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*Jackie and Matt Navas by the
patio waterfall at Gaelic Park*

The 2017 Wedding Section begins on page 11

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Piping It In

Jack Baker



Cold Month, Hot Music

Sitting here, cold as cold can be this time of year and the music I'm listening to takes me far away from the thermostat. Who am I listening to you ask. Beoga (www.beogamusic.com) One of the most consistently hot bands for many a year. Their most recent release "Before We Change Our Mind" is certainly one of the best they've ever done and that's a pretty high bar for this band. The band is made up of Eamon Murray on bodhran, Liam Bradley on piano, Seán Óg Graham on button accordion, Damian McKee on button accordion and Niamh Dunne on fiddle and superb vocals. The recording features some wonderful instrumentals and lovely songs which Niamh handles with her wonderful voice. Two songs here are exceptional. "The Bonny Ship, The Diamond", a whaling ballad is simply not heard very often. Here the band gives it a new arrangement and a new sound and does it as proud as ever I've heard. Then, as if that's not enough, they tackle Tommy Makem's "Farewell to Carlingford" and add a facet to that great song that we've never heard before, a truly lovely version.

Lots of good tunes to dance to and I hope that some of our local dancers give this CD a serious look at providing soundtracks for dance productions, this could work out well. Seriously well crafted tunes and songs that well reflect the intense work that Beoga is well known for. Give this one a listen and it will warm your world up nicely.

A joy indeed when an artist rolls into the store with a new cd full of great tracks to brighten my listening day. Such a day it was recently when Jim Hayes rolled in with the new cd by Jim Sullivan (www.jimsullivanmusic.com), "Catch the Heart Off Guard". This is singing to lighten your load and bring a smile to your face. Jim is joined by the great Jimmy Moore and John Williams, don't get too much better than that, plus Gerry Field on fiddle, Matt O'Connor on acoustic bass and the singing talents of Bill McNulty, Jim Hayes and Marybeth Sullivan. The production was handled by Jimmy Moorre and Jim Hayes and they did one standup job of it. Jim Sullivan has a great voice, no question and his choice of songs was spot on. He starts off with a good version of "Dirty Old

Town", "The Auld Triangle" "McAlpine's Fusiliers" "The Foggy Dew" "Big Strong Man" and a bunch of others that will have you yodeling away in total abandon. Easy to follow, easy to listen to and a total joy to sing along with, jump in and have some fun.

A couple years ago at the Louisville Kentucky Irish Festival I saw a couple young fellows performing that really impressed me. Matt Hill, who played guitar and sang with a clear strong confident manner, and Josh Bailey, who rocked out on bagpipes, uilleann pipes and whistles, billed themselves as Lachlan (www.lachlanmusic.com) and gave a performance that impressed the heck right out of me. I wrote about them at the time and since have been happy to see them performing around the country to pretty good reviews. Now, I'm happy to report, they have been signed to New Folk Records in Minnesota and



have released their new cd on that label. "Live at 9 Irish Brothers" is their newest and it highlights the skills of these two multi-talented lads in best way possible short of seeing them live. These boys love their music and they communicate that love to the listener. Watching them is a joy that I've been privileged to enjoy a few times now and I can safely report that they are consistently good, every time. I expect great things from these lads in future and it's encouraging to see the next generation of performers starting up so well.



A final bit of fun this month comes with the re-release of Seán O'Driscoll's 1997 recording "Seán O'Driscoll - Celtic Music". A classic recording that features Seán's musical skill on guitar and button box, not to mention singing, and joined by the likes of Liz Carroll on fiddle, Seán Egan on congas, Laurence Nugent on flute & whistle, Peter Ostroushko on fiddle, Mary O'Driscoll on fiddle, Michael O'Sullivan on piano and Ross Sutter on bones & bodhran. A line up like that is hard to come by. You see why I refer to this as a classic, indeed it is. Luckily for us, Ken Onsted of New Folk Records, has decided that great music like this should be available and he's distributing it. Thank you Ken! A must have recording and, in these days, a real collector's item.

That's it for this lovely short and frigid month. Hope to see a bunch of you next month at the Irish American Heritage Center's Saint Patrick's Day Celebration. Bring the whole family.

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Careers

By James F. Fitzgerald, CPA



Advice for Life and Career

The New Year is in its infancy. It makes this writer want to give you some suggestions on your life and career. I would hope you read the dozen suggestions I have for you and if you like one, adopt it as your own.

1. Be courteous to everyone. First of all, it's the right thing to do. You also never know when some discourteous conduct is observed and will later haunt you. We often gauge things or people based on one or two (almost incidental) observations. So being discourteous to a waitress or bus driver can affect how you are viewed by the world. Conversely, a courteous person tends to be appreciated by everyone. Be respectful of everyone regardless of their stations in life.
2. However good your

communication skills are, work on improving them. The impressions we create in our conversations with others are often determined by how we express an opinion. Stay away from negative comments; find ways to state creative thoughts with a positive halo to them. And by all means stay away from vulgarity; it is not normally appreciated. Think, even if only for a moment, before you respond to a significant question.

Re-read every one of your emails before dispatching; given the incredible speed of your mind and the relative slowness of your typing fingers, often critical words are left out of the message. The result is an inaccurate and/or confusing message.

3. Follow the advice of Kenny Rogers; "know when to hold and when to fold". Sometimes we

insist that our position on some matter is unquestionably correct. Please consider the possibility that you could be wrong; adjust your tone accordingly. You need not be disagreeable when you really only mean to simply disagree.

4. I would also recommend the quote attributed to Thomas Jefferson, "in matters of style, swim with the current; in matters of principle, stand like a rock". The real challenge is to learn how to "stand like a rock" without conducting ourselves as rock heads. As someone else said, if you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything.

5. Seize the moment; take the initiative. When an opportunity presents itself that will allow you to advance yourself, take the risk. As you know, we have become a very risk adverse society. Some studies say that our failure to take risk adversely affects our success. As General Colin Powell's Leadership Primer states, "don't wait until you have enough facts to be 100 percent sure because by then it is almost always too late".

6. When an opportunity surfaces that will allow you to help someone, take it. Most people find giving assistance to someone in distress is quite invigorating and satisfying.

7. Maintain your honor. "Always tell the truth" does not mean that you have to immediately blurt out a criticism about some undesirable act. Rather it could mean that you should carefully develop what to say so the truth is seen as that, not as an indictment of the other person or of their views.

8. Listen to your critics; their counsel can be invaluable, even if it is uninvited by you. Consider this rule; you will carefully examine anyone's criticism of your actions. If, after your thorough examination, you decide that the criticism is fair and appropriate, you need to consider changing the offending characteristic. Alternatively, if you decide that the criticism is unwarranted and invalid, forget it.

9. Be mindful of time. Be

on time for meetings; it is not only impolite but it is a waste of the time of the prompt attendees. Be prepared for meetings; do your homework before the meeting, not during the meeting. Develop your own agenda; what are the points that you want to share. Bring a positive idea or two to every meeting; do not arrive empty handed. Start your work day with a list of the most important tasks you need to accomplish that day.

10. Learn how to "sell" your ideas or programs, rather than bulldozing them through. This demands that you spend the time to develop and articulate a point of view. It's critical that you learn how to gauge the interest level of the other person.

11. The title of the song "Put on a Happy Face" constitutes great advice. No one likes to deal with a sour puss. A smiling face will often facilitate a discussion; you are signaling that you are a receptive person looking to solve problems, not create them. In brief, be positive, be positive and then be positive.

12. Broaden your horizons; nothing is as boring as a person who can't see the value or beauty of new ideas or new people. Being able to see the value or beauty of something is a real gift to all parties.

Hope you find one or more of these twelve suggestions to be helpful to you during this year and beyond. CARPE DIEM.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION: Help others solve their problems; standing farther away, you can often see matters more clearly than they do. The greatest service you can render someone else is helping him help himself. If you see an opportunity in his path, point it out, but let your hand guide, not push, him. By Baltasar Gracian, S.J. Spanish philosopher and writer

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An Immigrant's Musings

Michael Leonard



Presidential Temperament

By the time you begin to read this, our new President Donald Trump, will have been at work for almost one month. And, President Obama will hopefully be on that well-deserved holiday that he promised his wife. Say what you like about Obama, and however historians choose to rate his Presidency, there is broad agreement that Barack Obama had an excellent temperament as commander in chief.

Obama, despite continued opposition and sometimes what can only be described as thinly veiled racist positions, showed a remarkable ability to rise above such negative rhetoric. He consistently proved that he was better than his opponents in rising above their small mindedness with a generous and forgiving response to their attacks.

One thing is clear about our new President, he really would do well to, as bugs bunny might put it to, "thwink before you tweet" or as another saying goes, "engage brain before moving upper lip." Firing off late night or early morning knee jerk comments on twitter, is not a good way to conduct the serious business of international diplomacy.

Indeed, his friends and fellow members of the Republican controlled House of Representatives, could do well to follow that same piece of advise, before they move ahead with their plan to repeal the A.C.A. The fact remains, in the past six years since "Obamacare" took effect the House Republican have voted a massive 60 times to repeal all or major parts of the bill.

Furthermore, in all of that time and despite the fact that there have been numerous problems with the Obama health care law, the Republicans have had no serious hearings on the subject. This only leads one to the conclu-

sion, that the lawmakers have not been genuine in their attempts to improve matters for the millions of people who really need help. It also points to the sad fact that to date, they have failed miserably to offer an alternative. That leaves me with a couple of questions, do the Republicans really care about all the millions now insured who had no coverage before the A.C.A. came to be? And, now that they are in the majority, what is their plan following the repeal of "Obamacare"? They can no longer waste time, now they need to deliver.

The Seeker of Truth

After years of searching, the seeker was told to go to a cave, in which he would find a well. 'Ask the well what is truth', he was advised, 'and the well will reveal it to you'. Having found the well, the seeker asked that most fundamental question. And from the depths came the answer, 'Go to the village crossroad: there you shall find what you are seeking'.

Full of hope and anticipation the man ran to the crossroad to find only three rather uninteresting shops. One shop was selling pieces of metal, another sold wood, and

thin wires were for sale in the third. Nothing and no one there seemed to have much to do with the revelation of truth.

Disappointed, the seeker returned to the well to demand an explanation, but he was told only, 'You will understand in the future.' When the man protested, all he got in return were the echoes of his own shouts. Indignant for having been made a fool of - or so he thought at the time - the seeker continued his wanderings in search of truth. As years went by, the memory of his experience at the well gradually faded until one night, while he was walking in the moonlight, the sound of sitar music caught his attention. It was wonderful music and it was played with great mastery and inspiration.

Profoundly moved, the truth seeker felt drawn towards the player. He looked at the fingers dancing over the strings. He became aware of the sitar itself. And then suddenly he exploded in a cry of joyous recognition: the sitar was made out of wires and pieces of metal and wood just like those he had once seen in the three stores and had thought it to be without any particular significance.

At last he understood the message of the well: we have already been given everything we need: our task is to assemble and use it in the appropriate way. Noth-

ing is meaningful so long as we perceive only separate fragments. But as soon as the fragments come together into a synthesis, a new entity emerges, whose nature we could not have foreseen by considering the fragments alone.

Should you have any comments, questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me at: sliabhanoir@gmail.com

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Clancy's Pizza Pub in Oak Lawn is once again offering scholarships to students for involvement in Irish activities. In 2015 and 2016, eight scholars were selected re-

ceiving from \$250 to \$1000.00 scholarship awards for involvement in Irish dancing, sport theater, community and music. Students need to be enrolled in one of our Catholic schools in order to be eligible. Applications for the 2017 scholarships can be downloaded at the website www.ClancysScholars.com and submitted with brief essay by March 25th, 2017. Students interested in learning how to get involved in Irish activities to nurture their Irish heritage can also visit the website for a list of instructors or stop into Clancy's Pizza Pub, 4624 W103rd st. Oak Lawn 708-422-1110

[ClancysScholars.com](http://www.ClancysScholars.com) and submitted with brief essay by March 25th, 2017. Students interested in learning how to get involved in Irish activities to nurture their Irish heritage can also visit the website for a list of instructors or stop into Clancy's Pizza Pub, 4624 W103rd st. Oak Lawn 708-422-1110

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Benefit for Bagpipes & Drums of the Emerald Society 2-9

The Bagpipes & Drums of the Emerald Society - Chicago Police Department will hold a benefit for the Band from 3:00 until 8:00PM on Saturday, 09 Feb 2017 at Bourbon Street, 3359 West 115th Street, Merrionette Park, Illinois 60803. The Band was formed in 1982 for the mission of Honoring Fallen Police Officers and Firefighters killed in the line of duty. Sadly, we have performed over 150 Honors Ceremony's since. The Band has traveled the United States, performing with NYPD after the tragic events of 9-11; attended each of the Greater Cleveland Memorial services held each year. We had the honor of leading the St. Patrick's parade down O'Connell Street, Dublin in 2015.

The Band consist entirely of Police Officers of the Emerald Society (Irish American Police Association) from throughout the Chicagoland area. It is a volunteer organization with most of the cost of equipment and travel coming from the members own resources.

Gaelic Park's Annual Bridal Boutique Sunday Feb. 19, 2017

Gaelic Park, located at 6119 W. 147th St, Oak Forest is well established as the premier wedding venue in the Chicago Southland. In keeping with this distinction, it is presenting a one stop shop boutique of wedding vendors on Sunday, February 19h, 2017 from noon to 3.00pm.

All areas of wedding planning including florists, limos, bakers, travel agents, hair dressers, make-up, photographers, mobile food trucks etc will be on display and available to answer all of your questions. It is an opportunity to share and get ideas from live people, sample wedding cake, view and sit in limousines, and perhaps pick up some great deals. The afternoon will include complimentary hors d'oeuvres, a fashion show featuring bridal gowns and special occasions wear from David's Bridal store, and 40 great giveaways donated by the participating vendors. A grand prize of 2 round trip tickets from Chicago to the bride's choice of Jamaica, Cancun or Punta Cana provided by Gadabout Travel and Funjet Vacations will also be given away. Admission is \$5.00 per person.

For further information, call Gaelic Park at 708-687-9323 or visit their website at www.chicagogaelicpark.org



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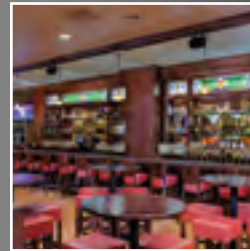
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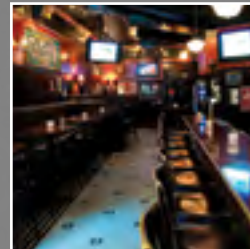
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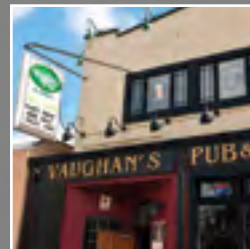
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Ireland Aiming for Six Nations Victory

Beginning annually on the first weekend in February and continuing for five of the next seven weeks, there

will be a sense of hope weaved with a dash of expectation as the Irish rugby team begin another Six Nations campaign.

It is a terrific time of year for those who per-tain a love of the sport on this side of the Atlantic as this great rugby carnival is to be enjoyed as the wet weather blows us from winter to the promise of summer.

The Six Nations is still the most celebrated annual rugby competition in the world where rivalries have been forged throughout generations. It is a time of rugby indul-gence both for the avid follower as well as for the spring time supporter.

It is a magical time of year that binds the country in a way that poli-tics never has as the four provinces come together to take on the best that European rugby has to offer on the international stage.

The pubs will be routinely packed and most every television screen in the country will be watching on. It will be the talk of the schools, factories and workplaces throughout the land. Only one country can win out



but as the narrative unfolds, new stars will emerge throughout the tournament to become household names on the back of a tackle or a try.

Each year brings with it the as-surance of an untold story and for the victor and their countrymen that inner feeling that all is well with the world.

Ireland

Irish rugby is in a better place than where it stood 12 months ago and for certain a sense that there is a team good enough to triumph this year.

The confidence has sprung from that historic and wonder-ful Saturday in Chicago when Ireland conquered the All-Blacks in Soldier Field. That encounter was backed up with a November victory against Australia to add further weight to such thinking.

Added to that, the provinces of Munster and Leinster have been flying it in the Pro 12 and par-ticularly in the Champions Cup. A

Continued on next page

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year ago, neither of them made it through to the quarterfinals but this year both have taken some of the biggest scalps that European club rugby has to offer.

Munster, significantly since the passing of Heineken Cup winning captain and former Head Coach Anthony Foley, have been in tremendous form. They have been playing with a spirit and a single-mindedness that was the hallmark of that great Munster team that brought such enjoyment and many rugby followers to the game from the turn of the century.

Leinster are also coming back to their best. Their pack is full of internationals on a weekly basis as a new generation of young talent in the backs gets blooded. The emerging centre partnership of Robbie Henshaw and Garry Ringrose will likely see action as a pairing during this year's competition.

There are a host of players with their hands up for a place on Ireland coach Joe Schmidt's starting XV.

At the moment, the front row picks itself in the form of Leinster props Jack McGrath and Tadgh Furlong bedding either side of captain Rory Best. Furlong is one who has come from the edges to being a certain starter and he received positive reviews from Lions coach Warren Gatland. In the second row, Devin Toner and Iain Henderson look to be the first choice pairing with in Donnacha Ryan or Ultan Dillane waiting to be sprung from the bench.

Joe Schmidt's most difficult selection will come in the backrow where Munster's Peter O'Mahony and CJ Stander along with Leinster's Sean O'Brien, Josh Van der Flier and Jamie Heaslip will fight for three starting places and one spot on the bench. All five are terrific players in top form and it will be interesting every time the Irish team is named to see which three will occupy these spots.

In the backs, Conor Murray and Johnny Sexton will start at scrum half and out-half respectively. Henshaw will start at 12 and the other big call will be whether Jared Payne resumes where he left off in November at 13 or whether the prodigious Ringrose is pencilled in.

The back three will most likely feature Simon Zebo, Andrew Trimble and Rob Kearney.

The Challengers

The bookies have made England the favourites for the competition. Last year they took the Grand Slam before finishing out the year unbeaten.

Coach Eddie Jones has brought the

bite back into English rugby and they are playing with the sort of arrogance that saw them win a World Cup back in 2003.

This year they will be missing back-rowers Billy Vunipola and captain Chris Robshaw through injury. The former in particular will be a significant loss as his carrying and off-loading ability has seen him become the standout player in his position over the last few years. He will be replaced by Wasps Nathan Hughes whose was impressive in the win against Australia in December. The loss of Robshaw will likely see the second-row powerhouse Mauro Itoje will the vacancy in the backrow.

Wales and France are third and fourth favourites respectively and it is very difficult to predict how they will fare.

Welsh club rugby has had another poor year yet in the past the Walsh players always seem to play their best rugby in these circumstances. Their head coach Warren Gatland has vacated his post for a year to manage the Lions tour to New Zealand in the summer. His understudy Rob Howley will keep the seat warm in his absence but there seems to be drama in camp with the early reporting of Sam Warburton thinking about relinquishing his captaincy.

France have been awful by their standards over the last few tournaments, yet in their final game of 2016 put in an impressive performance against the All Blacks. They are a side with talent and it will be interesting to if they are more fluent and disciplined in coach Guy Noves' second campaign.

Scotland have a good starting team but lack strength in depth but certainly are game enough to compete against the better sides. An upset victory or two is well within their grasp.

Italy, who are managed by Irishman Conor O'Shea, beat South Africa for the first time in November. Anything better than last place will be seen as progress.

This is the first year the bonus point system will be in place. That makes four points for a win and an extra point for the team that scores four tries or loses by seven or less.

Already eyes are looking towards a potential winner-takes-all clash when Ireland host England on the final weekend in Dublin on March 18.

This fixture will be at the end of a week of Cheltenham festivities and during the St Patrick's Day weekend.

A tournament victory for the Irish would round off the celebrations and is without doubt a tangible possibility.



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
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Irish Wedding Traditions

You Can Have A Traditional Irish Wedding!

Or at the very least you can add some lovely traditions and Irish Wedding Customs from the Gaelic history of Ireland to your big day.

Modern Irish Weddings can be lavish affairs. It is not unheard of for hundreds of guests to attend a fancy hotel for a swanky reception, for children in formal attire to be employed as page boys, ring bearers and even seating attendants! Some modern couples spurn the traditional Church setting preferring to be wed on a Caribbean beach or perhaps in a foreign Church (with blessings in Rome always proving popular).

Attending to the Bride
It wasn't always like this!

Irish history is venerated with centuries of oppression that was particularly harsh in respect of the Catholic religion. The 16th Century Penal Laws prevented Priests from saying Mass never mind conducting the Sacrament of Marriage. Sanctions, if a Priest was caught, were severe. The last of the Penal Laws was not repealed in Ireland until 1920.

Given this background and the unique identity of the native Irish people who were forced to practice their religion 'underground', it is not surprising that an Irish Wedding has a particular identity all of its own and has a number of specific traditions associated with it.

Handfasting: Tying the Knot



Handfasting is an ancient Celtic tradition that involved tying the hands of the betrothed together well in advance of their actual wedding day. It is similar to an engagement, a time when both parties decide if they really wish to commit. In Modern times the tradition occurs on the actual wedding day although in centuries past the ceremony acted as a kind of temporary marriage.

A Pagan Wedding Ceremony Handfasting was actually a legitimate way for people to be married during the Middle Ages and only declined when laws were enforced making the act of marriage much more formal. Ireland was ruled by 'Brehon law' and handfasting was

duly recognised as a proper form of marriage.

This tradition is well recorded in Ireland and especially at Teltown in County Meath. The Irish historian John O'Donovan (1806-1861) wrote of the 'Teltown Marriages':

A number of young men went into the hollow to the north side of the wall, and an equal number of marriageable young women to the south side of the wall which was so high as to prevent them from seeing the men; one of the women put her hand thro' the hole in the gate and a man took hold of it from the other side, being guided in his choice only by the appearance of the hand. The two were thus joined hands by blind chance were obliged to live together for a year and a day, at the expiration of which time they appeared at the Rath of Telton and if they were not satisfied with each other they obtained a deed of separation, and were entitled to go to Laganeeny again to try their good fortune for the ensuing year.

In the Pagan and Wiccan traditions the handfasting ceremony may involve an arrangement of rocks, candles, crystals, a robe or ribbon, a broomstick, marriage documents, a silver box and other symbolic items.

What is the Best Time of Year for a Wedding?

In Ireland of centuries ago the most popular day to be married was a Sunday. This made sense as it was the day when the working week was done and people were free to attend the simple marriage ceremonies that were available at the time.

As the decades and years rolled by and as the Catholic religion developed and reasserted itself in Ireland, the choice of Sunday became frowned upon as it was often seen as a mark of disrespect. Similarly, it became unusual for a couple to be wed in May as this was the traditional start of Summer and was marked by a Pagan feast: Bealtane.

These beliefs are the origin of the old marriage song:

Marry when the year is new, always loving, kind,
and true.

When February birds do mate, you may wed, nor
dread your fate.

If you wed when March winds blow, joy and sorrow
both you'll know.

Marry in April when you can, joy for maiden and
for man.

Marry in the month of May, you will surely rue the
day.

Marry when June roses blow, over land and sea you'll
go.

They who in July do wed, must labor always for their
bread.

Whoever wed in August be, many a change are sure
to see.

Marry in September's shine, your living will be rich
and fine.

If in October you do marry, love will come but riches
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*Barryscourt Castle is a castle located in eastern County Cork in southern Ireland, close to the town of Carrigtwohill.
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to have a wedding during a weekday, it can often be inconvenient for guests. Weddings on a Sunday are rare.

Using an Irish Heritage Site for Your Ceremony

In a marvellous development the Irish Government is now allowing couples to hire out some National Monuments and buildings for their wedding ceremony!

Incredible as it may seem you can now get married at:

- The Casino at Marino, Dublin
- Castletown House, Kildare
- Barryscourt Castle, Cork
- Desmond Hall, Limerick
- Kilkenny Castle, Kilkenny
- The Blasket Island Visitor Centre, Kerry
- The Ceide Fields Stoneage Visitor Centre, Mayo

It seems certain that other sites will be added. Who knows, maybe it will be possible to be married at the Rock of Cashel or the Hill of Tara - that really would be incredible.

The Wedding Day

Typically a wedding day would begin early with the Bride being attended by her Brides-Maids. Perhaps a hairdresser or make-up artist would be employed to help. Collection of the bride from her home in a fancy decorated limo is often greeted with car-horns and cheers from passers-by. With the Groom eagerly awaiting his fashionably late Bride at the Church her arrival is heralded with a suitable song or music. Presented to her husband-to-be by her father at the altar the nuptials may include the blessing of the wedding rings with the further symbolism of a few pieces of gold or silver also being blessed.

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If you wed in bleak November, only joy will come, remember. When December's rain fall fast, marry and true love will last.

In Ireland today most weddings, but by no means all, take place on a Saturday. They are often planned years in advance. This is usually to facilitate visitors to the reception who would otherwise be at their place of work. While it is not at all unusual



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The departure from the Church is preceded with some meeting and greeting outside and perhaps a few photos, before the happy couple are brought to their a Hotel for formal photography. Sometimes the wedded couple will depart for a public or private garden for some staged outdoor photos. The Botanic Gardens in Dublin are particularly popular for this although a lot of Hotels that specialize in weddings have their own formal garden for use by the newly married couple.

The wedding guests will have arrived at the Hotel by this time where they can partake of a beverage of their choice. It should be noted that not all wedding receptions are held in Hotels. Sometimes a Restaurant can be booked for the purpose and some other couples choose to have their wedding reception in their own home which, apart from the financial consideration, can greatly add to the intimacy and enjoyment of the event.

Speeches by the Best Man, and often by the Bride and Groom too, take place after the main dining. Telegrams (or Emails, or Twitter posts!) can be read out. Funny anecdotes told. A toast to the happy couple often marks the end of the wedding meal. Music or entertainment is then provided and this can be anything from an unstoppable Auntie determined to sing her song, to a Professional singer or Cabaret act, or perhaps some Irish dancers.

Usually a D.J. or live band round off the evening with plenty of dancing and drinking in evidence.

The following morning and having changed from her wedding dress into another carefully selected ensemble the Bride makes her departure with her new husband, often destined for some far flung corner of the globe.

So that is how it done in modern times, but what about the older traditions of an Irish wedding?

The Claddagh Ring



It is very common for a traditional Claddagh Ring to be used at an Irish wedding, most often by the Groom. The ring is faced outwards prior to the wedding and reversed to face inwards on the hand after

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the wedding, indicating that the bearer is taken forever! The Claddagh Ring is one of the most widespread symbols of Ireland and is very much associated with marriage and romance.

Irish Dancers

The sensation that became 'Riverdance' saw a new interest in Irish traditional music sweep the world. The tradition of having Irish dancers attend at a wedding is a relatively recent one though. It has to be remembered that until Catholic emancipation in the nineteenth century and the revival of the Gaelic consciousness at the turn of the twentieth century, expressions of the Catholic religion were severely restricted. Musically, there are a myriad of Irish songs that are associated with Irish weddings including the poignant 'She Moved Through the Fair'.

Irish Wedding Drinks

No Irish wedding would be complete without a traditional toast to the happy

couple. Of course in modern times this is often completed with Champagne but in the seventeenth century in Ireland this was in very short supply! For many Poteen was the drink of choice!

Poteen is a very strong Whiskey made from potatoes. It was not uncommon for the flavour and recipe to vary from village to village and County to County depending on the type of potato that was refined and the skill of the person doing



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the refining.

It is now quite customary for a bottle of Champagne or similar to be saved from the wedding reception to be opened when a child is brought into the marriage. The tradition of 'wetting the baby's head' at a Christening means more than the application of water by the Priest! It is a euphemism for celebrating the occasion with a drink.

Mead is another alternative. Mead is an Anglo-Saxon drink originally made by Monks and consists of white wine mixed with honey and herbs. It became very popular in Ireland and is often served in modern times as a 'traditional' Irish wedding drink. The Mead was said to possess magical powers of fertility and thus it became customary for the Bride and Groom to drink the Mead for one full moon after their wedding, giving rise to the word 'honeymoon'.

The Lucky Horseshoe

Wedding Horseshoe The tradition of a horseshoe is well known throughout the world and so it is in Ireland. By placing the horseshoe upright over a door or in a room the 'luck of the house' was kept intact. The Greeks associated the horseshoe

with the crescent moon and its symbolism of fertility. The tradition was popular throughout Ireland and England too with the readily available horseshoe being carried by the Bride as she walked down the aisle. It was then affixed securely by the Groom in the matrimonial home. Today, glass and ceramic horseshoes are symbolically used at Irish wedding ceremonies.

Flowers

It was customary to decorate the house that the wedding celebration was held in with locally grown flowers and plants. These would vary according to the time of the year that the wedding was held. Some plants have become associated with Ireland, not least the now readily available 'Bells of Ireland', used in modern times for its symbolism. A Celtic tradition in Wales involves the plant Myrtle which is presented by the Bride to the Bridesmaids who then plant it in their gardens. If the plant grew then the Brides-maid would be married before the year is out!



Wedding Reception: *Aiting the Gander*

The expression 'his goose is cooked' is still in use in Ireland and especially in Dublin. The phrase originated from the tradition of cooking a goose for the groom in the Bride's house the night before the wedding. Once the goose was cooked there was simply no going back!

Wedding Bells

The use of Church bells in Christian religions is symbolic of driving away the evil spirits from the marriage to be. In Penal times in Ireland this was not possible so the gift of a small bell acted as a substitute. Modern Irish weddings often have stationery, invitations, bunting and



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decorations adorned with bells, hearts, shamrocks and horse-shoes. A small glass or ceramic bell can be used in the Church service and kept as a memento.

The Magic Hanky

It is now usual for the 'magic hanky' to be made from Linen although it is likely the original versions were made from cheaper materials. It was usual for the Bride to carry the hanky on her wedding day and for it to be retained and later converted to a Christening hat/bonnet for her first child. The hanky would be



passed on from generation to generation to be re-used in a similar manner.

The Dowry

The tradition of dowry-giving was very well established in rural Ireland and was a source of pride for the family of the Bride. Modernity has relegated this tradition to the history books but in rural areas it is still noted if a Bride brings 'any land' with her.

The Wedding Toast

There are many old sayings, Blessings



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by John Plunkett
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ings each of you own. Decide what you you will keep, and what you will repurpose or replace. Of course you'll want pieces to be in nice condition and a quality level you will be proud of in your new home. Style comes into play here also. It can be tricky to blend ultra modern pieces with antique heirlooms or period pieces, but it can be done.

on your honeymoon... or on a past business trip. It could be in the homes of friends. It could be in a well-appointed room setting you saw in a furniture store or a magazine. It still is a great idea to go to a bookstore and peruse home and interior design magazines. Tear out and save pages you like (buy the mag first!) And today, online resources like Houzz and Pinterest are great sources for interior design and decorating ideas.

Find Inspiration

Inspiration for your new home is everywhere. It may have been in the wonderful hotel you stayed in

Take Inventory

Take a good look at the furnish-

Go Shopping Together

Yes, you can do this online today. But the real fun begins when you both visit some furniture stores together. It is best to see items in the flesh. Be analytical. Observe everything: The way the room is set up, style, types and colors of fabrics, woods, metals. Ask yourself, "Will I like this as well in five or ten years as I like it today?" Note prices and quality. Do your homework. TAKE YOUR TIME. Shop multiple stores over a period of time. Some looks will grow on you. Others, you may like one day but not so much a week later. Do not let anyone rush you into making fast decisions because "The sale ends this weekend." You know better than that. And taking your time will help you carefully create the decorating scheme you'll enjoy and be proud of over time.

Create a Plan and Budget

While you can do this yourself, planning is the most important step and is where a professional interior designer can be invaluable. Furniture and decorating mistakes are costly. Carefully measure and draw scale floor plans for each room. Layer in furniture arrangement options based upon the exact sizes of the pieces you will use and the way you will use the room. Consider all the components of each room: Wall color, window coverings, floor coverings, furniture, lamps and lighting. Don't forget artwork and decorative accessories: They are the jewelry that finish the room.

As you create your decorating



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Chicago Metro Area



There are moments in life that are meant to be acknowledged with ceremony, reflection, ritual – some with great intimacy and others through a coming together of community. In addition to weddings, I provide services for memorials, home blessings, vow renewals, pet blessings and other events marking important passages.

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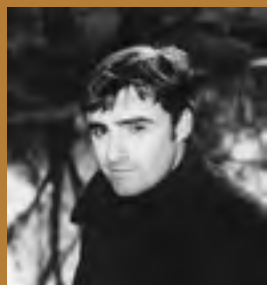
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plan, be sure that each room flows harmoniously into the next.

Now, importantly, put at least an approximate price tag on every item you have listed. Add it all up, room by room. Now you will see where you stand... and where you may need to edit. Of course, you can implement your plan one room at a time according to your budget and needs

Make it Personal

Each of you have very personal tastes and visions of home. Celebrate that! Meld these visions together in rooms where you can.



EXPERIENCE

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Want to be an Irish Dancer?

Trinity Irish Dance is open to boys and girls ages 3½ - 10. April starts our new Intro to Irish Dance series!

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In other rooms let one or the other of your personal styles shine. This will give your home greater dimension and vibrant personality.

Enjoy Your Home

Creating your ideal home interior can be tedious. But as Frank Lloyd Wright said, "If you invest wisely in beauty it will remain with you all the days of your life." Having done your work, now enjoy your home. Each of you work hard each day in our challenging world. It can take a toll. Your newly created interior spaces can aid remarkably in healing wounds, sharing stories and victories, nurturing family members, and recouping for the next day.

Now, share your home, both with family and with friends. Thankfully, home entertainment

is on the rise again. Yes it's nice to meet friends out at your favorite restaurant. But inviting them to your home for a wonderful meal and intimate conversation is so much more welcoming and personable. It enables people to connect at a deeper level. It also shows off your great decorating handiwork. And chances are good you will be the recipient of more than one compliment.

John Plunkett and his wife Valerie are Professional Interior Designers at John Plunkett Interiors in Wilmette, IL. They harken from the former Plunkett Furniture and now aid clients, Chicagoland and beyond, in their furnishing needs and in projects from small to large.

Special Valentine's Day Performances added!

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ChicagoTheaterandArts.com

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ChicagolandTheaterReviews.com



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"WONDERFUL."

BuzzNews.net

"4 STARS, A HIT."

AroundTheTownChicago.com

"UPROARIOUS."

ChicagolandMusicaltheater.com

"A TRIUMPH."

StageandCinema.com

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Groups: 773.327.3778 or info@grouptix.com

Ireland Network USA: Where it is Today

By John Breslin

Steve Lenox is truly an Irish-American global traveler. He commutes between the two countries, literally.

So the president of Irish Network USA is in a unique position to lead the growing organization, as someone with a foot in each country, and connected hands across America.

As Chicago, the birthplace 14 years ago of what is still known in this city as the Ireland Network, prepares to celebrate its annual ball Feb. 18, Lenox took time out from running his New Jersey-headquartered Lenox Consultancy business to talk about the state of play with the organization, and its future.

But Lenox also revealed details of the unique, and many might say enviable, work-life-travel balance, including the regular transatlantic commute back to Cork where he, his wife, Aoife, and three boys have a home. Holidays are spent between the two countries. "My

wife, having grown up in Ireland, always wanted, was yearning to go back home," Lenox said. "And we got the opportunity about eight years ago. She has her own business there and my business allows me to travel. It has worked for our family."

It's a global Irish tale, the family with feet in each country, and comfortable in both.

And that's an advantage for Lenox as the Irish Network, now with 22 chapters and approximately 5,000 members spread across the country, though sometimes viewed as simply connecting Irish-America, is also about connecting Ireland and America.

Lenox, whose great grandmother came from Donegal, admits that being Irish was "never something we wore on our sleeves" when growing up.

But courtship and marriage 15 years ago to a Cork woman quickly led to him connecting much more closely to the Irish-



Steve Lenox
photo by William Fry

American community. Apart from moving between the two countries, he is also now a dual passport holder.

About five years ago, he heard about and joined the New Jersey chapter of the Irish Network. And not long after that he was elected co-president of what quickly became Irish Network USA (IN-USA), the umbrella organization for all chapters in the country, then about 12.

"We restructured, formalized it as Irish Network USA as opposed to different networks in the various cities," Lenox said. "We wanted to make sure we had a bit more structure, connect the chapters a bit more strategically, not just in their own cities."

Cowboy Song: The Authorized Biography of Thin Lizzy's Philip Lynott

"Excellent, painstaking... [a] fine retelling of the messy life of Thin Lizzy's charismatic frontman."

—The Guardian

"The truest measure of the man we have... a must-read." —MOJO

"The Boys Are Back in Town," "Whiskey in the Jar," "Dancing in the Moonlight." These hits from Irish rock band Thin Lizzy, along with classic albums Jailbreak and Live and Dangerous, are now part of the rock canon. Philip Lynott (1949-1986), Thin Lizzy's guiding spirit and supremely gifted songwriter who passed away at only age 36, was the Republic of Ireland's first bona fide rock star—an instantly identifiable singer and charismatic stage performer, combining the instincts of a wild man with the soul of a poet. Bands from Megadeth to Metallica, Foo Fighters to Def Leppard cite Thin Lizzy as an influence, and artists as di-

verse as Pulp, Sade, the Hold Steady and the Corrs have covered Lynott's songs.

From its genesis in Chicago, Irish Network USA now has 22 chapters under its umbrella, not only in what might be regarded as the more traditional Irish-American cities, but also in such places as Cleveland, Atlanta, Seattle, Houston, and Austin.

And, Lenox said, people have expressed interest in setting up in such diverse places as Portland, Ore., Dallas, Kansas City, Mo., and Jacksonville, Fla.

It's not a coincidence that Ireland Network chapters have more recently sprung up in high tech hubs, where the Irish government, and Irish businesses, are developing deep contacts, including with the opening of consulate generals and appointing honorary consuls. Lenox said the Irish government gives the organization "wonderful support," not just financial through the Emigrant Support program, but also personal backing from Ambassador Anne Anderson and the consuls around the country. Most recently, Minister of State Dara Murphy attended a gathering in Seattle where a panel discussed the implications of Brexit and

other topics.

And so to President Donald Trump, where conversations about business, and other matters, tend to land at some point. Concerns have been voiced in Ireland over the president's protectionist rhetoric, and his stated commitment to bringing jobs back to the US, and punishing companies that do not do so.

At a recent news conference prior to his inauguration, he singled out pharmaceutical firms and questioned why drugs are not made in America if they are consumed in America. This has obvious implications for Ireland given this industry's large footprint in the country, both in terms of investment and jobs. But Lenox is not overly concerned, arguing the ties that bind are too close, and that works both ways.

"Ireland is going to continue to be a very attractive place for inward investment for lots of reasons," he said. "And Irish businesses are coming here and creating jobs."

The Irish Network USA president said the organization is not all about business, but also

Continued to page 39

FEBRUARY 23 - MARCH 25, 2017

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by Martin McDonagh

directed by Iuda Iopatina Solomon



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verse as Pulp, Sade, the Hold Steady and the Corrs have covered Lynott's songs.

Cowboy Song: The Authorized Biography of Thin Lizzy's Philip Lynott (Chicago Review Press; May 1, 2017) by Graeme Thomson is the first biography of the musician written with the cooperation of the Lynott Estate. Exploring the fascinating contradictions between Lynott's rock star persona and the shy, sensitive mixed-race child of a Catholic teenager and a Guyanese stowaway raised in working-class Dublin, Thomson traces Lynott's rise above daunting obstacles and wounding abandonments.

Cowboy Song analyzes Lynott's unsettled childhood, his musical apprenticeship, key alliances with the poets, painters and folkies of 1960s Dublin, stardom with Thin Lizzy and drug-induced decline. It examines the unique blend of cultural influences which informed Ly-

not's writing, connecting Ireland's rich reserves of music, myth and poetry to hard rock, progressive folk, punk, soul and new wave. Drawing on scores of exclusive interviews with family, friends, bandmates and collaborators, Cowboy Song is both the ultimate depiction of a multifaceted rock icon and an intimate portrait of

Continued on page 36



Chicago Gaelic Park

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



A Cháirde

Chicago Gaelic Park was delighted to receive the 2016 Mayor Richard J. Daley Award from the Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee, which represents the grand prize for overall excellence in its 2016 parade. Our float, a battle-scarred replica of Dublin's General Post Office, was designed by Lynnea Mangan to commemorate the 1916 Easter Rising. Our construction team, hauling team and marchers all contributed, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to the Parade Committee. We look forward to the 2017 parade.

If you've ever seen the Merry Ploughboys perform over the years at their pub in

Dublin, then you know how much fun can be had at our Merry Ploughboys Party on February 4th. We hope that you can come out that night and reconnect with the lads as they bring us their talent and energy. We also hope to see you (or someone you know with an upcoming wedding) at our Bridal Boutique, which will be held on February 19th. There will be top wedding vendors, giveaways, complimentary hors d'oeuvres, a fashion show, and a vacation grand prize.

Stay warm. Patrick's month will be here soon.

Slán go fóil,

Bill O'Sullivan, President

2017 CGP Calendar of Events 2017

FEBRUARY

2/4	Merry Ploughboy Party	
2/8	Ladies Auxiliary Meeting	
2/18	Dancing with Our Stars	
2/19	Bridal Boutique	
2/26	Classic Carvery with Garry Haughey	3:00pm

Monthly Musical Luncheons will resume in March

Monthly Mass and Breakfast is the 2nd Sunday of the Month

Pub Trivia are Tuesday evenings 7:30pm

Monday Evenings Set Dancing 7:30pm

Tuesday Evenings Ceili Dancing Lessons 7pm/Ceili 7:30pm

Sunday Evening CGP Radio Live WCEV 1450 AM 7:05-9pm



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Visit the CGP Library in the Shamrock Room

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- Pub Trivia every Tuesday, October-May starting at 7:30pm
- Every Thursday Traditional Music with Pat Finnegan & The Irish Musicians

the CARRAIG IRISH PUB

Live Music in the Pub

Fri	Feb 3	Jue Cullen	7:30pm
Sat	Feb 4	Kieran Byrne	8:30pm
Wed	Feb 8	Frank Rossi (Rib Night)	6:00pm
Fri	Feb 10	Jimmy O and Rhonda Lee	7:30pm
Sat	Feb 11	Mulligan Stew	8:30pm
Fri	Feb 17	Joe McShane	7:30pm
Sat	Feb 18	Bernie Glim	8:00pm
Fri	Feb 24	Gerry Haughey	7:30pm
Sat	Feb 25	Larry Nugent and Billy O'Donahue	8:30pm

Chicago Gaelic Park

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708.687.9323

www.chicagogaelicpark.org

NO COVER CHARGE



Chicago Gaelic Park Receives Mayor Richard A. Daley Award for Overall Excellence for the 2016 St. Patrick's Day Parade



President Bill O'Sullivan and Lynnea Mangan



Chicago Gaelic Park

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



THE MERRY
PLOUGHBOY
Party!



Appearing at

Chicago Gaelic Park

Saturday February 04, 2017

Tickets \$25.00

Doors open 7:00pm - Show at 8:00pm

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Join us for

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Sunday February 05, 2017

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Join us at The Carraig Pub for
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\$40 Per Person

From Kickoff to Final Whistle

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saturday march 11, 2017

St. Patrick's Concert

at Chicago Gaelic Park



Celebrate St. Patrick's with
Tony Kenny

and World Class Irish Dancers along with other special guests.

Enjoy an exhilarating and distinctive blend of Irish music, song, laughter,
and dance in an evening designed for the entire family.
Tony Kenny's Irish Celebration is internationally known and loved.

Tickets \$25

Doors open 7:00pm / Concert at 8:00pm

Chicago Gaelic Park • 6119 W. 147th Street • Oak Forest, IL • 708-687-9323

*Celebrate Valentine's Day
with Dinner at
The Carraig Irish Pub*



Tuesday February 14, 2017

\$70.00 per Couple

Reservations are required,

So call 708-687-9323

and make yours today.



*Your delicious meal includes soup and salad,
your main course of Filet Mignon with
3 Skewered Shrimp, Stuffed Tomato, Asparagus,
Double Baked Potato, Double Chocolate Layer
Cake for dessert, and a bottle of red or white wine.*

Enjoy!

Women's Little Christmas - January 2017





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in the Chicago Southland

Presents it's Annual



Bridal Boutique

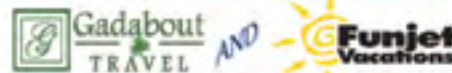
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Sunday, February 19, 2017

Join us for a day of shopping
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Top-Rated Vendors

Complimentary Hors d'oeuvres
And Great Giveaways!

Grand Prize Provided by:



2 round-trip tickets from Chicago - Midway Airport
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Must be available to attend on-site.

12:00-3:00pm

Admission \$5.00 at the door

And a Fashion Show Featuring
Gowns and Evening Wear from

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dancing for our stars

Hosted By Chicago St. Jarlath's Youth GAA Club

Saturday, February 18th, 2017

Chicago Gaelic Park
8119 W. 147th Street, Oak Forest

Doors Open
At 6:00 pm

Dancing Starts
At 7:00 pm

Tickets Available At
www.ChicagoStJarlaths.com

\$15 Prepaid - \$20 At The Door



Irish Festival 2017 Queen Contest

Application

The candidate chosen as the new Irish Festival 2017 Queen shall reign as Queen for one full year. A runner-up will also be chosen. Both the Queen and the runner-up will be invited to participate in many activities and events. During St. Patrick's week, the new Queen and runner-up will be given the seat of honor high atop the Irish Festival Parade float. Ceremonies, contests and gala festivities at Irish Festival 2017 will be memorable and fun for the Queen and everyone involved. Many gifts and prizes will be bestowed upon the newly crowned Queen. Valuable prizes will also be presented to the runner-up. All girls are invited to enter the contest, if they meet the following requirements:

- Are 18-24 years of age up to March 1, 2017
- Must be of Irish heritage
- Single
- \$10.00 registration fee

Name _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Email Address _____

Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____

Schools Attended _____

Talents / Hobbies _____

Employment _____

What do you think is Unique About you? _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Deadline for Entry is March 1, 2017
PLEASE ENCLOSE ENTRY FEE (NON-REFUNDABLE)

Mail To:
Gaelic Park Irish Festival 2017 Queen Contest
6119 W 147th Street, Oak Forest, IL 60452

The Gaelic Park Players Present the Annual All-Ireland Trivia Contest. It will be held at Gaelic Park on Friday, March 3rd at 7:30pm. Everyone should arrive by 7-7:15pm in order to register. Open to teams of 6 at \$60 per team named after Irish

counties. Singles can join at \$10 and will be assigned a team.

Cont'd on next page...





Chicago Gaelic Park

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



Monthly Musical Luncheon - Wednesday March 1st

Entertainment - Jerry & Kara Eadie

Doors open 12:00 - Lunch served at 1:00

\$15.00 - call to make reservations 708-687-9323

Gaelic Park Queen Contest - Saturday March 4th

St. Baldrick's Head Shaving Event - Saturday March 4th

register at www.stbaldricks.org

Saturday March 11th - Tony Kenny's



Concert - Tickets \$25.00

Southside Irish Sunday March 12th

Mass at 9am followed by Irish Breakfast

Doors open at 1pm with 3 stages of musical entertainment and an additional stage with children's entertainment

Admission \$5 adults / \$3 Kids

FRIDAY MARCH 17th

St. Patrick's Day
burgeon

Entertainment by Joe Cullen
and Cross Keys Irish Dancers

Tickets \$25 - RESERVATIONS ONLY

Ireland on Parade March 9-17, 2017 Celebrating 50 Years of Irish Music, Song and Dance

Dance School Schedule

Thursday March 9th

6:30pm Gaelic Park Set Dancers
7:00pm Tooromeen School of Irish Dance
7:30pm Maiden Street Irish Dance Academy
8:00pm Cross Keys School of Irish Dancing

Friday March 10th

6:30pm McCormack Fay Academy of Irish Dance
7:00pm Eilish Sullivan School of Irish Dance
7:30pm Trinity Irish Dancers
8:00pm Lavin-Cassidy School of Irish Dancing

Wednesday March 15th

7:00pm Weber Irish Dance
7:30pm Foy School of Irish Dancing
8:00pm Mullane Godley Academy of Irish Dance

Thursday March 16th

6:30pm Gaelic Park Ceili Dancers
7:00pm McNamara School of Irish Dance
7:30pm Blackbird Academy of Irish Dance
8:00pm Mulhern School of Irish Dance

St. Patrick's Day ~ Friday March 17

The Carraig Pub Open 11am - Pub Food Served from 11:00am - Pub entertainment starting at 3:00pm

Children's entertainment in the Tara Room at 4:30pm, followed by live music and a show by
The Lavin-Cassidy School of Irish Dancing at 6:30pm

Live music in the Emerald Room at 6:30pm

Gaelic Park Players

...Cont'd from previous page

Approximately 15% of questions are Irish. There is a cash prize of \$250, with trophies and a cup as well as spot prizes. Come out and join the fun! To sign up, please contact John Devitt 708-710-8591 or by e-mail Devitt62@yahoo.com.

We are also happy to announce our Spring 2017 show *For Better, for Worse* by Jimmy Keary. It is the sequel to *The Two Loves of Gabriel Foley* which was performed for our Fall 2013 show. Gabriel and Chrissie are now married but having troubles as his mother

Aggie lives with the couple which causes some friction. Gabriel also invites his widowed aunt to come join them as well. Stay tuned to this page for more information on our production.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Gaelic Park Players, the meetings are held the second Wednesday of every month at 7:30 pm at Gaelic Park. Anyone who is interested in either auditioning for our spring play production or being a part of the crew, please join us for a meeting or contact us via the website gaelicparkplayers.org.

The County Connection Corner



The Clare Association Dinner Dance will be held at Gaelic Park on March 25th.

Antrim Armagh Carlow Cavan Clare Cork Derry Donegal Down Dublin Fermanagh Galway Kerry Kildare Kilkenny Laois Leitrim Limerick Longford Louth Mayo Meath Monaghan Offaly Roscommon Sligo Tipperary Tyrone Waterford Westmeath Wexford Wicklow



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FACEBOOK AND TWITTER!
TAKE A MOMENT AND "LIKE" US!



Our Take on Social Services

By Paul Dowling



Each month Chicago Irish Immigrant Support hosts senior group meetings at IAHC and Gaelic Park. See below for specific details on upcoming events. All senior meetings begin at 10am. There is no cost and refreshments are served. All are very welcome. If you need further information, please call our office on 773-282-8445.

Chicago Gaelic Park

Wednesday, 8th February 2017

The Stories of a Lifetime

Dick Cavanaugh has lived a full life. At various times he's been a pilot, an airman, a father and a friend. He's met people as famous as Elizabeth Taylor, Bob Hope and President Kennedy, and as a common as an every man on the street. Dick joins us to share some of the many interesting and funny stories he's collected over the years.

Wednesday, 22nd February 2017 – *A Visit from an Adventurous Granny*

We are delighted to welcome back local 'granny' explorer Jeanne Roppolo to tell us about another of her exciting adventures to an exotic and distant land.

Irish American Heritage Center

Wednesday, 1st February 2017

Minding our Mental Wellness

Mental wellness is a hugely important part of each of our lives so it's essential that we have an understanding of what options are available to us if we find ourselves needing a little help. Today we are joined by Rose Elias who is a psychologist at the Kedzie Center – a neighborhood mental health service. Rose will help us to understand how emotionally difficult situations impact on our mental wellness and how we can best deal with these challenges when they occur.

Wednesday, 15th February 2017

Keeping Yourself, Your Home and Your Property Safe

The Cook County Sheriff's office will be delivering a presentation

explaining various crime prevention steps seniors can take to protect themselves, their families, homes, and vehicles. They will share tips on staying safe at home, as well as when you shopping, walking, taking public transportation or traveling.

Reminder – Returned to Ireland Survey

Do you know anyone who has moved back to live in Ireland in the last two years? Crosscare Migrant Project - a Dublin based service- is collecting information from those who have decided to return to live full time in Ireland. Their survey asks questions related to returning emigrants' experiences across a range of different topics including employment, education, family, and what prompted them to decide to move back home from overseas. The survey is a tool to better understand what challenges returning emigrants have struggles with most and in what ways they can be better support as they make what is very often a difficult transition back into what may once have been a very familiar environment. Those who want to find out more about the survey or about Crosscare Migrant Project and the services they provide should visit their website at www.migrantproject.ie

Reminder – CLANN

In June of last year, Justice for Magdalenes Research (JFMR) and Adoption Rights Alliance (ARA) announced the launch of Clann: Ireland's Unmarried Mothers and their Children: Gathering the Data (Clann) which is a joint initiative with global law firm, Hogan Lovells.

The purpose of Clann is to help establish the truth of what happened to unmarried mothers and their children in 20th century Ireland and thus to help ensure that investigation and reparation measures are as comprehensive

and effective as possible. Clann is assisting individuals affected by or involved with the treatment of unmarried mothers and their children to provide evidence to the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes and Certain Related Matters.

Assistance under the Clann project is open to people living anywhere in the world who have experience of Ireland's treatment of unmarried mothers and their children (including adult adopted people). If a member of a representative group avails of Clann's assistance in compiling their statement, they are free to use the statement as they wish afterwards. Witnesses will have an opportunity to share their statements with Clann, but they are under no obligation to do so. Clann will anonymise shared statements and will gather documentary and archival materials in order to make a public group report to the Commission of Investigation, the Irish Government, and international human rights bodies. The witness statement gathering process forms part of a larger project to create a permanent archive of the experiences of Ireland's unmarried mothers and their children via the Clann website. The Clann website will act as a resource for individuals affected by the issues and will be available to the wider public for ongoing education and research.

If witnesses have already given evidence to the Commission, they are still welcome to participate in the Clann project. They may find it helpful to have a written statement for safe-keeping or future use.

If they wish, witnesses may simply to send their statements to the Commission but not give 'live evidence' in person. In this instance, the statement will need to be attached to an affidavit and sworn in front of a solicitor. The Commission of Investigation's contact details are as follows:

Address: 73 Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2, D02 N773 or PO Box 12626, Dublin 2, Ireland.

Email: info@mbhcoi.ie

Confidential Freephone:

+353-1-6445088



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Celebrate St. Patrick's Day SEASON

PROGRAMS AND CONCERTS THIS FEBRUARY AND MARCH



The Irish Whiskey Class

Saturdays, February 4 or February 25, 4pm

Learn the history, legacy, production and character of whiskey, while sampling some of the "uisce beatha"; the water of life. **\$30**



Tea with Mamie Eisenhower, Saturday, February 11, 11am

Have tea with the wife of President Dwight D. Eisenhower and learn about her marriage to Ike, time as an Army wife and Hostess in Chief of the White House.

Adults \$25, Children 12 and under are free



Comedy and Crooning with Gene Cooney and Artie Fitzgerald Saturday, February 11, 7:30pm

IAHC President Gene Cooney performs a comedy set and entertainer Artie Fitzgerald sings classics and standards. Proceeds benefit the IAHC Library and the purchase of a new computer server. **\$20**



Katherine Anne Porter: The Dark Side of Storytelling Sunday, February 12, 3pm

Scholar Joyce Goldenstern discusses Porter, a writer known for her dark themes. **Donations accepted**



Quiz Night, Friday, February 17, 8pm

Show your smarts at one of Chicago's longest-running trivia contests. **\$30 per team**



Friday Night Fish Fry, March 3 to April 14, 6:30pm (Except 3/17)

Bring the whole family out each Friday during Lent for our fish fry and stay for live music at 8pm.

Adults \$12, children \$8



Wearing of the Green Dinner Dance, Sunday, March 5, 5pm

Kick off St. Patrick's Day Season with dinner, live music with Gerry Haughey, Kara Eadie and Teresa Shine, dancing, prizes and a cash bar. **\$40**



St. Patrick's Festival, Saturday, March 11, Noon-Midnight

Celebrate the season with music, dance, food, drink, cultural programs and exhibits on every floor.

\$12-15, Children 12 and under free



St. Patrick's Day Celebration, Friday, March 17, Noon-Midnight

Join the fun with music, dance, food and drink in the Fifth Province.

Adults \$10, Children 12 and under free



Celtic Crossings: Andy Cooney and Phil Coulter in Concert Saturday, March 18, 8pm and Sunday, March 19, 2pm

Wrap up your St. Patrick's Day with a concert featuring Phil Coulter and Andy Cooney. **\$35-\$55**



Dónal Clancy and Rory Makem take the stage with songs and stories from the Irish folk tradition

Friday, February 17 • 8pm

Tickets: \$20 for IAHC members • \$22 for general admission



Supergroup SOLAS reunites all members of the band; past and present, for a night of arrangements of age-old tunes, compelling covers and unparalleled musicianship, as it prepares to go on hiatus.



SOLAS
IN CONCERT


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at the Irish American Heritage Center

DON'T MISS ANY OF THE FUN!

MARCH 11 ST. PATRICK'S FESTIVAL FIFTH PROVINCE

1pm Larry Nugent and Bill O'Donoghue

3pm Shannon Rovers 

3:30pm Dooley Brothers

6pm Fonn Mor

9pm Chancey Brothers

ERIN ROOM

2pm, 3:15pm Wiggleworms

5pm Mulligan Stew

7:30pm In Spite of Ourselves 

ROOM 310

3pm Academy of Irish Music

5pm Patrick and Karen Cannady and Friends

ROOM 311

1-5pm Trinity Academy of Irish Dance Lessons

AUDITORIUM

1:30pm Irish Heritage Singers

2:30pm O'Hare School of Irish Dance

3:30pm Rebecca McCarthy School of Irish Dance

4:30pm Mullane Godley Healy School of Irish Dance

5:30pm Trinity Irish Dancers

MARCH 17 ST. PATRICK'S DAY CELEBRATION FIFTH PROVINCE

1pm Finbarr Fagan's Band

3pm Trinity Irish Dancers

4pm Chancey Brothers

6pm The Gleasons 

8pm The Dirty Wellies

10pm The Great Whiskey Project



To purchase tickets,
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773-282-7035, ext. 10.





Clutter Buster

Procrastinate No More

by Rita Emmett

Home Sweet Cluttered Home

There is an immediate emotional and psychological payoff to getting our houses in order. ~ Sarah Ban Breathnach
A story from a reader:

Overnight company was expected, the guest room was

swamped with clutter and parents were super-busy. When Mom & Dad were away, the helpful & kind-hearted teens clutter-busted the guest room and texted their parents a photo of the beautifully cleared-out area. The parents were thrilled. Then when they returned home, they were shocked

to discover the kids had moved all the clutter to their folks' bedroom and stacked it so high, nobody could walk a path through it.

Anyone relate to that? It's not clutter-busting; it's the "Clutter Shuffle". Here's a collection of tips to help you either get rid of clutter or find a place to put it.

General Stuff

- Designate one spot for gifts and cards you buy ahead of time. With all in one place, you won't forget what you have and buy a duplicate, and when you need something, you'll know where to find it.

- If you have several things that serve the same function, keep the newest or best one and get rid of the others.

- When you can't find time to tackle a cluttered area, then every time you pass it, try to take care of five items.

- Don't let it come into your home unless you have a place for it.

- Invite company over once in a while. God created company so the home gets cleaned.

Kitchen

- Get rid of canisters on your counter unless you love and use them. With most canister sets, sugar gets hard, you seldom use flour, and you don't drink tea AND coffee, so one is empty or filled with never-used stale stuff. Store sugar and flour in sealed containers inside a cabinet, and clear a counter spot where those canisters used to be.

- If you have a slow cooker, steam iron, waffle iron, light saber or anything else on the counter that you use only a few times a year, tuck it away. Eventually, you'll have a clear space making your kitchen look larger and less ... um ... cluttered.

- Consider how many people you have in the family versus how many glasses, mugs, dishes and plastic water bottles. Sure you need extra for company, but do you have many that are never used? Do you really need enough extras to supply a small third world country?

- Keep cookbooks that are actually used. Realize that recipes

in the unused ones can likely be found on the Internet. Toss, sell or donate them.

- Gather similar objects together in cabinets and refrigerator. Assign a certain spot for groups of food such as cereals. Train the family that short dairy products (butter, margarine, yogurt, cottage cheese) live on one refrigerator shelf. (usually that short shelf that nothing else fits on.) You don't have to use the butter compartment for butter if that bugs you. Keep batteries in it or leave it empty.

- Murphy's Law of the Kitchen: The least used items are usually

smack in front of the most used things. With each item ask, "How often is this used?" Not often? Store it high or low. Don't put the most used things in the least convenient spots.

- Where is it used? Store it nearby in a convenient place.

Rita Emmett is a "Recovered Pack Rat", Professional Speaker, and author of The Clutter-Busting Handbook,

To subscribe to her free monthly "Anticrastination Tip Sheet", go to her website www.RitaEmmett.com

847-699-9950 or

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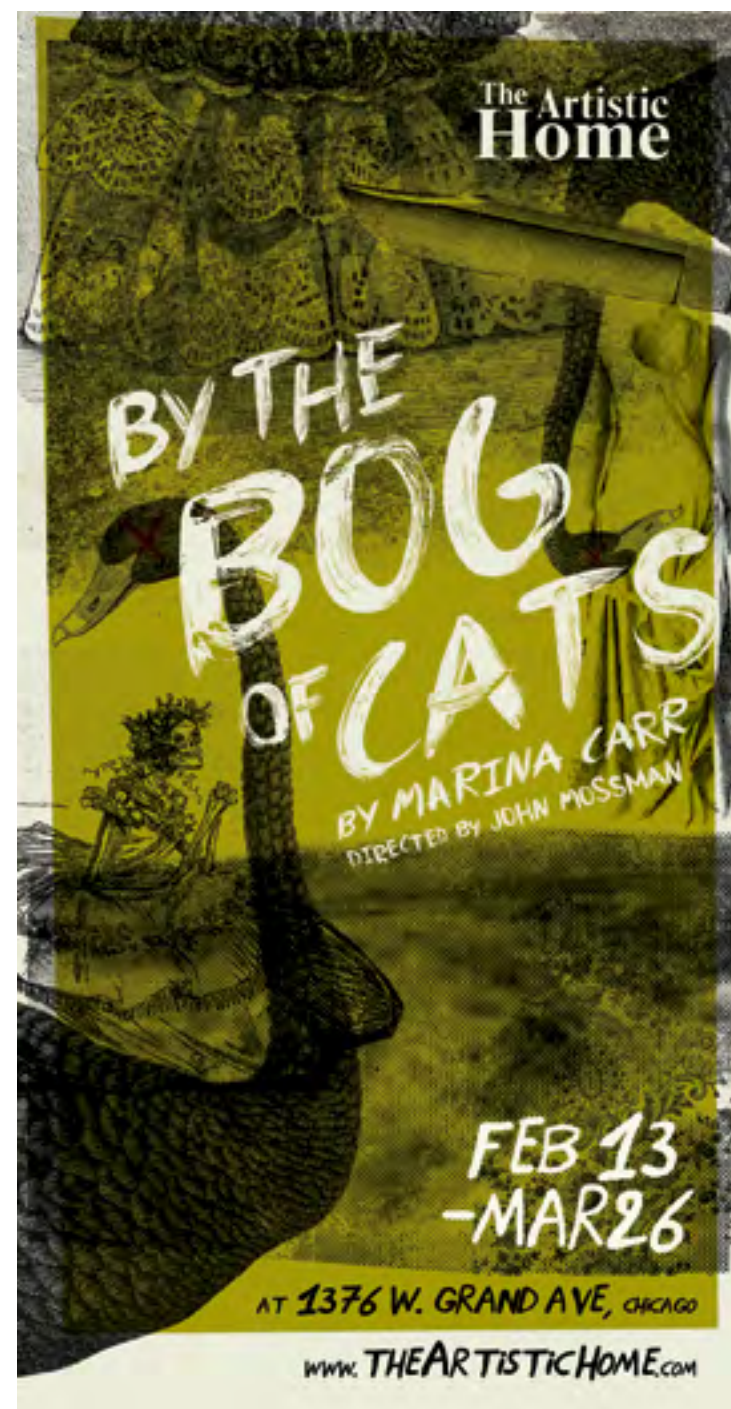
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Boyle the Kettle

We'll Have A Sup Of Tea
Tom Boyle



ed States has deeply normalized white supremacy." That's funny, I haven't seen any public toilets that say

except th' little kids with pannekakers that most iv the polis meet before midnight. Look at there table, will ye? 'An ax done it,' says ye? No, faith, but th' fist iv a Kerry Polisman they put on this here bate last week. He done it ladin' thrumps. 'Thank Gawd,' says I, 'ye didn't have a good hand,' I says, 'or I might have to call in th' wreckin' wagon.' Thim Kerry men shud be made to play forty-fives with boxin'-gloves on.

th' name iv Oleson ; an' over in the Nineteenth Wa-ard th' County Wath-erford is all stirred up because Johnny Powers is filled th' pipe-ya-ard with his own rilitives. I felt dam lonely, an' with raisin, too; f'r I was th' on'y man in th' camp that didn't have a job. An' says I, 'Gintlemen,' says I, 'can't I do something f'r Ireland, too?' I says. 'I'd make a gr-reat city treasurer,' says I, 'if ye've th' job handy,' I says; and at that they give me th' laugh, and we tuck up a subscription an' adjourned.

We Get Letters

Margaret Barry Aguilar: The anger in your letter tells me that someone close to you was a victim. If you look back on my December, 2016 column, I said in all fairness, when I included an email from my niece who was concerned that false accusations had wrecked the lives of innocent priests.

If you had followed my comments on pedophile priests over the years, you would understand that you and I are on the same page. For all victims, it's a curse that lasts a lifetime. Margaret, I wouldn't pull any punches on this subject.

As for the Irish American Cultural Center (IAHC) in Chicago, it is not closely aligned with the church. The members are mostly Catholic. I served 17.5 years on the board of directors, and we have always had an old fashioned Mass and breakfast for Christmas, followed by our Christmas Bazaar. We traditionally have an Easter Mass at which we honor the heroes of the Easter Rising in the Irish Rebellion.

Don't throw the baby out with the bath water.

Hunter College Professor

Two men were chasing and harassing Ivanka Trump, who was taking a Jet Blue flight to California.

Professor, Matthew Lasner, and his husband, Dan Goldstein, were removed from the plane when Goldstein told Ivanka her father was ruining the country, and demanding his resignation. Well, so far Trump hasn't ruined anything as he's not even in office!

Clinton's Party

Clinton's Democratic Party, especially the Left Wing, have spent decades perfecting "identity politics." At the polling booth it means slicing and dicing the electorate into interest groups based on color, gender, and sexual preference.

Everyday Feminism

"Not to be outdone, an organization called "everyday feminism" is promoting an online course called "healing from toxic whiteness." These social justice warriors say the election of Donald Trump is irrefutable truth that the Unit-

"whites only!"

Michelle/Oprah

All I needed to hear was Michelle Obama say, "we are feeling what not having hope feels like." She said this during her interview with Oprah. Conversely now, for the first time in 8 years, we will have some hope.

Liberal Paranoia

It's hard to believe the carry on. We are now hearing some people say, "who's going to protect us?" Immigrants fearing deportation? Women fearing the loss of legalized abortion? The loss of same sex marriage? Muslim's fearing religious persecution? Will all of these fears come to pass? Hardly. John Q. Public suffered in silence while the morally inverted, and wrong doers were portrayed as victims. And all the time the Obama administration piled up the national debt.

Mr. Dooley

In his book, In the Hearts of His Countrymen, he had this to say about the police: Their Excellencies, The Police. "Ye'll be goin' home early to-night, Jawn dear," said Mr. Dooley to Mr. McKenna.

"And for why?" Said that gentleman, tilting lazily back in the chair.

"Because gin'ral ordher number wan is out," said Mr. Dooley, "directin' th' polis to stop ivry man catches out after midnight an' make this give a satisfachry account iv themselves or run thim off to jail. I'v course, ye'll be pinched, f'r ye won't dare say where ye come fr'm; an' 'tis twenty-eight to wan, the odds again an Orangeman at a wake, that ye'll not know wher ye're goin'."

"Tut, tut," said Mr. McKenna, indifferently.

"Ye may tut-tut till he lay an egg," said Mr. Dooley, severely, "ye ol' hen; but 'this so. I read it in th' pa-papers yesterdah afthernoon that Brinnan --'tis queer how thim Germans all get to be polismin in, they're bright men, th' Germans, I don't think-- Brinnan says, says he, that th' city do be overrun with burglars an' highwaymen, so he orders the' polis to stick up ivry pedesthreen they meet afther closing time. 'Tis good for him he named th' hour, f'r 'tis few pedesthreens save an'

"I read about th' ordher, but it slipped me min' las' night. I was down at a meetin' iv th' Hugh O'Neills, an' a most intherestin' meetin' in was, Jawn. I'd been niglictful iv me Joey to th' cause iv late, an' I was surprised an' shocked to hear how poor ol' Ireland was sufferin'. Th' rapport fr'm th' Twinty-third Wa-ard, which is in th' County mayo, showed that th' street clanin' contrhact had been give to a Swede be

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Over the last 4 months I covered some topics about Dublin, I would like to add that our son attends studies at Trinity College Dublin he is studying Psychology. The next county I will cover is my dad Michael's second favorite county, Co. Cork. (Corcach-means the marsh) is the largest Co in area of

32 counties. The greater metropolitan Cork area which includes a number of satellite towns and suburbs has a population exceeding 300,000. The capital city of Cork is Cork city which is built on the river Lee, which spills into two channels at the Western end of the city. The city center is divided by three channels. The river Lee leads outwards towards Lough Mahon and Cork harbor, one of the world's largest natural harbors in the world. Cork was originally a Monastic Settlement founded by St. Finbar in the 16th Century. Cork achieved an urban characteristic at some point between 915 and 922 when Norseman Viking settlers founded a trading port. It has been



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proposed that like Dublin, Cork was important trading center in the global Scandinavian net work.

In the war of Independence (1919-1921) the center of Cork was burnt down by the English. During the Irish civil war Cork was for a time held by Anti-treaty forces until it was retaken by the pro-treaty Cork was the European capital of culture in 2005. In 2009 it was included in the Lonely Planets top 10 best in travel. There is a rivalry between Cork and Dublin similar to the rivalry between Manchester and London, Melbourne and Sydney, Barcelona and Madrid. Cork has had a notable history for Hurling and has won 30 all Ireland hurling championship titles and 7 football all Ireland titles. Cork has an impressive record when it comes to both hurling and football, in my estimation when it comes to a combination of both hurling and football championship titles Kerry holds the record of 37 football and 1 hurling title. Cork and my home co. Kilkenny has had many great "Clash of the Ash" in Irish sport history. One that stands out to me is the 1947 Hurling All Ireland Cork Vs. Kilkenny. that year the game was tied of a combination of 14 points each with 15 seconds to go. The hero for Cork was Christy Ring and Kilkenny's hero was Terry Leahy, however on that moment as the ever famous Michael O'Hehir (Dublin) (Original voice of Gaelic Games) said "time is ticking, 10 seconds to go, Leahy lost his hurly around the Cork Goal and he managed to get the ball over the bar with his knee to win the game for Kilkenny. The Kilkenny team that year got

a free trip to NYC. Terry Leahy fell in love and never came back to Ireland. And every year after when Kilkenny was competing they would joke "Come back Leahy we need you". Jack Lynch a sportsman and and politician, he was Ireland's Taoiseach (1966-73, 1977-1979) and a great hurler for Cork.

My father loved Cork and would secretly root for Cork even when they played Kilkenny maybe it's because his sister married a Cork man. His sister Katie immigrated to the USA and met a man from Skibbereen, Cork and they moved back to Ireland. They were married in my parish in Muckalee, Kilkenny. My father would send great gifts to his sister in Cork every Christmas and I would help him. He would send them a lot of produce.

As we approach February George Washington, Abe Lincoln and my father and I all have something in common, we all have birthdays in February. Speaking of Abe Lincoln here's one of his quotes. "Sometimes tis better to remain silent and let people think you are a fool than to open your mouth and remove all doubt" Valentine's day is around the corner he was an Italian saint that married love birds in secret. (include more")

My wife Mary and I are always conscience of calories. This is a poem dedicated to my loving wife for Valentine's Day.

Lettuce begin, cabbage always has a heart which is a good place to start. Just think of all the love we share I think we make the perfect pear. My pumpkin pie you are so adorable and the apple of my eye. O'yeah, I'll work and share my celery with you my pretty strawberry. If I'm late by an hour I'll stop to find a phone and cauliflower. You know I like to work out and run but don't squash my dreams now my little sugar plum so if you carrot at all about me you'll make me a cup of tea. My little cupcake I think about you all the time so will you peas be my valentine? My wife and I wish you a Happy Valentine's Day. Questions or comments please email me: kilkennycat1@yahoo.com

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Getting to Know the Irish

By Tina Butler



Where and what is Connemara? It is a cultural region in Co. Galway. (West Galway) (pop.32,000) It's a Gaeltacht (Gaelic speaking region) It is most notably the most traditional part of Irish culture in Ireland. (the word Connemara means a harbor by sea) It holds the vast part of the Connacht Irish speaking Gaeltacht which is a key part of the identity of the region.

The coast of Connemara is made up of multiple peninsulas and numerous islands off the coast, Inishbofin being the largest. People might go to Connemara just for the coastal drive. Connemara is remote, wild and it has a tremendous rugged landscape, breathtaking views and scenery with a mosaic of different shades of green. Oscar Wilde is quoted as saying that, Connemara a "savage beauty" which is incredibly accurate for anyone that has been lucky enough to visit the area. Connemara holds a particular fondness for anyone seeking the quintessential Ireland. Connemara is famous for it's marble, it is said to be one of the rarest forms of marble in the world due to its limited supply and dates back millions of years. The marble itself is formed when limestone is heated under pressure. While the color is predominately green there are shades of gray. Next time you're in an Irish store see if you can find any Connemara marble in the jew-

elry section. Other famous things associated with Connemara include: Connemara pony-is a pony breed origination in Ireland. Known for their hardiness, athleticism, versatility and disposition. They make excellent show ponies. There is a Connemara Pony breeders society that started in 1923 to ensure preservation of the pony. Next we have the "Twelve Bens" or "Twelve Pins", it's a mountain range of sharp-peaked quartzite range (2,000ft) IF you can get to the top of those mountains I'm sure your view would be unforgettable. There's a famous fair in Connemara, The Maam Cross fair, it's a historic one-day fair, where local farmers sell their surplus produce at the crossroads. The fair has grown into a major event in Connemara, it features cattle, sheep and the popular Connemara pony. The highlight is the Connemara pony show, this is a world famous event attracting visitors from all over the world. With a history dating back to 1924 there are over 400 ponies on show. It is the largest display of Connemara ponies anywhere in the world. Visitors are treated to the presentation of seeing the ponies demonstrate their art in competitions under the watchful eyes of judges. Some celebrities associated with Connemara include: Peter O'Toole (Lawrence of Arabia), Billy Connolly, Patrick Pearse, (owned cottage in Ros Muc) Sean Mannion (boxer in Massachusetts born in Ros Muc) Gaelic storm has a song titled, "Hills of Connemara", There's an Irish whiskey called, Connemara (Kilbeggan distillery Westmeath) There is a 5 star hotel in (Chennai) India named, "Taj Connemara"! I haven't been to Connemara yet but it sounds like a magical place. If someone wanted to practice some Irish, it would be the place to be.

Gaelic for the Month:
remote-iargulta, pony-chapailini, marble-marmair

Seanfhocail
soitheach folamh is mo torann-empty vessels make the most noise

If you have any questions or comments please Email me at: Molanive@yahoo.com



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"I'VE BEEN BEATEN bloody, tear-gassed, fighting for what's right for America. I've marched at Selma with Dr. King. Sometimes that's what it takes to move our country in the right direction." – Congressman John Lewis (D. GA) in response to Trump's counter-attack. Lewis had referred to Trump as "Not legitimate. I think the Russians participated in helping this man get elected. And they helped destroy the candidacy of Hillary Clinton," Lewis,

a civil rights icon, was also, like most African-American politicians, an early supporter of Irish-America's campaigns for justice for Joe Doherty and the MacBride Principles for Fair Employment in Northern Ireland. Irish-America will be grateful forever. Yet, despite Trump's obvious character defects, Lewis was wrong to label him "Not legitimate" and was doubly wrong in adopting the fake news of "Russian involvement." "Fake news," because the eMails

were revealed by WikiLeaks, not Russia. Those eMails by Hillary and Podesta, revealed their own corruption. The writers can blame themselves; not Russia. Though Hillary won by vote-count, Trump won by existing rules. What a mess. Congress, Supreme Court, Justice Department and news media, all corrupted, had left us with but two possible presidential contenders; not-yet-genocidist Trump vs. serial-genocidist Hillary. Genocide is the ultimate evil; it cannot be justified by any "greater good." Many Democrats oppose genocide even when presented as "defending America." They held their noses and voted for Trump against genocide.

LET'S HOPE the Dems don't do to Trump what the Repubs did to Obama; block everything introduced by the Dems; even Repub bills. Obama inherited a crashed economy, criminal wars, and a torture policy. He salvaged the economy but continued the wars. He condoned torture by blocking the prosecution of torturers. He maintained a list of persons that he targeted by drone, killing everyone nearby. He facilitated Big Pharma's looting of America. However, we the people will be busy urging Trump and his Cabinet to represent us instead of banker/corporations and their continuing Neo-Con plans of "Full Spectrum Dominance" (of planet Earth and space). That policy has already given \$trillions to the banker/military/industrial complex who have murdered millions, made refugees of millions more, and impoverished much of America. The \$trillions spent on Bush's wars and lavished on the bankers by Obama, now hangs over America, an unpayable debt.

"NATO IS OBSOLETE;" said Trump just now. Some Truth! Dare we hope?

WW3? As a measure of America's new susceptibility to war propaganda, a January 9-12 Reuters/Ipsos survey in all 50 States found that 82 percent of American adults, including 84 percent of Democrats and 82 percent of Republicans, described Russia as a "general threat" to the United States. Some 25 percent of Americans gave Rus-

sia the highest concern, labelling it an "imminent threat." Obama and Senators McCain and Graham accuse Putin of interfering in elections in Ukraine! Who can forget the taped phone conversation between State Dept. Ukraine Specialist Victoria Nuland and the US Ambassador to Ukraine? In it Nuland mentions the \$7billion invested in violent "protests" against Ukraine's elected President. Nuland's named choice, Yatsenyuk, was made president in a coup d'état organized by Nuland, the CIA, and Ukraine's Neo-Nazis. How dare Russia locate itself so aggressively close to our nuclear bases! Why can't those stupid foreigners understand that we bomb them for their own good; to delivery democracy? Why do some become terrorists and bomb us back? How did Americans, once "tough customers," become so gullible?

COPS-WHO-MURDER is finally being addressed. The Justice Department has issued a report that is amazingly honest considering it's from the government. The media referred to it as "scathing." For years Mary and I, and others, have vigiled at locations, mostly south and west sides, where African-American teenagers were casually killed by cops the previous day. The killing of Dakota Bright in the 6700 block of South Prairie was especially horrifying.

We are humiliated for our city and nation since, decades ago, "testi-lying" became the label for police testimony. The problem is less the 2% of Chicago's cops who murder than the "good" cops who cover for them. A good cop once told me he would be risking his life by upholding the law against cop-crime. We remember the U.S. helicopter pilot who stopped a war-crime in Vietnam by landing between U.S. forces and the villagers they were machine-gunning. His superiors retaliated by ordering him on missions without the standard protection of accompanying helicopters, but he survived.

JAMES KEATING, as Chicago's Deputy Chief of Police, personified the Good Cop. Until he became Deputy Chief other cops constantly harassed Mary and me while we

protested war, mostly in front of the Art Institute. They would arrest me on fabricated charges but never showed up in court at 400 W. Superior. Those crimes ended when Keating became Deputy Chief. We are forever grateful. Keating was removed by new Mayor Emanuel in 2011, but our war protesting decade had ended. Political "donations" override public opinion.

IRELAND'S MASS GRAVES of An t-Ár Mór (Holocaust) of 1845-1850, many of them, were never marked; none honestly marked. Mary and I continue, having already installed appropriate monuments in Counties Galway, Roscommon and Louth. Others are doing likewise for the mass graves near their ancestral homes. Which tax lawyer/accountant will assist Irish-America by getting the usual tax deductibility for such public good?

FRANK AVILA; thank you for the TV interviews and coverage

JUSTICE FOR THE FRAMED AND ABUSED CRAIGAVON TWO. Contact 312/664-7651 or fogarty@att.net.

Cowboy Song

Continued from page 24

a much-loved father, son and husband. Including an afterword by Lynott's former wife Caroline Taraskevics, Cowboy Song is the definitive authorized account of an extraordinary life and career.

Graeme Thomson is the author of several music books, including Under the Ivy: The Life and Music of Kate Bush, which the Irish Times described as "the best music biography in perhaps the past decade," and George Harrison: Behind the Locked Door. His work has appeared in the Observer, New Statesman, the Guardian, Uncut, the Telegraph, GQ, Mojo and Rolling Stone.

Cowboy Song: The Authorized Biography of Thin Lizzy's Philip Lynott

by Graeme Thomson | Chicago Review Press | Distributed by IPG | Biography/Music

ISBN: 9781613739198 | 376 pages | 29 b/w photos | 6 x 9 | Paperback | \$17.99 US

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Irish Books and Plays in Review

Frank West



This issue marks the beginning of the fortieth year that I have written this column. Our Irish heritage celebrates the beauty of words, and the Irish American News uses those words of beauty and publishes uplifting news and literature every month. I am honored to contribute to, and to be a part of this great newspaper. ~FW

The Weight of Him

By: Ethel Rohan
St. Martin's Press
Amazon

"Billy sped over the twelve miles from town...As he entered the village, he told himself to slow down...The car cruised past the pub, shop, church, and graveyard. He pushed away the image of the dark earth heaped over the fresh grave."

The Weight of Him is an optimistic book, despite the action taking place immediately after the suicide of Billy's teenage son.

That is because Big Billy Brennan (he weighs four hundred pounds) finds the inner strength to begin a suicide awareness crusade. It is very difficult for him to become the assertive, public-person needed by the End Suicide Now! campaign. But to accomplish the



noble goal he summons the strength to triumph over his own demons.

Billy comes to realize that the cause of his over-eating is the indifference and lack of acceptance shown him by parents when he was a child. He had even overheard his father say that he was not "the right kind of son."

Ethel Rohan wrote this life-affirming novel about Billy's painful obstacles. In *The Weight of Him* she shows how he overcomes them and creates a thing of beauty.

Ethel Rohan was raised in Dublin and now lives in San Francisco. She earned an MFA in fiction from Mills College in California. She is an award-winning short story writer whose work has appeared in several national publications. In 2016, *The Weight of Him* won the Plumeri Fellowship and was even praised by Man Booker Prize winner, John Banville.

To raise funds for suicide awareness and prevention, (suicide is one of the top three causes of death in Ireland) Billy gets sponsors to pledge money for each pound he loses.

His decision is very difficult because it means, not only a strict diet and exercise, but most difficult of all, understanding himself. As he says about that: "I'm choosing to save lives, including my own, and to try to make the world a little better."

His suicide prevention program gets strong support across Ireland from open-minded people. But there is still reluctance among many people to even talk about suicide, "it enraged him how people talked, and mostly didn't talk about suicide. There was still so much ignorance and stigma—the persistent belief by too many that it was a sin, a crime, a sign of weakness and something shameful to be hidden."

These quotes give insight into Billy and his work.

Speaking at a rally, he says: "We're here tonight... to give meaning to those lives already lost and to keep those who feel they can't go on to believe they can go on. Our goal is to get the suicidal to believe they can and must go on."

"Hundreds of donations were folding in online and in the post...Billy's followers on Twitter and Facebook also continued to climb...All this from strangers, and nothing from his own parents."

The last sentence in the book is spoken by Billy's young son: "We get reminders about dying, so we don't forget to make the most of living."

Pursuit

By: John McAllister
Glenish Publications
Amazon

A man is in an interview room being questioned by police. He is a skilled and disciplined "hit man." The police know what he does, but can't prove it. After not answering their questions, the police call for a break for tea.

The criminal observes that the tea for the policemen is served in Styrofoam cups, but that his tea is served in a porcelain cup. He didn't touch it. Why? He didn't want to leave fingerprints on the mug or DNA on its rim!!

John McAllister has written a great sprawling book that is filled with action, mysteries and surprises. *Pursuit* also contains powerful insight into society and human behavior.

He lives in Ballymena, Northern Ireland, with his wife and two children. He was an accountant during the long years of the civil war, or Troubles.

The book is unique because he began to write it in the early 1990's during that deadly period. His accountant office, and the businesses of friends and clients, were repeatedly bombed. He says, "People used laughter to get them through the darkest times."

"There was also hope. So one day in the early 90's he began *Pursuit*, the story of a Northern Ireland without the Troubles..."

During that time period, McAllister also found the time to study for a Master's Degree in Philosophy at Trinity



College Dublin.

McAllister is also author of the Barlow mystery and crime detection books. I read and reviewed "Barlow by the Book," and loved it. In both *Pursuit* and the Barlow books, he uses the quiet humor of Northern Ireland people. A word to the wise, don't be haughty or pretend to be more than you are.

The shooting war ended with the Good Friday Agreement of 1998. But, the attitudes of people didn't change, just like after our own Civil War.

Paramilitaries often used skills, honed during war, to become criminals. That is the focus of the book.

McAllister bravely looks at society during the Troubles and in the post-Trouble period. Fellow author, Michael Connelly says about a brave book, "the examination of crime is an examination of society."

About crime writing, author Tana French, says that it "examines the tensions and fears of a society."

The main theme of the book is that a crime boss wants to run for Member of Parliament. He does "favors" for corrupt politicians in London. Favors, like threatening their opponents, or making them "disappear" by killing them.

Paul Bradley is a Member of Parliament and has begun an anti-crime crusade. Crime bosses want to kill Bradley, but fear making him a martyr. The action of the hunt for Bradley is fast and furious.

A crime boss bemoans problems in his criminal world and says: "The only way to silence the rot, was to silence Bradley, and not make a martyr of him..."

You'll enjoy the book.

Mulligan's Brigade

By: Thomas Reimer
VBW Publishing
Amazon

This is not another book about the American Civil War. Rather, the author says it is "a book about the war as seen through the eyes of fictional characters."

Marvelous dialogue—relaxed and natural sounding—is used to introduce us to historical persons. Fictional characters become part of Abraham Lincoln's world. They talk with him and with members of

Continued on next page

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Daly Investor

By John P. Daly



The Dow finally did it: it topped 20,000 for the first time. What does this development mean for the equity market and your portfolio? Ultimately, it may not mean very much.

Does it signal that 2017 will be a great year for equities? Maybe. On the other hand, the Dow Jones Industrial Average includes only 30 companies, and the ones whose shares are worth the most exert the most influence on the performance of the index. Some investors consider this a flaw. The S&P 500 is seen as a better barometer of the market – it is about 17 times larger in terms of breadth, and as a market-weighted index, it is most influenced by the performance of its largest firms rather than its most valued ones.

Does it indicate that equities are overvalued? Some analysts believe that it does. Then again, if the Dow climbs 400-500 points this quarter, that

argument will seem premature. Feel free to celebrate this Dow milestone along with Wall Street; just remember that the real numbers to keep your eye on are your personal investment returns and the amount of your retirement savings.

I always tell my clients to control what you can control – like how much you save and invest for retirement. We are fresh into the new year, which means you can start funding IRA's, 401k's and other retirement plans again. And if you didn't fund an IRA for 2016, you have until April 15th of 2017 to do so.

Here is a breakdown of the 2017 contribution limits for your retirement plans. IRAs. The 2017 limits are the same as in 2016: \$5,500 for IRA owners who will be 49 and younger this year, \$6,500 for IRA owners who will be 50 or older this year. These limits apply to both Roth and traditional IRAs.

401(k)s, 403(b)s, & 457s. Each of these workplace retirement plans have 2017 contribution limits of \$18,000, \$24,000 if you will be 50 or older this year. If you are a participant in a 457 plan and within three years of what your employer deems "normal" retirement age, you can contribute up to \$36,000 annually to your plan during the last three years preceding that "normal" retirement date.

SIMPLE IRAs & SEP-IRAs. In 2017, the contribution limit for a SIMPLE IRA is \$12,500; those who will be 50 or older this year may contribute up to \$15,500. Federal law requires business owners to match these annual contributions to at least some degree; self-employed individuals can make both employee and employer contributions to a SIMPLE IRA.

Business owners and the self-employed can contribute to SEP-IRAs, which accept contributions of pre-tax dollars. Because you are contributing pre-tax dollars, you reduce your taxable income. The annual contribution limit on a SEP-IRA is very high – in 2017, it is either \$54,000 or 25% of your income, whichever is lower.

Mulligan's Brigade

his government. They become part of Lincoln's administration.

Fictional characters are added to the staffs of Union generals. Fictional characters are used to introduce us to Allan Pinkerton who becomes responsible for Lincoln's security. Among the many that they introduce is even Rose Greenhow, Confederate spy. And they introduce us also to Colonel James Mulligan.

Thomas Reimer is the author of this unique book. He was born in Chicago and "graduated from the Northwestern Technological Institute." He worked for the government. After retirement he studied genealogy. Many of his ancestors appear in this book.

I was attracted to Mulligan's Brigade because my great grandfather was a member of Chicago's

Irish Brigade. It was known officially as the 23rd Illinois Infantry Regiment.

James Mulligan was a young attorney when he formed the Chicago Irish Brigade in 1861. The purpose of the Brigade was to join the war to protest the Union.

My great grandfather marched south down Des Plaines Street with the Irish Brigade. They marched past Old St. Pat's Church to the Polk Street railroad station. There the soldiers boarded a train that took them to northern Virginia. The Brigade participated in many battles in the Shenandoah Valley.

Colonel Mulligan was killed in 1864 while leading his troops in battle. He is buried in Calvary Cemetery in Evanston. He was so respected by his men that many are buried near him, as is my great grandfather.

The author describes Mulligan "as dynamic, persuasive and a natural leader." That persuasive power is shown when forming the Irish Brigade by a speech he might have given.

Talking to fellow Irish Americans: "I wager there's not a man here who wasn't hated and mistreated by the British from the day he was born in Ireland."

"Our parents had few rights. They, and many of you, were not allowed to openly worship our... faith. We were not allowed to go to school. We paid double and triple taxes. My parents told me how they rented a mud hut on a small parcel of land and were on the verge of starving many mouths of the year."

Colonel Mulligan was a formidable leader, but known also for his compassion and respect for his soldiers.

I hope this helps put your focus on something you can control that will benefit your financial situation in the future.

John P. Daly is a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ and President of Daly Investment Management, LLC. John has been working with retirees and

people planning for retirement for over 18 years. John can be reached at Phone: 224-347-2623 or Email: john@dalyinvestment.com

Website: www.dalyinvestment.com 2016 "Five Star Wealth Manager" Chicago Magazine.

The Ireland Network

Continued from page 24

about promoting the arts, sports and education.

He cited as examples the promotion of Irish-made movies and a recent tour by the Abbey Theater Players, which staged their production of Sean O'Casey's Plough and the Stars in Massachusetts, Ohio and New Jersey.

They played at Montclair State University in New Jersey. The New Jersey chapter promot-

ed the event and organized social gatherings around the trip. It was "thrilling" for people to see the players and the event for the Irish Network to organize around.

Overall, the Irish Network is not about palming out cards and hustling for business, said Lenox. "Good networking is never quite so obvious; it's not so transactional, it's about building relationships that matter," he added. "We prefer the lighter touch networking."

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Truth Be Told

At this year's Golden Globes Awards on NBC, the \$632 billion American entertainment industry, self-appointed manufacturer and arbiter of morality and cultural values, was represented by Meryl Streep who described Hollywood's elite as oppressed victims: "You and all of us in this room, really, belong to the most vilified segments in American society right now. Think about it. Hollywood, foreigners, and the press". She painted those among the mighty multitude of millionaires assembled as just plain folks hailing from: "the public schools of New Jersey... a sharecropper's cabin ... raised by a single mom in Brooklyn... one of seven or eight kids from Ohio... Italy... Jerusalem... Ethiopia... Ireland... Canada... Kenya... London... Hollywood is crawling with outsiders and foreigners. If you kick 'em all out, you'll have nothing to watch but football and mixed martial arts, which are not the arts" Hollywood believes actors are superior to athletes and that Trump will expel all foreigners, not just illegal aliens guilty of crime.

Streep then highlighted one hateful "performance" in 2016 which "made its intended audience (deplorable American voters) laugh and show their teeth", regurgitating the media fabrication that when Trump made a flustered gesture, his intent was to mock a disability of reporter Serge Kovaleski for the entertainment of low-life Trump voters. The tale told by the poor little public schoolgirl from Jersey, her voice breaking, had her rich and famous audience and millions of TV viewers, near tears, and hating Trump.

That flap began after the Washington Post attacked Trump for claiming he'd seen news reports on groups of Muslims watching the 9-11 attacks from across the bay in New Jersey and celebrating the death and destruction. Other media giants, including the New York Times, chimed in to mock Trump as a liar, claiming no such incidents had ever been reported. That narrative dominated news headlines for days until Trump jubilantly unearthed that news report, which indeed had appeared September 18, 2001 in the pages of (get this) the Washington Post! The Post's senior fact-checker had to admit the story existed. It turns out there are sever-

al videos online documenting those Muslim 9-11 celebrations, including a nationwide interview with Dan Rather on David Letterman- hardly right-wing spokesmen. It's peculiar why no one at the Post recalled that or even bothered to check. The WP, mighty dethroner of President Nixon, was sorely embarrassed by this revelation.

So too was the mighty New York Times, current employer of Serge Kovaleski, who had contributed to the story. Confronted about the article, Kovaleski hedged, saying he couldn't remember thousands or hundreds involved in the celebrating, just that several people were questioned. He refused further interviews. Incidentally, Kovaleski's hands are frozen at the wrist by a genetic disorder.

While enjoying this victory over the hostile media, Trump did his characteristic arm-flapping 'Henny-Penny' gesture while talking about Kovaleski's memory of the story. This gave big media a clever way to both recover its pride and double down on Trump. Press reports isolated a freeze-frame from Trump's speech showing his wrist bent at an angle, and printed it alongside a shot of Kovaleski, showing his disabled wrist at a similar angle. The immediate impression given was that Trump was mocking that reporter who was standing before him in the crowd. Actually, Kovaleski does not have a spastic condition, and hasn't been near Trump in nearly 30 years. But Dem voters bought it, and the Clinton campaign spent millions propagating the fabrication. It failed to win the election; but the Streep speech proves that like the Loch Ness Monster and the Priory of Sion, it's a hoax that keeps on giving.

Her audience thus prepped, Streep twisted the poisoned dagger, saying: "And this instinct to humiliate, when it's modeled by someone in the public platform, by someone powerful, it filters down into everybody's life, because it kind of gives permission for other people to do the same thing. Disrespect invites disrespect. Violence incites violence. When the powerful use their

position to bully others, we all lose."

That's amazing hypocrisy from an industry that manufactures, promotes and glorifies violence for huge profit! Three years earlier that same group of glitterati awarded Golden Globes for Best Motion Picture, Best Screenplay and Best Supporting Actor to a film glorifying a character whose life mission was to casually and ruthlessly shoot to death large numbers of white people. Hollywood's excuse for this Grand-Guignol balletic bloodbath of airborne body bits titled "Django Unchained" is that the victim characters were all southern slave owners or plantation help; 'deplorables' deserving to die; their slow-motion final throes of agony eagerly anticipated by rapt munchie-crunching Americans hunched in darkened theaters.

Do you believe screen violence does not beget street violence? I'd say you're naïve. Psychologists have determined the correlation between media violence and aggressive behavior is just shy of that between smoking and lung cancer. 87% of actual crimes are nonviolent. But on the screen the ratio is reversed. On 'reality-based' TV programs only 13% of crimes depicted are nonviolent. FBI stats show murder accounts for just 0.2% of all crimes. On TV, the crimes are 50% murder, putting the lie to the entertainment industry's claim that their product reflects the level of violence in current society. I mean, think of it: how many murders have

any of you actually witnessed or been close to in real life? Researchers on the subject point out: "By the time the average American child graduates from elementary school, he or she will have seen more than 8,000 murders and more than 100,000 other assorted acts of violence (assaults, rapes) on network television."

Violence is golden in Hollywood. "Django Unchained" won three Academy Awards, reaping Oscars for Best Picture of the Year, Best Supporting Actor and Best Writing (for gems like: "How do you like the bounty hunting business?" Django: 'Kill white folks and they pay you for it? What's not to like?')

Apparently a believer in Goebbels' dictum that big lies are eminently more believable, Streep then had the chutzpah to propose: "So I only ask the famously well-heeled Hollywood Foreign Press and all of us in our community to join me in supporting the committee to protect journalists. Because we're going to need them going forward. And they'll need us to safeguard the truth."

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View From Ireland

By Maurice Fitzpatrick



The Fall of the House of Stormont

There is an irony about the 'cash for ash' Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) financial fiasco that ended Arlene Foster's tenure as First Minister in Northern Ireland and has precipitated an unexpected

election this March 2nd. The political structure of the North of Ireland, so often characterised as an unpredictable 'tinderbox', was foiled by an administrative flaw in a heating scheme. This is burning not as tragedy but as farce.

In any case, the politicians' recriminatory rhetoric produced

sparks aplenty. In the past, such flare-ups typically played out with the hardline parties holding out fiercely for a time, and an outside mediating force being brought in to tame them down. But this time the division may well be cataclysmic.

DUP leadership of the power-sharing Executive in Belfast was badly undermined by the tawdry financial cock-up, which was shouted up into a cacophony of sectarian wailing, when the focus should have remained on addressing the RHI issue. Instead, the scandal served to reveal quite how

divided the Assembly really is and how incapable it is of confronting a serious crisis on its own.

Arlene Foster's handling of the RHI scandal has been truly abysmal. Rather than taking her share of responsibility for the stuffing of 500 million pounds into the rathole of the Renewable Heat Incentive and admitting that it was an instance of gigantic mismanagement of public money, Foster portrayed the fallout as a Republican conspiracy to steal a march to hold the prized First Ministership in their hands. Having flogged that horse, she began to characterise her critics as misogynistic, which lost her considerable sympathy, notably among fellow female politicians.

Foster's political career is at stake and she is grasping at whatever lifeline that comes within her reach. She continued to ignore pressure from all sides to step aside for an investigative report into RHI to be conducted. Then her Deputy First Minister resigned (under Stormont rules there must be a Deputy First Minister and Sinn Féin refused to nominate a successor). Martin McGuinness' resignation letter read: 'It is a source of deep personal frustration that [my] efforts have not always been reciprocated by unionist leaders. At times they have been met with outright rejection. The equality, mutual respect and all-Ireland approaches enshrined in the Good Friday Agreement have never been

fully embraced by the DUP'.

With that, the fat is in the fire. McGuinness is quite right that a significant portion of the DUP is in denial of the Good Friday Agreement framework. Gone are the days when McGuinness and Paisley (who, for all his faults, ultimately did attempt to make the Belfast Assembly work) sat down together chuckling to themselves. It was McGuinness' resignation that triggered the March election in Northern Ireland. That happened, coincidentally, against the backdrop of news that McGuinness is seriously ill (it is doubtful that he will ever hold office again).

Last year Northern Ireland moved tentatively beyond its sectarian bounds; that movement came from the bottom up, spurred by a grassroots movement, the People Before Profit Alliance (PBPA), whose candidates gained mandates in the May 2016 Assembly Election to transcend the traditional green and orange template of Northern political parties: Eamonn McCann got elected in Derry and Gerry Carroll topped the poll in West Belfast. PBPA illustrated that, with a dedicated surge, class-based politics can and should run athwart the assumption that Northern Irish voters will irreversibly vote according to their religious-political affiliation.

Centrist parties of both unionist and nationalist hues, the UPP and

Continued on page 45

FEBRUARY 12, 2017 CHICAGO GAELIC PARK

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On March 5, 2016, our friend Mike Ruddy passed away suddenly, leaving behind his wife Teri and three young children. To those of us who knew him and to those reading this story, it must be said that we lost one of life's finest.

A funny, carefree, genuine, happy, consider, intelligent and decent man are but a few words to describe him. We all knew firsthand that as soon as he set foot on American soil, he took immense pride in his roots—as we often heard him recite the well-versed tune of "The Carrick Smashers". He was also beyond grateful for the opportunities that came his way as he made a life for himself here in this great country and married his best friend Teri.

During his time playing for the Chicago Wolfe Tones, his passion for the game and for his teammates was extraordinary. He won both Chicago and North American Championships playing with and against distinguished inter-county players and did it all with exceptional skill. In the years to follow, he remained an outstanding supporter to the GAA community all the while maintaining his sense of humor and mischief. In his professional life as an electrician, he didn't just take on projects; he took on a mission as if it were for family and finished it with professionalism and pride.

He made life long friendships with those who employed him and never asked for more than what was fair.

We are asking that you help us in *his* mission for every great ship that sails has a captain and its crew. This family has lost their captain but they must keep sailing, keeping life on course. We as a community must help to keep them sailing because as much as Mike was given in this world, he gave back 10 fold, never with a pause or a question, it was his nature. While our hearts are gripped with sadness as we think of this huge loss to this family and our community, we are reassuringly reminded by his carefree, lighthearted attitude to constantly live every moment of life to its fullest!

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Chicago Irish Immigrant Support

By Michael Collins,
Executive Director

Commander and Chief, most notably; healthcare reform, the conclusion of the Iraq and Afghanistan war's, killing Osama Bin Laden, and a deepening political gridlock in

Washington. Other areas of President Obama's legacy will be harder to define, specifically surrounding immigration. The now former President has a mixed record on immigration, with there being more deportations under his administration than any other in history (2.7 million) as well

as more progressive executive actions including DACA and a failed DAPA/DACA policy. Short of a comprehensive bill, President Obama prioritized enforcement and giving more opportunities to DREAMER's.

His first major action on immigration came in the form of his 2012 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) executive order. This policy changed the lives dramatically for young children brought to the US by their parents at a very early age. DACA provided these young people with protection from deportation and work authorization. The initiative also included

more access to public education in the US and allows participants to take advantage of in state tuition for public Universities. This initiative was massively successful and currently has over 740,000 people enrolled. The President tried again in 2014 to expand DACA and implement DAPA however this initiative was ultimately blocked by a Texas court. It is expected that President Trump will undo DACA forcing the 740,000 participants back into the shadows. Even so, this program can be seen as a success.

President Obama's legacy on immigration is conflicted mainly due to his not so glamorous deportation record. Although the President did turn away from the large workplace raids of the Bush years his focus on enforcement, especially for this with a criminal background, contributed to a record amount of deportations. During his eight years in office over 2.7 million people were deported from the United States. Some worrying demographics about these deportations is that many of them came from the interior of the country instead of at the border. There has also been a large increase in the number of central American refugees attempting to enter at the southern border. This is concerning as many of them are children and are forced to sit in ICE detention for long periods of time. It is difficult to say what President Obama's legacy on immigration will be. He is seen by many in the immigrant community has perhaps having not done enough earlier in his presidency. Many of his executive actions were done at a time when there was deep gridlock in Washington and perhaps it was a missed opportunity not to tackle this issue in the first two years of his term.

Ireland Network Ball

The Ireland Network Chicago hosts its 14th annual ball at the Drake Hotel February 18th at 6:30pm. The ball will have a champagne reception, dinner and a raffle benefitting Chicago Irish Immigrant Support and Concern Worldwide. CIIS is extremely grateful to the Ireland Network for choosing our charity as a beneficiary of the raffle. and CIIS is greatly appreciative.

Visit theirelandnetwork.com.

CIIS Update

CIIS hosted our first casino night fundraiser on January 20. The night was a great success with many attendees either winning at the tables or in our great raffle and live auction. I would like to thank all who attended and sponsored this event. As a community organization, we rely heavily

Continued next page

Obama's Immigration Legacy

As President Obama leaves office there is a lot of talk about what his legacy as president will be. There are obvious inclusions that will define his eight years as

The Coach's Huddle

Support Tim Twohig as he Tackles ALS

Food ♦ Music ♦ Silent Auction ♦ Raffles

February 19, 2017, 2:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Irish American Heritage Center, 4626 N. Knox, Chicago

In April 2016, at the age of 48, Tim was diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis or ALS, which is commonly referred to as Lou Gehrig's disease. ALS is a progressive disease that causes muscle weakness, difficulty speaking, swallowing and eventually, complete paralysis. There is no known cure for ALS.

Tim is a native Chicagoan and attended Queen of Angels Grammar School, Gordon Tech High School and a graduate of Michigan State University where he was recruited for football, met and married his beautiful wife, Jamie. They celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary on 10/12/16 and have three wonderful children; Jacqueline, attending Nursing School at Illinois State University, John attending the Business School at Northern Illinois University and Andy attending Taft High School.

After graduating college, Tim embarked on a career as a Registered Nurse and has worked in the Emergency Room at Illinois Masonic Hospital for the past 20+ years. His mentoring spirit earned him the name "Coach".

A natural leader on and off the field as an athlete, coach, and mentor. Tim has always been incredibly strong and active, both of mind and body, through his passion of sports. When he was diagnosed, being a medical professional, he knew immediately that he needed to focus on maintaining his strength and staying positive. His goal is to spend as much time as possible with his wife, children, family and friends.

The effects of this horrible disease have left Tim with many obstacles to overcome in his own home. The proceeds from this fundraising effort are going to help the Twohig family with the costs associated with this disease such as an electric wheelchair, outside wheelchair lift, and the many other medically necessary items to make life easier for Tim.

We hope you'll join us in supporting Tim "Coach" Twohig during this challenging time. Donations will be accepted at the door on the night of the event or through PayPal: www.paypal.me/CoachsHuddle or they can be sent directly to Coach's Huddle bank account: **Signature Bank, C/O Ella Riordan, 6400 N. Northwest Highway, Chicago, 60631 Ph#: 773-467-5624.**

On behalf of the Tim Twohig family, we thank you for your support and generosity.
Tim Twohig Benefit Committee



on the support of our community and it meant a great deal to have so many people come out and show their support. Your support means a lot to everyone at CIIS. I would also like to thank our wonderful committee for putting in countless hours to assist with the planning and organizing of this event. It is the work of this great committee that made the event go well. Thank you!

If you have any immigration questions, CIIS is continuing to host regular legal clinics in our office. Visit our website or contact Michael Collins if you would like to schedule a free consultation. 773-282-8445 or email mcollins@irishchicago.org.

House of Stormont

Continued from page 43

the SDLP, followed the PBPA's lead by making gestures of co-operation with each other and by going into opposition together in the Stormont Assembly.

So what do all of these shifts portend for the forthcoming election? For the first time in more than a decade—and at a crucial time, given that Brexit is on the horizon—the centrist parties have a chance to regain some of the ground they lost since Sinn Féin and the DUP signed The St. Andrew's Agreement in 2006. UUP leader Mike Nesbitt has said that he wants this election to be 'a referendum on 10 years of DUP and Sinn Féin rule'. Moreover, if the UUP and the SDLP do gain support as fallout from the collapse of the turbulent DUP/Sinn Féin administration, there are grounds to expect that they would form a coalition with good potential to last.

Nesbitt may want a referendum on DUP/Sinn Féin rule, but the forthcoming election

will far more resemble a referendum on the sustainability of a power-sharing Assembly in Northern Ireland. DUP/Sinn Féin may well be returned again but if they fail to form a new government within three weeks of the election, Stormont will be suspended. Dublin will scramble to honour the guarantees of the Good Friday Agreement, but few in London will be willing to invest the time or political capital to shore up that effort. And here hardline unionism will play its age-old favourite card: its alliance with the Conservative Party in British Parliament.

The Conservative Party has a majority in British Parliament but a very slim one, 329 out of 650 seats. The DUP holds 8 seats in British parliament. It is easy to imagine circumstances in which British Prime Minister Theresa May could badly need DUP support during this crucial year. If so, it would be quite wrong to assume that the current DUP leadership will bargain hard to defend the Belfast Assembly (they may well bargain to abolish it). For better or worse, 2017 in Britain will be dominated by Brexit. The DUP knows this and there is nothing they would like more than to form common cause with Little Englanders outside the EU. Direct rule of Northern Ireland from London could appeal just enough to the DUP and to the British Conservative Party to prompt them to prorogue the Stormont Assembly on a semi-permanent basis. Since its inception, the Assembly has periodically faced crises, leading at times to its suspension. But seldom has the crisis looked so bleak as now. The election on March 2nd is the biggest threat to power-sharing in Northern Ireland since the re-establishment of the Assembly at Stormont in 1998.

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It Starts With A Song

By Joe McShane



folk artists recording his songs with great success. Pete St. John, an Irish treasure...

Happy Birthday Margo on the 6th of this month. I can never forget that date because it brings back sad memories for me. It seems like such a long time ago now, but still fresh in my mind. Before I became legalized in the U.S. my Mother passed away and I

so she got to meet him and it brought her joy. I realized then how many friends I have in Chicago. My Mother's funeral mass was on a Monday and Brian McAteer and some other people organized a mass at St. Robert Bellermine, on Austin Ave. I was overwhelmed with the showing of love from my many friends here. I thought most people would be at work on Monday but the church was crowded and I have

to say it went a long way to easing a very deep sadness that I felt. I will always be eternally grateful for this. When I go home to Ireland people ask "could you settle down there again," and the answer is yes. I could settle back in a heartbeat. Having said that, I was at a funeral just before Christmas here in Chicago for a dear friend of ours Lawrence Staunton and there was of course a very big gathering that day. And as I looked around the church, it made me realize how many people I've come to know here.

Thanks to my friendship with Margo, I've been able to be meet with some very prominent people in the Nashville scene. And these people are some of the great stars of years gone by. I visited Liz Anderson's R.I.P. home (mother of Lynn Anderson R.I.P. of "I Never Promised You A Rose Garden" fame). Liz wrote the very first number one song Merle Haggard had, titled "Lonesome Fugitive". I met her husband Casey and was made very welcome in their house. There was also another lady, who was the longest reigning member of the Grand Ole Opry. Her name is Jean Shepard. I remember having vinyl CDs of her's way back. She had a great voice and made a lot of hits throughout her career. Her husband Hawkshaw Hawkins, was killed in the same plane crash as Patsy Cline and she was left to raise two children. Margo and I wrote a song for Jean about two years before she passed away and she cried on the phone when it was played to her. We know she would have loved someone to sing it to her in the Opry as a tribute but she wouldn't be the kind of person to ask for a tribute, albeit she well deserved it and would have appreciated it.

On Margo's advice when I was in Nashville, I made a trip to the Station Inn to listen to the Time Jumpers band. An outstanding band of ten of the finest session musicians you would ever wish to hear. They now play Monday nights in 3rd and Lindsey. I went to Vince Gill, who is a member of the band and gave him the CD of the song and I recieved what I can only describe as the cold shoulder treatment. Later that year Margo was in America and we visited the Time Jumpers again and she recieved the same treatment. The strange thing is that the word is that Vince loved Jean dearly. What ever kinda political carry-on goes on there, who knows the reasons behind it?. I guess since Porter Wagner passed on and another great gentleman Jim Ed Brown, who was looking like he would have become Grand Marshall, if God had of spared him. When it comes to Nashville, I love Austin, Texas these days. There was another tragic incident that happened at Jean Shepards home before this past Christmas and I will write about it in next months edition, or you can google it. She was a wonderful woman who didn't suffer fools and had the voice of an angel. This month's song is the one Margo and I wrote in her honor. The one she listened to on the phone one day from Castlebayney to Nashville. R.I.P. Jean Shepard, great singer and mother. We've changed the words now because she is no longer with us. As always be good to one another. Joe

A Tribute To Jean Shepard

(In The Grand Ole Opry)

Written by Joe McShane and Margo O'Donnell

Verse 1

From Pauls Valley Oklahoma where your family worked the land
To Visalia California and your first country band

Over 50 years upon these boards our lives became entwined

Thanks to you this country girl has got a satisfied mind

Verse 2

With old Ferlin Dear John letter became a number one song

It was good old country music, everyone would sing along

When I hear that lonesome steel guitar or a country fiddle play

Your voice rings threw the hall of fame and it ain't never slippin' away

Chorus

So timeless on this road of life, your songs will never age

A flutter of our hearts ago, you stepped out on this stage

As the years go by so quickly, I thank God that we

Were blessed with you Jean Shepard, in The Grand Ole Opry

Solo

Verse 3

Today you left this circle and walked out those back stairs

Where so many times you entered as in answer to our prayers

You'll be waltzing with the angels to a good ole country song

As you go to meet some friends I know you've missed for so long

wasn't with her when she died. It's a sadness and regretful feeling I will carry with me through my life. Even though she made me promise faithfully that I wouldn't return until I had my papers and it still haunts me. She took a stroke a couple of months before she passed away and I knew she was waiting for me to be with her. I asked my brother Nick to put the phone to her ear and he said "she can't talk" I told him just do it anyway and I said my final words to her with a heart that felt like it was about to break out of my chest. She passed away the following day. My wife Margaret had taken our son Declan over to see her when he was a baby,

Hello Everyone,
Maybe someday I'll get around to writing about all the great Irish song writers, but that's very doubtful. There is a multitude of them. It's funny how the English language was forced upon the Irish and they became masters in the craft of using it. So good in fact that it very often goes right over the head of the ones that introduced it. There's a man from Dublin, and his songs are sung all over the world. I know there's a lot of people that may not know his name but will definitely know his songs. The most widely known and used song of his many, is a song called "Fields Of Athenry." I don't know of a night that someone wouldn't request it at some point. The song writer is Pete St. John. It seems that almost every time he puts pen to paper, there is born an evergreen song. A couple more of St. Johns outstanding songs are "Dublin In The Rare Ould Times" and "The Ferryman." Some of the artists that have recorded his songs are - Danny Doyle, The Dubliners, Paddy Reilly and the list is almost endless. Educated at Scoil Muire Gan Smal, Inchicore and Synge Street C.B.S. he served his time as an electrician and then

emigrated to Canada. Moving on to Alaska, Central America and the West Indies. He worked as a professional athlete, truck driver, logging camp laborer, Pr/Sales Official and finally electrical contracting executive in the U.S.A. He became deeply involved in the Peace Movement and International Civil Rights before returning to his native city of Dublin in the late 70's. Taken from his biography - Finding the face of this city greatly changed he began writing songs in a very distinctive and unique style depicting the social conditions around him. Redundancy became the core element of his work and the city soon recognized his talent with the major

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pH Factor

By Pat Hickey



Anyone Running for Illinois Governor Should Have Kissed the Catfish Queen in Wilmington

If any candidate GOP, or Democrat can prove that he/she has at least attended one day of Catfish Days in Wilmington, Illinois, I will go all 19th Ward South Side Irish Parade Loyal for his Campaign for Governor!

We'll need to think on that.

I doubt very much that our current Harley riding Governor has, to this date, been anywhere near Wilmington, Peotone, Custer Park, Beecher, Symerton, Arcola, or Chebanse, let alone Goofy Ridge, Birds, Oblong, or Muddy, Illinois. Those are the towns of Flyover, Illinois.

Like the north, mid and southern states

of the United States, these towns are the homes of people who go to Iraq, work a double shift,

know how to use duct tape and feed a family of five without food stamps. These people are proud.

Not politics proud – people who cut in line at a wake and scowl while saying “do you know who I am?” That is for the Jan Schakowskys, Mike Quigleys, Dick Durbins and Toni Preckwinkles of our world.

One politically proud young man is Chicago Alderman Ameya Pawar. He has just concluded his fifth year in the Chicago City Council and is ready to assume the office of Governor! Proudly ready. Done what, exactly?

Matters not. Barack Obama became President for eight years had zero experience. Pawar says that he is running an Everyman Campaign. Does that include Yellowhammers?

I am sure the future Chief Executive of Illinois knows the Yellowhammers,

the Cobden Apple Knockers, the Fisher Bunnies and the Hoopston Cornjerkers.

Pawar is in proud company with plutocrats Chris Kennedy and J.B. Pritzker. Super.

GOP Plutocrat Bruce Rauner was elected by people sick of Governor Pat Quinn and to hold down the fort until an approved bootlicker takes the post of Chief Executive; that is for the creators of the Illinois oligarchy and certainly not me to say.

Anyway, I believe that an elected official should have at least a visceral understanding and appreciation for the people he/she will govern.

A good litmus test might be an Illinois Test.

- Did the candidate visit Catfish Days in July of the electoral year?

- Did the candidate buy a round of beers at the VFW in Beardstown?

- Did the candidate wait in line at the Gibson City Harvest Days Hayride?

- Does the candidate know how to get to The Longbranch in L'erable from Clifton, IL?

- Who are Yellowhammers? Circa Custer Park, IL

- Name the Cobden High School mascot.

Chris Kennedy is a lovely man, despite his wealth, and he takes an avid interest in doing the right thing. I have witnessed Mr. Kennedy deliver food to the hungry and clothing to cold on many occasions. However, I am not sure if he takes the Illinois Clan Kennedy on the road for an appreciation of Illinois.

Picture Mr. Chris Kennedy wandering Water Street in Wilmington on sweltering

July weekend and ambling along the Mill Race in search of the fabled monster and then dropping into The Rustic for an ice cold Miller Draft and perhaps a sampling from the creamy cauldron of bubbling goodness.

•Imagine!

Chris Kennedy - “ This Chowdah is Exceptional! Really thick.”

Wilmington Wildcat Grad '67; KofC and Vietnam Vet -" Son, that's Catfish Gravy. It goes on the biscuits. Your cup is empty, Son. Get over and fill her up over to The Rustic. Now, just get another beer and forget the Women's Reproductive Health and Green nonsense. Save yourself some grief. Ask the bartender where you can get a pint of Doc's stink bait, as you're cane-poling above the damn, Son.”

Catfish Days is a great family celebration and great time with great people.

Politicians talk through people. Decent people engage them and take them as they happen to be.

If Chris Kennedy goes to Catfish Days, I'll not only vote for him but post a Kennedy Love Piece every morning on my Blog. As to the other genets?

Ameya Pawar stops in Hoopston for the Sweetcorn Festival and wonders why the sweet corn is still on the bone.

J.B. Pritzker is confounded that nearly everyone in Arcola is named Yoder, Zook, or Miller.

Illinois has not had a real Illinois Governor since George Ryan. Say what you will about the man but he knew this State and loves its people.

Having some clue about those people just might be a step in the direction of having a decent governor.

Makem and Clancy at the Irish Cultural and Heritage Center Saturday, Feb. 18

Acclaimed Irish performers Rory Makem and Dónal Clancy will make their debut as a duo when they perform at the Irish Cultural and Heritage Center, 2133 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee on Saturday, Feb. 18. Tickets are available at www.ichc.net

It's no surprise that the two are outstanding singers and musicians as well as masterful storytellers with a witty and charming stage presence. They learned from the best: their respective fathers Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy, who along with the Clancy Brothers were the first group to shine an international spotlight on Irish folk song.

Born in County Louth, Ireland, Makem continues the lineage of an Irish music

dynasty begun by his grandmother Sarah Makem, who was sought after for her vast collection of Irish songs. His father, who died in 2007, was widely recognized as the modern Bard of Armagh.

Clancy spent his early childhood in Canada and the United States before his family moved back to County Waterford, Ireland. His father gave him a guitar when was 8-years-old and he was performing professionally by his early teens. He recorded both with his father and cousin Robbie O'Connell as well as with well-known artists such as Cherish the Ladies and Eileen Ivers. Clancy was one of the founding members of the band Danú and also a member of the supergroup Solas.



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A Word With Father Boland

The Voice of Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Chicago

Reverend Michael M. Boland

Administrator, President and CEO



It has been extremely touching to watch Pope Francis' repeated outreach to the homeless. Each one of his acts, including inviting homeless men and women to meals and concerts at the Vatican, taking them for a refreshing swim at the shore, treating them to pizza night, and installing shower stalls, a barbershop, and a health clinic near St. Peter's Square, all demonstrate his special love for those living at the peripheries of life—those whom Jesus entrusted to our care. The Holy Father's generosity is not necessarily intended to solve the complex problem of homelessness, but it goes a long way toward restoring the human dignity of our homeless brothers and sisters.

No one knows better the

struggle to maintain dignity than someone experiencing homelessness. Especially as the U.S. economy makes steady gains, understanding homelessness can be difficult.

A question I'm often asked is, "How do people become homeless?" There are frequently multiple factors that can lead to homelessness, but especially for mothers with children, who make up a large percentage of the homeless population, the primary cause is economic; they simply do not have enough money to pay rent and make ends meet.

There are two main economic issues working against poor families. The first is the high cost of housing in most metropolitan areas, which only

increases as the economy improves. Although there are affordable housing programs, it is estimated that there are approximately four renters for each unit of affordable housing. Consequently, if families are able to find housing, they end up spending a very high percentage of their income on rent, leaving little left over for other expenses or emergencies.

The second economic issue is employment. Although unemployment is low, there are very few entry- or lower-level jobs that pay what is known as a "living wage"—a wage sizable enough to pay rent and meet other expenses. In Illinois, a full-time job paying approximately \$18/hour would be needed to make a two bedroom apartment affordable. Since these wages are hard to find, poor families can work hard—40 or more hours per week—and still not earn enough to cover rent, utilities, food, medical needs, transportation,

child care, and other daily living expenses.

Low wages and high rents leave poor families extremely vulnerable to homelessness. For those who can find housing, any unexpected expense—such as a car repair or medical bill—can start a spiral into homelessness because they have no savings. Other crises, such as being diagnosed with a serious or chronic health problem, caring for an elderly relative, fleeing a domestic violence situation, overcoming substance abuse, or coping with a physical or mental disability, make the struggle even more challenging.

For decades, Catholic Charities has stood with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to advocate for more affordable housing, higher wages, and improved education and job training that could begin to address the structural causes of homelessness. Catholic Charities also offers a wide range of programs that meet urgent

needs including mobile street outreach, hot meal services, homeless prevention services, transitional apartment and shelter programs, domestic violence services, housing for homeless veterans, substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling, case management, and education and job training.

The most important goal of all of Catholic Charities' homeless programs is to restore an individual's dignity. Through the collective efforts of our board members, donors, volunteers and staff, we help people carefully craft plans to improve their lives, connect them with resources to bring about positive change, and treat them with the genuine respect that reflects their God-given dignity. As Pope Francis reminds us with his thought-provoking charitable endeavors, our responses to the poor and vulnerable are not one-time acts of generosity, but are the defining witness of the Catholic Church.

TWO LEGENDS OF IRISH MUSIC, JOIN FORCES FOR "CELTIC CROSSINGS"

Phil Coulter from Derry, Northern Ireland and Andy Cooney join forces for "Celtic Crossings," a rare North American tour that brings these two icons of Irish Music together for a limited time only.

Promising an evening of Celtic tranquility and the great music of Phil Coulter, featuring some of his classic songs sung by the internationally-beloved Andy Cooney, the "Celtic Crossings" tour will be appearing in the Irish American Heritage Center 4626 N. Knox in Chicago March 18 & 19th. Tickets can be purchased in advance online at irishamericannews.com or by calling Cliff at 847-872-0700.

Mr. Coulter and Mr. Cooney are pleased to be sharing the spotlight with special guest Geraldine Branagan and the Irish Pops Ensemble.

The concert will feature offerings from their latest releases, Phil Coulter's "ECHOES OF HOME" is a collection of 'the most glorious Celtic melodies' while Andy Cooney's 'Bright Brand New

Day', produced by Phil features many of his songs, including a highly charge ballad of love and loss, 'Noreen'.

Originally composed by Mr. Coulter as a wedding gift to Liam Neeson and his bride, (the late Natasha Richardson), the melody was first named for the actress. It was years later, after Natasha lost her life during a tragic ski accident, that Phil added lyrics to the enduring melody and renamed the song "Noreen."

Currently celebrating 50 years in the music business, Phil Coulter, known as Ireland's Musical Ambassador, has captured the hearts of millions throughout the world with his evocative lyrics and melodies. His career is decorated with 23 platinum discs, 39 Gold Discs, 52 Silver Discs and two Grand Prix Eurovision awards. He has enjoyed a long and varied



career as a songwriter, producing hits for a range of artists from Van Morrison to Sinéad O'Connor, from Elvis Presley to the Bay City Rollers. Who could forget 'Saturday Night'?

In 2007, Phil was the musical mastermind and original songwriter behind Celtic Thunder, an act which found huge success on PBS and has regularly topped the Billboard World Music Charts. Phil's contribution to He was honored on both sides of the Atlantic

in 2014 with induction into the Irish Songwriters Hall of Fame, and was given a Lifetime Achievement Award at Boston College.

Andy Cooney, with his outstanding tenor voice and dynamic stage presence, has captured the hearts of Irish music lovers from coast to coast. In 1994, Andy was christened Irish America's Favorite Son by The New York Times. Andy recorded

his first PBS TV special in 2006, An Evening of Irish Classics, a production that featured Andy's Irish band along with The Nashville String Machine. It aired in 40 different markets throughout the U.S. and Canada. In 2008, Andy recorded his first Symphony CD with the RTE Concert Orchestra in Dublin, Ireland. On this release, Andy was joined by Grammy Winning Artists Larry Gatlin and Crystal Gayle, and Irish Tenor Ronan Tynan. This collaboration

led to Andy Cooney's production show, American Voices, a three-artist show featuring Andy Cooney, Larry Gatlin, and Crystal Gayle, which toured for a year, taking in 18 cities.

Geraldine Branagan, with her trademark flowing blonde hair, has been one of the music world's most glamorous stars since the 1980s. With hit records in Ireland and #1 albums in South Africa, she was the first to entertain the Irish troops in Lebanon, and represented Luxembourg in the Eurovision Song Contest.

Some of her recent performances include The National Concert Hall in Dublin, The Cork Opera House, and Carnegie Hall. In December 2014, Andy Cooney and Phil Coulter teamed up with special guest Geraldine Branagan to create a production show: Celtic Twilight Christmas. The group enjoyed five stellar sellout performances in New Jersey, Philadelphia, Rhode Island, and New York's Carnegie Hall—a performance attended by President and Mrs. Bill Clinton.



Manhattan Irish Fest!



March 3-4

Get Out and Have Some Fun!

www.manhattanirishfest.com



Park District Rec Center SATURDAY

Noon -5p. Family Fun Area

5pm - 9pm Teen Dance

Cultural Areas

Sat. 11:30 - 2p. Manhattan Library

Fri 5-9p & Sat 10-5p

Manhattan Historical Society

St. Joseph's School

Sat. 9a - 3p Craft show

St. Joseph's Church

Sat. 8-11a. Breakfast, Music & Dancers

Sat. 8:30a. Catholic Mass

PARADE - 11:00 a.m.

Central Park Rugby Pitch

Morrigan Rugby v. TBD 1:00 p.m.

Shamrock Rugby v. TBD 3:00 p.m.



FRIDAY: Tent opens 5pm

Patrick Otto & Katie Burn 5:15-6:30

Three Men in Kilts 6:45-8

Whiskey of the Damned 8:30-10:30



SATURDAY:

Parade Grand Marshals escorted
by *Steve Morasso and his pipe band*

Emerald Society Pipe Band 12-12:30

RACE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sullivan School of Irish Dance 1-1:30

Hatfield Sisters 1:45-2:45

John Condron 3-4

Hughes Academy of Irish Dance

4-4:30

SCHOLARSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS

Finbar Mac Carthy 5-6

Reilly 6-7:30

Larkin and Moran Brothers 8-10

www.manhattanirishfest.com

To sponsor, volunteer, register for the 5k race or get more information, visit www.manhattanirishfest.com

For more information contact: Mary Kestel 815-791-3214 Mkestel.irishfest@gmail.com

The Irish American

Since 1981

Society of County Will

www.CountyWillIrish.net



The IASCW is proud to present the annual Manhattan Irish Fest, March 3 & 4, 2017 in Manhattan, IL See opposite page for Fest details.

The Irish American Society of County Will hereby pledges itself to the following ideals:

- * To promote Irish culture in America and to preserve Irish-American Heritage
- * To promote education, friendship, understanding and cooperation among members, and the community in general.
- * To promote and cooperate in the general welfare work of the community.

County Will Morigans Womens Rugby Football Club Spring 2017 Schedule

(H) Home games are played in Manhattan, IL Park District pitch

- March 4- (H) Irish Fest vs. Northern Illinois Un.
- March 11- TBD
- March 18- TBD
- March 25- (A) Nashbash Tournament, Nashville TN
- April 1- (A) vs. Grand Rapids, MI
- April 8- (H) vs. Chicago Sirens,
- April 15- (H) vs. Fort Wayne
- April 22- Playoffs - TBD
- May 6- Midwest Championship, TBD

For more information contact Morigan Match Secretary Kelley Hirt @ <http://www.moriganrugby.com/>



Irish Life Experience Program Scholarship Applications Available

All Will County high school student residents and/or those attending a Will County high school are eligible to apply for cash scholarships of up to \$3,000 which will be applied toward the Irish Life Experience program tuition (\$5,100).

The program runs from June 29 to July 23, 2017.

For more information on the scholarship process contact Laci O'Connell at iascw.laci@yahoo.com.

For more information on the program go to <http://irishlifeexperience.com/>



IASCW Annual Celebration in honor of St. Patrick

Members and guests are welcome to the annual dinner.

Buffet dinner, entertainment and scholarship presentations all included.

Date: Saturday, March 25, 2017

Time: 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Place: Knights of Columbus, 100 S. Infantry Dr., Joliet, IL 60435

Contact: Sharon Houk smhouk@gmail.com



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Terry From Derry
by Terry Boyle

Always at the beginning of the year, we look backwards at what has gone before, and ahead at what is to come. While we pledge not to repeat the same mistakes we hope that if we do they will not have quite the same devastating consequences. This ritual of review and promise making is never ending. It doesn't help that our own flawed thinking is capitalized on by the savvy business moguls who promise us new diets, concoctions to heal our every ill, and ultimately new bodies to replace the old mortal coils if they seem to be running out. Every year we allow ourselves to be conned into some scheme that we later regret.

It's time to deprogram ourselves from the exploitation of commercial economics and switch off those annoying ads that push all the wrong buttons in our psyche. While I'm not into conspiracy theories, I do think that we are being manipulated into a certain mindset that is designed to make us dissatisfied with ourselves.

Women have known for decades how foolish this push for perfection really is. For years they have watched the media, particularly those with a male agenda, determine what makes the perfect woman. To stand against such depictions is to be deemed as feminist, and somehow that is perceived as a term of derision (again, another example of indoctrination). Those who kick against the ideal are branded, and ostracized to realm of being retrogressive when in fact the opposite is true. The prophet's role is to remind us of who we really are, and

not to reinforce the illusion of who we think we are.

In this war of words, whether political, commercial, or religious, the drive to demonize the critical mind is key to understanding what the real motivation is. Why, if we believe in the idea that someone is innocent until proven guilty, do we readily accept the rash conclusions dished out to us by the unscrupulous publications who are more interested in sales than truth; as perfectly illustrated by recent phenomena of 'fake news'. What I love about 'fake news' is they are being criticized by other news outlets that show no morality when it comes to 'trial by media'. Fake news exposes our love of the lie. Why? Because it's more entertaining, and more interesting than the bland, mundane, truth.

Are we so gullible? Are we so naïve? The answer to that is too awful to contemplate. When we accept a world leader of who is racist, sexist, and minimize those damning traits as patriotic and manly then we have reached the nadir of gullibility. If a man can boast of being able to deceive a whole nation, and then does it, how should we react? With applause? Should we give him authority to govern us as mindless sheep? Or should we 'name and shame' the culprit? Have we become so unquestioning about the world around us? What about the hype?

If we really want to change, or amend our ways in a meaningful way, then we should be prepared to take the blinkers off and face the fact that we're being duped. The businessmen

want your money and will go to no expense to get you to buy what you don't really need. They pay psychologists, economists, and cyber experts to track your daily habits, interests, so as to line their own pockets. Success is measured, or so we are told, in terms of luxury, or materialism, though not exclusively. Unfortunately, even the spiritual aspect of our society has become mass produced, and marketed for the 'consumer'.

Pop psychology, combined with pseudo-spirituality, has found itself a nice little earner with the uncritical mind. Magical stones, sacred herbs, and all sorts of superstitious practices have become a substitute for real faith and stop the soul from exploring the more perplexing questions that face us every day.

I'm reminded that the meaning of 'repentance' implies a turning away from evil and a turning towards goodness. Our yearly, New Year resolutions, are a pale shadow of this gut wrenching desire to do change our lives and in turn the lives of others. Instead of giving up chocolate, or going to the gym, what about unmasking the forces whose aim it is to drive us further away from questioning who exactly it is pulling our strings? Let's take the mask off the commercial drive towards selfishness (because we're worth it) because that in fact infers that we don't have to have any social responsibility for those can't afford such thoughts of self-actualization. Let's not ignore the elephant in the so very white house, and fuel the cause of racists and misogynists.

If we really want to change then it's time to cut the strings and not be manipulated into buying or electing what will inevitably destroy our critical faculties. The great burden of freedom is to live with the responsibility to 'think' for ourselves.



From the Motherland

By Sean Farrell



(Some Of) The Ties That Bind

"The family ties and bonds of affection that unite our two countries mean that there will always be a special relationship between us." Not exactly love-bombing, but this was British Prime Minister, Teresa May, speaking. The context was the need to preserve the Common Travel Area (CTA) between Ireland and Britain following British exit from the EU, the occasion the announcement of Britain's roadmap for Brexit. And maintaining the Common Travel Area was number four in May's twelve negotiating objectives, highlighting its importance to Britain.

As I write, Donald Trump has just been sworn in as the USA's 45th President. His "America First" inauguration address came with vows to repatriate US business based overseas and to rewrite the terms of much of current US trade relations. Trump's plans for US business could affect future and even existing US investment in Ireland, which has relied heavily on FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) from US companies. And a major alteration in the US' current trade agreements could potentially seriously derail international trade patterns with consequences for every country. We shall see.

However, a much more clear and present danger for Ireland is the impending Brexit and that roadmap set out by May, which heralds a tough set of parameters for the negotiations. There are few "coulds" but some very definite "woulds" regarding the likely consequences of Britain leaving the EU. The phoney war since June is now ending and quite a grim picture for Ireland is beginning to emerge. Put simply Ireland, North and South, stands to be affected disproportionately greater than the other 26 EU members by Britain's departure. May has signalled the so-called "Hard Brexit", involving the introduction of controls on Immigration from other EU countries as well as pulling out of the Single Market and the Customs Union. All three are critical for Britain; all three will have profound effects on Ireland.

Tied in with this, though not mentioned by May, is the North, so self-evidently an issue of critical concern to the people of Ireland, North and South. It is less than a generation since the guns fell silent and not

yet a decade since the fledgling institution of the Power Sharing Executive appeared to be taking hold. Right now there is a hiatus,

with elections pending in March and old tribal loyalties reasserting themselves. Peace is not under threat – far from it; the North has come too far to fall back. But the last thing needed, at a time when North South relations have never been closer, is the prospect of new or renewed barriers across the island. To a large extent the Good Friday Agreement was predicated on close relations between Ireland and Britain with physical and economic contact enhanced by a common membership of the larger entity of Europe.

A critical ameliorating element here has been the Common Travel Area, dating back to Irish independence, far predating, as May noted, membership of the EU. This was not affected by subsequent EU enlargements – until now. While May speaks of working "to deliver a practical solution" to maintaining the CTA while "protecting" the UK's immigration system, there's clearly a circle to be squared here. Any solution involving a two tier approach, admitting the Irish but restricting other EU nationals is unlikely to go down well with other EU member states, for example Poland, whose nationals in Britain now actually exceed the numbers of Irish. Other nationalities are much less significant in this context but will doubtless also have views. However, while new controls on immigration might be a nuisance for others, their impact on Ireland and the Irish would be of a different magnitude. Unilateral action by Britain, admitting the Irish alone, would pose the further problem of how and where to police the common land frontier lest Ireland become a back door for entry into the U.K.

The analogy of Norway and Sweden, is hardly relevant – population flows of other EU nationals between them are negligible compared to the flows between Ireland and the U.K. (Ireland remember has also admitted large numbers of Poles and others from the 2004 Enlargement – far more proportionately than the UK). A special accommodation for Ireland, negotiated by the Commission and agreed to by the other 26, is the preferable solution, but whether it is achievable and in what form is another matter.

Brexit is serious for Ireland across the whole spectrum. The two countries have had a long and not very happy relationship stretching back for at least a millennium (it

didn't all start in 1169). In many ways the two islands form a common cultural area. We've adopted their legal system and their language and over the centuries millions of Irish have migrated to Britain and settled there. There are at least half a million Irish born people currently living in Britain, (equivalent to 10% of the population in Ireland) with estimates suggesting that one in six Britons has an Irish grandparent. (The Catholic Church, five million strong, is overwhelmingly an Irish immigrant church). The Irish people have been and are well represented in all walks of life in Britain, including the media, sport and the arts. No other EU country even approximates to this.

Quite apart from the North, the historical, cultural and traditional links with the British and the huge Irish community in Britain, our vital national economic interests are under threat by Brexit in a manner that those of other EU members are not. Some are scarcely affected at all. Bulgaria? Croatia? Latvia? Romania? Luxembourg? And the others? All have trading links, some have investments, all have citizens in Britain but none compare with the bald facts of our relationship with Britain. Britain is our major trading partner, however one measures it, one of our major FDI sources and the largest origin of our tourists. Already we have suffered job losses as sterling has fallen in value since last June rendering Irish exports less competitive.

Next time I will expand further on the above, but with the invoking of Article 50, beginning the exit process, expected before March 31, it is imperative that our politicians address urgently the issue of the appropriate means for protecting our vital national interests in advance of the negotiations. It is currently envisaged that the European Council will set out high level objectives for the EU and then consider and approve a draft negotiating mandate from the Commission, which will then conduct the negotiations. This approach enshrines the Treaty-based proposition that all Member States have a stake in the outcome – including preservation and maintenance of what are perceived as the EU's core values.

All well and good, but while all certainly have a stake Ireland has more and the issue is whether we can simply be just one voice among many, relying on the Commission negotiators – who will be seized of the "big picture" which will not necessarily prioritise our concerns – to look out for us. Factor in the likely EU interinstitutional rivalry and the aggregation of other national interest of partners big(particularly) and small and there is every danger that our

priorities, proportionately more vital, will be side-lined. Should we put not our trust in princes?

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IRISH AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER

Chicago, Illinois



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President's Message

Greetings from the Irish American Heritage Center!

As we really get into 2017, there has already been so much activity, and so much planning for what's to come in February, and of course, March.

First, we would like to welcome our new Consul General, Brian O'Brien. The Consul joined us for our Thursday night Sessions in the Fifth Province Pub, and met so many of our members, as well as groups like the Shannon Rovers, the Irish Heritage Singers, and Chapter 32 of the Ancient Order of Hibernians that make the Center their home. All were honored to meet Mr. O'Brien. We look forward to working with him during his tenure, and to hosting him at future events.

Speaking of the Sessions, we will be hosting two very special sessions in February. On the 16th, the good time Chancey Brothers will appear to celebrate the release of their new CD, *Patriots and Immigrants*.

The February 23rd Session features the music of our younger members. Be sure and join us for the first in a series of "Youth Sessions," hosted by Devin Shepherd.

Many thanks to Trinity Irish Dance Company for making the Center the future home for "Big Horse," a ceremonial drum of historic importance that we will care for when it is not on tour with Trinity.

While we are busy giving thanks, we can't thank Cliff Carlson of *Irish American News*, and Ed Sexton of Sexton Hardwood Flooring enough for the beautiful work done to restore the floors in our Fifth Province Hall. Thanks Ed and Cliff, for coming up with the idea and making this happen! Our pub area is so beautiful right now, and when the winter chill sets in, there's nothing better than sitting in our cozy pub with the fire blazing.

We are so proud to welcome Makem and



Clancy to our Auditorium on February 17. Excitement has been running high since we announced the appearance by Rory and Dónal, so don't wait to purchase your tickets. Tickets are \$20 for members and \$22 for general admission.

February is considered the month of LOVE. And you will love attending the upcoming Comedy and Crooning concert we have planned to raise money for the Center Library. I am teaming with singer Artie Fitzgerald for a wonderful show of song and comedy. Last year we raised \$5,000 for the cause, so book your tickets early or show up at the door for the \$20 entry which starts at 7:30pm on Saturday, February 11th in the Auditorium.

The Saturday Morning Tea Series presents Tea with Mamie Eisenhower also on February 11. You must reserve a seat on line or by calling the office. They sell out - don't wait!

We kick off the March festivities with Irish Music stars Solas on March 4. Tickets are \$30 for this concert featuring all past and current members of the band, as they prepare to go on an extended hiatus.

I can't keep up with all the activity! Irish Whiskey tasting classes, Memoir and Creative Writing workshops, great music in the pub! There's too much. I have to thank all of the volunteers that make it happen. Visit www.irish-american.org to purchase tickets and see the full list of all we have happening in February and March.

I can't end this letter without a heartfelt thank you to our Building Committee volunteers. They are the people who keep our boiler going and our beloved old building in good repair. We think of you and thank you all year, but are especially thankful when we walk into the warmth of the Irish American Heritage Center from the winter's cold!

Eugene M. Cooney
President

Annual Appeal

Below are the names of donors to the 2016 Annual Appeal who have given through January 23, 2017. The campaign runs through March 2017 and donations will be listed in *Irish American News* through the March issue. Each year, Patrick and Peggy Burke generously pledge \$25,000 in matching funds for the Appeal. We thank them, and you, for your generous support.

Benefactor (\$500-\$999)

James Convery
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Maureen Doyle
Kathleen Kelly
Michael O'Regan and Karen Reshkin
Mary Jo Rice

Advocate (\$100 - \$249)

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Paddy Homan, in memory of Maureen O'Looney

Catherine T Keating (Kitty), in memory of Jeffrey M. Keating

Sheila E. McGuire

Michael Murphy

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Jim and Mary Zalinski, in honor/memory of Maurice J. Foran

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FEBRUARY ENTERTAINMENT

- 2/3 Francis O'Neill Ceili Mor
- 2/4 St. Stephen's Green
- 2/10 Dylan Walshe
- 2/11 St. Stephen's Green
- 2/17 The Boils
- 2/18 The Dooley Brothers
- 2/24 John Devlin
- 2/25 TBA



Thursday Night Irish Music Sessions: Feb. 2, 9, 16, and 23; 7pm-9pm

February 2017

Feb 1	Tara Club	Room 304	10am
Feb 3	Francis O'Neill Club Ceili Mor	Fifth Province	8pm
Feb 4	The Irish Whiskey Class	Fifth Province	4pm
Feb 10	Paints and Pints	Fifth Province	7pm
Feb 11	Tea with Mamie Eisenhower Library Great Books Club	Fifth Province	11am
	<i>The Immortal Irishman</i> by Timothy Egan	Library	1pm
	Katherine Anne Porter Lecture	Library	3pm
	Comedy and Crooning Concert	Auditorium	7:30pm
	St. Patrick Fathers Social	Fifth Province	8pm
Feb 15	Tara Club Senior Meeting	Room 304	10am
Feb 17	Makem and Clancy Concert	Auditorium	8pm
	Quiz Night	Room 109	8pm
Feb 21	Celtic Women Meeting	Room 304	7pm
Feb 25	The Irish Whiskey Class	Fifth Province	4pm
Feb 26	Genealogy Workshop	Library	1pm

Regularly Scheduled Events

Mon-Fri	Gift Shop	First Floor Lobby	4pm-8pm
Tues	Nimble Thimbles	Room 208	9am-Noon
	Memoir and Creative Writing Class	Library	4pm
	Set Dancing	Room 111	7:30-9:30pm
Wed	Traditional Irish Music Session	Room 311	7pm
	Na Gaeil Irish Language Class	Library	7pm
	Nimble Thimbles	Room 208	7-10pm
	Watercolor and Acrylic Class	Room 309	6:45pm
Thurs	Taping of The Craic Radio Show	Fifth Province	6pm
	Thursday Night Irish Music Session	Fifth Province	7pm
	Memoir and Creative Writing Class	Library	7pm
	Irish Heritage Singers Rehearsal	Room 306	7pm
Fri	Francis O'Neill Club Ceili	Room 111	8pm
Sat	Gift Shop	First Floor Lobby	10am-8pm
	Na Gaeil Irish Language Class	Library	11am

Library Hours:

Tuesday and Thursday 10am to 2pm | Wednesday 4pm to 8pm | Saturday 10am to 2pm

The Heritage Line Staff Kathleen O'Neill, Editor
Contributors: Meg Buchanan, Theresa Choske, Gene Cooney, Laura Coyle, Ellen Folan, Catherine Kelly, Sheila Murphy, Mike Shevlin, Becky Tatz



the heritage line
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 heritage center Chicago, Illinois



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COMING THIS FEBRUARY AND MARCH



Comedy and Crooning: Saturday, February 11, 7:30pm

IAHC President Gene Cooney performs a comedy set and entertainer Artie Fitzgerald sings classics and standards. Proceeds benefit the IAHC Library and the purchase of a new computer server. **\$20**



Wearing of the Green Dinner Dance: Sunday, March 5, 5-10pm

Kick off St. Patrick's Day Season with dinner, live music with Gerry Haughey, Kara Eadie and Teresa Shine, dancing, prizes and a cash bar. **\$40**



Tea with Mamie Eisenhower: Saturday, February 11, 11am

Have tea with the wife of President Dwight D. Eisenhower and learn about her marriage to Ike, time as an Army wife and Hostess in Chief of the White House. **\$25 for adults and children 12 and under \$8**



Whiskey class: Saturdays, February 4 or February 25, 4-6pm

Join whiskey educator Martin C. Duffy for a "tootful" as you learn the history, legacy, production and character of whiskey, while sampling some of the "uisge beatha"; the water of life. **\$30**



Tickets Now on Sale for Our Annual St. Patrick's Day Celebrations

Saturday, March 11

Noon-Midnight

\$12-15, children 12 and under free

Celebrate the season with music, dance, food, drink, cultural programs and exhibits on every floor.

Friday, March 17

Noon-Midnight

Adults \$10, children 12 and under free

The fun continues with music, dance, food and drink in the Fifth Province.

To purchase tickets, visit www.irish-american.org or call 773-282-7035, ext. 10

CONCERT CORNER



Dónal Clancy and Rory Makem take the stage with songs and stories from the Irish folk tradition

Friday, February 17 • 8pm

Tickets: \$20 for IAHC members • \$22 for general admission



Supergroup SOLAS reunites all members of the band; past and present, for a night of arrangements of age-old tunes, compelling covers and unparalleled musicianship, as it prepares to go on hiatus.



SOLAS
IN CONCERT

Saturday, March 4 • 8pm • Tickets: \$30



Driven by vocal harmonies, the duo seamlessly blends traditional Irish and Americana to create a fresh, Celtic folk sound.

Friday, June 9 • 8pm • Tickets: \$35

Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady



"Every single power system manipulates and uses ordinary people to further that system's own supposedly noble aims."

I'm slightly paraphrasing that spot-on sentiment from the great American film director, Sam Peckinpah.

With bitter accuracy he noted: "All the goddamn power systems, all the wheelers and dealers at the top with their gin and fizzes... need guys like you to do their bloodletting while they're busy making speeches about freedom and progress. They're all full of it. There's not one power system that cares about a civilian."

We've seen the truth of this over and over again since that 1972 interview. In the intervening years since we lost our collective virginity, we have witnessed one power system after another show its feet of clay: the Church, the Banks, the Judicial...and the Health Service.

In Ireland the health system has only this week been shown up -- once again -- for the shambles it is. Despite the fact that we actually DO have hard-working and compassionate people on the front line, they are hampered

and held back by those who shout that there IS NO MONEY to change things; to speed up appointments for those who are desperately ill; to take the suffering off the trolleys that they can spend days on whilst waiting for a non-existent bed.

And there IS money, make no doubt about that. Money is always something that can be found when our Masters want to show off -- or grab a photo-op -- on the world stage.

Only this week they found a couple of million Euros down the back of the sofa that they decided to send to war-torn Yemen: a country that few could point to on a map because it has been kept out of mainstream reporting due to the uncomfortable fact that it involves our old pals in Saudi Arabia; weapons being bought from the British; and other 'power systems' that we don't want to upset. And the very fact alone that we're coming out with this after FIVE SILENT YEARS tells me everything I need to know about the likelihood of any money being sent over reaching the correct destination.

For the moment, though, let's stay a bit closer to home:

In 2008 the Health Service Executive (HSE) made a written commitment to help fund the Irish children's cancer charity 'Hand in Hand' with the sum of €450,000.

Over the three-year period from 2009 - 2011 the amount of €300,000 was to be returned to the HSE upon closure of the separate charity, 'Boys Hope - Girls Hope'.

It was agreed between their trustees and the HSE that €150,000 would be added to the €300,000 to fund the unique services of 'Hand in Hand'. This was the composition of the figure of €450,000; and this was the agreement confirmed by the HSE.

At this point 'Hand in Hand' was unaware that an internal HSE memo of the period made the remarkable presumption that:

'We (HSE) are likely to benefit as not all existing funding will be used in any given year.'

Basic Timeline

On May 4th 2009 the check for €300,000 was sent to the HSE with a cover letter that referenced the terms of the donation.

Only nine days later -- again in an internal HSE email -- an official notes that the total amount available in the first year of funding is to be... halved. This email also categorically states:

'It goes without saying that [Hand in Hand] do not need to know that the funding is being reduced by half in 2009.'

On July 1st 'HinH' signed an HSE Memorandum of Understanding. This was under false pretenses as pertinent information had been withheld from them, leaving them to naturally believe that the agreement was for €450,000.

Startlingly, it was only thirty days later that the HSE deigned to inform them that it could not now make a commitment to funding beyond the end of the year.

And -- incredibly -- worse was to come.

Two months later, on the 28th of September, having received precisely nothing at all at this point, the offer was withdrawn. The reason given was simply that the HSE was 'not in a position' to fund the service and -- again with extraordinary bluntness -- this little children's cancer charity were informed that the matter was 'non negotiable'.

In fact it is now known, due to yet another internal memo, that 'the 300k was used as income to offset the [HSE] bottom line in 2009'.

Just let that sink in for a moment, if you will. The money was used to offset the bottom line of a powerful organisation. And to do that they were willing to stick their clammy little paws into the pockets of children who have been diagnosed with just about the worst illness that I can imagine.

And mark you, this is all during the period when they were handing over literally millions to the conman Paul Kelly of 'Console'. Talk about taking from the poor to give to the rich.

We hear a lot about 'hitting the most vulnerable in society.' Hell, like most truisms it's become something of a cliché.

But to my mind it takes a special kind of ghoul to hit out at the families of children who are going through this awful time.

That same memo goes on to state:

'As a consequence of political pressure... only half the money originally available is going to be made available over 3 years...'

And, to add final insult to injury:

'...with absolutely nothing more to be added by us regardless of how worthy the service proves to be.'

Again, you feel an intake of breath here: regardless of how worthy the services are.

The hell with them, in other words. Our bottom line is only ever M-O-N-E-Y, suckers! Show me the M-O-N-E-Y!

So by December 7th the HSE approved -- 'on a once-off basis only' -- a payment of €50,000 to support the charity's work in 2011. Indeed, an internal memo had revealed that 'the Minister [was told] before the summer that the HSE would honour the commitment given by this organisation -- at this point I need something in writing as it has become embarrassing'.

In what is a stunningly convoluted trail, the most surprising thing is that only now was it perceived as becoming 'embarrassing'.

The sheer disrespect and contempt that the charity continues to be shown as it tries to get its money is staggering.

For the last few years I've volunteered a few hours a week with this charity. I do it because they're not one of those that have an overpaid -- or indeed any -- CEO. I do it because they have a Board who are completely voluntary. I do it because this is a REAL charity, not one that goes by that name whilst in truth being a part of Corporate Ireland.

And I do it because they are the only charity of its kind that offers the practical, essential help that they do.

And as I am simply a volunteer, these views are my own. But I'm spitting blood. That money withheld by the HSE (as of my writing on 12th January) would ease the suffering of children with cancer and their families throughout Ireland.

To ignore that is to cross a line that even I didn't think would be done.

You can email me at chasbrady7@eircom.net. Or see www.handinhand.ie

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Very Important Chicago Rose Dates:



February 4th – “Meet The Rose Pub Crawl”

Reilly's Daughter, Emerald Loop, The Dearborn, Fado Irish Pub and Corcoran's! Starting at 2:00 p.m. at Reilly's Daughter & 3:00 p.m. at Emerald Loop. Tickets must be purchased no later than Feb. 2nd midnight. \$30 includes shuttle ride, goodie bags, drink & food special

March 25th – Chicago Rose Escort Selection – Reilly's Daughter

Looking for men between the ages of 18-28 to escort our Roses for the April 8th Selection. C'mon on out for a night of fun to vote for your favorite escort! 7:00 p.m. Accepting applications now at website below

April 8th – Chicago Rose 2017 Selection – Ridge Country Club

Registration NOW open for all entrants for the 2017 Chicago Rose Selection. Chicago Rose applicant ages 18-27. Registration also open for Rose-buds ages 5-12 & Rose Petals ages 13-17.

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