

International Costumer

Volume XVIII Issue 2

Mar - Apr 2019



"Magic Stars Light" from Pixabay.com

President's Message

By Marianne Legume



"Survivor and Voter" Photography by Jason Smith.

Another year has passed and we come again to Costume-Con only a few days away. This year has been one with a lot of big changes for me personally, from losing loved ones to finally facing my depression and getting help. This community has been a constant source of love, fellowship, and support, and I am truly grateful for the members of the ICG. This is the last President's address of the year before elections are held at our annual member meeting and elections. Many individuals have served the ICG and costuming community through the past year, and I'm proud of the growth we've achieved. Be sure to thank your chapter's officers for all the work they put into keeping this

organization running. It's the 'boots on the ground' that have the lion's share of the responsibility in making our organization a success and it is always wonderful to see reports and posts on facebook about what everyone is up to.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at Costume-Con. I'm sure everyone will be thrilled to hear that the member (and earlier BoD) meeting will be held an hour later than it has been in the past. While I'll miss those who can't make it this year, be mindful that you can still exercise your vote by proxy. If there are any issues you would like addressed in the agenda, please contact me with the details!

Yours in Costuming,
Marianne Pease
ICG President

Co-Editor's Message

By Melina Chestley

As many of you are probably aware, Costume-Con is coming up quickly. A little too quickly for my personal costuming deadlines but such is the way of deadlines.

For those unable to attend Costume-Con and who still wish to have their voice heard, the proxy ballot is found at the end of this issue. Please print it and send it along with your designated proxy.

Thank you to this issue's contributor's; Anne Davenport and Spaz (with help from the Sick Pups).

Spaz Presents¹ A Costumer's Alphabet!

A is for Armor, or Aiguillettes, or Authenticity.²

B is for Best in Show, or Bustle, or Bodkin, or Blackwork.

C is for Costume, or Corset

D is for Documentation, or Dress Form.

E is for Elastic, or Eyelets, or Epaulette, or Embroidery.

F is for Farthingale, or Fabric.

G is for Gusset, or Glue, or Glitz.

H is for Hot Glue, or Horsehair Braid.

I is for Imagination, or Illusion.

J is for Jerkin, or Judges.

K is for Knitting, or Knife.

L is for Lace, or Leather.

M is for Makeup, or Masquerade, or Muslin.

N is for Needles, or Ninja.

O is for Organza, or Ornamentation.

P is Pattern, or Presentation.

Q is for Quilting, or Quality.

R is for Research, or Ribbon.

S is for Steampunk, or Scissors.

T is for Thread, or Tech.

U is for Undergarments.

V is for Velvet, or Velcro.

W is for Workmanship, or Wool.

X if for X-acto knife.

Y is for Yardage, or Yoke.

Z is for Zipper, or Zigzag.

1. Translated into human by several Sick Pups at the June 2018 meeting of the New Jersey-New York Costumers' Guild.
2. Spaz tended to dither a lot, so most letters have more than one word.

ON TAKING UP KNITTING

Part 1

by A.R. Davenport

Knitting is amazingly simple. If people in the Bronze Age had known about knitting, they would have done it. All you need is two smooth pointy sticks and some fiber spun into yarn. But it came along remarkably late with the first confirmed example of knitting from medieval Egypt.*

Being so simple, knitting (and crochet, but that's for another time) has been one of those craft skills that I've wanted to have in my costumer's arsenal. Various things have gotten in the way of really devoting the time needed to gain at least some proficiency, but the #1 reason is that I did not have any particular project that I wanted knitted, other than the most basic and simple Doctor Who scarf some 30+ years ago.

However, some projects that I want to do have turned up:

- a hat
- glasses case

- leggings (tailored to fit my legs)
- wrist bands and arm bracers
- a top (tailored to my unique body shape)
- costume accessories with a lot of woven texture on the surface that photographs so much better than simple fabric

So, finally I have the incentive to acquire those knitting skills that I've always thought would be nice to have – and this kind of motivation is really the first and most essential thing to have in hand when taking up knitting in the first place.

Here is a list of tips on learning how to knit (and I think a lot of these would apply just as well to learning how to crochet).

- Good resources on the basics of knitting are very easy to find
- Printed book/magazine/pamphlet knitting instructions and references are very helpful
- Go green. Start by making dish cloths
- Tension, tension, tension
- Make other square things to work on proficiency
- You will make mistakes; learn what they look like
- Learn how to read knitting instructions

- Knitting goes reasonably well with re-watching movies and binge-watching TV shows

Good Resources on the Basics of Knitting are Very Easy to Find.

Any bookshelf at a craft store (especially one selling yarn and knitting tools) will be loaded with magazines and pamphlets with clear, detailed and illustrated instructions on the basics:

- Yarns and needle sizes and choices
- Casting on (there are multiple ways to do it)
- How to Knit
- How to Purl
- Increasing and Decreasing Stitches in the Work (again, multiple types of these)
- Casting Off (there are multiple ways to do it, some stretch-ier than others)

Books with hundreds of different knitting stitches ('cause it's not just about knit and purl stitches) are available from booksellers online for less than \$20. And if you don't want to invest too much and you have an internet connection, go to youtube. Knitters with beautifully manicured hands will demonstrate all of the basics for you. Plus, more interesting and advanced stitches and projects when you're ready for them.

Some stitches don't even look like knitting; they look like textured woven cloth, or are extra plush or extra stretchy, or are as lacy as crochet. It's nice to know that there is a huge variety of choices to move on to while slugging your way through the basics.

Other basics that you'll want to work on to complete a project:

- Blocking, wetting work, stretching it out to dry so it is the right shape
- Edge stitches (especially for multiple piece projects that will have to be sewn, knitted or crocheted together)

These are some basic tools that you want to have around when working on knitting projects (or taking it somewhere when you travel):

- Knitting needles (either long or circular, or both)
- Solid tips for the needles, because they will otherwise poke through everything (I made mine out of folded-over leather scraps)
- Yarn of choice
- Snippers for cutting yarn
- Tapestry needle (for weaving in the yarn tails into the work, or sewing knitted pieces together)
- Crochet hook (for catching mistakes and missed loops when they inevitably happen)

- Bag with pockets to put tools and projects in (you might want to wait on knitting this bag until you gain proficiency)



Circular needles are supposed to be acceptable to TSA (airport security) for taking knitting projects in carry-on luggage, because they're not going to let you take long, pointy metal needles with you into the cabin.

Printed Book/Magazine/Pamphlet Knitting Instructions and References are Very Helpful

Videos are great, but sometimes someone else is using the computer. Or the WiFi is down, or the connection is slow. Or something else. It is just handy to have that non-electronic reference to look at when you have a brain-freeze and forget how to make a slip knot or decrease or cast off.

In any tactile craft like knitting, the hands remember what to do better than the brain

does, but sometimes it's nice to give the brain a little prompt to understand how the knitting works and improve enough to start improvising and doing more creative stuff.

Go Green; Start by Making Dish Cloths

They're easy to make, patterns are easy to find (printed or online video) and even if the final result is more trapezoidal than square, it's fine; they're dish cloths. I recommend the Peaches & Cream cotton string. It's inexpensive, absorbent and the string is dense and hard to accidentally split (poke your needle into the middle of a string instead of under it). I get 2-3 dish cloths out of each ball of string, depending on how big they are.



Tension, Tension, Tension

In knitting, the yarn is looped around one needle that is used to pull it through a loop (stitch) on the other needle. The yarn that is pulled through becomes the new loop, or stitch. Keeping the right tension in the looping yarn is everything when making new stitches. There are many ways of doing it and a couple are:

- Holding yarn between 2 fingers to loop with
- Winding yarn around fingers to keep tension during knitting

Everyone has different hands and different techniques. This is where online videos can be especially helpful. Keeping a comfortable tension in the yarn while minimizing motion is the key to knitting faster and with more even stitches. Practicing is the only way to:

- get proficient
- discover the best way (for you) for keeping tension in the looping yarn
- enjoy your knitting more.

Make other square things to work on proficiency

For me, I found a blanket to make. It is made up of squares to be pieced together. Each square uses different knitting stitches along with edge, cast-on, bind-off stitches to practice with. It will use up about 12 skeins of yarn, but that's what it takes to get good enough to move on to more complex things.



(End of part one. Part two will appear in the next issue)

This Proxy Statement is for ICG members who will not be attending the Annual Meeting at Costume-Con. If you want to vote, print and complete the form and give it to someone who will be attending. You must sign this form for it to be valid.

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International Costumers' Guild 2019 Annual Meeting Proxy Assignment Form

On this _____ day of _____, 20____, I, _____, assign my vote to and authorize the below named member of the International Costumers' Guild, belonging to _____ Chapter, to represent me in all business coming before the 20____ Annual Meeting of the International Costumers' Guild.

Assignee Name*: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

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Assigner Name**: _____

Address: _____

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Signature: _____

*Who you are authorizing to vote on your behalf.

**Your name

About the ICG

Membership Benefits

ICG membership benefits include participation in local Chapters and in Special Interest Groups, voting rights, eligibility for grants, online forums, learning and volunteer opportunities, and the International Costumer.

ICG Online

Visit the ICG website for current information and resources:

<http://www.costume.org/>

Join us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/internationalcostumers>

Join the ICG-D Yahoo! group for lively discussions on costuming-related topics:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/icg-d>

Amazon Smile link:

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/52-1656188>

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The Marty Gear Costuming Arts and Sciences Fund

The Marty Gear Costuming Arts and Sciences Fund provides grants for projects and activities that promote the art and science of costuming.

For information on how to apply for a grant, please visit

<http://www.costume.org/grants/grants.html>

The International Costumer

The *International Costumer* newsletter is published bi-monthly by the ICG. The current issue is for members only. Back issues are freely available to the costuming community on the ICG website.

Online Submissions

We welcome short costuming articles, book reviews, event reports, and news items. Submit your copy as rtf, doc, docx or txt files to the International Costumer editor: icg-newsletter@costume.org. All graphics formats are accepted.

Contacting the Editor

Please contact the editor to report problems, or to offer comments and suggestions: icg-newsletter@costume.org.

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