other, and check in. Hear information about the upcoming board election, bi-laws amendments, and ask the board questions. Hope to see you there! Details to be posted to the ACLC Facebook Group.

September 19 – Our Annual Meeting will still be held to approve updates to the club’s by-laws, & elect our board members for the coming year. We are continuing to monitor re-opening timelines and best health practices to determine if we will be able to host this event in-person. If this is not safely possible, we will conduct the meeting and vote virtually. Details forthcoming as the board tests a virtual voting platform and as health guidelines are updated. Send in your board nominations to info@acleather.org anytime before voting on September 19th!