

# The International Costumer

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The newsletter of the International Costumers' Guild, Inc.

*Vol XXV Issue 2 - May 2026*



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## ICG Officers Elected at 2026 Annual Meeting

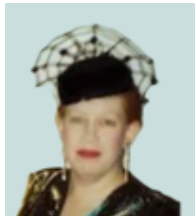
By Philip Gust

At the 2026 ICG Annual Meeting, a slate of officers was elected to serve for the 2026-2027 term. The meeting was held virtually on April 18, 2026 via ICG's Zoom corporate account. VP Leslie Johnston stood as President, replacing outgoing President Kevin Roche. Nora Mai agreed to stand as VP at the meeting. Treasurer Jeanine Swick and Recording/Corresponding Secretary Anne Davenport agreed to stand in their current roles. The slate of officers was approved unanimously at the meeting.

Here is information about the 2026-2027 elected officers.



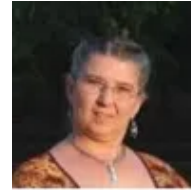
**Leslie Johnston – President** (*New Jersey – New York Costumes Guild*) is the Director of Digital Preservation at the U.S. National Archives. (NARA). Leslie has been costuming since the 1970s, making both fantasy and historical competition and hall costumes. She has won many awards at many masquerades over the years, including at Balticon, BayCon, Costume-Con, Westercon, and Worldcon. She loves to learn new techniques with every costume she builds, and particularly enjoys working with unusual materials. She is the Webmaster of the ICG Pat and Peggy Kennedy Memorial Archives, and the 2022 recipient of the ICG Lifetime Achievement Award.



**Nora Mai – Vice President** (*St. Louis Costumes Guild*) has previously served as ICG Vice President and ICG President. She was the founding President of the St. Louis Costumes Guild and has held SLCG offices for over 30 years. She has been costuming for over five decades with experience in Historical and SF&F,

and mostly creates original designs. She and her husband Bruce received the ICG Lifetime Achievement Award in 2010. She currently works as the primary photo archivist for the ICG Archives.

**Jeanine Swick – Treasurer** (*Silicon Web Costumers' Guild*) is ICG Treasurer and former SiW Secretary. Her grandmothers and mother taught her to make clothes for dolls and school at an early age. In



Home-Ec, she made 3 piece suits while others figured out 3 piece patterns. She costumed in high school for theater, and later for her own teens. Her work is “period inspired” rather than historically accurate, incorporating her own creativity. She sells at regional renfaires, cons, SCA, and belly dance events. Jeanine is the 2024 recipient of the ICG Lifetime Achievement Award.



**Anne Davenport – Corresponding and Recording Secretary** (*Silicon Web Costumers' Guild*) has been costuming for 40 years since sewing and wearing a Starfleet uniform for Senior Class Dress-up Day in high school. Most of her costuming energies are aimed at convention hall costuming, but she also participates in Masquerades at the Master level from Costume-Cons to Worldcons. She is a long-time member of the Rebel Legion (a Star Wars costuming group), and has been a member of the ICG for at least twice as long.

## Steward Hartman Receives 2026 ICG Lifetime Achievement Award

By Kevin Roche



On April 18, 2026, ICG President Kevin Roche presented the ICG's highest honor, the ICG Lifetime Achievement Award, to Steward Hartman. The award was announced during the ICG 2026 Annual Meeting.

The award is made in recognition of the role he's has played for nearly three decades in build an extraordinary visual record of our competitions, displays, and hall costumes through his costume photography, and

directing the halftime photo-run at costuming conventions including Costume-Cons with calm efficiency so that every costumer receives the attention they deserve while keeping the show moving smoothly.

View [his LAA award page](#) to learn more about him and watch the award announcement video.

Below is the text of Kevin Roche's announcement.

*Hello! I'm Kevin Roche, President of the International Costumers' Guild.*

*One of the unique responsibilities and privileges of being president of the ICG is administering the selection process for and presentation of the International Costumers Guild Lifetime Achievement Award.*

*The Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes a body of achievement in the costuming art and service to the costuming community. Candidates for the award:*

- *Shall have been active in the costuming community for at least 10 years.*
- *Shall have achieved significant recognition for their costuming skills, which may be in the form of, but not restricted to, competitive awards, professional accomplishments, teaching of skills, and/or media recognition.*
- *Shall have made significant contributions in service to the costuming community.*

*Any ICG member, chapter or special interest group in good standing may nominate candidates; the selection is done by the Chapter Presidents and elected ICG officers via secret ballot administered by the President.*

*This year we, again, had several deserving nominees, and it is my privilege tonight to announce the 2026 recipient.*

*Our artform is profoundly ephemeral, and much of its history would vanish without the dedicated members of our community who capture it for posterity. Among those invaluable documentarians, few have contributed as consistently and generously as the recipient of the 2026 ICG Lifetime Achievement Award.*

*For nearly three decades, they has been a constant presence at Costume-Con, quietly and meticulously recording the full breadth of our creativity. Beginning in the era of film—when they still managed to produce hundreds of images each year—and continuing through the transition to digital photography, our honoree has built an extraordinary visual record of our competitions, displays, and hall costumes. Their coverage is both comprehensive and thoughtful: thousands of images from each event, with dozens of detail shots capturing the craftsmanship of a single entry. And something uniquely precious to the Archives: reliable costumer identification, thanks to their practice of photographing each participant's badge.*

*Beyond these archival contributions, our honoree is frequently the familiar figure directing a halftime photo-run with calm efficiency so that every costumer receives the attention they deserve while keeping the show moving smoothly.*

*This skill, dedication, and collaborative spirit led to this icon being made the official ICG Archive Photographer beginning with Costume-Con 32—a role he has fulfilled with distinction ever since. His work preserves not only our images, but our history.*

*For this, and for his decades of service to the community, it is my honor and privilege to announce that the recipient of the 2026 International Costumers' Guild Lifetime Achievement Award is Steward Hartman.*

## **Miss Lizzy at TeslaCon 2025**

By Lisa Ashton and Leslie Johnston

*Report by Lisa Ashton, President and Founder, Miss Lizzy's Traveling Historical Fashion Show, a Special Interest Group of the ICG. Photos by Leslie Johnston*

With Costume-Con currently off the schedule, there seemed no venue to exhibit or share any of Miss Lizzy's wonderful

acquisitions, when there have been many in years past! So, we were extremely fortunate to be offered an opportunity last fall!



Figure 1: Eduardo and Sarah Questell at the Ball

If you were at the 2026 International Costumers' Guild Annual Meeting, you will have heard a bit about TeslaCon. Teslacon is an immersive steampunk convention held in late fall in Madison, Wisconsin, with a different theme annually and an associated Victorian year. The 2025 theme was "The Tear of Odin" (Norwegian traditions) and its year was 1895.

Eric Larson, who runs the con, offered a large parlor room to run a Costume-Con program and Archives track, and, even with very little lead time, we were able to design a costume topic schedule. The opening program item on Friday morning of the con was "Miss Lizzy's presents a Look at Authentic Victorian Garments and Accessories." I had about a month to promote it, and I did on my own Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/MissLizzysTravelingHistoricalFashionShow>) and in the group for people who participate in the con: "TeslaCon Fans" (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/teslaconfans>).

I brought two large bins and several small boxes of items, although unfortunately I was unable to bring my small mannequin, as there just wasn't enough room in the van! But we got up to the room an hour early and got everything unpacked and displayed, and then folks started arriving!

I brought dresses from the early 1860's through about 1910, of all kinds of fabric, from silk dresses of the American Civil War era to a wool plaid 1890's bodice with some gold soutache trim and an 1890's plush velvet bodice with vast amounts of beadwork and beaded fringe. There was wool, linen, silk and cottons. I tried to include many saturated bright colors and patterns of fabric, as well as items with different types of fabric manipulation and embellishment. People could examine the insides of bodices and how the stays were fastened in, see how repairs were made.



Figure 2: Bodices from the late 1880s (left), and the mid-1890s (right)

People were very enthusiastic about examining authentic Victorian clothing. We talked about how Victorian ladies modified and recycled their dresses to stay current with changing fashions, and how things were repaired.

I even brought my actual whalebone stays and a crinoline! Accessories included fans, beaded reticules, hats, gloves, hosiery, a man's plush velvet collar case with collars, and more.



Figure 3: Cage Crinoline, likely 1870s

I brought an 1870's hand-sewn quilt and talked about how an antique patchwork quilt provides a fabric reference library of a specific time. I brought Victorian autograph albums and photos, and we talked about leisure pursuits. We talked about sewing techniques of the time, how fabric was measured and sold. Everyone took lots of photos of the outside and the inside of garments.



Figure 4: 1870s Crazy Quilt

I also brought one of my antique sample books of trim from the 1870's, one of my treasures and rare, so everyone got a look at the pages of different types and colors of clothing and home furnishing trims available then.



Figure 5: Sample Book of 1870s Trims

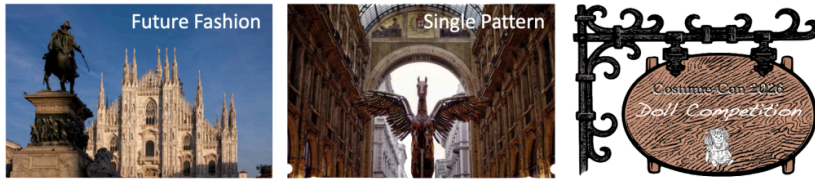


Figure 6: Miss Lizzy, aka Lisa Ashton

All gratitude to Leslie Johnston and Karen Schnaubelt for helping with it all and answering questions. Next year for Teslacon, with longer to plan, I hope to bring many more and different items, and get the mannequin in a bigger van so I can display a dress on it! We'll be part of the "Costume-Con at Teslacon" programming track.

## Costume-Con 2026 Virtual Competitions

By Bruce Mai, Nora Mai, Pierre Pettinger, Sandy Pettinger, Kathe Gust and Philip Gust



Three virtual competitions took place on the evening of April 18, 2026, including the Single Pattern contest, the Future Fashion Design competition and Show, and the Doll competition. This was the second year for the virtual Single Pattern contest and the Future Fashion competitions, and the first year for the Doll competition. These events are normally held at Costume-Con, but since it was not held this year or last, the competition directors decided to put them on virtually using Zoom. Service Mark holder Karen Schnaubelt kindly allowed the competitions to use the Costume-Con name in recognition of their long association with Costume-Con.

The theme for the Costume-Con 2026 virtual competitions was Milan, Italy. According to Future Fashion competition co-chair Pierre Pettinger, the theme celebrates the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milan. Milan is also the home of high fashion, magnificent architecture, and beautiful art. As always, entries in the competitions were not restricted to the overall theme.

The show was recorded and will be available on the ICG Archives YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/ICGArchives/>), along with a replay of ICG President Kevin Roche's 2026 Lifetime Achievement Award announcement, and the ICG Archives 2026 Memorial reel.

### Single Pattern Contest

*Co-Diretors: Bruce and Nora Mai*

The Costume-Con 2026 Single Pattern competition is designed to provide a starting point for entrants to construct, embellish, or modify an outfit from a standard commercial pattern selected by the

convention. Participants may use one or more of these patterns. The finished garment may be dramatically altered from the original design but must be recognizable as the original pattern(s) and retain its fundamental shape.

The patterns were all selected from the Folkwear line of Ethnic and Historical Clothing: #145 Chinese Pajamas, #230 Model T Duster, #231 Big Sky Riding Skirt, and #118 Tibetan Panel Coat.



The five contestants made costumes using a combination of three of the four patterns. Four awards were presented, including “Best in Show” to “Stained Glass Lampshade Coat” by Karen Siemens, who used the Folkwear 118 Tibetan Panel Coat. Watch the show video to see the other entries and awards.



CC2026 Single Pattern Best in Show.

## Future Fashion Design Competition and Show

*Co-Diretors: Pierre and Sandy Pettinger*

The Future Fashion Design Competition allows designers to create and submit original costume designs that will be collected into a Future Fashion Folio. Entrants in the Future Fashion Show select and create costumes based on designs in the Future Fashion Folio that are presented during the show.

This year the theme of the Future Fashion Design Competition was Milan and we had a special category of Oz. Three designers submitted designs and our judges, chose 78 winners. Only one person chose to make a design.. Janine Wardale chose to make up her design “Best Friends in Oz” This design won in the Formal Wear category. The ensemble features a blend of pink and green fabrics. The two plaid fabrics, underlying cotton, vintage buttons, pink fringe, pink coral trim, collar lace, flowers, and accents are all thrifted or secondhand finds. The look is topped with a coordinating pink and green hat. It serves as a spring garden dress, perfect for the day after a blizzard.



Future Fashion Design and Show

## Doll Competition

*Co-Diretors: Kathe and Philip Gust*

Contestants for the Doll competition create original, handmade costumes for either purchased or custom-made dolls or figures, which can include humanoids, animals, or aliens. Documentation about the design and construction is also encouraged as part of the entry. Three aspects are judged separately: design, construction, and presentation.

There were four entries in competition this year, as well as three exhibition entries. Awards were presented for Best Design, Best Construction, and Best Presentation, and a special award recognizing a whimsical themed entry. A Best in Show award was presented to “A Day at the Sea” by Janine Wardale. This entry created not only the costumes and hats for the dolls, but an entire beach environment and a story about the Sea Creatures. Watch the show video to see the other entries and awards.



CC 2026 Doll Competition Best in Show

# About the International Costumers' Guild

The International Costumers' Guild (ICG) is an affiliation of hobbyist and professional costumers, dedicated to the promotion and education of costuming including cosplay as an art form in all its aspects. The ICG is a U.S. 501(c)(3) non-profit, educational organization.

## Benefits

Member benefits include participation in local Chapters and Special Interest Groups (SIGs), voting rights, eligibility for grants, online forums, social media, learning and volunteer opportunities, and announcements about ICG business and activities. Chapters and SIGs are eligible for tax-exempt status, Quickbooks, web hosting, Zoom, and Google Workspaces.

## ICG Officers

- **President:** Leslie L. Johnston ([president@costume.org](mailto:president@costume.org))
- **Vice President:** Nora Mai ([vice-president@costume.org](mailto:vice-president@costume.org))
- **Treasurer:** Jeanine Swick ([treasurer@costume.org](mailto:treasurer@costume.org))
- **Corresponding Secretary:** Anne Davenport ([corr-secretary@costume.org](mailto:corr-secretary@costume.org))
- **Recording Secretary:** Anne Davenport ([rec-secretary@costume.org](mailto:rec-secretary@costume.org))

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*The International Costumer* is published by the ICG Editorial Board. We welcome short costuming articles, book reviews, event reports, and news items. For the latest content, visit the [International Costumer webpage](#).

**ICG Editorial Board:** Kathe Gust, Philip Gust, Betsy Marks, Patrick O'Connor, Kevin Roche, Jeanine Swick, Randall Whitlock.