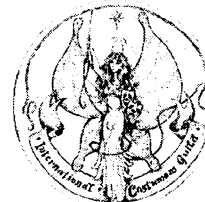


The ICG Newsletter

Published by the International Costumers' Guild, Inc.

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Volume V, Issue 5 - September/October 2006

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



his time I want to do a little nagging about participation. The ICG has a lot of things to offer and a lot of new ideas for activities and promotion. But none of these things can happen without member participation.

Our newsletter and website, the two biggest promotional tools we have at this point, are basically the product of two people. They're fabulous for what they are but it could be so

much more if everyone felt the urge to contribute. Articles, links, suggestion, advertisers (yes, you can stump for the ads, too); Jeff and Denisen would welcome input from all of you.

And if you can't do it yourself, how about badgering someone else into contributing? Say you know someone who did a great job with their first tailoring/welding/<insert random technique here>; and you think their story of how they proceeded, what problems they ran into, how they solved a difficult part would be interesting to others (cause it would be). Tell them so. Suggest they write up their experience, add a photo and send it in. I've done it; it works. Making a specific suggestion gets a better result than "maybe you could write something."

Or maybe they're an expert in some field. If it's a topic they've already devoted considerable time to then a summary isn't that difficult. Or if they've gone further and already published online - that'd be a good link from our website.

How about a suggested resource list? That would be good content online. A book/event/convention review is always good. And speaking of same - know any upcoming events or conventions that costumers might like to attend? Jeff has a place for those on the site, Denisen puts them in the newsletter. Drop them a line and let them know what's going on in your neck of the woods.

Speaking of events/conventions - going to any this year? Odds are good you'll be attending at least one. At the very least, bare minimum, you could bring some flyers to promote the ICG; contact Karen Heim who heads the PR committee on what we have available. Maybe the organizers of the event would let you head-up a panel or two on costuming and the ICG. Make your friends help you.

Extreme participation? Volunteer to help organize some of their costuming related events, up to and including the Masquerade, if need be.

You may be the only ICG member at a particular event, so volunteer and make us look like the good guys. ICG members are slowly making their presence known in a variety of venues from WorldCon to DragonCon, from media to anime cons. At DragonCon this year, Aurora Celeste ran the Friday night costuming event and

Continued on Page 2

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

What Nora said. But also my heartfelt thanks to all who have contributed to the newsletter during my first year as editor. Writers, photographers, editing staff, advertisers, folders, staplers, mutilators ... To Betsy who put up with endless calls for advice, Dana who offered me support at the outset, Carl who said more than once "it's your newsletter, do whatever you want," Nora who continued that theme, and Richard Man, who's kindly given me permission to reprint "many" of his photos in multiple issues of the newsletter. And especially to sweet Jay, who has sat in front of the tv with me more than once when mailing parties were just us two, and who minds the girls while I write editors messages and curse the inventors of WordPerfect. Thanks a really lot, everyone!

Meanwhile, the trusty (but not dusty!) ICG Board of Directors, web people and I have been cooking a (nefarious) plan. Bulk mail seems to be taking foreeeever to deliver the newsletter. Accordingly, we're investigating offering online access to ICG members in addition to sending out hard copies of the newsletter. It's important to note that this is in addition to, NOT instead of, hard copies of the newsletter. A hard (paper) copy of the newsletter will still be sent to your home unless you specifically tell us not to. If you have a chance, email us at newsletter@costume.org, and tell us if you would be interested in this option if it was offered at some point in the future (the online version, by the way, would include color versions of the many of the photos you've been seeing in the newsletter). We are such a service oriented group!!!!

I owe an apology, by the way, to Jeff Morris. Sorry Jeff. You really are a "Super-guy"! I identified him as Jeff Harris in the caption to the picture of him in the last issue. Thanks to those who pointed out my error.

Last, but by no means least, we're going to try and get out the holiday season issue of the newsletter a little early this year. So get us your submissions early - by November 1st, please, and thanks in advance!

Say it with me:
"Submit early, submit often!!!"

**Congratulations to Trinity Blood!
Winners, L.A.con 2006
Masquerade**



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several panels. And other ICG members (including Marty Gear, Judy Mitchell, Jan Price, Dany Sloane and many others whose names slip my mind this instant) were tapped for judging, panels and participated in many of the events. Hopefully we'll have a review from someone who was there for the newsletter. This is a growing venue.

On the West Coast, a number of members are participating at some of the large anime cons (they have several out there). Kevin Roche, Andy Trembley, Richard Man and Karisu-sama (and others) have all made contributions towards getting the ICG's name out there to a largely untapped pool of costumers.

Be proud to be a member of the ICG. What we do as a hobby is creative, educational, inspirational and therapeutic. We are artists, every one of us, who should share our passion and experience whenever and wherever we can. So step up, speak out and flaunt the fact that you're a costumer and a member of the International Costumers' Guild.

The ICG is the sum of its parts - you're one of the parts.

Nora Mai
ICG President

ICG TREASURER'S REPORT

September 15, 2006

Submitted by Bruce MacDermott

ICG Treasurer

I have been working on entering the transactions for the year to date into a financial management application. This has been hampered by the minimal information I received when I took over the Treasury. I expect to have all of the records entered by the end of September. Meanwhile, here is the situation as of the writing of this report.

The current state of finances can be seen in the Balance Sheet:

Balance As of 9/15/2006 (Accrual Basis)

ASSETS

Cash and Bank Accounts	
Checking	6,599.28
TOTAL Cash and Bank Accounts	\$6,599.28
Other Assets	
Customer Invoices	0.00
Memberships Receivable	108.00
Un-Deposited Funds	164.00
TOTAL Other Assets	272.00
TOTAL ASSETS	\$6,871.28

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

LIABILITIES	
Other Liabilities	
Sales Tax	0.00
Accounts Payable	87.88
TOTAL Other Liabilities	87.88
TOTAL EQUITY	\$6,783.40
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$6,871.28

The cash flow can be summarized with the following report.

Income/Expense Report

	Year-to-Date	Last 30 Days
INCOME		
Member		
Memberships	1,354.00	102.00
Non-Member		
Ad Sales	270.00	60.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$1,624.00	\$162.00
EXPENSES		
Member		
Awards	114.60	0.00
Computer	22.47	22.47
Postage	543.72	0.00
Printing	1,557.62	0.00
Supplies	44.78	0.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,283.19	\$22.47
OVERALL TOTAL	<\$659.19>	\$139.53

As you can see, the corporation has incurred a net loss of \$659.19 for the year-to-date. This is not bad, considering the loss of income from the CGW and the GBACG, while we continue to send out the ICG newsletter to their members.

Next issue I will have the budgeted numbers entered into the accounts and will be able to report on how we are doing compared to our budgeted projections.

Non-Profit Group Exemption Status

I have been in contact with the IRS and discussions have begun on the Board of Directors to address the issues that will have to be worked out to meet the current requirements for Group Exemption Status for "subordinate" organizations (Chapters). It remains to be seen if the requirements will be acceptable to any of the chapters. I assure you that your Board Representatives will be keeping you posted as the discussions progress.

We are looking for a computer savvy person to take on the position of Assistant Treasurer - Membership. This person will have the following responsibilities:

1. Receive data from chapters & newsletter editor.
2. Update membership database.
3. Send updated database to Treasurer once a month.
4. Generate mailing label file for newsletter every other month
5. Work closely with the Treasurer to keep information flowing

If you would like to volunteer for this ~~thankless wonderful exciting~~ interesting [feel free to insert any adjectives you like] position, please contact me at Bruce-T@mnouveau.com.

Respectfully Submitted.
Bruce MacDermott, ICG Treasurer

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Photography with a Compact Digicam

by Richard Man, Copyright © 2006

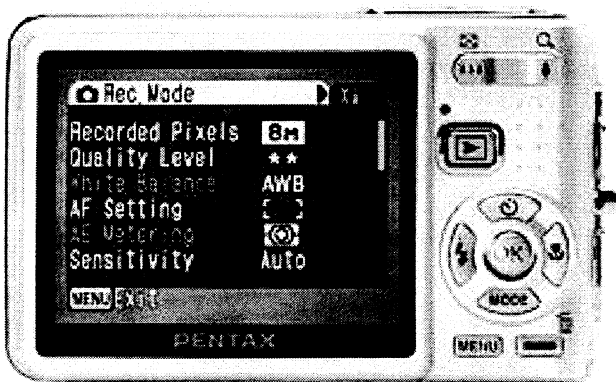
So, you picked up one of those FOUR MEGAPIXELS OPTICAL STABILIZING 4X ZOOM COFFEEMAKERs digital cameras. Now what do you do with it? In this article, I will give some tips on how best to use the camera, with some emphasis on costume photography.

A digicam is short for "digital camera," and typically refers to the pocket-fitting, stylish accessory that happens to take pictures. Most cameras are pretty good these days. Stick with major brands and avoid cameras that are unusually cheap or expensive; there is always a catch. Currently, \$200 to \$250 is a "sweet spot" for digicams. At this price range, the camera has 4-5 megapixels, which is good enough for web pictures, 4x6" and even 8x10" enlargements. Cameras with higher megapixel counts are not really necessary, and just create bigger files resulting in slower camera operation.

The camera should respond quickly. Turn it on; how long before it is "awake" enough to take a picture? Press the shutter button; how long does it take to focus and take the picture? Try it with the flash enabled as well. How long do you have to wait before you can take another picture?

Do the controls feel comfortable to you? Do the control and software menus look confusing or well thought out? How good is the video mode? Does the recording look jerky or smooth? Finally, consider getting one with "macro mode" to take close up pictures.

Figure 1 Make sure the buttons are not too large or too small



Control that Camera

Digicams are meant to be "idiot proof." Turn on the camera, press the shutter button, and you will get a beautiful picture. At least that's what the manufacturers want you to believe. Spending a little time on a few important features will improve your actual picture quality greatly.

It is important to learn where your camera auto-focuses. "Artsy" photographs aside, if a picture is out-of-focus, it's not going to be a good picture. Your camera will usually do a pretty good job, but sometimes it can be fooled. One classic example is two out-of-focus people with a background sharply in focus. Try shooting a scene like that before you meet those two once-in-a-lifetime costumers! If you know the camera mis-focuses in certain situations, you can focus on the subject you prefer by centering it in the viewfinder, half-pressing down on the shutter button, then moving the camera (while still holding the shutter button) to re-compose the image.

Figure 2 Focus on the important things

Another feature to check out is the hue and saturation color adjustment menu. If you find your pictures too "cold" (e.g. too blue or yellow), adjust the hue slider in the display in the "plus" direction. Alternatively, if your pictures are too red, adjust the hue in the "minus" direction.

"Saturation" is how rich a color looks. For people, a "softer" saturation look usually looks better, but for flora and costumes, you may want a stronger "punch."

Do not jab the camera when pressing the shutter, because shaking the camera makes the pictures blurry. Press gently halfway down for the camera to focus and then push down firmly. Don't immediately pull your finger up as if it is on fire. Just lift it off gently.

It's All About The Light

Pay attention to lighting: its quality, colors, direction and how it interacts with the subject's features. Look at the tones and the textures. Are they the effects you want? A softer light is preferred in most cases. Examples of soft light include sunlight filtering through the clouds, incandescent lights with lampshades, or lights bouncing off walls and ceilings. Any light that is diffused looks softer.

For portraits, there is no better light than the so-called "Rembrandt light" – light coming in at similar direction from where you are shooting. It gives a lovely texture to the subject. The worst lighting is strong overhead light (e.g. noonday sun, or strong hotel overhead lights). This causes eye sockets to become dark circles with no details. Fortunately, even in this situation, you can use something called "fill flash" (see below).

Figure 3 "Rembrandt" light, but vampire casts no shadow?



Ambient Light

If at all possible, taking pictures via natural light outdoors is the best. Noon sun is brutal. Sunlight filtering through hotel plants often leaves strange shadows. Try a slightly shady area close to hotel walls; building lights provide accent lighting and the walls diffuse the natural light.

Continued on Page 4

Photography Continued from Page 3

If going outside is not possible, try to take advantage of light coming in from a window. Having a window right in back, though, is the same as having the sun right behind the subjects. This is called "backlighting" and usually makes pictures come out too dark.

Rule Number One: avoid shooting toward the sun or a similarly strong light source. Window light coming in from the side is fine.



Figure 4 Window light

If you are inside a hotel or convention center, lights can be all over the place. Look at how shadows fall on the eyes. If they look like dark circular blobs, sometimes moving just a few feet over can make a big difference. Sometimes using a flash will help.

Using Flash

Flash is great in that it gives better pictures most of the time. However, flash takes character and textures out of the

subjects. If you are taking indoor pictures, they often create dark backgrounds for your subjects. Flash lighting is like fast food: cheap, fast, and may even be edible if not very tasty.

To tame the flash and give your pictures a better look,

Rule Number Two is to check the menu to determine how to turn the flash output down. This is usually given in terms of + or - settings. Try something between -2/3 and -1 1/2. This tells the camera to use more light from the area where you are shooting and rely less on the flash itself. Sometimes this gives a slight blurry image as you are no longer relying on the flash to "freeze" your subject, but it may give a better overall image.



Figure 5 Effective use of fill flash

Picture Taking and Posing 101

How close you are to the subject affects the relative size of the subject as related to its surroundings (this is known as perspective). Generally speaking, if you are taking portraits with just the face or half body, standing about 6 to 8 feet away and zooming in gives a good "neutral" perspective. Closer, and you get the wide-angle effect of big noses or distorted heads.

Try to level yourself with the head of your subject if you are taller. Otherwise, the subject looks like they have a big head with short torso and legs. If you are shorter, try standing as tall as possible or even on chairs. A low angle shot (e.g. crouch down, pointing the camera up) emphasizes a "heroic" pose, but watch out for distortion making the legs look thicker than they are.

Avoid clutter in the background or things in the back "growing" out of the subject's head (unless, of course, it is a Klingon with protruding forehead). Sometimes waiting for just a second longer or



Figure 6 Forced perspective: the woman in the right is physically shorter but the character is taller than the one in the left. Careful position creates the right illusion.

moving slightly to the right or left makes a big difference. Look for interesting lines, angles, abstract shapes to make a better composition.

If you expect some interaction between a couple of subjects, you can pre-focus the camera by pressing half way down on the shutter and holding it there. When the peak action happens, finish

pressing down on the shutter fully. If you wait until the action happens before you focus, it will be too late.

The subject's head should be positioned slightly to the side, up to a 3/4 view, but do ask them to still look at you with their eyes. An in-character pose is more interesting than the standard face-on pose. In fact, anything is probably more interesting than a face-on hands-at-the-sides view.

Figure 7 The Catch!

Do remember that some the costumes may be just not the most comfortable thing to wear for an extended period of time.

Rule Number Three is that you should

always be keen to the costumers' needs and wishes. You should not ask them to hold a pose for unduly long or keep on taking pictures when they are tired.

Smile and be friendly; most people will react in kind. I personally love candid shots ("artsy" photography), but you should always try to ask for permission first. Be critical of what you put on the web: no one needs to see a picture if the costumer looks tired or is in an unflattering pose. Of course be aware of copyright issues, or non-adults showing a bit more than they should.

Finally, taking pictures is fun and easy. Practice improves them. Go do it!



Richard Man is an avid semi-professional photographer. He and his wife Chris have been active in the science-fiction community for many years. He has served the community as Masquerade Photographer for a number of conventions, and was the official photographer and one of the Fan Guests of Honor at Anime LA 2006. He will be the official photographer of Costume-Con 26. His day job involves running a small software company with customers all over the world.

ICG-D LIST POLL:

What person or occurrence (real or fictional) inspired you to start costuming?

Two things really. The first was my mother, who dressed me as either a gypsy or a witch for every Hallowe'en until I was twelve and demanded to design my own. They weren't great, and were of the "mum's old drawers" variety, but it was liberation. My first desire to design my own costume was when I was seven or eight and wanted a faerie costume. I know what faeries looked like; I'd seen them on television and in books. My mother agreed and decided that it would be made out of cheesecloth. That was fine...until I found out that cheesecloth essentially meant bandages! I hit the roof. I wanted what she called "netting", which I know now is actually tulle, which was actually less expensive than cheesecloth. I had a choice: cheesecloth or "mum's old drawers and a gypsy again." I went as a gypsy. The second occurrence was going to my first SF convention and needing a costume. I was in college and had no money, so everything was made using my pink caftan. I started getting nasty comments about twenty years from now I'd still be wearing the caftan. I got irritated and started to design different things although it would still be a while before money allowed me to move beyond "mum's old drawers."

Alixandra Jordan

(Ed Note: Photo on right is Alixandra in her beautiful fairy costume - clearly she's no longer in her "mum's drawers"! Winner of many awards, including Best in Show and Workmanship-Artisan, Best Floral Design at Primedia in 1997, Best Artisan and Workmanship-Artisan in 2002, Sequin and Bead Embellishment at Toronto Trek 16, and Workmanship for Bead Detailing-Journeyman at TorCon 2003)



For me, although I had been to a few local cons (Balticon at my rate), it was Noreascon 3 in 1989 that really galvanized me to begin costuming. It was my first Worldcon, in a city I felt comfortable in, and the Masquerade totally blew me away. I remember sitting way up high, with my mouth hanging open and probably drooling as the masquerade went on and the costumes seemed to get more and more incredible. Rather than being completely shut down and intimidated, I remember a very insistent "I HAVE GOT TO DO THAT" buzzing in my head. I still idolize you guys--I see more creativity at one day at Costume-Con than almost the whole rest of the year!

Lisa Ashton

For me it was Jim Henson and Labyrinth. Although I didn't do the costume until almost 20 years later I so wanted to recreate Jareth's costume. I saw possibilities with the masks that I hadn't thought of before.

Kath the Puppeteer

I want a copy of the dress Mary Poppins wore after she jumped into the chalk drawing. (And the size 10-14 body to go with it would be nice too! *sigh*)

JoAnn Abbott

I always wanted the gold ballgown that Anna wore in the 1956 Yul Brynner film version of the King & I. Still want that darned dress. Still haven't made it. But I've got a lot of others, and have danced at a lot of balls, and someday . . .

Denisen Hartlove

It was the same movie for me. I saw it in the theater when I was 6 or 7, and I loved Deborah Kerr's entire Victorian wardrobe. It inspired me to make my first historical costume. I sewed my hula hoop into one of my mother's old circular skirts. Okay, so it was more of a wheel farthingale than a crinoline, but it was spot-on for me at that time.

Toni

I guess I would say that I was motivated by science fiction in general, and the designers Bob Mackie and William Ware Theiss in particular. My first self-made costume (in 6th grade or so) was Judy Jetson (from the Hanna Barbera cartoon, THE JETSONS), made out of bed sheets dyed pink. Her stiff triangular collar was cut out of cardboard and had pieces of the pink sheet glued to it. I then went trick-or-treating with two of my cousins, who were dressed as Chicago gangsters, LOL!

Karen Dick

I wanted my third doll to be a [starry-eyes here] Fairy Tale Princess. So I went to the library & looked up "costume." The doll didn't turn out too well, nor her costume, but I've made a thousand since then.

Ann Catelli

Carl took me to my first con, Lunacon, in 1983. There Tina & Byron introduced me to Peggy and Pat Kennedy. Basically, Peggy told me there was no reason not to try costuming, since I already knew which end of the sewing machine was up. Then Peggy introduced me to Anne McCaffrey, and the rest is history.

Elaine Mami

I definitely eased into the shallow end of the pool, rather than dive in the deep end. Which is totally out of character for me. At a couple of Archons, Bruce The Lesser asked me to wrangle for him back stage and in the green room. This I was happy to do. One year, he wanted to do a presentation inspired by Pern, with a young dragon rider imprinting on a baby dragon about to hatch. There would be a large egg on stage, and a dragon inside casting its shadow on the inside of the egg. I volunteered to be the dragon, and to make my own dragon head and costume. The presentation went off well enough. It was either the next year or the year after, that I decided to bring my dragon head out from behind the egg. I'd made it of blue vinyl. I think because the Pern illustration book I bought showed blue dragons. In any case, I covered the dragon costume with black pants, put on a white shirt, black suit coat & tie, and a fedora. I was "Elwyrn Blues, the Blues Dragon." The reaction I got from the Archon crowd as I came on stage hooked me for life. There isn't any award you can win at a masquerade as good as that crowd response. Gotta have it, gotta have it.

Dave Kanoy

Continued on Page 7

ICG BoD Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Frances Burns,
ICG Recording Secretary

*Summary minutes - see ICG-BOD Mailing List on the ICG web site
(http://www.costume.org/) for original emails*

July 13, 2006

ICG Member Transition Committee moves to create a new Standing Rule (SR) 13, as follows:

"Whereas membership in the corporation requires membership in a chapter in good standing with the corporation, to accommodate those members whose chapter, for whatever reason, becomes disassociated with the corporation and to maintain their full rights and representation as members of the corporation, an ICG Member Transition Chapter, hereinafter referred to as the T-Chapter, shall be created.

(A) This chapter shall exist when and only when there are ICG members of disassociated chapters who qualify for membership in the T-Chapter, as outlined below. When the T-Chapter exists, a corporate officer appointed by the President of the corporation shall become a de facto member of the chapter. (B) When a chapter disassociates itself from the corporation, its corporation members shall automatically be transferred on the corporate membership roster to the T-Chapter. Additionally, said members shall be notified in writing of this action. Such written notification shall include a

description of the rights and obligations of T-Chapter members. For multi-chapter members (as defined in SR5), if the disassociated chapter was not designated as the primary chapter, no action shall be taken and those members shall not be transferred to the T-Chapter. (D) Membership tenure in the T-Chapter shall be limited to: (1) the remaining "paid through date" on the corporation membership roster, or (2) one year, which ever comes first. (E) To remain members of the corporation, T-Chapter members must join another chapter in good standing with the corporation before their membership in the T-Chapter expires. (F) The T-Chapter members shall elect a representative to serve as a Director on the Board of Directors within sixty days of its becoming active. If no representative is elected within that period, the appointed corporate officer, as a member of the T-Chapter, shall appoint a representative from within its membership."

July 13, 2006

Renumbers SR 13-30 as SR 14-31. Moved by Jan Price, seconded by Betsy Delaney,

July 14, 2006

Motion designated 07-06-01

July 15, 2006

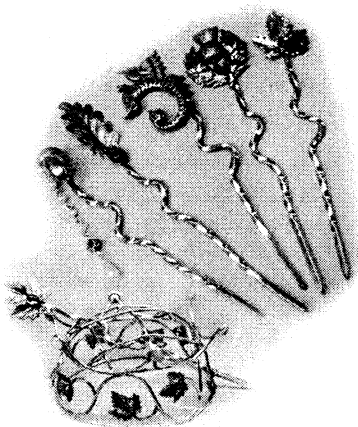
Discussion re managing exiting chapters

July 18, 2006

Section change to SR 14-31 that T-Chapter shall be established in the state of Maryland, the location of the corporation's registered

Continued on Page 7

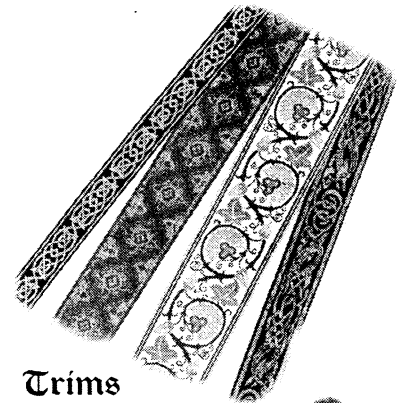
**Dreaming of
Something Special?**



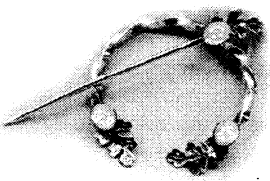
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