



*Dan Schweitzer*

Sewing.

A couple of years of square dance writing and I've never extolled the virtues of sewing your own duds. (And I'm not starting now.)

Some people argue that sewing saves money. They pop over to their favorite sewing center and pick up:

- Bernina aurora 430 sewing machine, \$4,749
- Bernina 700D Serger, \$719
- Fiskars bent shears, \$28.25
- Dritz cutting board, \$16.99
- Two dress patterns at \$9.99 and \$14.99 (\$25.98)
- Two yards each of three different fabrics, carefully chosen based on mutual harmony, club colors, and skin color analysis, at \$8.99/yd. (\$53.94)
- Thread in each color, plus black and white spools at \$2.05 ea. (\$10.25)
- Four yards of lace at \$0.99/yd. (\$3.96)
- YKK 16" zipper (\$0.97)
- Pearlized pins, \$0.82, machine needles, \$3.00 pr., Dritz tracing wheel (\$1.39), and Collins 60" tape measure (\$2.30)

Hot dog! Today I added 5,615 miles to my frequent flyer Visa card!

Next, they consult girl friends (CGF), and determine that one of the fabrics is too green, and that two yards of the patterned fabric won't be enough – need three yards. Back to the sewing center (BTSC) for two yards of a less green fabric and more of the patterned fabric. Whoops, store no longer carries the patterned fabric, so get three yards of a different pattern. (\$34.95 total). CGF about new fabrics.

More agonizing; CGF about the fabric and lace layouts. Next, the shears makes its appearance, which, inexplicably, follows the wrong trace line and ruins a yard of fabric (BTSC, \$8.99).

Setting up the sewing machines (bobbin loading, tension guessing, and thread routing) takes only minutes, but, on testing, produces a tangle of thread. CGF. Finding the manuals and setting up the sewing machines correctly takes a few hours. Whoops, need a bobbin for each color of thread (BTSC, \$14.99 for 10).

After several days of serging, basting, stitching, restitching (BTSC for seam ripper, \$1.67.), and buttonholing (Buttons! BTSC, 6 at \$0.47 ea. or \$2.82), the big day arrives. What?! This pattern's size 8 is too small! CGF. BTSC.

Sewing. One, small, square dance dress: \$5,679.27.

The CGF hours: Priceless.