



# The ICG Newsletter

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The International Costumers' Guild, Inc. (ICG), is an affiliation of amateur, hobbyist, and professional costumers dedicated to the promotion and education of costuming as an art form in all its aspects.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

from Nora Mai, ICG President



Do you remember the children's book "The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins"? That's a lot what my life is like recently. I find that I wear too many hats lately.

I switch swiftly & slickly between them at a moment's notice - good thing I like hats. Costume-Con 25? Approximately ten hats. I'm officially the Treasurer. Which means I receives

the money, deposits the money and dispenses the money. Partnered with that is the position of Membership Coordinator because, since I receive the money, I might as well keep track of where it came from. I'm also keeping track of various related items like programming and room assignments. Oh, and the website. I'm also sponsoring the Pirate Hall Costume Contest on Saturday at the convention. Just look for the pirate with the obnoxious yellow plumes and a cashbox. After the convention I can dispense with that bunch of hats but many will remain.

St Louis Costumers Guild? Rough guess - down from five. Well, I was the founding President and have never been far from the reins of power there. I also created and still maintain the website. Currently they let me handle the money. Of course that also involves handling the membership roster, but at least I don't have to police the calendar, since I don't sleep with the President anymore. At least, not in the same bed.

The Job? 6 or so. Yep, I got one of those too. And interestingly enough, it's not just one hat there either. Officially I'm the database administrator. But I also program the database, train on computers, provide help desk assistance and crawl under desks. Our cleaning crew doesn't spend as much time under the desks as I do and I can prove it.

And then there's a little thing called the ICG. Being the President of the ICG has its joyful moments. It can also be terrible drudgery. And it comes with its own wardrobe of chapeaux; probably in the dozens - I can't begin to count them all. The hats of the ICG are a wide variety of styles and colors; the colors may not match the outfit, but maybe they will complement it.

So the key to life is flexibility. And always wear a great hat, no matter how many times a day you have to change it.

Nora Mai  
ICG President

## EDITOR'S MESSAGE

from Denisen Hartlove, ICG Newsletter Editor

Happy New Year, everyone! While we in our family love the winter holidays, it's a relief when the new year arrives and we can begin looking forward to what's coming next. I hope 2007 treats everyone reading this message all sorts of joys and pleasant surprises throughout the year!

In this issue, we have information on the ICG Annual Meeting at Costume-Con 25, as well as a fascinating article by Judy Mitchell on media recreation costuming, and information from Bruce MacDermott, the ICG's Treasurer, on the ICG's (and its Chapters') tax-exempt status. And who can't attend the Annual Meeting, but still want to vote, we're publishing the ICG's proxy form on the very back page of this issue of the Newsletter. Print out the form, sign it, and give it to someone attending the meeting to vote on your behalf.

To begin with, there are several important dates coming up:

- January 30: ICG Executive Officer Nominations Opened  
Deadline for Lifetime Achievement Nominees
- February 28: ICG Officer Nominations Due by Today
- March 14: Deadline for Meeting Items for General Meeting  
ICG Board of Directors Recess Begins
- March 30: ICG Board of Directors Meeting (9:00 a.m.)  
ICG Annual Meeting (10:00 a.m. or earlier)

The following are the current proposed Board of Directors and Annual Meeting agendas. Note as mentioned above that the deadline for getting additional items onto this schedule is March 14<sup>th</sup>. Contact your Chapter Representative or any Board Member with questions or suggestions prior to that date.

### ICG Board of Directors Meeting Agenda (9:00 a.m. 3/30/07)

- ✓ Convene and roll call of Board of Directors
- ✓ Budget Approval
- ✓ Recess (During recess, proxies will be validated and counted as have been carried by Board Members, and ballots will be assigned)

### ICG Annual Meeting Agenda (10:00 a.m. 3/30/07)

- ✓ Call to Order
- ✓ Validate remaining proxies carried by non-Board Members
- ✓ Minutes of Last Meeting
- ✓ Call for motion to skip reading minutes aloud, waive discussion and vote to accept outright (note that minutes are posted online for those interested in reading them)
- ✓ New Chapters (if any are ready to be voted in)
- ✓ Reports from Executive Board
  - President - Nora Mai - State of the Corporation
  - Vice President - Jan Price
  - Treasurer - Bruce MacDermott
  - Corresponding Secretary - Karen Heim
  - Recording Secretary - Frances Burns
  - Parliamentarian - Pierre Pettinger
  - Archivist - Pierre Pettinger (& Bruce Mai)
- ✓ Reports from Committees
  - Budget & Finance - Bruce MacDermott
  - Newsletter Editorial Board - Denisen Hartlove

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(Meeting Agenda, Continued from Page 1)

- Fundraising - Elaine Mami
- ICG Guidelines - Andy Trembley & Betsy Delaney
- Archives Online - Bruce Mai
- T-Chapter - Jan Price
- PR Committee - Karen Heim

- ✓ Other Old Business
  - Website migration & status - Jeff Morris
- ✓ New Business
  - IRS discussion
  - Officer Nominations
- ✓ Recess from General Meeting
- ✓ Reconvene Board of Directors
  - Brief meeting to confirm elections & other topics as necessary

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### ICG Board of Directors Meeting Minutes September-December 2006

Submitted by Frances Burns, Recording Secretary

The Letter of Dissolution of Subchapter Status from Costumers' Guild West was received.

A T-Chapter was formed for ICG members that still have active memberships. The following Chapters indicated that they were willing to take members from the T-Chapter: NJ/NY, SiW, SWCG.

A suggestion to deliver the Guild newsletter by email was raised. After some initial discussion, the matter was tabled to resume after IRS issues are resolved by the Board.

The Board of Directors discussed issues pertaining to the Internal Revenue Service and the ICG's group exemption throughout September, October, November and December. The Board voted on and approved forming a Committee of the Whole.

A poll was created for the ICG-BOD group. Question: Do you/your Chapter accept a Uniform Governing Instrument that is a restating of our by-laws? Seven Chapter representatives responded to the poll. All accepted the UGI as it is currently written. Five agreed to participate in the gathering of the required materials for the IRS, one did not.

In order to pay a \$900 filing fee associated with the IRS issues, we may need to pull from our "back-up" funds. Some Chapters have expressed a willingness to donate a small portion to offset the deficit. A petition was received from the Southeastern Costumers' Society, representing the southeastern United States & centralized around Atlanta, GA to become a Chapter of the ICG. They are aware of the ongoing discussion about the IRS 501(c)(3) status.

It was moved and seconded that the Chapter be accepted into the ICG.

Nora Mai announced that she is now accepting nominations for the ICG Lifetime Achievement Award. Any ICG member in good standing may nominate someone for this award by sending their nomination (including a paragraph or two on why they wish to nominate said person) to the ICG President either via snail or email. The deadline for nominations is January 30, 2007.

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#### ICG Newsletter Identification Statement:

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### (MORE) CHAPTER NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD!

Since our last issue, news has continued to come in from Chapters nationwide, telling us about their adventures! **Welcome to Our Newest Chapter!!!!**

Congratulations and welcome to the newest Chapter of the International Costumers Guild!! The BoD just recently passed a motion welcoming the Southeastern Costumers' Society representing the southeastern United States and centralized around Atlanta, Georgia. Fifteen new members have joined us, and we at the Newsletter in particular are looking forward to hearing from our newest Chapter as to their activities and members' adventures!

#### GCFCG

The Greater Columbia Fantasy Costumers Guild (GCFCG) has had quite a busy time this year.

In May, while Judy (Mitchell) and Jan (Price) were able to make it out to Costume-Con, the rest were busy at Balticon giving panels, helping to judge the masquerade, and running a post-masquerade party.

In July we went to the Multiple Sclerosis Fantasy Ball, where the proceeds went to help the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. It was great fun, with this year's costume theme being Arabian Nights!

In September various members went to Dragon\*Con in Atlanta. Marty (Gear), Judy and Jan all helped out on the new (and very well attended/received) Friday Night Masquerade. Marty and Judy also helped on costuming panels, and Jan was mostly in charge of the huge costume parade. Stephanie got to see how crazy it is in the Dealer's Room, and Deborah also got a taste of the con. It really has absolutely amazing hall costumes.

In October we haunted a local library. After a great turnout last year, they asked us back again to run a one-day haunt for the community kids (this year's theme was underwater/pirates). We had about 166 people. Much fun was had, and the response was that it was even better than last year.

In November we drove up to the Winterthur Museum in Delaware to see the Fashion in Film exhibit. After a very . . . adventuresome start (including a flat tire and someone else's really bad accident that closed the highway) we made it there without even getting lost! We had a lovely champagne/mimosa brunch and headed up to the gallery. This exhibit will close in Wilmington on Jan 7, but it travels to Omaha, NE January 25 - March 25, 2007, so if you can get to see it, it's lovely. Some 35 costumes from various movies are on display. Now in December we are planning on a Costumers' Christmas Party!

*Note: Photo is the GCFCG & friends at their Library Haunt in 2006.*



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## MEDIA RECREATION COSTUMING

by Judy Mitchell

If you go to many media-centered science-fiction conventions, you'll find that much (not all) of the costuming is media recreation. Why the interest in media recreation costumes rather than original concept costumes?

Maggie Mascetti of Costumer's Guide and Padawan's Guide took a poll on why her members like to make costumes, and just over half preferred to recreate a costume rather than design an original.

One of the reasons is the recognition/cosplay factor - it's fun to dress up and be someone recognizable. Whether wearing the costume lets you daydream that you are the lead character kissing the other lead character, or the bad guy mowing down the opposition, it might simply be that it's flattering when people come up to you and recognize the character you're portraying.

There is a drawback to the recognition aspect, though. As Thomas Atkinson points out, "A recreation costume will also draw criticism if it deviates just a little from the source material. A popular costume will have been seen by lots of people, and if the color of your recreation is a bit off, or a seam is out of place, those lots of people won't hesitate to point it out to you. I've learned that they really think they're being helpful." If you feel you need to respond to them, it's helpful to have an explanation such as "this was the actual color on the set before the post-production sweetening," "this was an alternate version that was changed at the last minute," or simply, "this was the closest fabric I could find."

Another reason for recreating media costumes is simply for the challenge of it! Dany Sloane said "I really like a character and I'll think to myself 'Y'know, I could pull this off.'" Most admit that there is a lot of work involved - you have to research the costume, analyze how it was made - and how to make it fit you (unless you are sized the same as the actor).

Jules K, one of the directors of Alley Cat Scratch, has said of her Haradrim and Corsair costumes, "The research is half the fun, the search for suitable materials or using something else, but having it totally appear [as] the original can give enormous satisfaction."

Other people came up with different reasons. Many beginning sewers like the fact that they can see the costume and it's already designed for them. They need to do the research, but they enjoy it. For some people, recreating is a knack they have. For people who

can't draw and aren't necessarily good at design, recreating someone else's costume that they really like can be a great way to participate in the costuming hobby.

Some experienced sewers find that recreating a media costume forces them out of their comfort zone and expands their knowledge of sewing, fabrics, and draping. The "how did they do that?" factor leads to "how the heck do I do it," or as Thomas Atkinson puts it, "Researching a recreation costume . . . will lead you to try techniques that you might otherwise have dismissed as too hard, or

too far outside your skills and talent - it can force you to grow as a costumer. Sewing is my strong suit. I might never have tried my hand at sculpture and prop-making were I not trying to recreate an important costume piece." Many of us are simply wired to enjoy the research and think it's fun.

So how do you go about making a media recreation costume? If you're working from a text, about all you can do is collect every reference you can find to what the person looked like. For example, in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Fellowship of the Ring*, we read, "Tom Bombadil is a merry fellow, bright blue his jacket was and his boots were yellow." That's not a lot of information. But if we search a little more, we can find that he had curly brown hair and a beard, blue eyes, leather pants and wore a tall hat with a feather in it. Tolkien never drew a picture of him. If you wanted to create this book character, you've got a lot of latitude, just as long as you hit all these bases. Tolkien never said anything about what sort of coat, whether he even has a shirt, what sort of leather pants, and how high were the boots (were they "wellies" or "bucket boots"?). But add in a big lily pad tray and some waterlilies, and anyone who is familiar with the character will likely recognize it.

Your own imagination and skill can take over, but it still counts as a "media recreation" costume, since books are media. Even Spaceman Spiff from the Calvin & Hobbes comics qualifies!

Choose your favorite book character, collect every single reference to what they wear and whether the author has done any sketches, and do your best to match whatever was said. It may involve also knowing the culture of a story: it is futuristic where they wear jumpsuits, or lots of zippers or Velcro or buckles? Or is it more medieval where they use simple clothing styles of tunics and trousers? Make sure the final design fits the culture. However, unless it is a truly well known book character, you often don't get the same recognition factor that gives many costumers a "buzz."

(Continued on Page 4)



