



# Keeping it Chicago Reel

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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Daniel J. McLaughlin  
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## Mayo.ie Launches Competition For Members

The online initiative [www.mayo.ie](http://www.mayo.ie), which was launched by An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny in June 2011, is steadily emerging as a master Mayo website.

The website has received excellent visitor numbers from all parts of the globe, in the short few months since its launch and in recent weeks the website was launched in both Cleveland, Ohio and in Chicago, and received an overwhelming response in both locations.

The site gives users access to a wide range of Mayo linked elements including business and social interactions, and historical and genealogical information.

One of its most popular features is its events section, which hosts details of thousands of Mayo events taking place on a daily basis both within the county and overseas.

The original and ongoing objective of the website is to give the global Mayo



Family a forum to connect and interact with each other. It offers an opportunity for them to update on what's happening in Mayo and what's happening in Mayo Communities worldwide.

Mayo.ie has recently launched a membership drive requesting anyone with a Mayo connection to register as a member on the site. Mayo.ie has partnered with Mayo- and Irish-based companies including Aer Lingus, Mulranny Park Hotel, Ireland West Airport Knock and FLYBE, Elverys, Foxford Woollen Mills, Portwest and T-Rex to offer some fantastic prizes.

The team at Mayo.ie is asking you to log on to [www.mayo.ie](http://www.mayo.ie) today and register as a member. They also want you to inform 10 people that you know with a Mayo connection about the site and ask them to register too.

For further information on Mayo.ie contact [info@mayo.ie](mailto:info@mayo.ie).

## Multi-Award-Winning Irish-Speaking Teddy Bear "BB"

BB Bear, the world's first Irish-speaking toy, is winning awards, gaining great sales and securing a firm place in children's hearts around the globe!

BB was a huge hit at his first Christmas last year. Over 30,000 BBs have now been sold and the toy is available in over 100 stores in Ireland as well as online, and is currently available in stores in 14 states in the US.

BB has also just signed up for a TV animation series *BB agus Bella*, a pre-school series based on the bear incorporating language learning that will be seen on TG4 in 2012, funded through the BAI.

This cuddly and colourful teddy bear teaches toddlers and children 33 words in Irish. BB has bright buttons to press and in response the teddy speaks the friendly-sounding Irish words for basic numbers, colours and shapes. You can check out the teddy bear on the interactive website [www.babogbaby.com](http://www.babogbaby.com), where toddlers, young children—and adults!—can meet BB.

The teddy is the brainchild of children's toy company, Bábógbaby Limited, based in Moycullen, Co. Galway. Adrian Devane

set up Bábógbaby in early 2010 to provide tools and toys for toddlers, children and parents to learn those first cúpla focal.



BB the Irish-speaking teddy bear costs €29.99 plus postage and packaging and is available for delivery throughout the world at [www.babogbaby.com](http://www.babogbaby.com).

Check in on BB via Facebook and on Twitter—just search for Babogbaby.

BB is also available on Babog Baby Iphone, Ipad and android app.

## Maggie Daley Has Died and Chicago Weeps

By Mike Houlihan

Margaret Ann Corbett met her husband at a Christmas party in 1970 while she was here for what she thought would be a short-term stay with a job working for Xerox Learning Systems. The job had developed out of a management-training program she had entered right after graduation from Dayton University. She wound up managing matters of the second largest city in the world.

Being the only girl in her family from Mount Lebanon, Pennsylvania, with six brothers of her own, probably prepared her for her role in the city of the big shoulders. Among the more earthy and rough edges of Chicago politics, Maggie Daley always shone with grace and femininity. She was the tranquil lady in the midst of a maelstrom of testosterone-fueled bravado.

Chicago never really knew what to make of her in the early part of her life. She kept a low profile and seemed to shun the glare of the press while playing mama bear to her family and belying a fiercely protective nature whenever her kids were in the spotlight.

She lost a son, Kevin, in 1981. Born with spina bifida, the lad succumbed at the age of three after a scrappy fight with the disease. That kind of tragedy hollows out many parents. Maggie Daley tempered her heart with Kevin's mettle and saved that strength for her own nine-year battle with cancer.

Diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer in 2002, Chicago began to take a second look and discovered a woman who smiled through pain as she faced the challenges ahead. She was the epitome of grace under pressure and a model of encouragement for all who suffered. Keeping a public schedule in spite of pain she was often seen all over town on crutches, in a walker or wheelchair.

The cancer spread to her lungs, liver, and bones. But Maggie Daley kept going. I was lucky enough to see her on stage at the annual "After School Matters" dinner back in late September. It was a charity she founded for teenagers in Chicago Public Schools and everyone wondered if she would make an appearance. The lights dimmed on stage and when they came up, there she was, standing at the podium, smiling, beaming actually as

the crowd sprang to their feet for a standing ovation. We all felt small in the presence of this heroic angel.



Friends who knew her tell stories of so many acts of kindness she performed quietly over the years. Whether it was showing up at a city worker's mother or brother's wake unannounced or sending a note to make someone feel loved. When tragedy would strike a family through the suicide of their child, Maggie Daley would swoop in and handle everything, showing up at their house and coordinating funeral arrangements, logistics the family couldn't comprehend at the time. You never forget something like that.

The First Lady of Chicago died on Thanksgiving surrounded by her family, former Mayor Richard M. Daley, and her children Nora, Patrick, and Lally.

God rest her lovely soul.

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## Putumayo Releases Celtic Christmas

Putumayo announces the release of *Celtic Christmas*, an enchanting collection of Celtic music from Ireland, Scotland, England, Canada and United States, on October 25th. Celtic Christmas follows previous successful Putumayo Christmas releases such as *A Jazz & Blues Christmas*, *New Orleans Christmas* and *Christmas Around the World*, which combined

sold over 1 million copies.

*Celtic Christmas* offers Celtic interpretations of Christmas classics along with an original recording. The collection begins with the joyful singing of The Albion Christmas Band on “Here We Come A-Wassalling,” and moves into Charles T. Cozen’s instrumental version of “O Come, O Come Emmanuel.” The Gothard Sisters

update the classic “Little Drummer Girl” with fiddle and guitar, while DruidStones’ rendition of the French carol “Noel Nouvelet” features harp and harmonious vocals. David Huntsinger adds an original Celtic twist on the classic “Angels We Have Heard On High” while Charles T. Cozens returns with a flute-driven take on “Good King Wenceslas.” Next comes Lasairfhiona Ní Chonaola’s original Gaelic recording of “Nollaig Bhan,

(White Christmas).” Steve Schuch & The Night Heron reinterpret the seasonal classic “Joy To The World” with playful sounds from the mandolin, while Aine Minogue incorporates the harp and mandolin on “Jezebel Carol.” David Arkenstone’s “God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen” features flute and strings, and Dougie MacLean closes out the collection with a soulful Scottish rendition of “Auld Lang Syne.”

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# The Play Penelope

By Frank West

John Mahoney had to cancel his part in the play, Penelope, due to an unexpected death in his family.

The play, written by Enda Walsh, will go on with the very capable Tracy Letts in the role through February 5, 2012.

John Kindly made time for this interview, even though he was very busy rehearsing for the play.

The play features three other members of the Steppenwolf ensemble, which is directed by Amy Morton, also an ensemble member.

The purpose of the interview is to discuss some of mahoney's views of the theatre and of life.

Mahoney was hospitable and friendly, and immediately made me feel comfortable. he smiled and laughed often during the interview. He seemed to be a man who is comfortable with himself.

Although he is a famous and greatly honored actor on the national stage and screen, I didn't observe even a bit of pretension in him.

Penelope is a modern retelling of the Odyssey. The Illiad and Odyssey are the Greek epic poems written by Homer, in about the 8th century B.C. They are the basis of Western literature.

Odysseus was called Ulysses by the ancient Romans. That is the Latin form of his name.

The poem is about fate and the apprehension of destiny. Penelope was written by Enda Walsh to reflect modern audiences.

Frank: What motivated you to devote your life to the theatre?

John: I was associate editor of a medical journal here in Chicago. When I was close to forty years old and bored, I took an acting class. And,

I realized that acting was something I just had to do.

FW: Why this play?

JM: I love working at Steppenwolf. And in particular I like Enda Walsh's Penelope. There are a lot of questions in it - questions with no answers.

FW: Your character, Fitz, says to Penelope, "Lead me to opening my door to taking a chance. I long for love." Would you comment on this?

JM: Fitz does something wonderful. After many false starts he realizes many profound things. The main one is his realization that love can save you. Accept love for the sake of love. Love has enormous power. Take the

risk of loving.

John Mahoney is a fearless actor who works very hard to develop his acting skills. He takes difficult roles for the challenge. In the way of Irish artists, he feels a responsibility to help the next generation. why do I say this? When I first met him last summer, he was generously sharing his acting skills with young actors.

He is a generous, gracious person filled with enthusiasm both for acting and for life.


Steppenwolf Theatre is at 1650 N. Halsted, near North Ave. For tickets go to [www.steppenwolf.org](http://www.steppenwolf.org) or 312-335-1650.


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# Chicago Gaelic Park

Serving the social & cultural needs of the Irish community throughout Chicagoland



## A Chairde:

The staff and volunteers take great care and pride every year in decorating and installing lighting at Gaelic Park to celebrate the Christmas season, and our members and supporters will have many opportunities during the month of December to enjoy the lights and festive atmosphere at Gaelic Park. On Saturday morning December 3, our Ladies Auxiliary will host a Breakfast with Santa for their membership, and on Saturday evening, Andy Cooney's A Classic Irish Christmas is scheduled. The Mingle and Jingle parties on December 8 and 15 are a great and economical way for small and large office groups and friends to get into the holiday spirit. Our Monthly Mass followed by Irish breakfast is scheduled for December 11 at 10am, and this

is a wonderful opportunity for families to celebrate mass and break bread together. The Celtic Supper is special in December with all the decorations in place, and the New Year's Eve Gala is the grand finale of the holiday season which includes Chef Johns' special menu and live musical entertainment. This is a fitting way to sweep out the old and ring in the new year. Gaelic Park attire make wonderful Christmas gifts and tickets for our February concerts will also be available for those on your gift list. In Ireland, the Christmas season is a special time for families and friends, I like to think of Gaelic Park as our extended family. To all of the readers, I wish you A Happy Christmas and A Healthy New Year. **John Devitt, President**



**Sunday Celtic Suppers** This is the perfect way to gather family and friends to celebrate the Christmas season. The adult cost is \$16 and for children 12 and under, just \$8. The hot buffet is available from 4-7pm and music and dancing from 5-9pm. Entertainment for December will be: 12/4 Gerard Haughey, 12/11 Sean O'Donnell and 12/18 Ray Gavin. Reservations required.

**Musical Luncheon** The Christmas luncheon will be held on December 7 at Noon with music provided by John Dillon. The hot, sit down meal and musical entertainment is all for the cost of just \$13. Call for group reservations today at 708.687.9323. The musical luncheon will not be held in January!

**Christmas Shopping at CGP** Stop in our gift shop for all the names on your shopping list! Everyone loves a night out so include several Gaelic Park gift certificates that can be used for dinners, concerts and other upcoming events.

**Mary McSweeney Paintings** will be available on Saturday December 10 from 4-9pm and Sunday, December 11 from 10am-8pm.

**Wren Night** Come join Chicago Gaelic Park's Ceili and Set Dancers on Monday, December 26 from 6:30-10:30pm. Admission is \$3, tea and coffee will be served. Music by the Irish Musicians Association.

**Women's Little Christmas** This annual party is planned for Friday Jan. 6, 2012.

**Movie Matinee** On Sunday January 8, Gaelic Park will host a viewing of the movie "Once" at 2pm in the Tara Room. Admission is free, with food and drink available for purchase!

**Bridal Vendor Boutique** Gaelic Park invites you to join us for a day of shopping at our Bridal Boutique featuring 25 of Gaelic Park's, top rated vendors on Sunday February 19, 2012. More details to follow.

**CGP Sunday Radio Program** live broadcast is held on Sunday nights from 7-9pm straight from Gaelic Park by Harry Costelloe, Mary Hackett and Mary Riordan on WCEV 1450 AM.

**Congratulations on 25 years of Sunday night broadcasts at Gaelic Park!**

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# Merry Christmas to All



...from everyone here at  
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**A very warm welcome to Yvonne Byrne**, our new manager of the Carraig! Come in and check out the expanded Pub menu!

**Pub Quiz Night** with quiz master Tim Tobin is held on Tuesday evenings starting at 7.30pm. Teams can consist of up to five players at a cost of \$5 per person!

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## The Making of the President 2011

Theodore White's book on the 1960 election of JFK has become, rightly, a classic of political reporting. In what was a watershed election, his book changed the way U.S. politics and elections were regarded. It chronicled the changing pattern of society in the USA 50 years ago, including the way in which television had emerged as a major factor in informing and influencing public opinion.

We have just had a presidential election in Ireland, one which saw Michael D. Higgins, the veteran Labour Party politician, elected as Ireland's eighth President, with the aid of TV. The election came towards the end of what has been a tumultuous year in Irish politics, with the previous government dumped unceremoniously out in February. This was the first chance the electorate had to vent its feelings since, albeit for what is officially a largely ceremonial and non-political office.

The results and those of two constitutional referendums held simultaneously are being pored over by commentators and public alike after the most extraordinary presidential election campaign Ireland has witnessed. "Michael D.," an intellectual from the left wing of the Labour party, ran a consistently low key and non-controversial campaign and was always first or second in the opinion polls, which otherwise showed widely variable levels of support for his six opponents. Even when he slipped behind as polling day approached, his overall popularity ensured that, under our PR system, where second and third preferences can count, he would be there at the finish. In fact, he won easily with almost 40% as his chief rival, independent Sean Gallagher, self-destructed on national TV and radio just three days before the vote. Shades of 1960.

The other candidates had fallen by the wayside well before. Most spectacular was the failure of Fine Gael's Gay Mitchell, who polled a miserable 6.4%. Fine Gael, as the largest party at 36% in the polls, had high hopes of victory, but from the outset, Mitchell, a decent but abrasive politician, failed to make an impact.

that she had acquired US citizenship a number of years ago did not help. Mary Davis, another independent candidate, polled well initially in an anti-establishment atmosphere, but foundered when her presence (and earnings) on a number of State Boards were publicised, leading her to be dubbed the "Quango Queen," Davis and Dana each polled less than 3%.

The colourful gay Senator, David Norris, had briefly led the polls as the campaign opened. However, his always controversial campaign was dealt a mortal blow by the revelation that he had written to the Israeli courts pleading for clemency for a former lover—and pro-Palestinian activist—convicted of statutory rape of a 15 year old boy. Norris left, then re-entered the race, garnering sympathy by his efforts to secure, as an independent, a place on the ballot paper under Ireland's complicated and restrictive selection procedures. Public support, however, stopped at ensuring he got on the ballot and he received just 6.2%.

Martin McGuinness, Sinn Fein's very high profile candidate, had entered the race with a definite agenda. This was not to win but to maximise his party's support as part of a medium term strategy to displace discredited Fianna Fail as the major republican party, akin to the way they had brushed aside the SDLP in Northern Ireland. While he increased Sinn Fein's share of the vote by almost 40% to 13.7%, there was considerable consumer resistance to McGuinness' previous record and reputation and frank disbelief at his claim to have quit the IRA in the mid-1970s. Sinn Fein clearly has some way still to travel.

McGuinness did, however, succeed in ambushing, live on TV, the surprise pre-election frontrunner, independent Sean Gallagher. Gallagher, a former member of Fianna Fail, with an existing media profile, had come from nowhere during the campaign to enter the final week with a commanding lead in the opinion polls (40% to 25%). His appeal had in part derived from the prevailing strong anti-political party mood and on the perception that his active

Scoop Jackson's abortive candidacies in the 1970s come to mind.

Dana, Eurovision winner in 1970, was never going to be a serious contender, and the revelation

involvement with Fianna Fail had been slight. However, during the last TV debate, three days before the vote, confronted by a McGuinness allegation that he had been chief organiser for a \$7000 a plate Fianna Fail fund raising dinner, Gallagher first equivocated and then contradicted himself.

The truth as it emerged was somewhat less dramatic but certainly showed Gallagher to have been very much politically involved with Fianna Fail. This was compounded by unconvincing responses to separate technical questions on transactions in some of his companies' accounts. A professional politician might have winged it. Gallagher did not. It was enough to burst the Gallagher bubble and his support ebbed rapidly. In the event, he finished a creditable second with 28.5%.

Conclusions are already being drawn, not necessarily all correct. What IS beyond doubt is that the electorate is volatile, subject to rapid mood swings and prepared to punish on a whim. This was further emphasised by the close last minute defeat of a government sponsored referendum to establish political tribunals of enquiry. The election of Michael D. does not demonstrate a shift to the left, more that he was the one where positives most outweighed negatives. And, without Gallagher's TV debacle, he would probably not have won.

Clearly Fine Gael did very badly, and its candidate flopped also in the day's separate by-election. Yet whatever about the candidate's shortcomings, the party still has to grasp that the last general election was not so much won by Fine Gael as lost by Fianna Fail, and that it must keep working hard, and in touch with the grass roots, to cement its first place position. With a tough budget pending this could prove difficult, particularly with Sinn Fein and the assorted left yapping at the government's heels.

What of Fianna Fail? Arguably Sean Gallagher could be seen as a surrogate Fianna Fail candidate and the aggregate of his and McGuinness' vote actually comes close to that secured by Fianna Fail in 2007. Sinn Fein failed to make much progress in its bid to supplant Fianna Fail nationally, while in the separate by-election the Fianna Fail candidate polled surprisingly well. The jury on the "republican party" remains out.

A final point. All the candidates were subjected to unprecedented media scrutiny, pressures and demands for commitments from lobbies. Some were asked at one point whether they would use the Presidential residence to

house people rendered temporarily homeless when their apartment complex was vacated for fire safety reasons. Other equally inappropriate issues were raised with the hapless candidates. Several were asked whether, if elected, they would help empty commodes when officially visiting hospitals. These questions were put, in all seriousness, to candidates running for election to be Ireland's Head of State. Michael D, in his response, restored some perspective (and gained some plaudits) when he stated he would do what the Irish President was expected to do. He will maintain the dignity of the office. Of that we can be sure.

## Martin Hayes, Dennis Cahill Fiddle Concerto

The astonishing fiddle player Martin Hayes and fantastic guitarist Dennis Cahill, premiered Dave Flynn's fiddle concerto Aontacht with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra last year at the National Concert Hall.



(L-R) Martin Hayes, David Flynn and Dennis Cahill. (Photo: Fran Flynn.)

Frisbee Publications has a limited edition score of Aontacht alongside a limited edition score of Music for the Departed, Flynn's moving musical portrait of the grieving process which Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill also premiered with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra and subsequently toured with the Irish Chamber Orchestra in 2011.

These scores are ideal, one of a kind gifts for a discerning music lover and essential study resources for Irish music scholars. A strictly limited number of copies of each score, personally signed with a dedication by the composer, are available at <http://daveflynncomposer.weebly.com/sheet-music.html>.

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## pH Factor

By Pat Hickey



### Patrons – Adopt a Newspaper and Start with *Irish American News*

*When buying and selling are controlled by legislation, the first things to be bought and sold are legislators.*

~P.J. O’Rourke

Why buy a politician or an editorial board? Why, to control the free flow of ideas imposed upon other people and provide an easier access to other people’s savings. People of wealth became so because of some person, or persons of substance who made an impact on this our planet earth. A person of substance is one who made a difference in the lives of other people—built a carburetor, a heart pump, a more elegant piano, an adhesive, PVC pipe, or an idea. Money is good to have and wealth is really good.

Without some money, people are not and can not be very happy. Happiness, the ancient Greeks argued,

was ‘living well.’ The core value is inarguable, but the means of attaining is a cobweb of dispute. Each man seeks to live well in his own way, within the norms and values of his culture and society.

I am perfectly happy never having appeared in a Drag Show, a Drag Race, or a Dragnet. All three repulse me instinctively, morally and ethically, but that is just me. I am not a transvestite NASCAR driver with criminal inclinations. There but for the Grace of God and etc...! I read books, cook and pester my children and lady friend. This lad is happy, because I hang around with generous people.

Generous people support schools, hospitals and causes. The Irish American Community runs 24/7/365 raising money for sick children and families visited by tragedy. No other

community I know takes care of its own like the Irish.

Irish people of wealth support politicians, as well. Politicians need to eat too, I know. However, do they need to leave such a God awful mess when they hit the trough? Catholic Charities, which began its work in the care of children, has been forced out if the foster care service, because of the very politicians we support with our time treasure and talents. Catholic politicians did in Catholic Charities in Illinois. Businesses are leaving Illinois because of politicians—well the smaller ones anyway.

I am not a wealthy man, but a comfortable one. My financial debts are far less than my obligations as father, son, brother, neighbor and citizen. I am a happy man. I have worked not a day in my career as a teacher and Catholic school fundraiser. God has been good to me and I try to give back in some small way by writing—grants, letters of appreciation, long-range planning strategies, op-ed articles, a novel, a history, book reviews and thought pieces here on the pages of the *Irish American News* each month. A widower’s mite to be sure.

There are generous people who support *Irish American News* and

allow real writers like Chris Fogarty, Rachel Gaffney, Rosemary O’Carroll, Shay Clarke, Tom Boyle, Bill Margeson, Deidre Kozicki, Mick Morley, Mike Houlihan, Jim McClure, Frank West, Dr. Sean Callan, Father Mike Leonard and Monsignor Boland to present accurate reflections Irish American Chicago—certainly a diverse rainbow of opinion and perspective.

We get our corporate news pre-packaged and pasteurized, I believe. Newspapers and television seem no more than extensions of politicians and their agendas. They are predictable because they are consumed already, digested and distributed for our consumption. I know exactly what Carol Marin will say before she says it in the *Sun Times*, or on NBC 5 and WTTW. On the other hand, I never know what Mike Houlihan will say next.

Cliff Carlson has me running around in the very tall grass among mighty oaks like Sean Farrell and Charles Brady.

I wish to make my Christmas wish right here and now. I wish, hope and pray for a number of Substantial Persons—persons with wealth a great deal of disposable income—to ignore the purchase or the rent of our elected officials.

They are fatted up nicely by Political Action Committees—PACS and the pension that they larded into Illinois legislation for themselves and the persons and PACS they owe.

This giving season, if you are a real estate mogul you might wish to ignore the political animal that bit your hands after you fed him/her, and make a handsome gift to *Irish American News*.

This giving season, if you have a voice in banking you might wish to see Sen. Milquetoast’s hooks out of your back pocket, with a preemptive benefice bestowed upon Cliff Carlson and the crew of the good ship *IAN*.

This giving season, if you produce a product in Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Michigan, InjeeAnna, or Minnesota, avoid the sharks and jump in the warm and welcoming waters of the *Irish American News*.

My words come without fee and I pray are certainly anything but cheap, I hope that my Christmas Wish is yours as well and that *Irish American News* will have more than a few Patrons—persons of substance—supporting a great gift to everyone each month—under Cliff Carlson’s lighted tree.

*Merry Christmas and God Bless Us!*

# Ireland & Britain



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**iBAM! 2011 Photo Contest Winners**

Pictured from left to right:

**First Place:** Inis Mór by Deirdre Hayes

**Second Place:** Fairy Tree above Killary Fjord, Connemara by Diane Splon

**Third Place:** Shoes by Tara Murphy

**Milwaukee Irish Fest to Present Blarney Christmas Concert 12-17**

*Concert to Feature Irish Seasonal Favorites Performed by Local Irish Folk Band*

Milwaukee Irish Fest presents Blarney Christmas Concert, a special holiday concert featuring local Irish folk band, Blarney, on Saturday December 17, 2011 at 8 p.m. at the Irish Fest Center, located at 1532 Wauwatosa Avenue in Milwaukee, Wis. The event will bring the Celtic Christmas spirit to life through a musical evening of Irish seasonal favorites.

“Irish culture has many unique traditions – and that includes holiday tunes,” said Barry Stapleton, director of the Ward Irish Music Archives at the Irish Fest Center. “The Blarney Christmas Concert is another example of how we continue to share the Irish experience with the Milwaukee community.”

In American culture, no holiday is complete without “Jingle Bells,” “Silent Night” and “White Christmas.” For the Irish, families gather each year to sing “Christmas in Killarney,” “The Wren Song” and “Miss Fogarty’s Christmas Cake.” Seasonal songs like

these, along with other traditional favorites, will be the focus of this event, which benefits the Wauwatosa Food Pantry.

Tickets to the concert are \$10 and can be purchased at the door, or online. Doors open at 7 p.m. Guests are encouraged to bring non-perishable food items to donate. Free parking is available in public lots located across from the Irish Fest Center on the corner of Wauwatosa and Harmonee Avenues and one block south of Harwood on 76th Street (Wauwatosa Avenue). Parking is also available next door in the Church lot. For more information, visit [www.irishfest.com](http://www.irishfest.com) or call (414) 476-3378.

**Forget the Baubles and Beads for Christmas and get Herself what she really wants...**

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And here's a lovely incentive to get you started in the right direction!  
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**Visit a Winter Wonderland at the Holiday Bazaar**

Get into the spirit with the Christmas Bazaar at the Center.

The annual celebration is Sunday, December 4, from 9am to 3pm and includes mass, breakfast, bake sale and a visit

from Santa Claus. The Fifth Province Pub will be open from noon until 6pm.

Mass is celebrated in the Auditorium at 10:30am with music by the Irish Heritage Singers and a traditional Irish breakfast follows in the Erin Room. Breakfast orders are now closed and we can take no more reservations. There is no charge to shop the bazaar.

Holiday shoppers can browse the bazaar, where there will be a craft sale from

Chicago artisans and an Irish-American quilt will be raffled off. There will be an instant raffle with prizes from each of the day's vendors and local Irish import stores. The Fifth Province and first floor will be transformed into a Winter Wonderland, with trees and festive decorations, courtesy of the Nimble Thimbles.

The Bake Shop sells tea, coffee, homemade pies, bread, scones, cakes and cookies. Santa Claus visits from 1-3pm

and will pose for photos with each child.

For more information on the Bazaar, call the Center office at 773-282-7035, ext. 10 or visit [www.irish-american.org](http://www.irish-american.org).



**Shamrock Kids Club Event at the Holiday Bazaar**

Parents, bring the kids for the December Shamrock Kids Club event at the annual Christmas Bazaar.

Along with our family friendly offerings, the Club will feature a crafts table and information on all of its 2012 scheduling. Families can browse the crafts, listen and dance to live music, visit with Santa and more!

Don't miss this great family day and fun way to kick off the holidays!

For more information on the Shamrock Kids Club, email [info@irishahc.org](mailto:info@irishahc.org) or call the Center office at 773-282-7035, ext. 10.



**Holiday Art Exhibit**

Join Irish Artist Mary McSweeney in the Fifth Province on December 9 from 4pm to 9pm for an exhibit and sale of her work.

Her exhibit, *Paintings of Ireland*, is free and open to the public.

**Paintings of Ireland**



**Ring in the New Year with Annual Party**

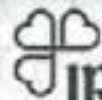
Kick off the New Year in high style with the annual New Year's Eve Party at the Center.

This year, celebrate in the Fifth Province. Doors open at 8pm on December 31, 2011.

Tickets for the party are \$25 in advance for members and \$30 at the door. General admission is \$30 in advance and \$35 at the door and includes dancing, hors d'oeuvres, a champagne toast at midnight, party favors and entertainment by Gerry Haughey and Friends.

Tickets can be purchased at the door or by phone. To reserve tickets or to reserve a table for you and your friends, call the IAHC office, 773-282-7035 ext 10.





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### President's Message

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Christmas and the holidays are a time for hope. This is also the season for peace on Earth and good will toward men. The season also provides time to reflect on all the good of the Irish American Heritage Center. 2011 was an exciting and successful year at the Center. We continue to substantially grow our membership. We continue to make improvement in our finances. We continue to make improvements to make the Center the best Irish American cultural gathering place.

There is so much to be thankful for and so many to be thankful to. To all of you a heartfelt thank-you.

As we ring out 2011 and ring in a welcome 2012, we will be busier than ever at the Center.

Our 2012 New Year's Resolutions are too many to list, but I would like to share a few.

- We will continue to focus on our cultural mission and the vision of our founders. We will invest more resources in our cultural programs and look for new opportunities to add to our cultural programming.

- We will continue to drive the "Members' Culture" at the Center by advantaging our members and implementing strategic and specific plans to grow our membership. Our

members are our strength.

- We will continue to drive the "Volunteers' Culture" at the Center. We will work hard to add to our great volunteer pool and work even harder to constantly thank the volunteers we have.

- We will continue to ask you to support the Center with the Annual Appeal, Membership Renewal, the Annual Raffle and we will staff our Development Committee that will help us further strengthen our future.



- We will continue to strengthen our financial outlook through specific "Best Practices", cost control, measurement, organizational efficiency and new revenue sources.

- We will continue to offer the programs and events you expect and have become fond of and we will add new events and programs.

- We will continue building improvements to our home.

- We will work in a transparent environment that openly encourages information sharing and open communication. Town Hall meetings

will continue to help you help us at the Center.

- We will reach out to partners, organizations and others to help us increase our Chicago footprint while we maintain our respected worldwide presence.

- We will work to measurably increase attendance at all our events including our cultural events as well as our more social events.

There are more resolutions but I hope the above helps display the excitement 2012 will bring. Please continue to be a part of the 2012 excitement.

Perhaps you would like to make your New Year's Resolutions for the Center and share those with me so I can incorporate them into our 2012. I look forward to hearing from you. My e-mail is [jgorski@irishahc.org](mailto:jgorski@irishahc.org) and my cell phone # is 630-272-3612.

The Center will continue to strengthen, grow and prosper in 2012. You have my word on that.

My wife Mary and I wish you and yours Merry Christmas and warm, holy and Happy Holidays!

## Annual Appeal

We need your help with the Center's Annual Appeal.

Each year at this time, we ask our members and friends to help the Center by making a donation.

Your donation is very important to the operation and success of the Center. The Annual Appeal is a very important element of our overall funding. We thank you for your contributions, past and present, and urge to once again think of the Center and make a donation. We are working hard to preserve Irish heritage and provide our members and friends with the events and programming you have come to expect from the Center.

Once again, Pat and Peggy Burke will continue their Burke Matching Challenge.

We will continue to accept donations to the Appeal through 2012 and will list contribution through our March 2012 issue.

**President's Club**  
(\$5,000+)  
Pat and Peggy Burke

**Director's Circle**  
(\$2,500-\$4,999)  
Dave and Gloria Dooley  
Tom and Cathy Joyce, in memory of Tom and Anne Joyce  
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Jeannette McLysaght, in  
memory of Frank McLysaght  
Donald L. Mahoney  
Herbert K. Miller  
Thomas J. Moriarty  
Thomas Mulvihill  
Maureen Neylon  
Mr. and Mrs. Patrick O'Connor  
Gerald L. O'Donnell  
Annabell V. O'Malley  
Mary Phee  
J. Blair Raftree  
John and Barbara Savage  
Eva Sheehan  
Maureen Vaughn  
James F. Ward  
Patricia Young

*Thank You All!*

### Wish List

**We wish all Members would:**

- Give to the Annual Appeal
- Support our groups and committees by attending their events
- Volunteer in 2012!
- Visit our Library and Attend Genealogy Meetings
- Have a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season



**THE HERITAGE LINE**  
 IRISH AMERICAN  
 heritage center Chicago, Illinois



[WWW.IRISH-AMERICAN.ORG](http://WWW.IRISH-AMERICAN.ORG)

**Make a New Year's Resolution  
 to Volunteer in 2012!**

We seek volunteers for help with concerts and special events, to assist with building work, to help with our Golden Diners Program and help with administrative work in the main office. If you would like to lend a hand, call Kathy O'Neill at 773-282-7035, ext. 13 or email [info@irishahc.org](mailto:info@irishahc.org).



*Audrey Murphy and Tom McNamara*

**Visit our New  
 Welcome and Sales Center!**

We opened our new Welcome and Sales Center on December 1 and feature gifts and items from Maureen O'Looney's Shamrock Imports shop. You can also purchase

tickets to concerts and events and drop in for Center news and a cup of tea. The Sales and Welcome Center is located on the first floor, across from the Main Office.

**Culture Corner**

**Visit the IAHC Library**

• for research and lending of our extensive collection, book signings, lectures and activities

**the Genealogy Club**

• for monthly meetings on finding your roots

**the Art Gallery**

• for Exhibits, lectures and art classes

**and the Museum**

• for our collection and special exhibits

**Love to sing, dance or create?**

The Irish Heritage Singers rehearse each Thursday night at 7:30pm. To join this lively and talented group, call 773-282-7035 ext.34 or e-mail [irishheritagesingers@irishahc.org](mailto:irishheritagesingers@irishahc.org).

**Love to céili dance or want to learn?** The Francis O'Neill Club meets every Friday night at the IAHC.

A Céili Mor (Big Céili) is held the first Fridays of each month. Free lessons begin at 7:30pm, followed by live music with The Ceoltoiri Chicago Céili Band from 8:30-11:30pm. in the Fifth Province. The cost is \$10.

Regular Céilís are held the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, or 5th Fridays of each month, with taped music from 8pm-11pm. The cost is \$5 for Francis O'Neill Club members and \$7 for non-members.

**Nimble Thimbles** is a group of busy quilters and skilled artisans who needlepoint, crochet, knit and sew in an established workshop. The group meets Tuesdays at 9:30am and Wednesdays at 7:30pm in Room 205. If you would like to be a part of the group, contact Nancy Liston at 773-282-7035, ext 10.

**An bhfuil Gaeilge agat? = Got Gaelic?**

Join Na Gaeil for classes to learn the Irish language. Saturday classes meet 11am-1:30pm. Wednesday classes meet 7pm-9:30pm.

For information on the next beginners and intermediate class semesters, call the office.

**HOURS**

**Genealogy Monthly Meetings**

The last Sunday of every month at 1pm (except December)

**Museum**

Call our office for a docent led 45 minute tour

**Art Gallery**

Special exhibits throughout the year

**Library**

Mondays and Wednesdays - 4-8pm

Tuesdays and Thursdays 10-1 pm

Friday closed

Saturday 9-3pm

Sunday open on the 2nd and last Sunday of the month

**Center Members and Friends Enjoy Their "Hunt for Green October"**

The Center's first tour to Ireland this past October proved to be a huge success! 49 people boarded the Aer Lingus Flight to Ireland and enjoyed a 6 day CIE Sightseeing Tour through Galway, Killarney and Dublin.

Tour participants included Board Member Bob McNamara, past Board Member Mary Gorski, members of the Larkin and Moran Brothers Band and many more members, family and friends!

The group was treated to music and song throughout the course of the trip, and evening performances by the Larkin and Moran Brothers were arranged at

local pubs throughout the course of the week. Highlights included a visit to a family-owned sheep farm for freshly baked scones and tea, a visit to the 6th Century Gallarus Oratory, as well as an intimate demonstration of craftsmen designing and cutting crystal at the Connemara Celtic Crystal factory.

Tour members all came back with high praises for their CIE Tour Guide, Brian Hanrahan, for his wealth of knowledge, gift of humor, gab and song. The group is already looking forward to the next tour!





# THE HERITAGE LINE

## Irish American Heritage Center

Chicago, Illinois



WWW.IRISH-AMERICAN.ORG

### December 2011

Dec. 2	Francis O'Neill Ceili Mor	Fifth Province	8pm
Dec. 3	Shamrock American Club Social	Sham Amer Rm	8pm
Dec. 7	Tir Na Nog Christmas Party	Fifth Province	11am
Dec. 9	Mary McSweeney Art Exhibit	Fifth Province	4pm
	New Member Party	Fifth Province	7pm
Dec. 10	St. Patrick's Fathers Social	Room 310	8pm
Dec. 17	Roscommon Club Dance	Room 310	8pm
Dec. 18	Shamrock American Club Christmas Party	5th Province	10am
<b>Dec. 24</b>	<b>Building Closed</b>		
<b>Dec. 25</b>	<b>Building Closed</b>		
<b>Dec. 26</b>	<b>Building Closed</b>		
Dec. 31	New Year's Eve Party (cover)	Fifth Province	8pm



### Regularly Scheduled Events

Tues., Thurs., Fri., & Sat.	Golden Diners Senior Lunches	Kitchen	12:30pm-2pm
Dec. 1-18	Seanachai Theatre's <i>St. Nicholas</i>	3rd Floor Theatre	8pm Thursdays, Fridays & Sundays 5pm & 8pm Saturdays

## Fifth Province News

Our Friday Night Family Fish Fry continues this winter. Come by for unlimited Fish and

Chips from 6pm to 8pm each week. The cost is \$11 for Center Members and \$12 for Guests and Visitors.



## the fifth province

### UPCOMING ENTERTAINMENT

All shows start after 9 p.m.

#### DECEMBER 2011

Fri, 12/2	Ceili Mor
Sat, 12/3	In Spite of Ourselves
Fri, 12/9	Mulligan Stew
Sat, 12/10	The Dooley Brothers
Fri, 12/16	Joe McShane
Sat, 12/17	Kathleen Bremer and Joe McShane
Fri, 12/24	Closed
Fri, 12/30	Seamus O'Kane and Jimmy Moore
<b>Sat, 12/31</b>	<b>New Year's Eve Party 8pm (cover)</b>



Free Parking

Drop by for the very best in traditional and modern Irish music.

Check out our live music session each Thursday night at 8pm, led by the students and teachers of the Irish Music School of Chicago

## BECOME A MEMBER

Chicago boasts one of the finest Irish Centers in the world. Become a part of it.

Running, maintaining, and upgrading the Center is a big job that takes big commitment.

Your membership helps make the Center happen.

To join call 773-282-7035 x10, visit [www.irish-american.org](http://www.irish-american.org), or fill out the form below. Send payment to:

**The Irish American Heritage Center Membership**  
4626 N. Knox Ave  
Chicago IL 60630

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp \_\_\_\_\_

3 Digit code on card's back: \_\_\_\_\_

### Individual Membership

#### Annual dues

\$30/year or \$50/2 years

#### Family Membership

\$40/year or \$60/2 years

#### \$250 - Harper

3-year membership

no annual dues

#### \$500 - Bard

5-year membership

no annual dues

\$1,000 - Chieftain

10-year membership without annual dues

\$2,500 - High King

25-year membership without annual dues

\$5,000 - Saint

Lifetime membership without annual dues



If you have an iPhone and the Kaywa Quick Response Code Reader App, scan the code to the right and be taken directly to the Irish American Heritage Center website!



### Follow us on Facebook and Twitter

For updates on upcoming events and ticket giveaways, follow the IAHC on



Facebook and Twitter



### The Heritage Line Staff

Kathleen O'Neill, Editor

#### Contributors:

Cathy Featherstone  
Mary Morris

John Gorski  
Sheila Murphy

Mary Gorski  
Kevin O'Kennedy

Mary Griffin

4626 N. Knox Ave., Chicago, IL 60630 • 773-282-7035



# The Irish Rover

By James McClure



## The Funny Side of Poverty

Like many of my generation, I am suffering through the full fruits of the Recession. And it’s usually fruit in a can from the local food pantry.

Somewhere between the job interview at the (insert business locale of hourly wage job here) where the supervisor inevitably says “What’s a guy who went to Notre Dame doing applying here?!” and the local gas station where I show up with a giant mug of coins the day before payday to count out enough currency to get to work, it dawns on me that these are pretty tough times indeed.

Graced with what others say is incomparable talent with the pen and a wonderful knack for riding several industry *Titanics* down into the cashflow death whirlpool (television news, public relations/advertising and print journalism), I have to admit I’ve pretty much hit financial rock bottom.

Nothing left on the credit cards. The third and final Annual Draining of the 401K. The nostalgic Second Agreement with The IRS This Decade to Pay Installments on 401K Payouts.

There’s no getting around it... after several years of cutting everything imaginable in the budget I’m making just enough to not quite make it—while feeling the gentle fluid push of rising gas prices that drown me in the fuel costs that make up more than half my outflow, beneath rent and utilities nearing half my inflow.

We’re approaching the three year mark where my last economic bubble burst, a well-paying public relations job where my executive salary was augmented by a big raise that was highlighted by a big layoff two months later (probably due in part to said big raise, though half of my colleagues also got the shiv over the coming year).

Brimming with faith and confidence in the January 2009 sub-zero weather I strode toward the local Denny’s the day after with my cheeks blushing not from the cold but from my taking advantage of a free meal offered nationally to anyone without a job.

The smile faded a bit when the long line I was in suddenly broke up and re-formed into a smaller one as the manager called out that too many people had come but he would offer a voucher for a few dollars off a future meal as he handed out those coupons. I remember this clearly as I saw the last one given out just ahead of me after ten more minutes of waiting. “Sorry... that’s it!”

Raising my collar and turning back toward my car I noticed several things. First, the sun had gone down as it tends to do on cold winter afternoons. Secondly, I recalled less than 24 hours before trudging through the snow about this time in the post workday carrying heavy boxes filled with the last remains of my last workday. Third that bold and cheery smile was gone.

Driving home I noticed that gas had fallen to below 2 dollars a gallon from its 4 dollar high in 2008 the year before. Thank goodness for small mercies, I thought to myself. Take a look at your local gas price this week to see how that brief hope worked out.

Sometimes things are so bad you just have to laugh. Here’s a few games I play to get by:

### 1. Spot The Security Guard

On your way back from church on Sunday (another great way to keep going) see if you can spot another brave soul trying to get by with one of the few jobs aging Baby Boomer males can get with little training, a dose of integrity and a lot of food pantry support. It’s easy, just check out the parking lot of every moderate sized factory or larger corporate headquarters along the expressway. Spot the one car with three hubcaps, either a 1980’s Toyota or relatively new Kia fueled by a combination of kimchi and a drive powered by hamsters on a wheel fed by the cash from your gas guzzling trade-in.

You lose the game outright if you pick the new BMW sport coupe by the executive entrance. That’s the marketing exec spending his Sunday cutting a deal with China to buy the last of the products he outsourced to Mexico from the American plant he shut down with technical assistance from the Indian IT firm.

### 2. Education en Español por Pesos

I refuse to bemoan my cutting out cable 2 years back. If I time it right I

can catch the Movie of the Week on the color set at the local 24 hour laundromat. Let other men cry over the fact that one of my Notre Dame classmates from Spanish class is a star on ESPN and other network TV. While she rises in the broadcast medium, I’m enjoying *Rocky III* in Spanish on Telemundo because I; a) didn’t date half the football team, and b) I paid attention in Mr. Richardson’s Spanish class at O’Shaughnessy Hall.

### 3. How Low Can You Go?

Enjoy this luncheon limbo anytime you’re fresh back from the gas station with enough fuel for the underpaid overqualified hourly job commute.

All you need is; 1) no money in your wallet, 2) no money in the bank after your last 26% APR minimum credit card payment, and 3) a realization that you (phew!) made it another pay period without declaring bankruptcy. I’ll cheat and give you the answer:

Breakfast: One instant oatmeal.

One Chef Boyardee Ravioli Can for Lunch in the company breakroom microwave

One Obscure Food Pantry Brand Box of Mac and Cheese for Dinner.

Add plenty of water drunk at intervals and the knowledge that tomorrow is another day. And payday at that!

*IrishRoverJim@aol.com.*

## Opening of National Shrine of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini Slated for 2012

The Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus converged at the chapel of the former Columbus Hospital in Chicago on Thursday, November 17 to commence construction and restoration of the National Shrine of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini. Sister Joan McGlinchey, on behalf of The Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, proudly announced that the Shrine will open its doors to the public in the fall of 2012.

“The reopening of the Shrine provides a remarkable opportunity for Chicagoans and those devoted to Mother Cabrini to be spiritually

tirelessly for the past decade to ensure the restoration of the chapel and the opening of the Shrine came to fruition. Neighbours and friends, including partners from Kelly Construction, Father Kenneth Simpson, Pastor of St. Clement Parish, and Father Ted Ploplis, coordinator of spiritual services at St. Joseph Hospital and the expected rector of The National Shrine of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini, were also on-hand to commence the restoration.

Once reopened, the Shrine will feature a garden grotto and a sacred space adorned with many of Mother Cabrini’s personal belongings. The



Photo by Charles Osgood.

renewed and deepen their relationship with God,” said Sister Joan McGlinchey. “We are pleased to introduce a new generation to this holy woman who lived, worked and died in Chicago. She is a modern day Saint who made a difference in the lives of so many through her life and mission,” Sr. McGlinchey adds.

The Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus were joined at the ceremonial groundbreaking by the law firm of Ruff, Weidenaar & Reidy; Ricker Murphy Development; and the architectural firm of Sullivan, Goulette & Wilson, all of whom have worked

Shrine will offer those who visit an opportunity to experience God’s love, and be a center for prayer, worship, reflection and learning about the life and holiness of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini, the Universal Patron Saint of Immigrants and the first American citizen to be Canonized. In her lifetime, Mother Cabrini founded a total of 67 institutions, including schools, orphanages, hospitals and parish ministries on three continents. Locally she founded three hospitals, including the former Columbus Hospital, the exact site where the Shrine is located.

[www.cabrinishrinechicago.com](http://www.cabrinishrinechicago.com).

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## iBAM! 2011 Poetry Contest

### Winners

#### First Place:

##### Belief

By Ruby Hoy

Seventeen degrees atop  
the Shenandoah Mountain,  
sun shines a day past  
the Winter Solstice.  
Surely, slowly,  
we move to the light.  
Spring is a promise  
even the faithless  
can believe in.

#### Second Place Tie (in no particular order):

##### Hurrah

By Jerry O'Neill

I graduated from High School in 1963,  
And my Uncle told me travel was just the thing for me,  
So he sent me to Paris, the island, not the country,  
Where I earned a Ph.D., in the fine art of gruntry.

I was sent to a hovel, they call Viet Nam,  
With my new occupation. to maim and to bomb,  
To destroy all in sight, to kill or be killed,  
For my own preservation, I quick became skilled.

To spend every night, just a heartbeat from hell,  
To see napalm flashing, and life's ending smell,

To be transformed from a man, to some jungle beast,  
The metamorphosis once started, never did cease.

We were finally shipped, carried, or air-freighted back home,  
To desk jobs, to factories and to filthy, hopeless ghettos,  
With one thing in common, our flashback mementos,  
Of unseen enemy, both here and abroad,  
To have been used as pawns, in a national fraud,

With gifts from both sides, our sweet dreams of Charlie,  
And quaint little rashes, from the Agent Orange folly.  
A decade and change, has plodded on by,  
But cold sweats rekindle, as the sun leaves the sky,

When again we sojourn down, our own nightmare alley,  
Dreaming of buddies left there, and a lieutenant named Calley,  
Trudging through slop, and human remains,  
As an unrelenting sun, scrambled our brains

The incredible damn, dank humid heat,  
The short-timers blown into large chunks of meat,  
The children, the destruction, the mindless fragging,  
The freeze frames won't stop, they just keep on dragging.

When we came home, there was no parade,  
Just an incredibly ridiculous, national charade,  
In place of confetti, we were welcomed with spit,  
By mindless morons, too small to hit.

We were finally given recognition, in the form of a wall,  
Where we would sit, stand or kneel, but mostly would bawl  
The tears from our eyes, cleansed the stain from our souls,  
And raised our dead brothers, from their unconsecrated holes  
We're all better now America, no problem here,  
As we daily blow our brains out, with chemicals and beer,  
We weren't allowed to assimilate, when we slithered back across  
the foam,  
We learned they just don't make wars like they used to,  
'WHEN JOHNNY CAME MARCHING HOME'.

#### Open Soul

By Janet Gannon Bieschke

Bless me Father, for I have sinned.  
I didn't tell my Mother and  
I didn't tell my Priest.  
But I did it.

I started with the confessional lies.  
It was right after my first confession.  
I wanted exciting sins  
So I lied and made up good ones.

I think Father knew I must be exaggerating  
But he listened and gave me my penance.  
Next week would bring the sin of adultery  
Who knew I couldn't do that at ten?

I did not steal the cookies and  
I did not start the egg fight in the henhouse.  
You know that my brother Pat did both.

You know that I took the punishment.  
I still have the finger scars from the butcher knife spanking.  
I should not have put my hand back to cover my backside.  
You know that Mom was sorry.

Then I did it. I switched.  
I didn't do things I should have.  
I did many things I should not have.  
I did not confess.

I still do not confess to the Priest.  
I know, and I know that You know.  
You are always with me.  
Some times I hope you look away.  
But I know that You do know.  
And even if now sometimes Pat gets my punishment,  
We both know  
I did it.

## St. Nicholas Production to Benefit Seanachai Theatre Company and Shanghai Low Theatricals

"When I was a boy, I was afraid of the dark... what was there.

And maybe one of the things I thought was there was vampires."

An acerbic Dublin theatre critic falls prey to a cabal of vampires in *St. Nicholas*, Conor McPherson's macabre 1997 tale of one soul's self-inflicted thirst.



Steve Pickering - the solo performer in *St. Nicholas*, a veteran of the *Goodman*, *Broadway* and *London's West End*.



Matt Miller directs *St. Nicholas*.

*St. Nicholas* opens for a limited run December 1st to December 18th in the Seanachai space, the 3rd Floor Theatre of the Irish American Heritage Center, 4626 N. Knox in Chicago. *St. Nicholas* runs for only three weeks, and is a benefit production for Seanachai Theatre Company And Shanghai Low Theatricals.

www.seanachai.org or call (866) 811-4111

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# The Irish Connection



By Colleen Kelly



## Savoring the Holiday Season

Every Christmas, my husband and I have our annual tradition which breaks up the hectic holiday schedule. We truly try to enjoy the feeling of entire holiday splendor. After a day of gallivanting around town, we top it off with a dinner at a restaurant loaded with tons of holiday spirit.



Chicago Cut's David Flom and Matt Moore

getting in touch with the real spirit before it is over. We like to hop on a train and spend the day in downtown Chicago checking out the city in its

This year we decided to head over to Daley Plaza to check out the enormous Christmas tree and to stroll around Christkindlmarket (the

German-inspired open air holiday market 312.494.217 christkindlmarket.com). Needing a little warm-up, we grabbed a steaming cup of traditional Glühwein (warm red wine) and walked around the market while taking in all the international decorations and tempting treats.

We also have this fun tradition (and wager) to find the CTA's annual Holiday Train. The holiday 'L' train is a beautiful sight with its thousands of twinkling lights and open-air flatbed with a real life Santa passing out candy canes and waving to kids of all ages. First one to spot the train gets to pick the restaurant we will next visit in January.

Having lost the competition last year, I was determined to be the first one to spot this year's holiday train. After searching all afternoon, neither one of us had any luck. Even though I was a little disappointed, we still enjoyed the day especially with the warmth of the Glühwein. After it wore off, we jumped in a cab and headed to our chosen restaurant, Chicago Cut Steakhouse.

Being of Irish descent and a real meat and potatoes gal, I couldn't wait to try this new restaurant. It has everyone talking, including many notable Chicagoans and some very well-known celebs.

Named by Crain's and Esquire magazine as one the "best new restaurants in 2011", this high-end, yet comfortable, steakhouse is filled with excitement. Although the restaurant is frequented by many celebs and sports personalities, the warm and friendly atmosphere in which I was greeted by Pat, the Maitre d, and the Chicago Cut staff, made me feel perfectly at home.

Gone are the dark rooms and light-

ing of traditional steakhouses. This modern Chicago Cut Steakhouse boasts floor to ceiling windows and gorgeous views of the Chicago River and skyline with the quintessential 'L' train set in the background.

Mulling over the many appetizer choices on the menu, I made sure

Fresh Shucked Corn. My favorite was a toss-up between the Truffle Scalloped Potatoes (again, the Irish potato obsession) and the Shitake and Crimini Mushrooms. The Bone-In Filet Mignon, prepared under the direction of Head Chef Jackie Chen, was so tender and delicious that I



I was going to try an Irish dish. I chose the Lollipop Lamb Chops. My husband decided on the Jumbo Lump Crab and Avocado appetizer. The server graciously divided both appetizers so we could sample them both. The Lollipop Lamb Chops were expertly prepared and the crab and avocado appetizer were fresh and delicious.

Since I am a bona-fide meat and potatoes girl, I chose for my main entrée one of the mouthwatering dry-aged prime steaks. Good choice, don't you think?

The Chicago Cut Bone-In Filet Mignon was my selection. My husband chose the Bone-In NY Strip. Our side dishes were served family-style so we ordered the Shitake and Crimini Mushrooms, Truffle Scalloped Potatoes, Hash Browns, and

hardly needed a knife to cut it. While we were there we got to meet the Managing Partners, Irish-born Matt Moore and David Flom. They couldn't have been more friendly and welcoming. With their attention to detail, these two hardworking owners have been the key to the well-deserved success of Chicago Cut Steakhouse.

My favorite holiday moment came at the end of the evening. I felt enveloped in this beautiful glass Christmas-box restaurant and was beginning to get in touch with the special magic of this time of year. Stunning city views, mouthwatering steak and ruby-red cabernet... does it get any better than this?

Glancing out the window, my eyes could not comprehend what I was seeing. Could it be what I thought it was? In the distance, across the twinkling Chicago skyline, was THE Holiday Train, all decked out with thousands of lights and a jolly ol' white-bearded man exhilaratingly waving and smiling. Ok... bring it on... the holiday season has officially begun and I am ready!

Since I won the wager on the Holiday Train, I think I will pick BRUNCH in January at Chicago Cut. I am betting my husband will agree.

Chicago Cut Steakhouse is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner and is located at 300 North LaSalle in Chicago. (312.329.1800 chicagocutsteakhouse.com) To catch the 'L' Holiday Train in November and December, go to transitchicago.com/holidaytrain.

Colleen Kelly can be reached by email through Travel Film Productions at info@travelfilmproductions.com (Please reference Irish American News).

# WANNA PLAY?

Young musicians come together to play Irish Music... and have a great time too!

The Academy of Irish Music students meet once a week at the Irish-American Heritage Center in Chicago. Students are divided into beginner, intermediate, and senior groups based on ability and experience. The children come from all over the the Metropolitan area. Most of them participate in school bands and orchestras; many are Suzuki trained. These kids enjoy playing Irish music and making new friends.



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(847) 564-1338 • nrice@interaccess.com  
www.academyofirishmusic.org



at the Irish American Heritage Center | 4626 North Knox Ave, Chicago, IL

## Heather A. Begley



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Website: www.kroll-lawfirm.com Blog: www.chicagoaccidentinjurylawyer.com



## Careers

By James F. Fitzgerald, CPA



you are an accident waiting to happen.

(5.) Starting an exercise program at any age can be a life saver.

In my view, if you don't have a spiritual component in your life, you are really missing something vitally important to your health on all levels; mental, physical and psychological. We need to integrate our spiritual needs into our schedule. If we don't have that balance in our lives, why are we even concerned about our career?

**#4. Finances.** I would not presume to tell you how to deal with your finances. I would however presume to suggest to you that you find a trustworthy financial advisor. Deal with someone who you have learned to trust. There are a lot of charlatans out there, but there are also a great number of smart, competent advisors who can help you navigate our current financial crisis. Yes, their services may cost you some money, but if you have picked well you will be rewarded by your choice.

Don't spend what you don't have. Don't charge some major expenditures because you "think" some business or bonus is coming your way. Think carefully before you sign anything that endangers your financial position. There are a million books on finances including *Finances for Dummies*. Find a resource that works for you.

If these four touchstones (Family, Career, Health and Finances) are important to you, please weigh carefully every major decision in light of its effect on one or more of these key elements. START paying attention to these four touchstones NOW (at the latest, January 1, 2012).

*All my very best wishes for you and yours in 2012. Carpe Diem.*

**\*\*NOTE:** Prepare a list of your 2011 achievements and put it in your career file for future reference.

*James F. Fitzgerald is the president of James F. Fitzgerald & Associates, Inc., an Oak Brook, IL-based senior executive coaching and career transition firm. Email: jamesffitz37@hotmail.com Web-site: jamesffitzgeraldassociates.com. Phone: 630-684-2204.*

should acquire? If so, how should you arrange that opportunity? As an experienced outplacement consultant, I am distressed to see how many job seekers simply want to find a job. Far too often, they haven't done their research about the company they are considering.

I had an email just before drafting this article from a former outplacement client. In essence he learned that his new employer gives good raises; what he didn't find out is how often they give out raises. He has since learned that it has been four years since the company gave any raises.

**#3. Health.** What kind of shape are you in? No, honestly! If you are beyond one of those threshold years (you decide which one), you should be getting an annual physical. Physicals don't automatically make you healthier, but they allow your medical professional to have important benchmarks for future reference. Virtually every illness that is detected earlier, rather than later, is more likely to be cured, limited or controlled more effectively. When medical people say "early detection" is key to a complete cure, they have the statistics to back it up.

Regardless of what illness or malady that may surface in your physical, you are better off knowing than not knowing. Once you know the problem, you can address it more knowledgeably. I claim no expertise whatsoever in medical sciences, but I would still suggest a few things:

- (1.) If you smoke, stop.
- (2.) If you drink excessively, stop; if you drive drunk, you could die much earlier than expected.
- (3.) If you ignore telltale signs of medical problems, you are behaving foolishly.
- (4.) If you use "recreational" drugs,



(L-R) Justice Anne Burke, Ed McElroy and Allen Rafelson. Ed McElroy, host of Community in Focus TV show, recently interviewed Justice Anne Burke of the Illinois Supreme Court and Allen Rafelson, President of the Chicago Journalists Association.

## Will 2012 Be A Better Year For You?

Rather than create a laundry list of "Do Nots" that will dictate your conduct in 2012, consider an alternative approach. Let me suggest resolutions for each of the four major elements in your life: Family, Career, Health and Finances.

**#1. Family.** How well will you interact with your family this year? Where does your family rank on your list of priorities? Do your career needs trump your family needs, occasionally or regularly? Do you allow your boss(es) to control your life to the nth degree? We all understand that many companies want to be assured that their employees are committed to the goals of the corporation. But in our current economic environment with downsizings and restructurings, does it make sense for you to be totally committed to the demands of corporate life? Have you ever heard of a person on their death bed commenting on how they should have spent more time at the office?

As a father with four adult children, I can assure you that you don't get a "do over" with your children. You are either "present" to them or if absent, you become irrelevant. For confirmation of this reality, watch returning military personnel talking about what family events they missed while deployed.

Many of us build our "work out" times into our calendars. We need to do the same with our family commitments. Always start with the belief that you can make that important (to your child) event. And then do your very best to make it happen.

**#2. Career.** Are you really taking the appropriate steps to enhance your career? How many books relative to your career have you read this past year? Have you taken any type of educational course that will increase your understanding of your business? We are in the midst of a knowledge explosion, so that which you learned in college, ten or twelve years ago may already be irrelevant.

At a recent seminar I attended, the speaker said that the information an engineering student learns in freshman year will be obsolete by the time the student graduates.

Have you actually "thought" about your career? Have you taken the time to carefully look at your career track, whether you stay with your current employer or not? Are there experiences within your company that you

## Nut Hollow, the Knife and Nefairious

This is an epic Irish fantasy adventure set along the magical North Antrim Coast. It tells the tale of the fairies of Nut Hollow, an idyllic spot at the foot of the field where the river runs. They have lived happily these many years with only the occasional worry but all of a sudden worry is going to knock loudly upon their doors.

Nefairious, the fairy gone bad is back, and he's in no mood for handshakes or cups of tea. He plans to claim Nut Hollow as his own and release his dastardly father, Neroh, from captivity in the Fairy Thorn.

And so into this fairy war are thrown two little human girls, who today are down at the foot of the field as usual looking for an adventure. Little did they know that an adventure was looking for them!

Many introductions later and with no little urgency Katie and Dara befriend the put upon fair-



ies and swear to help them. But will it be enough—what with the fussy old salmon, Saroist, the notoriously short tempered seal, Rachary, the evil crow Préak and a host of other animals and fairies thrown together in this battle for survival and journey of a lifetime?

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# Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady



## A Master Class in Back Stabbing

What an illness-inducing month that was. No, it wasn't because of the mercifully concluded Presidential election. Hell, that was just a distraction, the kind of age-old "Bread and Circuses" guff that is spouted to take the minds of the voters from the real issues of the day. Imaginary assassination attempts; gay scandals; an ex-terrorist running for High Office: these were all just part of the fun while we cheered on for an office that doesn't make a blind bit of difference and which carries not an iota of political power. This was something else entirely.

Just when you think that your dislike for politicians can't get any more intense, what do you get inflicted with but a relentless feeding frenzy as Fianna Fail ministers turned on their own ex leader? Even a battle-hardened scrapper like Brian Cowen must have been in shock as he watched his erstwhile ministers—people that he himself had appointed to their well-paid jobs—turn on him with utter ruthlessness and just well, blame him for everything.

It was as nauseating a sight as I've seen in quite some time. There were the likes of his successor Micheál Martin, Willie O'Dea, Mary O'Rourke and the appalling Mary Hanafin coming out from under their stones like the woodlice they are in order to try to do a belated damage limitation exercise. Well, how did that work out for you lot? You may have thought that you were presenting yourselves in a good light—you must have—but that only goes to show how blissfully un-self aware you creeps are; because to the public you just came across as sleeven, slithery backstabbers who couldn't be trusted to give an honest answer if your mother's lives depended on it.

I have put the boot into Brian Cowen

in this column and in others more times than I care to remember. I was doing it before it was fashionable because I thought that he was doing a lousy job—even though I often mentioned that he inherited an impossible situation from that brazen liar who was on watch before him, Bertie Ahern. This bunch, however: they accepted their highly paid positions, backed him up and worked under him with hardly a squeak. Now that the reputation of their rotten party is so far in the dirt, they must have gotten together and decided that they needed a scapegoat. Well, it just shows what geniuses they are. I'm not the only one who felt sympathy for Brian Cowen as he was mercilessly put through the ringer this month. Jeez, even the fact that he likes a pint came into it.

These are the same people who backed him up to the hilt after it was suggested that he was hung over during an interview the morning after the infamous Galway Think Tank. What a shower of unreconstructed bloody hypocrites they have shown themselves to be. Mary Hanafin and Willie O'Dea in particular came out looking like cowardly, craven chancers. Both appear now to have been horrified by the Bank Bailout of 2008. This was where they all helped us to sign away what is so far around €500 billion.

An almost gleeful Hanafin told us: "Ministers were told that it was the only option to protect people's money and it had to be done before the markets opened."

O'Dea had a crisis of conscience: "It was probably the most far reaching decision I have ever participated in, in my five years in cabinet and I would have liked to have sat around the table to discuss it."

"The government did not have a

mandate for the banking guarantee. In retrospect, it would have been better for the country if a fresh government had come to power at that stage."

Get away with you! You didn't have a mandate to bail out the banks? Hell, I'm not a big financial brain like you guys and I knew that. As for a new government coming along you would have fought tooth and nail to keep your jobs. You people despise the electorate! You despise us!

My father always told me it was a sin to hate someone, so it's as well he's not alive to read this: I hate you lot as much as you hate us; but I want to thank you for partially showing us your true loathsome colours this month. You are nothing but a gang of yobs who didn't have the guts to confront your boss at the time, preferring instead to wait until he was gone.

As if that wasn't enough to make the gorge rise, we were also treated to a glimpse of the pensions that some of these spectacular failures are on.

Step forward, Ray Burke: in the years since Burke was released from prison after serving time on corruption charges he's been pocketing €3,838 a year. Who says crime doesn't pay?

Galway's own pride and joy, Frank Fahey—the man with the most interesting (and huge) property portfolio in Ireland—is scraping by on €2,141.

Good old Death's Head Mary Harney herself is on a total of €29,805, a well earned "thank you" for turning our health service into one of the most feared in Europe.

The ghastly John O'Donoghue, booted out for his ridiculous global travelling expenses and the sin of being caught is still able to get around a bit on €19,177.

There's much more; however, I have to wrap this up while I figure out how to pay this month's electricity bill. (And I'm not kidding.)

Still, I must mention the man without whom no list of gougers and chancers would be complete: you guessed it, trumping them all is Bertie Ahern on a total of €52,331, which of course doesn't take into account his after dinner bore-fests. Ah Bertie, as you once said yourself, you truly are Ireland's last socialist.

chasbrady7@eircom.net

## Hooliganism at O'Donovan's

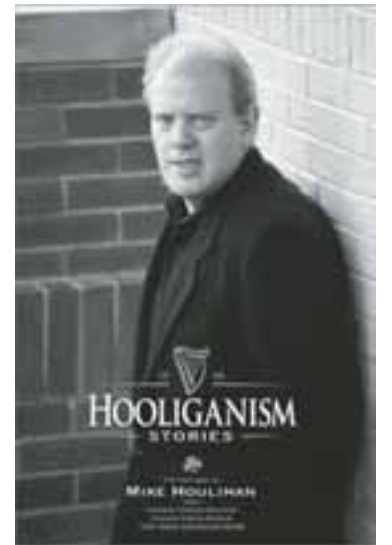
On Wednesday December 21st, *Irish American News* columnist Mike Houlihan will hold court at O'Donovan's Bar on West Irving Park Road to tell some stories, sign, and sell his book *Hooliganism*. The fun begins at 6pm and Houlihan will tell some Christmas stories from his book as well.

Mike Houlihan is a former features columnist for *The Chicago Sun-Times*, co-host of the immensely popular Irish radio program, *The Skinny & Houli Show*, and a filmmaker whose work has been broadcast on WTTW and at film festivals all over the country. He has written his humor column, *Hooliganism*, for the *Irish American News* since 1996.

Stop into O'Donovan's for some *Hooliganism* and finish your Christmas shopping with Houli while having a few beers and dinner. They're having their half-price meat loaf dinner special that night for only \$6.95 and all you can eat meatloaf for \$10.95.

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favorite comfort food, daily food & drink specials, a giant beer garden &



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O'Donovan's is located at 2100 West Irving Park Road in Chicago. Call 773-478-2100 for more information.

Hope to see you at O'Donovan's for some holiday cheer with Houli.

## Wexford's Double All Ireland Camogie Champions Launch Fashion Calendar

Striking images of the Wexford All-Ireland champions looking as glamorous outfits stylish as professional models - and not a hurley in sight.

The girls were treated to professional make up by Yvonne Maher, hair by Martina Higgins from Unique Hair Design and styled by Peig Donegan of Tresor boutique at Rathwood. "It was a chance for them to shine but in a different way to what they are used to, to glam up and they looked sensational," says Peig.



The official launch night was an opportunity to meet the camogie team, have a social evening and get a copy of the calendar," said Patrick Doyle, of Tom Doyle Supplies, who came up with the idea of a calendar with the Wexford Camogie champions and is the main sponsor. The calendar can be purchased at Gala shops around Co. Wexford, Tom Doyle Supplies in Camolin, Rathwood, www.tomdoylesupplies.com.



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## For The Republic



Chris Fogarty



market-value of our houses in the period 1945-2008 was not earned by us and doesn't belong to us while others

OUR PRIMARY task is to put people to work. This is no unsolvable problem if we face it wisely and the lines of attack courageously. It can be accomplished in part by direct recruiting by the Government itself, treating the task as we would treat the emergency of a war, but at the same time, through this employment, accomplishing greatly needed projects to stimulate and reorganize the use of our great natural resources...

And finally, in our progress towards a resumption of work, we require two safeguards against a return of the evils of the old order. There must be a strict supervision of all banking and credits and investments. There must be an end to speculation with other people's money. And there must be provision for an adequate but sound currency. **Franklin Delano Roosevelt, First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1933.**

**U.S. SURVIVAL INSTINCT.** Can Americans control their own bloodlust? The Repub platform (and many Dem pols) refuse to reduce our \$multi-trillion war budget that harms millions while benefitting only Israeli criminals; all while demanding cuts in SocSec, Medicare, Medicaid, ADC, etc.

**SHARE THE BURDEN?** Most wealth accumulated in the U.S. from WW2 to 2007 was a "windfall" from the increasing market-values of everybody's homes. Those who profited most had bought the largest houses they could, as early as possible, as leveraged as possible. Excepting during temporary economic blips residential house prices rose. The 3-br, full-basement houses I built and sold for \$17,500 and \$18,000 in 1956 and 1957 were selling for \$180,000 in 2007 though 80% of their lives were used up. Because residential sales are driven by people of married age with children it is not right that those who bought after, say, 2004 are solely liable for their upside-down mortgages today. Similarly, the increased

are upside-down in theirs. (Note: Windfall is defined here as the extent to which house price increases exceeded those of all other goods and services.) Our gains resulted directly from the gov't's failure to maintain an honest currency, while the post-2008 losses are due to the crash caused by politically-connected issuers of entirely fraudulent "AAA" CDOs, and CDS, as well as by the super-rich's usurpation of the wealth produced by America's workers. Neither we winners nor subsequent losers contributed in any way to our respective financial outcomes. The bubble could have continued indefinitely but for those politically-connected criminals. Let's undo the injustice because it's the right thing to do. If doing right proves unpopular in newly-cruel America let's do it to head off what such historic injustice always engenders—bloody revolution.

**HOW CRUEL?** At recent Repub presidential debates we have observed spontaneous applause and cheering for the following; 1) executing more prisoners than any other State governor; 2) favoring torture; and 3) advocating denial of medical care to an uninsured patient who will die without it.

**CORRECTION CORP** of America's Stewart facility in Lumpkin, Georgia is the nation's largest private detention center. Stewart currently makes \$50 million/year profit. CCA often cuts costs by denying basic services to detained immigrants and by limiting access to their family members. CCA charges inmates nearly \$5 a minute to make a phone call. To pay for it, inmates work in the facility at \$1/day. Five days of hard work gives them just enough time for a one-minute call.

**HANDICAPPED COUNTY?** Cook county residents' vehicles display 204,787 handicap placards and 38,981 handicap plates; totaling 243,768. Divide this by the 2,662,231 vehicles owned by Cook county residents to find that a staggering 9.2% of all vehicles owned by Cook

county residents claim handicapped status. (source, *ChiSunTimes*) (Is such widespread corruption a direct result of the far greater corruption of Chicago's sale of its on-street parking meter income to a foreign company which promptly began gouging parkers?)

**GLEN BECK** heavily-promoted his main advertiser Goldline which was recently charged with theft and fraud in a 19-count indictment by the Santa Monica City Attorney's office. Customers seeking to buy bullion were pushed into purchases of overpriced gold coins. Encouraged by Beck and other "conservatives," Goldline extracted \$hundreds of millions from gold-seekers.

**A U.S. HERO** The U.S. gov't's former chief prosecutor at Guantanamo, retired Air Force Col Morris Davis has accused the administration he served of operating a "law-free zone" there, on the eve of the 10th anniversary establishment of that detention camp in Cuba. Davis resigned in October 2007 in protest against torture there. He said that he and the other military officers there had been ordered to use unlawful methods of interrogation "by civilian politicians against our will and judgment."

**MORE HEROISM** On November 15th, a historic group of Palestinian Freedom Riders, inspired by the US Civil Rights movement, attempted to board segregated buses serving Israeli settlers in the West Bank, and were met with violence. Please contact the State Department demanding an end to Israel's discriminatory restrictions on freedom of movement.

**109 NATIONS** recently voted UNESCO recognition of Palestine. Israel/U.S. and mostly Pacific islets voted against. The US promptly withheld dues.

**€BILLIONS** of Ireland's petroleum wealth given to multinationals by crooked pols. See [www.shelltosea.com](http://www.shelltosea.com).

**WHICH BRIT REG'T** starved your relatives? See [www.irishholocaust.org](http://www.irishholocaust.org).

**WHO ARE THE TERRORISTS** re Occupied Ireland? See [www.terroris-mireland.org](http://www.terroris-mireland.org).

**GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT;** beneficial? See [www.freegerry.com](http://www.freegerry.com) (urgent); [www.michaelmckevitt.com](http://www.michaelmckevitt.com), and [www.friendsofcolinduff.com](http://www.friendsofcolinduff.com) Contact 312/664-7651 or [fogartyc@att.net](mailto:fogartyc@att.net).

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## Boyle the Kettle

We'll Have A Sup Of Tea

Tom Boyle



### Major Donald J. Reilly, USMC

If you recall *BTK* May 20, 2011, I wrote about Major Donald J. Reilly, USMC, who was killed in Viet Nam.

Major Reilly's helicopter was shot down December 9, 1965. He was awarded the Navy Cross posthumously. Now we know a little more about his story.

His daughter, Allison Reilly-Gorman, contacted the *Irish American News* attempting to make contact with Captain James P. Mulroy, USMC. I told Allison he passed away nearly six years ago. Allison was not quite three years old when her father was killed in action. He had been in Viet Nam for eight months, so she doesn't remember her father at all.

In one of the many letters that I received from my friend Jim Mulroy, he told me the story of Major Donald Reilly and Operation Harvest Moon. After I gave him the letters back so he could read them, the only letter he never returned to me was the letter about Operation Harvest Moon. Mary Ann Mulroy will try to find that missing letter, and share it with Allison.

### Taxes and Turnips

They say you can't squeeze blood out of a turnip, but a taxpayer can always bleed a little more. Raise all the fees on Chicago-

ans, put up cameras, trap more people, kill jobs, discourage everybody, cut back library hours, make them pay! It's

the Democratic way, this is a Democracy? Right?

### Penn State

On November 10, 2011, at 5:34pm I sent the following email to [wgntvinfo@tribune.com](mailto:wgntvinfo@tribune.com). "When is somebody going to voice concern for the victims? To hell with Paterno!"

Coach Jerry Sandusky is denying the charges of pedophilia. He "just enjoys the company of young people." He showers with them? Assistant coach, Mike McQueary, is lying low. In 2002 he said he saw Jerry Sandusky rape a 10-year-old boy in the shower, and states he stopped it, but did not intervene physically. Why didn't he knock Sandusky on his ass? McQueary said he told the police but they have no record of him doing so. Everybody is lawyered up! The University is afraid of civil suits and what the victims' monetary awards might be. Are the University police lousy record keepers or is McQueary trying to cover his ass? If everything he said is true, this should have ended nine years ago. How many victims might have been spared?

Joe Paterno's credibility is now in question. Remember this, major universities all cater to football players over this country because college football is big business. Penn State makes about \$53 million a year on its football alone program alone.

How many times have we heard about players getting cars, money and women, especially while they are being recruited. Head coaches make big money. Many over \$1 million a year plus benefits. I just heard Joe Paterno's pension will be over \$500,000 a year. This is a state school, and the state of Pennsylvania will be paying that pension. So there you are, Pennsylvania taxpayers. A \$500,000 yearly pension for a football coach! He's 84 years old. If he lasts two years, he will get more pension money than the average working man makes in a lifetime.

There are major moral issues woven into the fabric of Penn State's quintessence. After their riot, the students came to their senses and held a prayer vigil for the victims.

### Chicago's Teacher's Union

Karen Lewis, President CTU, should remember what the old carpenter learned as a young man. Measure twice and cut once. I was somewhat perplexed by her behavior, strutting back and forth across the stage berating Arne Duncan, and his lack of teaching credentials, while disparaging his Magna Cum Laude degree in Sociology from Harvard University in 1987. She also made note of his speech impediment, which she said he wouldn't have if he had been a student in Chicago public school. She has since seen the error of her ways. Surprisingly, she said she smoked a lot of weed when she was in college. Is that something she really wanted all the Chicago school children to know about? I must throw down the gauntlet. She can meet me at Weight Watchers for yogurt!

### iBAM!

This incredible cultural smorgasbord was devoured by the Irish community and they savored each and every bite! Irish books, art and music was taken to new dimensions by a remarkable committee dedicated to the Irish culture.

The awards dinner on Friday night produced some profound acceptance speeches. Mark Howard, who won the Performing Arts award, reminisced about his early days at the Irish American Heritage Center and the choreography he developed there for the Trinity Dancers. Mark became very emotional about his father, Michael, who passed away just prior to the event.

Maurice Lennon won the music award and let his magic fiddle speak for him by playing a haunting melody. Music that touched your soul!

John David Mooney won the Visual Arts Award and he spoke of the transformative spirit of the volunteers who created the mystical ethereal presence throughout the Center. He said, "I remember the Erin Room when it was a gymnasium," as he pointed to the crystal chandeliers. Maeve Binchy won the award for literature, and her nephew, Chris Binchy—a gifted writer in his own right—

accepted the award for her. Father Andrew Greeley was named person of the year, and the award was accepted by his niece, Eileen Durkin, who reported that Fr. Greeley has never fully recovered from his accident.

Saturday and Sunday found waves of people washing up on the shores of the Irish American Heritage Center to soak up the cultural offerings. Frank Delaney's lecture on Yeats was brilliant... he lights the way.

### Cardinal Versus Governor

Cardinal George openly criticized Governor Quinn, who presented an award to Jennie Goodman, who is a rape victim and counselor. The name of her organization is Personal PAC which aims to elect pro-choice candidates for public office. Now, the Cardinal deeply regrets his actions because he unwittingly involved the victim.

I'm sure the Cardinal is well aware that liberal Democrats dominate state and city government, in particular, the city of Chicago. So, how can any of them meet the moral standard for Catholics if they are pro-choice and support same sex marriage? Is the real rift over civil unions and defacto same sex marriage? Or is it because the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services is in the middle of cancelling \$30 million in contracts with Catholic Charities for referring unmarried couples to other agencies.

I'm sure that all of this carry-on strengthens the argument against Catholic politicians running for office. Remember what John F. Kennedy said, "I am not the Catholic candidate for President. I am the Democratic Party's candidate for President who happens also to be a Catholic."

A final statement. Church and State, oil and water!

### Ex-Priest Daniel McCormack

The latest settlement with one of Daniel McCormack's victims just took another \$3.5 million out of the collection plate.

### Tracy Mallon

Proud papa, Jim Mallon, has bragging rights. His daughter, Tracy, is a jewelry designer whose jewelry can be found in the Andersonville Galleria. If you get a chance, do a little Christmas shopping there.

*Nollaig Shona Duit (Merry Christmas) and Happy New Year!*

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death one million Irish and forced another two million to leave Ireland. The critical point here is the intent by Britain to exterminate Irish. Now historically they have always argued, and even

forward with a second draft, something with more detail, when I hear from others."

So, be a part of that effort. Order a copy of Professor Boyle's book, *United Ireland, Human Rights and International Law*. Give it a good read, and get back to him with your thoughts on his vision for a united Ireland.

See the expanded version of this article at [IrishAmericanNews.com](http://IrishAmericanNews.com) (Columns, Mick)

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## Acid Reign

I visited iBAM! November 12 and had the great fortune to meet an old friend, world renowned legal expert, Francis Boyle, Professor of International Law at the University of Illinois, and to talk with him about his new book *United Ireland, Human Rights and International Law*.

Francis, tell us a bit about your new book: "Mike, as you know, the two leading issues going on now are a United Ireland and the Potato Famine. And I decided to bring this book out now to address both those issues. I have a chapter in here in which I design a united Ireland; what it should look like and how to do it. As you know, Sinn Fein has said the British government and the Irish government should produce a white paper on united Ireland. With all due respect, I don't think the two governments are going to do it. I think they are the problem and not the solution. So I decided to take the bull by the horns myself and do a preliminary vision of what a united Ireland would look like. As for the Potato Famine, the second big issue, I've attempted to develop for the first time ever the legal case for why the Potato Famine was, in fact and in law, British genocide against the Irish.

The historians who addressed this matter before were of course excellent: Woodham-Smith and Christine Kinealy, but they did not express a legal opinion, because their training obviously is not in the law. Well, I'm a professor of international law and have actually argued genocide at the International Court of Justice in the Hague where I won two World Court orders for Bosnia on the basis of the Genocide Convention. And indeed then, acting pursuant to my advice, President Izetbegovic of Bosnia instructed me to sue Britain for aiding and abetting genocide against Bosnia. So as of now I'm the only lawyer in the world with actual experience of trying to sue Britain for genocide. So I thought the time had come, after me doing all this work for the Bosnians, for me to set forth the case as to why Britain fully intended to commit genocide against the Irish. And I have 40 pages in here developing that argument."

(Note: Prof. Boyle sued Britain on behalf of Bosnia after they embargoed arms shipments intended to provide the Bosnians protection against ongoing genocide. But then Bosnian foreign minister, Ljubijankic, was told that if his government was to continue with the lawsuit, the humanitarian assistance to the Bosnian people would be cut. Britain also threatened to withdraw its Coldstream Guards.)

You developed the case for Bosnia. How is that similar to British actions in "The Famine"?

"I took that same expertise developed there and applied it to the British genocide against the Irish over the Potato Famine. The facts are not in dispute: that they starved to

today they have argued that they did not have the intent to eliminate Irish; that in fact this was simply a case of laissez-faire economics gone awry. And what I do here is go back through the historical archives and pull out all the statements where the highest level officials of the British government at that time, from Russell, the Prime Minister, on down, and I list them all here by name and office



Francis A. Boyle, Professor of International Law, University of Illinois

and statements—prove, state specifically, that they intended to reduce and eliminate the number of Irish living in Ireland, either because they were Irish or because they were Catholic, or both."

Was it very hard finding these records?

"No, I basically started with the books by Woodham-Smith and Christine Kinealy. They had already done the archival research. I also had two research assistants of my own at the College of Law who went out and did additional work. So, all the sources that I cite here as to the British intent to commit genocide against the Irish are documented from the British archives or the British press, media, at the time. And it's very important Mike to keep in mind the distinction between motive and intent, which is well recognized under common law that applies both in Britain at the time and here in the United States. They might have said that the motive was laissez-faire economics, but the intent clearly was to reduce and eliminate the number of Irish living in Ireland at that time; because basically the British deemed us to be an inferior race of people, pretty much like the idea, philosophy the Nazis had toward the Jewish people... However you want to define it legally, it was definitely genocide as defined by international law... outright genocide. And we, the Irish in Ireland and in America and throughout the Diaspora must understand that, and hold the British government to account for it."

Professor Boyle also outlines his fascinating vision for a united Ireland in his new book.

"I thought someone had to take the first draft... Read it for yourself. It's a work in progress, and certainly I'd appreciate any feedback, comments, criticisms. We can move



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## Mince Pies

Mince pies in Ireland are as much a part of Christmas as Midnight Mass, spiced beef and the Christmas turkey. Omitting them now, would be gross negligence on my part!

Throughout my travels, I have tried several varieties from home made to store bought and still to this day, the mince pies made by Margot Gaffney, also lovingly known as ‘Mum’ to me, are without a doubt, the best. I wonder what makes them the best?

Every year, our kitchen was a hive of activity, with the cupboards and fridge brimming with fresh ingredients including, oranges, lemons, fresh herbs, potatoes, brussels sprouts, carrots and meats.

Everything was made from scratch months and weeks ahead. The traditional Christmas cake and puddings were prepared well ahead of time, preserved with plenty of alcohol and neatly wrapped in ‘Mason Cash’ pudding bowls and wrapped in brown paper and twine.

I have fond memories of mum making a fresh batch of mince pies on Christmas Eve, and my father waiting eagerly to be the recipient of the first one. I idled around, also waiting for these sweet treats to emerge, listening to Bing Crosby singing “White Christmas” in the background. The memory of that first bite of pastry melting in my mouth and the taste of the sweet and spiced filling is indelibly printed in my memory bank.

Mince pies, or minced pies as they were once called, were a delicacy in the medieval times before arriving at the Tudor Court in England. They

were indeed made from minced meat. Everything from swan to veal and later mutton and beef. They were then mixed with spices, apples and dried fruits. The mince pies that I grew up with were made from suet instead of actual



minced meat. Suet is the fat from mutton and beef found around the kidneys and loins of the animal. This fat was shredded and mixed with spices, lemon zest, sugar, brandy and dried fruits. If you did not want to get suet from your butcher then you could purchase Atona brand suet in a box which was suet mixed with flour.

I watched my mother bake these delicacies year after year. Growing up next to your mother in the kitchen is by far the best way to learn how to bake and cook. Many years later I lived in Chicago, now with a family of my own, and whilst there, I asked the butcher to save me some suet for my Christmas baking. He expressed surprise as it had been a long time since he had been asked for suet. My mother always told

me that your butcher is a great friend to have. Those were different times but there are indeed some great butchers still around, and my advice to you is to seek them out.

One such butcher in Ireland is Pat Whelan from County Tipperary. Proprietor of ‘James Whelan Butchers,’ award winning butchers for over forty years. Recently I read Pat’s beautiful book *An Irish Butcher Shop*. It arrived, wrapped in brown paper and tied with twine. The photographs in this book are simply a work of art and one of my personal favorites is a photograph of succulent lamb chops, with a smattering of rose-

mary and a sprinkling of sea salt. These photographs almost jump off the page, inviting you to try. This book is available on [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk) and [www.jameswhelanbutchers.com](http://www.jameswhelanbutchers.com).

Recently, Pat and I were talking about Christmas and although we are now an ocean apart, we both have the same nostalgia associated with Christmas. His customers are nostalgic and are on a quest to create the perfect holiday, recreating childhood memories.

“I think in a funny way,” says Whelan, “the smells associated with winter are my favorite—the smell of the fire burning, the warm feeling that it gives me, but particularly the smell of seasonal food cooking reminds me of times past. One of the most unique smells for me at Christmas time is Spiced Beef, it’s one of those products that makes Christmas unique because it’s not available at any other time of the year.”

Smells become memories and it is those memories that evoke nostalgia.

I know that my mince pies are delicious, but what makes my mother’s mince pies the best are the memories.

I also know that what comes along with those delicious treats, those sweet morsels, are the memories of Bing Crosby singing, my father, almost childlike waiting for that hot pastry, the aroma of baked dried fruits, the sound of a crackling fire and the flickering candle on the window sill, guiding those weary travelers.

The secret ingredient for a great tasting mince pie is love. The love of a mother.

## Mince Pies With Kerrygold Butter Crust

### Ingredients

2 cups all purpose flour (I prefer King Arthur unbleached)  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
12 tablespoons KERRYGOLD unsalted Butter, cut into cubes  
6-10 teaspoons ice cold water

1 egg yolk (reserve egg white for pastry)

### Filling

1 jar of mince meat. (if you are not making home made)

Utensils... Food Processor, Rolling Pin, 2 cookie cutters 3-1/2” & 3”

Cup cake pan, fork & pastry brush.

### Method

Preheat oven to 425° F. You will need to grease a cup cake pan. Keep your water in the fridge until needed.

In a food processor, whirl together flour and salt. Add butter next, pulsing until it resembles

coarse meal. Add egg yolk. Slowly add water, 1 teaspoon at a time and pulse again until dough begins to form a ball. You can wrap this dough in plastic wrap and keep in fridge until ready to use or just flour surface and roll with rolling pin.

You will need 2 cookie cutters. Round or fluted edge. I prefer fluted for decorative purposes. Roll the dough out and, using your 3-1/2” cookie cutter, cut out the pieces and place in pan. Spoon mince meat into the center, then using your smaller 3” cookie cutter, cut out the tops and place on top as lids.

You can use the egg & milk wash as a seal for the lids by brushing the pieces before placing them on top.

Prick each mince pie with a fork, once in the center.

Bake for approx. 20 minutes. Let cool on a wire baking tray. Sprinkle with powdered sugar.

## The Dogs of Ireland - Irish Wolfhound

By Ray Cavanaugh

This towering hound would make a fine guard dog, except that its good nature often makes it friendly towards strangers, even those with bad intentions. That being said, the formidable presence cut by a Wolfhound’s sheer size might suffice to deter unwanted guests.

Now a big teddy-bear of a dog, the Irish Wolfhound was once a bloody menace on the battlefield. Wolfhounds are described as “war dogs” in certain Celtic manuscripts of the early-Christian period. Some suggest that the breed came to Ireland over 5,000 years ago. Pre-Christian woodcuts depict Irish Wolfhounds, and Julius Caesar mentions them with a touch of awe.

Centuries later, Oliver Cromwell would use them to control the population of wolves in Ireland. Cromwell seemed to think highly of the breed. In fact, he passed a law that only members of the nobility could own an Irish Wolfhound.

By the 19th century, the breed had become scarce. With Ireland’s wolf population mostly eradicated, Irish Wolfhounds were no longer employed as hunters; they were declining status symbols. It seemed the Irish Wolfhound was soon for extinction, but along came Scottish

army officer George A. Graham, who spearheaded the effort to ensure the breed’s survival.

Because so few accessible Wolfhound specimens remained, it is believed that they were crossed with Deerhounds, Great Danes, and the Borzoi (Russian Wolfhound).



Eventually Graham, along with other supporters, established the Irish Wolfhound Club in 1885. Ensuing decades would see a Wolfhound resurgence. These days, the Irish Wolfhound worries little about breed extinction. This is a dog with an even-keeled disposition.

The breed usually shows an awareness of its immense size and displays an especially gentle streak towards children. Sadly, this cuddly colossus has among the shortest of canine life expectancies. Many succumb to the ravaging effects of bone cancer.

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## Tradition In Review

Bill Margeson



Boy, this is gonna tick somebody off. Courage, Bridgid, courage. Since this is Chicago, let's talk the six albums that should be on your stocking stuffer list for the trad music fan in your life. Any one of these makes an A+ when it comes to the Christmas morning goodies—all six would be like a holiday gift from the gods. We think these are available in the local Irish shops—but most especially, the Rampant Lion in Villa Park, and Paddy's on the Square in Long Grove. No priority order. There are more. There are others. Check in with us this month on LiveIreland.com to see a longer list of worldwide treats, which space does not allow us here. Here we go—get your pencils and credit cards ready!



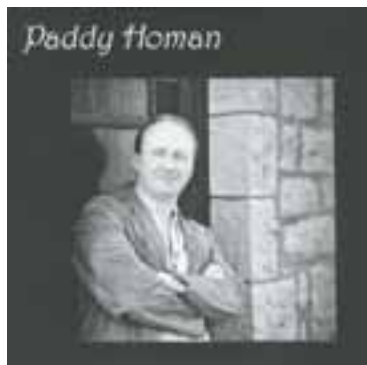
1.) Our favorite Christmas album remains *A Kiltartan Road Christmas* by Cathy Cowan. This was recorded a few years ago and remains the gold standard when it comes to Christmas treats. It is wonderful. The absolute equal of the Chieftains' iconic, *Bells of Dublin* Christmas treat. On her first swing at bat, Cathy hit a grand slam with this one. We love it. When all the relatives come over on Christmas Eve, you probably won't be all that happy to see half of them. What will make the whole night better is *A Kiltartan Road Christmas*.

2) Any *Bohola* album. Jimmy Keane, Sean Cleland, and Pat Broaders put together a magic trio several years ago. One of the most influential acts in the business. Their music remains superb. Great, great stuff from what was—at the time—the hottest group in the tradition. Bohola

is no more. Thank heavens we will have their albums forever. Incredible stuff. All of it great.



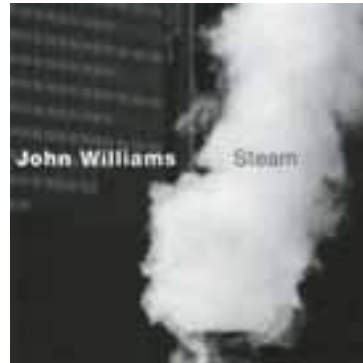
3) Any *Liz Carroll* album. She is the best. Period. If we had to choose one, perhaps it would be *Lost in the Loop*. It was Liz's first album out of a period of not recording when she was raising her family. She burst back on to the scene with this treasure, and it set off an explosion of tunes that we are still loving today. She is the Queen.



4) *Paddy Homan*. Look, we're not going to write any more about Paddy Homan in this issue. As with Liz and Bohola, we are out of adjectives. Paddy is the Male Vocalist of the Decade. If you do not have this album, get it. If you do have it, play it. Now, you're talking a Merry Christmas! He is currently at work on a new album, and about time! Wow! A voice from God, and it is Christmas, after all.

5) Here's a surprise that you haven't heard from us in a couple of years. Local button box wizard John Williams put out an album several years ago entitled, *Steam*. Just about the most appropriate title for an album we ever heard. We still play it a lot, and love it more with the passing years. John Williams is a master musician and composer,

and this MAY be his best of all time. Merry Christmas, John, and please don't join any more groups. We need you out here solo showing us your special gifts.



6) *Chicago Reel*. The group and the album are the same names. No matter how you combine it, this is a great album. A brand new group thundering out of Chicago onto the international trad scene. We have raved about this before, and for good reason. This is a contender this year for New Group of the Year, Vocal/Instrumental Album of the Year, and Male Vocalist of the year. We had the world premier of the album on our radio show and remain as in love with it today as when we first heard it. This is a stunning first album from a stunning group. Impossible to recommend highly enough. Our Christmas wish list now includes that *Chicago Reel* stays together a long, long time and gets the recognition and dough they deserve.



Do tune in all month to *Ireland Tonight* on Mondays from 8-9, WDCB 90.9FM. Also available at [www.wcb.org](http://www.wcb.org). Real Irish music, all traditional all the time. Co-host Maryann Keifer and producer Imelda Brogha are picking out their Celtic Christmas favorites as this is being written. A magical time of the year with Chicago's only area-wide broadcast of all traditional Irish music. The real deal. The garden gate is open for you and Christmas is on its way along with a boatload of great music.

*Merry Merry and HO-HO-HO from all of us at the paper!*



## YOU'RE HOME

By John Plunkett



### Tablescapes

By Mrs. John Plunkett

You may not be Antoinette Pope and I'm certainly not the Barefoot Contessa, but I hope what I say here might be the beginning of conversations about how we entertain and the traditions we leave for our children.

As an interior designer, I have the opportunity to talk to people about their homes, how they use them, and the fashion and social elements intertwined. I'm a bit amazed when I hear people say they no longer use the china, crystal and silver they've collected over the years. They may feel it no longer reflects who they are. Or maybe they just aren't interested in the clean up. They prefer the use of paper, plastic, everyday plates, or, in many cases, restaurant meals. It makes my heart sink a little and I think, "They don't understand what they are missing."

Granted, we live less formally today. More women work and have less time or inclination to prepare lavish sit-down dinners. Still, though, occasionally there's something special, more personable, about sharing our homes and our acquisitions with guests.

Setting a table is a labor of love, fulfilling in so many ways. Forget "If these walls could talk." Have you ever listened to your Mikasa, your Waterford, your Villeroy and Boch as it passes lovingly through your hands? Setting a table and fondling your finery rekindles memories of life's cherished moments: holidays, birthdays, graduations, meeting the future in-laws... so many wonderful celebrations, so

many warm reflections. These stories long for retelling, and what better audience than our children? We owe them this.

So, take the plunge. Plan a party! A great way to start is with a theme for your tablescape. This time of year makes that easy. After determining the guest list, have some fun setting the

table. Think out of the box. My neighbor's "high holiday" is Halloween. She loves it and her recent buffet table was

evidence, complete with a skull, jar of pickled fingers, and cobwebs on the candlesticks! Once for my son's birthday the theme was "Frogs, Snails and Puppy Dog Tails." Whether for casual or formal gatherings, I enjoy adding a spirit of whimsy to my scapes. Often you'll find pheasants on haystacks, butterflies on florals, or pixies climbing candlesticks. Pull out your treasures. Play with what you have and discover how easy it is to create fabulous tables on your own. I guarantee you will feel a sense of creativity and accomplishment, especially when the compliments come.

As for the cleanup, I won't argue that using your finery doesn't take a little TLC. See this as an opportunity to get family members involved and away from the video games or computer. After the grumbling, sooner or later, directly or indirectly, they'll thank you. It may be for the great meal. It may be for the Antoinette Pope tutorial. Or it may be for passing on fond memories and rich traditions.

Happy Holidays!



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## An Immigrant’s Musings

Fr. Michael Leonard



### Mike Kenny~A Tribute

In October we bade farewell to one of the greatest sons of “the kingdom of Kerry” to have ever made America his home.

Mike Kenny, a native of Ballyheigue, Co. Kerry was one of nature’s gentlemen. I am very grateful to Mike’s family and in particular to his son, Michael Jr. and his daughter Theresa for the details that make up this tribute.

“In January of 1950 when he was 17 years old he had to leave his parents, sisters, brother, home and country due to the tough economic conditions in Ireland. He left wearing a \$20.00 bill his mother pinned to the inside of his jacket, so he would not lose the money. The suitcase he carried contained 5 teapots, tea, nylons, and candy gifts for the people in Chicago and not many clothes because the bag was smaller than most gym bags today. He traveled by train to Cork to board the primitive ship for a ten day rough winter voyage to New York. He traveled by train from New York to Chicago, which was a remarkable journey for a 17 year old to travel on their own.

His train to Chicago arrived late, so his Aunt Mary had to make two bus trips to collect him because car ownership was rare. Aunt Mary and Tim Reidy immediately welcomed him to their home and treated him like a son. They provided him with the exact same love and privileges they provided to their three kids. Father Tommy, Tim and Ann Marie also welcomed him and treated him like a brother. In a short time he started working at Davey’s Packing House as a meat cutter. It wasn’t long, however before he was moved into the boiler room as a pipe fitters assistant, and then to the head pipe fitter position.

In June of 1951 he met Nancy Kelly, who was the love of his life, at an Irish Dance and danced with her and pursued her until she would agree to go on a date with him. In 1954 he was drafted into the United States Army. He completed basic training at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri. He received additional training at Fort Monmouth in New Jersey, which allowed him to be promoted to the rank of Corporal and he finished his training at Fort Huachuca in

Arizona. He served in the U.S. Army for two years and received an Honorable Discharge as a Corporal. Our parents were married on October 6, 1956. In 1981 we were able to host a 25th wedding anniversary at Eagle Hall for our parents to illustrate how much we loved, appreciated them. On October 7, 2006 we were blessed to have the opportunity to host a 50th Wedding Anniversary Celebration for our parents at Gaelic Park, which commenced with a mass and renewal of our parents wedding vows that was conducted by Father Tommy. We were able to celebrate our parent’s 55th wedding anniversary on October 6, 2011 two days before our Dad passed away due to his strength and determination. Our father rallied that day and we sat around telling stories and reliving details of their first date.

While in Chicago he hurred for the Shannon Rangers and Boland’s and played Gaelic Football for the St. Pats. He won multiple medals for Chicago and North American League championships and forged many excellent friendships, memories and stories. His love of the Gaelic games inspired him to hold numerous officer positions with the Shannon Rangers, Chicago Divisional Board and North American Board throughout multiple years.



Mike Kenny

His contributions on and off the field resulted in him being inducted into the Chicago Gaelic Athletic Association Hall of Fame. He was a volunteer, initial shareholder and past director of Gaelic Park and was an integral component of its current success. He was honored at a St. Brendan’s Football Club Dinner Dance for his continued support of the club. In 2004 the Good Morning Ireland Radio program inducted him into the Chicago Irish Hall of Fame at their dinner. On March 7, 2006 at the St. Patrick’s Day Parade Reception Mayor Daley awarded him a Certificate of Appreciation. He received many other awards from groups for his commitment to the Irish community and benefits.

He was instrumental in the creation of the Kerry Social and Benevolent Association and was elected President at the first convention held on November 23, 1979 at T.J. Daley’s Blarney Stone. He was elected by the members, even though he was absent due to illness because they held him in such high esteem.

Our Mom and Dad taught us the “Golden Rule in Life” probably before we were able to walk, which is to treat others the same way you want to be treated. We learned that great family members, friends and co-workers are some of the most sacred things in the world that should never be taken for granted. He taught us to be for-

giving because it is more stressful to have anger or an enemy because life is too short to waste on negative things.

He taught us to have a strong work ethic and commitment to everything we are involved with whether the items are work related, personal or social related. He taught us how to approach every project clearly and concisely in big picture terms with having future needs in mind. The skills and work ethic he taught us have been instrumental in our successes.”

In conclusion, I am not including a separate section for your reflection in this issue. I have chosen not to do so because, I think Mike Kenny’s life and the example he gave of Christian living is an inspiration for all of us.

This piece is, I think above all, a tribute not just to Mike, but it is also a superb example of what a genuine difference for good a life well lived can be. Mike was a shining example of what is best in immigration and how people like him add so much to our country.

### The Holidays

As always, approaching the season of Christmas, I take this opportunity to wish all our readers and supporters a blessed and happy Christmas. May the New Year bring you good health, and may an abundance of blessings be yours in 2012.

*Should you have any comments, questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me at: sliabhanoir@yahoo.com or 773-282-8445.*

### Our Take on Social Services

By Paul Dowling, Director of Social Services  
Chicago Irish Immigrant Support

#### This Month’s Senior Group Meetings

Senior groups take place at both IAHC and Gaelic Park. See below for specific details of senior group meetings this month. There is no cost and refreshments will be served. All are very welcome. If you need further information, please call the office on 773-282-8445.

#### Gaelic Park

**Wednesday, 7th December 2011**

Our guest today will be a Cook County Circuit Court Judge. S/he will tell us more about the workings of the Circuit Court and speak about issues of particular relevance to seniors. There will also be time for specific questions from senior group attendees.

#### IAHC

**Thursday, 1st December 2011**

Charles Fanning is a Professor Emeritus at SIUC and the author of 12 books. His work focuses largely on Irish-American immigrants. Charles


will be discussing different representations of Irish culture at the 1933 World’s Fair held in Chicago. The Irish Government’s exhibition tried to create an image of high culture highlighting great Irish literature, painting, and crafts. However, Irish-American entrepreneurs created the ‘Irish Village’ with pubs, dancing girls, and bizarre events. Come along to learn more about how these two opposing Irish identities were constructed.

#### Christmas Party

**Thursday, 15th December 2011**

This year it is Gaelic Park’s turn to host our annual Christmas Party. As always, there will be great food, live music, and plenty of craic! Transportation will be provided from the Irish American Heritage Center so the north siders can join the festive fun. For more information or to reserve your space at the party please call the Chicago Irish Immigrant Support office.

*Continued on Page 27...*



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## A Word With Monsignor Boland

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## Celebrating the Season of Giving Making the Season Bright

It was 64 years ago that the parents who had adopted their children through Catholic Charities Adoption/Maternity Department decided to have a big Christmas Party for their children. But instead of receiving gifts, the children and their parents brought gifts for hundreds of children whose families were struggling in poverty and receiving assistance from Catholic Charities. While the children had great fun and treats at what became an annual celebration, they were learning the art of giving at the "Toy Shower"!

Today, thanks to the extraordinary generosity of Catholic parishes, donors and individuals of all faiths throughout Chicagoland, that beautiful, time-honored tradition of giving and receiving continues in Cook County for thousands of children and families as Catholic Charities celebrates our 64th Annual "Celebration of Giving and Toy Shower!" More than 10,000 children will have a "merry and bright" Christmas as they receive presents of toys, games and dolls under their trees. More than 500 low-income families will receive new winter clothing and household goods through our "Sponsor-a-Family" program.

Catholic Charities' "Toy Shower" in Cook County welcomes all new, unwrapped toys and gifts for children and gifts of clothing in original packaging that will be distributed to children in our 156 programs. This year, we are deeply grateful to Chicago's Merchandise Mart for their generous donation of 12,000 square feet of available space to serve as Catholic Charities' "Toy Room" to store and sort these gifts.

The Chicago firefighters and paramedics will hold their 11th Annual Toy Parade on December 3, culminating at the IBEW Hall on West Washington Boulevard. Thanks to the charity of these courageous men and women, the Hall will fill with toys and bicycles to warm the hearts of hundreds of children.

In Lake County, Catholic Charities participates in a community-based "Christmas Giving" program that will provide gifts for 13,000 children. Catholic Charities has never failed to be there for families

and individuals in tough economic times, thanks to the great generosity of the people of the Cook and Lake County communities.

A thoughtful and unique program that originated 10 years ago with a group of women in Lake County today provides beautifully wrapped new nightgowns and pajamas to low-income women and men in Catholic Charities senior residences and to moms in need in Cook and Lake Counties.

For our staff and volunteers who organize these programs, and the thousands of generous volunteers and donors who pitch in, this is an extraordinarily joyful and busy time! Everyone is invited to "get involved!" For those who look forward to giving, and for those families who depend on our charity to make Christmas a joyful time for their children, it is a special time indeed.

This Advent and Christmas season, I am deeply grateful to the members of Catholic Charities' Board of Advisors and Junior Board, and our generous donors; as well as to the numerous Catholic parishes, schools and other institutions who contribute in so many ways! Special thanks are due the local corporations and businesses who generously support us. But above all, we appreciate our energetic legion of volunteers! Together, we make it all happen—and Catholic Charities could not accomplish all these good works in Cook and Lake counties at Christmas and throughout the year without every great-hearted person who cares about his or her neighbor in need.

May God, who sent His only-begotten Son, born of the Virgin Mary, to show us the true meaning and joy of life, bless you and your family for your charity year-round; and may you and your families have a most blessed Advent and a joyous Christmas!

For more information re: *Catholic Charities Toy Shower*, please call: *Toy Room Hotline* (312) 226-0650; or visit: [www.catholiccharities.net/celebration](http://www.catholiccharities.net/celebration).

For more information about *Catholic Charities' programs and Year-End Appeal*, please visit: [www.catholiccharities.net](http://www.catholiccharities.net); or call Margaret Hughes at (312) 655-7012.



So much has happened since last month. I have competed in my second PC feis. It was the Halloween feis. I dressed in my Halloween costume (Holly Golightly from Breakfast at Tiffany's) and I practiced my steps before I went up on stage. I did my treble jig first, then my slip jig. I thought I did very well. This feis was a little different because I had to do my set, Planxty Drury, which counted as part of my score. (Fun Fact: Planxty is a song that is believed to come from the Fairies.) I thought my set was good but it could have used a little extra work. I did not place but I didn't mind. It was my only my 2nd PC feis and when I looked at my results, I was very proud of myself. I had gotten a 4th in slip jig! That was the best I have ever gotten! Well, Oireachtas is literally around the corner and I have been practicing my arse off. I hope my team does well and my goal is to qualify for nationals for solos. I have practiced so much; I know I will do well.

I recently went to the iBAM! cel-

ebration and I got many great books. One of the great books I got was *The Irish Dresser* by Cynthia Neale. It is about 13-year-old Norah McCabe who is forced to leave Ireland with her family because their crops have failed and they are in the midst of the Great Famine. They have nothing to eat so they leave everything they have ever known and head to New York City. But what happened when she is separated from her family and the fever is going around? Find out in *The Irish Dresser*. I also bought the sequel *Hope in New York City* but I have not read that one yet. I also went to hear a lovely presentation by Brenna Briggs, the author of the *Liffey Rivers* books. It was about her books (I have read all of them) and about how Irish dance has changed over the years. It was a good power point and an excellent presentation.

*Hope everyone has a very Happy Christmas! Congrats to the Ireland soccer team for beating Estonia and making the European Championships in the summer. Good luck in Poland!*

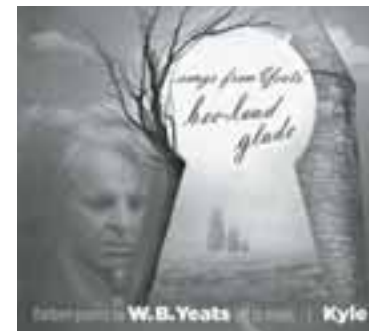
## Kyle Alden Puts Yeats Poems to Music

*The jester walked in the garden;  
The garden had fallen still;  
He bade his soul rise upward  
And stand on her window-sill.*

Reading these lines from Irish poet W. B. Yeats, Bay Area musician Kyle Alden felt the words leap from the page as a song. He had just been to Ireland on tour with his Irish folk band, the Gas Men, and it seemed like Yeats was following him around. While traveling through County Galway, Alden stopped at the house where Yeats used to live, and at Coole Park, immortalized in the poem "The Wild Swans at Coole." Back home in San Anselmo, California, Alden pulled down a dusty collection of Yeats' poems and found a trove of potential songs. It was if they were just waiting for a melody and a voice. Alden picked up his guitar and soon had "The Cap and Bells," a touching allegory of love between a jester and a queen.

After growing up on the Grateful Dead and Jefferson Airplane, Alden turned his rich voice and his talent on the guitar and mandolin towards Irish music as well as his own work in the folk-rock band the Restless Flames. He also has a notable solo

career, having brought out three of his own albums in the past six years. After twenty years of collaborating with some of the top talent in the business, Alden called in some favors, and has brought master mandolinist Mike Marshall, former Frank Zappa bassist Scott Thunes, and violinist Athena Tergis, a featured soloist with the Dublin Philharmonic Orchestra,



to lend a hand with this tribute to Ireland's greatest poet.

"Songs from the Bee-Loud Glade" takes thirteen of Yeats' poems and sets them to Alden's signature modern folk style. Irish tradition weaves in and out, but so does the fingerpicking and slide guitar, along with beautiful harmonies and instrumentation. The CD includes the original poetry for all of the songs, as well.

## Our Take on Social Services

...Continued from Page 26

### Reminder

The open enrollment period for Medicare Part D (prescription drug plans) ends on December 7th. If you have not done so already be sure to review your plan to ensure that the prescription drugs you need will be covered at a price you can afford. More information can be found at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) as well as a search engine that can compare plans and help you find the one that's right for you.

### Don't Get Left In The Cold

Winter is upon us and keeping your home warm can be a financial burden for some. The Community and Economic Development Association of Cook County (CEDA) is running a weatherization program for low income home owners. CEDA Weatherization is a year-round program using state-of-the-art technology to make homes more energy-efficient for qualifying low-income clients in Chicago and suburban Cook County. Weatherization provides safety and health equipment, repairs or replaces heating systems, seals air bypasses and other drafty areas, increases attic, wall, basement, and crawl space insulation. These measures will save energy for homeowners and keep homes warmer in winter and cooler in summer. For information on the program and how to apply, call CEDA on 800 571-2332.

The first song, "Brown Penny," brings an up-tempo bluegrass feel to a young poet's love:

*"Go and love, go and love, young man,  
If the lady be young and fair."  
Ah, penny, brown penny, brown penny,  
I am looped in the loops of her hair.*

For "The Lake Isle of Innisfree," one of Yeats' best-known poems, Alden downshifts to a mellow, dream-like vision of peace and solitude. With hints of James Taylor or John Denver, Alden contemplates the simple life. Songs run from the folksy "Heart of a Woman," backed by an autoharp, to the haunting darkness of "The Blessed." Brought to life with passion and skill, Yeats' poems don't feel a day old. Some burst with energy; some drift peacefully—all capture some part of the magic of Ireland and its incomparable bard.

<http://kylealden.com/news.html>.



## Piping It In

Jack Baker



to ballads done right, this is the one for you.

If you got a chance this year to watch the Red Hot Chili Pipers at any of the festivals they performed at, you

Before I get started with new music, I have to take a moment and gush about iBAM. I'm writing this the day after and I'm still pumped about what a great event it was. I have been involved with hundreds of festivals over the years but I've never been so proud of an event. I spent most of the event at my booth and got to see close up the great work of Karen Cook and Pat Cannady who organized the entertainment in that area and also performed. It was a great show with wonderful trad music and it



flowed smooth as water. I got to see the band Chicago Reel play and they were every bit as great as their CD, which I sold out of. Luckily the band restocked me right away. If you get a chance to see Chicago Reel perform, do so, they're the real deal. In the meantime get their CD and treat yourself to some homegrown Irish music of the finest kind. If you missed iBAM this year, make a point to be there next year, you won't be sorry.

As it's the Christmas season, I always get asked about my favorite Christmas CD. My answer is always the same "bo-HO-HO-hola" by Bohola. This classic by the team of Jimmy Keane and Pat Broaders can't be beat. It simply is the best Irish Christmas CD I've ever heard! Get yourself a copy and increase your joy at the holidays.

One of the finest voices singing today is Ed Miller. Originally from Edinburgh Scotland, Ed now lives in Austin Texas and performs thru out the US. He has just released a new CD, "Come Awa' Wi' Me", and I think it's the best he's ever done. Joined by a bevy of fine musicians, Ed performs a selection of traditional folk songs and adds some unique songs, such as the Proclaimers' "Scotland's Story", Woody Guthrie's "Gonna Get Through This World" and the best version of Ralph McTell's "Streets of London" that I've ever heard. In addition to the joy of listening to Ed sing, you also get to enjoy his liner notes which are always entertaining and informative. I love getting the back story on the songs and Ed Miller never disappoints. If you like to listen

know what fine pipers they are. One of the boys, Kyle Warren, in addition to being a fine piper, is one heck of a composer and arranger. He shows off all his talents on the new Klub Records release "Wanted". Oh to be able to pipe like this guy! The CD is loaded with new pipe tunes that will dazzle your ears and completely confound your fingers. With the sizzling new release, Kyle Warren joins that exclusive club of pipers who show us just how big the scope of music is that you can get out of a bagpipe. You won't hear any of these tunes being played by pipe bands in parades, but they would if they could. A remarkable first release from a remarkable young piper.

Some good news...there's a new Bua CD! With a new lineup, Bua now consists of Devin Shepherd on fiddle, Sean Gavin on flute, whistle and pipes, Brian Ó hAirt, voice, concertina and dance and Brian Miller on guitar and bouzouki. A strong traditional sound but now, with the addition of Brian Ó hAirt, there's a stronger vocal part. Brian, the youngest and only American to become a champion All-Ireland singer, adds an entirely different direction to Bua's music. I'm pretty fussy when it comes to singers but this guy I like. I haven't had a chance to see the new Bua perform live but I'm sure looking forward to it. Sean Gavin's piping, I should add, is perfection personified. All-in-all it's a nice tight sound that I'm sure you'll enjoy, I know I did.

I hope I see you all at the Chicago Stockyard Kilty Band's 90th annual Tartan Ball. It takes place Saturday 3 December, 7 PM at the Evergreen Park American Legion Post, 9701 S. Kedzie in Evergreen Park. A grand time is always had there. Stockyards have been around a long time and certainly know how to throw a good party. Admission is \$10 at the door, there will be a cash bar and food.

I hope everyone has a great Christmas. You can reach me at pipingitin@comcast.net or call the store at 630-834-8108 Slainté

## Irish Dance Rebecca McCarthy Style

Ever since I can remember I loved dancing. My parents enrolled me in dance when I was three years old, and I never looked back. I trained in all different forms of dance and fell in love with Irish Step Dance. I loved the costumes and history behind Irish Step. I actively competed for a few years, but my true love was the performance side of Irish Dance. I loved the thrill of stepping onto a stage; hearing the hush of the crowd; waiting for the curtain to open and then the music to begin. My goal was to make my performance to be personable and memorable.

It was in high school when I knew I wanted to teach and share my love of dance. I wanted dancers to feel the same excitement that I felt while performing. I continued to train in Irish Step as well as all other forms of dance and began teaching younger dancers. My educational back



ground consists of studying at the University of Michigan, University of Florida and Illinois State University. I graduated from University of Wisconsin Stevens Point with a bachelors of fine arts degree in dance. I was awarded dance scholarships to several universities including; University of Illinois, University of Iowa, Hope College Michigan and Stevens Point Wisconsin. During my college career I performed as the soloist in the Nutcracker and was the guest instructor and performer for Orleans School in London England, the Cultural Arts Festival in Central Wisconsin and Aberdeen Maryland. My choreography was seen performing live with the "Off Kilter", "Chicago Rovers", "Green Tea", "Chicago Pipe Band" and the "Emerald Society". My recent piece, "Lines of Grace" was selected to perform at Chiwaukee Dance Festival.

Soon after graduating from college I opened the Rebecca McCarthy School of Dance in 2004 located in Algonquin Illinois. The school offers Irish Step, Ballet, Pointe, Jazz, Tap, Modern, Lyrical, Hip Hop, Poms, Musical Theater, Creative Dance, Technique and Pilates. Currently we have approximately 400 students and 6 instructors. Dancers who are more serious about performing and their

dance training are invited to audition for the "McDance Company".

The "McDance Company" is a group of dancers who are focused on performing Irish Step rather than competing. They are versatile and well-rounded with an emphasis on Irish Step. In order to maintain their superior ability to perform Irish dance, The McDance Company trains in all forms of dance. The McDance Company has several costumes; modern, classical and traditional. The costumes

are simple so the choreography, movement and feet work are noticed first and reminds the audience of what Irish Dancers wore years ago. We want to be known for the choreography and movement.

"The McDance Company" was founded in 2000 and recently performed in Disney World. "The McDance Company" also performed on the

Royal Caribbean Cruise Line, Alaska, Ireland, San Antonio Texas, Allstate Arena, Sears Center, Solider Field, Millennium Park, Celtic Fest and for the Chicago Racquet Club. "The McDance Company" has performed for the Chicago Storm, Schaumburg Flyers and Universities half time shows such as; Purdue, Northwestern, DePaul, Iowa and Northern Illinois.

I train my students to dance the best of their ability, perform to their fullest and enjoy every moment on stage. I stress the importance of working and dancing together as a group, helping each other backstage and watching and learning from one another in class. The dancers are the first to admit that they are a "family". I train them this way to remind them that the history of Irish Dance included love, respect and special bond with each other. It is common to have our RMSD dance graduates return during their college breaks and reconnect with the dancers and teachers. They enjoy teaching what they are experiencing and learning

Rebecca welcomes dancers ages 2 - 92! www.rebeccamccarthyschoolofdance.com. We invite you to attend the McDance Company's Christmas performance December 11th, "Christmas Joy," held at Springbrook Church, 10115 Algonquin Rd Huntley.

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## Stanford Outsmarts, Outlasts Irish

By Coleman Clarke

Notre Dame ended their season finale against Stanford hoping to make a statement to the college football world that their modest four game winning streak was not a fluke but a harbinger of good things to come and proof that they were performing close to their potential – as predicted at season’s start. However, by the end of this contest with Stanford, it was clear that Notre Dame’s winning streak was merely ‘fool’s gold’ and that no significant progress has been made in the two year under Head Coach Brian Kelly.

Last year, the Irish were mentally and physically whipped by Stanford in South Bend. Many team members on this year’s squad were part of that debacle and remembered the embarrassing loss in which they appeared to almost quit on Coach Kelly in the eyes of this writer.

Notre Dame’s start on Saturday was also inauspicious and marred by mental errors in the first offensive series of the game with numerous false start penalties against Irish Center Mike Golic Jr, son of current ESPN sportscaster Mike Golic, who had a forgettable night all around.

The Cardinal defense forced an Irish punt and proceeded to march downfield behind Cardinal quarterback and future first round pick Andrew Luck, who wasn’t spectacular, but opportunistic, taking advantage of the Notre Dame defense and picking his spots to deliver the ball to Stanford receivers who took advantage of the soft ND corners when needed.

Notre Dame Linebacker Darius Fleming intercepted a deflected pass from Andrew Luck and rambled down the Stanford

sideline deep in Stanford territory aided by a personal foul on a Stanford defender for a dirty “horse collar” tackling penalty for fifteen yards. The Irish had another opportunity to make the game interesting but failed to reach the end zone following a terrible overthrow by quarterback Tommy Rees--- another false start penalty as well. Stanford then proceeded to methodically march down field again, stretching the lead to 21-0 before the first half mercifully ended.

In the second half Kelly switched quarterbacks, finally removing Tommy Rees, who was disastrous and inserting the more mobile freshman quarterback Andrew Hendrix, who temporarily energized the lethargic Irish offense who stymied the Stanford offense for most of the second half until quarterback Andrew Luck slammed the door on the Irish with a backbreaking 55 yard touchdown pass-- scorching the secondary on a play that has become too familiar to Irish fans. Stanford ended up defeating the Irish with the final score of 28-14 in a game that never appeared to ever be in doubt.

This game was excruciatingly painful to watch on many fronts because the Irish could have been contenders and won this game with competent coaching and preparation-- ingredients that have been lacking in all of their Head Coaches the last 15 years!

Notre Dame boasts higher ranked players than Stanford according to the major recruiting services, including Rivals and Scout. However, the mental errors and poor execution in all phases of the Irish playbook is appalling for a school that for years maintained the highest standard of excellence on the gridiron.

With this needless loss, Notre Dame’s glory days are in the

distant past. The legends of former coaches, Knute Rockne, Ara Parsesegian, Frank Leahy, and most recently Lou Holtz, are becoming faint memories! Then there are the former greats like Joe Montana, arguably the greatest quarterback ever, and Raghib “Rocket” Ismael, Tim Brown, etc. who can only wonder .

If the Irish want to reclaim their status among the college football elite, buy out Coach Kelly’s contract and conduct a hard target search. It is painfully obvious that he is not capable of delivering a national championship.

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About the Cover



Senior photographer, Cathy Curry, took this month's cover picture of Chicago Reel at Chief O'Neill's.

Band members (L to R), Devin Shepherd, Gerry Carey, Pauline Conneely, Denis O'Sullivan, Rose Duffy, and Jonathan Whittall just may be the next big thing in Irish music if they stick together! Stay tuned...

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## Strictly Commercial

By Kevin O'Donnell and Susan Farmer



Many of us have had the pleasure of moving. Sure the excitement of a new home is great—but the actual act of moving can be quite overwhelming and cumbersome. The same holds true for commercial office moves, especially since these moves include a larger number of involved parties. In addition to keeping staff up to date on moving protocols, companies have to juggle communications with both old and new landlords, service companies, their customers, and many more groups of people.

As a commercial real estate company we believe it's partially our job to make office relocations as easy as possible. From helping to bring all parties together and keeping communication consistent to recommending preferred vendors, our firm knows that our job extends past the actual real estate transaction.

Our website includes an ever-growing "Tenant Toolbox" that aids in this action, providing a glossary of commonly used terms, methods on how to calculate rent, and even a relocation checklist.

In this article we'd like to expand on our current relocation checklist by featuring tips from Daly Moving & Storage, a fellow Irish business commonly featured in *IAN*. This family owned company has offered moving services throughout Chicago and the suburbs for over 25 years. As a licensed and bonded company, clients can rest assured their items are in good hands.

Below is a list of tips Daly Moving & Storage have for successful office moves:

**Send notifications early and often.** Similarly to residential moves, utility companies need to be made aware of office moves... don't assume landlords or property managers will take care of this. Water, gas, electric, cable, trash removal, security and janitorial should be notified a month before the move and then again the week before. Vendors, such as office supply

and computer service companies, should also be notified. A discussion should be had with your insurance company as rental insurance requirements may vary at each location. The post office can be notified online. Customers should receive notification personally. Often times, companies include a message in their email signature line notifying recipients of the moving date and new address. Finally, necessary stationery should be ordered as soon as possible to eliminate any lack of correspondence.

**Keep staff informed.** Once the final paperwork has been completed to conclude the real estate transaction,



- Professional
- Dependable
- Affordable

staff should be kept "in the know" as to their moving responsibilities and the overall moving plan. By having a plan clearly communicated in advance, staff will not be overwhelming the project leader on the day of the move, keys will not be misplaced, and no one will feel left out from this exciting time for the company. If the new location is quite a distance from the previous office, a company tour may be appropriate to show staff the new office, how security works, where parking is, and what nearby amenities there are.

Additionally, staff should be made responsible for certain moving efforts. Provide numbered storage containers so that staff can pack their own office/cubicle the day before the move. The number will help the movers effectively place the container in the correct area. Other moving efforts for staff to complete include purging of old files and properly shedding unnecessary documents.

You can't be too detailed. Checklists, timelines, and floor plans are a great way to stay on top of every

moving detail. A floor plan outlining the new office and where furniture/boxes go should be presented to the movers and necessary parties. Use color-coded stickers or a number system to easily identify boxes from the outside. A reference sheet of all necessary contacts should be kept on hand including property managers, landlords, utility companies, movers, etc... Make numerous timelines for each step of the move, including one for the actual day. While things may not go as planned, at least a timeline will keep you knowing what the next step is.

**Eliminate downtime.** Obviously the goal of most companies is to be profitable. A day spent on moving, although will be helpful in the end, is not profitable while in transition. Therefore, by completing as much work in advance, you'll eliminate unnecessary downtime. Work with your computer and telecommunications companies to properly set up the new office prior to the move and then ask them what their protocol is to get you up and running shortly after the move is complete. Keep phone lines connected for as long as possible and keep a staff member on hand to answer calls in the previous location until the phone line is set at the new one. Weekends or nights may be ideal for moving, however they also may be less cost-effective.

**Don't make furniture assumptions.** Evaluating space properly is harder than most think, therefore it is important to correctly measure your furniture to ensure it will adequately fit in your new space. By using a floor plan, you can easily "layout" furniture in your new space. Doing this can also help with cabling, as you can make sure outlets and wiring are in the right location.

For more tips or a free quote to move your office, contact Daly Moving & Storage at 773.697.9323. But if you haven't found that perfect new location, contact us. We promise to help you with your office, medical, retail, or industrial relocation every step of the way, from finding a banker to an architect, and ensuring your moving day goes as smoothly as possible.

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# Meehall Recalls

By Michael Carroll



## Ditchin’ (Part 1 of 2)

*Advice from your old Uncle Meehall, my dears:  
Do as your parents say, not as I did here.*

One Sunday morning when I was in eighth-grade, I arose bleary-eyed after staying up very late on Saturday. The two tall cans of Stroh’s I’d lifted from my Dad’s stash in the basement fridge may also have had something to do with it. I squinted at the alarm clock, only to fuzzily make out the numbers spelling... *twelve-fifteen?*

“Oh, no!” The very last Mass at Saint Tommy More would begin at 12:30. I had overslept again, and Mom would kill me if I was late. For my own part, over the years I’d ceased caring much, and now considered my church to be the great outdoors, where I could commune with Creation in a bigger way. Sunday morning services at our parish had become dull, boring, predictable. And those dreadful, plodding, out-of-tune hymns! Surely the Lord God Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, couldn’t possess such a tin ear as to want to hear this blather!

And the Sunday Masses, always the same. Nothing new ever happened in our church. On the other hand, forests and lakes always surprised me, with their beauty, majesty and ever-changing moods. No cathedral could compare. But while living under my parents’ roof, I had to at least pay lip service out of respect.

“Michael! Are you up yet? You’re going to be late for Mass! Get up, right now!” Mom shouted up the stairs.

“I’m up, Mom! I’m getting dressed!” I yelled back down.

Finally I got it all together and presented myself before the High Priestess, who inspected for cleanliness, pronounced me kosher, and hustled me off to the Temple, much relieved to find me in a state of grace. At least I would remain so for roughly the next ten minutes. I grinned and chuckled to myself. All I had to do now was say hello to my friend’s Mom and Dad, smile

politely and wait for Sack to get his own tie and shoes inspected. Then, we could ostensibly depart for St. Tommy More Church, head west down 81st street, pass dangerously close to the object of our avoidance and head on over to Crazy Joe’s house, ditching Mass. Joe lived conveniently next door to the rectory, but we’d have to keep a sharp eye out for any passing priests, or worse, Father Hayes. An old-school Irish-American pastor, Fr. Hayes stood over twelve feet high (we thought) and had a huge barrel chest, a head almost as wide and tall, and a booming voice that rang out from the altar of our church for decades. His powerful oration was such that he almost made me want to attend Mass, instead of ditching to go hang out at Sack’s or Crazy Joe’s house.

The three of us had developed a wickedly simple system for avoiding our heavenly duty, one very like a floating craps game. We employed a rolling schedule, rotating in shifts so that, except for once every three weeks, none of us would have to endure the same old lecture and unenthusiastic singing. This Sunday would be hosted by Crazy Joe. I would tell my mother that I was leaving for 12:30 Mass, then head on over to Sack’s, who’d told his mom that he and I were walking to church together. Next Sunday he’d meet me at my house for a similar routine, and off we’d go.

This week was Crazy Joe’s turn to serve as our pigeon and so he’d sat through an ear-

lier Mass, returning home with a “Mass receipt” (our parish weekly bulletin, dated and notarized for parental inspection) for himself, plus two extra for me and Sack. These would be carefully folded and pocketed for our post-church walk home. Next week Sack or myself would have to bite the bullet and do our stint. Now the two of us ambled down the sidewalk in our shirts and ties towards the house next to the priests’ rectory. Suddenly, my forward progress was halted by Sack’s big meathook across my chest. Aghast, he pointed down the block.

“Mike!” he hissed. “Over there! It’s your sisters! Get down!” In two seconds flat he’d dragged me behind a nearby bush. Not forty yards away I spotted all four of my siblings, strolling home from 11:15 Mass. Packy and Jimmy had taken the lead, which I was glad of since they were blocking the view of my two sisters. If Mary Ellen and Denise had been ahead of them I’d surely be dead by now. I clapped Sack on the back, in deep gratitude.

“Good eye, man! Mary Ellen woulda turned me in, for sure!”

“Or Denise. She caughtcha that one time, remember?”

We crouched in the shrubbery alongside a neighbor’s front steps, waiting it out.

“C’mon you guys, hurry it up, willya?” I grumbled, watching my brothers and sisters pass. “We’re gonna miss half the ballgame at Joe’s.” Baseball was another of my glorious substitutes for church. I richly appreciated its grace and beauty, and the profound sermons to be heard in the crack of an ashwood bat as it connected with leather,

sending the ball up, up, until it had reached an altitude where God himself could make the call, fair or foul. There was sanctity in baseball, all right. My pal Crazy Joe shared my religious views, and would surely have his TV set tuned to the pre-game show by the time we arrived. *If we ever arrived, that is.*

“Look, Mike, they’re turning the corner. Let’s go!”

My siblings finally out of sight, Sack and I hustled down 81st street towards Crazy Joe’s house. We walked briskly but not too fast, lest some pious passerby recognize that we weren’t hurrying to Mass, but away from it. Passing the church, we spotted Father Hayes at the side door, so we ducked around the corner and quickly past the front of the church, stopping to catch our breath in the gangway on the far end, next to the nuns’ convent. I contemplated with growing alarm our strategic position. Sack and I were now two stranded sailors in a leaky raft, surrounded by a sea of ecclesiastical sharks. We had the pastor behind us, the church on our right and a whole houseful of nuns on our left, who might emerge at any second to lead us off in handcuffs, phone our parents and then we’d be dead. Right now, Sack and I might already be dead men walking. We had to get out of here, and fast. Dashing across the asphalt parking lot past the rectory, suddenly I smashed flat into my fellow conspirator’s back as he skidded to a stop right in front of Father Hayes, who’d appeared like a holy ghost from the rectory garage.

“Good morning, boys!” he sang out, towering above us with his huge, shiny black priest’s shoes planted widely apart on the warm asphalt.

He looked like a linebacker for the Monsters of the Midway, and we like two puny weaklings who’d had the great misfortune to find the ball in our hands. *(To be continued in next month’s issue.)*

*These stories are excerpted from Celtic artist Michael Carroll’s books Meehall and The Trouble With Meehall, available at www.lulu.com. Michael’s artwork may be viewed at www.mccelticdesign.com.*

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**Irish Books and Plays in Review**

Frank West



I particularly enjoy the literary quotes Tremayne uses. A page of my notes is filled with them. Like this one: a Christian fanatic

**By Time**

**Everything is Revealed**

The Chalice of blood: A Mystery of Ancient Ireland by Peter Tremayne is another in the outstanding series of mysteries set in medieval Ireland.

The main character is Fidelma, who we would say is the detective. But, in ancient Ireland here title was Brehon. A Brehon had the powers of a judge, states attorney and prosecutor. The Brehon had the responsibility to find the facts of a case at law and to then pronounce a judgement.

The title is an ancient Irish proverb, and Fidelma uses time, acute observation and inspired questioning to solve a case.

The author is Peter Tremayne, the pen name of Peter Beresford Ellis. Hi is a scholar of the ancient Celts. His most recent book relates the stories associated with their religion.

The stories are magical. The title of that book is “Celtic Myths and Legends.”

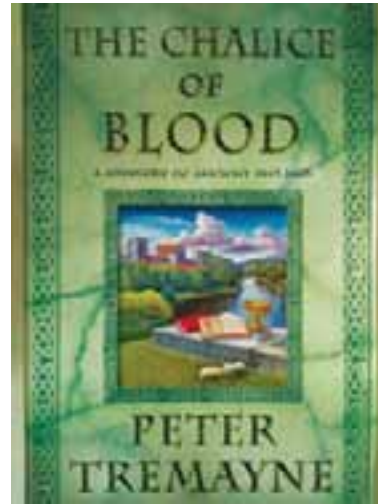
works to purge the library of the monastery of any books that don’t agree with his rigid, intolerant views. This causes a character to use the Latin proverb: “I fear the man of one book.”

The mystery that Tremayne sets for Fidelma to solve occurs in 670 A.D. “An eminent scholar is found murdered in his cell in the monastery. His door was locked from the inside, with no other means of exit. How did the murderer escape? And, what was the content of the manuscripts stolen from the scholar’s room?”

this mystery is set against the change of the Celtic church to that of the authoritarian Roman style church. The Christian Celtic church, centered in Ireland, existed from about 400 A.D. to 1111 A.D. I found that background both enlightening and deeply disturbing.

The Catholic Church of today wouldn’t be in eclipse in the shadow of sex scandals, it was influenced by the Celtic church.

The Catholic Celtic church had a more realistic, and relaxed view of human nature. This humane estimate of people is shown in



a saying of the Celtic church: “the sun shines for everybody.”

Values of the Celtic church were: • People generally behave as well as they can. Harsh rules are not needed - they only make people feel guilty.

• The Celtic church was friendlier to women. It permitted married clergy and permitted persons of both sexes to live in the same monastery.

• Women were seen as equals of men.

• Abbots, who actually lived with the people in the monastery, were preferred to distant bishops.

•The Celtic church also seems to have been more spiritual and more aware of nature and our place in it.

The Celtic Catholic church existed from about 40 A.D. to 1111 A.D. In 1111 a synod of bishops decided to impose the harsh rules of the Roman Church. These rules were called the Penitentials.

The Chalice of Blood: A Mystery of Ancient Ireland, by Peter Tremayne. St. Martin’s - Minotaur books. www.minotaurbooks.com

**Theatre is for All Times**

During this holiday season, and as we begin a new year, it is important for us to remember the importance of world events and their rapid changes. What captures complete attention today is forgotten tomorrow. The great Irish playwright, George Bernard Shaw, pondered this. Shaw wrote, “Heartbreak House” during World War I. That war caused profound changes. Shaw wrote about this in 1919.

Once great empires, with their kaisers, czars and aristocrats had been swept away. But Shaw said: “Euripedes and Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Moliere, and Ibsen remain fixed in their everlasting seats.” Shaw might have included himself too, because we read and enjoy his plays today.

Irish playwrights of today continue this important tradition. They show how important it is to put world events into perspective.

That is a distinct feature of the plays of Brien Friel, Martin McDonagh, Enda Walsh, and Conor McPherson. The plays of Irish American, Eugene O’Neill, put seemingly important events into their true transitory position.

Not only is theatre enjoyable, but it puts world events into their true perspective. These events might otherwise consume our attention.

**Fun Brunch and Theatre at IAHC**

What a wonderful time I had. And, during the theatre performance, after the brunch, the person sitting next to me was laughing out loud.

The Sunday brunch and theatre series at the Irish American Heritage Center is new, exciting and a huge success. A delicious brunch is served from noon to 1p.m. It is followed by an Irish one act play. All this for only \$25 for IAHC members.

The information flyer says this about one act plays: “First popularized by the Abbey Theatre in the first part of the 20th century, the one act play has recently found a new audience. One act plays are now often produced in pubs and restaurants, particularly in Ireland.”

The September and October performances were sold out. I was lucky to get tickets for the November 6th brunch and performance of “Bedtime Story,” by Sean O’Casey.

The play was followed by a “talk back.” This lovely feature gave the audience an opportunity to talk with the actors, director and producers.

The series was created by Frank Mahon, and Frank and Brigid Duffy are the producers.

Frank promises there will be future events in this delightful series. Watch for news of these in this paper!

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Martin J. Healy, Jr.

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THE HEALY LAW FIRM



*This is the next of a series of columns on how the law can impact your life. Each month we will focus on various aspects of the law relating to personal injuries, those that happen both on-the-job and otherwise, including mishaps which occur in driving vehicles, using products and receiving medical care. The column will also respond to legal questions relating to personal injury that are sent to us.*

*The Healy Law Firm is comprised of eight trial attorneys, two of whom are from Ireland. We are located downtown at 111 West Washington Street, Suite 1425, Chicago, Illinois 60602 (800-922-4500 or 312-977-0100). [www.HealyLawFirm.com](http://www.HealyLawFirm.com). The firm concentrates in the representation of injured victims of all types of accidents.*

*Readers are encouraged to call or write with questions concerning personal injury law.*

## Toy Safety at Christmas Time and Throughout the Year

Several times in the past we have written about toy safety. With Christmas approaching, it is once again a good time to look at dangerous toys and other child-safety issues. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), the organization that regulates the safety of most consumer products, including most toys, over 250,000 children were treated in emergency rooms for toy-related injuries in 2009 alone.

Many toys have been found to contain high levels of lead paint and other toxic chemicals. Others pose choking or strangulation hazards. Some toys, often those manufactured overseas, fail to comply with U.S. safety regulations or are not tested at all. This article will focus on these topics and examine other recently recalled children's products.

### Lead Paint and Chemicals

One major issue with children's toys continues to be lead paint. Many of us may take for granted that the paints

and dyes used in the toys we buy for our children are safe. But, poisonous lead paint can still be found in toys across the country. In 2010, the CPSC recalled more than half a million toys and children's products for violations of the federal lead paint standard.

In one recent example, a Los Angeles manufacturer, GA Gertmenian and Sons, LLC, recalled a Toy Story 3 Bowling Game because the red paint used on the toy bowling pins exceeded the maximum allowable lead paint level. Similarly, a Miami company, LM Import & Export has recalled "Gallop X" toy racing car sets, found to contain "excessive levels of lead," according to the CPSC.

The CPSC has also issued lead paint related recalls affecting 1.5 million Thomas the Tank Engine toys and parts, nearly 1 million Sesame Street, Dora The Explorer, and other children's toys, and 250,000 SpongeBob SquarePants toys.

Exposure to lead paint can affect almost every system in the human

body and is particularly toxic to the developing brains of young children. Exposure to even low doses of lead can cause IQ deficits, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and deficits in vocabulary, fine motor skills, reaction time and hand-eye coordination. A child exposed to a single high dose of lead can suffer permanent neurological and behavioral damage, blood poisoning or encephalopathy.

Children are more vulnerable to lead exposure than adults, because young children often put their hands and other objects in their mouths. Moreover, their nervous systems are more sensitive to the damaging effects of lead.

Strangulation and Choking Hazards

In addition, each year we see products being recalled due to strangulation and choking hazards. Just this month, Build-A-Bear recalled a teddy bear swimwear set that included an inner tube accessory because the inner tube could be pulled over a small child's head and pose a strangulation hazard.

In September, Little Tikes expanded a recall of its Workshop and Tool Set containing oversized blue and red plastic nails. The CPSC received reports of children choking on the plastic nails or the nails becoming lodged in their throats. Over 1.7 million units are now affected by the recall. Choking continues to be the leading cause of death related to toys. Between 1990 and 2009, at least 198 children died as a result of choking on a toy or toy part. In 2010, 5.8 million toys and children's products were recalled in the US and Canada due to choking hazards.

Complaints involving Banzai Falls

Recently, a Massachusetts jury awarded a large verdict in a case against Toys R Us. A 29 year-old married mother of an 18 month old daughter was playing on a Banzai Falls inflatable slide made for use with an in-ground pool. She slid down the slide head-first, but the slide collapsed and

she struck her head on the edge of the pool. She was paralyzed and died the following day.

In Missouri, a camp counselor had a similar accident and was left quadriplegic as a result. His lawsuit against Banzai Falls and retailer, Wal-Mart, is still pending.

The Banzai Falls inflatable slide is an example of why it is important to use care when purchasing toys made overseas. Often, foreign toys do not comply with American safety standards. In the case of the Banzai slide, the product was never tested for compliance with CPSC pool slide regulations, which require pool slides to support up to 350 pounds.

### Other Recent Toy Recalls

In August, the CPSC, in conjunction with Radio Flyer of Chicago, issued a recall for the Radio Flyer Scoot 'n Zoom children's riding toy, after Radio Flyer received reports of the toy tipping and children falling forward while riding. Radio Flyer advised consumers to immediately take the recalled scooters away from children.

In June, Target expanded a recall of booster seats made by Circo because a fault in the restraint buckle was causing the buckle to open unexpectedly, leading to children falling out of the seat. The recall now affects over 400,000 units.

A Colorado company, Phil&Teds USA Inc., has recently recalled a chair designed for small children and intended to clip onto a table. A problem with the clamps used to hold the chair to the table led to the chairs detaching from the table and falling to the ground. Other reports indicated children's fingers were lacerated, crushed, or amputated after being caught between the clamping mechanism.

Recent changes ensure stronger federal crib regulations

Recent legislation has resulted in

stronger regulations for safety of cribs. Drop side cribs are now banned from being manufactured. Federal regulators recommend that those who currently own a drop side crib destroy it and buy a new crib. The new regulations also require stronger materials be used so slats on the crib are more resistant to breaking. Mattresses will now be subjected to tests involving 45-pound weights being repeatedly dropped on them. To know whether the crib you are buying meets the new standards, you should ensure it has a certificate verifying compliance with the stricter regulations.

When buying other toys for kids this Christmas season, the CPSC recommends you read labels thoroughly before purchasing the toy. Look for labels that provide age recommendations and safety instructions. Pay particular attention to instructions and warnings on battery chargers. Some chargers do not include devices to prevent over-charging and can cause electrical shocks. In addition, select toys that are appropriate for the age, ability, and interest level of the child who will receive the gift. For young children, avoid toys with sharp edges and points.

### Products Liability Lawsuits

At The Healy Law Firm, we have represented clients seriously injured by dangerous consumer products. Product liability lawsuits encourage corporations to act in a responsible manner. As just these short summaries show, many children's toys are released into the market without appropriate safety evaluations and testing. If the important safeguards of products liability law were not in place, some corporations might make decisions focused solely on financial return rather than a strong concern for safety.

*By Martin Healy, Jr.; Patrick C. Anderson*

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# Hooliganism

Mike Houlihan



Malachy Swift was not a bit modest about being a dog lover. He loved his Irish Setter Finoola.

Malachy was so in love with Finoola that he wanted to marry her. After all, Malachy and Finoola had been cohabitating for almost a decade and that alone was evidence of the integrity of their union. They’d been together even longer in dog years.

Actually it was dog years that

gave their romance that May-December quality. Malachy was only in his late twenties and had met Finoola when she was a pup and he was just graduating from high school. So she was quite a bit older than Malachy.

Malachy had invented a computer application during college and made a fortune on the Internet matching up dates for the LGBT crowd on his website, “Sockets &

Wenches.” He’d dabbled in the gay lifestyle himself but soon grew weary of the endless merry go round. Malachy was curious about inter-species affection.

One night while combing out Finoola’s shiny red coat after an Elton John concert at The United Center they took their relationship a step further. He put on a Johnny Mathis record of Christmas songs and poured a half bottle of Pinot Grigio into Finoola’s bowl.

Before you knew it they were both head over paws in love. Malachy proposed the next night over some milk bones and liver as he placed a diamond collar around Finoola’s neck and popped the question. It was a modest proposal. She said “Woof!” which Malachy took as a yes.

The nuptials were delayed a bit when they wouldn’t grant them a marriage license at the County Clerk’s Office. Malachy was not the type of guy to wait though and he immediately made a phone call to his old friend the Governor.

The Governor sensed an opportunity and insisted that Malachy come for dinner at the Mansion the following night. Malachy had donated quite a bit of dough to the Gov’s campaign because he believed in his agenda of raising taxes and increased abortions.

After a sumptuous dinner, the two men sat smoking cigars and sipping brandy in front of the fire as Malachy made his pitch.

“This is very, very, very important to me Governor. And to all of us who crave inter species marriage.”

Are you looking for marriage to all animals or just dogs?

“Well in my case it should be just Irish setters and I know you’d be on board with that because we’re both Irish.”

Irish Catholics!

“Exactomondo! I suppose we should include all dogs and most farm animals as well.”

But Malachy, let’s please exclude pigs so we don’t piss off any Muslims.

“By the way, Governor, I must ask you. What was that delicious dish we had for an appetizer tonight? I don’t think I’ve ever tasted anything so succulent or sweet.”

I thought you’d enjoy those Malachy. Those are baby fingers and toes. Planned Parenthood sends them over by the truckload. I got the recipe from the White House chef at the Inauguration Ball. You can only use first trimester babies because those are the most tender.

“Well they are just scrumptious.”

The Governor clinked his glass

with Malachy and the two agreed that the next day legislation would be introduced to legalize inter-species marriage throughout the state.

Malachy thanked the Governor and made out a \$500,000 check, on behalf of his organization Privacy PAC, to the Committee to re-elect the Governor. Privacy PAC is committed to electing legislators who support animal husbandry.

The two shook hands and Mal-

achy said, “I’d like to get married in church, but I have a feeling that might be a problem.”

Not if you go to my priest, Father Larry, over in Oak Park.

“Oh, did he officiate at your marriage?”

Uh, no Malachy, actually I’m ...divorced.

“Was she a bitch?”

Well, she wasn’t an Irish Setter.

# Safe Home

By Heather Begley



## Put Safety at the Top of the List

This busy time of year is filled with list-making to keep us organized. You may have a mental list of the names of people for whom you need to buy gifts or may have written a grocery list filled with the necessary ingredients for cookies, Christmas dinner and holiday cocktails. My daughters have been working feverishly on their wish lists for Santa Claus. Of course, the big Santa man himself is “making a list and checking it twice... He’s going to find out who’s naughty and nice!”

Personally, I find satisfaction in making a to-do list and checking each item off of the list. I have also heard a lot lately of people mentioning the phrase ‘bucket list.’ After the Chicago Marathon in October a couple of friends mentioned, “Ran 26.2 miles. Check that off the ‘bucket list.’” It’s not a bad idea to list 50 or 100 things that you want to accomplish. By doing so, you create a road map of goals for your future. Ideas can be simple or grandiose. A few of mine include learning to properly operate my digital camera, climbing to the top of Mt. Brandon near Dingle and helping put my girls through college.

In the short term, there are the goals we all set on our New Year’s resolution lists. The top resolutions are usually losing weight, getting more exercise, getting out of debt, quitting smoking, quitting drinking and learning something new. Those are fantastic resolutions. This year, I ask that you make a resolution to improve the safety of yourself and your family. It may actually be easier than losing weight and quitting smoking!

A few ideas for improving safety in your life in 2012 may include the following: (1) Thoroughly salt driveways and sidewalks to prevent falls on slippery ice; (2) Check that your child’s car seat is safely installed; (3) Ensure that the locks on your

doors and windows are in working order; (4) Consider a home security system; (5) Make appointments for a physical and eye examination; (6) Make sure your car (brakes, engine, etc.) is well-maintained; (7) Talk to your children about bullies, internet safety and wearing a helmet while riding a bike; (8) Always wear your seat belt; (9) Do not drink and drive; (10) Learn CPR; (11) Adjust your water heater to 120 degrees to prevent burns; (12) Make an evacuation plan for your house and share it with your family; (13) Ensure that carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are working; (14) Keep cleaners locked up so small children cannot access them; and (15) Examine consumer product safety websites to determine if any of your household items and toys have been recalled.

*Make the resolution to improve your safety. I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and safe 2012!*

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Bob Banville, owner of Shanoule Bed and Breakfast on Michigan's Beaver Island, describes the allure of this island to visitors. "Life here is slower."

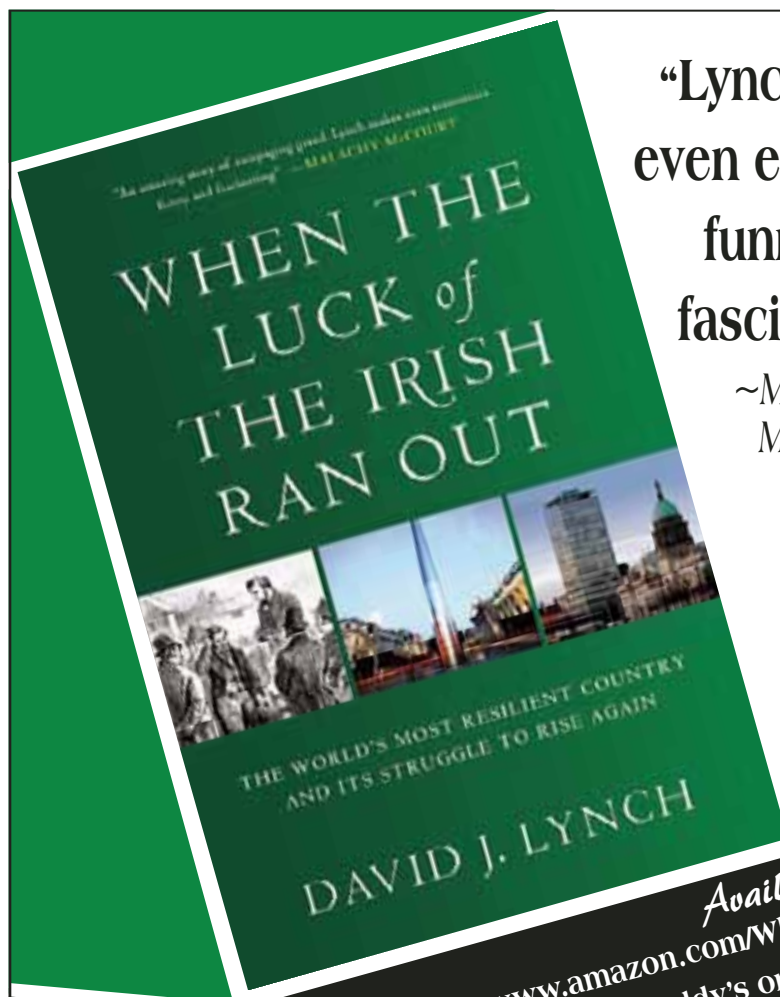
Beaver Island (population: 600, mostly of Irish descent) has a history of independence, beginning with self-declared King James Jesse Strang in 1850. His "reign" ended with his assassination in 1856.

Today the island is as relaxed as any in the Caribbean. Bicycles and in-line skaters cruise Main Street, home to about a dozen shops. The eight hotel owners learn their guests' names and most ask if you want to be driven around.

Expect to chitchat with the owners at this secluded three-guest-room B&B. Shanoule Bed and Breakfast. Bob and Joan Banville pick up and drop off guests at the ferry dock and offer tours of the island. From \$150 (231/448-2092; [shanoule.com](http://shanoule.com)).

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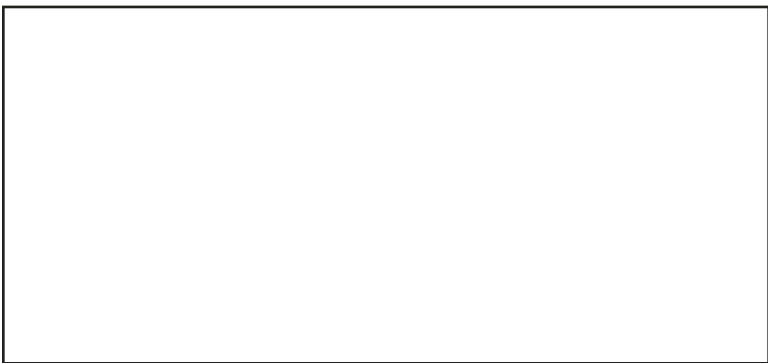
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