

President's Message at 2015 Annual ICG Members and Board Meetings

Focus is on

- Providing more value to individual members and to affiliated chapters and SIGs
- Providing chapters and SIGs with the tools and resources they need to recruit and retain members
- Reaching out to genre and subject specific costuming communities
- Finding ways to appeal to costumers of all ages and interests

Accomplishments:

- Marty Gear Costuming Arts and Sciences fund has awarded two grants, and we hope to receive others this year for innovative projects that benefit the costuming community locally or at large.
- We have a new ICG chapter, the Time Travelers Costume Guild, in the Greater Portland Oregon metro area with 14 members. I'll say more about them during the chapter updates. Chapter president and ICG board representative Lorien Fletcher asked me to let everyone know how excited they are to be an ICG chapter. We also hope to have several new chapters forming or affiliating in the coming year, including one in the "Lower" half of Arizona, one here in the Charleston area, and one in Florida. I'm also in contact with several others who are at various stages of considering ICG affiliation. I'm especially focusing on how to attract larger stand-alone costuming groups.
- We have a new Special Interest Group: "Props and Costuming FX." This SIG provides a focus for those who are interested in learning and sharing information about prop making and creating costuming special effects such as lighting, sound, mechanicals, and other effects that enhance costumes. As someone who is handier with a soldering gun than a serger, I'm excited about this new SIG! We hope to have several other SIGs forming this year, including one on Steampunk.
- One of our new SIGs (Miss Lizzy's) is now participating in the ICG's Group Exemption Letter, and the new Portland chapter is in the process of applying. GEL is a powerful incentive for new chapters and SIGs.
- The website now has resource sections aimed at chapters and SIGs, including information on how to start one. We're working on additional resource pages for new and existing chapters and SIGs about nuts-and-bolts items like setting up a bank account and the roles of chapter officers and the board representative.
- There is a new "Benefits" section on the website describing the benefits of membership and chapter/SIG affiliation, and a listing of discounts available to individual members, chapters, and SIGs. We'd like to enlist ICG members to help us locate other discounts available from merchants, and to contact merchants about offering discounts to ICG members. We'll list them on the new "Discounts" page. Please contact me if you'd like to help.
- The ICG is now making proof of membership available to members. Those who receive the online edition of the newsletter will find it in the email notification for

each issue. Those who receive the print edition will find it on the address label. Your proof of membership includes your name, address, the expiration date, and your primary chapter. In addition to helping you remember when it's time to renew, you can use your proof of membership for discounts and other benefits from merchants who offer them to members of non-profits like the ICG

- The PR committee has developed a set of templates that chapters and SIGs can customize, and has already made them available to chapter representatives. They will also be posted shortly to a new “Resources” section of the website. Look for an announcement soon on the ICG-D and ICG-BOD lists.