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John Murray

John Murray, 87, died peacefully at home. A lifelong resident of Chicago he was the son of Irish Immigrants Mary and James Murray, He attended Resurrection Grammar School, St. Patrick's High School and Loyola University Law School. John practiced law in Chicago for over 50 years as a partner at Beverly, Pause, Duffy & O'Malley. John was preceded in death by his dearly loved sister, Kathleen (the late Martin) Egan. While John was a confirmed bachelor, his sister Kathleen had seven children. He was known to them as "Uncle Jack". He was uncle to the late Mary (Keith) Szlak, Anne Egan (the late James Haughey), James (Dominique) Egan, Noreen Egan (the late Martin Quinn), Kathleen (Thomas) Touhy, the late Veronica (the late Daniel) O'Neill, and Timothy (Alene) Egan. From the West Side, John moved his mother and Kathleen's family to the Northwest side of Chicago living a few blocks from each other. With a watchful over his nieces and nephews he ensured all were provided with a Catholic Education and a good life. John loved to walk his animal companion, Stubby throughout his neighborhood. John purchased a vacation home in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin for

the family and where many an Egan/Murray bash was held. John would enjoy Sunday drives to the cottage where he would read his newspaper, smoke a cigar and enjoy the views of the lake. John was a great uncle to 12 and great great uncle to 13. He will be missed by all of them. John had four loves; his family, his religion, his country and Irish Music. John's father died when he was a young man and he provided for his mother with great love and care in his home until she died. He was a loyal parishioner at Queen of All Saints for over 50 years and faithfully attended mass until his health prevented him. He served proudly in the Army during the Korean Conflict in Germany. John even established the Hercules Mulligan American Legion Post with friends Ray McNamee and John "Tiger" Lyons, both preceded him in death. While growing up he took music lessons from Terrance "Cuz" Teahan and became quite proficient on the button accordion. He assisted in writing the charter for the Irish American Heritage Center and could be found there on Wednesday nights playing with his dear friends Pat McPartland, Tom O'Malley, John Meehan, Mike Macken, Susana Haslett, Gary Tigus, Tom McQuire, and various others

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Irish American Heritage Center. For info 773-777-3944 or www.GFFH.com

Cathleen Hansen

We regret to let you know that Cathleen Hansen passed away Sunday, December 10th, after a valiant battle against lung cancer. She was the mother of Mary Mahoney and grandmother of Katie Mahoney. A very kind and helpful woman, she became famous for her homemade rhubarb pies which were always devoured at the

Ceili Tea Time. Though she rarely danced, she had a good word to say to everyone and often commented that her goal was to "make myself generally useful," which she certainly did. The Upstairs Ceili just let her have a spot in their Set. She will be missed. Please keep her family and friends in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

Cathleen Hansen, age 82, (nee Forrestal), Native of Ferrymountgarrett, New Ross, Co Wexford. Beloved wife of the late Peter; loving mother of Peter (Nancy), Mary (Tom) Mahoney and the late Kevin; cherished grandma of Meghan Hansen, Kevin (Heather) and Katie Mahoney; proud great grandma of McKenna and Finn; dear sister of Brigid (Mogue) Bryne and the late James (Kathleen) Forrestal; fond aunt, cousin and friend to many. In Lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Francis O'Neill Club, 4626 N. Knox Ave., Chicago, IL, 60630 or St. Patrick Fathers, also known as St. Patrick's Missionary Society 8422 W. Windsor Ave., Chicago, Il. 60656-4252 or view stpatrickfathers.org.

For info www.elmsfh.com. Or (708) 453-1234.

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From the Motherland

By Sean Farrell

A Watershed?

December 2017 may well prove a "watershed moment", for Ireland, for Britain and for Europe. The hyperbole may in this case be justified. We shall see. The issue was Britain quitting the European Union –Brexit; the event was the December European Council meeting; the result was agreement to proceed with substantive negotiations on future EU-British trade and other relations. For Ireland, the country with most to lose from Brexit (apart from Britain!), the outcome was positive and reassuring, but there remains much to play for.

Up to now Brexit has appeared slightly surreal. Yes it was to happen, in 2019, the outcome of a narrowly won plebiscite on a flawed and inadequate question and after a campaign of disinformation and misinformation on the one hand and ineptness on the other. The losing Prime Minister walked away and his successor has shown weakness and crass political misjudgement, arguably digging an even deeper hole for her country than that produced by the referendum result. All this compounded by the antics of her Cabinet colleagues who have thus far minimised or distorted the very difficult nature of the process of disentanglement and extraction from forty years of regulatory integration, while also misrepresenting post-Brexit Britain's future prospects.

Now there can be no doubt. Britain is on the way out. Much remains to be negotiated but a significant milestone on the path to no return has been rounded. As I write it appears that every party has got some of what they wanted. In Ireland's case, critically, Britain has been faced down over the Border post-Brexit. For Britain, the decision by the European Council that the Brexit negotiations can proceed to future trade arrangements, something seen as the Brexit Holy Grail and fundamental by gung-ho Brexiteers, and, in the real world, something welcomed by the increasingly nervous British captains of commerce and industry. For the EU relief that there is now the potential for an orderly exit and future relationship by and with Europe's second largest economy and avoidance of a British crash-out.

For Taoiseach Leo Varadkar events came thick and fast. One of those small hurdles which can bring a government down suddenly cropped up during November when the Maurice McCabe Garda Whistle-blower affair surfaced again. The McCabe affair has already claimed several notable scalps, including a former Minister for Justice, Garda Commissioners and top civil servants. This time it added another - that of Tanaiste and Justice Minister Frances Fitzgerald, who took one for the team, resigning with protestations of innocence to head off the Government's collapse. Her Secretary General also left abruptly. An overhaul of the Justice Department is pending, while the problems besetting the Gardai continue.

For a while an early election seemed on the cards as relations between Fine Gael and Fianna Fail deteriorated sharply. The sour aftertaste left has led most observers to expect an early general election. This at a time when the negotiations over the Border post-Brexit demanded maximum Government attention.

Relations between Ireland and Britain took a nose dive in the run up to the December European Council. The British goal was simple – to achieve EU agreement that negotiations could proceed to future trade relationships between the two entities. Three conditions were necessary: agreement on the size of the "Divorce Settlement" to be paid by Britain upon departure, satisfactory arrangements to protect the rights of EU citizens living in Britain and agreement on the Border arrangements in Ireland. The first two were a shoe-in, despite some initial bluster from the Brexiteers. Britain agreed to pay roughly €50 billion over a period and also gave guarantees regarding EU residents. Which left the tricky issue of the Irish Border.

The Border and all it represented has long been the running sore in relations between the communities in Ireland and between Ireland and Britain. With the advent of peace the situation changed. The security apparatus was dismantled and, with the introduction of the European Single Market and the Customs Union, border posts and barriers disappeared. This "soft border" between the two parts of Ireland has been one of the elements central to the success of the Good Friday Agreement and the Peace Process. Its importance has been acknowledged by all parties, not least by the EU which has strongly supported peace in Ireland.

However, with Britain due to leave the EU after March 2019, the Border will become effectively the external frontier of the EU and of Britain, with all that that implies. Ireland, with the support of the EU, has stressed from the outset the importance of maintaining the Common Travel Area between the two jurisdictions and the open border with free movement between North and South. In the negotiations to date over Brexit a satisfactory outcome over this was one of the EU's three preconditions for Britain to satisfy. And from early on Britain has stressed it wants a "soft Border" to remain.

In practice however this involves squaring a particularly difficult circle. The soft Border is predicated on membership of the Single Market and the Customs Union, both of which Britain is to leave. This exit is not set in stone – it was a commitment by Teresa May at a Party Conference – but so much rhetoric has been expended in support of leaving that a change here seems currently off the radar.

In the run up to the Brussels' Council the British side huffed and puffed and stated repeatedly they wanted a soft border, without, however, going into specifics. The Taoiseach made clear that it was a national interest for Ireland and that we would hold our position and that moreover the problem was not of Ireland's making. As Britain gave way on money and citizens' rights the pressure on Ireland increased. The British tabloids joined in, excoriating Leo Varadkar as only they could. British politicians and commentators on TV expressed outrage that Ireland would/could/might hold up Brexit's Manifest Destiny. Yet our EU partners held firm in support for the Irish position.

Something had to give, and it did. On December 4 May blinked and a form of words acceptable to Ireland was signalled. Then an immediate hitch. The DUP, who are keeping May in power, demurred at any arrangement that would mean some form of regime applying in the North different to the rest of the UK. May backed off.

The stalemate lasted for several days. Ireland and Brussels remained firm. May eventually agreed to further changes. Then another hitch. David Davis, the Brexit Secretary, described the agreement as not legally binding but merely a declaration of intent. In the uproar that followed Davis hurriedly backed down and the assurances ultimately given enabled the European Council to declare sufficient progress had been made to proceed.

Which is where we are at. But without a definitive answer as to how the circle will eventually be squared. Negotiations will commence shortly on the length of the transition period after Brexit, with two years being currently envisaged. Will Britain move on remaining in the Customs Union or the Single Market? Will the current British government survive? How quickly will there be progress on trade? Will Brexit eventually come to naught with another referendum? What else can/ will happen?

Finally, Dignity for a Chicago War Hero

By Patrick Gorman

Earlier this fall I was contacted by my friend Michael Feeney (MBE) of Castlebar, Co. Mayo Ireland. Michael and I have been friends since we met in 2006 at his home in Milebush. It was then that he asked me to help research military men and women who, have served in the armed conflicts of the United States and most of whom made the ultimate sacrifice. Many of these soldiers gave their life for a country that was not yet even theirs. Thus began my foray into military research, a topic I knew nothing of but would soon teach myself. I have been a genealogist since 1999 so I eagerly took on this task for my friend in Mayo. The reason you ask… quite simple, Michael was the brain child and driving force behind the construction of the Mayo Peace Park and its "Garden of Remembrance". A memorial in Castlebar to honor all that served in foreign wars.

So, when contacted again I jumped at the chance to look into another lost soldier. Michael's wife Mary, in an effort to help locate soldiers spends many hours searching the internet for info on those from Mayo. And find another she did, Martin J. Cunningham who, sadly died of his wounds on July 22, 1918. Martin was born on September 28, 1888 and baptized two days later on the 30th. He was the son of Martin and Mary nee Forkan Cunningham of Treenlaur in the townland of Shanvally, 2 miles from Kiltimaugh, in Co. Mayo.

In the early part of the 20th century it is believed he came to New York, and then on to Chicago to live with his sister Mrs. Margaret (George) Brady on S. May St. in Chicago. In abt. 1916 he joined the US Army and when we entered the war in April of 1917 Martin's destiny was sealed, he was to be sent overseas. Martin served proudly with Co. "A" of the 28th Infantry as a corporal.

Sometime on or about the 22nd of July Martin was wounded and later died of his wounds (DOW), and was buried in France. It was reported in the Chicago Daily Tribune and was accompanied by a photo of Martin and eight other listed as dying in France. After the war, his body was exhumed and returned to Chicago at the request of his father and sister. He was laid to rest in Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Chicago on July 23rd 1921, three years and one day after he died.

Moving ahead to 2017, after getting the call, doing my research and reading his burial file that I got from St. Louis (NPRC) it was then that I found the final resting place for Martin. I called the cemetery and they were very helpful, telling me the "NO" Martin did not have a marker on his grave. I knew that getting a marker was an easy fix, but I was also told of the $275 setting fee for flat granite markers. It was then that I got the idea of writing to the owner of the cemetery, the Archdiocese of Chicago, (Cardinal Cupich) asking for a fee waiver on compassionate grounds. The letter was answered several weeks later from the Director of Catholic Cemeteries with a resounding "NO". After the initial anger and shock wore off I remembered a friend that worked for Catholic Charities of Chicago. The call was made and she too was upset with the lack of compassion displayed by the Archdiocese. She readily agreed to help and her organization will be covering the cost of the setting for the VA marker when it arrives in the spring.

A call to the Mayo Association of Chicago was never returned when I left a message.

Another idea that came to me, was to hold a simple grave dedication ceremony after the marker is set, most likely on July 22, 2018 the 100th anniversary of Martin's death. I contacted Rich Leschman of Post #450 of the local VFW in Chicago and he agreed to help in any way that they could to give Martin the dignity he was denied in 1921. For those interested, more details about the upcoming ceremony will be listed as they become finalized and the day grows closer.

Respectfully submitted,
Patrick Gorman
Dixon, IL 61021
(815) 440-5965

Footnotes:

1) In 2009 one of the markers I arranged to have sent to Ireland was for James Forkan, a cousin of Martin's. My wife and I had the good fortune to be able to attend his ceremony and meet the family.

2) Martin's sister and brother in law are buried next to him, also in unmarked graves…..anyone feeling generous?

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** 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.*

ILE Scholarships Available!

High school students are encouraged to apply for the 2018 IASCW scholarship for the Irish Life Experience,a summer study abroad program in Ireland offered to both American and Canadian High School students. (http://irishlifeexperience.com). Application deadline is February 17, 2018. Eligible applicants are either Will County residents or attend a high school located in Will County. Awards of up to $3,500 are available toward the $5,100 total tuition. For more information go to www.countywillirish.net or write to info@countywillirish.net.

IASCW GIVES BACK TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

In 2017, IASCW member efforts secured significant funds that were donated to the local community. A total of $34,585 was shared with the following beneficiaries: Honor Flight Chicago(in honor of veteran Dan Maher); Catholic Charities Shepherd's Table; Cantigny Post 367 VFW; Morning Star Mission; Senior Services Center of Will County; Hopeful Tails Animal Rescue; Wreaths Across America; Will County Habitat for Humanity; Village of Manhattan; Manhattan Youth Athletic Association; AVON 39 The Walk to End Breast Cancer; Shamrock Rugby Football Club; Manhattan Park District; Operation Care Package; Manhattan Fire Department; Manhattan Neighborhood Food Pantry; St. Joes Baseball; County Will Morrigans Rugby; and St. Joes Manhattan School.

SAVE THE DATE:

* **Manhattan Irish Fest: Friday-Saturday, March 2-3, 2018.**

* **St. Patrick's Scholarship dinner: Saturday, March 24, 2018**

* **johncondron.com album release event, Feb. 16 at Rialto Square Theater.**

IASCW Founding Fathers Scholarships Available!

Honoring founders Michael McHugh and Marilyn Ferguson, The IASCW is proud to offer awards of up to $1,000 each. Eligible applicants are Will County high school graduating seniors who plan to pursue post high-school education and/or skilled training. For more information go to www.countywillirish.net or write to info@countywillirish.net.

IASCW MEMBERS CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS

Thanks to all members who attended the December 17th IASCW member Christmas party. Chairperson Kathy Jordan did a great job organizing this event held at Paddy's Pub (@paddys.bar.54) 362 Theodore street in Crest Hill. Members enjoyed good food, holiday spirits and winter fellowship.

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WillCountyCelticFest.com

Irish Books and Plays in Review

Frank West

A Week in Winter

By Maeve Binchy, Anchor Books—Random House

Maeve Binchy was generous of spirit, humane, and open-minded. She was sincere, perceptive, and humorous too. Her novels show those wonderful qualities. In the tumultuous world we live in, we need a person with those qualities to create literature that is optimistic and uplifting. As she would say: "Think for yourself. Life is short, live fully."

Meave was born in 1940 in Dalkey and passed away in 2012 in Dublin. She wrote 18 novels. They were translated into many languages and sold over 40 million copies. They show her personal qualities. I have read many of them and reviewed them.

She had a wonderful gift for storytelling. About that her fellow novelist, Anne Euright, said: "Maeve had an unsurpassed grasp of what makes a good story and that reading her was like being with a good friend."

I met, and interviewed her, when she and her husband were in Chicago to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. I found her to be pleasant and friendly to me, even though she was one of the world's most well-known and widely read authors.

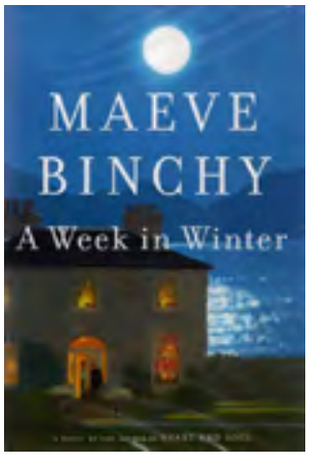
I learned recently that another novel of hers was ready to be sent to her publisher, when she passed away. It was published posthumously. That book is A Week In Winter.

There were many reasons for the popularity of her novels. One was that: she had the knack of making the story so interesting and intimate that the reader felt it was like listening to a conversation.

Other reasons were that the topics of her novels were of intimate interest to most people. Some of those topics are: how people relate to each other, the search for love, loneliness, fear, memories, hope for the future, and insightful observations of people. Her stories are intricate, clever, and marked by great humanity and compassion.

The stories in A Week in Winter are focused on the small seaside town of Stoneybridge in the west of Ireland.

Mrs. Starr had returned from New York with the dream and determination of opening a guest house. There was a huge, dilapidated mansion on a cliff overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. An elderly woman lived there, she was a descendent of the once large family that owned the mansion. She liked the idea of it becoming a guest house and loved the people she met when the house



was being refurbished.

The mansion had been called Stone House. As a guest house, it would offer: great food grown in the area; cliff-walks, binoculars for watching the many seabirds, and packaged lunches to take on walks, and suggestions for music and food in local pubs.

Mrs. Starr was pleasant, supportive of local business and people, and made the guest house run smoothly. She accepted her guests for the persons they are and they quickly felt comfortable.

The guests liked the idea of a communal dinner, served to them in the large dining room prepared by Mrs. Starr's niece, an award-winning chef. There they could talk in a relaxing atmosphere, and not have to maintain an 'appearance.'

A guest liked traditional Irish music and asked if any local pub had a 'session' during the day. He, and another guest, asked for suggestions and were told that there were "two pubs both of them known locally for their 'sessions.' One of them did terrific seafood at lunch time, if they were interested in sampling the local food."

"They asked for directions. The two set out in the direction of the town. They passed white washed cottages, and farmhouses. For a while, the road followed the coastline, and high as they were on the cliff top, the wind and spray stung their faces. Even the trees were bent double and stunted by the Atlantic gales. Then the road took them inland so that the sea was out of sight."

"The main street in Stoneybridge was lined with two and three story houses…the two explorers made the little café their first stop. They talked easily, comparing notes on their first impressions of their fellow guests at Stone House. They went into the larger of the pubs for lunch with great bowls of steaming, succulent mussels and fresh crusty bread. And then…a small, red-faced man sitting in the corner produced a fiddle and started to play. The session had started."

The experiences at Stone House were relaxed, positive and life-affirming. And without pressure, the guests found that they could make decisions about their future. A Week in Winter is Maeve Binchy at her storytelling best.

Andrew Jackson and the Battle of New Orleans

By Brian Kilmeade, Sentinel-Randomhouse

On January 8, 1815 one of the most important events happened in American History. That event was the Battle of New Orleans.

Brian Kilmeade tells a story with vitality and energy. And he has the ability to make the reader feel part of the action. I have read his Thomas Jefferson and the Tripoli Pirates. He is co-host of "Fox and Friends" and is a host on Fox News Radio.

Born in 1964 in New York City, he lives on Long Island with his wife and their three children.

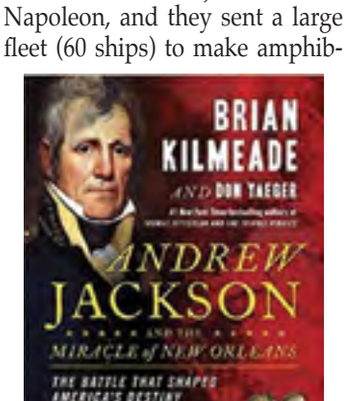
The commander of the American forces was General Andrew Jackson. His forces were badly outnumbered: 4,732 to the 14,450 of the British Army. It looked like the British would have an easy victory. But they didn't count on Andrew Jackson, who was determined to outwit and defeat them.

Irish Americans can be very proud of fellow Irish American, Andrew Jackson. Jackson's family had come from Carrick Fergus, in Co. Autrim, and as Presbyterians, they never forgot their harsh treatment by the Church of England.

They joined the war for American independence and were strong supporters of the future United States.

British cavalrymen terrorized his family and neighbors in South Carolina. A British officer even slashed young Andrew and scarred his forehead and hands.

The British had just defeated Napoleon, and they sent a large fleet (60 ships) to make amphib-



ious attacks against the new U.S. They defeated the American army near Washington, they burned the city. (The walls of the president's home were so badly charred, that they were painted white, so that we have the White House today.) Next, they attacked Baltimore and Fort McHenry. (The "Star Spangled Banner" was written during the attack.) Then their fleet sailed for the Caribbean and New Orleans.

Jackson understood the strategic importance of New Orleans. It was at the mouth of the Mississippi River valley. That gigantic area extended east to the Appalachian Mountains, west to the Rocky Mountains, and north to Canada. It was 2 to 3 times bigger than the United States. "The Mississippi was an economic lifeline for farmers, trappers, and lumbermen."

What did Andrew Jackson look like? He was 46 years old; red-haired, but already turning gray, blue-eyed and a rangy six-foot-one."

His personality characteristics: he was intensely strong-willed and resolute. He didn't even consider defeat. He had "unrivalled courage, natural leadership, and uncanny battlefield instincts."

It was a typically American army he put together: there were no class or racial divisions. It included militiamen from Tennessee and Kentucky, Indians, freed slaves, woodsmen, and pirates, they were superb artillerymen, and French colonials.

When Jackson learned the British army was setting up camp, he roared on promise: "By the Eternal, they shall not sleep on our soil." Then, he led his small army in a surprise attack on it. The British were routed and realized taking New Orleans wouldn't be so easy.

Jackson knew they'd be back. He positioned his men behind a canal. Then had them build an earthen wall to fire from. He knew the show-down battle was coming, but he had so inspired his soldiers that they did not flinch when the British attacked on January 8.

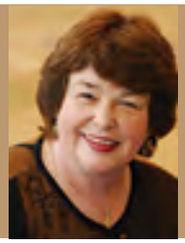
Jackson outsmarted and out fought the British. New Orleans, and the whole Mississippi valley remained American.

I think you'll like these quotes.

Powerful advice from Andrew Jackson's mother, "Make friends by being honest and keep them by being steadfast. Never tell a lie, nor take what is not your own, nor sue for slander—settle them cases yourself."

Ursuline nuns in New Orleans prayed for divine protection for Jackson and his soldiers. He gave them generous thanks and asked for service of gratitude at the cathedral. He sat by the altar during the service and the Te Deum.

A convent of Ursuline nuns in New Orleans prayed all night for divine help for Jackson. The Mother Superior promised the Almighty an annual mass of thanks. And "to this day, on January 8, the Ursuline nuns conduct a Mass of Thanksgiving…" for victory at the Battle of New Orleans.



Clutter Buster

By Rita Emmett

Procrastinate No More!

Wishing You A Year That Brings
True enjoyment in each moment,
True fulfillment in each goal,
True contentment in your heart,
And true delight within your soul

Let's Skip New Year's Resolutions This Year

Happy New Year. At this time of year, we tend to think of New Year's resolutions, new starts, and sometimes regrets. It's those regrets that often lead to procrastination.

Year after year we make the same resolutions or set impossibly high goals that we know we won't keep.

Then we start to think of ourselves as failures, losers or worthless worms. That frame of mind doesn't lead to BREAKING the procrastination habit; it more likely causes us to simply give up trying anything and to procrastinate more.

Let's kick off 2018 on a more positive, productive note. Instead of setting goals, look at the past year and focus on all the good things you did that you can be proud of. Write them down. None of this has to be huge. Just think of the things that make your life good, the way you want to be living it.

For example:

- Completed one thing you've been procrastinating about
- Donated blood
- Tried a new project, hobby or recipe
- Cheered up a friend
- Had fun building a snowman for the first time in ages
- Volunteered for a community fund-raiser
- Got rid of some clutter
- Had good times with friends and family
- Learned something new on the computer
- Made someone laugh
- Worked on a committee at church (or at Irish American Heritage Center)
- Clutter-busted a stack of papers that was bothering you
- Took a drive with the family to enjoy the fall colors
- Learned to relax
- Cleaned out a closet & donated clothes to a worthy cause
- Sang at the top of your lungs just for the joy of it

This is simply a list of random examples. Nobody expects anyone to have accomplished ALL of the above, but it might trigger some ideas for you.

Take your time, write down everything you can think of that you are happy to have done. Leave the paper out for several days and enjoy adding to it. As you list your positive achievements of 2017, let yourself wallow in feeling good about yourself, your life, and your accomplishments.

Doesn't that sound like more fun than making up a ton of resolutions? Don't forget that old saying: "Success breeds success". As you wallow in feeling good about your achievements, you just might find the energy and desire to move forward on something you've been putting off for a while (or a lifetime).

If that should happen, here's a question you can also write out and stick up on a wall or mirror (It's one of my favorite questions to ask at a New Year's Eve party). What would you do if you knew you could not fail?

May 2018 be the very best year of your life. **Happy New Year !**

Rita Emmett is a "Recovering Procrastinator", Professional Speaker, and author of The Procrastinator's Handbook,
To subscribe to her free monthly "Anticrastination Tip Sheet", go to her website www.RitaEmmett.com
847-699-9950 or REmmett412@aol.com.

Dublin Irish Dance at McAninch February 11

The world champion Irish step dancers of Dublin Irish Dance bring "Stepping Out," an epic tale of Celtic culture, to Glen Ellyn's McAninch Arts Center, located at 425 Fawell Blvd., on the campus of College of DuPage Sunday, Feb., 11, at 2 p.m.

This all-star cast featuring members who have performed across the globe in "Riverdance," "Lord of the Dance" and "Celtic Woman," will be joined by a sensational, eight-member Irish band and vocalist in a highly entertaining show featuring traditional melodies and steps into an extravaganza of Irish sights and sounds.

Tickets are $48-$52. Visit AtTheMAC.org or call 630-942-4000.

Photo by Keith Dixon

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CelticMKE Names New Executive Director

CelticMKE, home of Milwaukee Irish Fest, is excited to announce Mike Mitchell as its new executive director. Mitchell was offered the position after an extensive review process conducted by a special selection committee and approval by CelticMKE's board of directors. In his new role, Mitchell will oversee the strategic vision of the organization along with managing daily operations, including administration, programming, community outreach and more. Mitchell will assume the role in early January 2018.

"The selection committee was impressed with Mike's business acumen, leadership skills and ability to engage with a wide variety of stakeholders," said Linda Clark Klibowitz, president of the board of directors for CelticMKE. "Equally as important, the committee appreciated Mike's positive, outgoing personality and the enthusiasm he brings to the job. He's a great fit for our organization and culture."

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Mike Mitchell

Mitchell brings more than 35 years of administrative and management experience to his new position at CelticMKE. For the past 13 years, he has held various leadership positions within the American Red Cross, most recently serving as the executive director of the American Red Cross of West Michigan. In this role, he was responsible for setting the strategic vision of the organization while collaborating with a wide variety of stakeholders, including staff, board members, committee members, volunteers, government officials, business leaders and more. He also played a major role in deployments to areas impacted by natural disasters, including hurricane relief efforts in Texas earlier this year.

Prior to joining the American Red Cross, Mitchell founded a multi-million dollar software development company specializing in call center technology. His company, Strategic Communications Systems, was later acquired by a global technology leader.

"A job like this is truly an opportunity of a lifetime," Mitchell stated. "I'm excited to lead an organization that is dedicated to promoting and celebrating all aspects of Irish and Celtic culture. I also look forward to working closely with all of CelticMKE's stakeholders to fulfill the mission of the organization."

Mitchell is no stranger to CelticMKE. For the past 28 years, he has served as an entertainment volunteer at Milwaukee Irish Fest, the organization's signature event.

"My experience as a volunteer at Milwaukee Irish Fest helped ignite my passion for all things Irish," Mitchell said. "It also gave me a deep appreciation for the people behind the organization, including its board of directors, paid staff and dedicated team of more than 4,000 volunteers – CelticMKE is truly a world-class organization."

Mitchell is married with two adult children and currently resides in Holland, Mich. He will be relocating to Wauwatosa, Wis. in the coming weeks.

About CelticMKE

Through original programing and events, CelticMKE aims to preserve, promote and celebrate all aspects of Irish, Irish American and Celtic cultures, and to instill an appreciation of these cultures in current and future generations. CelticMKE produces the world-renowned Milwaukee Irish Fest, August 16 – 19, 2018, along with a variety of Celtic-themed classes, lectures, concerts and cultural heritage projects.

CelticMKE Center is located in Wauwatosa, Wis. For more information about the organization, visit celticmke.com.

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Terry From Derry

by Terry Boyle

The Love of Language

There is something to be said for those who use words in the most profound ways. For me, one of the main attractions into the arts, particularly literature, was reading. When I was a teenager, I devoured novels. I just could not get enough of those wonderful worlds created in the minds of those who had accomplished the mastery of words. My appetite for reading was only stifled by a lack of funding. We had little money, and what we had went on more important things than books. School provided me with books but they were made to be educational in the worst possible way. It seems that the way to kill a passion for literature is to limit it to an examination, or torture the art of writing with endless analysis. It's ironic, since I never thought that I'd ever live to become the very person I've just described, an English teacher.

Most parents understand the emphatic language of teenagers. They either hate or love something. There's little in-between these two extremes. If there is any indifference at all, it's usually because the teenager is bored. As a teenager, when it came to books, I was rarely indifferent. I either loved or hated what I read. Schools books were obviously consigned to the damned region, whereas those I stole from the local bookshop had to be savoured. Often, I get fixated with fantasy novels. Tolkien and the like had won me over. I read Lord of the Rings three times and The Lion, Witch and the Wardrobe series with an equal amount of enthusiasm. My world, for the longest time, was lived inside someone else's imagination.

Emily Bronte

To understand how important these books were to me you need to appreciate how chaotic life was back then. The Troubles were at their worst. School, housed close by to a police station, was a flashpoint for riots. Can you imagine a principal of a school standing before an armoured tank while trying to harangue his pupils back into their place of education? It wasn't quite the Tiananmen Square, history making event of the century, but this brave man's efforts certainly put the army and the students squarely in their place. He may not have been a political agitator but he made an impression on all of us. Home was equally troubled. Constant raids by the police and army made escape from the chaos almost impossible. There was only one escape left, books.

On opening the pages of a good book, I could be immediately transported into the shire with Bilbo and Frodo, or Narnia with animals that spoke and acted like humans. Among the impossible, the unreal, I could hide from the absurdity of real life in Northern Ireland. However, the magic can only be sustained by words. Language has a music of its own. When the right words come together they create a rhythm, each sentence takes you further and further into a new and exciting place, and the promise of a great escape.

To some this might appear as simple escapism, but it's more than that. While I do believe that the fantasy genre helped me to cope with an extreme situation, it also led me to value the beauty of language. From fantasy, I was drawn towards Victorian literature. My absolute favourite is Wuthering Heights. Having read it and re-read it, I am, after all these years, reading it again on my iPad. The story of Cathy and Heathcliff has managed to follow me through the technological revolution.

Magic kingdoms fell to the stark, wild, Yorkshire moors of Emily Bronte. In her only novel, she bequeaths to us a romance that has subsequently been transferred to the stage and screen. Her tale of tortured souls continues to haunt those who are ravenous for a good story. For those who see this tale as a romance novel, they have obviously never read it. Nelly Dean and Mr. Lockwood, the narrators of this tale, are in themselves as much of a mystery as the fated Cathy and Heathcliff.

My journey from the fantastical worlds of the imagination to the tales of this world has had one common denominator, beautiful language. Anyone can write, but not everyone can write well. Even now, when I power up the iPad, my mind is captivated by the music of Emily's harrowing tale of love and loss. The Brontes, metaphysical poets, Shakespeare, Milton etc. have taken their place in my mind, sometimes as an escape, but more often than not now, as a reminder of how powerful language really is and how beautiful it can be in the right hands.

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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

What if I told you that by giving only a few hours each month you could personally help a young person avoid negative influences, improve self-esteem, and increase the chances he or she would go to college? Would you be willing to get involved? Well, there is a way that you can do this! By becoming a youth mentor, you can forever change the life of a child in need. January is National Mentoring Month, and it is a great time to understand the important role mentoring plays in young people's lives.

We have long known that youth benefit tremendously from positive, caring relationships with nonparent adults. Many of us may have had that special teacher, church leader, or aunt or uncle who spent extra time with us and served as a motivator and role model. Yet, today we find that 1 in 3 children, mainly youth from disadvantaged backgrounds, don't have this positive influence in their lives.

In the past few decades, formal youth mentoring programs have been developed both as a prevention and intervention strategy with disadvantaged youth. Youth are paired with a volunteer adult who commits to meeting on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. Typically, at least a year-long commitment is made, but many relationships carry on for years, or even a lifetime. There are numerous mentoring programs nationwide, and the research coming out of these programs is truly remarkable.

At-risk youth who meet regularly with their mentors are less likely than their peers to start using drugs and alcohol, have better attitudes about school, are less likely to skip school, have higher high school graduation rates, and are twice as likely to go to college. They have more self-confidence, reduced anxiety, and fewer depressive symptoms. Mentored youth have improved attitudes, behavior, and interpersonal skills; are more likely to be involved in sports or extracurricular activities; and have better relationships with parents, teachers and coaches.

It is amazing that mentoring can have such a profound impact on a person's life. They call this the "ripple effect" because having that one caring adult who is a constant, positive presence, ripples through all aspects of a young person's life—academics, athletics, emotions, behaviors, self-esteem and more. The "ripple effect" also carries on to future generations and can have an important impact on the entire community. Adults who were mentored are more likely to become mentors themselves, spreading the benefits even further into the future.

Catholic Charities currently has two youth mentoring programs—one that serves disadvantaged youth in Lake County, and one serving at-risk youth from the Back of the Yards community. We have a great need for volunteer mentors in these programs. We find that people are sometimes intimated about becoming a mentor, or think they need to be young, of the same ethnicity or gender, or from the same neighborhood as the mentee. In reality, we have found that the best mentors are those that have the ability to give a few hours of their time each month, have an open mind, and are willing to let the relationship gradually and naturally unfold.

All of our mentors tell us that although they wanted to give of themselves, they receive far more from the relationship than their mentees do. Being the positive force in a child's life can be the most rewarding experience of a lifetime. Whether it's with Catholic Charities or another organization, I hope you will consider becoming a youth mentor. Just a few hours per month can have a lifelong, powerful impact on the future of a young person—and your own!

To find out more about Catholic Charities' youth mentoring programs contact Sarah Loffman at 312/655-7081 or sloffman@catholiccharities.net (Lake County); or Viridiana Godinez 312/655-7970 or vgodinez@catholiccharities.net (Back of the Yards).

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Irish Rovers at North Shore Center March 2nd

The Beloved Irish Band Continues Its Final World Tour with One Performance on March 02 at the North Shore Center for Performing Arts in Skokie, IL.

The Irish Rovers have charmed and entertained audiences around the world with their exciting stage shows for nearly fifty years. The days of the long tours are coming to an end for these Irish lads as they are now completing one last world tour. After that, they will rove again only for special events, festivals and longer stays. International touring will happen only on a very limited scale. Full-price tickets for The Irish Rovers range in price from $39.50 to $59.50 and are on sale now at the North Shore Center box office, NorthShoreCenter.org, or by calling 847-673-6300.

The past year has seen The Irish Rovers excite yet another generation by returning to the radio airwaves, expanding their visibility on YouTube and returning to the small screen with two television specials in the last two years. On the heels of their nomination for the Irish Music Association's Tommy Makem Award, which honors their philosophy, and traditional approach to Irish music, the Rovers began their "Long Goodbye Tour". The band hopes to sing a proper farewell to all those they have entertained for these many years. After more than forty albums released in North America and many more internationally, The Irish Rovers continue to receive rave reviews for their recordings and performances.

The Irish Rovers recently released the CD, Drunken Sailor, and the DVD/television special, The Irish Rovers Christmas. The release of the CD was spurred on by over 5 million hits of their usual show-closer, "Drunken Sailor". As well as featuring the title track, the album includes the single, "Whores and Hounds" as well as a tribute to the great ship Titanic on its 100th anniversary. The DVD and television special was filmed in Canada on the ski slopes and in the streets and pubs of Banff National Park, and includes their live Christmas concert filmed at Chatham, Ontario's historic Capitol Theatre with musical guests from Ireland, Morris Crum, Patrick Davey, Gerry O'Connor, with Canadian/Irish Tenor John McDermott and guitarist Jason Fowler.

On their last two sold out concert tours the band garnered rave reviews, attracted the attention of a new younger audience, and were touted in the press as "internet sensations" for their multi-million YouTube fans, revamping their website, uploading more videos to YouTube and becoming active on Facebook and Twitter." As Global TV stated, "They're getting a new generation of fans, so in their case you can teach an old dog new tricks!"

In 2010, The Irish Rovers released the CD, Gracehill Fair (Vancouver Island Music Award – Song of the Year), with an extensive tour, and the DVD/television special, Home In Ireland which was filmed entirely along the northeast coast of Ireland, and at their Belfast Waterfront Hall concert.

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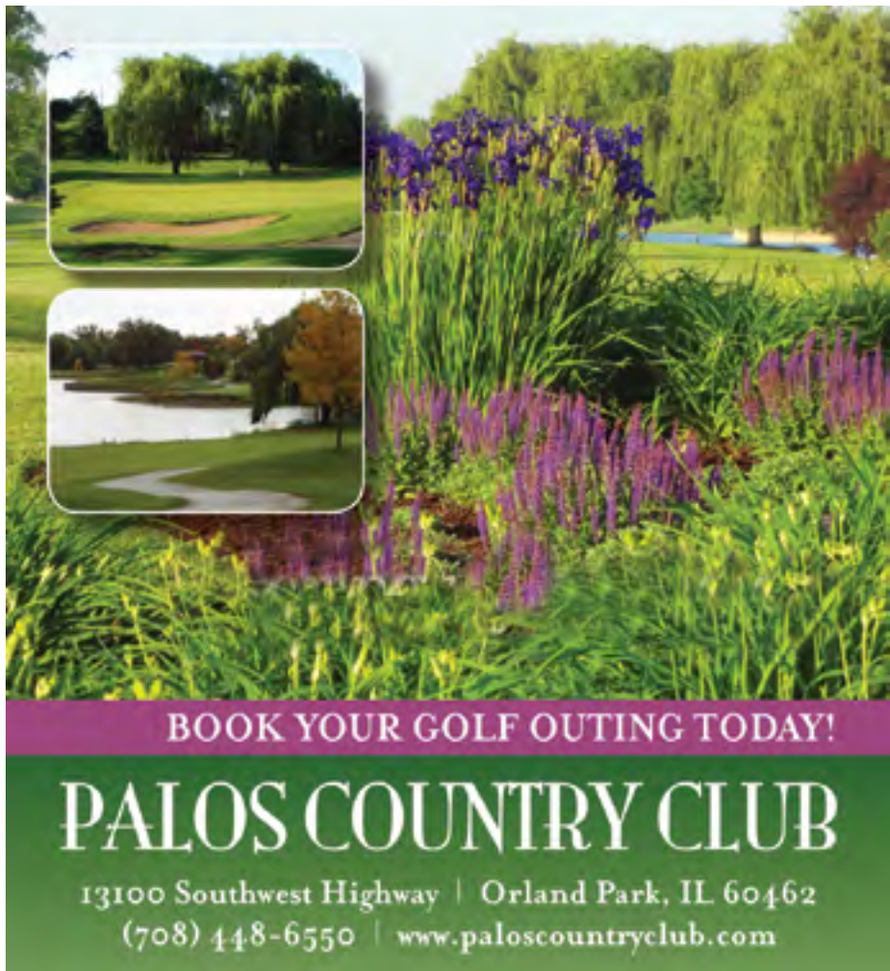

From Ireland to Chicagoland

Hailing originally from Arranmore Island, off the Donegal coast, Caroleann has been living and priacticing law in Chicago for over ten years now. Her practice has been concentrated in representing labor and union workers and their families, in all types of personal injury and work related accidents; including, construction site accidents, automobile accidents and premises liability claims. Her father and three brothers all worked as tunnell miners so she has a deep rooted affinity for the working man and their families

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Growing up, Caroleann has directly experienced the devastating impact on a family when the primary breadwinner suffers an injury. she recently joined a nationally renowned law firm concentrating in all types of personal injury, medical malpractice, nursing home abuse and neglect, workers compensation law, and wrongful death litigation. Caroleann is committed to protecting and vindicating the rights of people who are injured by the negligence of others

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For this wonderful New Year I will start with Co. Limerick, it's nicknamed Shannonsiders (county with the Shannon river, the longest river. It's also called Treaty city, after treaty of Limerick in 1691)it is located in the providence of Munster. Population if roughly 200,000. Limerick is the 5th largest of Musters 6 counties in size and the 2nd largest by population.

The river Shannon flows thru the city of Limerick into the Atlantic ocean at the North of the County. Below the city the waterway is known as the Shannon estuary because the estuary is shallow. The counties most important port is several kilometers west of the city at Foynes. The land consists mostly of a fertile limestone plain moreover the county is ringed by mountains named the Slieve Felims to the north east the Galtee mountains to the southwest the ballyhoura mountains to the south and the mullaghareirk Mt. to the southwest. The eastern part of the county is part of the Golden vale which is well known for dairy produce and consists of rolling low hills.

Towards the west of mullagharerk Mt. volcanic rock is to be found in numerous areas in the county at Carrigogunnell at knockfierna and principally at pallasgreen kiteely in the east which has been described as the most compact for its size one of the most varied and complete carboniferous volcanic districts in either England and Ireland. The establishment of Limerick as a town based by the Danes in the mid 900's and their alliance with Irish families including their alliance with the O'Donavans resulting in significant conflicts with the neighboring clans namely the O'Briens.

Catherine Coll the mother of Eamon De Valera (3rd pres of Ire, born in NY) was a native of Bruree and this is where he was taken by his uncle to be raised. St Patrick brought Christianity to Limerick in the 5c adoption of Christianity resulted in the establishment of important monasteries in Limerick.

Patrick Sarsfield the prominent Jacobite general features on the Limerick coat of arms the county was to be further ravaged by war over the next century after the Irish rebellion of the 1641 Limerick city was taken in a siege by Catholic general Garret Barry in 1642. It was during the 1690 siege of infamous destruction of the Williamite guns at ballyneety near pallasgreen was carried out by general Patrick Sarsfield. Some famous people from Limerick, include: Jon Kenny (D'unbelievables comedy duo) Malachy McCourt (actor, writer) Frank Malachy (writer), Ruth Negga (Ir/Ethiopian actress) and Michael D. Higgins, our current president. Up Limerick!

I will wrap this month up with a joke. "An Italian boy's confession" Bless me Fr. for I have sinned! I have been with a loose girl! The priest asks is that you, little Joey Pagano? Yes father it is. And who was the girl you were with? I can't tell you father, I don't want to ruin her reputation. Well Joey I'm sure to find out her name sooner or later so you may as well tell me now. Was it Tina Minetti? I can't say. Was it little Teresa Aconito? I'll never tell. Was it Nina Capelli? I'm sorry but I can't tell. Was it Dolly Borsato? My lips are sealed Fr.. Was it Rosa DiAngelo? Please Fr. I can't. The priest sighs in frustration you're very tight lipped and I admire that. But you've sinned and have to atone. You cannot be an alter boy now for four months. Now go and behave yourself. Joey walks back to his pew and his friend Franco slides over and whispers, "what'd you get?" Four months vacation and five good leads".

Count your kind deeds instead of your mean count your health instead of your wealth love your neighbor as much as yourself. My wife Mary and our five children wish everyone a Happy New Year!

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Daniel O'Donnell to Appear at the Arcadia Theatre in St. Charles 2-24

St. Charles, IL: Daniel O'Donnell, the iconic Irish recording artist and television star from Donegal, returns to the Chicago area on Saturday, February 24, 2018. In response to a tremendous performance at The Irish American Heritage center back in October, O'Donnell will make a tour stop for a command performance at the historic Arcada Theatre in St. Charles.

"We are constantly being asked to bring in an act that celebrates the rich culture of Ireland," said Arcada Theatre President and CEO Ron Onesti. "Daniel O'Donnell is a PBS superstar who does just that, as good as anyone from there could. I couldn't be more excited about it, and so is everybody in Chicagoland's Irish community!"

Tickets for the one-night-only performance start at $59 and are available by calling The Arcada Theatre Box Office, 630.962.7000 or by logging onto www.oshows.com. The Arcada Theatre is a 900 seat, 1926 Vaudeville era theatre located at 105 East Main Street in St. Charles.

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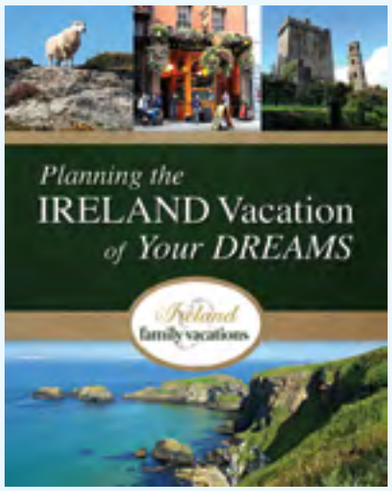

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Gallagher's Advice

By Caroleann Gallagher

Question: When leaving work, I slipped and fell in my employer's car park, is it covered by worker's compensation law?

Answer: Well… it depends...

Not the answer you hoped for right? It is however not a question that can be easily answered in the workers compensation context. A thorough examination of the actual facts surrounding the fall, what condition caused you to fall and what you were actually doing at the time of the fall, needs to be carried out by an experienced workers compensation attorney, in order to fully be able to answer this question.

In Illinois in order to have a compensable work injury case, you need to be able to show that when you got hurt you not only were working but that your injury also arose out of your employment. This is a very detailed and complex area of the law, which I recently presented on at a seminar for The Illinois Trial Lawyers Association. The area is complex and filed with a lot of nuances and should not be navigated without the benefit of an attorney who is familiar with all areas of workers compensation law.

"Parking lot" cases, pose a very difficult challenge in answering the question as to whether or not an accident is a work injury or not. The answer will largely depend on how involved your employer is in the parking lot, and how involved they are in for example, dictating where you actually are parking your car every day.

To give an example, a delivery driver who is loading his truck in the parking lot of his employer's premises, slips on ice while loading his truck. He is in an area where his boss told him to be and the lot is owned and maintained by his employer. He is also working when he actually encounters the ice. This certainly will be a compensable work injury.

It is those times at the beginning and end of your work day, including going to and from work or during a lunch or coffee break, which are the trickier situations to assess if the accident will be covered by workers compensation or not.

At one end of the spectrum, employers may own, maintain and take care of their own parking lots. They may further designate a specific part of that lot for "employee only" parking. If you fall on this part of a lot, even on your way to or from work or at lunch, on some hazardous condition, then generally these types of accidents will almost certainly be considered to be a work accident that would be covered by workers compensation.

On the other end of the spectrum, if you fall on a parking lot that is at your place of work but the lot is not owned by your employer and not controlled or maintained by your employer, then generally, such an accident would not be a compensable work accident.

For such an accident to be considered to be a valid work accident, you would have to be able to prove that, despite the accident happening in an area to which all members of the general public have access, you were at an increased risk of an accident because of the specific job you had or were doing at the time.

The best example of this goes back to the delivery driver who having loaded his truck at his employer's yard, now goes to deliver his load to the local food store. That food store parking lot is certainly not owned or maintained by his employer. As he is wheeling his dolly loaded with boxes into the store, he slips on an area of black ice. Is this a workers compensation case even if it happened away from his employer's lot?

The answer is generally yes it will be, because this worker, unlike other users of the parking lot who are just going there to do their shopping, is at an increased risk of having an accident because, as part of his job, he has to wheel a dolly filled with boxes into the store.

The type of hazard that causes you to fall is important to assess. Simply put, there must be some type of hazardous condition which caused you to fall and simply walking and stumbling on an unknown condition will not be sufficient to prove you have a compensable work injury case. Snow and ice are considered hazardous conditions for a workers compensation case. Defects such as potholes or uneven walking surfaces are also considered hazardous conditions in the workers compensation scenario. Wet walking surfaces or pavements in and of themselves are not currently considered by Illinois courts to be a sufficient hazard to satisfy the tests laid out by the courts.

If a fall in a parking lot, is deemed not to be a compensable workers compensation accident, then you may have other avenues of relief to compensate you for any injury. However, whether that that avenue is open to you or not, will require a very thorough look into the circumstances of the fall and most importantly the conditions which caused you to fall. The scope of that discussion is beyond the time I have here.

Whether your accident is compensable or not under the workers compensation umbrella, or under another area, requires the assistance of an experienced workers compensation and personal injury attorney who is familiar with all the nuances associated with parking lot cases.

As the Chicago Winter sets in and our climate changes, be careful out there and If you or your loved ones are involved in a fall in a parking lot either during, before or after work, or on any other occasion, please give us a call so we can go through all the aspects of the case and determine what avenue is the best one for you to proceed and to ensure your rights are protected.

**Caroleann Gallagher is an Irish born Attorney now licensed in Illinois and practicing all types of personal injury law – including nursing home litigation, medical malpractice law, wrongful death claims, transportation injuries, premises liability claims, defective product claims, construction site injuries and Workers Compensation. She can be contacted at Dwyer & Coogan Personal Injury Lawyers or at 312-782-7482.*

End of the Year Awards 2017

Time has come to once again give out end of the year awards to cds and bands I've reviewed over the year. I have to limit myself to cds that I have reviewed even though there are a number of cds that I was unable to get copies of. No fear though, I've got more than enough material to work up a goodly list of awards. My criteria are first and foremost what I think of the recording but I also use sales figures and the feedback I get from my customers. I am blessed to have several customers who are very vocal about what they like, or don't like, about new recordings. It has always been a lot of fun discussing the pros and cons of new cds in the store. So that said, I'll get to it and give out the awards, but don't take me as the final word. When it comes right down to it, it's what YOU like that's important. It would be a very boring world if we all liked the same things.

Let's start off with the

1. **Best Performance I Saw This Year** and that has to go to We Banjo 3. For sheer exuberance, audience involvement, musical excellence, We Banjo 3 just can't be beat on stage. Never saw them slack off or walk thru a performance. The audience always got their full measure of enjoyment when We Banjo 3 performed.

2. **Best Welsh CD**. Well there was only one that came across my desk but it was a doozy. "Soloman" by the group Calan was a thoroughly enjoyable, well-produced recording. I enjoyed the heck out of it and so did everybody that bought it, so I thought it deserved a mention.

3. **Best Scottish Group CD**. There were a bunch of these, but "Room With a View" by Old Blind Dogs took the cake. These guys have never done a lame recording and they've done a bunch. All good.

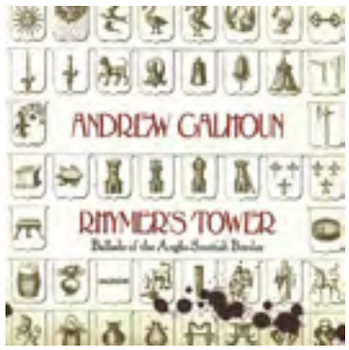
4. **Best Irish Group CD**. Here the competition got really tough. There were several that made the cut and, at the end I had to set myself down with "Beo" by Kila and "Femme Fatale of Maine" by the Jeremiahs and listen to both back to back. Finally I gave the nod to the Jeremiahs but both recordings are excellent.

5. **Best Overall Solo Performer CD**. This one was easy, despite the fact that there were a number of really classic solo recordings released this year. "Sonda" by Richard Neylon reignited my love affair with uilleann pipes. I played this recording so much that customers started to recognize favorite tracks. Suffice it to say that the boy can play.

6. **Best Solo Fiddle CD**. There were enough solo fiddle recordings this year that they deserved their own category. Again the competition was tight with great performances captured on disc. I finally felt that the most deserving cd was "Bittersweet" a collection of 21 Eddie Kelly compositions by Eilis Crean, truly a monumental work that deserves our attention.

7. **Best Solo Female Singer CD**. Had to award this to Christine Primrose for her cd "Grádh Is Gonadh – Guth Ag Aithris" (Love & Loss – a Lone Voice). A pure hour of unaccompanied Gaelic singing by one of the finest voices. This is a true gem, a rarity to be treasured.

8. **Best Solo Male Singer**. The incomparable Andrew Calhoun ran away with this one for his



recording "Rhymer's Tower, Ballads of the Anglo-Scottish Border". Three years in making for all the research, recording and rerecording, this two-disc set performed by the man who was born to sing Scottish border ballads presents the finest, best performed collection of this rare art form. Literally a classic of historic music.

9. **Best Female Vocal Group CD**. The Screaming Orphans pulled this award with the release of their "Taproom" recording. The four sisters continue to polish their sound and record songs outside of the commonly heard stuff while touring like road warriors all over the country. They have built a huge fan following by working every festival they can get booked into and showing real interest in their listeners.

10. **Overall Best CD of 2017**. This one really caught me off guard. A local production by some of the Chicago area's finest musicians. Sales started off slow but then picked up as word spread and customers came back to buy more copies to give as gifts. I found myself listening more and more to this cd with it's collection of old favorites done well. Jim Sullivan's recording "Catch the

Heart Off Guard" gets my best of the year award for being listenable, fun and extremely popular with the cd-buying public.

That's it for the first month of 2018, I'm off to Florida to work a couple fests in the sunshine and work on my tan so you'll have to find my on line, store@rampantlion.com.

Slainté

Historic Marker to Mother Jones Unveiled On Route 66 Near Her Illinois Resting Place

A commemorative road marker in honor of Cork-born Mother Jones was unveiled near Mount Olive, Illinois on December 11 in the presence of the Honorary Irish Consul General in Chicago, Mr. Brian O'Brien.

The marker will be seen by over a million people a year who come to take a break just off the world-famous Route 66. After the ceremony, Mr O'Brien visited the indoor exhibition area at the location. Then the group traveled to Mount Olive where Mr. O'Brien placed a wreath at the grave of Mother Jones in the Miners Cemetery in Mount Olive.

The wreath contained the words of her motto "Pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living" in both Irish and English.A toast to Mother Jones at the grave was celebrated using Red-Breast Whiskey.

(l to r): Brigid Duffy of Irish American Heritage Center, Mother Jones Performer Amy Rueff of Illinois American Federation of Labor, Rosemary Feurer of Mother Jones Heritage Project and Consul General Brian O'Brien

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Gerry Adams' Farewell

By Sabina Clarke

We knew it was bound to happen… that Gerry Adams President of Sinn Fein since 1983 would eventually hand the baton over to the younger generation but it still comes as a shock…the moment still stunning.

On the heels of the loss of Martin McGuinness, whose sudden premature death at sixty-six resonated around the world, Adams departure marks yet another poignant chapter in Irish republican history—living history which is disappearing before our eyes but will be forever etched in the minds and hearts of the people for whom they fought and their many supporters around the world.

Before a packed crowd of about 2,500 people—some in tears--Adams gave an emotional address referencing his 10 year plan for Sinn Fein that he said was formulated by himself and Martin McGuinness stating that they both agreed when it would be the time for each of them to step down.

He opened his address in Irish greeting friends and comrades all over the globe and expressing solidarity with the people of Palestine and the Gaza Strip and the people of Catalonia—and particularly to the widow of Martin McGuinness--Bernie McGuinness—whom he later introduced and embraced onstage –to a thunderous standing ovation.

His opening lines were "This is our time. Republicanism has never been stronger. We will grow stronger in the time ahead. But leadership means knowing when it is time for change. That time is now."

Adams made it clear that "Contrary to the bogus argument being put forth by some, it is evident that Sinn Fein is fully committed to the power sharing institutions agreed to in the Good Friday Agreement but there will be no return to the Assembly in the North without a 'Stand Alone Irish Language Act' and agreement on the resolution of other outstanding issues."

He criticized the "conservative republicanism" of Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and Fianna Fail Leader Micheal Martin which he called "a million miles away from the vision of the 1916 Proclamation" and compared Varadkar to the late Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher—saying "Our legacy lives on in our Taoiseach"—adding that "He needs to be more like Michael Collins and less like Hugh Grant."

He promised that if Sinn Fein is in government they will hold a referendum on Irish unity within five years.

He concluded his remarks by thanking his wife Colette and mentioning how they survived the many ups and downs—such as his incarcerations on the Prison Ship Maidstone, Belfast Prison, Long Kesh and the H-Blocks, and his years of being 'on the run'.

The event was historic. I watched it live. It opened with a moving musical tribute to Martin McGuinness whose face was on a large screen-as if he were watching as the crowd stood up and cheered their departed courageous Chieftain.

So, it seemed as if Martin was there in spirit as Adams mentioned him several times in his address—at one time saying, "None of us knew that Martin would be terminally ill and that we would meet this year without him. We don't have time now to reflect on these mysteries of life and death or on the loss of such a wonderful comrade and leader."

What Adams and McGuinness accomplished for the cause of peace at the risk of their own lives and personal fortunes will long be remembered

We will not see their likes again.

The Fire Inside

I watched a very interesting documentary on BBC2 recently. It concerned the race between the explorers, Amundsen and Scott, to be the first to reach the South Pole back in 1911. Amundsen went on to win the race while, tragically, the majority of Scott's expedition died on the return journey. The documentary served to contrast and highlight fundamental differences in relation to preparation and leadership between the Norwegian and British teams.

The British team did not use dogs. The men expended an amount of energy pulling the sleds, but were not taking the correct amounts of food and nourishment to compensate. The Norwegian team used dogs and they also went to great lengths to put food stations in place along the route before the expedition started. They also seemed to know, and which was unusual at the beginning of the 20th century, the vital constituents of food. There was a high intake of vitamin c before the journey and along the way Amundsen insisted that some fresh meat (seal and blubber) was eaten every day to ward off scurvy.

A few years later, in 1914, Shackleton took leadership and courage to the outer limits of human achievement when he kept the morale up among his men when the 'Endurance' was stuck in ice for over nine months, and the courage he displayed on the perilous journey aboard the small boat from Elephant Island to South Georgia.

There are not many more territories to be discovered anymore and it is more a personal voyage of discovery these days. However, the ability to prepare well in advance and the qualities of leadership are still very valid in our modern world. A good leader and manager, whether in business or sport, knows that that best and most important work takes place on the training pitches and in the dressing rooms. A manager cannot do an awful lot on the day of the game, as the team pursue their own destiny inside the white lines, except maybe to alter the tactics at half-time.

The very essence of leadership is that you have to have a very crisp and clear vision; otherwise you will confuse people by blowing an uncertain trumpet. Anyone can hold the helm when the sea is calm. Fear of failure is possibly the greatest reason why we do not press our foot firmly on the accelerator of risk. The question we should ask ourselves is: 'what great project would you attempt if you knew you could not fail'? Perhaps you should go ahead and do it anyway.

'If the highest aim of a captain were to preserve his ship, he would keep it in port forever' – Thomas Aquinas

Originally from Tallow in West Waterford, Bill Daly spent 30 years in Cork as a Senior Manager in the Electronics Manufacturing industry with such companies as Apple, EMC and Logitech. He has been working on his own as a Consultant/ Contractor in Manufacturing Operations and Materials for the past 18 years. He also attended UCC and has a BA Degree in Archaeology and Geography. Bill is a resident in Connemara, Co. Galway since 2009.

Making Dreams Into Reality at Chicago Scenic Studios

By Ryanne Gallagher Johnson

The evolution of Chicago Scenic Studios over the last 40 years finds them in another new home. Serving the creative needs of our city, our country and even our world, this cutting edge design solutions and fabrication company has moved from it's previous location at Goose Island to a sprawling 165,000 square foot warehouse on Cermak and Halsted.

With a more efficient layout for its projects and employees, and stunning views of the city, the company's latest headquarters appears to be well-equipped to serve it far into the future.

Started in the market district in a loft just a fraction of the size it is now, Bob Doepel began Chicago Scenic initially for Chicago's theatre community. "We started off doing off-Loop theatre… the core of the company was really from theatrical business. We're still doing theatre, it's just a smaller segment of our business," the company's owner and president, Bob Doepel explains. "We're really here as a fabricator… fabricating, general contracting events and large projects."

We could technically build the Willis Tower, but that's not what we do."
Bob Doepel

Now the fifth home for the company, this new location boasts a carpentry shop, a metal shop, an in-house paint finish room, an electrical shop, and enough space to work on even the biggest commissioned projects.

The full time staff of 55 is made up of welders, artists, carpenters, painters, designers, and electricians. "The bulk of our employees are either from theatrical or artist backgrounds. Most of our floor employees actually have college degrees in theatre, design, production, art, and architecture. All our welders are certified, we're licensed electrical contractors, we hold a general contractor's license, and we've got a Class A general contractor's license as well. We could technically build the Willis Tower, but that's not what we do."

They also have a comprehensive apprentice program which can be entered straight from high school that trains employees on every aspect of the services they offer. "As the apprentices advance with skill sets, we advance their level of pay, and eventually they become journeymen. But that can or two years, sometimes it's five or six years, it just depends on how quickly they're able to grasp the different skills," Doepel says. "But we cross-train them in all the different departments, so they work carpentry, we send them outside for welding school, we send them to AutoCAD school so they learn technical drawing on the computers. They spend a 90-day period on our project management so they learn how to do estimating and work with clients, supervise crews. We get them very well-rounded."

With affiliates on the east and west coasts, and projects that they've both completed and are currently bidding on nationally, they also bring in workers on a project-by-project basis. At any given point, their staff can include twenty to thirty seasonal, part time, or contracted employees.

"We do a lot of one-time only projects so we have a lot of subcontractors we work with, and we operate at certain times 24/7 so we have to be able to do anything. We have our own repair service machines, steel work, our printing goes out of house, we sew here, but we also have outside sewers. Stuff happens here."

They also have a special connection to the art around Chicago. "We have an odd niche in that we're the only company allowed to touch public art in the city.... We are very careful and respectful of it."

They've worked on so many projects around the city- and the country- you've probably seen their work and not even known it. Most recently, their repertoire includes redoing the exhibits for the Skydeck of Willis Tower, building the 2,000 new bus shelters around the city, and creating Winter WonderFest down at Navy Pier. They worked on a fashion mall in Las Vegas for General Growth Properties here in the city, on the television studio for the Minnesota Vikings, and even created President Obama's election night venue in Grant Park.

"It's pretty hard to walk around Chicago and not see some of our work. We're in all the museums and the observatories. If it's crazy and strange and unique, we probably had our fingers on it," says Doepel.

With the Chicago river now directly behind the new location and Chicago helicopter tours nearby, Chicago Scenic's new home is settled where it should be - surrounded by reminders that it's also a staple of the city.

For more information on the company, you can visit Chicago Scenic's website at www.chicagoscenic.com.

The Chicago Marathon Bell - full sized!

top and bottom photos provided by Chicago Scenic Studios

the heritage line

Irish American Heritage Center

Chicago, Illinois

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UPCOMING CONCERTS AND PROGRAMS

PÍOBAIRÍ

PÍOBAIRÍ, a presentation hosted by Patrick and Karen Cannady with Patrick's students and musical colleagues returns in 2018 for live traditional Irish music.

Saturdays, January 6 and January 27, 6-7pm

Quiz Night

Show off your skills at one of Chicago's longest running trivia contests. There are prizes for the top 3 teams and proceeds from the evening benefit a local charity each month.

Friday, January 19, 8pm, $60 per team

Celebrating St. Brigid's Day: Brigid's Journey

Celtic Women International presents a multimedia program on one of Ireland's most venerated saints; St. Brigid. Learn about her significance and her relevance today.

Sunday, January 28, 1pm, $10 for IAHC and CWI members and $15 for General Admission

The Irish Whiskey Class

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

Saturdays in February on 2/3, 2/10 or 2/17 from 3pm-5pm, $40

Kevin Burke Concert

Kevin Burke's fiddle playing has been at the forefront of traditional music since the early 1970's. His work with such renowned performers as Arlo Guthrie, the Bothy Band and Patrick Street, along with a solo career as a musician and teacher has earned him international acclaim across the globe.

Friday, February 16, 8pm, $20 Members, $22 General Admission

Pre-concert Fiddle Workshop: Friday, February 16, 5:30pm, $40

Tea with Rachel Carson

In this solo performance, historian and actress Leslie Goddard portrays Carson as she discusses her work on educating the world to the beauty and fragility of nature. The Tea Series showcases notable women in literature and history.

Saturday, February 17, 11am, $25, Children 12 and under $8

RUNA in Concert

RUNA has been pushing the boundaries of Irish folk music into the Americana and roots music formats since their formation in 2008. Interweaving the haunting melodies and exuberant tunes of Ireland and Scotland with jazz, bluegrass, they offer a thrilling and redefining take on traditional music.

Saturday, February 24, 8pm, $20 Members, $22 General Admission

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President's Message

As we bid farewell to 2017, we are grateful for the blessings that shone upon us and all of our successful activities and events. We had a banner year with the help of some wonderful committees and their army of volunteers. Our membership is strong and very generous with their support of the Irish American Heritage Center. This place is an institution that has helped provide a great history of fellowship and friendship for more than three decades.

We were honored to have the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade visit us in December and they were astonished by our beautiful building and all of our programs. They were impressed by our history and our ability and motivation to promote and preserve our Irish culture for generations to come.

We are very excited as we look forward to 2018. There is so much on the calendar and before you know it, we will be in St. Patrick's Day mode. Pardon our dust as we prepare to renovate the women's washroom on the first floor. You will have to be inconvenienced and take the elevator to the second floor for a couple of months. Our hard working Building Committee will proceed as quickly as they can.

2018 will also bring much needed upgrades to our Auditorium, beginning with the addition of a new sound system, paid for by an outside grant. This installation, along with other renovations, will make the Center more appealing to big national acts and artists from Ireland, as well as making commercial concert rentals a steady source of income.

Make one of your New Year's resolutions to donate to our Annual Appeal. Every year Patrick and Peggy Burke match the first $25,000 of your donations, so please be generous as we continue to build on our mission to provide this area with one of the finest Irish cultural centers in the country.

Stop by the Center. It belongs to you, after all.

Eugene M. Cooney
President

January 2018

1/1	New Year's Day	Building Closed	
1/5	Francis O'Neill Ceili Mor	Fifth Province	8pm
1/6	Píobairí	Fifth Province	6pm
	Shamrock American Club 25 Card Game	Shamrock American Room	8pm
1/13	St. Patrick Father's Social	Fifth Province	8pm
1/14	Great Books Club		
	Bobby Kennedy: Making of a Liberal Icon	Library	1pm
1/17	Tara Club Monthly Music Gathering	Room 304	11am
1/19	Shamrock American Club Meeting	Shamrock American Room	8pm
	Quiz Night	Room 109	8pm
1/27	Píobairí	Fifth Province	6pm
1/28	St. Brigid's Day Celebration; Brigid's Journey	Room 309	1pm
	Genealogy Workshop	Library	1pm

Regularly Scheduled Events

Mon-Fri	Gift Shop	First Floor Lobby	4pm-8pm
Tues	Nimble Thimbles	Room 208	9am-Noon
Wed	Traditional Irish Music Session	Room 111	7pm
	Nimble Thimbles	Room 208	7-10pm
	Na Gaeil Irish Language Class (Beginning 1/31)	Library	7pm
Thurs	Taping of the Craic Radio Show	Fifth Province	6:30pm
	Thursday Night Irish Music Session	Fifth Province	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 (Beginning 1/27)	Library	11am

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

No Cover *Free Parking*

the fifth Province
irish american heritage center

JANUARY ENTERTAINMENT
Music Starts at 8pm

1/5 Francis O'Neill Ceili Mor
1/6 Píobairí 6pm
1/6 Joe Cullen
1/12 Seamus O'Kane
1/13 St. Patrick Fathers Social
1/19 Cirrus Falcon
1/20 Cash for Kids Johnny Cash Fundraiser $15-20
1/26 Mulligan Stew
1/27 Píobairí 6pm
1/27 Larry Nugent and Bill O'Donoghue

Thursday Night Irish Music Sessions: January 4, 11, 18 and 25; 7pm

Save the Date for the annual St. Patrick's Festival on Saturday, March 17, 2018. Tickets go on sale on January 15!

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

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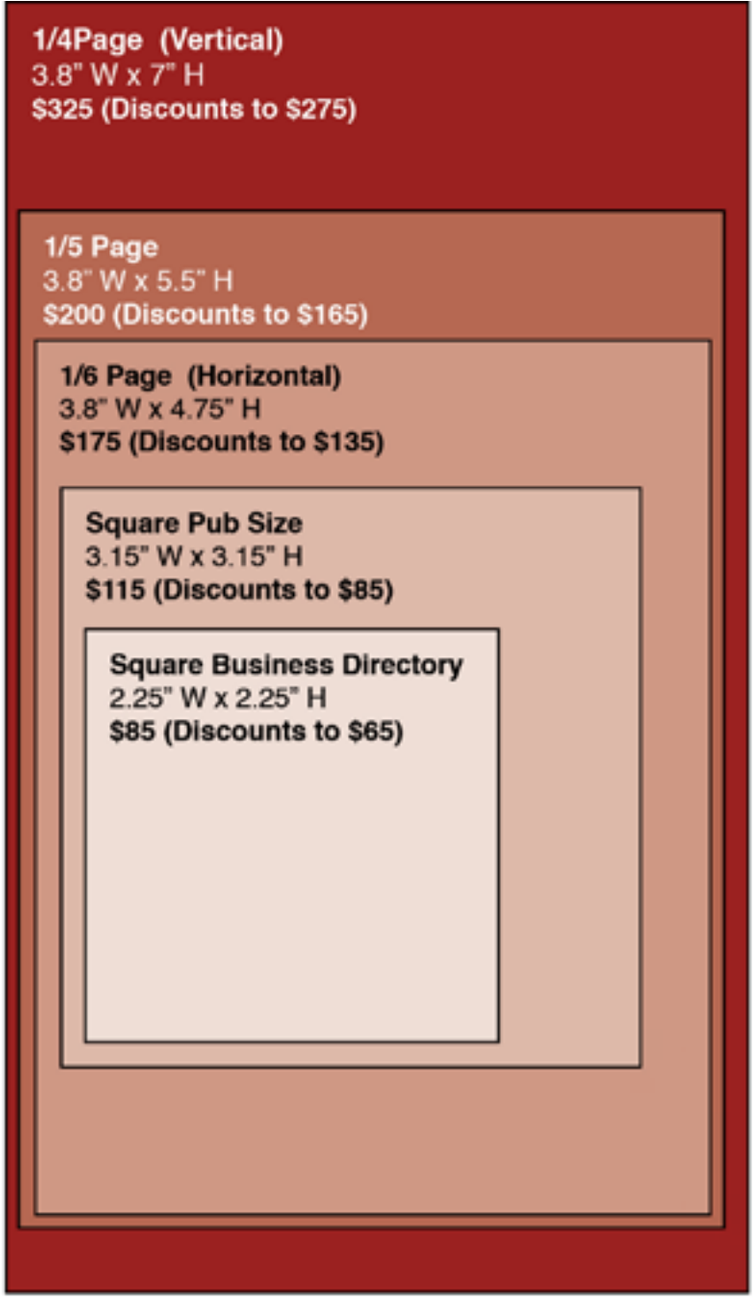

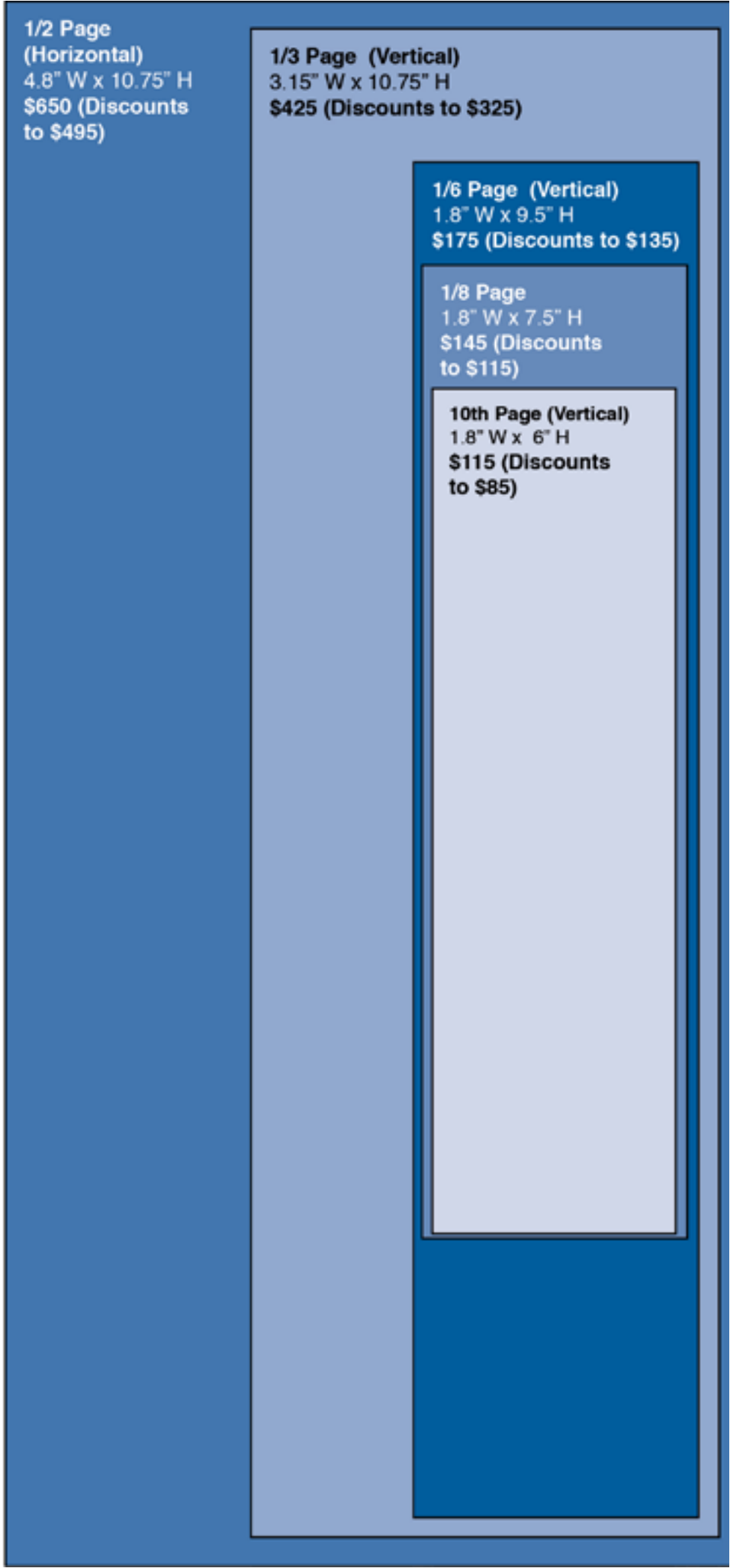

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2018 Publishing Dates

Published 12 times a year

- January 2
- February 1
- March 3
- April 2
- May 1
- June 1
- July 2
- August 2
- September 1
- October 2
- November 1
- December 1

2019 Publishing Dates

Published 12 times a year

- January 3
- February 1
- March 2
- April 2
- May 1
- June 1
- July 2
- August 1
- September 3
- October 3
- November 1
- December 2

Content: Irish American News focuses on the areas of Chicagoland with additional coverage in Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, Michigan and Iowa news of interest to those of Irish heritage; including current events, special events, local sports, book reviews, travel, entertainment, poetry, history, politics, news from Ireland, Irish personalities in all fields, and Irish Clubs and Social Media outlets.

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About Us:

Irish American News has been serving the Irish and Irish-American community in Chicagoland since our publication debuted in March, 1977.

This March we will cross the 40 year mark! Current publisher, Cliff Carlson, bought the paper from the papers founder, Bob Burns in 1991. During that time we have published over 300 issues and counting.

Several Irish organizations in Chicagoland have partnered with us to produce their official newsletters which we mail to almost 100 percent of their memberships including:

- **Gaelic Park**
- **Will County Irish**
- **Irish American Heritage Center**

We also mail newspapers monthly to the membership of the **Irish Fellowship Club** and the **West Suburban Irish.**

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Chicago, Ill. – The Young Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago (YIFC) will be hosting the largest and longest running St. Patrick's Day fundraiser, Forever Green, on Friday, March 9 from 6:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. at the historic Chicago Cultural Center in the heart of the loop.

Celebrating its 43rd anniversary in 2018, Forever Green has been a tradition among Chicago's Irish community, young and old alike. What started in a basement as a small gathering among friends, Forever Green has grown to become Chicago's largest St. Patrick's Day party. The basement gathering grew and moved to a garage, then to a warehouse, then to Navy Pier, where Forever Green called home for many years, then to Park West in Lincoln Park -- and finally moved to Chicago's historic Cultural Center in 2017.

Attendees at the 43rd anniversary celebration can expect authentic live entertainment while enjoying the company of fellow enthusiastic Chicagoans. Entertainment for the evening will include traditional Irish music from DJ Vaughn, the Shannon Rovers Pipe Band, The Chancey Brothers and the Mullane Godley Irish Dance Academy.

Over the years, Forever Green has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for local, Chicago charities. Proceeds from this year's event will benefit March4Meg and the Live Like John foundation. March4Meg was created as a tribute to Meg (Donovan) Moonan, mother of 4, who lost her battle to melanoma in March, 2012 and Live Like John was created to push for advancements in the care and treatment of pediatric brain tumor patients by facilitating better coordination of information between patients and providers.

General admission tickets are $60. Premium tickets are $85. The Chicago Cultural Center is located at 78 E. Washington St. in Chicago.

For info or tickets, visit www.youngirish.com/FG43

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An Immigrant's Musings

Michael Leonard

New Tax Law

As I go to press the Republican controlled Congress has set about finalizing the reconciliation of the House and Senate versions of the new tax law.

The Republicans having failed dismally on other issues, most notably on the repeal and replacement of the Affordable Care Act, are desperate to place a major piece of legislation on Mr. Trump's desk before the holidays.

Let me be clear about my position. I'm in favor of an overhaul of the tax laws in the US. I would like very much to see the corporate rate dropped to enable companies to expand. This measure however needs to be structured in tax breaks for companies that are creating jobs, which in turn would allow our economy to grow. I am also in favor of a reduction in taxes for the hard-pressed and shrinking middle class in America. I further support an increase in the tax rates for the very top earners who can easily afford bearing a larger slice of the burden on taxpayers.

The Treasury Department has issued a rather simple one-page summary claiming that the new tax law would pay for itself by creating an additional $300 Billion over a decade. Mark Mazur, director of the Tax Policy Center, has disputed this. He was quoted on CNN as saying: "This is not a serious analytical effort that could withstand peer review,". In fact he is not alone as anyone following the news on a variety of networks and news print media will be able to cite many other dissenting opinions.

I am really concerned about two aspects of the proposed new tax law. Firstly, this effort has been pushed though by the Republican controlled Congress without taking the time to truly study the impact that the new law will have on individuals and families. The funny part about this approach by the Republicans is this; they are repeating the same mistake that the Democratic controlled Congress did in passing the Affordable Care Act. They did not truly listen to the opposition and give adequate considerations to the opinions of serious economists and independent scholars on the subject.

Secondly, most people position on the new law is limited to the short-term benefits of the law to the majority of taxpayers. I am therefore, concerned that while the new law may bring some minor relief to the middle class in the near term, I'm not convinced that the benefits will extend beyond the first couple of years. This to me is again a perfect example of elected folks making a change that is driven by political calculation and not based on good policy. The Republicans should not be making the same mistake on taxes that the Democrats did on health care.

In conclusion, I take this time to offer a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year to all our readers.

The Little Wave

The story is about a little wave, bobbing along in the ocean, having a grand old time.

He's enjoying the wind and the fresh air – until he notices the other waves in front of him, crashing against the shore. "My God, this terrible", the wave says. "Look what's going to happen to me!"

Then along comes another wave. It sees the first wave, looking grim, and it says to him: "Why do you look so sad?"

The first wave says: "You don't understand! We're all going to crash! All of us waves are going to be nothing! Isn't it terrible?"

The second wave says: "No, you don't understand. You're not a wave, you're part of the ocean."

By Mitch Albom in "Tuesdays with Morrie"

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

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Chicago Gaelic Park

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

A Cháirde

We begin 2018 with renewed energy and commitment to carry on Gaelic Park's mission of preserving and promoting the culture and heritage of Ireland. The Park was founded many years ago as a place to play Ireland's national games. The founders had a broader vision, and also wanted a home for a wide variety of Irish organizations and activities, a home that would embrace the music, dance, theatre and literature of Ireland.

Thanks to its many volunteers over the years and to your support, Gaelic Park has become one of the finest Gaelic Athletic facilities in the world, and a key part of the Chicago and international Irish community. We extend a warm welcome to you, and hope to see you often in 2018.

Slán go fóil,

Bill O'Sullivan

2018 CGP Calendar of Events 2018

JANUARY

Jan 14	Sunday Mass & Breakfast	
Jan 14	Classic Carvery: Music by Ray Gavin	3:30pm
Jan 21	Classic Carvery: Music by Jerry & Kara	3:30pm
Jan 28	Classic Carvery: Music by Gerry Haughey	3:30pm

No Monthly Musical Luncheon in January

No Ladies Auxiliary in January

Monthly Musical Luncheon* - (will resume in February) Doors open at noon, hot lunch served at 1pm for just $15 per person

Monday Evenings Set Dancing *7:30pm*

Tuesday Evenings Pub Trivia *7:30pm*

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

Sunday Evening CGP Radio Live WCEV 1450 AM *7:00-8:00pm*

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- Every Thursday Traditional Music with Pat Finnegan & The Irish Musicians

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Fri	Jan 5	Gerry Haughey	7:30pm
Sat	Jan 6	Larry Nugent & Billy O'Donahue	8:30pm
Wed	Jan 10	Frank Rossi	6:00pm
Fri	Jan 12	Joe Cullen	7:30pm
Sat	Jan 13	Glenn's Vibes	8:30pm
Fri	Jan 19	Kieran Byrne	7:30pm
Sat	Jan 20	Bernie Glim	8:00pm
Fri	Jan 26	Ray Gavin	7:30pm
Sat	Jan 27	Jerry & Kara	8:30pm

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Chicago Gaelic Park

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Women's Little Christmas at Gaelic Park

Saturday January 6, 2018 7:00pm

Join us for a fun-filled night

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

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The Gaelic Park Players wish everyone a Happy New Year! We are pleased to announce our Spring 2018 play *Mammy's Boy*, a comedy by Jimmy Keary. We look forward to seeing you at our spring play which will be performed April 6,7,8,13,14,15 and April 20, 21 22nd. More details to come next month, stay tuned!

We will also be hosting our annual trivia night sometime in February. It is always a fun night with friends as well as a chance to win prizes! Watch for the date to be announced soon.

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

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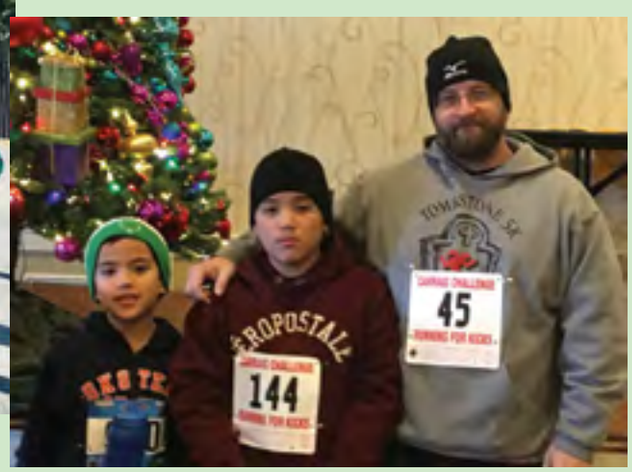


Gaelic Park can be found on FACEBOOK AND TWITTER! TAKE A MOMENT AND "LIKE" US!

While Al Capone and Bugs Moran Battled, the Harps Were Busy Perfecting the Art of Fun

By Dennis J. Dooley

For the 20-something sons of Irish immigrants, coming of age in Chicago in the Roaring Twenties held challenges their parents never faced back in the hills of Clare. My dad Tom Dooley, who lived on S. 49th Avenue just a few blocks north of Al Capone's Cicero headquarters, saw high school buddies jailed or gunned down by gangsters or the Feds.

There had to be another way to get through Prohibition, have some serious fun along the way, and come out the other end alive and still having a good time. So he and Ed Jennings and Lawrence Keefe and Joe Malone and Clem McDermott, the Byrne boys, Joe and Emmett, and their pals organized a different sort of gang. One that would become legend in Chicago's west side Irish community.

They called themselves The Harps. Not just because that instrument was the national symbol of Ireland (as one newspaper noted) but because the term was actually an

ethnic slur in those days. In fact, thumbing their nose at those who saw them as some lesser breed of human, the Irish had taken to using it themselves to poke fun at those in their midst who fancied themselves born comedians with an endless supply of witty repartee. ("Aw, you guys are just a bunch of 'harps'!")

So "The Harps" they would be, then, defiantly proud of their heritage—and their silver tongues. And, beginning in the summer of 1926, they set about throwing a series of memorable parties, late night adventures, and supper dances that would soon become the talk of the city. They even had a secret induction ceremony, a spoof of the Masons' solemn rites that substituted heroes of Irish myth for Egyptian deities. But, curiously, they never exceeded 20 official members, believing for some reason that the classic Irish harp had only 20 strings.

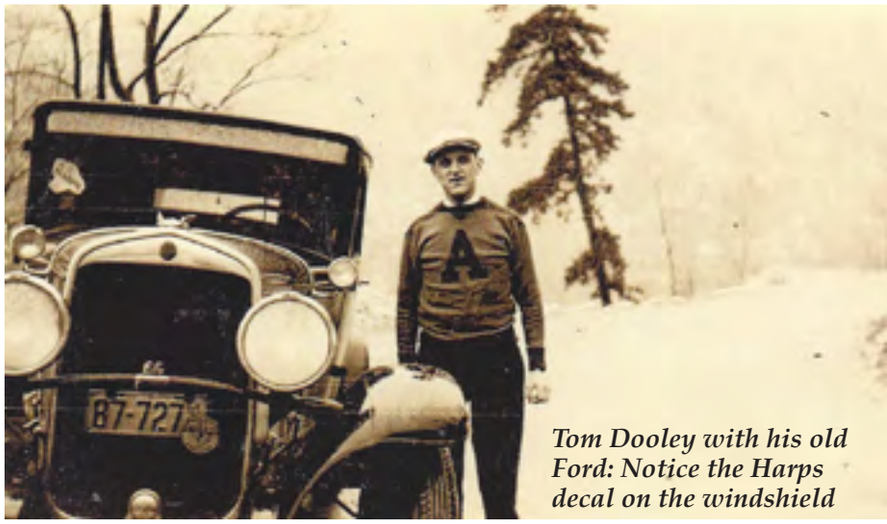
For them it was all about making beautiful music together, and living in tight harmony. In fact, the soundtrack would be supplied by hot bands of the day with names like The Gloom Chasers and The Doctors of Rhythm.

In the beginning it was beach parties on the city's waterfront or out on the 68th street water crib, then foxtrot marathons at the West Side Knights of Columbus Hall that broke for snowball fights with the south side contingent. (The Harps all hailed from Cicero, Oak Park, Berwyn and Austin.) Then it was parties on a floating speakeasy tied up in Belmont Harbor that was continually raided by the Feds or lively roadhouses like the Purple Grackle out in the unincorporated parts of Cook County where they dodged feuding gangsters' bullets.

In time, the Harps events became so popular, drawing hundreds of couples, that they had to move their much anticipated supper dances to the big downtown hotels like the Drake and the Sherman, which competed actively for their business all through the 1930s, Depression be damned! (Especially once booze was back!)

But the years passed, as they will. And the Harps found themselves gathering more and more often in the pastoral settings of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and Queen of Heaven. Eventually all traces of their Excellent Adventure faded into the Celtic mist that still settles on Chicagoland at dusk . . . until a treasure chest in the form of a dusty cardboard carton turned up in the back of my late father's closet.

Here was everything: The lists of table reservations, the clippings, the pictures and correspondence, the official papers of incorporation, even the club's secret induction ritual. As a retired journalist and public radio broadcaster, I knew I now



Tom Dooley with his old Ford: Notice the Harps decal on the windshield

had the material with which to reclaim and tell that long-lost story. So I put it all in a book called simply The Harps: The Story of Chicago's Legendary Irish Social Club. Copies can be purchased at the Irish American Heritage Center (where the Harps Archives now await Ken Burns and his ilk) or at amazon.com.

In fact, since so many of the people in the pictures are still unidentified, I'd like one day to bring out a second edition that incorporates this information—along with other stories or great photos that may lurk in somebody's attic. (The book already includes a list of almost 350 names, from Ahern to Whalen, of people we know from the records attended Harps events. Is your ancestor there? Did you hear stories in your youth of Harps adventures like some of those recounted in the book?

I believe this is an important piece of Chicago Irish history that deserves to find a place on the bookshelf (or coffee table) of every Irish family in Chicagoland. It ought to be a part of what we know about ourselves and our proud heritage, and pass on to our grandchildren

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Legislation By Lithograph

The current administration considers it folly to believe that 'American exceptionalism' can tame hostile empires, manage diverse cultures, control and reverse natural phenomena, even the climate of the entire planet; and keep all that in balance while boosting prosperity for Americans. Remember when 'flower children' believed Orange Sunshine, LSD, would save the world? Hello: they sit in American boardrooms and legislatures now.

"Democreligion", as I call it, insists that all conform to its moral tenets. Toronto-based author Mark Steyn recently commented: "What is morality when it is a post-modern construct? …There is no moral high ground for those opposed to morality." Many U.S. jurisdictions believe the moral way to handle a non-documented person with 7 prior felony convictions and 5 prior deportations, is to simply flush him without warning back into the public stream, free to make what mayhem he will. San Francisco has come a long way from the days of gunfighter Sheriff Harry Morse.

Feminist author Christina Hoff Sommers wrote in the NY Daily News: "All men are not predators, but there's a danger that all men are being vilified. [After years of high dollar lawsuits, the Catholic Church is now firmly painted in the public mind as evil to the core, while public schools remain largely free of serious scrutiny regarding sexual abuse. But however unwarranted, negative media is directed only at Catholics, not half the human race.] It's now common in the University to see "the enemy" as men. The dogma also is anti-sports, anti-military, anti-police.

Financial commentator Melissa Francis on sex abuse: "It's not an NBC problem, it's not a Fox problem; it's a worldwide problem... It's not about any political persuasion." It can be found in workplaces that are hardly trendy: the Post Office, the Department of Sanitation. The accusers at NBC pointed to Matt Lauer, but not higher-ups like Jeff Zucker, who claimed he "never heard a whisper" of complaint about Lauer. That's the same Zucker who joked onstage at the Friars Club 2008 roast for Lauer, saying Matt uses hand sanitizer before and after masturbating. Other celebrities joked about Lauer's sexcapades with colleagues Katie Couric and Ann Curry. Martha Stewart told the star-studded audience: "NBC executives call Matt the C**k of the Rock". Morning Joe Scarborough laughed along to what he described as "three hours of d—k jokes".

One of Democreligion's most prolific and iconic culture creators is Harvey Weinstein. His arrogant declaration of Hollywood's progressive mission to right the wrongs of the world now sounds grotesque: "Hollywood has the best moral compass, because it has compassion" said Harvey, who circulated a petition among Hollywood's glitterati, demanding the release of director Roman Polanski, arrested in Switzerland on a U.S. arrest warrant on a child sex charge while en route to a film festival honoring him. "We are calling every filmmaker we can to help fix this terrible situation".

Signers included Woody Allen, Martin Scorsese, Tilda Swinton, David Lynch, Jonathan Demme, John Landis, Wim Wenders and a host of others with armloads of Oscars, Golden Globes and assorted arts and entertainment awards. Weinstein's petition had the enthusiastic support of France's Society of Dramatic Authors and Composers, Left-wing French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner, and French culture and communications minister, Frederic Mitterrand, himself an openly admitted pedophile and author of an autobiographical novel, 'The Bad Life', detailing delights he experienced in Thailand's male brothels. "I got into the habit of paying for boys... it pleases me beyond the reasonable."

In most instances, the bottom feeders in any group represent about 2%, but they win the lion's share of media attention. Media and political establishments support each other from one feeding frenzy to the next. Chaos is the standard soup de jour. Dealing with chaos (in a society that is growing ever less civil) creates extended rounds of legal brawling, compounded by the instinct of most institutions to "protect their own". The standard reaction to abuse is predictable: first it's ignored, then denied and covered-up. Finally, wads of cash are thrown in hopes it goes away.

To survive in this environment, high-profile potential targets have had to develop unusual defense strategies. For instance, to avoid the risk of ever being labeled 'President of Vice', by a hostile press, Vice-President Pence refuses to dine alone with women other than his wife, nor will he attend events where alcohol is served without her. Is the 'sexual revolution' finally over?

The current political pogrom is bigger than the "Satanist" child-care hysteria of the late '70s. At the time, the robust recovery of Germany and Japan finally slowed the post-war boom; and inflation caused in part by the Vietnam War led to "Nixon Shock" when the U.S. ceased exchanging gold for dollars. A single income could no longer support a middle-class family, and more mothers became wage earners. Day-care centers multiplied, as did anxiety and guilt over leaving young children with strangers. In 1984 the McMartin Preschool case burst onto TV screens, the first of many such cases soon to receive massive media attention. In Manhattan Beach, California, seven teachers at a preschool owned by a well-liked family, the McMartins, were accused of child sex abuse. Over the course of an investigation, nearly 400 children were interviewed. Bizarre tales filled the media of children being kidnapped, forced to engage in group sex, pose for child pornography and watch animals being tortured to death. The McMartins faced 135 counts of child molestation.

t started when one mother Judy Johnson, thought her 2½-year-old son had an itchy bottom. Though a doctor assured her nothing was abnormal, Johnson, going through a divorce [and later discovered to have problems with alcohol and mental issues] called police, who sent warnings and questionnaires to parents, lending weight to the charges. A social worker, Kee MacFarlane, was hired to interview the kids. She used 'anatomically correct dolls', repeatedly questioning children who eventually agreed the charges were true. After six years of criminal trials, all charges were dropped. It was then the longest and most expensive criminal trial in American history.

The moral panic led to a wave of similar accusations and investigations across the U.S. and abroad. In most cases those accused were exonerated, often receiving 6 and seven figure awards in compensation, but their lives and reputations were destroyed.

Will politicians and celebrities now adopt Shaker lifestyles, or will the swamp recover and settle under a deeper jungle canopy? As I write, a younger Sulzberger, Arthur Gregg, has assumed the lead in his family's control of the New York Times boardroom and will lead the media establishment's assault on the new American administration, its overhaul of the tax code and the two party system. We unfortunately "live in interesting times".

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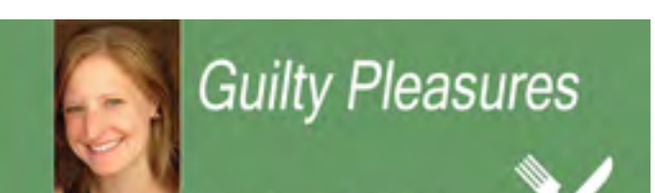

The holidays remind me that I'm geographically separated from my family. They – siblings, parents, in-laws – are spread all over the country and world. I think back to when we were together, in Minnesota, where we regularly and easily communed for holidays – Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas.

Now that possibility is more difficult. The effort to get together highly desired, but the logistics challenging, sometimes out of reach. And as I contemplate the next iteration of our family, the changing of the guard, I wonder what it will look like. How will we commune to keep our traditions going, flowing across generations?

For some, this generational fluidity comes into stark relief because of a sudden change. In Gareth Moore's case, it was the loss of his father to a heart attack in 2011. With a background in finance, Gareth had not considered the possibility of seeing out his father's dream: A new world whisky distillery in Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains.

But he knew he had to try. Sitting among the half constructed distillery, with the stills in place, his father's mantra repeated in his head: "You take the best of the old world and the best of the new world, that's what America is all about."

Gareth's father grew up in

Gareth Moore

County Lough. He fell in love with a woman who lived across the border in South Armagh. He also fell in love with the brewing process working at Smithwick's brewery. Later at business school he studied under John Teeling, an economics professor at the University College of Dublin. Teeling became a mentor to Gareth's father and only later became (serendipitously) interested in whisky. In 1972, Gareth's father received a scholarship to study at George Washington University and left the isle with his love in tow.

Over the years, Gareth's father built many businesses, but kept coming back to his passion for spirits. He had 400 bottles of whisky in his collection, with a preference for single malt.

"Single malt is not traditionally associated with Ireland," Gareth said. "It's funny having two parents from Ireland liking a product more associated with Scotland."

Before his passing, Gareth's father started the market by importing a six-year single malt and then finishing it in the Virginia port wine casks. Old world and new world, indeed.

"It's taking the traditions and techniques – not just copying them – but making them better," Gareth explained.

Virginia's climate is different compared to Ireland's and Scotland's. Hot, humid summers that break 100 degrees Fahrenheit followed by snowy winters. "For maturation, it's huge," said Gareth.

"If it's a hot summer, it's pushing the whisky out of the wood. In the winter, it's pushing it in. It's the breathing of the casks, in and out, heating up and cooling down over the years," he explained.

The Wassail

This is a crock pot recipe that makes 14 cocktails.

6 cups apple cider
1 cup orange juice
4 cinnamon sticks
8 whole star anise
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1 tablespoon whole allspice
2 tablespoons lemon juice

Instructions:

Heat cinnamon sticks and other ingredients in a large sauce-pan or covered crock pot for a minimum of 3 hours. Add 1½ ounces of whisky to mug and top with 4 ounces of the wassail. Garnish with a cinnamon stick.

It creates a unique whisky that's smooth and sweet. They use all American grain, casks from Kentucky and casks from Spain.

But Gareth's guilty pleasure is a super peaty Islay whisky called Bruichladdich. Like an unfinished

cigar, he cannot get through a full pour of it. He'll give himself half an ounce.

While he's sniffing the deeply peaty smells, he contemplates the future of his family's business. He hopes to continue the story his father started. "It's an American story," he says.

His family's story reminds me to appreciate my own. The next generation may celebrate our family traditions just as we did in the past, but we'll grow from the solid ground my parents and extended family created for us. Our roots are deep, but we also know how to re-grow somewhere else, how to unite old and new.

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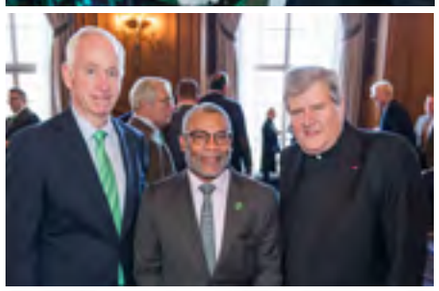
Christmas Luncheon December 1, 2017 honoring Outgoing President, Hosted by Luncheon chairman James F. Coyne, Business

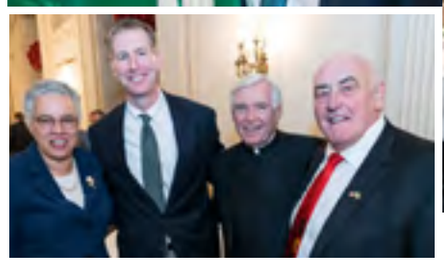
Santa O'Claus

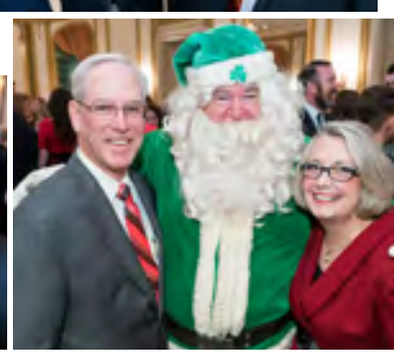
For many years The Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago has been bringing their very own Irish twist to every club event. One of the most recognized personas of the Irish Fellowship Club is our very own 'Irish Santa" regaled in none other than his Green Santa suit. Many people have asked when and where Santa started with his once a year tradition of his Green Suit. This is the 50th year of its appearance and here is the story of how it came to be.

In 1967, Butch Maguire, Then a member of the Board of the Irish Fellowship Club, mixed two of his favorite traditions and showed up at the Irish Fellowship Club Christmas Luncheon in a custom made traditional Santa Suit. All were both amazed and entertained as this was the first time that this Annual Luncheon had graced by this special Persona. Ginger McHugh LeFevour and Butch put their minds together and decided to "one up" the appearance for 1968. Using her artistic and imaginary talents, Ginger made a customized velvet suit trimmed in rabbit fur. Butch, being the showman, filled the roll exceptionally well and wore his suit to the luncheon for the next 20 years. In 1988, Butch was no longer able to keep his annual performance due to health reasons. He was determined that this tradition continue and asked Bill McTighe to take over his duties. Butch Made Bill promise that he would always make himself available for the Irish Fellowship Luncheon and that when the time came he too would find a worthy successor.

As the 50th year of this unique and special Persona continues, it seems appropriate that our faith, our heritage, our roots, and fellowship can all be combined in the appearance of Santa O'Claus. Thanks Butch, and thank you Bill for the last 30 years!







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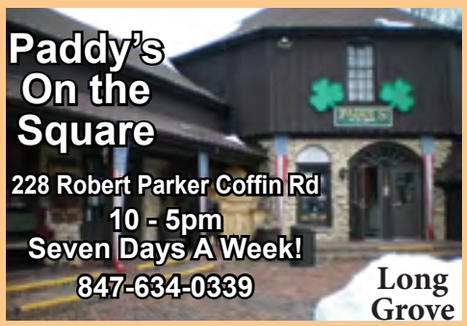

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