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*Photos by Colleen Callahan Gallagher - story pages 19-26*



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# View From Ireland

By Maurice Fitzpatrick



## Two Referendums, Two Wallops

On March 8th the Irish electorate went to the polls to vote on two referendums, to amend Article 41.1 and Article 41.2 of the constitution. It is rather more accurate to state that a fraction of the electorate did, since only 44% of voters turned out. That in itself was a defeat for the government parties and the opposition parties that sponsored the referendums - all but one of them. A much more bitter pill for the advocates of the referendums followed when the count came in the following day. 67.7% of people voted against the first, the 'family referendum'; 73.9% voted against the second, the 'carer referendum'. Taoiseach Leo Varadkar appeared glum-faced before television cameras

and characterised the results as 'two wallops'.

The family referendum sought to expand the definition of family to include 'durable relationships' in the constitution's provisions rather than defining a family by marriage alone. The carer referendum sought in a vague way to expand the recognition of those who provide care, and to rid Article 41.2 of the sexist association of women's duties in the home. So why did the Irish defeat both motions so comprehensively?

The government's main argument to hold the family referendum was that the wording of our constitution is outmoded, particularly in respect to women in Irish society. If that was the aim, the referendum was foredoomed, largely because the amendment did not sufficiently address that core matter. An overwhelming number of the Irish electorate believe that Article 41.2 in our constitution states that 'a woman's place is in the home'. That is not literally true. It reads: 'the State recognises that by her life within the home, woman gives to the State a support without which the common good cannot be achieved'. It is reasonable to suggest that the implication of that article is that a woman's work is in the home and

that, therefore, the Irish constitution claims that a woman belongs in the home. Certainly, successive Irish governments, the Catholic Church and Irish society throughout most of the first century of independence have acted according to that assumption. So, the text of the article under debate has far less grip on the Irish public than its subtext. By proposing to change the text, the government missed the point that the subtext of the claim matters far more. The government was at least proportionate enough to frame the amendment as 'a step in the right direction'. But it was nothing more than that, an insubstantial step. That lack of ambition helps to explain one of the wallops.

One of the many faults with the referendums is that they did not live up to their own aspirations. The Irish electorate saw through that and foresaw that no extra support for carers would flow from the proposed carer referendum. Sooner hold out for a real gain than be swindled by a vapid gesture. Many also understood that the proposed new article in the family referendum lacked clarity, and that the 'durable relationships' term would have been a field day for lawyers.

The day before the referendums an online news journal, The Ditch, published a confidential letter sent last December from the Attorney General to the government advising on the 'uncertainty' of the legal status of the wording of the proposed changes to the constitution. That was yet another embarrassment for the government as it has led to accusations that members of the cabinet, particularly Equality Minister O'Gorman to whom the letter was principally sent, misled the public.

The leading opposition party, Sinn Féin, reluctantly supported the referendums. The calculation was that it would have damaged its image as a modern party of change to oppose them. Yet its leader, Mary Lou McDonald, went further in February. She indicated that if the carer referendum was defeated, then Sinn Féin would hold another one on the matter, assuming they form part of the next government: 'Should this fail, the question we would put would be the wording as per the citizens' assembly'. The recommendation of the citizens'

assembly was for an article that 'obliges the State to take reasonable measures to support care within the home and wider community'.

On the day the votes were counted, McDonald turned turtle. She could not quite bring herself to say that she will not follow through on her undertaking to re-run the referendums with different wording: 'The propositions that have been put by the Government have failed, so there is no question of rerunning those... I just want to reassure the people that there will be no attempt on our part to rerun the same questions'. McDonald was heckled. She did not add that the Oireachtas committee on Gender Equality that departed from the citizens assembly's advice also comprised members of Sinn Féin. She was also silent on why she did not support independent TDs who opposed the referendum wording such as Michael McNamara to stage a pre-legislative vote on the referendums in the Dáil. It will be concerning for her that the only party to oppose the referendums, Aontú, led by Peadar Tóibín, is a splinter from Sinn Féin and stands to take support from Sinn Féin for its stance against the referendums.

Taoiseach Leo Varadkar will dissolve the current government within 12 months. In practice, that very likely means that there will be a general election either this autumn or next spring. The government has very little time left to pass legislation and it should now think three times about attempting to force a contentious bill through the Oireachtas like Minister for Justice Helen McEntee's Hate Speech Bill. That bill was held up in the Senate last year and it has mysteriously not reappeared (there is widespread opposition to it for its assault on free speech). It was probably dead already, now that the government's authority is diminished by the referendums McEntee's bill is buried. By that indirect way, these referendum defeats have been instrumental in defending free speech.

Two tokenistic motions roundly defeated; the voice of the people upheld against political spin; venality exposed on both sides of the aisle; the prospects of a nefarious bill destroyed: March 8th, 2024, was a good day for Irish democracy.

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# An Irish Complex

By Thomas O'Gorman



It's Saturday night. I've been home from the hospital for six days. WFMT is blasting Irish tunes. It's St. Patrick's Eve. After all. The classical music station has hokey folk tunes normally fluffing the memories of senior citizens transformed into Irish melodies for the night.

What a week. Cardiac Care is enough to scare the bejesus out of me. And that was after a week in Cardiac Intensive Care. Even more frightening because they take everything "serious," very seriously. Twice a day visits from the cardiologist. And deep frowns from the nursing staff at the mere mention of a gummy bear.

Of course I've been in the hospital before. But this time was more filled with apprehension. Repeated blood checks meant all sleep was interrupted regularly for blood draws. OK by me. Let's get as much information as possible to solve this case. Apparently, an antibiotic I took caused a serious drop in my blood pressure when colliding with the dose of my daily Warfarin. So all meds were stopped and then some were restarted. It all made me a little dizzy. And had to be intently watched. Confined to my bed while in Cardiac Intensive Care. Later in Cardiac Care I was free to roam. Progress was made. My blood pressure returned. I began sleeping with a C-Pap mask. And I made three million promises to God that I'd behave.

But back home recovery went slow. I lost my appetite. My reliance on good wine. And even some weight. I did write a lot. I went to the sleep apnea clinic. Getting a diagnosis of sleep apnea. And I even voted in the Illinois Primary. By mail, of course.

Scrambled eggs and toast have lost none of their miraculous healing power for me. They bring me back to life, the wetter they are. Strawberry preserves on toast also has a healing power for me. I'm no hypochondriac. I believe real healing does take place in the quiet of the hospital room. In the "beeps" of a blood pressure machine. In the poke of a needle to draw some blood.

I watched Gary Oldman's bio-pic about Churchill, called "Darkest Hour." I was surprised that I was actually reading the book before Churchill's vigilance saved Britain in the brink. Such films are empowered with rational intensity and inescapable logic.

But beyond all powers to heal nothing is as transformative as painting. The sight of paint

being squeezed from the tube comes with its own electrifying magic. The array of colorful paint fanning the palette strikes an enduring aesthetic that is uplifting and life giving. For both me and Churchill.

I did a lot of napping while hospitalized. Dozing gave me the perfect ratio between dreaming and remembering the past. Not hard to accomplish when you had the grandmother that I did. Her birth in 1888 on the fertile soil of an Irish winter filled her with a sense of mystery and mystical awareness. She never addressed such issues at face value. But as she dispensed healing advice and medicinal

And repeated prayers for health and hope seeking the successful mending of a body. And the restoration of a soul.

I thought of my childhood so rich in the mystical hope of my grandmother's healing touch. I could smell the fragrance of her piety even now in Cardiac Intensive Care. It was telling me to open my own heart. My own soul. To the healing forces that have never left us or abandoned our cause.

In the corridors of Northwestern Hospital I could hear the lilting sound of her voice. Strong in the poetry of life. Powerful in the prayerfulness of faith. A lot of the details that were so natural a part of everyday life are much harder to see in the heavily secular age in which we live today. But Rebecca had little difficulty seeing the visions of faith even with the

Friday. She insisted that a child born on Good Friday and baptized on Easter Sunday will have the gift of healing. The planting of a few crop seeds always brought blessings to all the crops you grow. I remember that she thought that boys born and baptized on these days should enter the the priesthood. And those who die on Good Friday go straight to heaven.

Rebecca certainly had a firmness of purpose that embodied the spiritual way of Catholicism. I remember just as Easter began when we lived in Visitation Parish that Rebecca was anxious for us to collect the special Easter Water distributed from the parish. She'd say, "You must have holy Easter Water blessed on the Eve of Easter. Then drink three sips of the water for good luck and sprinkle everything around you for good luck." Her scope was vast, like the balance of her love for we her grandchildren who made a steady procession up to the Church and back. We never lacked the water in our ample supplies.

I recall that our celebration always included eggs as a signifier of life. We'd either color them or give them as gifts.

Back in Ireland Rebecca said they'd often bring the cinders from the fire to be blessed. Effectively letting the warmth of the fireplace remind everyone of the need to embrace the tiniest of details as a way to channel mercy and joy. My time in Cardiac Intensive Care began to lift my heart as I struggled to remember the details of Grandma Rebecca more than six decades ago.

Catholic spirituality is meant to lift us high above the troubles and dangers of bad health and wounded living. Irish intuition and Irish mysticism still have the capacity to make safe the journey and raise our senses to God's love. A power beyond the wave band of WFMT bridging the mysterious life of God's spirit.



intuition among the family and friends, you knew her words had their origin in the larger complexity of Irish mystical living.

Born Rebecca Crowe, she was raised with eight brothers and sisters on a successful dairy farm. Well known for its sweet milk and thick cream. Handsome, flavorful home churned butter. The Crowses of Regaulawn, as their farm in Tipperary was known, produced dairy products filled with the flavor of past centuries. All the Crowe girls, Mary, Freida and Rebecca were champions in the kitchen. But it was Rebecca whose wit and good baking gave her a reputation as sweet as buttery apple tart.

The farm was an easy walk downhill near the village of Hollyford. And to the local parish church where Rebecca had fine tuned a reputation for muscular Catholicism and all the elegant prayer traditions of Irish mystical ways. When illness struck or bad health visited, Rebecca's the first one who local patients reached out for. For decades of the rosary. Novenas to Our Lady. Fasting before all the saints.

disabling cataracts that altered her sight. She could always see beyond the two-dimensional. The distressing lack of color in her vision. But we knew she could hear the tidal renewal of images on the heart. She could absorb the painful wording of a young son dying facing Hitler's army. Personal tragedy seemed to lift her more deeply into the mysticism of God made flesh. Finding the Savior in the complex shreds of human life. Irish mysticism at its most robust.

Her holy life was filled with the details of holiness. While in the Cardiac Unit I tried to remember all the opportunities she taught us to embrace the mystery of God bursting into our lives.

Lent appropriately stood before me in all the familiar detail she treasured. Beginning on Lent's start. She loved to remind us to take off our shoes when entering a Church. And always cautioned us to remain quiet from noon until 3 pm. She'd always tell us of her youthful trips to holy wells and graveyards. Saying, that all water from holy wells has curative properties on Good



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### GETTING TO KNOW THE IRISH!

By Tina Butler



Belfast I'm definitely Irish, but I don't miss the prejudice. We are all the same and I think it's terrible how people fight. I will get a house in Ireland I want to live their part of the year. Morrison has lived in the US, & England. He has a house in Dalkey, Dublin (seaside village)

My favorite songs of Morrison's would be, "Someone like you", & "Bright side of the road".

Freedom of Belfast, the highest honor the city can give. In 2010 Morrison was given a Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

He was knighted for services to the music industry and to tourism in Northern Ireland.

Smidin Gaeilg Music—ceol, To Sing---ag canadh Song--amhran

"All I want to rock your gypsy soul just like way back in the days of old and magnificently we will fold into the mystic" Morrison

"Smell the sea and feel the sky" Morrison

"Bragging makes you seem less impressive not more impressive if you are doing something worth bragging about, others will brag for you." Dave Willis

Willis' quote sums up Morrison he went from windows to the Grammy's because he was

grounded, talented and down to earth. Protestant, Jehovah witness, scientologist whatever Van the Man is we embrace him and love his music & hope he keeps singing!

If you have any questions/ comments, please email: Molanive@yahoo.com

Thank you readers for the very kind/generous emails, very dear to my heart...

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This month I'd like to shine a light on Sir George Ivan "Van" Morrison. Van the man as we affectionately call him. He is currently touring across three countries. His music was basically the entire soundtrack to the movie, Belfast. If you haven't seen it, I'm pretty sure you'll enjoy it. It won a few awards including A People's choice award. It seems that awards are not a focus for Morrison, which I admire. Doing the thing you enjoy and enjoying the ride will always mean more than an award ever could!

I work at a high school and sometimes students share their ups and downs with me. I always ask what type of music do you listen to? I always try to inspire them to listen to upbeat music as it is known to boost our mental health.

Morrison started performing as a teenager, he played a variety of instruments including guitar, harmonica, keyboards, & saxophone. He's been referred to as Celtic soul or Caledonian soul.

He was born into a Belfast working class protestant family. A lot of speculation surrounds his religion, and some think he is a Jehovah witness because one of his albums was about his experience in the Jehovah Hall, but he states he is a "Christian Mystic."

Morrison went to secondary school and left with no qualifications. He was expected and directed to get a regular full-time job. Someone told him the best job you'll ever get is window cleaning. Morrison had the good sense to keep at the music and ignore that negative limiting statement.

Morrison has collaborated with a variety of artists including Eric Clapton, The Chieftains, Michael Bubl , Natalie Cole and many others.

Critic Greil Marcus argues "Van truly has a distinctive breadth and complexity it is impossible

to cast his work among that of others. He remains a singer who can be compared to no other in the history of Rock & Roll,



a singer who cannot be pinned down, dismissed or fitted into anyone's expectations. Morrison is R & B, jazz, hymns, blues and Celtis melodies. Morrison defines himself as a soul singer.

Morrison left Northern Ireland before the troubles. He has said I don't want to go back to

Morrison has received many decorations for his work including two Grammys, American music lifetime award, Rock and Roll hall of fame, honorary Doctorate from University of Ulster, & the French government made him Officier de l'Ordre des arts et des lettres. He was awarded the



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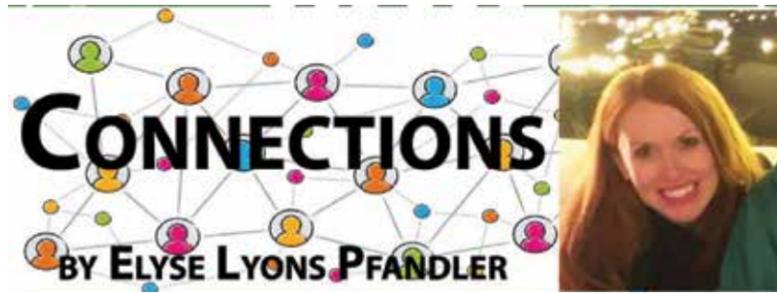
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**Those Who Came Before Us**

When traveling to Ireland in 1998 with my mom, we visited the home that my great-grandmother lived in. My mom mentioned that one thing that her grandmother, Ann, always talked about was that the door of her home was red and how she took a final look at the door before she traveled to America, as a young woman. We found the door and it was

still red, although chipped and peeling. I recall looking back at the door as we drove away pretending to be my great-grandmother and trying to understand that feeling of leaving. And not just leaving on a trip, but leaving and not knowing when you would see those you love again and all that you know. I still recall the wave of emotion that I felt that can only be described as being on a rollercoaster at the very top and starting the descent

down: fear and excitement. I felt a connection with my great-grandmother that I had never felt before looking at that red door and I sometimes think of it still.

Finding a connection with those who came before us can be challenging because it is hard to imagine what

our ancestors looked like, what they did daily, what they ate, and talked about, and what their joy or challenges were. Hearing stories about my friend's families that have come over from Ireland is always an interest of mine. My friend, Eileen Kapolnek Pounds, shared a profound story about her great-grandmother with me. Her great-grandmother, Annie McGowan came over from Ireland in April 1912, was married, had children, and lived until she was 95. The part that struck me was that Annie McGowan came over on the Titanic. Annie and her family lived in the parish of Addergoole, County Mayo. Annie was the eldest of seven children and at the age of 17, she decided to go to America. At the time, many Irish families were sending older children to America to give them opportunities and to find jobs. Her aunt Catherine

had returned to Ireland from America to escort her niece to America and help her travel to Chicago. Twelve other men and women from the same parish of Addergoole also traveled on the Titanic. The group was later deemed the "Addergoole 14." They traveled together and boarded the Titanic. They said goodbye to family members in Ireland with the promise of being successful in America and helping others emigrate.

On the night of April 14th at 11:40 PM, Annie and her aunt were at a party in the third class when the Titanic hit the iceberg. Annie could not recall any crash or bump, but did remember that crew members were rushing around and one crewman did tell the group that the ship had no chance of survival. They moved to the deck and Annie was grabbed and told to get into a lifeboat. She was very concerned about her aunt but they were separated. People assured her she was on another boat. She spoke later about the bitter cold and the screams of those left behind. She also remembers the ship busting in half when sinking. At 2:20 AM, the ship sank in the ocean. Annie never saw her Aunt Catherine again. There were only three survivors

from the parish of Addergoole: Annie, and two other young women, Annie Kate Kelly and Delia McDermott. They were rescued and taken to New York where they spent time recovering as the women were all in shock and Annie suffered from frostbite. Of its total 2,240 passengers and crew, only 706 people survived the Titanic.

Annie later traveled to Chicago where she met another aunt and went to secretarial school. Annie was married in 1920 and had three daughters. She never spoke of her time on the Titanic to her family until much later in her life. When A Night to Remember, Walter Lord's book about the Titanic came out in 1955, Annie wouldn't read it. When one of her grandchildren told her that her name was in it, Annie replied "Well, I don't care. I can write my name anywhere I want." Her daughters didn't know that she for sure was on the Titanic until they were young adults. Annie did not like water, boats or planes and she never traveled to Ireland again. Eileen was able to meet her great-grandmother and spend time with her as a little girl. Annie McGowan passed away when she was 95 and her death left only one remaining Titanic survivor from an Irish background.

For the Centennial Anniversary of the Titanic sinking, Eileen and her family traveled to Ireland to the town of Lahardane. Eileen described how many family members of the "Addergoole 14" were there to remember those who left Ireland and lost their lives or whose lives were completely changed. This small village suffered the greatest loss of life from one locality. Eileen said that at exactly 2:20 AM, family members rang the bell for each member of the Addergoole 14. Eileen's family rang the bell for Annie. When I asked Eileen about her visit to Ireland, she said, "The Centennial anniversary was not just a moment of remembrance, but a solemn tribute to the indomitable spirit of those affected by tragedy. It was an unforgettable reminder of the ties that bind us across generations, a solemn tribute to those we have lost and a celebration of the spirits that continue to guide us." This tribute is now done every year to commemorate the Addergoole 14. Annie was described as feisty and determined by her daughter Mary, Eileen's grandmother, in the documentary "The Addergoole 14: The Lost Passengers of the Titanic." Eileen has a wit about her that I would describe as funny and spirited and it seems that Annie's spirit lives on, as our ancestors do live on through us. So look back at the red door, find out more, because you never know the journey you will go on.

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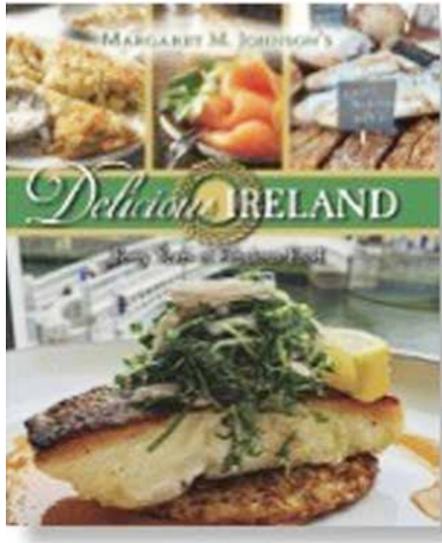
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MARGARET M. JOHNSON is



author of fourteen cookbooks—most recently Festive Flavors of Ireland (2021), Teatime in Ireland (2019), and Favorite Flavors of Ireland (2015)—all published by Ambassador International.



Congratulations to the Gainer family on receiving the Catherine McAuley Leadership Award, 2024. (l to r): Nora, Mary, Sheila, Bridget and Maureen, all graduates and supporters of Mother McAuley High School.

Mary Pat Flanagan Sr. VP North American Sales

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# CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Archdiocese of Chicago  
**Loss at 45: The**

## Journey Continues

By Deborah Major, Director, Loving Outreach to Survivors of Suicide

When people contact Catholic Charities for assistance dealing with the loss of a loved one to suicide, we tell them that the LOSS Program (Loving Outreach to Survivors of Suicide) is here for them on their grief journey, offering

community, direction, and resources for healing, as it has been doing for the past 45 years.

Fr. Charles T. Rubey founded LOSS in 1979, to help three couples who had each lost a child to suicide. They started meeting with the goal of offering compassion and understanding to each other. Over time they came to terms with their tragic loss and found joy in life again. Today, the LOSS mission remains the same. We offer a safe, non-denominational environment where survivors of suicide loss can talk openly within a supportive network of people who share this common bond.

LOSS offers personal and group

counseling to individuals, couples, children, and entire families. We meet each person wherever they find themselves on their grief journey. Our support groups are led by a mental health clinician and two trained volunteer facilitators who have used the LOSS program themselves, which means they understand participants in ways no one else can. Online services help us reach survivors around the country. We also issue The Obelisk newsletter six times a year, allowing more than 2,000 readers nationwide to stay connected through this publication.

This past year, we added a support group specifically for families of first responders due to a tragic rise in the number of fallen police officers and firefighters who have died by suicide.

Also, LOSS recently has been asked to participate in The Missing Pieces Trial, a collaborative research project with Lurie Children's Hospital and the HAP (Hospice and Palliative Care) Foundation, which examines best practices for supporting grieving parents.

Fr. Rubey continues to offer spiritual guidance and pastoral care to LOSS participants, honoring those who have died and ministering to survivors. In addition, Fr. Rubey is working with Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese of Chicago to create a memorial space at Queen of Heaven Cemetery in Hillside to welcome all survivors and acknowledge those who have died by suicide. He continues to inspire us all with the care and concern he shows to the thousands of LOSS community members he has met over the years.

In addition, we host two annual events. At our Evening of Remembrance in November, survivors join in tribute and remembrance for their loved ones who are no longer with us. The focus is on celebrating and remembering who each person was and supporting those

who mourn their loss.

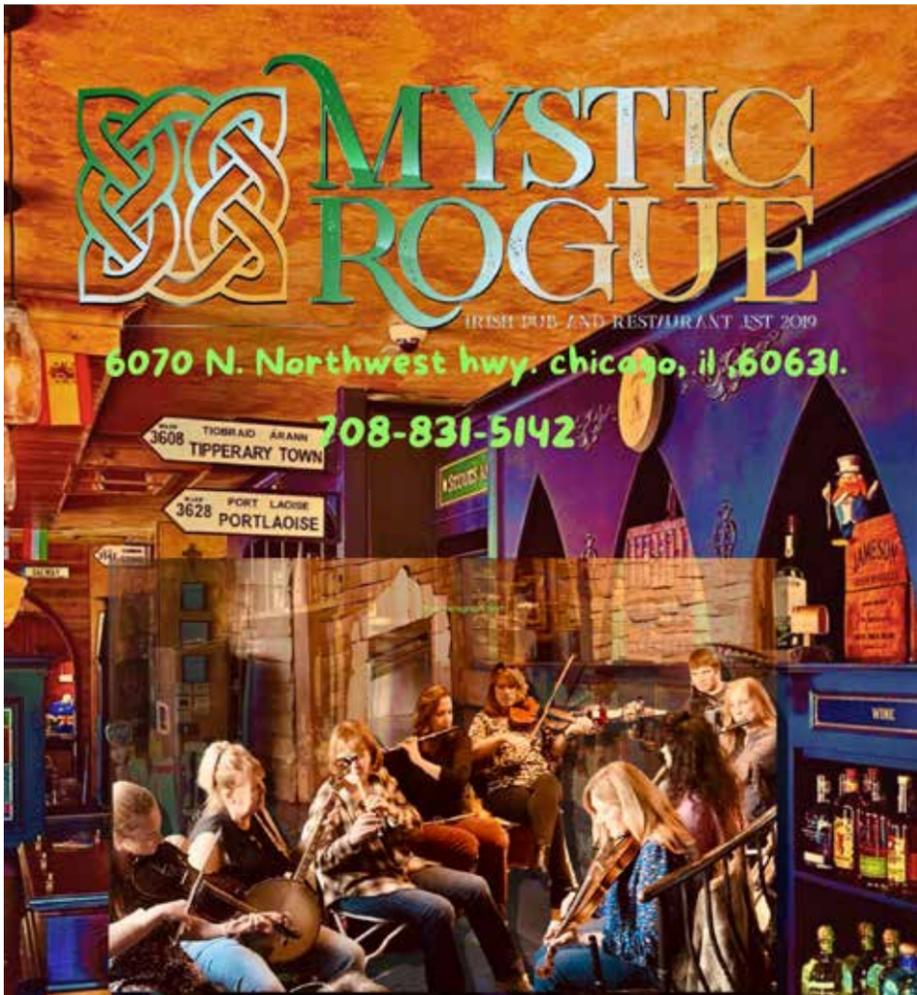
Our Spring gathering celebrates the courage, strength, and progress of the LOSS community, and raises critical funds for the continuation of the program. The 33rd Annual Blossoms of Hope Brunch will be held Sunday, April 28 at the Westin Chicago, in Lombard, and all are welcome to attend. To learn more and purchase tickets, please visit: <https://www.catholiccharities.net/attend-an-event/>.

The Keynote Speaker will be Meg Kissinger, an award-winning author and investigative reporter who recently published, *While You Were Out: An Intimate Family Portrait of Mental Illness in an Era of Silence*. Meg will discuss how her experience of losing two siblings to suicide led her on a journey of discovery regarding America's mental health system. Meg's book is being recognized by literary critics as an important and powerful memoir. In a recent appearance on *The Voice of Charity*, we were grateful to hear that her family's experience with LOSS long ago was a positive one. She said, "In Chicago, we're lucky because we have Fr. Rubey and the LOSS program. It served our family so well. In fact, I believe that the LOSS program should be modeled in every Archdiocese throughout the world."

We thank Meg for her courageous testimony and look forward to her joining us at the brunch. We continue to follow Fr. Rubey's example, established 45 years ago, and we invite you to learn more about LOSS. Contact us at [loss@catholiccharities.net](mailto:loss@catholiccharities.net) or call (312) 655-7283. The journey continues.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

33rd Annual Blossoms of Hope Brunch Sunday, April 28, Westin Chicago, Lombard For tickets, visit: <https://www.catholiccharities.net/attend-an-event/>.



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## The Celtic Lawyers League Honors O'Brien, McNabola and Walsh

Judge Brendan O'Brien (2024 Celt of the year), Ted McNabola and Matthew Walsh at the Celtic Lawyers League Luncheon with almost 1000 others, most in the field of law, celebrating their heritage.

### Advice from 2023 iBAM! Visual Artist Awardee Róisín O'Farrell

When I started painting, I painted everything and anything. City scenes, still lives of fruit, flowers, cutlery and crockery. I painted landscapes, woodlands, interiors and chairs. I

can, doesn't mean you should. When you find yourself chasing a previous success, step in and remind yourself that the first success did not come by chasing it. It just arrived. Try to make way for the next one to arrive. My early success came from working



Painted cats and dogs... you get the picture.

After some hundreds of these little paintings, I was approached by a gallery. They liked the still lives. We had a show and they all sold. That was amazing... Gob smacking even.

So then, I painted more still lives. And then some more... After a short while I found that all I was painting were still life paintings. And I was bored.

I realised that just because you

the process. So I started painting more of the things I liked painting and concentrating on the process. And before long, my galleries started asking for other work and to my surprise, they sold too.

So my pennies worth of advice for today? Stop chasing previous success! Trust the process. Paint, then paint some more. Follow your curiosity. And... paint some more

Go get your studio dirty!

### Eimear Arkins Releases New Album Here & There

Fiddle player and singer, Eimear Arkins is delighted to announce the release of her second album, Here & There. Born and raised in County Clare, Eimear has been living in St. Louis, MO for almost a decade and the album celebrates her musical connections to both places. The tunes on the album are almost exclusively compositions by renowned Clare fiddle players and composers such as Bobby Casey, Séamus Connolly and Junior Crehan while the songs range from sean nós to folk. Two of Eimear's own compositions are also included on the album; a jig she wrote in honor of Helen Gannon called She's At It Again and a reel which was the product of pandemic isolation called Hanging On Halliday. The album features a number of esteemed musicians

and singers with whom Eimear performs regularly and those include Alan Murray, Eileen Gannon, David McKindley-Ward, Kevin Buckley, Dan Lowery and Jackie O'Riley. Eimear released her debut album, What's Next? in June 2018 to great acclaim and was awarded



Newcomer of the Year by liveIRELAND in 2019.

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

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# CHICAGO GAELIC PARK

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

A Cháirde:

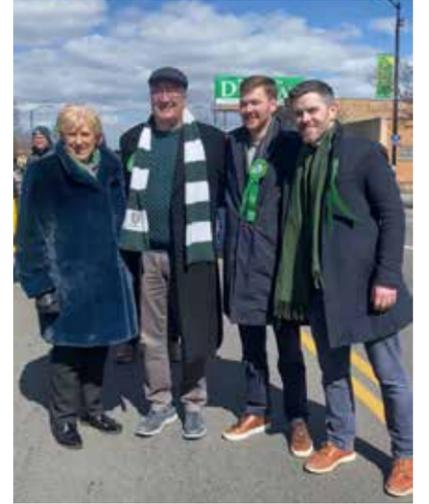
Thank you! We thank the dance schools and Irish musicians that entertained us in March, and our brilliant staff who performed tirelessly. We thank our volunteers, and we especially thank the thousands of you who joined our celebrations. There are so many wonderful entertainment and celebration options in Chicagoland in March, and we're always pleased when you include Chicago Gaelic Park in your holiday plans.

Our annual elections of our board of directors was held, and I'm pleased to announce that Ann Walsh-Lang and John Bridges have joined our board. Welcome, Ann and John! Please congratulate them when you see them.

Sláinte,  
Bill O'Sullivan



CGP President Bill O'Sullivan with Mayor of County Cork Frank O'Flynn during his visit to Chicago Gaelic Park



Minister Heather Humphreys TD, Bill O'Sullivan, Vice Consul Pádraig Manning, and Consul General Kevin Byrne at the South Side Irish Parade

## Win A Chicago Home

IN SUPPORT OF GAELIC PARK CHARITIES

When our community pulls together, great things are possible. We are grateful for the effort of our volunteers, the press, and each and every person who bought a ticket to support our Win A Chicago Home (Or \$450,000) Raffle! The spirit and strength of the Irish-American community help keep organizations like ours strong.

Our Grand Prize Drawing took place at Chicago Gaelic Park on Sunday, March 24th. Congratulations to Matthew Hearn!



Thanks for celebrating with us all month long!



# SAVE THE DATE

## Irish Fest Returns August 23-25

### Friday, August 23

Conor Mallon - 4CAST - One of These Nights  
The Byrne Brothers Gaelic Brew -  
The Larkin & Moran Brothers - Liam Durkin

### Saturday, August 24

JigJam - Dancing Queen: An ABBA Salute  
Onóir - Sina Theil - The Byrne Brothers  
Gaelic Brew - Shannon Rovers

### Sunday, August 25

JigJam - An Irish Heartbeat - Onóir  
Conor Mallon - Sina Theil - Gaelic Brew  
The Byrne Brothers - The Dirty Wellies



Stay tuned to our social media for more entertainment to be announced!



@CGPIrishFest



@ChicagoGaelicParkIrishFest

# CHICAGO GAELIC PARK

6119 W. 147th St. Oak Forest, IL 60452 - (708)687-9323 - ChicagoGaelicPark.com

## UPCOMING CONCERTS & EVENTS

### Event Calendar

Visit [chicagogaelicpark.com](http://chicagogaelicpark.com) for more information on upcoming events. No cover charge for music at The Carraig pub.

April 7th - GAELIC PARK BOOK CLUB  
April 12th - OPENING NIGHT - GAELIC PARK PLAYERS  
April 13th - MIDNIGHT AT THE MASQUERADE  
April 13-14th - ST. VINCENT DEPAUL DRIVE  
April 14th - MONTHLY MASS & BREAKFAST  
April 19th - THE CHICAGO EXPERIENCE  
April 21st - A TRIBUTE TO SHANE MACGOWAN  
April 21st - CHICAGO IRISH SINGERS CLUB  
May 4th - KENTUCKY DERBY - YGA EVENT  
May 10th - THE FOUR C NOTES  
May 12th - MONTHLY MASS & BREAKFAST  
May 25-26th - THE CHICAGO FEIS - QUICKFEIS.COM

### Music at The Carraig

April 4th - TRAD THURSDAY  
April 6th - KEVIN ROWAN  
April 12th - RAY GAVIN  
April 13th - BERNIE GLIM  
April 18th - TRAD THURSDAY  
April 20th - WHISKEY & HARMONY  
April 26th - KIERAN BYRNE  
April 27th - MULLIGAN STEW  
May 3rd - TRUE STORY  
May 4th - DISCOUNT VINYL

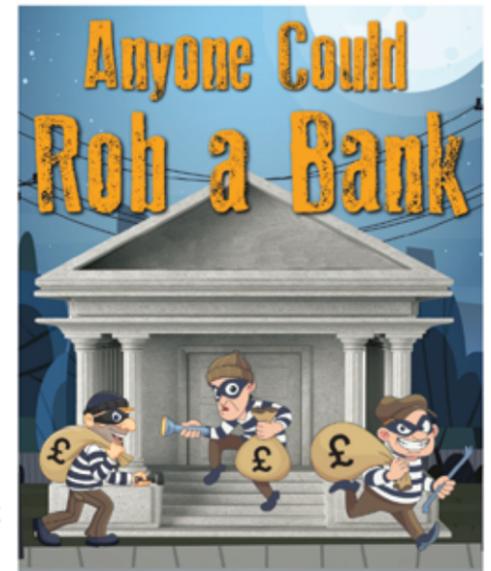


### Anyone Could Rob a Bank Gaelic Park Players' Spring Production

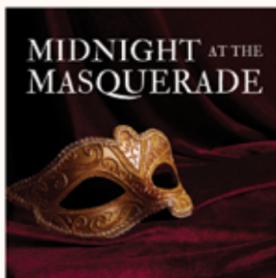
For over 30 years the Gaelic Park Players have been entertaining the Chicago Gaelic Park community. The Players are delighted to present their Spring 2024 production of *Anyone Could Rob a Bank* by Tom Coffey beginning on Friday, April 12th.

This comical farce follows the story of three men, Badger, Jerreen, and Windy, who discuss how easy it would be to rob the local bank and come up with the perfect plan to do so. However, they are shocked to wake up and discover that the bank has been robbed using many details of their own scheme. As a result, they begin to suspect each other, leading to a series of hilarious and entertaining events.

Join us for Dinner and the Show at Gaelic Park. Theatre-only tickets are available for \$15, with performances on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. On Fridays and Saturdays, the Pub Dinner-Theatre Combo is available for \$35. On Sundays, the Dinner-Theatre Combo tickets with Buffet after the show are priced at \$45. Reservations are a must, particularly for the Pub Dinner. Please book no later than 6:30 pm for Friday or Saturday reservations. The show runs the weekend of April 12th and April 19th Friday-Sunday.



*Anyone Could Rob a Bank* is presented with special arrangements by the Drama League of Ireland.



### Murder Mystery Dinner

SATURDAY, APRIL 13TH



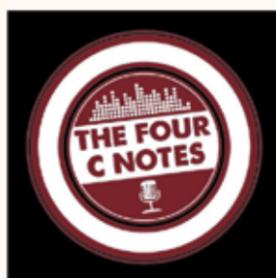
### The Chicago Experience

FRIDAY, APRIL 19TH



### Shane MacGowan Tribute

SUNDAY, APRIL 21ST



### The Four C Notes Dinner & Show

FRIDAY, MAY 10TH



### Seven Nations Patio Concert

THURSDAY, JULY 18TH



### Petty Kings

SATURDAY, JULY 20TH

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**Generation Next**  
By Conor O'Connor

**RFK Jr. is a Repugnant Fool**

When he first assumed the presidency of the United States, John F. Kennedy was an unprecedented leader in a number of important ways. He was the most Irish President to have ever taken office, and he was the first Roman Catholic. In the end, his lunar aspirations and untimely death ultimately immortalized him in the eye of the public.

His brother, Robert Kennedy, was

did not face riots on the scale of other major cities after King's death. Robert, however, would face a similar fate to King when he was shot and killed a few short months later.

The Kennedy clan maintains a huge amount of influence in the domestic political world; a Kennedy has, at one time or another, been in the U.S. House, the U.S. Senate, the presidency, several state legislatures, and served as ambassadors, envoy and mayor. Today, however, much attention has been and will continue to be paid towards the presidential campaign of Robert Kennedy Jr.

The author of the phrase "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree" clearly never met Robert Kennedy Jr. (RFK Jr.), who peddles anti-vaccine propaganda and has flirted with alt-right circles even in the midst of his campaign.



also a gifted politician. When Robert ran for president in 1968, he brought a sense of hope to millions of people in the midst of great social upheaval. His friendships with Cesar Chavez, Walter Reuther, and Martin Luther King, Jr. assisted him in sculpting a vision of the United States that was equitable towards everyone, regardless of color or creed. One of my favorite speeches of all time was delivered by Robert Kennedy in Indianapolis after he learned of the assassination of King-it was partially due to his elegant, empathetic (and impromptu) words that Indianapolis

This past week, RFK Jr. floated the idea of NFL quarterback Aaron Rodgers serving as his running mate. Aaron Rodgers shares RFK Jr.'s vaccine skepticism, and has also claimed that the Sandy Hook Massacre, which left 20 small children dead in one of the most horrific mass shootings in history, was a hoax.

There is no chance that RFK Jr. will become president. He knows this. Yet, despite this, he is running as an independent candidate. He is little more than a Republican plant meant to siphon votes away from Joe Biden and get Donald Trump elected to the presidency once again. And the infuriating thing about this plan is that it just might work.

Lest we forget, Joe Biden just barely eked out an electoral victory in 2020. If 100,000 people voted differently (or stayed home from the polls) in 6 states, the outcome of this election would have been squarely reversed. Democracy is vulnerable and precious-and electing Donald Trump could be its death blow. RFK Jr. knows this, and yet he continues to wage his hopeless campaign with the name recognition of his uncle and father. He is pathetic.

**Union Leader Headlines 2024  
Mother Jones Birthday Party Celebration**



**Sara Nelson, President of the Association of Flight Attendants**

The leader of the union representing 50,000 flight attendants working for 20 airlines will be the special guest at the annual "Mother Jones Birthday Party" celebration in Chicago.

The free event will take place on April 28, at Chicago's Irish American Heritage Center. The president of the Association of Flight Attendants, Sara Nelson, will speak at the birthday celebration for the iconic Labor activist, which will also feature musical performances, displays, additional speakers and refreshments.

Mary "Mother" Jones (1837-1930) was an Irish immigrant who overcame tremendous personal loss, and the Great Chicago Fire, to become a internationally known activist, fighting

for the rights of working people and against child labor.

The celebration is organized by the Mother Jones Heritage Project, a non-profit group dedicated to promoting awareness of the work of Mary "Mother" Jones. The Project is also raising funds for the statue of Mother Jones, which is expected to be installed near the Historic Chicago Water Tower in 2025. Party attendees will be able to meet the artist who will design the monument project. The Party begins at 3pm on Sunday, April 28, 2024 at the Irish American Heritage Center, 4626 N. Knox Ave, Chicago, IL.

The event is free. Please RSVP to [motherjonesmuseum.org/events](https://motherjonesmuseum.org/events)

**New Podcast The Magdalenes and I**

The Magdalenes and I, a new Podcast series created by award documentary maker Steven O' Riordan and distributed by Acast Creator Network, charts the incredible and intimate story of how

I wanted to create a Podcast that was conversational and easy to listen to."

O'Riordan goes on to say, "So much about what happened to these women still remains a mystery. However, in



**The Magdalene Survivors and Podcaster Steven O' Riordan met with the Irish President Michael D Higgins in 2013**

Steven met with and campaigned for 100s of Magdalene survivors over a period of 10 years.

The Podcast, released Monday, March 25, also explores the shocking details surrounding the exhumation of 155 Magdalene women, which took place in Dublin in 1993.

In bringing the story of the Magdalene's to life, O'Riordan uses the powerful interviews he recorded with survivors over the years to illuminate their struggles and delves into the background of how and why he took on their stories.

O'Riordan says, "When I was asked to do this podcast by Acast, I wanted it to be a fly-on-the-wall podcast series. It goes behind the scenes to look at and talk about why I took on the story of the Magdalene women, the impact their stories had on me, and the struggle I had to get their voices heard.

Episode 2 that is when my jaw dropped to the floor. I was interviewing two relatives whose grandmother died in 1983 and was buried in a mass grave. The circumstances of that exhumation and how the family had to fight to have their loved one reclaimed is shocking. To this day, the Religious Order still has a lot of explaining to do."

New episodes of The Magdalenes and I are released weekly (every Monday) starting March 25. Episodes 1 and 2 are available now and can be listened to on all social media platforms.

Apple: <https://podcasts.apple.com/ie/podcast/the-magdalenes-and-i/id1736908348>  
Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/show/2YCx0s8rG2zL4GOMToUlnr>  
Acast: <https://shows.acast.com/the-magdalenes-and-i>

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### Gone Fishing on The Shannon River in Ireland

Lough Ree, the lake of kings, is a popular boating destination along the Shannon waterway and also one of the island of Ireland's best angling spots boasting good stocks of pike, trout and coarse fish.

A new boat that has been adapted for wheelchair users and those with a disability is now ensuring that no-one is excluded from enjoying all the lough has to offer. The Lough Ree Access for All boat caters for up to three wheelchairs at a time and is the only licensed vessel of its kind in Ireland or the United Kingdom for passenger travel of this nature. The roll-on roll-off design makes it easy for wheelchair users to embark and disembark from the boat.

Those keen to try their hand at angling can take a guided fishing trip, with all rods and reels supplied, and have a go at catching one of the lough's famous large pike which can weigh more than 9kg. There are also daily trips around the lough visiting some of its many islands.

Among these is Inishcleraun (Quaker Island), a place of learning and pilgrimage for centuries, where the remains of churches founded in AD 540 can still be explored as well as a fort built for protection against Viking raids. The ruins of other monastic sites can be seen on Inis Inchturk, Inis Inchmore, Inis Inchbofin, and Inis Ainghin (Hare Island).

Lough Ree is one of the largest lakes on the Shannon waterway and is also designated as a special area of conservation. Lots of flora and fauna can be glimpsed

on a boat trip including a range of waterfowl such as widgeon, teals, great crested grebes, water rails and cormorants.

At the exit of the lake on its southern side is the historic town of Athlone. Here centuries of history

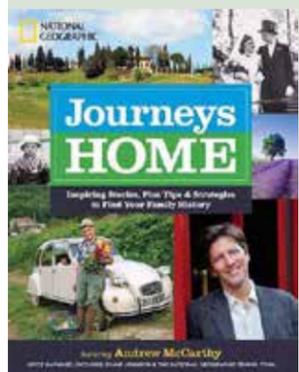
are written into the buildings and streets. An imposing twelfth-century castle sits on the river's edge and tells the story of the early settlements, warring chieftains and foreign invaders who shaped the region.

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



**Dave Pickering at Hartley's Bridge, Carrick-on-Shannon**

### Journeys Home: Inspiring Stories, Plus Tips and Strategies to Find Your Family History



Addressing the explosive growth in ancestral travel, this compelling narrative combines intriguing tales of discovery with tips on how to begin your own explorations. Actor and award-winning travel writer Andrew McCarthy's featured story recounts his recent quest to uncover his family's Irish history, while twenty-five other

prominent writers tell their own heartfelt stories of connection. Spanning the globe, these stories offer personal takes on journeying home, whether the authors are actively seeking long-lost relatives, meeting up with seldom-seen family members, or perhaps just visiting the old country to get a feel for their roots. Sidebars and a hefty resource section provide tips and recommendations on how to go about your own research, and a foreword by the Genographic Project's Spencer Wells sets the scene. Stunning images, along with family heirlooms, old photos, recipes, and more, round out this unique take on the genealogical research craze.

288 pages, Hardcover Published 2-3-2015 by National Geographic

ISBN # 9781426213816 (ISBN10: 1426213816)

<https://www.amazon.com/Journeys-Home-Inspiring-Strategies-Hardcover/dp/B011MDEISI>

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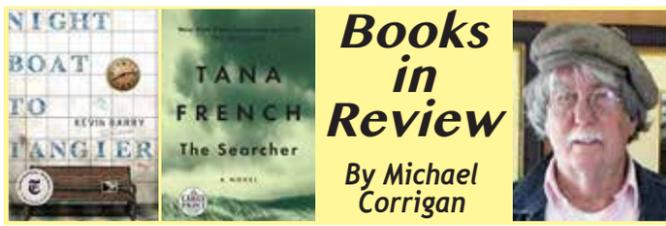
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**A Challenging Novel About the "Troubles"**

Much has been written about the sectarian violence in 20th century Northern Ireland known as "The Troubles," which reached a violent peak between 1969 and 1972. It concerned a three decade conflict between Irish Catholics wanting a united Ireland free from England's domination and British influenced Protestants known as Unionists. The British military, local police and opposing paramilitary groups made Belfast, Ireland a city under siege. Anna Burns has added to the literature with Milkman, a novel with a unique viewpoint

and an Orwellian twist. It takes place in an unnamed city in an unnamed country, but the parallels to Belfast are clear. Milkman won the Man Booker Prize.

The heroine is an 18-year-old narrator referred to as "middle sister." She walks down the street reading Ivanhoe since she hates the 20th century and its literature. One of her brothers has been shot to death in the struggle. One day, a sinister 41-year-old paramilitary officer from a world of assassins and bomb makers pulls alongside her. He is nicknamed the milkman and indicates that he knows everything about her brothers, her "maybe-boyfriend," and her night studies.

"I did not like the milkman and had been frightened and confused by his pursuing and attempting an affair with me," middle sister says. "I would be startled by every encounter, except the last, I was to have with this man."

"Milkman" is a slang term for hitman, one who delivers crates of bombs instead of milk. Burns lets the reader know that the milkman is eventually killed in the mysterious first sentence. "The day Somebody McSomebody put a gun to my breast and called me a cat and threatened to shoot me was the same day the milkman died."

Somebody McSomebody is a jealous rival to the milkman and her "maybe-boyfriend," and this sentence encapsulates the plot. There are many fascinating characters in this surreal novel; Anna Burns simply lets them reveal themselves, much in the manner of Jane Austen.

Burns had this to say about her novel's inspiration: "I grew up in a place that was rife with violence, distrust and paranoia, and peopled by individuals trying to navigate and survive in that world as best as they could."

Milkman with its long sentences turning into large paragraphs full of rich details and many asides

is a daunting read. Her prose resembles Joyce, Faulkner and Virginia Woolf when it comes to fractured but dazzling images strung together and separated by dashes and semicolons. Here is middle sister's description of her father's depression. They were "big, massive, scudding, whopping, black-cloud, infectious, crow, raven, jackdaw, coffin-upon-coffin, catacomb-upon-catacomb, skeletons-upon-skulls-upon-bones crawling along the ground to the grave type of depressions."



Burns also writes with a compassionate irony viewing these tragic people who must name their children with the "right" names, drink the "right" tea and the "right" whiskey, and never marry someone with the "wrong" religion. Informers disappear.

With few exceptions, critics have praised Milkman. Ron Charles of Book World said, "It's the last great novel of the year. Possibly the most challenging one, too." Dwight Garner of the New York Times insists that "'Milkman'" requires so much effort for so modest a result."

The female narrator is a survivor in a dangerous volatile world. How can anyone resist a young woman who reads aloud The Exorcist to her much-younger siblings before bed?

Milkman by Anna Burns will take its place with celebrated Irish Literature.

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SATURDAY MAY 4<sup>TH</sup>



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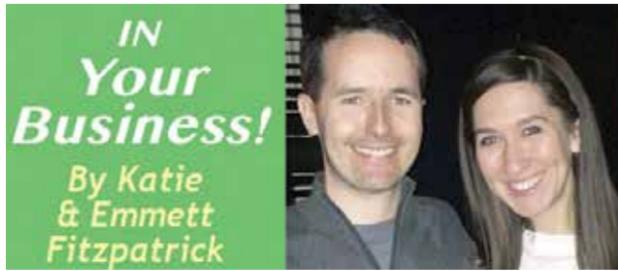
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HOME TO MAYO



in the British Navy, and emigrated to the United States around the age of 20, ending up, like so many Irish, in Chicago. There, he met Christine's grandmother, who had recently emigrated from County Mayo and briefly stopped in New York before moving to Chicago with her brother.

"My grandpa had that thick Cork brogue," Christine recalls, "so thick that visitors to our house would often ask me, 'what did he just say?'"

Growing up in Mount Greenwood in an Irish Catholic family - Christine is one of six children - she remembers nearly everyone in her neighborhood being at least partially Irish. As she reflects, "we considered

fans who are experiencing difficult life challenges. She references one example of organizing a special spring training outing in Arizona for the family of Andrew Weishar, a Brother Rice alum who was studying at Illinois Wesleyan University when he was diagnosed with Stage IV cancer. Andrew ultimately passed away, and his family started a charity supporting young people with cancer; Chicago White Sox Charities continues to provide funding and other support for the family and the organization.

"My job is personal to me," Christine says, and notes how she views her work as an extension of her Irish heritage.

**Sox Side Irish**

Christine does not shy away from highlighting the lasting connection between the White Sox and Irish Chicago - particularly the South Side Irish:



"Chicago is such a neighborhood city. You ask each other, 'Where are you from?' 'What parish are you from?' With the team being situated on the South Side, which has historically been home to so many Irish Catholics, there's a sense of ownership between the community and the team, and vice versa. That bond was created when the team was establishing itself on the South Side, and even though many families have moved away, we take that pride, that connection, with us wherever

ourselves Irish, and it started and ended there."

If being Irish was one hallmark of the legacy her parents and grandparents left on Christine, their dedication to service was another. Her father served as a Chicago Police Officer and her mother was a nurse, and Christine originally planned to serve as a special education teacher upon graduation from Illinois State University in 1983. Instead, she accepted a full-time job in the White Sox promotions department, figuring it would be a fun experience, particularly given that the team was ready to host the 50th anniversary of the All Star Game that year.

"I kept renewing my teacher's license year after year because I never thought my job with the White Sox would be forever," Christine acknowledges.

She is now in her 42nd year with the team.

**Remarkable Impact**

The impact she has helped make over those 42 years is nothing short of remarkable. In her role, she oversees the team's charitable giving, and since the founding of Chicago White Sox Charities (CWSC), the organization has donated \$47 million to nonprofit and social service agencies. She is also instrumental in the White Sox organization's investment in youth baseball development in Chicago's under-resourced neighborhoods, with more than \$680,000 in annual funding serving hundreds of young people on the baseball field and in the classroom.

Ask Christine about the greatest impact she has helped to make during her time with the White Sox, however, and she will not focus solely on the numbers, though they are impressive. Rather, she will share one of the myriad stories of how she, on behalf of the White Sox, has facilitated special experiences for

we go. The team has also had that blue collar mentality, that emphasis on grit, and when I think of my extended Irish family, we feel that way about ourselves. There's an undeniable connection with the White Sox. It's almost genetic."

**Dual Legacies**

Christine made her first trip to Ireland to visit her daughter - one of her two children - who was studying at Maynooth University, and immediately fell in love with not only the beauty of the country, but the beauty of the people. She recalls meeting different people on her trip and experiencing the familiar culture of storytelling that she recognized from her father and grandfather. One conversation with Christine will confirm that she is carrying on that tradition of storytelling as well.

Christine's legacy, much like her life's work, is felt in the two communities she has called home: Irish Chicago and the White Sox organization. She recently welcomed her second grandchild, and she admits to "getting choked up" out of pride and happiness that her daughter and son-in-law chose an Irish name for the little one, ensuring that the sense of Irishness will continue in future generations. For the White Sox, she wants people to believe in the heart and soul of the organization, acknowledging the dedication of Chairman Jerry Reinsdorf in making the team's charitable and community accomplishments possible.

Christine sums up the legacy she would like to leave at the intersection of 35th and Shields succinctly: "If people see the positive, compassionate side of the White Sox through the work that I've been doing, that would be a 'wow' for me. That would be good."

**Christine O'Reilly-Riordan Continues Legacy of Service in Chicago White Sox Charities**

In the early 1980s, when teenager Christine O'Reilly-Riordan visited Comiskey Park to inquire about a summer job with the White Sox, she received a warm welcome from none other than Mr. White Sox, Minnie Miñoso, who, as Christine describes, "literally opened the door for me" to begin what has become a decades-long career with the organization. But to trace the origins of Christine's success as Vice President of Community Relations and Executive Director of Chicago White Sox Charities, one must go farther back in time to Ireland, where her paternal grandparents were born.

"We Considered Ourselves Irish. It Started and Ended There."

Christine's grandfather hailed from Cork, served

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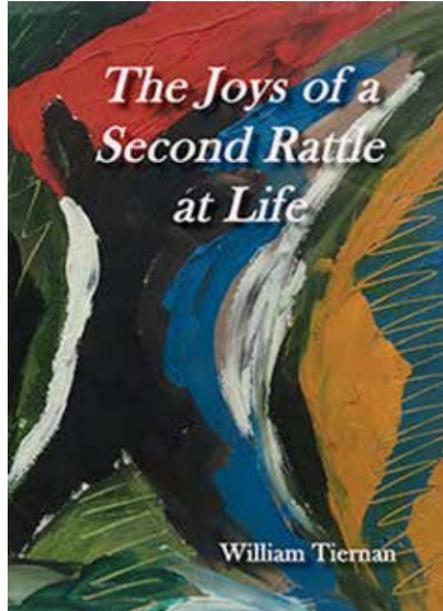
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### The Joys of a Second Rattle of Life by William Tiernan



Celebrating World Poetry Day with a Galway-based lyric poet -

Practiced throughout history - in every culture and on every continent - poetry speaks to our common humanity and our shared values, transforming the simplest of poems into a powerful catalyst for dialogue and peace. - UNESCO, marking World Poetry Day, observed annually 21 March

Poetry will never be soccer, or movies, or music, or rock, or hip hop. But we do it because our heads burn with inspiration, not to mention torment. - William Tiernan, Irish author and lyric poet

The Joys of a Second Rattle at Life by William Tiernan is the author's third volume of poetry and, arguably, his most ambitious to date. Whether addressing himself to issues such as pandemics or the war in Ukraine, to more universal themes of redemption and re-birth, battles of the body and the bullying of the mind, Tiernan's observations go straight to the human heart, breaking down the distance between what is right

from what is wrong, conveying it all in his unique and inimitable

lyrical style, conveyed here by just a few excerpts from his poetry, chosen at random:

Mine is a hard hammering against the wall of flame.

The demon we must come to terms with and tame.

A new day brings a new, raw hunger and thirst.

I must give the world my poem and my word,

Without having to fall on my sword.

The heart can be touched by crying, But the soul knows not of dying.

It's smiles we give and tears we fall. We belong to the universal call.

I'm sick and tired of war and dying. Sick and tired of hunger and homelessness crying.

I'm into me and I'm the whole world's lover,

And I know there are many mysterious things to discover.

The road less travelled is the road best left behind

And the better one, perhaps, is the one we've yet to find.

Existence is forever so short But life, at times, too long.

Old fashioned I might be, but most of the poetry nowadays doesn't turn me on. I like the stuff to rhyme, while this thing of survival gets on my bloody nerves.

William Tiernan is an Irish poet who resides in rural Galway, close to the Roscommon border. His writings reflect his personal experiences and convictions, as well as strong ties to the community in which he lives, his identification with the place where he grew up. *In 2014, he was National Winner in the poetry category at the Hanna Greally Literary Awards, organised as part of the annual SiarScéal Festival in Co. Roscommon.*



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We were hosting a St. Patrick's Day gathering at our home, but unfortunately, my daughter had to undergo wisdom teeth extraction surgery. Despite being in some discomfort, she has been an excellent patient throughout her recovery. Our neighborhood is lively with St. Patrick's Day decorations adorning the homes and yards. We typically open our doors for an open house

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celebration, welcoming all our neighbours - Italian, Polish, Serbian, Indian, Mexican, and Palestinian. We were devastated to hear that they had lost family members and friends. They marched with our Jewish community to end this madness. We stand in solidarity with them during this time of grief

Our family has a tradition of celebrating St. Patrick's Day on the actual date of March 17th. However, this year, with the holiday falling on a Sunday, the city of Chicago is commemorating it a day earlier on Saturday the 16th, and we will join in the festivities. A cherished tradition we dearly miss is receiving St. Patrick's Day ribbons from my late father-in-law. I have put them away before they fall to pieces so that our children can have them for their children. Now, I create my own ribbons, incorporating the Irish tri colors and symbols such as the harp or shamrock. Some are adorned with crosses, as gifts for the communion and confirmation ceremonies of my Irish friends' children

Our St. Patrick's Day routine involves cooking an authentic

Irish breakfast, with bacon, sausages, black pudding bought from our import stores. I'd make my Donegal mothers treacle and sultana scone bread..(You taught me well mother, I can now just make it all without measuring anything). Every time I make it, it feels like a hug from heaven. In years past, we would dress the kids in O'Neill clan shirts and participate in the parade riding on Alderman O'Connor's float. Lovely family. Our kids went to school with his young cousins. The weather was always unpredictable but come rain hail or snow the kids always looked forward to this day and loved seeing the river dyed green. We would hurry home to get our party food together and have a quick trip to Our Lady of Quadaulpe outdoor grotto to honour our saint and to light candles for our loved ones. This year looks like it's going to be a beautiful sunny day. Happy Saint Patricks to you all.

Recently, a heartfelt letter penned by individuals at the ancient Kilwirra graveyard in County Louth, Ireland has been circulating on Instagram. In this letter, they implore President

Biden to recognize the shared suffering of Irish and Palestinian ancestors and take action to end the violence in Gaza. Their words poignantly reflect the pain and historical trauma endured by the Irish people during the Great Hunger who were forced from their homes dying of hunger on the road, bodies were found with grass in their mouth because of our history, the Irish people will never forgive those who enable the oppression, ethnic cleansing and genocide of other people. By financing and providing political cover you are betraying humanity. The ongoing violence in Gaza has profoundly affected us all. The loss of life has been staggering, with reports indicating over thirty thousand murdered, the majority being women and children. This crisis has sparked global outrage and united communities in protests, calling on all governments, especially USA to intervene and put an end to this bloodshed.

In solidarity with our ancestors and those suffering today, we echo their impassioned call for peace and justice. and a permanent lasting Ceacefire.

**THE CELTIC FESTIVAL OF BELTANE**

There are four significant seasonal festivals in the Celtic calendar and all centre around important times in nature and farming, heralding the beginning of new seasons and new activities.

They are Imbolc (February), Beltane or Beltene (May), Lughnasadh (August) and Samhain (October).

Beltane is the Celtic May Day festival celebrated on the first of May. It was considered an important festival in the Celtic calendar; a time for welcoming the warmth of the summer sun and the imminent ripening of the crops. It falls halfway between the spring equinox and the summer solstice.

The Bealtaine Festival is a historical event with its roots sewn in the region's culture

and traditions. The festival was initially celebrated to welcome the harvest season – summertime that opens a doorway for farming and cultivation. Initially, the festival was celebrated by Irish Celts and the residents of Scotland. While the forms of



celebration have evolved over time, there was a time when Bealtaine was observed following ancient traditions such as rituals with fire, bonfires, and maypoles. It was believed that during this month, fairies and supernatural entities were present in the mortal realm; hence, the rituals

were a way of ensuring that these beings crossed over to their world easily.

Another myth narrates that Fionn MacCumhaill, a legendary hero, is also associated with the Bealtaine Festival. According to the legend, MacCumhaill defeated Aillen, also known as the monster of darkness, a fire-breathing being who lulled its victims to sleep with the harp and then breathed fire on them. Because the meaning of the name 'Fionn' in Irish is 'bright,' this battle is linked to welcoming the light after the darkness. Beltane takes its name from

the Celtic god Belenus, linked with light, sun and healing, the word 'bel' translates as 'light'. It was also hoped that these activities would lead to abundant crops after the harsh, cold dark days of the winter. Bonfires were lit and flowers were often used to decorate doorways.

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## THE FINNS

**MAY 10 | 7:00PM**

One of the most popular acts at Trad Fest 2024 in Dublin, we are looking forward to welcoming The Finns for their first show at the Irish American Heritage Center!

**Tickets: \$15 IAHC Members | \$20 non-members +fees**

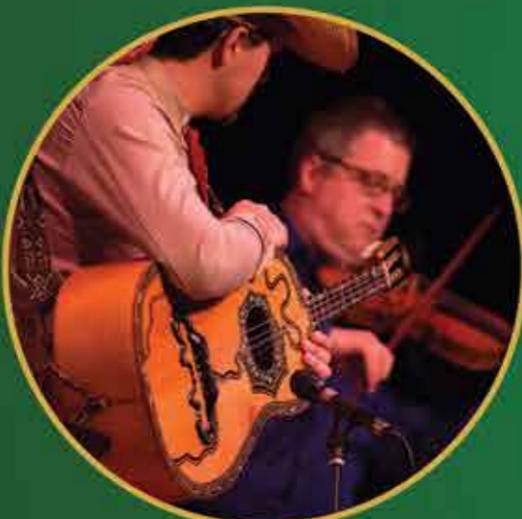


## BOW TIDES

**MAY 17 | 7:00PM**

The Bow Tides are back in the Mayfair Theatre on May 17, 2024. Don't miss the fiddle frenzy! Their second appearance at the IAHC, this will be a can't miss performance!

**Tickets: \$20 IAHC Members | \$25 non-members +fees**



## LOS SAN PATRICIOS: THE IRISH SOLDIERS OF MEXICO

**MAY 18 | 7:00PM**

Los San Patricios: The Irish Soldiers of Mexico is back for another triumphant performance in the Mayfair Theatre at the Irish American Heritage Center! Don't miss this opportunity to celebrate two of Chicago's most vibrant cultures in music and dance! Join Sonos de Mexico and the Irish Music School of Chicago as they share the stage to present a tribute to the the St. Patrick's Battalion (Batallón de San Patricio).

**Tickets: \$30 IAHC members | \$55 non-members +fees**



## DAMIAN MCGINTY: A MILLION LITTLE WAYS

**JUNE 18 | 7:30PM**

Join Damian at the Irish American Heritage Center for an intimate show, with some special tickets that include a sound check with the artist himself.

**Tickets: \$35 - \$100 +fees**

**Only 100 tickets are available**



## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Members and Friends of the Irish American Heritage Center,

As spring unfolds, bringing with it the promise of renewal and growth, we reflect on the vibrant energy that filled our center during the St. Patrick's Day weekend. We're thrilled to announce that this year's festivities were among the most highly attended in recent memory, a true testament to the spirit and enthusiasm of our community.

In the wake of this success, and with the fresh bloom of spring inspiring us, we've decided to extend our special "buy one, get one free" membership promotion until the end of May. It's a perfect opportunity to invite friends and family to join our thriving community, ensuring they too can enjoy the rich tapestry of cultural events, educational programs, and social gatherings that define our center.

Moreover, our Annual Appeal is in full swing, with this year's contributions significantly impacting the much-needed resurfacing of our parking lot. This project is vital to ensuring a safe and welcoming environment for all who visit our center, and every donation moves us closer to realizing this important goal. The support and generosity of our community are what enable us to maintain and enhance our facilities, enriching the experience for everyone.

As the days grow longer and the world around us awakens, let us come together to celebrate the beauty of this season and the shared heritage that binds us. We encourage you to take advantage of our extended membership offer, contribute to our Annual Appeal, and continue to engage with the diverse programs that make our center a center of Irish culture and craic.

Thank you for your continued support and enthusiasm. Your involvement is the cornerstone of our success and the driving force behind our endeavors. Here's to a spring filled with community, culture, and the continued flourishing of our shared heritage.

Warm regards,

Tom Chambers  
President, Irish American Heritage Center

## 2024 BIENNIAL JURIED ART EXHIBIT DON'T MISS THE CLOSING RECEPTION SUNDAY, APRIL 28TH FROM 1-3PM



Opening reception Friday February 16th 7-9p.m.  
Closing Reception Sunday April 28th 1-3p.m.  
Friday Feb. 16th, 23rd March 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd 7-9 p.m.

### Take a Genealogy Journey at the Irish American Heritage Center



Genealogy and family history research can be a lonely enterprise. It's easy to fall down rabbit holes, accumulate myriads of records with dates and names, but still feel like you can't see the forest for the trees. How can history, time and place bring to life your ancestors' stories?



Lois Farley Shuford will speak with the Irish American Heritage Center's genealogy group on **Saturday, April 20, at 2:30 p.m.** in the library about how using a writers' approach to research can solve mysteries and make your family history come alive. Lois is the author of *Finding Home: An Irish American Story*.

Lois Farley Shuford



### THE IRISH AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER TEA SERIES CONTINUES INTO 2024 THIS APRIL, WHEN WE PRESENT TEA WITH JANE ADDAMS

Join us Saturday, April 13 at 11:00am for tea with activist and social justice crusader Jane Addams, as portrayed by actress Betsey Means. Enjoy the performance as it takes us through the life and time of Addams, the world-renowned founder of Chicago's Hull House. Reservations are necessary and can be made here until April 10th. Tickets are \$30 for adults, \$15 for children 12 and under. Call 773-282-7035 extension 10, or go to [irish-american.org](http://irish-american.org) to reserve.



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- Members in good standing for three out of five consecutive years can run for IAHC Board of Directors
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- The right to vote for IAHC Board of Directors
- Members in good standing for three out of five consecutive years can run for IAHC Board of Directors
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- *Irish American News* subscription
- 1 Exclusive IAHC Member T-Shirt

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# The Irish American Heritage Center Set for a Major Remake of Both of Their Parking Lots

By *Ryanne Gallagher Johnson*  
Photos by *Colleen Callahan Gallagher*

Chicago, home to over two hundred thousand people with Irish ancestry, is the second-most Irish city in the U.S, behind Boston. Early Irish immigrants in the Midwest date back to before Chicago was even incorporated, creating a deep interconnection between the city and the Irish and Irish-American communities.



So, it's not an understatement to say that the preservation of Irish heritage and culture is a very important part of the history of Chicago as a whole. For this very reason, the Irish American Heritage Center (IAHC) was created.

When the concept of a central hub for all things Irish came to fruition, the search for a home base began. In the 1980's, IAHC's founders purchased an old former Chicago Public School and Junior College on Knox Avenue. Now a 100-year-old landmark, the beautifully historic building that we know as the Irish American Heritage Center has had thousands of hours of volunteer labor over the decades, slowly updating

the rooms and hallways, creating a gorgeous old home for our Irish culture.

"The fact that it [used to be] a school is meaningful, because a big part of our mission is to teach, and pass on cultural Irish arts," explains Tom Chambers, President of the Board at the Center.

The building is now home to the Fifth Province Pub, the Mayfair Theater, a museum, a library, and plenty of unique spaces for meetings and events of any size. The center offers a wide variety of ways to explore Irish culture and heritage, among the archives of literature and music and art.

"There's thousands of dancers that have passed through the school. We've had music schools, we have Irish language classes, painting, embroidery. We currently have an art show going on. We have a rich set of activities that are related to culture," says



about it."

The Nimble Thimbles, a quilting and crafting group, is also housed at the IAHC. Among other things, they make quilts to donate to raffles at the Center.

Special exhibits from Ireland are presented every year, covering Irish from all over the globe.

"We collaborate closely with the Irish government.



Tom. "Remembering the contributions and honoring the contributions of the Irish in this country and to our region. But also, just promoting and being a part of the development and flourishing of Irish culture going forward."

The Irish Music Association is working with IAHC on archiving music. "It's well-placed. We have some artifacts, some original edition books. We have Chief O'Neil, some other artifacts from him in the museum. So it's fitting that the musical archive, which is continuing the tradition of preserving Irish music, will be located right next to it. We're really excited

So, depending on when you come by the center, you'll see interesting exhibits. Currently, we have a set of displays on the third floor that tell various stories [about] contributions from the Irish to Central and South America."

Two non-profit organizations are connected with the center: The Irish American Hall of Fame, and the Irish Books, Art, and Music Celebration. The Hall of Fame, started in 2011, hosts an annual dinner to honor people who have made extraordinary contributions all over the world. And IBAM, created in 2009, is a celebration of Irish art and artists, with the goal of helping the center

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The Irish American Heritage Center is a 501(c)(3) tax-deductible organization. You can find information on the center, including a calendar of classes, list of spaces for rent, and links for donations and memberships, on their website, [irish-american.org](http://irish-american.org).



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and awarding people in the culture of everything Irish.

For all of its work and teaching and offerings to the Irish community, the IAHC runs on donations and volunteer time. They were fortunate to make it through the pandemic, and have a running list of needs for the building



that they've managed to keep up with through the ebbs and flows of the economy, but the fact remains that there is always a need for more.

"We've got two focuses over the last few months, and through the spring," says Tom. "We want to increase our



memberships, so we're in the midst of a membership drive. [And] we are raising funds so that we can redo our parking lot. The Heritage Center building is 100 years old this year. It's got a lot of needs, but we decided to move forward this year with a major refurbishing the parking lot, which needs repairs badly."

Membership was steady during the pandemic but not growing, so the push for more members is important.

Rooms, classrooms, and the theater are available for rent for various events and gatherings. Portable bars and food service are available for parties. Classes in dance, art, Irish language, and music are offered through the center. Volunteers are also needed, in a wide variety of skills and interests.

"We want this place to continue to be vibrant, and it needs people to do that. . . If you have something you'd like to do, or if you have a skill, we'd love to have you."

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# COMING

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**COMING 2024!**  
 PARKING LOT RESTORATION PROJECT

## It's Your Irish American Heritage Center - Join and Be A Part of It!

by Cliff Carlson

Most people don't know that the Heritage Center is a non-profit 501 (C) 3. Without volunteers it never would have made it to 38 years and counting.

It started in 1976 when a group of strong-willed Irish women and men gathered in Hugh O'Hara's basement gathering any and all support to find a home where they could build an Irish American Heritage Center to their liking.

Some of the people who were at the meetings all the time were Tom and Breege Looney, Mike and Cathy Boyle, Mike and Katie Shevlin, Gabe and Mary Kivlehan, Mary and Tom McNamara, Don and Peggy Lanuis.

"We were all into it in a big way but it took us from 1976 to 1985 to get the building. We were trying to get money together. Josie, Hugh O'Hara's wife, filled two plane loads to Ireland when you could rent a plane at the time and keep the profits. She raised over \$80,000 in seed money. The rest of us were doing smaller things to raise money," said Mary Kivlehan, one of the founders of the Center. Others who helped in the beginning to raise money used the Shamrock American Club, the St. Patrick's Day Dinner Dances at

St. Demetrius Hall on Winona Street (which brought in as much as \$7000), Easter parties, and Christmas parties. That's how the money was raised.

Through the years many Irish families volunteered including: the Shevlins, the Looney's, the McNamara's, the Kivlehan's, Barbara and Mike Glinn, Bob and Kay Dyra, Kevin Moran, John O'Malley,

Moran-Latimor, Dan Lydon, Mary McSweeney, Ed Cox, Marty Mersch, Pat and Dan Fagan, Mary Morris, Bronagh McGill, Henry and Katherine McGill, Conor O'Keefe, Tim Gunning, Eileen Quinn, Jerry Gleason, Jimmy and Pauline Scollard, Josephine Fergus, Frank Griffin, Fr. Karl Langsdorf, Fr. Mick Mulligan, Fr. Kill, Father John Ahern, Kathleen and Frank McDermott, and Frank Crowley.

Still more volunteers were Eileen Sullivan, Margaret and Tom Reed, Nora and John Cashen, Maureen Cashen, Nora Murphy, Irene Higgins and Dolores Byrne, Pat Roach, Agnes Mahoney, Ann Maloney, Ellen Folan Moosa, Mike Gallagher, Ben Griffin, Kathy O'Neill, Mary McManaman, Pat Duffy, Dominic McNicholas, Brian Doherty, Matt Burke, Pat McLoughlin, Tom McLoughlin, Tom Willis, Pat Henegan, Paul Henegan, Marty Lally, Margaret Blackshire, Mary Ryan, Dorothy Collins, Pat Flaherty, Anne Carney, Patrick Bloom, Pat Branigan, Jeannie Connolly, Mike Kilcoyne, Judy Levi, Mary Dorney, Alan Duggan, Kathy Walsh, Ann Mulchrone, Mike Donoghue, Mary Halverson, Theresa Haughey, Kathy Philbin, Noreen Philbin, Norah Hamilton, Barbara Mulkearns, Jerry Kujawa, Kevin, Mary, and Jimmy Marks.

Bob Burke, Tom Looney, Mike Shevlin, and Tom McNamara, were instrumental in talking Ambrose Kelly into heading up the major remodeling effort that would be needed around the building.

Barbara McDonagh and Nora Brennan

are the ones who found the building the Center is located in now with the help of Mary McSweeney, who was in real estate at the time.

Maureen Green came up with the name of the Center by researching names in Springfield of Irish organizations that were already in use.

There was a large Irish Fest held at Navy Pier in the mid-1970's that Tommy Ryan spearheaded. When it was over Tommy and Maureen O'Looney wanted to give half the money raised to Gaelic Park, but most involved didn't want to do that, and there was an Irish rift that took place, with some volunteers no longer helping or involved.

Although Maureen O'Looney did not agree with not giving half the money to Gaelic Park, she stayed involved with the Center and eventually, she was even on the Board for several years.

Bob Burns, the original owner of *Irish American News* was very involved in the beginning and was very helpful in getting the word out about the Center, until he sold the paper in 1991.

**Editors Note:** We know we haven't begun to list all of the wonderful volunteers in this story, and we know we may have some of the names misspelled, so we ask you to email any information to us for additional coverage at a future date. [cliff@irishamericannews.com](mailto:cliff@irishamericannews.com)



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Barbara McDonagh, Nora Brennan, Mary O'Reilly, Mary Griffin, Maureen Green, Margaret and Bob Burke, and their son, Pat Burke, the young Mike Neary and his father, Emmet, John Grace, Tom Henegan, Eileen Ryan, Barbara McDonagh, Marty McDonagh, Maureen Sweeney-Sheridan, Jimmy Duran, Johnny Mulchrone, Mickey Smith, John, and Jim Fergus, Eileen Griffin, Joanne Fergus, John, Marge, and Gabe Kivlehan Jr., Tom and Joan Gardner, Jim and Joe Kilroy, Johnny and Eddie Bunce, Morgan Schmidt-Georges, Joyce Stonemason, Paddy Homan, Mike and Jen Hamman, Eugene Cooney, and Chuck Kenny lent a helping hand.

Others include Ambrose and Theresa Kelly, Mary and Gerry Archibald, Phil and Pat O'Connor, Brian Donovan, Peggy Murphy, Tom Boyle, Harry Barrett, Peg and Joe Reid, Theresa Choske, Rita Adamczk, Kinny, Mary Kane, Mary and Frank Duffy, Mike and Una Garrity, Una and Heidi Depner, Jeffrey, Kevin, and Kitty Keating, Pat and Una White, Brian and Nora McMorrow, Michael Kilcoyne, Bill Casey, John McGing, Tom Tarpey, Eileen and Brendan Reardon, Eileen and Jim Convery, Mike and Mary Cremins, Patsy Majewski, and the McCarthy Family, Patsy O'Donnell, Eddie Cassidy, Martin McGuane, Johnny Joyce, Tom, Mike, add John O'Grady, Pat and Maureen McKenna, Josephine Craven and Frank Gleason, Ann

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**Podcast Tells Story of Chicago Trucker-Turned-Spy**

By *Abdon Pallasch*

What a wild story: The street-smart quartermaster general for the IRA taken in by an American protestant with no real Irish roots; the FBI paying the mole to run a pub on the Northern Ireland border so he could make inroads with IRA supporters.

"If you brought this to some Hollywood studio and they were going to make a movie - and it's a truthful movie - here's what's going to happen: They would've shown you the door right away and said, 'This is bullshit! Nobody's gone to believe a word of this! This is nonsense!'" said Andy Wilson, a professor of Irish history at Loyola University of Chicago.

When President Biden went to Belfast last year to celebrate 25 years of relative peace in Northern Ireland, he did not thank Dave Rupert by name.

But without the key role the Chicago trucker played in taking down the IRA splinter group trying to blow up the peace process, we might not be celebrating the relative peace that has come to Northern Ireland under the Good Friday Accords.

A new podcast began (begins?) March 13 retelling Rupert's unlikely story. "The Rebel Kind" is the second installment in Entropy Media's "Underbelly" series. Listen to it here: <https://www.entropymedia.art/the-rebel-kind>

A 6-foot-7 protestant from upstate New York, Rupert was able to go where British intelligence had never been about to place a mole before - right next to the leader of the Real IRA, Mickey McKeivitt. The Real IRA claimed responsibility for the 1998 Omagh that killed 31 people including a woman days from giving birth to twins.

"I knew he was a bad guy. They've been chasing him for 25 years, and really never got anybody close to him, and here I walk in and, you know, 'Hi, how ya doin'?" Rupert told us.

Catholics and protestants north and south of the border in Ireland had voted overwhelmingly for the peace plan hashed out by leaders on both sides. But nationalist leaders led by Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness were not able to persuade all factions of the IRA to law down their arms and embrace the peace process. McKeivitt led the most threatening breakaway faction that wanted to keep up the armed struggle.

When news first broke in 2001 that Irish police had arrested McKeivitt and charged him with "Directing Terrorism;" and that the main witness against him would be a Chicago trucker named Dave Rupert, I had so many questions: Had Rupert been

a mole from the beginning? Was he a true believer who turned?

As reporters for the Chicago Sun-Times, my colleague, Bob Herguth, and I had both written about Irish and Irish-American issues. We began interviewing members of American support groups that raised money for the Irish cause. For years, Rupert had been infiltrating those groups in Chicago, Boston & New York, bringing the money U.S. groups raised directly over to McKeivitt and other militant leaders, which he says helps explain some of his popularity - you show up carrying envelopes of money from the U.S., people are happy to see you.

Rupert was already in protective custody and remains off the grid for his own protection today. After our first few stories, the opportunity arose for us to work with Rupert on a book about his incredible story. We began tape-recording interviews with him in which he explained the unlikely events that put him on a path to international espionage for the FBI and MI5.

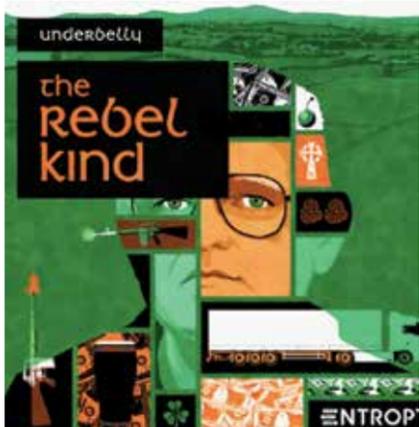
Those tapes would eventually become the subject of a federal court case - which we'll have an episode about in the podcast. But they have never been played publicly before this podcast.

Twenty years ago, and again over the past two years, Herguth and I retraced Rupert's steps across Ireland and the U.S. - from Rupert's upbringing on New York's Canadian border - to his chance encounter in a Florida Irish pub with the woman who would introduce him to the world of Irish Republicanism - to the day the FBI walked into his Chicago trucking office and started his dangerous adventure as a spy.

We'll even take you to El Paso, Texas, where McKeivitt sent Rupert to scout the border with an eye toward smuggling arms out or McKeivitt in. We interviewed people Rupert interacted with in Ireland and the U.S. and you'll hear from many of them.

"I probably don't disagree with the Republican philosophy that the Brits probably shouldn't be there," Rupert told us.

Listen to the podcast and you can learn how - and why - he did it.





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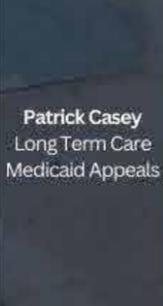


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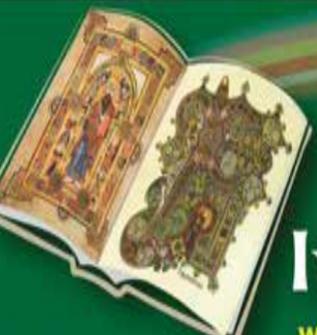


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requiring the bar to be separated from the dining room and not visible from the street. Fast forward to today and those restrictions no longer exist so things may have

Twenty one years ago my wife Anne and I opened a French Bistro in Oak Park. We already had the space, it was a Children's Apparel shop called Kid's Stuff which we operated for five years. The project was a total gut with all new plumbing, hvac, and electrical. We installed a tin ceiling, mosaic tile floor, small bar, and decorated it in the belle époque style. The goal was to recreate a cozy French Bistro you might find in the West Bank of Paris circa 1915. I had been thinking about this idea for some time and started collecting artifacts for the room. We also had The Irish Shop and on one shopping trip

to the Merchandise Mart in Chicago I came across a really cool table lamp of a rustic rooster. Next to it was another lamp with a silk shade with feathers around the bottom. To my delight I was able to switch the lamps shades so I bought two lamps for the bar. After all the rooster is the national symbol of France so Café le Coq became the perfect name for our little restaurant. The first couple of years were kind of crazy. Chicago Magazine picked us as one of their top twenty new restaurants. We were on Check Please with Fab reviews. The all French wine list that I put together was awarded a Wine Spectator Award which is a very exclusive club, only three thousand awarded worldwide per year. We were busy every night. So you're probably thinking why a French Bistro? Why not an Irish Pub? To be honest I seriously thought about it. My wife is from Belfast. I played Irish music for 25 years. I have a great affinity for Ireland. I just thought the space was too small considering at the time Oak Park had an ordinance

been different.

Getting back to French food I have always been a fan. Simple but elegant! No secrets just respect for your craft. Using the freshest and best ingredients, paying attention to detail and committing to the time required to finish your tasks. Preparing everything al a minute excluding braised, roasted, and baked items. Nothing sitting around in a steam table and everything cooked to order, and lots of butter! Who can argue with that? The key is to have all your ingredients prepped and ready, and understanding all the elements necessary to complete the recipe. The first two books I remember buying were La Technique, and La Methode both by Jacques Peppin. These were not cookbooks but manuals detailing everything you would learn as a cook apprentice working in a restaurant. In my estimation there is only one way to cook. The correct way!

Back at Café le Coq we would do a number of Bridal showers, and one of the favorite menu items was quiche. When you think about it, it's a pie dough baked with an egg custard filled with just about any ingredients you want to use. It's relatively foolproof if you follow a few easy rules. Prebake your pie dough. This helps the crust from getting soggy. Use 5 eggs to every 1.5 cups of whole milk and heavy cream for you custard

Precook up to 2 cups of any ingredients, except cheese that you add to your quiche. Make sure to drain the ingredients of any excess liquid. Use 1 cup of shredded cheese. Swiss is the most commonly used, but Cheddar, Asiago, feta and goats cheese all work great. I like to sprinkle some grated Parmesan over the top half way through baking. The most popular and best known is Quiche Lorraine. This quiche contains diced ham or bacon, or both, Swiss cheese, a little cooked shallots, and Dijon mustard, your egg custard, salt and pepper, thyme, and a pinch of nutmeg.

Let's start with the crust. This is the same recipe I use for all my pies. It is called Pate Brissee, and makes enough dough for 2 standard 9 in pie pans without tops.

- 2 cups flour
- 4 oz cold unsalted butter cubed
- 2 oz lard or shortening
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1/3 cup ice cold water
- Filling
- 5 large eggs
- ¾ cup whole milk
- ¾ cup heavy cream
- 1 cup shredded Swiss cheese
- I like to use Gruyere
- 1 cup 3/8 inch diced bacon, or ham
- Use slab bacon if possible
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1.5 teaspoon thyme
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese

Combine all the dry ingredients. A food processor makes quick work of this recipe. If not use a bowl and cut in the butter with a pastry knife or your hands quickly incorporating the butter and flour until resembles small peas. Slowly add the water while

325. This technique is used when pie fillings do not need to be cooked and will require a little more cooking time 25 minutes or so. The edge of the pie dough will be lightly browned.

Remove the weights and you are ready to go. Brush the bottom of the quiche with Dijon mustard. In a fry pan add butter ham or bacon and shallots. Cook 10 minutes until shallots are soft and fat is rendered from the bacon but not crisp. In a bowl whisk together eggs, heavy cream and milk. Add salt pepper, thyme and nutmeg. In a bowl combine shallots, bacon, and cheese. Place in the quiche shell. Pour custard mix over the bacon and cheese mixture and stir enough to evenly spread out. Place in a 350 degree oven and bake for 45 minute or until there is a very slight jiggle in the center when you shake the pan. Half way through baking, place the quiche on the lowest rack in the oven and sprinkle



mixing until just combined. Do not over work. Empty contents onto a floured surface and form into a ball. Dough should smooth but not sticky. Cut in half and form into a disc. Wrap disc in plastic wrap or zip lock bags and refrigerate at least 30 minutes. This will prevent the dough from shrinking when cooked. When chilled roll out dough to a thickness of 3/16 turning ¼ while rolling. Roll back dough on the rolling pin to make it easier to pick up. Place dough over the pie pan or tart tin making sure the overhang is the same around the pan. Gently press dough into the pan leaving a 1 inch overlap around the pan. Tuck the overhand under the edge of the pie pressing or crimping the dough.

For deep dish pies, or quiches you make need to use all the dough and blind bake. After rolling out your dough poke holes in the bottom of the dough. This is called docking. Place a piece parchment paper or tin foil over the dough. Fill the pan with pie weights or if you don't have them use beans or rice, or even pennies to prevent the dough from puffing.

Bake about 10 minutes at

with Parmesan cheese. Remove from the oven and let it cool before slicing.

The great thing about quiche is that you can fill them with every ingredient and cheese imaginable. Remember ingredients with a lot of moisture content like spinach, mushrooms, and zucchini will reduce in volume after cooking. In the photo I have an individual size broccoli and Cheddar, spinach and mushroom, quiche Lorraine, goat's cheese sun dried tomato and pesto, and an Irish breakfast with sausage, bacon, black and white pudding, tomato and mushroom. The large deep dish is spinach and mushroom. For mini quiches you can use a muffin pan. If you have had issues with pie dough in the past you will be amazed at how simple and easy this recipe is. If you're still uncertain about the pastry place the custard mix in a large non stick pan with olive oil and pop it in the oven until set. Invert on a large plate and sprinkle with parmesan cheese. You've just made a frittata.

These are great dishes for buffets or large gatherings. Who doesn't love quiche?

Until next time, Keep Cooking!

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**Master Your Money**  
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**How to Qualify for Social Security Spousal & Survivor Benefits**

*For spouses, ex-spouses, widows and widowers*

I read a recent Kiplinger Personal finance article on this subject of Maximizing Social Security Benefits....even if never paid into Social Security or didn't work long enough to qualify for a meaningful benefit, and I thought I would share some of the information.

If this applies to you or someone you know, then you may be able to get a Social Security Spousal and or survivor benefits at your retirement. If

you had to stop working in order to care for children and or older relatives this could impact you as well.

Even if you've paid into the system and qualify for Social Security based on your own work record, you might qualify for a higher benefit through your spouse or even an ex-spouse.

Depending on your situation, there are some requirements you must meet in order to qualify for spousal or survivor benefits.

Whether you're currently married or divorced determines how you can qualify for spousal benefits.

If you are Married: You can qualify for spousal benefits if you meet all of these requirements:

Your spouse is already receiving retirement benefits.

You have been married for at least one year.

You are at least 62 years old, or you are caring for a child who is under age 16 or disabled.

If you are Divorced: You can receive Social Security spousal benefits based on your ex-spouse's earnings record if you meet all of these requirements:

You were married for more than 10 years.

You never remarried.

You are age 62 or older.

Your ex-spouse is entitled to Social Security retirement or disability benefits.

The benefit that you would receive would be more than what you'd get based on your own work record.

Note: It's not necessary for your ex to be taking his or her benefits for you to receive spousal benefits, but if he or she isn't, there is one additional requirement to qualify for spousal benefits. In this case, you must have been divorced for at least two years.

Survivor Benefits are available if you are Widowed or Divorced. Benefits are calculated differently but its worth looking

into if your spouse died and certain criteria is meet. If you are a widow and have been married for at least 9 months and you are at least 60 years old



you could potentially be eligible for a survivor social security survivor benefit.

If you are divorced and your ex-spouses died, you could qualify for a survivor benefit, if you were married for 10 years before divorcing and you are at least 60 years old, or 50, if you are totally disabled or caring for a child who is under age 16 or disabled.

Note: Unlike with spousal benefits, remarriage will not affect your eligibility for survivor benefits, as long as you remarried at age 60 or later, or age 50 if you're totally disabled.

How Much You Can Expect from Social Security Spousal Benefits will depend on your age, your spouse's age, the maximum amount of your spouse's benefit and whether other benefits are available to you. The maximum amount you can claim is 50% of your spouse's full benefit.

You might be eligible for a retirement benefit based on your own earnings history. If your retirement benefit is higher than the spousal benefit, then Social Security will pay your retirement benefit. If the spousal benefit is higher, then Social Security will pay you the spousal benefit. The good news is that Social Security will do these calculations for you.

It's important to keep in mind that if you get a pension from your public-sector work that wasn't subject to FICA taxes, Social Security will reduce the benefit you are eligible to receive as a spouse, ex-spouse or survivor. That reduction is two-thirds of your pension amount.

What About Receiving Benefits Early? Full retirement age varies from 65 to 67, depending on your birth year. If you were born after 1960, your full retirement age is 67. You can begin receiving spousal benefits as early as age 62 – and

survivor benefits as early as age 60 – but you will receive a reduced benefit, according to the number of months left until you reach full retirement age.

Delaying Benefits: Some retirees delay claiming their Social Security benefits based on their own earnings record because the monthly payments will be larger for those who wait. To get your maximum benefit, you could wait until age 70 to claim. But spousal and survivor benefits work a little differently. For spousal benefits and survivor benefits,

it doesn't pay to put off claiming past your full retirement age. Spousal benefits will never grow beyond the 50% of your spouse's maximum benefit that you receive at your full retirement age. It's similar with survivor benefits: You will receive 100% of your

spouse's benefit at your full retirement age, and waiting past then will not cause the benefit to grow any larger.

Social Security is COMPLEX and you should seek help to see what makes the most sense for your individual situation. Everyone is different so there is no right or wrong answer. It just depends. An analysis or a Claiming Strategy Report should be run by a qualified Social Security Expert that is best equipped to review your situation. Unfortunately, the Social Security Administration is Prohibited from giving advice, They can just provide you the information and leave it to you to decide.

Our office can help and has

the expertise to assist people with identifying what their maximum benefit possibilities are. We are very familiar with the rules regarding the right timing for you and your spouse or ex-spouse to start claiming

Social Security benefits. Call Mike Corrigan, Corrigan Financial Services, Inc. at 708-215-5100 or e-mail [mike@corriganfs.com](mailto:mike@corriganfs.com) to learn more. There is no cost for an initial consultation.

**Genealogy Speaker  
Lois Farley Shuford at IAHC April 20**

Lois Farley Shuford will speak with the Irish American Heritage Center's Genealogy group on Saturday April 20 at 2:30 pm in the library. Her topic will be how



using a writers' approach to research can solve mysteries and make your family history come alive. Lois is the author of Finding Home: an Irish American Story.

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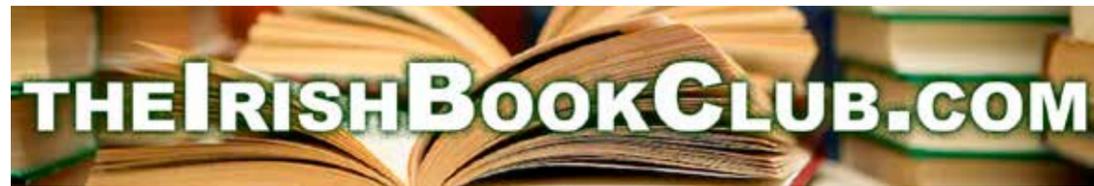
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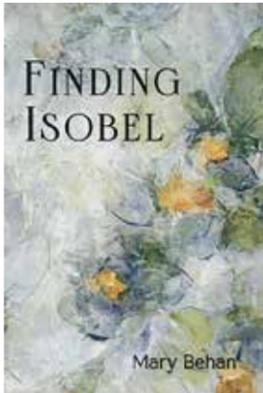
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**Finding Isobel**

Finding Isobel is a compelling story of self-discovery, forgiveness, and the enduring power of family.

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burgeoning relationship, Isobel embarks on a quest. Her search takes her from the tranquil landscapes of Wisconsin to the untamed beauty of New Zealand and ultimately to Bosnia, where she was born. Along the way, she encounters a diverse cast of characters, each with their own secrets and stories to share.

Isobel discovers that the past holds far more than mere answers, setting her up for a future she could never have imagined.

<https://www.mybehan.com/finding-isobel.html>

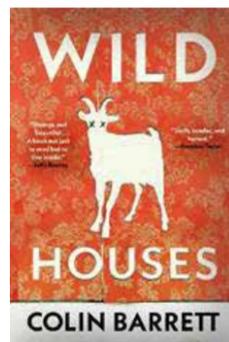
**Wild Houses**

by Colin Barrett  
The riotous, raucous and deeply resonant debut novel from "one of the best story writers in the English language today" (Financial Times) Wild Houses follows two outsiders caught in the crosshairs of a small-town revenge kidnapping gone awry

As Ballina prepares for its biggest weekend of the year, introspective loner Dev answers his door on Friday night to find Doll English— younger brother of small-time local dealer Cillian English— bruised and in the clutches of Gabe and Sketch Ferdia, County Mayo's fraternal enforcers and Dev's cousins.

Dev's quiet homelife is upturned as he is quickly and unwillingly drawn headlong into the Ferdias' frenetic revenge plot against Cillian. Meanwhile, Doll's girlfriend, seventeen-year-old Nicky, reeling from a fractious Friday and plagued by ghosts and tragedy of her own, sets out on a feverish mission to save Doll, even as she questions her future in Ballina.

Set against Barrett's trademark depictions of small town Irish life, Wild Houses is thrillingly-told story of two outsiders striving to find themselves as their worlds collapse in chaos and violence.



**An Irish Passion for Justice: The Life of Rebel New York Attorney Paul O'Dwyer**

An Irish Passion for Justice reveals the life and work of Paul O'Dwyer, the Irish-born and quintessentially New York activist, politician, and lawyer.

O'Dwyer is remembered for his fights in the courts and at the barricades for the rights of the downtrodden and the marginalized throughout the 20th century.

This book recounts O'Dwyer's legal crusades, political campaigns, and civic interactions, deftly describing how he cut a principled and progressive path through New York City's political machinery.

An Irish Passion for Justice tells an enthralling and inspiring New York immigrant story that uncovers how one person, shaped by history and community, can make a difference in the world by holding true to their ideals.

Paul was one of the best-known and most influential Irish Americans of the 20th century. Also want to flag Paul's prominence in the Chicago '68 convention protest.

**The Dark Queen of Donegal**



Featured in the book section of Irish American News the last two years, The Dark Queen of Donegal is now being purchased globally.

Dark Queen of Donegal is a finalist for Historical Fiction

before the 17th Century. Besides selling here in the U.S., books have been sold in Australia, New Zealand, Wales, the UK, Ireland, Portugal and Canada.

Author, Mary Pat Ferron Canes is also looking to put the book on audible.

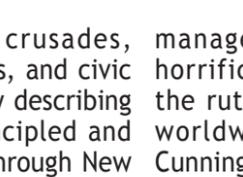
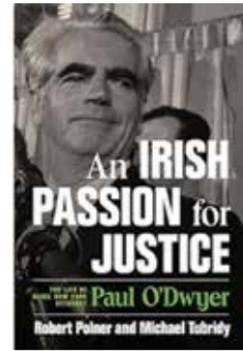
The book can be found at Barnes and Noble and Amazon.

"Dark Queen of Donegal" is a fact

based work of historical fiction featuring a Queen in Ireland in the sixteenth century who pits herself against Elizabeth I. The Queen of Donegal is determined that her eldest son become a king in Ireland despite the English Crown kidnapping him.

This book is filled with the assassinations and beheadings that took place before Ireland became free because of the Easter Rising in 1916 and the subsequent War of Independence 1919-1921. The Good Friday agreement in 1998 stabilized Northern Ireland.

**Enemies Among Us**



As Nick Reagan hunts down the terrorist mastermind, The Handler, he uncovers corruption at the highest levels of government, perhaps even within his own CIA.

Nick Reagan and his team of talented CIA operatives have managed to prevent three horrific attacks planned by the ruthless terrorist known worldwide as The Handler. Cunning and resourceful, The Handler has eluded capture, and now Reagan is determined to track him down.

While assembling clues to the possible whereabouts of his prey, Reagan's superiors in the CIA inexplicably order him to stand down.

Accustomed to flaunting authority, Reagan ignores the directive while seeking to identify the source of this obstruction. As he probes, it becomes increasingly evident that the evil he faces is corruption from within.

Charting an unfamiliar course amidst the pervasive treachery and deadly secrets inside the nation's capital, Reagan is not sure who he can trust as he works to expose the worst of America's elite—those who believe in a New World Order.

Violent confrontations intensify with each new act of treason he unearths, leaving Reagan to rely on his patriotic instincts as he and his team risk their lives to bring down these traitors and restore safety and freedom.

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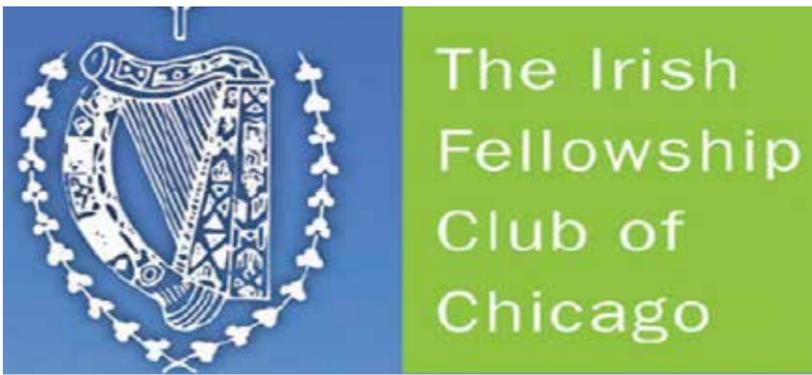
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## Largest St. Patrick's Day IFC Dinner

The Irish Fellowship Club hosted its largest St. Patrick's Day Dinner on March 15 to kick off the civic celebration of St. Patrick's Day in Chicago. Said IFC President Jim Coyne who is the Business Manager of Plumbers Local 130 and the General Chairman of the St. Patrick's Day Parade, "I am grateful to board members Devon Bruce and Pat Clair for their leadership of this signature event for the Irish Fellowship Club. Their efforts and the support of our generous sponsors made this our most successful event." Sponsorship of the dinner provides important support to the Irish Fellowship Club Education and Cultural Foundation enabling scholarships for Catholic high schools across the Chicagoland area and Irish cultural organizations.

The program opened with the singing of the national anthems of Ireland and the United States sung by Paddy Homan and Sarah Gorecki Konieczny. Co-chair Devon Bruce of Power Rogers, LLP welcomed the guests and introduced the special guest from Ireland, Minister Heather Humphreys, Minister of Justice, Social Protection, Community and Rural Development. Previously, Minister Humphreys served as Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, leading the successful 2016 Centenary Programme. Following her remarks, Co-chair Pat Clair introduced Fr. Tom Hurley, Pastor Emeritus of Old St. Pat's and now at Marist High School for the grace before dinner. Fr. Hurley is the Chaplain for the Irish Fellowship Club and the Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade.

An Irish Fellowship Club tradition is to honor our Chairman with the Richard J. Daley Award for outstanding service. In his remarks, IFC President Jim Coyne recognized the recent loss of Patricia Daley Martino, daughter of Mayor Richard J. Daley (RIP). In recognizing Bob Flood of Flood Brothers and Chairman of the Irish Fellowship Club, Jim commented, "Bob's commitment to the Irish Fellowship Club and the educational mission of our Foundation is impressive. His leadership in hosting our recent Scholar Celebration this fall connected us to our 40+ Catholic high school scholars and the leaders serving them. I am grateful to Bob for his dedication to the Irish community of Chicago and to the Irish Fellowship Club."

Following dinner, Jim Coyne returned to the stage in his role as General Chairman of the St. Patrick's Day Parade. He presented special awards to Grand Marshal Peter O'Brien who is a former Chairman of the Irish Fellowship Club and Guest of Honor, Hon. Patrick Kennedy and the Kennedy Forum. Both well represented the Parade's theme of Mental Health is Essential.

Co-chair Pat Clair thanked the guests for their support of the dinner and the Irish Fellowship Club Foundation and the Raffle donors for their generosity.

Entertainment was provided by The Laurence Nugent Band, the O'Hara School of Irish Dance and Rich Daniels and the City Lights Orchestra. In keeping with tradition, the Shannon Rovers led in the VIP guests into the International Ballroom with pipes and drums.



*Michele Scaccia Coyne & Jim Coyne with Shannon Rovers*



*Pat Clair, Jim Coyne, Devon Bruce*



*Peter O'Brien, Pat Clair, Devon Bruce, Jim Coyne, Chris Kennedy, and the Honorable Patrick Kennedy*



*O'Hara School of Irish Dance*



*VIP Guests at the Dinner*

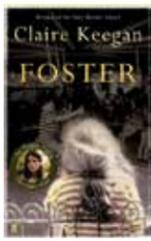


*1st Vice President Fr. Jack Clair, and Kathy Taylor*



*Jim Coyne & Bob Flood*

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## Books Under Review

By Sabina Clarke



### A New Dawn is Breaking...On the Cusp of a United Ireland

With the recent installment of Sinn Fein's Michelle O'Neill, Northern Ireland's first nationalist First Minister and the return of the Stormont government after a two-year delay—Sinn Fein has much to celebrate.

There is no precedent in the political sphere for the party's ascendancy as led by Gerry Adams, Sinn Fein's President for 34 years before stepping down in 2017—

the same year Martin McGuinness, his ally and Chief Negotiator died from amyloidosis.

President Bill Clinton's granting of a visa to Gerry Adams in 1994 was a huge step because it gave legitimacy to Adams and kick started the peace process. Adams came to Philadelphia for a weekend of events in October 1994-- his first official visit to the U. S. and the public face of the Northern Ireland Peace Process was launched. This was followed by the April 1998 signing of the Good Friday Agreement -chaired by former Senator George Mitchell who brilliantly cobbled together a peace agreement between the warring parties.

When the Nobel Peace Prize was announced in 1998—many of us were disappointed that Adams was not included—the award went to John Hume, Social Democratic and Labour Party leader and David Trimble,

Ulster Unionist Party leader.

That day Gerry Adams gave a talk at the Union League in Philadelphia sponsored by the World Affairs Council and attempted to console the crowd—many of whom expected him to share in the prize when he said "I don't care about prizes—the prize for me is peace." There was not one person in the room that did not believe him.

Now it has been 7 years since he stepped down as Sinn Fein President. He can look back and we can all look back at where he has taken his party—not seeking any personal rewards just savoring the possibility of a peace hard fought for. His protégé and the best successor Adams could have is Sinn Fein President Mary Lou McDonald who upon her election said. "I can't fill Gerry's shoes but I brought my own shoes." By all accounts it seems that Mary Lou McDonald will be the next Taoiseach and a border poll vote may well lead to a United Ireland in the not so distant future.

Then what a legacy Adams will leave.

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# Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady



my kind of place, for certain. Yet I never quite got the whole 'Irish identity' thing. Not like my father did. He was proud of his Irishness, very proud. To me it was simply something that was just there. Which brings me - finally, says you! -- to where I left off last month's musings.

## The Sniper in the Brain... and More Cheerful Thoughts

'Time, he's waiting in the wings'. So sang the great David Bowie...oh, a long time ago. 'The sniper in the brain', he called Old Father Time. It's that, all right; gets under your skin, needles away at you with memories of unfortunate decisions taken, wrong forks in the road chosen. He can be a very demon, can Time; especially at four in the morning, when sleep seems as distant as that day you bought the album that the song is taken from.

I'm writing this (or at least making a start on



it) on a roof deck in Spain, having left behind a cold and wintry Ireland in exchange for a nicely hot climate. So, I'm actually double-tasking successfully for a change: working on my tan while getting my rambling thoughts down, for what they're worth. It's my 65th birthday and I didn't want any fuss, so... Spain seems like an escape that's good for both sun-starved body and melancholy soul. And it's a nice place to press the reset button, to quietly prepare for whatever the next decade will bring. It'll arrive with or without me in any case, that's for sure.

He has a way of making your life feel far and wee, does Father Time. 48 years ago come this summer, I first visited Spain. I had hitched a ride with a trucker and as we came over the Pyrenees we watched the most beautiful sunrise. That was my introduction to the land that drew so many Irish to fight for Franco during the Spanish Civil War.

This time I arrived by airplane, as on so many subsequent visits. Instead of a good-natured truck driver with a taste for remarkable sunsets I was stuffed into a metal Ryanair tube with people who seem chronically unable to leave their phones alone, who take this miracle of flight for granted. I know the company I preferred. But that was then...

Then I had abdominal muscles; today I have a depressing layer of fat around my waist that is stubbornly insisting that it's here to stay.

Then we had no tools outside of letters and the occasional expensive phone call with which to let others know that we were still in the land of the living; today we can reach anywhere in the world for pretty much nothing and yet we've never been so isolated or cut off from each other. It's a funny thing, is Time. 'The sniper in the brain, the regurgitating drain'.

Indeed. And then there are the regrets. If I had known forty-five years ago that, when I ran out of money whilst hitching around Ireland, I would settle into work here and never leave...well, I would have learned that gorgeous language of the Gaeltacht areas. It's a funny thing to have a regret about, but it's tied up...ah, with all of these feelings I have lately that I should have investigated my Irish heritage a bit more.

Don't get me wrong, now. I knew from those early days that I was going to love Ireland. Hell, I couldn't get over how easily you could drop into a bar in the middle of Godspeed and you would find people conversant with everything from theatre through to literature and cinema. And that was

I mentioned that I had come across Chicago Renaissance man Mike Houlihan's 2013 documentary film 'Our Irish Cousins', which records with a fair bit of humour his first trip to the land of his ancestors. Whilst some of it is as broad as bedamned, it is the real sincerity of his love for this country that shines through for me. There's no fear of this guy taking the place for granted the way I do, and that shames me a little.

The film just grabbed my interest from the outset. There is this marvelously dry, quietly hilarious voiceover from 'the Man from Clare', a character called P.J. O'Dea.

'...as with all Irish stories, it is steeped in mysticism, legend, Celtic spirituality and folklore', says the Kilrush man at one point.

And if you know me, you'll know just how that kind of thing resonates with me! Celtic spirituality, mysticism...it's a fascination I have. Even where I live in the County Galway village of Oranmore, this small area known as Lios Na Cri translates roughly as 'fairy fort'; and the fields that I look out on are known to older villagers as 'the meeting place of the fairies'. I just love all that stuff.

But the first part of Houlihan's documentary shows me the Chicago Irish (and I must add that it is a city I've not yet been to) and how important their Irish identity is to them in ways that we who live here sometimes don't quite get.

Here is the writer-director's niece, a beautiful young woman by the name of Nora Houlihan, speaking outside of Glascott's Groggery:

'I say I'm a hundred per cent Irish. The pride is the same. The pride that you get from being a Chicago Irish Catholic is just the same as you're going to get in Ireland for being Irish there... . It's a totally different accent, but it's the same pride that you're going to get here in Chicago.'

Personally, I think that the pride of this lady might have the edge on what you often find here; but it is a lovely sentiment indeed.

Still, I also 'get' Michael McNeal -- a fella with one of those great granite-like faces --, speaking in the same bar:

'I'd be in a pub and they'd ask me what county are you from. And I'd look at them and I'd say: 'Cook. It's in America. I'm not Irish, I'm an American. And they'd say: 'Finally, a Yank that knows where he's from. And they really took issue with all the Irish Americans who went over there claiming to be Irish when in fact they're American.'

For a while I was a bit like that. Yet we are all works in progress... works in progress; and few more so than myself, a notoriously slow learner. But finally - and due in no small part to thinking about Houlihan's film - I'm beginning to understand things just a little better. For it really comes through that there is a shared sense of humour and 'a sense of accepting the bad times that come your way and somehow learning to laugh through all that stuff. And that's exactly what we do here as Irish Americans.'

Mike Houlihan now has Irish citizenship, something that he is incredibly proud of and which he records in part; and since making his film he has visited the country every year that it has been possible.

There are moments here that will genuinely move you. I mentioned last month how unexpectedly touching I found Houlihan's reading of the Proclamation outside the G.P.O., all internalized feeling that somehow reaches out to the observer. Another is when he visits the church in which his grandfather was baptized. That is something; that is quite something.

Maybe I'll get to meet Mike one of these days, either here or over there. In any case...he now owes me a pint. And Time is always waiting in the wings.

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## Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady



### Happy Days at the Lost and Found

A little over a year ago - on St. Patrick's Day, 2023 - the Silent Cinema Galway (in conjunction with the wonderful Cinephile Paradiso) had the great privilege of playing host to a full day of Irish films from the Silent Era, which were shown for free. It turned out to be an enjoyable, informal and fun day; and for myself at least it was also an instructive one. I was fascinated by some of those who dropped in and of just how many had their own thoughts on that long-ago period - a period that remains enthralling for many of us and for whom it still has a powerful attraction. One of the highlights for me was a showing of the New York Kalem Company's 1910 film, *The Lad from Old Ireland*. Directed by and starring the multi-talented Sidney Olcott, this was the first ever American studio film to be shot on location outside of the States -

in Cork and Killarney, in fact.

What made me smile is that what went on behind the scenes seemed to be so very much an Irish story, with the local priest being less than happy with his parishioners dressing up as extras and telling them so from the pulpit; everyone else being very happy with the American cash being splashed around; production being closed down under pressure; the bould Sidney going up to Dublin and over the clerical head; and the disruptive priest being promoted sidewise while a more compliant one put in his appearance. And why does that tell me that Mr. Olcott appeared in Dublin with a brown envelope ready to exchange hands? The more things change and all that...

Well, I got back from holiday last week only to discover another Irish story of the Silent Era that has that one beat all hollow!

A friend in Dublin had forwarded to me an article by Kasandra O'Connell, the Head of the IFI Irish Film Archive,



who have been undertaking such Trojan work over the last thirty years, Ireland never having had an archive until the late 1980s.

I've spoken before here, about how many films that were considered lost when I became interested in the field back in the 70s, have since been found - due in part to the internet; more communications between enthusiasts of a niche market; and people raiding their grandparents' attics in general. Yet with her staggering news Kasandra O'Connell grabbed me by the lapels and repeatedly headbutted me (metaphorically speaking). For this wasn't just any old find; this was one with a great backstory and political significance.

*The Callahans and the Murphys* was a 1927 film that should have remained simply an innocuous comedy but instead became a right royal pain in the backside of the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio lion. For its tale of two feuding Irish immigrant tenement families struck just the wrong chord at the wrong time. Not only did it upset the emerging and increasingly powerful Irish political lobby in the States, it also sent the Roman Catholic Church bananas. There were howls of outrage and Old Testament denunciations; and as pickets were placed outside cinemas, the Church in addition called for an outright ban. As I've said before, the more things change...

In fact, it was one particular scene that caused the unholy uproar. And as Ms. O'Connell writes:

"The scene that caused the most consternation was set at a picnic on St. Patrick's Day, where the characters celebrate Ireland's national holiday by

dancing, boozing and brawling. This proved to be a stereotype too far for the Irish abroad. In response to the violent reaction the film provoked MGM initially recut it, removing this objectionable scene. However, when this failed to placate Irish groups in America, England and Australia, MGM withdrew the film, allegedly destroying all the prints."

How awful, that last sentence. Shades of what almost became of *Nosferatu* and words to send shudders up the collective spines of all film lovers. Thankfully, like F. W. Murnau's masterpiece, all copies had not been destroyed.

For twenty years one reel of film lay on the Archive shelves. It had been given in by film collector Paul Balbirnie and was simply labelled inoffensively as *An Irish Picnic*. However, when the Archive last year hired Matthias Smith, an American archivist and authority on silent cinema, he discovered that the picnic in question was *THE Irish picnic*, the one that had caused such a furore almost a century ago.

No wonder Kasandra O'Connell and the Archive are so excited about it. As she herself put it:

"Despite its short period in distribution, the film had a long-lasting impact. The moral outrage it ignited led the Roman Catholic Church to become actively involved in monitoring Hollywood output and to make recommendations about what wasn't acceptable for good Catholic audiences. This interference was eventually formalized in the 1930s, becoming the Production or Hays Code, which regulated the content of Hollywood films until the late 1960s."

Whew. I think I need a bit of a lie down after digesting all of that. Every time something like this happens, I believe that there's still hope for finding my favourite 'lost' film. Yes, Lon Chaney and *London after Midnight*... I'm looking at you. And from the same year - 1927 - too!

\*\*\*The IFI Irish Film Archive digitized the St. Patrick's Day scene just in time for this year's celebrations and you can find it and more information on the Archive Player.

### Paddy's Day Not A Good Day For Snakes!



By Mike Houlihan

St. Patrick's Day scares me a helluva lot more than Halloween. Especially this year, my 75th St. Patrick's Day. My wife, the lovely Mary, and I live in Senior Housing. It's economical and functional with an indoor parking garage that comes in mighty handy for Chicago winters.

We've lived here for almost four years and it's been pretty good; once we got

rid of the "Nurse Ratched" building manager. Don't ask.

But I had quite a scare the other night. Man I was spooked. I live on the top, fifth floor of our building and both elevators conked out. We weren't counting on doing a lot of "stair work" but we had no choice. And there was a very good chance that we all risked a "grabber" climbing those stairs.

*Continued on next page*

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### Brooklyn Laundry at Northlight Theater

Northlight Theatre, under the direction of Artistic Director BJ Jones and Executive Director Timothy J. Evans, continues its 2023-2024 season with the rolling world premiere of *Brooklyn Laundry* by John Patrick Shanley, the Pulitzer, Tony, and Oscar-award winning author of *Moonstruck*, *Doubt*, and *Outside Mullingar*. *Brooklyn Laundry* runs April 11-May 12, 2024, at Northlight Theatre, 9501 Skokie Blvd in Skokie. Fran is chronically single, has piles of bills, and finds Owen obnoxious. Owen has a bad back, runs a laundry, and thinks Fran is gloomy. And

then he asks her out. After years of putting the rest of her family first, Fran is ready to make the leap toward her own romantic dreams. Little does she know that even bigger challenges are headed her way. Featuring Sandra Delgado (Susie), Marika Mashburn (Trish), Mark Montgomery (Owen), and Cassidy Slaughter-Mason (Fran).

April 20-May 12, 2024

Northlight Theatre is located at the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts, 9501 Skokie Blvd, Skokie

Tickets: Previews: \$39-\$74; Regular run: \$49-\$89 Student tickets are \$15, any performance (subject to availability)

<https://northlight.org/series/brooklyn-laundry/>

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So yeah, I'm scared....I could croak... but even worse. I could miss St. Patrick's Day fer feck's sake! And of course THAT is unacceptable.

Oh I've survived many Paddy's Day adventures over the years along my crooked path. In 1967 I was a senior at Mt. Carmel HS and we had Paddy's Day off. So myself and my old pal Jack Whalen swiped some cassocks from the Christ the King sacristy and jerry-rigged a couple of priest disguises to visit Mother McAuley HS to thank the girls for their mission collections and hopefully hear some confessions of the naughtier girls!

When I was twenty I showed up for work for my janitor gig at the Sanitary District on Paddy's Day wearing green pants. My boss Jackie Sullivan gave me the rest of the day off to go to the parade downtown, where I proceeded to get quite a load on before hopping the Rock Island home to 95 th Street. My dad woke me up later that afternoon to inform me that Joe Canavan was at our front door asking for me. I met Joe on the front porch where he promptly punched me in the head, "And that's for what you said to my sister at the parade!"

I like to think that in the last 50 odd years I've celebrated this holy day with more reverence and good judgement than I have exhibited in the past. But that's wishful thinking.

Early in my career I was cast as Captain Brennan in Sean O'Casey's Plough and the Stars. The play takes place during the 1916 Easter Uprising in Ireland and the story of those patriots inspired me as they fought and died during the siege of the GPO. I visited Ireland for the first

time in 2009 with my family, saw the Irish Proclamation on display on O'Connell Street in Dublin and stood with my sons in Kilmainham Gaol, where many Irish patriots were executed.

At the Church of the Assumption in the little town of Mt. Collins, in County Limerick, Ireland, we found the church where my grandfather, Denis Cusack, was baptized in 1861. As I plunged my hands into the water of that same baptismal font, the spirit of my ancestors took possession of my soul and I had my first of many Epiphanies in Ireland. Enlightenment had arrived after a lifetime of chasing dreams and my vision instantly became focused on the celebration of Irish and Irish American culture. Blessed with this new outlook, I was granted Irish citizenship, founded Hibernian Media, and set to work celebrating the culture of the Irish Diaspora.



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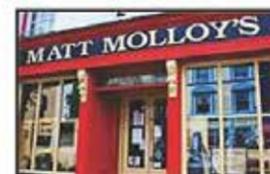
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Guinness Storehouse



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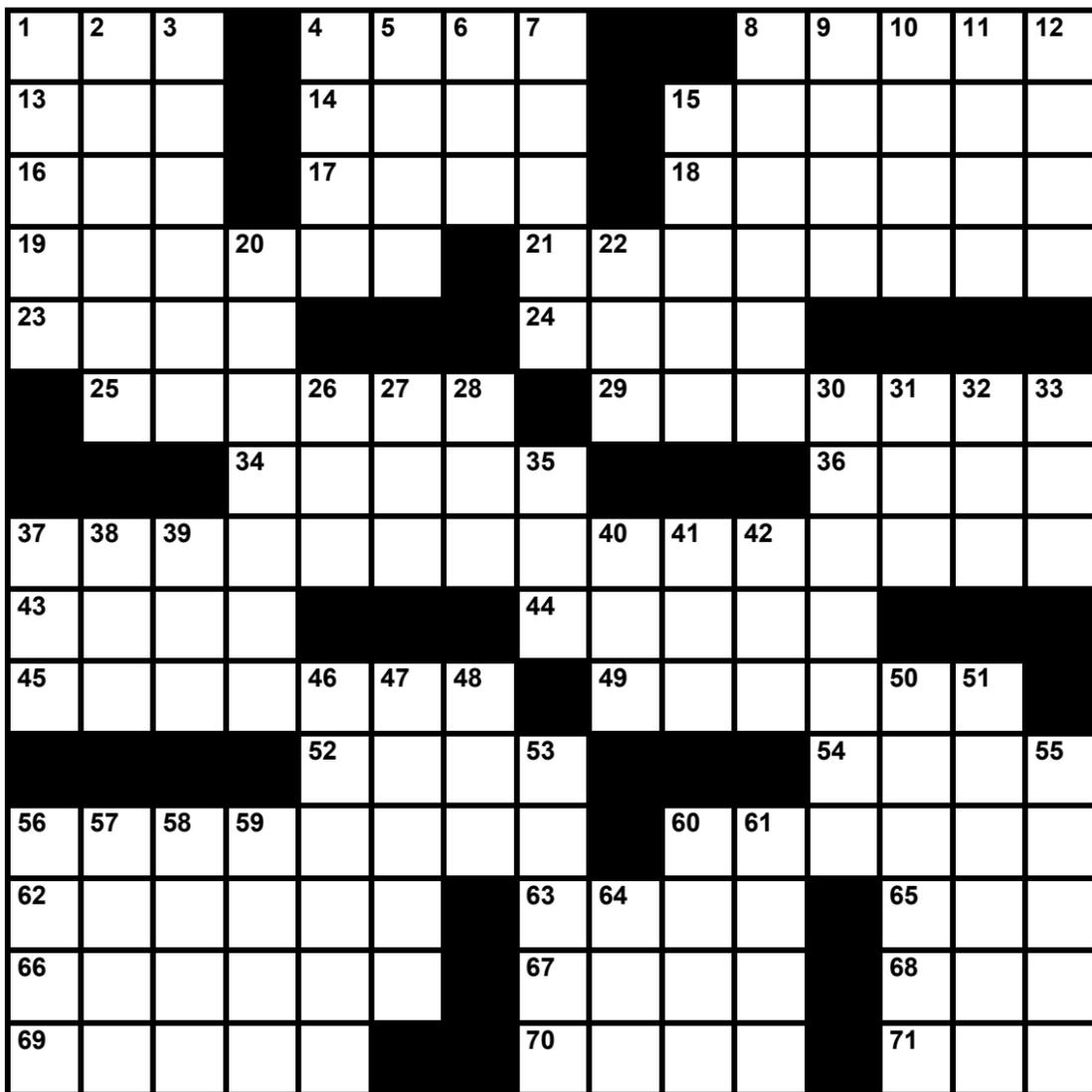
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- Across**
- 1. Former TV show recorder, abbr.
  - 13. Annoyance
  - 18. Ore of lead
  - 4. Garret
  - 14. Taj Mahal site
  - 19. High point
  - 8. Leg parts
  - 16. Card below a jack
  - 21. John and Patrick \_\_\_\_ who created Stripe
  - 17. Enthusiasm
  - 23. "Star Wars" princess

- 24. Loafer
- 9. Prefix with pad
- 25. Solicit, as business, 2 words
- 10. Sews up
- 29. Pepsi, for example, 2 words
- 11. Popular iPod in its day
- 34. Smart people
- 12. Extend across, as a bridge
- 36. Writer Grey
- 15. Cold house
- 37. Desperate lawyer, 2 words
- 20. "Tahitian Women on the Beach" artist
- 43. Patrick's "Ghost" wife
- 22. Goes with ahs
- 44. Digital message medium
- 26. "The Producers" producer Brooks
- 45. Iconic Irish racehorse, 2 words
- 27. One in Spanish
- 49. Best Buy array, 2 words
- 28. ATM requirement
- 52. River to the Baltic
- 30. Colorful garden shrubs
- 54. Battery for laser pointers
- 31. Dads
- 56. Partygoer
- 32. All for \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_ for all
- 60. Dish dirt
- 33. Price word
- 62. Macy's famed Christmas event
- 35. "Rocks" at a bar
- 63. Anjou or Cornice fruit
- 37. Write, as a P.S.
- 65. Popular camera type, for short
- 38. Start of an apology, \_\_\_\_ culpa
- 66. Mechanical pencil end
- 39. Audi rival
- 67. Cut
- 40. 911 responder, abbr.
- 68. Wide shoe spec
- 41. Cleveland cager, for short
- 69. Force back
- 42. Word on one of two matching towels
- 70. Princes, e.g.
- 46. Short poem
- 71. Mormons, initially
- 47. Milk provider
- Down
- 1. Of great importance
- 48. Formally known as
- 2. Covered with light fabric
- 50. Hanging strand
- 3. "La Loge" artist
- 51. Traveled on water
- 4. Relax
- 53. Bank takebacks, briefly
- 5. Curvy molding
- 55. After, as in \_\_\_\_ ski
- 6. Monk's title
- 56. One who's good at impersonations
- 7. Baby bottom sprinkles
- 57. Weigh food wrapping
- 8. Climbed, a ladder for
- 58. Hazard in golf
- 61. Put on as weight
- 64. Rock music style

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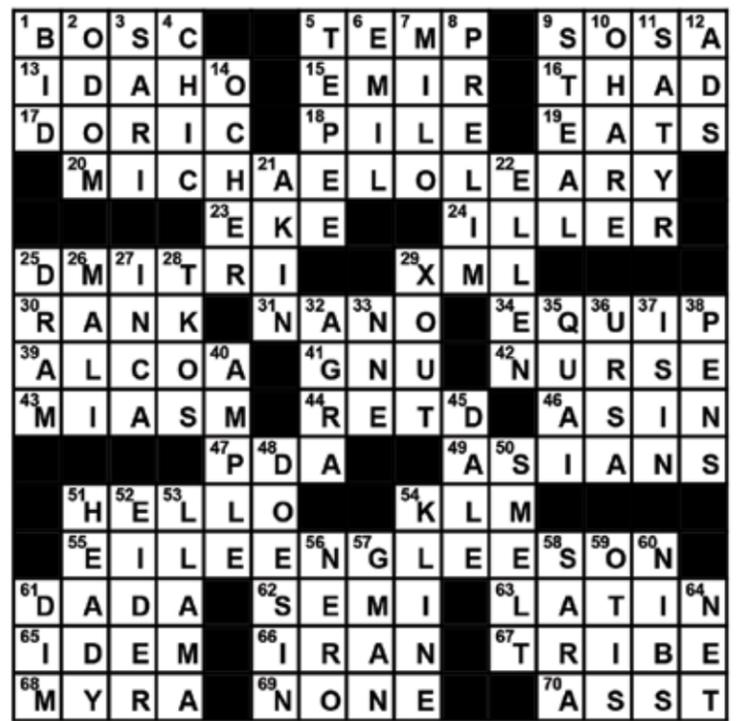
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## Young Irish Artists Build Bridges with New Releases

While their approach to music might be totally different, two young up-and-comers have something very important in common: a desire to connect their musical communities through their work. St Louis MO resident Eimear Arkins seeks a deeper connection between her native Clare Ireland and her adopted city in the recently released "Here and There," while Irish Bluegrass Band JigJam seeks to build a bridge between American Bluegrass and its Irish origins in "Across the Pond."

"Here and There" by Eimear Arkins

"Eimear" is an Irish name that has no known English translation, but the name "Emer" can be found in Irish mythology. The daughter of a high king, Emer became the wife of the warrior Cuchulainn and supposedly possessed the six gifts of womanhood: beauty, voice, speech, needlework, wisdom and chastity. Singer/musician Eimear Arkins appears to have followed somewhat in her namesake's footsteps, as she is known for her remarkable voice, manual dexterity on the fiddle (which I'd venture to say could be considered an equivalent to needlework), and wisdom as a music educator and adjudicator.

While she was growing up in Ruan, County Clare, Arkin's father, the Mayor of Clare, made sure Eimear was tutored by the best, starting at the tender age of 5. Those influencing her development included renowned fiddlers and music educators Frank Custy, Siobhan Peoples, Aisling Mulhern, and Maire O'Keefe, and traditional singers Deirdre Scanlan, and Nan Tom Teamin De Burca.

Arkins holds eleven solo All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil titles (among these English Singing, Irish Singing, Lilted, and Fiddle slow airs). However, she is also an accomplished Irish dancer, making her what some refer to as "the Triple Threat!" She toured extensively with Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, and in 2014 she was selected to be part of the Comhaltas National Folk Orchestra of Ireland. She has toured and performed with Cherish The Ladies, The Paul Brock Band, Trinity Irish Dance Ensemble and Téada. In June 2018 she released her debut album,

"What's Next?" and was awarded "Best Newcomer" from Livelreland in 2019.

"Here and There" is Eimear's second CD. The title of the CD is derived from the two places most dear to her, St. Louis MO, and Clare. I caught up with her this week, and asked her which place was "Here" and which was "There?" to which she thoughtfully replied, "Each place could be either....as I feel an equally deep musical connection to both Clare and to St Louis."

The tunes on the album are almost exclusively compositions by renowned Clare fiddle players and composers, while the album features a number of esteemed musicians and singers with whom Eimear performs regularly in the US, including Alan Murray, Eileen Gannon (St Louis), David McKindley-Ward, Kevin Buckley (St Louis), Dan Lowery and Jackie O'Riley.

As to Eimear's favorite track, well she says it changes every day. At the moment, she is particularly fond of the sad love song "Dobbin's Flowery Vale", performed with David McKindley-Ward on guitar and vocal harmonies, and a lively reel, "The Hairy Chested Frog," performed with Kevin Buckley on guitar. The album does contain two of Arkin's original compositions: a jig



all at such a high level; Eimear Arkins is one of them. I found the lilted particularly fascinating, as we have very few recordings of women lilters. Good stuff! Thanks Eimear!

"Here and There" can be purchased at <https://www.eimeararkins.com/> or <https://bandcamp.com/>.

"Across the Pond" by JigJam The title of this CD is easily understood; but "JigJam" requires a bit more thought. To gain a rudimentary comprehension, I had to explore the origins, history and development of Bluegrass music.....

Bluegrass music can be traced back to the immigrants who came to America from Ireland, Scotland, and England between the 1700-1900's, and brought with them basic styles of music that are generally considered to be the roots of modern Bluegrass music. The violin (fiddle) was one of the first instruments to arrive from Europe; later, banjos were brought to America through African slave trade. As settlers moved into Appalachia, specifically North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia, they wrote songs about daily life in the new land, much like their ancestors had done before in the old countries. The melodies were based on Irish ballads and dance tunes and influenced later by blues and jazz. This music was known as country, hillbilly, or mountain music. But it was not until 1945 that the term "Bluegrass music" appeared.

Most authorities believe that Bluegrass was born in December 1945 at the Grand Old Opry, when Kentuckian Bill Monroe and his "Blue Grass Boys" first appeared with new bandmates Earl Scruggs, and Lester Flatt. Scruggs distinctive three-finger picking style on the banjo with Flatt's guitar playing and vocals, combined with Chubby Wise on fiddle; and Howard Watts on the upright bass came together to form a new genre of country music. By the 1950s, Monroe began referring to his style of music as "Bluegrass music", and others followed along. Since

then, Bluegrass has blossomed and is now performed and enjoyed around the world. The International Bluegrass Music Association claims members in all 50 states and 30 countries.

Instrumentation, vocal harmonies and beat distinguish Bluegrass from other genres. Instruments are typically acoustic, most often fiddle, five-string banjo, guitar, mandolin, and upright bass (string bass). These may be joined by the resonator guitar (also referred to as a Dobro) and sometimes harmonica or Jew's harp. Vocals feature 2-

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3- or 4-part harmony and the beat is anticipated, creating the high energy characteristic of bluegrass.

Given the worldwide growth and enthusiasm for Bluegrass, and modern technologies, it's not surprising that the genre has made its way back to its origins in Ireland, Scotland and England. In Ireland, a fresh musical movement entitled "I-grass" or "Celt-grass" is growing in popularity. Think of it as a fusion between Irish traditional music and American Bluegrass music. The result is JigJam.

JigJam's name is a clever melding of a characteristically Irish tune, the jig, with a typical Bluegrass session, known as a jam. Founding members from Offaly Jamie McKeogh (Lead singer and guitar) and Daithi Melia (5 String Banjo and Dobro) were joined by Tipperary-born Gavin Strappe (Mandolin and Tenor Banjo) in 2016. This year they are joined by Kevin Buckley (Fiddle) to make up this iGrass quartet.

I had the pleasure of speaking with Jamie McKeogh this week. He learned to play and sing from his mother, who was a music teacher in Ireland. He started on guitar and fiddle at five years of age and progressed to playing the banjo and mandolin. A winner of four All Ireland Titles at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, Jamie has toured with the Comhaltas tour of Ireland and the UK, and with various groups such as

Celtic Legends. While Jamie's personal influences include John Doyle, Chris Thile and Gerry O'Connor, he says JigJam has been heavily influenced by Ricky Skaggs, Billy Strings, Steve Earle, and the Punch Brothers.

JigJam came together in 2012 initially as a hobby, but then it took off. Jamie describes "Across the Pond" as "our most cohesive work to date." One of his favorites on this new album is called Waters Hill, written by his friend Ken



Malloy. The song is based on an old traditional tune but incorporates both Bluegrass and Irish styles. This is a terrific track to listen to, as it provides those new to this genre with a perfect example of what JigJam strives to achieve, a fusion of traditional Irish music with Bluegrass, or I-grass.

JigJam is currently touring in the USA, stopping in 18 cities. Unfortunately, Chicago is not one of them. But they promised me they are sure to be back very soon.

"Across the Pond" can be purchased at the band website <https://www.jigjam.ie/>

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### The Ireland Tonight Radio Music Awards 2023

For many years, the Ireland Tonight Radio Music Awards (formerly known as American Celtic Listener Supported Radio Awards) have honored those who have impressed radio hosts and listeners with the excellence of their music.

For those of you who would like to listen to Ireland Tonight Radio at 90.9 FM on your radio dial, go to: Ireland Tonight Radio

For 2023, The Ireland Tonight Radio Music Awards have been presented to the following:

**Female Vocalist of the Year:** Karan Casey, Nine Apples of Gold

**Male Vocalist of the Year:** Joe Gibney, The Jeremiahs, Misery Hill and other stories.

**Album of the Year:** Conor Mallon, Unearthed

**Debut Album of the Year:** Reverie Road

**Female Musician of the Year:** Katie Grennan

**Male Musician of the Year:** Sean Heely

**Live Performance of the Year:** Pauline Conneely, Reel Housewives of Irish Traditional Music

**Female Vocalist of the Year, Karan Casey** in 2023 has provided yet another



**Joe Gibney, The Jeremiahs.** The Jeremiahs celebrated 10 years as a band in 2023 and Dublin born Joe Gibney has been surrounded by both traditional Irish music and other music genres from an early age. His love of music shows throughout this album and The Reluctant



Farmer illustrates Joe's love of music and his ability to tell the story.

**Album of the Year goes to Conor Mallon** for his album Unearthed. Conor Mallon is from Keady, Co. Armagh in the North of Ireland and is

known as one of the lead Uilleann pipers today. Per folk.com, 'Conor Mallon is leading the next generation of Uilleann pipe players.' The dynamics of Conor Mallon's Unearthed CD are absolutely mesmerizing and complex and you are totally drawn in as you eagerly

await the next tune. He captivates his audience with his uilleann pipes. Band members include, Paul Starrett, electric guitar, Jack Warnock, acoustic guitar and vocals, Fintan Mulholland on bodhran and whistle. Unearthed was created during the COVID lockdown and during this time Conor decided to focus all of his

attention on unearthing the many unique sounds of the Uilleann Pipes. Conor not only is 'the uilleann pipe player', he also composed many of the tunes on this album. You realize very quickly that as you listen to each track you want more!

**Debut Album of the Year is Reverie Road.** Reverie Road is a group of highly accomplished musicians.

John Williams, founding member of the group Solas, a multi-instrumentalist and an international wonder playing the flute, concertina, button accordion, bodhran and piano. John has won five All Ireland titles as well as being the only American born competitor to win first place in the Senior Concertina category.

**Katie Grennan**, formerly from Gaelic Storm

is a classically trained fiddle player and Irish Dancer who is not only working on the Reverie Road project but also on STEAM, the Irish Quartet, The Bow Tides and is the executive director of Share a Note which provides music to those that are not well in a variety of hospitals.

Winifred Horan, is a classical trained fiddler who has played with Cherish the Ladies as well as the Sharon Shannon band and is also a founding member of Solas. She is an accomplished teacher and often asked for sessions.

Utsav Lal rounds out the Reverie Road band. He is an accomplished piano player that has performed several

piano concerts which include Indian ragas at venues such as Carnegie Hall and the John F. Kennedy Center. Utsav Lal is currently on the teaching faculty of Piano School of NYC.

Four people who bring their love of Irish Traditional music and their musical experiences to the album makes Reverie Road a delightful listen.

**Female Musician of the Year is Katie Grennan.** Katie has taken on several different projects this past year. She is formerly from Gaelic Storm and is a classically trained fiddle player and Irish Dancer



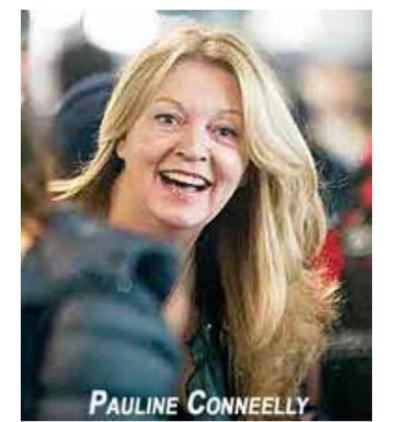
extraordinary who is not only working on the Reverie Road project but also on STEAM, the Irish Quartet, The Bow Tides and is the executive director of Share



a Note which provides music to those that are not well in a variety of hospitals. Katie is a lead instructor at the Trinity Academy of Irish Dance based in Chicago. In addition to her many varied projects, Katie has released several solo albums.

**Male Musician of the Year is Sean Heely.** Sean is a champion fiddler and singer and has released his latest album Dramagical in 2023. Liz Carroll has referred to him as "One powerhouse of a fiddler." He is a U.S. National

Scottish Fiddle Champion as well as an award winning fiddle and folk singer in

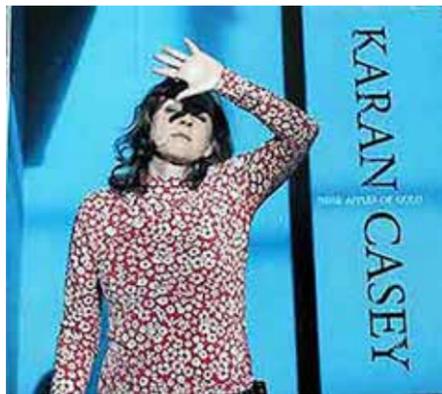


Scottish Gaelic. Dramagical provides the listener with the drama and magic that is Scotland. In addition to performing Sean provides individual instruction in his private teaching school. Sean developed a Celtic Christmas Concert that has always sold out and has plans to take it on the road next holiday season. Sean features many original tunes and arrangements with the Sean Heely Celtic Band.

**Live Performance of the Year goes to Pauline Conneely**, and the Reel Housewives of Traditional Irish Music. Pauline coordinated 14

ladies that have exceptional musical talent to perform together for the first time at Chief O'Neill's in Chicago. All had played with each other at some point in time but they had not all played together. "The Reel Housewives of Irish Traditional Music," included Eimear Arkins, Michelle

Bergin, Laura Byrne, Liz Carroll, Kathleen Conneely, Pauline Conneely, Rose Flanagan, Patty Furlong, Eileen Gannon, Eileen Goodman, Liz Knowles, Siobhán McKinney, Margie Mulvihill, and Clodagh Ryan. The talent, the wonderful camaraderie and the genuine enjoyment of playing together came through to the audience loud and clear. Congratulations to all of our Ireland Tonight Radio Music Award winners for 2023.



gem, her 12th album, Nine Apples of Gold. This album provides the listeners with thoughtful arrangements and with Kate Ellis on cello, Ashley Hayes on mandolin and many others, the quality of this album has been enhanced. The album focus' on women and their variety of friendships.

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The Oscars are already in the rearview mirror, and it was a good night for Irish talent - to say nothing of the fact that the viewing figures were the best for a few years.

The big news of course was the triumph of Oppenheimer, which took home seven of the famous golden statues, including Best Picture, Best Director for Christopher Nolan and a first in the category for an Irishman, Corkman Cillian Murphy as Best Actor.

It is hard to believe, but despite past nominations as Best Actor/Actress for actors including Saoirse Ronan, Paul Mescal and Collin Farrell receiving nominations, no-one before had heard their name called out. Also, supporting nominations (but no wins) have gone to Liam Neeson, Michael Fassbender, and Ruth Negga, among others, in the past as well.

"I'm a very proud Irishman standing here tonight," said Murphy, who dedicated his awards to "peacemakers everywhere," and concluded: "Go raibh míle maith agaibh."

Irish co-production Pretty Things,

a fantasy/comedy which took home five awards, unfortunately saw Irishman Robbie Ryan missing out in the Cinematography category, but Emma Stone took home her second Best Actress Oscar (the other was for La La Land).

Another winner was for Best Original Song "What Was I Made For?" by Billie Eilish, which comes from the movie Barbie. She has Irish and Scottish ancestry, as does her older brother and collaborator, Finneas O'Connell, and this win was their second Oscar too (they also won last year for No Time To Die).

In other news, Warner Brothers have pushed The Batman Part II, understood to star Dubliner Barry Keoghan, back to a 2026 release, with director Maggie Gyllenhaal's remake of The Bride of Frankenstein starring Killarney's Jessie Buckley hitting the screens instead in October. The date change is apparently one of many after-effects of the writer/actor strikes last year, and the Frankenstein remake - entitled Bride! - also stars Christian Bale, Peter

Sarsgaard, recent Best Actress nominee Annette Bening (Nyad) and Penelope Cruz.

The cast of The Batman Part II includes Robert Pattinson (Twilight), Jeffrey Wright (just nominated as Best Actor for American Fiction), and Andy Serkis. In it, Keoghan (Saltburn) is believed to be reprising his role as the Joker, as teased in 2021's The Batman.

Finally, while we may all have had one or three more Guinness's than usual for St. Patrick's Day recently, there's some exciting news about the family behind Ireland's most famous export: they're coming to Netflix!

Peaky Blinders director Steve Knight recently announced a new drama series, House of Guinness, will be based on one of Ireland's biggest dynasties.

Set in 19th-century Dublin and New York, the story will focus on the consequences of the death of Benjamin Guinness, the man responsible for the extraordinary success of the Guinness brewery, and the impact it has on his adult children: Arthur, Edward, Anne, and Ben.

Shades of huge hit Succession here perhaps, and Knight noted that "...wealth, poverty, power, influence and great tragedy are all intertwined to create a rich tapestry of material to draw from.

I've always been fascinated by their stories and am excited to bring the characters to life for the world to see."

Filming for the eight-part series is due to begin this summer, and it has been rumored to have the power of Peaky Blinders, the huge hit show that starred newly-minted Oscar winner Cillian Murphy, but with the scale and the sweep of a true family saga.

Netflix also announced it will bring Limerick-born Marian Keyes best-selling novel Grown Ups to the screen as an ensemble family drama, basing the story around three couples: Nell and Liam, Cara and Ed, and Jessie and Rory.

Keyes apparently screamed when she got the news, and I'm sure Irish audiences here in the USA will be looking forward to both - quite different - series - when they come to our screens.



Irish Consul General Kevin Byrne joined Governor of Wisconsin Tony Evers, the Wisconsin Irish Caucus, and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation yesterday for the signing of the Wisconsin-Ireland Trade Commission Bill. "The economic relationship between Ireland and Wisconsin is strong and mutually beneficial.

We look forward to continuing to work with our partners across the State to deepen this relationship in the years ahead," said Kevin.

Governor Tony Evers Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation Embassy & Consulates of Ireland USA Irish Foreign Ministry merriionstreet.ie

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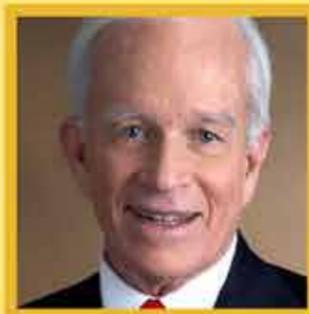
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**Science:** Joseph P. Kerwin, M.D.  
**Hometown Hero:** The Hagerty Family

**Date:** April 27, 2024

**Location:** Irish American Heritage Center

**Early Bird Rates through April 1:**

Tickets: \$175 general public; \$150 for IAHC members

Table of 10: \$1700 general public; \$1,450 for IAHC members

**For more information, visit:**

[www.iahof.org](http://www.iahof.org)

### Archiving Irish America: Music, Dance, and Culture April 11-13

In Irish America, archives have been essential in allowing recent generations to tap into the long history of music, language, oral traditions, dance and folklore essential to a vibrant and living culture. Archiving Irish America: Music, Dance & Culture will bring together those who engage with archival materials in their research or creative practice, those who have collected and curated cultural treasures for these archives, and those who wish to contribute to

### BogSide History Tours Gives Visitors Insight into the Bloody Sunday Massacre

Bogside History Tours offer a walking tour of Derry Bogside that gives students and tourists a first hand and on-site analysis of the Bloody Sunday story in Derry City. This comprehensive tour will give an educational insight to the Civil Rights era, corner and beneath the city walls of Derry. The tour begins at the Guildhall in the centre of Derry where the original march was to finish and makes its way over to the Bogside, through Glenfada Park and finishes at the Bloody Sunday monument



*From left to right: Glenn Doherty (tour guide), John McKinney (tour guide), Paul Doherty (tour guide), and John Kelly (Museum of Free Derry).*

Bloody Sunday and the conflict that ensued. This hour long walking tour in Derry will also retrace parts of the original march and visit places where the dead and wounded fell.

The tour will pass The Museum of Free Derry and conclude at the Bloody Sunday monument within sight of Free Derry on Rossville Street. This tour is not just about the Bloody Sunday massacre it is about when the truth was set free it allowed the people of Derry and indeed Ireland to embrace a brighter future and a new beginning. GRMA. <https://bogsidehistorytours.com>



Festival, Irish Arts Center (N.Y.), Jacobs Pillow (MA), The Joyce (N.Y.), Kennedy Center (D.C.), Project Arts Centre (Dublin), and Seamus Heaney Homeplace (Northern Ireland).

In 2018 Butler founded Our Steps, a not-for-profit organization committed to expanding the way we think about history, practice, and performance of Irish dance. Partnering with the Jerome Robbins Dance Division of the New York Public Library, Our Steps initiated the first living Irish dance archive, entitled Our Steps, Our Story: An Irish Dance Legacy Archive. To date, this ever-expanding archive has created over 200 hours of video and audio resource materials never previously documented.

Butler has taught at Princeton University, University College Dublin, University of Notre Dame Global Center, Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, University of Limerick and Glucksman Ireland House, NYU. She choreographed and starred in the original Irish dance productions, Riverdance and Dancing on Dangerous Ground and is the recipient of many prestigious awards and honors.

documenting and creating Irish American culture through these important institutions.

#### Keynote Speakers

Liz Carroll was born in Chicago of Irish parents. She's a junior and senior All-Ireland Fiddle Champion and has toured as a solo artist and with the Greenfields of America, Trian, String Sisters, and as part of the duo Liz Carroll & John Doyle. She's featured on eleven albums and has appeared on many more. Liz is a recipient of the National Heritage Fellowship Award (1994). In 2010 she became the first Irish-American musician nominated for a Grammy. In 2011 she became the first American-born

composer honored with the Cumadóir TG4, Ireland's most significant traditional music prize.

Dancer, choreographer, and Our Steps Artistic Director Jean Butler is a leading figure in the world of contemporary Irish dance performance. Her most recent production, a site-specific promenade piece entitled 'What We Hold' premiered at the Dublin Theatre Festival in October 2022 to critical acclaim. Past works have been supported and presented by The Arts Council (Ireland), Abbey Theatre (Dublin), Baryshnikov Arts Center (N.Y.), Danspace Project (N.Y.), Dublin Dance Festival, Dublin Theatre



**Gaelic Park President, Bill O'Sullivan, standing in front of the 2024 parade float**



**Participants getting shaved for St. Baldrick's Foundation to combat children's cancer at Gaelic Park in March**

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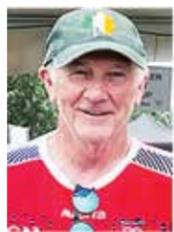


## Summer Irish Arts Kids Day Camp at the Irish American Heritage Center in July

The Irish Music School of Chicago and the Irish American Heritage Center will be hosting their 15th annual Irish Arts Kids Day Camp July 22-26. Camp will run from 9am-12pm Monday-Friday. Children ages 4-11 are transported to Ireland learning from some of the best Irish musicians, teachers and artists from around the world. Each day starts and ends with live traditional Irish music and their days are filled with learning many Irish arts forms including singing, liltin, sean-nós, group and step dancing, storytelling and folklore, and arts and crafts. Campers choose between tin whistle or fiddle for their daily music class and all campers try their hand at bodhrán playing too. The Irish Music School of Chicago and the Irish American Heritage Center partner to provide this fun yearly program to pass on the love and appreciation of Irish arts to the next generation.

To find out more about the 2024 Irish Arts Week Kids Day Camp, [visit www.irishmusicschool.org](http://www.irishmusicschool.org) or call 773-412-5082.





# Game On!

By Chris Wheaton



St. Patrick's Day has come and gone, and I am hopeful that each of you got the opportunity to partake in one of the numerous local celebrations. For myself and my family, we enjoyed the Naperville parade which was hosted by

the West Suburban Irish and as usual they did a bang-up job. Ninety-one groups participated in the mile and a half walk through downtown Naperville ranging from the usual pipes and drums bands, the Knights of Columbus, Shriners on motorized coolers, Naperville Hurling Club and many, many political candidates. A wonderful time was had by all as the sun shone brightly to make the brisk morning feel comfortable and festive.

At the end of the parade, much of the crowd headed over to Quigley's Irish Pub for the best poured Guinness in the area and some great

music. Others moved on to other parades as Elmhurst and St. Charles both host fantastic events starting later in the day. There was no lack of fun and I thought it was brilliant to have so many parades on March 9th to avoid competing with the South Side and Chicago parades.

As we move deeper into spring, I am still fearful that this will be the year that Mother Nature dumps one of those huge April snowstorms on us. It has been so mild lately I feel like it is a well-set trap that will suck us in. Our lawn is green and lush and almost ready to be mowed but I have seen this movie before and am not going to fall for it! I hope I am wrong and the outdoor pursuits we enjoy can get underway. Indoor hurling is great, but it is a bit like pinball and is not a substitute for the outdoor game, known as the

fastest game on grass. For those of you who do not know what I am talking about, head over to Nike Park in Naperville on a Sunday afternoon and see the Naperville Hurling Club in action. If Gaelic Park is more in your wheelhouse, you can always catch some wonderful hurling and football action as well as sample the food and drink on the phenomenal patio.

Moving into spring I want to make a point this year of getting around to more of the fine Irish Pubs and shops that are abundant in the Chicago area. I have had the Mystic Rogue on my radar for quite some time and am committed to making it happen sooner rather than later. My understanding is that the owners are two lads from County Laois where one of my friends, and club-mates, Bryan Delaney hails from. It will be fun to schedule a group outing and confirm what everyone

has been saying, that it is one of the finest pubs in the area.

On a more personal note, the coming of April signals the safe return of our future son in law from the Middle East where he has been deployed for the past 9 months. It has been a trying and scary time for us. Each day that passed without incident was a victory and another day closer to safety. Having never experienced something like a military deployment it was extremely unnerving to hear about the bombs being detonated on or near his base and the time spent hunkered down in a bunker. Lt. Jack Hamman made his family and country proud, and I am honored to know him. Jack is also a valued member of Naperville Hurling and although he has not been around much, he knows that he will always have a supportive GAA home.

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## Hooley in the Park 2024 at Chicago Gaelic Park

by **Brendan Houlihan**  
Chicago Gaelic Park Director  
Thank you to all the folks who attended Hooley in the

sponsors who helped make this weekend possible: Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago, AG Coyle Concrete-Alan

Musicians Association, Gaelic Park Players, Chicago GAA, Winston's Market, St. Jarlath's Youth GAA, Cross Keys School



**Brendan Houlihan, Stuart Moyles, Jack Keogh, Kathleen Sheeran and Donna Killen**

Park at Chicago Gaelic Park. We enjoyed Stuart Moyles, Jack Keogh, Ger Butler, Colin Butler, Joe McShane and Myles McVeigh & The Holye Brothers. We thank all the

Coyle, Bridges-John Bridges, AthleteX- Tom Mulvey, Chicago Gaelic Park, McMahon Painting-Brian McMahon, BFH Wealth Management-Brendan Houlihan, Irish

of Irish Dance, Jack & Pat's Old Fashioned Butcher Shop, Lavin Cassidy School of Irish Dance, Clancy's Pizza Pub, Clancy's 95th, and IAN-Irish American News.

## Hurling and Camogie Spring Training Rookie Camp

Hurling and Camogie Spring Training Rookie Camp Will be held in the Naperville Yard, 1607 Legacy Circle in Naperville, IL on April 28th starting at 7am.

No experience necessary and entry is free. Naperville Hurling & Camogie Club

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### Queen's U Receives Largest In-kind Donation from US Tech Company

Queen's University Belfast has today received its largest ever in-kind donation from US computer software company Alteryx, who will be donating data licences to students and staff at Queen's University Belfast with an estimated value of \$15million.

Alteryx will initially provide 3,000 licences to support Queen's students and staff to access free software, training and accreditation in data analytics.

As the demand for digital transformation powered by data analytics and artificial intelligence increases, this game-changing partnership will enable Queen's to infuse

career opportunities and allowing our students to be more competitive in the workplace on day one.



At the signing of the memorandum of understanding today (March 19) in New York City to formalise this commitment, Professor Sir Ian Greer, President and

Vice-Chancellor at Queen's University Belfast, said: "Philanthropy is a vital tool that allows Queen's to make a difference, change lives and continue to be at the leading edge of global innovation.

"This exceptionally generous donation from Alteryx will make a huge difference to the lives of our students and staff. Data analytics skills are no longer reserved for a few data-focused jobs or companies - they are now in high demand and relevant for every industry. Employers eagerly seek professionals with data skills, and thanks to this \$15 million donation, our students will benefit from the training and certification provided by Alteryx, making them even more future-ready when they graduate from Queen's."

The Alteryx SparkED Education programme helps learners at every stage become data literate with employability

skills to start on exciting careers at no cost. The programme has a vast global reach with over 180,000 learners from universities in over 50 countries.

Alteryx Co-founder and Chief Advocacy Officer, Libby Duane Adams, who attended today's signing, added: "We are extremely excited to partner with Queen's University Belfast and I want to thank Vice Chancellor Greer for presenting such a unique opportunity for Alteryx to contribute to the lives of students in Northern Ireland. Alteryx is built on the principle that data skills should be democratized, and when we empower students to work with data, we democratize opportunity in a global economy."

"Our journey with Queen's University was catalysed by our participation in U.S. Special Envoy Joe Kennedy's recent business delegation to Northern Ireland. I'd also like to thank the Special Envoy for his leadership and support throughout this process."

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**Saturday 6th April**

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**Gatherings for Seniors**

Discover a vibrant community and embrace the Irish spirit this spring!

Join our **FREE** Senior Gatherings at *Chicago Gaelic Park* and the *Irish American Heritage Center* for an engaging blend of Irish cultural events, social activities and educational workshops.

For questions or to have a detailed schedule of senior gatherings mailed to your home, call **Kathleen** on 773-282-8445.

The Shamrock Seniors	The Golden Gaels
Senior gatherings at the <u>Irish American Heritage Center</u>	Senior gatherings at <u>Chicago Gaelic Park</u>
<b>Wednesday 3rd April</b> 10 a.m. — 12 p.m. <b>Monthly Musical Gathering</b> Live music with Declan McShane	<b>Wednesday 10th April</b> 10 a.m. — 12 p.m. <b>Irish Film Showcase</b> Award-winning short films from Ireland
<b>Wednesday 17th April</b> 10 a.m. — 12 p.m. <b>Irish Film Showcase</b> Award-winning short films from Ireland	<b>Wednesday 24th April</b> 10 a.m. — 12 p.m. <b>Live Irish Music</b> With Ray Gavin
<b>Wednesday 1st May</b> 10 a.m. — 12 p.m. <b>Monthly Musical Gathering</b> Live music with Ray Gavin	<b>Wednesday 8th May</b> 10 a.m. — 12 p.m. <b>Tea Party</b> Tea, special refreshments & great company
<b>Wednesday 15th May</b> 10 a.m. — 12 p.m. <b>Laughing Session</b> Learn about laugh therapy & have a laugh	<b>Wednesday 22nd May</b> 10 a.m. — 12 p.m. <b>Live Irish Music</b> With Declan McShane

For questions call Kathleen on 773-282-8445.



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- Intergenerational Holiday Celebrations

Call 773-282-8445 and speak with Kathleen.



# Counties of Ireland

by Tom Butler



Penal laws were laws imposed on Ireland from England to control, oppress and keep Ireland powerless. I will share just a few. Irish Catholics couldn't own a horse. Irish Catholics couldn't own a firearm. Irish Catholics couldn't hold a profession. When allowed and laws were lifting a Catholic church could only be built of wood and far away from a main road. Thank God we are way passed the Penal laws but it's a part of our history and one we shouldn't forget.

Onto technology, Dublin has major tech companies such as Google, IBM, Microsoft etc. Dublin was the driving force behind Ireland's Celtic

tiger. A few facts: Dublin is home to the largest Viking cemetery out of Scandinavia, St. Valentine is buried in Dublin and Arthur Guinness signed a 9,000-year lease on a brewery in 1759.

Some places to visit in Dublin include Trinity College, St. Stephen's Green & Kilmainham Gaol Museum, Dublin Castle and Guinness Storehouse. Some famous people from Dublin include Bono, U2's lead singer, Oscar Wilde poet, James Joyce, poet and Maeve Binchy, author. My oldest son Michael lives in Dublin, he told me when he was five years old that he was going to move to Ireland. He moved to Ireland when he was 21.

Dublin airport is the 13 busiest airport in Europe. National parliament is called Dail Eireann as the house of representatives and the Seanad or senate..

Instead of a story this week I am listing some good deed ideas we can

all try to do.

Let your first check of the year be to charity.

Help a friend in need.

Volunteer for an hour at an organization of your choice.

Buy a gift for your mother or grandmother - just because.

Write a thank-you note to someone who won't expect it.

Find unneeded items in your house and donate them to a charitable organization. Plant a tree.

Think of something you do well and use your talent to benefit others - for example performing magic tricks at a children's hospital or playing music at a nursing home.

Organize a family meal and appreciate being together.

Collect stuffed animals or toys from family members, friends, and donate them to an organization that helps children. If you have any questions, please call. (708) 425-7021

This month we will head to Dublin the bustling, diverse and welcoming capital of Ireland. Dublin is a county and is our capital city. It is in the province of Leinster. There is an open marketplace on Moore Street where they sell a variety of things such as fruit, vegetables, crafts, clothing, jewelry, baked goods, etc. Dublin City is unique because of the people, the repartee, wit and humor of Dubliners is unmatched.

The river Liffey runs through Dublin dividing the north and south. Dublin means black or dark pool in Irish. There was a Gaelic settlement known as Ath Cliath (ford of hurdles) located further up the Liffey near the Fr. Matthew Bridge. Dublin is the most populous county.

Despite harsh penal laws imposed on Ireland Dublin still flourished.

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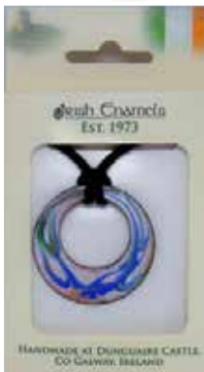
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### A Dog, The Doctor and The Dogfighters

There are many more dog breeds than provinces in Ireland, nine species in fact, including the Glen of Imaal Terrier also known as the Glen or Wicklow Terrier, the Irish Setter and the Irish Red and White Setter, the Kerry Blue Terrier, the Irish Water Spaniel, the Kerry Beagle, the Irish Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier, and the Irish Wolfhound.

But far from the Irish Sea the Navy's newest aircraft carrier built to sail the Seven Seas has brought a whole new breed of healing from a dog whose journey may arguably be more legendary than the waterborne voyage of County Kerry's St. Brendan the Navigator.

#### The Dog

Her name is Sage, a yellow lab whose ship was the USS Gerald R. Ford, whose mission worthy of Star Trek's legendary space going Irishman James Kirk was to boldly go where no dog has gone before, into a combat zone off the coast of Israel.

Now, while military dogs have seen duty both on land and at sea doing security duties, Sage was specially trained to bring a special security in peace of mind and comfort sorely needed among loneliness and stress, close confines and combat tempo. Sage is part of a pilot program where she demonstrated the impact a pet can have for the six thousand sailors of the Gerald R. Ford and the ships that support and defend the biggest

and most advanced flattop ever. Clad in protective pink crocs on her paws and outfitted in flight goggles for helicopter hops from the carrier deck to the other ships of the strike group, Sage brought and received love to so many in harm's way.

Her job was to help sailors handle immense emotional stress and the Ford's maiden journey would prove to be



an unanticipated stressor when war broke out in Israel October 7th. A five month tour turned to an 8 month endurance of homecomings delayed and three about faces from homeward bound to a Middle East aflame from Syria to Gaza. Sage's comfort honed in years of training is one of two dozen new innovations now under study as the Carrier Air Wing aviators recoup at Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia Beach, Virginia and top officers and engineers aboard the carrier at its Norfolk homeport go full speed ahead to study lessons learned before the vessel goes back into the fray as tensions abroad once

more have let slip the dogs of war.

#### The Doctor

A former Veterans Administration psychiatrist whose journey has taken him from his native Brooklyn and treating vets with PTSD just after the Vietnam War to private practice as a Miami area therapist who has treated the families and service members of the nearby US Air Force base, Coral Gables' Arthur Bregman, MD has internationally recognized expertise germane to pets and perils, fighter pilot dogfighters and dogs of healing.

"It's the 20 to 40 year olds,

the Millennials who are our new Greatest Generation," says of the current generation of military service members as he cradles his GoldenDoodle "Alf" with a scratch behind the ear and that perfect description of the age range on a naval vessel from the youngest sailors to the senior officers. And the healing range that Sage brought to sailors. "There's a powerful health benefit," Bregman observed the week that the Ford and Carrier Air Wing 8 returned home. "It decreases depression, reduces anxiety, lowers stress...it's just so good to have a dog involved, to be attuned to our behavior and emotions."

Bregman's insights come from his fame from Europe to America in print and broadcast news stories on his pinpointing of the global peacetime crisis known now as Cave Syndrome. From Covid then to the Carrier now, people have felt the effect of being trapped emotionally and physically in close confines for so long and then fear or have trouble adjusting in returning to the outside world.

Both Bregman and Navy mental health teams encourage present and past service members to reach out for healing with no fear of stigma.

"Come for the dog, stay for the talk," was the goal of shipboard presentations where Sage held court for groups of sailors, as the spokesperson for the admiral commanding the Naval Atlantic Fleet, Public Affairs Officer Dawn Stankus told Navy Times. The playful pup was center stage as the Navy's mental health teams aboard ship described the options available for seeking help.

#### The Dogfighters

With all the brave seagoing sailors and air warriors experiencing one on one therapy with Sage, I must add a personal note that I too was somewhat in need of her healing and glad that someone I admired and worried about met her. Lt. Commander Nikkol Rajkovic of the BlackLions Squadron aboard Gerald R. Ford was someone I worried about during the whole extended deployment. The F/A-18 Super Hornet backseater is known as a "Whizzo" or WSO-Weapons Systems Officer. She was part of a two-woman team I interviewed for an article tied to the women Navy aviators who inspired the character "Phoenix," the no-nonsense pilot with "Bob" as her backseat bomber in the film Top Gun Maverick. Nikki's

front seat pilot was my former Navy Sea Cadet among dozens of youngsters I watched over and marched to the mess hall at Great Lakes Naval Base in North Chicago. As the first female instructors at TOP GUN, Lt. Commander Briana "Tonsil" Plohocky and "Big Raj" flew in Tom Cruise's famous movie jet and like many of those I write about, I keep in touch and hope to meet them if I haven't already.

A Midwest snow storm conspired to keep me from meeting Nikki and personally welcoming her home. After covering homecomings many times as a television news reporter in Norfolk this time I felt the ache the families feel about the returning heroes that the ordeal is over and their hero is home safe. "Tonsil," whom you'll meet in a future column, tells me that Sage was also fast friends with the Marquette University grad I feared for eight months was going to be flying into the maelstrom with me feeling the same uncertainty every parent must feel of their brave sailor at war's edge.

So thank you Sage for taking care of my personal hero and defender among the many I've written about. You touched me too.

God Bless the United States Navy Sailors and Marines on aircraft carriers, Sage's colleague named Demo out there now on the carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower currently in the headlines and in the thick of it battling terrorist enemies, and bless Dr. Bregman and Alf back here in the States caring so long for so many who paid the price of freedom with hidden wounds of troubled emotions from serving us and protecting others. E-mail

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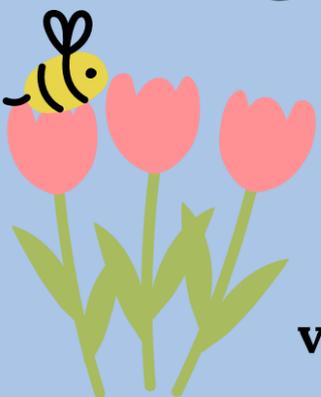
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