THE ICG NEWSLETTER
PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COSTUMERS' GUILD, INC.
A 501(C)(3) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

VOLUME X, ISSUE 1 - JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2011

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.

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FROM THE EDITOR
The ICG board has authorized an online edition as well as a printed edition of the newsletter. Your newsletter delivery preference is part of your ICG membership record. If you want to change or verify your delivery preference, contact your local chapter. The newsletter editor relies on these records to determine who receives a print edition.

Members who have an e-mail address on record will be notified when a new online edition is available. Those who receive the print edition are also welcome to experience the online edition by going to http://www.costume.org/currentnewsletter.

When prompted, enter the user name “newsletter” and the issue password “renovation.”

Many back issues of the ICG newsletter are available online for the entire costuming community to enjoy. Contact the newsletter editor to report problems or comment on the newsletter. If your postal or e-mail address changes, notify your local chapter promptly, or send your updated information to icg-membership-corrections@costume.org. Returned copies of the print edition cannot be re-mailed.

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................................... Susan Toker (assistant)
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Parliamentarian ............... Pierre Pettinger .......... icg-parliamentarian@costume.org

ICG MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS
Your ICG membership benefits include voting rights and a subscription to this newsletter. Chapters that fail to report their members and submit their dues run the risk of being deactivated. Members of deactivated chapters who wish to participate in activities as ICG members must join an active chapter of the ICG.

ICG VIA EMAIL OR THE INTERNET
• ICG WebSite: http://www.costume.org/
• Yahoo! Groups:
  • ICG-D@yahoogroups.com ............ General Discussion
  • ICG-BOD@yahoogroups.com ........ Board and Officers Discussion
  • ICG-TW@yahoogroups.com .......... Tech and Web Discussion
  • ICG-Pub@yahoogroups.com .......... Publication Discussion

ICG-D is open to everyone, including non-members. Everyone can read message archives of the other groups, but only invited members can submit messages.

ICG NEWSLETTER
International Costumers' Guild, Inc. Newsletter January/February 2011 Issue – Published bimonthly as a benefit for its members. It is delivered to all members in good standing with the ICG. Subscription is included with ICG membership.

International Costumers' Guild, Inc.
c/o Patrick J. O’Connor, Editor
6321 W Raven Street
Chicago IL 60646-3615

ICG EDITORIAL BOARD 2011:
Betsy Delaney, Philip Gust, Carole Parker, Jeanine Swick and Randall Whitlock.
HARDCOPY SUBMISSIONS (IF ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY)
Send by snail mail to the ICG Newsletter address previously listed. We reserve the right to retain all hard copy unless accompanied by a SASE.

PUBLICATION SPECIFICATIONS/ADVERTISING
Deadline to receive materials or advertising for print is the FIFTEENTH of the month prior to publication:
- Issue 1 – January/February Deadline – 15 December
- Issue 2 – March/April Deadline – 15 February
- Issue 3 – May/June Deadline – 15 April
- Issue 4 – July/August Deadline – 15 June
- Issue 5 – September/October Deadline – 15 August
- Issue 6 – November/December Deadline – 15 October

ADVERTISING RATES
Rates are per issue. Please make payment to the ICG, Inc. and send with advertising copy to the ICG Newsletter Editor. Ads received without payment will not be published. Advertising revenues help defray the cost of mailing the newsletter. Additional proceeds benefit the International Costumers’ Guild, Inc.

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<th>AD SIZE</th>
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ICG CHAPTERS:

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C/O Henry Osier Re: ACG
2705 N. Shepard Ave. Milwaukee, WI 53211
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ICG Board Representative: Henry Osier

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16619 Larch Way, Apartment M-201
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ICG Board Representative: Julie Zetterberg

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ICG Board Representative: Sue Edmunds

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http://groups.yahoo.com/group/macscostume/
ICG Board Representative: Stacey Lee Feldmann

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CHICAGOLAND COSTUMERS’ GUILD-PRESIDENT’S CHALLENGE:
Patrick O’Connor
This year at the June 2010 meeting, Sue Edmunds, the CCG President, proposed the following competition:

Chicagoland Costumers’ Guild Challenge:

1) At the next CCG meeting (7/17/10) all participants in the challenge must bring 10 patterns from their current pattern collection (if you do not own 10 you can bring less but you must bring at least 4 to qualify). From those patterns 3 will be randomly selected for the challenge.

2) Using those 3 patterns and any supplies you already own or can trade for, you must make a costume to wear to the CCG New Year’s Eve party, where we will vote for the best costume and award a trophy (“the Scroungie”) to the winner. Party location TBA.

3) Some portion of each of the 3 patterns must be used in the final costume, but you can use or draft any additional patterns to supplement the costume as long as no money is spent. The winner will be selected by secret ballot by all people attending the New Year’s Eve party who want to vote. Participants cannot vote for themselves, but can vote for other costumes.

This challenge is an exercise in creativity & thrift, so one of the most important things to remember is you cannot spend any money on this costume. You must construct it from supplies you already have or can trade for. You can trade in any manner you would like; physical materials, findings, thread, services, skills etc. Just no $.

Six members of the CCG brought patterns to the July meeting. Each of us found ourselves with combinations—at least some of us with different genre’s and different centuries to merge into one (coherent?) whole. ‘Challenege’ was to find a unifying theme.

...And we were off to the races.
Contestants at the January 2 competition were Sue Edmonds, Sue Finkle, Leah O’Connor, Patrick O’Connor and Renata O’Connor-Rose. Other members present included Lauren Yeager, Carol Mitchell, Michele Jay Solomon, Joel Finkle and Ellen Tudor.

Sue Edmonds’ costume, a combination of three different eras, was dubbed ‘Ottoman Steampunk,’ by those present. Sue Finkle’s blue outfit was an airship stewardess costume, Leah O’Connor’s was a Victorian gown with one 18th-century element in the skirt, Patrick O’Connor’s combined the 1960’s, 1860’s and 1360’s as the ‘Ghost of ‘60s Past’ and Renata O’Connor’s costume reconstructed David Tennant’s Doctor Who with elements of his assistant Donna...
**TREASURER'S REPORTS:**
This report was received from the Treasurer at the Newsletter Editor's office on January 4, 2011

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**
Accrual Basis as of (Dec 31, 2010)

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**SURPLUS AND LOSS BUDGET VS. ACTUAL**
Accrual Basis (Jan 2010) through (Dec 2010)

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LIGHTS, COSTUME, ACTION—PART 1
by P. J. O’Connor, based on a panel done at Windycon 37, November, 2010

So, you want to make a costume that has lights, maybe even switching and special lighting effects. Where do you start?

LEDs:
If you want to decorate your costume like a Christmas tree, one place to start is with a string of Christmas lights. Don’t think in terms of the Christmas lights that plug into the wall; you don’t want anything on your skin that can accidentally include you in a circuit with 115 volts; that can lead to injury or death. You don’t want a costume that requires an extension cord, either, but the main factor in choice of types of lights should be safety. Strings of Christmas lights that can be bought at a discount in January will do just as well as custom-made lighting systems, for a lot of applications, but start by looking for solid-state LED (light-emitting diode) lights that can be operated off a battery pack. For red or yellow LED lights, two ½ volt AA or button cells will provide enough voltage to run the lights. More voltage is needed for colors like green and blue, or ‘white’ LEDs (which are really blue LEDs with a phosphor like that in a fluorescent lamp). Those require three ½ volt cells to light them, so your choice of colors can affect the weight of the battery pack. You can find Christmas-light packages that run off a battery pack at a number of places on the internet.

Suppose your costume does not need as many lights as the shortest string of Christmas lights you can buy. Is there a way to safely shorten the string of lights? Battery-pack lights are generally wired like a railroad track (a parallel circuit), with the two rails being a positive and a negative wire attached to the battery holder, and the ‘ties’ connecting one track to the other being the LED’s.

SAFETY: You can sever the positive and negative leads (wires), cutting off the unwanted LEDs so you can discard the ones no longer attached to the battery pack (—but don’t cut the wire while the battery pack is turned on!). One important consideration is to not leave exposed copper wire where it can touch other wires or your skin. A drop of epoxy glue on each cut end can insulate it against this possibility.

This is all fine if you can find lights that have the colors you want, and are spaced apart as far as the lights of a Christmas-light string. But what if you want something else? Suppose you just want one or two lights, maybe different colors, and spaced far apart on the costume? Then, you need to do your own custom wiring, and that means you need to know more about these lights than just where to buy a string out of Christmas surplus.

Every light is part of a circuit. Electrical charge circulates around a loop going from the battery to the light, and back to the battery. With LED lights, in addition to the battery, the wires and the light, there must be a component called a resistor somewhere in the path to limit the current to a safe value. The easiest way to do this is to connect the resistor to one terminal of the LED, and consider the combination as your ‘lamp.’

Here is a picture of an LED by itself and with a resistor added:

Typical resistor values are a few hundred ohms. For a two hundred twenty ohm resistor (which is a good value for most LEDs) the three color stripes (seen in the diagram) are red, red and brown.

To complete the wiring, you need to connect a wire from the Positive end of the battery pack to the ANODE end of the ‘lamp’ and a wire from the Negative end of the battery pack to the resistor on the CATHODE end of the lamp, as shown below: Note: LED’s are polarity-sensitive. That means there is only one direction current will go through the lamp to light it up. If you do it wrong, reverse the connections from the battery and see if the lamp lights up. The CATHODE end is supposed to be identified by a flattened section on the flange around the base of the LED, as shown in the diagram.

The best way of connecting the resistor to the LED is to solder them together. A soldering iron is like the hot-glue-gun of electronics. It will make properly-conducting connections that join conductors to one another with a metal having a lower melting point than the wires. Rather than going into detail, let’s suppose you have learned to use a soldering iron and electrical solder to join electrical conductors, and you have completed the connection of your light to the battery wires. It should look like this:

SAFETY: In case you wondered how you are going to electrocute yourself with the voltage from those three AA or button cells, you can’t. If you tried to electrocute yourself with this voltage (less than five volts) you wouldn’t even feel it. That’s not the hazard. You can get along with five volts, but you can also get a short (a short circuit). If, for instance, the exposed metal sticking out of the positive (red) wire were to touch the exposed metal sticking out of the negative (black) wire, the battery would put thousands of times more current through those wires than they would normally carry to and from the LED. The wires would then get super-hot, and might burn through your fabric, your accessories, and YOU—
So, there's all this exposed metal, from where the red and black wires were stripped to solder to the lamp, (for costuming, 36-gauge stranded wire will allow a desired amount of flexibility in the wiring) and where the resistor and LED contacts were soldered together. All of these exposed pieces of metal are an accident waiting to happen. To protect these connections against banging into something that isn't supposed to be connected to electricity, slide pieces of heat-shrink insulating tubing over the exposed connections.

Once it is heated with a hot air gun (or by holding it over the hot end of the soldering iron and letting the rising heat force it to shrink) all the metal will be sealed off from outside and safe to attach to something that will be worn.

SOURCES: Battery-operated Christmas LED light strings:
Amazon.com
Sears.com
Christmaslightsetc.com

CHAPTER FOCUS - Chicagoland Costumers' Guild
P. J. O'Connor, CCG

Late in August, I interviewed Carol Mitchell--long-time costumer and one of the people who was in 'at the start' of the Chicagoland Costumers' Guild, about how it all got started.

The Chicagoland Costumers' Guild--otherwise (and originally) known as the "Masters of Bravado," (abbreviated as "da M.O.B.") were first accepted into the International Costumers' Guild as a chapter, after they applied at Costume-Con 16 (1998), in Saint Louis. Rumor has it that three members (dressed as mobsters and a gun moll) brought the application to the Board of Directors with the names of 27 members, and advice that they "Admit us, and nobody gets hurt :-)"

The M.O.B. has been meeting since 1997 (?) once every month. Their first meeting was a day-long drop-in event (in costume!) on Halloween of that year at the house of Robert King, costumer in the 'furry' genre and one of the founders of Midwest Furfest. More than forty people dropped in, and a number decided to join the new Guild. The M.O.B. met monthly and had a newsletter called, at least for part of its life, "The Hit List."

SOURCES: 'Loose' LEDs, heat-shrink tubing and components:
Superbrightleds.com
Sciplus.com
Radioshack.com
Mouser.com
Digikei.com

FIBER OPTICS:
If the idea of running wires alongside your skin still bothers you (and we realize mistakes happen, now and then!) there is another way to get light where you want it without wires that might turn hot in the event of a short, running through your fabric or under the lining. Plastic and fiberglass strands called optical fibers can be used to carry light around corners. At the point where the fiber is cut off, the light becomes visible as a bright point of light at the end of the fiber. To make a more extended or spread-out point of light, 'rough up' the end of the fiber with sandpaper or an emery board. An LED source of light (or even a flashlight in a pocket) can be fastened to one end of a fiber with a clear cement, so light goes into one end of the fibers, then wound through the fabric of the costume and brought out where the point of lights are supposed to show up. This way, light can be brought several feet away from the LED or other lamp that is the source, and the light appears at the far end of the fiber.

NEXT ISSUE: More about Fiber Optics, plus switching and sequencing of LED lights.

CCG Members who applied at CC-16 looked around, said, "We can do this!"
Working on programming at Chicon 2000 (Chicon 6) World Science-Fiction Convention further convinced Carol Mitchell that having a Costume-Con in Chicago--sponsored by the CCG--was 'do-able.'
Within a few years, Costume-Con 21 (2003) was held in Chicago. Carol Mitchell and Henry Osier were co-chairs. Carol is one of the founding parents of the M.O.B. (and hence, of the CCG) and Henry--as most of us know--later founded the Armed Costumers' Guild (ACG) chapter and was chair of CC-28 (May 2010) in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
Presently the number of members in the CCG has varied between the middle twenties and low thirties for the past few years. Our group is active supervising masquerades and competing in local conventions such as Windycon, Capricon, Duckon, Tardis and Cyphan, in the Chicagoland area, as well as appearing, competing, and presenting our "Cement Overshoes Award" to participants in international conventions such as Costume-con and the World Science Fiction Conventions (Worldcons).

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**FEATURED ICG CHAPTER WEBSITE:**
The website of the Silicon Web Costumers' Guild (SiW) www.siwcostumers.org is featured in this issue. SiW is one of several Chapters (another example is the Armed Costumers' Guild) that don't embrace a specific geographic region of service. My slightly rusty Latin (last used before Vatican II) tells me that include a 'members' page with profiles and pictures of SiW members who chose to be listed, a 'costuming links' page that connects to other related organizations and a page for the SiW Newsletters, including current and back issues. The current issue requires a password and login to open, as does the online ICG Newsletter. Back issues are freely available to all under a Creative Commons License. The newsletter section includes searchable tables of contents, author and subject indexes.

"The Spider Costumes Virtually Everywhere," on their web logo. The main page of the website indicated its nonprofit status and welcomes those who are interested in "the making, wearing and display of costume." Founded in 2003 for costumers interested in using Internet capabilities, the website provides the capability to sign up for the chapter newsgroup, webmail, an online costuming magazine, The Virtual Costumer, and other networking tools.

An 'organization' page identifies the officers, with links to their personal listings on the membership page. Links are provided to the Bylaws and Responsibilities pages that delineate the rules of the Chapter. Also under the 'organization' page is a description of the Chapter's 'Dreamcatcher' award, and who has won it in the past. This award for creative use of technology in costuming is given at major conventions. Other pages The Membership page includes a map of where the members come from within the United States. California has the Silicon Valley, and is apparently more web-enabled, with 43 members, compared to the next most populous state (Arizona) with three members. As with the Armed Costumers' Guild (not geographically defined, but having more members in Wisconsin) there does appear to be a regional 'center' to this non-region-defined chapter, but members clearly come from all over the map. (Except Canada; where are you web-enabled costumers from the Provinces, eh?)

---P. J. O'Connor
ICG ARCHIVES, ARTICLE 3

Bruce and Nora Mai

Now that you know the history of the Pat and Peggy Kennedy Memorial Library (aka “The Archives”), and not everyone has met us, an introduction to the core Archives team is in order.

Pierre Pettinger: Pierre and his wife, Sandy, have been costuming for over 25 years. Pierre has been the ICG President, and still acts as the Guild Parliamentarian. Pierre was an informal historian practically from the beginning of their costuming hobby. They had been privately collecting photos and video for many years, so Pierre was the logical choice to take over the Archives from Carl Mami when he stepped down. The Library is being held and is in the process of being organized in their house in his spare time. One of his biggest jobs is gathering data on masquerades. Eventually, the hope is to have some sort of searchable database. Currently, he is adding some of that data to the photos that are being uploaded to the International Costumers Gallery.

Bruce Mai: Costuming since 1984, he and Nora met Pierre and Sandy through the old CostumeApa. Their eyes were really opened by the Pettinger’s personal collection of photos and videotapes. He was the head of the committee for investigating how to make the Library more available to ICG members, which involves putting a good portion of it on line. He also has been working to digitize the masquerade videotapes and making themed video programs of costume presentations pulled from the video library. When not doing that, he’s helping Nora with photo digitizing.

Nora Mai: Nora got her start in costuming at the age of 17, when she began making her own Middle-Eastern Dance costumes. She’s been a photographer since she was a child. Like Pierre, Nora served as the ICG President, from 2005 - 2008. She’s also been responsible for a number of promotional ideas for the Gallery. She’s why the IC Gallery has a Facebook page, with 300+ followers. She has taken the bulk of the task of digitizing the paper media photos that have been donated or loaned to the Library along with the digital images which have been donated, and then inventorying them.

Acquiring, digitizing and inventorying all the photos and video is a daunting task. It will be years before it’s up to a point where all we’re doing is acquiring new material. But we all have a keen desire to share our hobby’s history with as many people as possible, and to make our community more aware of each other in regions beyond their own.

We have a growing part-time support team who are helping us with some of the grunt work such as data entry on the Gallery. We can always use more volunteers, though.

Next time: A look behind the scenes at what we’re doing to make sure the images of our hobby are preserved for posterity.

Recent Newsletter and Ezine Updates

CACTUS NEEDLES, JANUARY 2011

Southwest Costumers’ Guild (SWCG)

The most recent issue includes news of chapter events, local and regional costuming events. This issue includes an article on Dillinger Days at the Hotel Congress. Sounds like something the Chicago Guild should have done...

Cactus Needles is published monthly, and is available to SWCG members and the entire costuming community upon publication.

http://www.southwestcostumersguild.org/

THE VIRTUAL COSTUMER, NOVEMBER 2010

Silicon Web Costumers’ Guild (SiW)

This issue concentrates on Victorian, Edwardian, Dickensian and other things 19th-centuryish. VC is published quarterly. The “community issue” is available free to the entire costuming community.

SiW members can access issues 3 months in advance.

http://www.siwcostumers.org/vc_current-issue.html

YIPE! ISSUE 2, 8, DECEMBER 2010

A privately published costuming ezine.

This month:

• Letter from the Editor
• All I Want for Christmas is my Jet Pack
• All I Want for Christmas is my own Ray Gun
• All I Want for Christmas is a Better Hand
• Letter from the Other Editor
• A Question for 10 Costumers
• Letters for Santa

Yipe! is a monthly, costume-dedicated e-fanzine edited by ICG member Kevin Roche and Jason Shachat, with staff photographer and ICG member Andrew Trembley. With contributions from an international assortment of costumers, photographers, and writers. Yipe! is available free to the entire costuming community upon publication, in high- and low-resolution editions.

http://www.yipezine.com/

Send community-accessible newsletter updates to icg-newsletter@costume.org.