

# *International Costumer*

Volume XIV, Issue 6

November-December 2015



Getting Involved in Our Communities

## President's Message

By Philip Gust

Welcome to the final issue of the *International Costumer* for 2015. I hope that you have had an enjoyable year of costuming, and have wonderful plans for 2016. As we go into the holiday season, I'd like to extend my best wishes to you and your family, and a hope for peace and happiness in the year to come.

As I write this, we're heading into Halloween. Many of you will buy or make costumes for your children to go trick-or-treating in, and some of you will wear costumes yourselves at Halloween parties or maybe just to hand out treats on the big day. If you take photos, consider sharing what you and your family are wearing by posting them to social media and tagging them with [icg\\_halloween\\_2015](#), or posting them to the ICG-D Yahoo group.

In our neighborhood, we're the house where the kids never know who will be there to greet them. Will it be scary Pirates of the Caribbean, Beauty and the Beast, or Mickey and the Sorcerer Yensid? Will they meet Princess Leia and Obiwan Kenobi, or maybe Klingons Kang and Mara, or even Bilbo Baggins and Arwen Evenstar? If you'll be home that evening, why not answer the door in costume and add to the magic? Kids really will remember, and they'll also see that adults enjoy wearing costumes as much



*Philip and Kathe Gust as the First and Second Doctors at a local "Doctor Who-Dunnit" party in mid-October. Photo by Christopher Erickson.*

as they do. Who knows, you may even inspire a young costumer.

Halloween is the most obvious time for members of ICG chapters to get involved with their communities. It's not only a way make a difference locally, but also a great way for the community to learn about costuming and all the other things that your chapter does. Here are just a few ideas:

- Help run a haunted house for a school or local non-profit

- Collect "gently used" Halloween costumes for disadvantaged youth
- Put on a Halloween party at a local senior center
- Visit a VA or children's hospital in costume during Halloween week
- Help local downtown merchants organize a Halloween costume contest

Halloween isn't the only time for chapters to get involved in their communities. There are many other opportunities throughout the year.

- March in a parade on the Fourth of July or other community celebration in costume
- Volunteer on a local Habitat for Humanity project wearing chapter T-shirts and caps
- Help your public library organize a costumed theme event (e.g. "Jane Austin," Star Wars)
- Organize a visit to a children's hospital wearing costumes of favorite characters
- Make hero capes or pillows to distribute to children facing surgery
- Sew soft head coverings for cancer patients who have lost their hair to treatment
- Work with a child welfare group to put on a costumed picnic for disadvantaged youth

These are just of a few ideas to consider. It's easy for chapters to put on events just for

their own members, but it's important to plan activities that involve their communities, too. In this issue, you'll read about how the Madison Area Costuming Society (MACS) is getting involved. How about your chapter?

If your chapter has community involvement activities, consider writing a short article for *International Costumer* or posting a note to the ICG-D Yahoo group to let other chapters know what you're doing. Also, don't overlook the opportunity for coverage on social media and by local media outlets. Many are eager for local human interest items. See the "Events and Activities Idea Bank" and the "Public Relations Tips and Media Guide" pages on the ICG website (<http://www.costume.org/resources>) for ideas.

One other thing to consider. The Marty Gear Costuming Arts and Sciences Fund provides small grants to individuals or small groups of ICG members for projects and activities that benefit the costuming community as a whole, or a local costuming community. This can include local outreach programs that educate, promote, or raise awareness of costuming in the community. The Fund hasn't yet received proposals for local activities, but the committee would be very happy to consider them. See the "Marty Gear Fund" area of the ICG website (<http://www.costume.org/grants>) for

information about the Fund and how to apply.

I encourage you and your chapter to become more involved in your community, and to take advantage of the many resources that the ICG offers thanks its members. If you're not currently a member, please consider joining. If you are a member, thanks for your support. You'll find your renewal date on the ICG membership card you receive with this issue.



*Members of Madison Area Costuming Society ran a charity masked ball at Geek.Kon. Photo by Patrick Stutz Photography*

## From the Editor

*By Vicky Assarattanakul*

I can't believe that 2015 is coming to a close. This year has been quite eventful. What costuming plans do you have for 2016? I'd love to hear about them!

The cover of this issue features members of Madison Area Costuming Society (MACS) at a local parade. These photos were submitted by Jamie Butler. MACS desires to provide educational opportunities for crafting as well as preserving costuming history. Stace Feldman, founder and current president, has led the charge to reach out to the community and provide these opportunities. As a result, they have seen a trend in local conventions toward using ICG guidelines for fairness in their masquerades and an increase in attendance at costuming panels at the local convention. Even local youth programs have been reaching out for assistance in running educational programs on costuming. This past August, several members ran a charity masked ball at a local convention, and raised over \$500 for Second Harvest Food Bank. This was more than half of what was donated by the convention as a whole.

Does your chapter do any community work? Consider writing an article for *International Costumer*, to let us know what you've been up to in your local areas.



## Costume-Con 34 Updates

By Danielle McKinney

One of my favorite traditions of Costume-Con is the Friday Night Social. Costume-Con 34's theme, the Wonder of Nature; is a really rich area of creativity; and *Dance with the Sidhe* is a logical progression of thought for me with this theme. When I think of nature, my mind wanders to the incredibly magical changing of the seasons and how beautifully they flow together. I think of the wonderful spots I would find as a child to play; a natural shelter under a fir tree, the tree house comprised of four trees grown together, a trout stream on my Aunt's land with crystal clear water and freely growing watercress. I was in awe of the tiny, perfect flowers, the details of leaves, and the amazing textures, colors, and scents surrounding me. To me, nature seemed within my grasp and beyond my understanding; truly magical.

When you think about creating a costume for the evening, think of what magical creature you envisioned inhabiting your special spaces as a child, or how a field of golden wheat dancing in the wind makes

you feel alive. Take time to research the mythical creatures that enrich all cultural histories and see what inspires you. From the Lakota Canoti, to the Greek Sirens, to the Japanese Jibakurei; there are a wealth of mythical natural creatures to create.

Looking forward to seeing you and your amazing creations at *Dance with the Sidhe*!

### We Need Your Help!

Costume Con 34 is shaping up to be a wonderful entry in the ongoing tradition of this convention. We have many panels lined up to explore a myriad of costuming methods and materials; the Friday Night Social will transport you to a magical fairy ring with music and lights; and the Masquerades are your time to shine with fellow costumers; it's a fully comprehensive convention experience. What we're missing is volunteers!

To be successful and offer everyone the best possible experience, we need volunteers to assist with a variety of tasks:

Consuite: Helping set up food, keep items stocked

Registration: Passing out badges, assisting with at-the-door registration

Panel Assistants: Get missing items, report issues to Con Staff, gopher as needed

Dealer's Room Assistants: Report issues to Con Staff, gopher as needed

Exhibit Hall Assistants: Report issues to Con Staff, gopher as needed

Tour Guide Assistants: Help keep folks taking tours aware of the time, etc.

Green Room Assistants: Help Masquerade participants as needed

Friday Night Social Set-up/Take Down: making a fairy ring is hard work and lots of hands is what will make it truly magical!

There are a variety of other tasks awaiting your skills; tell me what your expertise is, and what your interests are, and we'll work together to make your volunteer experience fun and rewarding.

Please contact Danielle McKinney, Con-Vice Chair and Head of Workforce at: [majors@uwalumni.com](mailto:majors@uwalumni.com).

## Working With Our Community

By Stace Feldman

Over the past year, the Madison Area Costuming Society (MACS) has been given a number of opportunities to raise our profile awareness within the city of Madison, both inside and outside fandom-community circles. As a chapter, we have always had something of a presence at Geek-kon and have been instrumental in building its masquerade to be the best in the state - a destination masquerade for talented costumers - as well as providing at least half a dozen costuming-related panels every convention. Yet, the wish was always there to do more than just convention work. At last, we've made some steps into the wider world, through our relationship with GeekplastiQ, connections at the Middleton Library, and the Madison St. Patrick's Day Parade.

When GeekplastiQ, a local fandom store, opened a couple of years ago, I went to Simon to strike up a cooperation between our businesses, and MACS came up. He was extremely interested in a club or guild for costume-lovers, and wanted to do whatever he could to help us out. We've kept promotional material in his store, and he has asked MACS for help whenever he wanted folks in costume to add a little color



*Judging at Geek.Kon's masquerade.  
Photo courtesy of Catie Cherwin.*

to his store events. For their grand opening at the new location, we came out in our splashiest outfits and stood by the street to wave at cars. Since then, we've also been asked to host Halloween costume events at the store, and recently the idea has been floated to do non-Halloween cosplay events, in order to bring more attention to MACS itself rather than the store. Simon loves to look at costumes and even cosplays himself once in a while, and his encouragement has helped us to branch out and seek other opportunities.

In July of 2014, I was contacted by someone

from the Middleton Library who had picked up a card at GeekplastiQ, wondering if someone would like to come and do a talk about cosplay at an event they were holding. They have a teen group at the library, and host events for the kids to learn about things related to their reading interests. It turns out most of the kids are big into manga and all things Japanese, so the library decided to host a "con" as an event one evening, with a manga-swap and games to tie in with it. Being as "cosplay" is a word in the greater societal lexicon, now, and most of the kids had heard it via TV or online articles, they were really curious and wanted experts in to explain the phenomenon. Three of us from MACS attended the library event, dubbed "LibCon," and provided an hour-long talk with Q&A. We had a room full of kids, at least 30, sitting with rapt attention for the entirety of that hour, and they wanted to go longer and ask more questions. We explained that cosplay is just dressing up in



*Madison's St. Patrick's Day Parade. Photo courtesy of Jamie Butler.*

costumes at conventions, and a little of the history behind it going back to 1939. We assured them that at their age they can easily start learning how to make costumes themselves, plus provided advice for a few youngsters who were afraid their parents wouldn't understand if they wanted to get into this hobby. We encouraged them, and said they could tell their parents that many adult cosplayers are professionals - doctors, lawyers, teachers, and so on - and they were in fact talking to a small-business owner, a scientist, and a city administrator right there! They were extremely receptive and more interested in asking about social and theoretical interests than actual hands-on how-to topics. The library staff was just as fascinated, and asked that if they wanted to host a similar event in the future, would we like to come back? Of course, we will!

This spring, MACS decided to take an even bigger jump forward into the community at large by entering the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Here in Madison, there has been a long-standing parade run by a volunteer committee rather than the city, and it has always been a place for the local Irish families to gather and show off once a year. A lot of non-profit community groups also march in the parade to raise awareness; for example, this year the Autism Society, Veterans for Peace, and the St. Baldrick's



*Madison's St. Patrick's Day Parade. Photo courtesy of Jamie Butler.*

Foundation fielded marchers, and the Historical Society, the Children's Museum, and the Overture Center were sponsors. All proceeds from the parade and its events go to the Cancer Center at the UW-Hospital and other children's charities. MACS joined with a small group, about 10 marchers with our banner and the Costume-Con 34 banner, and had an awesome time. The weather was beyond fine for Wisconsin in March, and we attracted a lot of attention

from the kids lining the parade route, excited to get candy from characters they recognize. Based on the turnout, we have decided to make this an annual tradition, and look forward to creating costumes to fit the holiday for the next outing.

As a chapter, we feel that community outreach doesn't always have to mean holding workshops and teaching people to sew. An organization like ours is a member of a community, and in Madison, that community is often what provides heart and soul to events. In the future, besides the St. Pat's parade, we may look into other parades (4th of July, Willy Street Festival, etc), and are already forming a relationship with someone who would like to start a sub-organization to provide costumed characters to visit the Children's Hospital. We would also like to provide more educational opportunities like LibCon, and hope to work with Geekplastiq to find meeting space to hold public workshops and lectures. Day to day and month to month, MACS is still a group of friends who love costumes and get together to talk shop, but we've taken a big step beyond that as a chapter and as an organization, to entertain as well as educate, to break out of the rut of merely going to conventions and try something new.

## Toni Lay Has Died

*By Mike Glycer*

*This article was originally posted by Mike Glycer on August 29, 2015 on his blog. It has been reprinted with his permission. The original article can be found at <http://file770.com/?p=24629>.*



*Toni Lay in 2009. Original picture can be found at <http://www.sickpupsnot.org/toni.html>*

Veteran masquerade participant and Worldcon regular [Toni Lay](#) of the NJ/NY Costumers' Guild (a.k.a. the Sick Pups) died

August 28 after a lengthy hospitalization caused by a series of strokes. Her passing was reported by Susan de Guardiola who said, "Toni was 65 and had been a part of the NYC metro fan community since at least when I met her back in the late 1980s (and probably longer)."

Toni Lay was a Deputy Chatelaine for the Crown Province of Ostgardr in the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA), Program Director for Costume Con 5, a Historical Masquerade Director for Costume Cons 16 and 22, a Historical Judge for Costume Con 28, and a Presentation Judge at Renovation, the 2011 Worldcon.

She worked as a secretary for the New York City Department of Design and Construction.



*Some merriment, circa mid-1970s, at a New York STAR TREK convention... That's also Elyse Pines (Rosenstein) second from left in front, Joan Winston on Jeff Maynard's lap (sadly, both Joan and Jeff are also gone), "Patia Von Sternberg," redheaded, fourth from left in the back, and a very popular helmsman, under the beanie...*

Her early fan activity included writing about Star Trek in the 1980s and participating on the 1992 Worldcon (MagicCon) program.

A photo gallery of some of her masquerade appearances can be found at [http://www.costume.org/gallery2/v/bruce\\_mai/pettinger2/L-Costumers/lay/](http://www.costume.org/gallery2/v/bruce_mai/pettinger2/L-Costumers/lay/).

## An Appreciation of Toni Lay

By James H. Burns

*The following is an excerpt from an appreciation written by James H. Burns for Toni. It has been reprinted with his permission, and the original piece can be found on Mike Glycer's blog at <http://file770.com>.*

Toni Lay was one of the first beautiful women I met. At a convention, anyway! Back in that wild wonderful month of my own early convention experiences, January of 1976: THREE major conventions in Manhattan, within weeks?

Creation started it off that annum with their comic book, fantasy and media festival, held at the old, great, Commodore Hotel. A GIANT "Star Trek": convention would cap the month, at the New York Hilton. (The fifth, and last of, "The Committee's" Star Trek fests would be a few weeks later, at the Commodore.)

But in between—the second week of January?—was Al Schuster's Star Trek convention, at the Statler Hilton (aka The Hotel Pennsylvania).

I was invited to a party one night for Nichelle Nichols, a fan event, to be sure, in someone's crowded hotel room. But there



*Toni Lay in 2015. Photo by Jonathan Gleich*

were at least two beautiful women there that night.

Remember that classic mid-1970s look for African-American women? Toni knocked it out of the park. With an incredible low-cut black dress that I can still remember, INSTANTLY, nearly forty years later. Which made it all the more extraordinary when she smiled. Or gave forth with that remarkable laugh, so filled with joy. Because then, she just radiated...

Toni had a long relationship with ANOTHER pal, Jonathan Gleich— Of whom it's sometimes been forgotten that he hosted what may well have been one of the first—if not THE first Star Trek radio talk shows in the country... (*The Trekkie Show*, on WHBI-FM, out of Newark, but with their studios in Manhattan, and heard throughout New

York. Jon hosted under the moniker, "Jay Gee," beginning sometime around 1974.)

There was this whole nice crowd one could always count on seeing, once upon a time, and Toni was a sparkling part of that.

I had heard through the years that she had a MAJOR involvement with costuming fandom, and I'm certain that her contributions there were immense. Because Toni was never simply a smiling charmer— But one of the brightest people you could chat with. Anywhere.

I KNOW there are all sorts of great circles of friends who gather not only in the North East, but elsewhere, united today by their love for science fiction, and all of its sub-genres...

But the folks one first knew, always retain that special patina in memory. And the only way to recreate those days, even with all their pitfalls, but with oh so many more pleasures, is to recall the laughter.

And, you see, when Toni Lay would smile, everyone around here, would get happy.

How could you not?



## 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>

Send comments and suggestions to the ICG board and standing committees:

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### The Kennedy Memorial Archives and Gallery

The ICG's Pat & Peggy Kennedy Memorial Archives is the world's largest archive of photographs, video and paper ephemera, spanning 70+ years of Science Fiction costuming. Exhibits include an online photo gallery (<http://www.costume.org/gallery2/>) and the ICGArchives YouTube channel (<http://www.youtube.com/user/ICGarchives>).

### 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](mailto: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](mailto:icg-newsletter@costume.org).

### Newsletter Delivery

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If your postal or e-mail address changes, notify your local chapter promptly, or send your updated information to [icg-membership-corrections@costume.org](mailto:icg-membership-corrections@costume.org). Returned copies of the print edition cannot be re-mailed.

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