



April • 2007

Long-Anticipated Gage to Open Soon

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Finally – Agreement on Power Sharing

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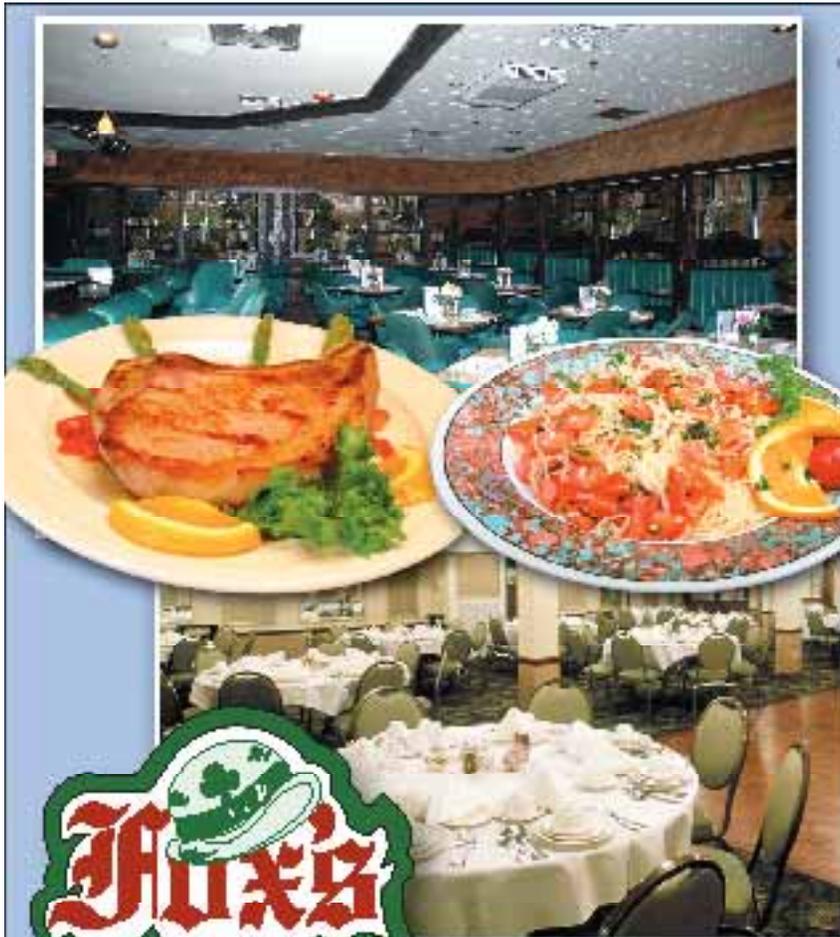
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Time To Cut The Cards In Northern Ireland

The most obvious result of the Assembly elections on March 7 was that both the Democratic Unionists and Sinn Féin continued to improve what in the corporate world would be called their 'market share.' Obvious too was the fact that they did this at the expense of their main rivals. In the DUP's case it was the former bastion of unionist politics, the Ulster Unionist Party, that suffered while Sinn Féin took still more votes away from the Social Democratic and Labor Party. What is less obvious, particularly if you happen to be reading the establishment British and Irish press, both staunchly in the SDLP's camp and both still broadly more supportive of the UUP than the DUP, is that both the SDLP and the UUP are edging ever nearer to that critical point in the life of any political party, the point at which its share of the vote combined with the downward trend in its vote over successive elections suggests that the end is near.

In short, the most pressing issue for both the UUP and the SDLP right now is how to survive. In the UUP's case, they probably stumble on in the hope that the normalization of politics in the six counties will bring many of their voters back to the fold. After all, if politics are normalized—if the Assembly can be reconstituted and survive uninterrupted—the very reason the DUP came to the fore in the first place will be shown for the sham it always was. Make no mistake, Paisley and his DUP accolites won the unionist base over by scaring the bejaysus out of them. They created a toxic atmosphere of fear. Fear that republican violence was still a clear and present danger to protestants everywhere and fear that going into government with Sinn Féin was one short step away from going into a United Ireland. If they now accept the massive financial inducement on offer to take their places in the assembly the DUP are effectively admitting what everyone else has known for years, that the possibility of IRA violence is zero. They will also have to reassure the unionist electorate that a working Assembly does not necessarily mean the inevitability of a United Ireland any longer. Precisely what they will say has changed to make this so is anyone's guess. Either way, maybe the best strategy for the UUP is just to sit tight and hope that the majority of unionists finally see through Paisley's bluff and bravado and realize that they have as little in common with his bally-go-backwards politics as they have with his fundamentalist religious beliefs. Maybe it's not even

a good strategy but it might still be their best.

On the nationalist side of the coin, the SDLP's political future is even more precarious. It is apparent that nationalist voters have decided that their short, medium and long term interests are best represented by Sinn Féin. It's hard to see a reversal of this situation ever. Sinn Féin have now unequivocally and successfully made the transition to purely democratic politics. The last two momentous hurdles on a long and arduous course, disarmament and now support for the policing structures, have been cleared with no significant downside for them at the ballot box. What's more, they are attracting the younger voters who, unless things on the ground change dramatically, will have no reason to switch allegiance in the foreseeable future. That they have all the key personalities in nationalist politics north and south of the border and that they also have a clear and defined vision of a United Ireland and a strategy for getting us there, has helped enormously.

So what lies ahead for the SDLP? Don't be surprised if the answer lies in a merger with one of their suitors in the south. For several years now the SDLP has been courted by Fianna Fáil, the Labor Party and Fine Gael. The prize is a big one. Any party that can bring the SDLP under its wing

instantly becomes the only other All-Ireland party (other than Sinn Féin). With the votes that would bring and with the delicate balance of power now extant in the south, that is an enormous advantage. For the SDLP, the upside would also be an All-Ireland platform, which might catapult them back into voter calculus in the north. A merger would also increase fundraising and a better tactical ground operation, both pragmatic areas of politics where they have been soundly beaten by Sinn Féin for well over a decade.

They are murmurings even now that any merger should take place sooner rather than later while the SDLP still has something to offer its prospective partner. And there is precedent. When the old Nationalist party, that previously had represented all nationalists in the north, fell apart in the late sixties, it was the newly formed SDLP who picked up most of wreckage.

The implications for republicans are double-edged. While some would like to deliver the final blow to a party that they increasingly see as their nemesis, a merger would undoubtedly shift the center of political gravity even more towards unifying the country. All nationalists in the north would be represented by a party that is active and possibly in government both sides of the border. That is hard to ignore.

An Taoiseach Bertie Ahern TD On Devolved Institutions In Northern Ireland

The Taoiseach today Monday 26th March 2007 said, "This morning saw unprecedented and very positive developments in Northern Ireland. We move forward from today in an entirely new spirit and with every expectation of success. I welcome the agreement between Sinn Fein and the DUP on the restoration of the devolved institutions on 8 May. This has the potential to transform the future of this island.

This has been a period of intensive engagement involving parties and governments. I have discussed these latest developments again with Prime Minister Blair today.

Through our partnership and cooperation we are determined to ensure that the final steps of the peace process are successfully completed.

In view of the absolute commitment to the restoration of the Good Friday Agreement institutions in six weeks time, and the intensive preparations for government that will now commence, the two Governments will accommodate this new date.

I urge all the parties to make best use of the preparatory period now available to ensure that the new Executive will be able to discharge its responsibilities with full and immediate effect on 8 May."

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**Unionists And Sinn Féin Reach Historic Accord
Despite A Further Six Week Delay, The DUP Has Given An 'Absolute Commitment' To Restart The Political Institutions On May 8**

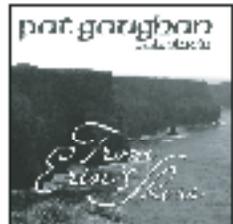
by Buffy Maguire

A last minute agreement between the Democratic Unionist Party and Sinn Féin has been enough to persuade the British government to abandon plans to dissolve the Northern Ireland Assembly. The two parties met, for the first time ever, face to face



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on the morning of March 26.

Previously, Ian Paisley, and his party, had categorically refused to engage in direct dialogue with Sinn Féin. The meeting came as a last ditch effort to rework the timeframe of the St Andrew's Agreement which, according to the British and Irish governments, had mandated the nominating of officers and the sharing of power at an Executive Assembly by March 26.

Defiant until the end, Ian Paisley and his hard liner Democratic Unionist party refused to nominate officers or the power sharing Executive by the deadline and sought, instead, to extend the deadline 6 weeks longer. They agreed in principal to sharing power, but asked for more time.

Despite months of assurances by the British government that it would force the DUP's hand by March 26—either to share power or to face the prospect of dreaded joint authority with the Irish Republic—in the end, it will acquiesce to the DUP timeframe and bring legislation that will prevent the direct rule permanently transferring to London, effectively giving Paisley the wiggle room he requested. This is in response to what Prime Minister Tony Blair described as "an absolute commitment" by the DUP to share power by May 8.

The British government was pleased with the outcome of this historic meeting between the two icons of politics in the North of Ireland.

"If they can talk together and agree together for the first time in their lives, putting 40 years of conflict and disagreement behind them, everything and anything is possible," said British Secretary of State Peter Hain.

His sentiments were echoed by Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams who said: "The discussions and agreement between our two parties shows the potential of what can now be achieved."

Hain did not push through emergency legislation immediately but instead signed a restoration order for devolution. This set the clock running

and required the political parties to come to an agreement in a speedy fashion in order to avoid permanently dissolving the Assembly.

Upon news of the extension request, Sinn Féin had insisted that if there was an extension it would require direct dialogue with the DUP so this meeting seems to be a tip to them.

The news that the DUP refused to nominate officers and refused to follow the British government's lead became public following a March 24 DUP meeting during which 90 percent of the party's 120 executives backed the plan to ask for six more weeks. As the largest political party in the North, the DUP insisted that they needed until the middle of May before agreeing to sharing power with nationalists.

"We in Ulster are in a serious state because we have a dictation from the Government about things that people resent," said Ian Paisley, Sr. "The Ulster people will be persuaded but they are not going to be driven. We will deliver to you later on the full content of the resolution and I think as the hours proceed you will have a closer conception and perception of what we are after."

Paisley was surrounded by many of the party's senior figures including MPs Gregory Campbell, Nigel Dodds and the Reverend William McCrea who have had reservations about the March 26 deadline.

There does appear to be some dissension within the DUP as MEP Jim Allister was conspicuously absent from the news conference. He also did not join the DUP leader afterwards, prompting speculation about whether he was on board the six-week proposal. It is unclear what the DUP believes will change in six weeks and it seemed merely that the DUP did not want to march to the British government's time line.

Other political parties were also angered by the DUP's last minute renegotiations.

"We see no reason why there's any real difference between (today) and a matter of a few weeks. I think the Secretary of State is clearly undermined and his authority is ridiculed. In any other part of the UK his foot wouldn't touch the floor. He would be out," said Ulster Unionist party deputy leader and assembly member Danny Kennedy.

But the March 7 election results confirmed that the main players in Northern Ireland politics will continue to be the DUP and Sinn Féin as voters increased their mandates.

The DUP received 30.1 percent of first preferences—up 4.4 percent

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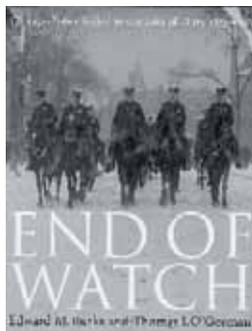
Thomas O'Gorman, Alderman Ed Burke, Police Superintendent Phil Cline, and President of The Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 7 Mark Donahue at the launch of the new book, End of Watch.

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End of Watch examines the remarkable sacrifice of 526 sworn officers of the Chicago Police Department. The book includes a detailed narrative of each officer and the circumstances involved in their deaths that trace the heroic history of Chicago's finest. Information for each episode has been drawn from municipal records,

police files, contemporaneous newspapers, court documents and ground breaking research. End of Watch is a very human story focusing on the great loyalty and honor emerging in the ordinary lives of extraordinary Chicagoans. Alderman Edward M. Burke is the Dean of the Chicago City Council, its most well-known historian, and a for-

mer policeman. Thomas J. O'Gorman is a Chicago historian and storyteller, at home in the poetry of its urban life. Both have authored several books on Chicago history and architecture.



End of Watch: Chicago Police Killed in the Line of Duty 1853-2006 by Edward M. Burke and Thomas J. O'Gorman. Chicago Book's Press, 1st Edition, Feb. 2007. ISBN-10: 0978866320; Paperback: 400 pages; \$35.00. www.chicagobooks.com

Old St. Patrick's Church Rededication Sunday April 29th

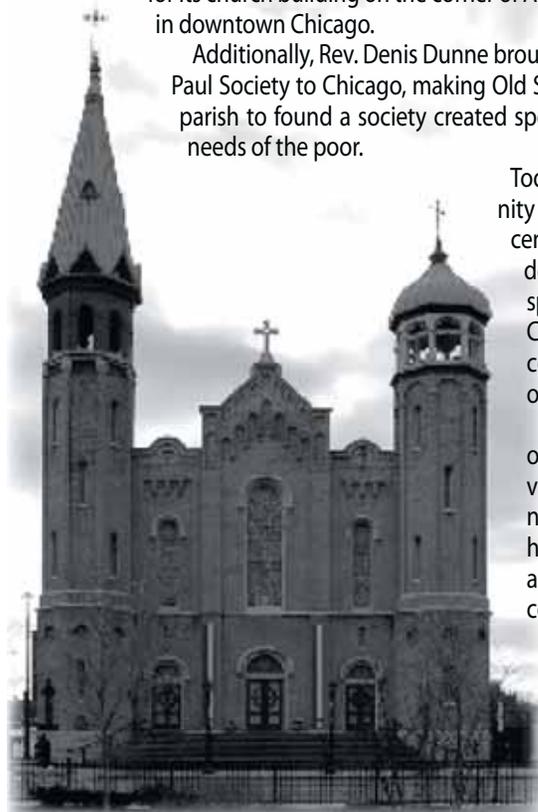
Old St. Patrick's Church was founded 150 years ago, on Easter Sunday, April 12th, in 1856. At that time, Old St. Patrick's Church held a dedication ceremony for its church building on the corner of Adams and Des Plaines in downtown Chicago.

Additionally, Rev. Denis Dunne brought the St. Vincent de Paul Society to Chicago, making Old St. Pat's (OSP) the first parish to found a society created specifically to serve the needs of the poor.

Today, the OSP community celebrates its sesqui-centennial year in what is deemed to be a sacred space, in the heart of the Chicago. A rededication ceremony will be held on Sunday, April 29th.

The OSP provides ongoing outreach services to 14 community care organizations, here in the U.S. and an additional four in the countries of Nicaragua, Peru, East Africa and India.

"In honor of reaching our sesqui-centennial year, we asked all member households of our



parish community to contribute 50 hours of service towards our goal of offering 150,000 hours of service to local and global outreach efforts. Currently, we have reached 120,000 hours of service and counting. We will present those hours of service as a gift to the city of Chicago at Rededication Sunday."

All who attend Rededication Sunday will experience "A Journey through Time" as you view an exhibit in the church hall that combines the growth of the city of Chicago with the simultaneous growth of Old St. Patrick's Church.

The exhibit will be open to the public from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. in the Old St. Patrick's church hall, 700 West Adams Street.

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on the cover:

The Gage Opening On Michigan Avenue

The Lawless family hope to call it lucky number seven when they open their new two-story pub/restaurant, The Gage, this month at 24 S. Michigan Avenue, directly across from Millennium Park.

Calling it, "My kind of town," Billy Lawless Sr. fell in love with Chicago when he came from Ireland to settle in America. "I visited New York, Boston, and then Chicago. It took me all of three hours to decide on Chicago. I love it here," beamed Billy. The lake front, Grant Park, the neighborhoods and especially the friendly people made me feel right at home," he continued.

A family affair, Billy and Anne Lawless, and Billy Jr., and Catherine Gilmore-Lawless will run this excellent new adventure.

The Gage is situated in a group of three buildings (18, 24 and 30 S. Michigan) collectively known as the Gage Group. They were built in 1899-1890 by Holabird & Roche for the millinery firms of Gage Bros. & Co., Theodore Ascher & Co. and Edson Keith & Co. Those firms supplied hats throughout the United States.

The buildings' facades, which resulted from master architect Louis Sullivan's collaboration with Holabird & Roche, demonstrate two different approaches to the Chicago School, a design movement that led to the creation of modern commercial architecture. With their simple external structure visually expressing the underlying skeleton and little applied ornamentation, the buildings by Holabird & Roche foreshadow the Chicago skyscrapers of the 1960s and 1970s. The ornate facade designed by Sullivan (at 18 S. Michigan) exemplifies Sullivan's more expressive approach and was one of his last commissions.

In homage to the era of its construction and original use, The Gage has a vintage, industrial look. Design elements include rich brown leather seating, tiled bar floor and columns, exposed brick, metal fixtures, and "old" factory windows. The Gage's décor evokes a timeless feel-as if it has been a Chicago mainstay forever. Designed by the acclaimed architecture firm Knauer (Gibson's, Quartinos, Lux Bar, Hugo's Frog Bar, RL), The Gage's main floor comprises three rooms. The first is dominated by a 50-foot bar and bar seating, including booths. The second is a dining room flanked by leather banquette and booth seating with a room that

can be closed off for private group dining and the third room, separated by a two-sided fireplace contains a display kitchen and ample booth and table seating. Downstairs, features a bar and lounge area and an audiovisual-equipped private meeting/dining room. Total permissible occupancy may exceed 400, with 220 seated on the first floor and 100 seated on the lower level.

Originally a farming family in Galway, urban life encroached heavily on the family farm that Billy started working on full-time after graduation from high school at the age of seventeen. "My dad sold off a lot of our land to various interests in Galway. I used to milk cows on the same spot that Galway University stands today," said Billy. "I looked for another business to get involved in at the time. The bar business looked glamorous at the time," he laughed.

Billy and family started in the hospitality industry since 1977. Billy doesn't do anything half way. A born leader, he became president of the pub/restaurant owners association of Ireland while still in his twenties. The Lawless family went on to own and operate several renowned bars, restaurants and hotels including Gallows Prospect Hill, Taaffe's Shop Street, The Tribesman (named after the 14 tribes of Galway), Trigger Martyns (now Tigh Coilin) and The Twelve Pins, a full service 20-bedroom hotel which included a bar and acclaimed restaurant. "The Old Gallows were just opposite the bar in Eyre Square," laughed Billy.

The Lawless family moved to the U.S. in 1997 and acquired an existing restaurant in Wrigleyville. After complete reconception and renovation of the establishment they opened Wrigleyville's first Irish bar, The Irish Oak (www.irishoak.com). Managed by Clodagh, The Irish Oak remains a favorite of locals and tourists alike. Son, John Paul, adds to the Irish flavor at The Oak with his Gaelic speaking and singing. Featured recently in the Sun Times, the "Oak" is Zagat guide recommended and was voted Best Irish Bar 2004 and 2005 by Citysearch and Winner of the AOL City Guide 2005 and 2006 for Comfort Food. The popular spot has also won the 2004/05/06/07 Silver Platter Award.

Not to be outdone by his father, Billy Lawless Jr. looked north and acquired Winners, a sports bar in Lincoln Square, together with a partner. They oversaw a complete renovation of the establishment

to reflect a more modern Irish bar/restaurant and The Grafton was opened in late 2002. Today, The Grafton has attracted a loyal clientele and the establishment is among the most successful in Lincoln Square. In early 2006, Billy Jr. divested his share in The Grafton in order to focus on The Gage.

Billy Sr. is married to Anne. Their children include Billy Jr., Clodagh, Amy, and John. Billy Jr. is married to Catherine Gilmore-Lawless, a health care executive, and they have two children, Kieran (4.5) and Darragh (2.5).

Catherine's grandfather (born in Ireland; now deceased) was the first man to parachute onto Irish soil and was an acclaimed pilot. He was awarded the OBE for his efforts during the war and his story, which has been reported in Irish and Canadian publications is very interesting. But that's another story! With their track record of success, and their prime location across the street from Millennium Park, the Lawless's should have no problem getting this operation off the ground! We expect this to be their golden parachute!

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Billy Lawless, Jr. and Billy, Sr. prepare for the opening of The Gage in early April, 2007

Cover photo by Nathan Kirkman
www.nathankirkman.com



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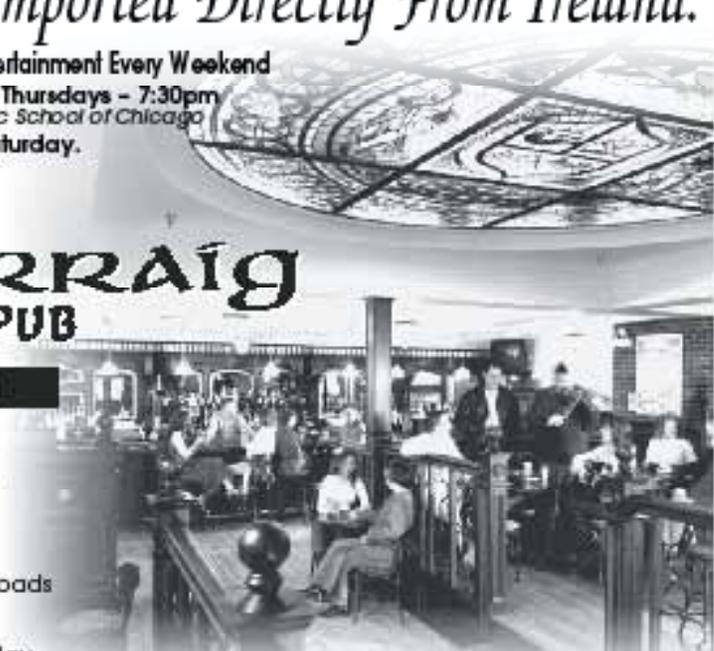
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By Martin J. Healy, Jr.
Senior Partner



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

Rights of Injured Workers Expanded

In 1995, two Maintenance Mechanics and long time friends were on their lunch break at the Clark Blue Island Oil Refinery when untrained co-workers accidentally opened a valve releasing flammable materials and causing an explosion and fire. The two workers were trapped in the lunch room and died. It was first thought, as is often the case, that the only remedy for their families would be the limited death benefits awarded under the Workers Compensation Act, because the fire that led to their deaths was

caused by co-workers. However, later investigation revealed that another entity may also have been involved – Clark USA, Inc., the parent corporation of the owner of the refinery, Clark Refining & Marketing.

The Healy Law Firm represented one of the worker's family in a lawsuit against Clark USA, arguing that it should be held responsible for the fatal fire. But Clark USA argued, and the trial judge agreed, that Clark USA could not be held liable, because it was just a parent corporation, was not involved in the actual operations of the refinery, and was shielded by corporate and workers' compensation immunities.

The Healy Law Firm pursued an appeal to the Appellate Court of Illinois. The Appellate Court reversed the Circuit Court. Clark USA then appealed the matter to the Illinois Supreme Court.

Supreme Court Expands Scope of Recovery

Last month in a unanimous decision, the Supreme Court reversed the decision of the Circuit Court and sided with The Healy Law Firm's argument that Clark USA could be held liable for the death of the two

workers. The Court found that Clark USA may have directly and wrongly implemented severe budget cuts at the refinery which led to the fatal fire. The case was argued in the Supreme Court by Martin Healy, Jr. of the Healy Law Firm and Edward Willer of Corboy & Demetrio. The Supreme Court's opinion, and the Appellate Court's opinion which preceded it, are the first decisions in Illinois to adopt this "direct participation" theory of liability and join only a handful of cases nationwide which have adopted and applied the theory to hold a parent corporation liable for its direct involvement in causing an injury.

Often, large corporations, such as oil companies, will organize themselves as more than one company – a parent and one or more subsidiaries – for a variety of tax, employment and other reasons. Even though these companies are comprised of the exact same individuals, the law recognizes each of these companies as distinct, and will not, without more, hold one responsible for the wrongs committed by another. Typically, a parent company is not an operations company, but usually just a holding company.

In this case, The Healy Law Firm argued that the parent company exceeded this role as a holding company or mere investor, and directly participated in the operations of the refinery.

Clark USA Imposes Drastic Cuts on the budget of the Blue Island Refinery

Testimony in the case indicated that Clark USA ordered a drastic 25% reduction in operating expenses in order to achieve a \$200 million cash surplus for the parent company. Clark Refining employees showed that such a reduction was impossible, because 80% of the budget was uncontrollable costs such as utilities and raw materials that could not be reduced. The only area of the budget that could be reduced was the other 20% consisting of employee wages, benefits, education, training, repairs, and equipment maintenance. Even though excessive budget cuts in this area would affect safety at the refinery, the cuts were made.

Following the reduction in safety, training and maintenance, conditions at the refinery rapidly deteriorated, prompting one employee to testify the refinery was "falling apart" and another that it was, "an accident waiting to happen." It was this deterioration that led to the fatal fire.

The Supreme Court's decision that this type of interference may result in civil liability brings some solace to the family and friends of these two workers, but the decision also represents a potential victory for injured workers throughout Illinois. This decision allows an injured worker to recover from a wrongdoer who is responsible for a dangerous condition, even if it is a parent corporation. More importantly, this decision should improve workplace safety. Civil lawsuits are aimed not just at compensating an injured person, but also at deterring wrongful conduct that may cause injury. Employers and their parent companies are now on notice that they will no longer be able to hide from the fatal effects of wrongful business conduct. The decision is especially important in businesses with hazardous activities, such as oil refining, which when poorly operated can result in extreme danger to all of those at or near the premises.

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NY Firefighter Toured Waterford Crystal and Discovered Sean Egan's Dedication

By Michael O'Rourke

My name is Michael O'Rourke. I am a 26 year veteran of the F.D.N.Y. This past October of 2006, I was touring Ireland with a group from New York. On this particular trip, I was touring the world renowned Waterford Crystal Factory with a group of 50 people from New York. While nearing the end of the tour, I was approached by a woman that I have known for a long time, her name is Eileen Cronin. Eileen came running across the factory at Waterford and grabbed me saying, "Michael you have to come with me and see something". I was introduced to a nice Irishman named Sean. Sean works at Waterford Crystal as a skilled craftsman. He was sitting at his desk working skillfully and meticulously on a piece of glass. At first I didn't recognize what he was doing until Eileen said, "Look here, Michael".

Lying next to him on the desk was the picture seen by everyone worldwide, the picture of the five emergency workers carrying Father Judge out of the wreckage on 9/11. He was studying the picture and replicating it with his engraving tools on a piece of glass. To me the piece of glass looked like the rounded front piece of the Pope's mitre [hat]. I asked him what he was doing and why he was doing it. He answered that he saw a broken vase in a bin and that it looked like a church window. He then retrieved the broken piece of glass and decided something special should be done with it. He reshaped it and cut the sides.

He later went home and looked through some old newspapers that he kept and came upon a newspaper from 9/11 and found the photo. He then went on the internet and found a more detailed photo. He decided to recreate the photo on this piece of glass. He told me that he hoped to have the piece finished by Christmas of 2006. I asked him "How long have you been working on it?" He said that he had started on the piece in July of 2006. By the way, Sean has been working on this piece on his own time, always looking over his shoulder to see who might be watching. He told me that when he finishes the main piece that he was going to work on the shell of one of the twin towers that broke into three tall

parts and attach it to the base behind the main piece.

Sean told me that he would like to dedicate the piece with the five men carrying Father Judge as his memorial to the 343 New York City workers who lost their lives that day, and the three tall parts will represent all that died in the towers. He noted that the base of the piece is made of bog oak which he paid for himself. He said it is very heavy.

I asked Sean what he was going to do with the piece when it is finished. He said to me, "I'm not sure, I think I'll go over to New York and give it to the firehouse." I said, "What firehouse?" He replied, "I'm not sure." At that point I was getting a bit overwhelmed by what he was doing and I told him that I would try to help him find its rightful place. I thanked him for what he was doing and I took some pictures of him doing his work and of me standing next to him with his work. We exchanged e-mails and have been in contact ever since.

Since I met Sean in October there has been a buzz all around Waterford Crystal about this fellow Sean doing this piece. Many people have come to see the piece and even firefighters in Waterford have heard about it. Others have tried to get involved and at one point he said that he had met a New York fireman named Mike O'Rourke and said, "I'm just going to deal with him." In early December a few of the "big boys" [Sean's words] are going to come to see the piece and see how they want to handle things. At one point I told Sean that I would try to help him get over here with his wife and possibly see how I could help raise some money to cover his traveling expenses needed to bring them and the piece to New York. Sean said that he was trying to get the CEO of Waterford to see the piece and was hoping that the company would pay for two flights for him and his wife and hopefully pay for three nights in a hotel.

On about December 7th, a big crate arrived. It was about four feet high. Sean said that he could barely lift it when empty and he wouldn't know how to manage it with the piece in it. On about December 14th, the CEO of Waterford, John Foley, finally came to see the piece. He loved



Sean Egan of Waterford Crystal

it and was touched by the way Sean did something so special for New York and 9/11 on his own time. He asked Sean if he could have done the piece bigger. Sean replied, "yes, if I had known that it would turn out this nice." John Foley asked Sean to do the piece twice the size and he wants it to be a "wow piece" and that he would give it maximum publicity in Waterford, Ireland and in New York. He said, "I want to go big with this." Sean replied that by doing the piece bigger, he would be able to get more likeness in

their faces. John Foley said that he would give Sean six weeks off of production and the run of the factory. Sean was very happy to hear this and told me that he was glad that he would not have to be looking behind his back for a boss to catch him.

Waterford Crystal said that the new piece will be the one off piece which will come to New York. The original piece will then be proudly on display in the Waterford Crystal showroom in Ireland for all to see. Sean was also told that Waterford Crystal

would take care of his and his wife's flight to New York and also his hotel and that the company is 100 percent behind him in his endeavors.

Sean is planning to have the new piece ready for March 2007. I would love and hopefully the F.D.N.Y. would see to it that Sean gets the recognition and publicity that he deserves. Waterford's U.S. marketing team is also fully behind this event as well as New York's "top guy" for Waterford Crystal in New York, Pete Cheney. As of December 21st, a manager from UPS Parcels has met with Sean in Ireland and is personally going to get involved in transporting the piece to New York.

I hope with all of the attention that this has been receiving in Ireland & New York and all those who are stepping forward in support of this project (Waterford Crystal, CEO John Foley, New York Representative Pete Cheney, UPS, Sean Egan, Michael O'Rourke & the FDNY) that we can make this a special day in March 2007 for the FDNY and all its uniformed members active and retired. Firefighter Michael O'Rourke Division-7

FDNY Accepts Waterford Crystal Sculpture Honoring FDNY Members Lost On 9/11

New York Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta on March 14 accepted on behalf of the FDNY a Waterford Crystal sculpture designed to honor Father Mychal Judge and 342 other FDNY members whom he made the Supreme Sacrifice on September 11, 2001.

"The sculpture is a beautiful piece of art, and the sentiment behind it is greatly appreciated," Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta said.

The dedication ceremony was held at the quarters of Engine 1/Ladder 24 in Manhattan, where the sculpture will be housed. Father Judge considered the firehouse his own, and it was from there that he responded to the World Trade Center on September 11.

"This beautiful crystal creation, gifted to the FDNY and the people of New York, is a testament to their courage, bravery and dignity following that dark day in September 2001," said CEO of Waterford John Foley.

The piece was created by Master Waterford Engraver and Glasscutter Sean Egan.



He said he was moved by the events of September 11, 2001 and was looking for a way to express his sympathy and honor the FDNY.

After years of searching, he said he was inspired by a piece of glass that looked like a church window. He referred to a clipped newspaper photo he had of firefighters carrying Father Judge out of the wreckage and began creating the piece in his personal time.

FDNY Firefighter Michael O'Rourke

happened to meet Egan while he was touring the Waterford factory in Ireland. He said he was stunned by the design and the sentiment, and helped notify officials at the FDNY and Waterford of the project.

Soon after, Waterford commissioned the piece to be made for the Department.

"I'm overwhelmed by the whole thing," Egan said. "My thanks go to the Fire Department for accepting this piece for what it is and the story behind it. May you use it as a reminder that we haven't forgotten about you."

CHICAGO Gaelic News

BY PAT HENNESSY



Chicago Honors St Patrick with Two Big Parades

Once again, as it has done since 1953, when it all started, Chicago is the only big U.S. city to honor Ireland's national apostle, St. Patrick with two big parades in the month of March: one on the great south-side of the city on Sunday prior to the feast day, March 17 and the other, the official one, in the downtown area, on the big day. Ideal weather on the south side march-past brought the largest crowd even seen at this parade, an estimated half a million cheering spectators. It was spectacular; something to be seen and appreciated. Weather for the official one was not however so pleasant with a cold stiff breeze blowing out of Lake Michigan, along Columbus Drive.

Ideal weather for the south-side parade and great publicity by the organizing committee brought out the largest crowd ever seen at this one since it began in 1971. It is considered a family community minded tribute to Ireland's national apostle, but an estimated half million spectators came out to view this one and were in position six deep along both sides of the street along the two mile route, when the first unit stepped off at noon.

As almost 100 units followed beautifully colored and decorated floats, marching units, and some of the most the best marching bands in the city and surrounding areas followed, they were greeted by cheers all along the way and were cheered by a group of officials and a master M.C. who made all of them welcome and expressed thanks for their attendance. It was a beautiful gesture and was appreciated by all the units. In my 53 years of

participation of south side and official parades I have never seen such a large and cooperative group of people, who apparently were having a good time. The Chicago Police also played their part in directing the huge crowd and the parade monitored by parade officials left nothing to be desired.

Space allows us to mention a few of the parade officials who did an excellent job. Those include two charming colleens, Mary Beth Sheehan, and Ann Coakley, Coordinator, also Bill Gainer, a tower of wisdom Bill Winters, Tom McNamara, Pat and Jim Heffernan, but a heart gur a mile mait agat to all of them and Beannact De ar an oibre (Thank you and God bless your noble work).

The official parade on the feast day in the downtown area, along Columbus Drive, was not so lucky weather-wise, as a cold breeze from adjacent Lake Michigan greeted the huge crowd, but did not dampen their enthusiasm. A touch of snow reminded one of the cold days on 79th Street, 54 years ago when fans had to dart in and out of nearby stores to warm up. But, it was all worth the effort then and now, as the famed Tommy Ryan Pipers band stepped off from Balboa and old man sun came out smiling. Mayor Richard M. Daley and our own Cardinal Francis George followed and the cold was all forgotten.

Fifty colorful floats, over 100 marching units and others passed by in another great tribute to the saint

who brought religion to our country and will be forever remembered by Irishmen and women at home and in exile. Prior to the parade Cardinal George officiated in celebrating Holy Mass at Old St. Patrick's Church. Afterwards, Mayor Daley paid a tribute to the great saint and to the millions of Irish emigrants who helped build, fought, and died for this great country of ours.

A Tribute To Kevin Shanley, O. Carm

The recent death of well known Fr. Kevin Shanley, O. Carm. is a huge loss to the Chicago Irish community and beyond. Born in New Jersey in 1931 he was ordained a priest in 1956 after having professed his vows to the Carmelites in 1950. News of his untimely death cast a huge cloud of sadness all over the Chicago-Irish community, throughout the U.S. and Ireland where his name was a household one and he was equally beloved.



Fr. Kevin Shanley, O. Carm.

Fr. Kevin was a great educator and as Communications Director was editor of the widely read Carmelite Review for 35 years and was a popular columnist for the Irish-American News and other publications. His articles in the Chicago Irish News relating to Irish history and other subjects were very popular and helped all of us who worked with him over the years. He researched Irish history and could be relied upon to have the facts, at all times. And as a popular teacher of the subject and the Gaelic tongue was one of a kind and unique.

But, above all of this, Fr. Kevin was first and foremost a wonderful priest, one who loved his God and his fellow man and lived to serve both of them every day of the year. He was a unique fluent Gaelic speaker and taught the subject at Chicago Gaelic Park and the Irish-American Culture Center. He also officiated at the celebration of Holy Mass at Gaelic Park and the Heritage Center on Irish feast days and other occasions. But despite his heavy work load he was never too

busy to stand and chat or counsel and his big smiling Irish face and disposition settled many a problem or removed many a worry.

He loved his parents and his family and frequently talked with pride of his youth in 'Jersey'. His father was his idol and he was so proud of his fight for freedom in the Easter Rising and the Irish War of Independence. He also liked to talk about his father's feats on the football fields of Dublin and Gaelic Athletic Association in 1884 and of the fact that it restored the pride of the Irish people after the Famine and eventually led to the 'rising' in 1916 and the heroic fight for freedom in the 20's.

Fr. Kevin was a humble and unassuming priest and although he was the recipient of many prestigious awards including being chosen by a select committee of well known Irish-American's as one of the most outstanding Educators, Scholars, and Journalists of Irish ancestry, in recent times, he accepted it in his usual humble manner.

He always talked with pride of the great work of Chicago gael who reactivated the Gaelic Athletic Association in the 50's after an absence of over 20 years and of course the generations who carried on the good work over the years culminating in the erection of Chicago Gaelic Park for the purpose of promoting Ireland's national games, hurling and Gaelic football, and the song, dance, and musing of the Gael. Likewise of the establishment of the Irish American Heritage Center and the important place it plays in promoting Irish culture.

Fr. Kevin's huge wake and his funeral mass at Mount Carmel church testified to his great love that Chicagoans and indeed others from all over had for the beloved priest. His interment at Mount Olivet Cemetery was "the finest ever seen." We may never see his likes again. "Lives of all great men remind us that we can be sublime and in passing leave behind us, footprints on the sand of Time."

Deepest sympathy is extended to his grieving family and in union with Fr. Kevin's countless friends in the old Gaelic tongue that he loved so well, Ar Dheis De go raibhn an ainm.

Daley Does It Again

Once again, as he has done five times before, Mayor Richard M. Daley steamrolled two opponents winning a sixth term Mayoral Election with 71% of the votes cast. If the dynamic Irishman serves the

full term of 4 years he will have won the record, held by his late father and model, the legendary Richard J. Daley.

Thanking the citizens of Chicago the mayor said, "This victory means the world to me. I will work just as hard as I can for the next four years. But an election is not the end," he continued, "instead, it offers a new beginning. I want to thank the people of Chicago most sincerely for their continued support." Asked if he would like to break the record, he replied "You don't stay here to be here, you want to accomplish things for the city and its people."

And that indeed he has over the years, made Chicago "The cleanest and most beautiful city in the nation." He helped build coalitions, included minorities in his administration, and in all departments of government, spread resources and public developments, including new schools, libraries, and police and fire stations across the city. He has helped provide services to the poor and needy. He has helped to cut down crime making Chicago one of the safest big cities in the nation.

And his recent effort to win over Los Angeles, the much coveted prize of being host city to the 2016 Olympics has won the acclaim of big business, and many others who have already gathered the big money necessary to promote such a Herculean undertaking. He has traveled to London and other cities to gather information to help Chicago in this mighty effort and help establish Chicago as a beautiful global metropolis that attracts millions of visitors every year.

As a proud Irishman he has helped every Irish cause that has come along, including Resolution by the City Counsel for Joe Doherty and other freedom fighters for the cause in Ulster (Northern Ireland), a province of Ireland. "A fair and equitable U.S. Immigration Law that would allow more Irish to settle in America." He has also provided Civic receptions for All-Ireland hurling and football champions, in the sixties when he welcomed Killkenny and Tipperary and came to the hotel and shared a drink with the winners. He also provided a guided tour of the city and a police boat ride on beautiful Lake Michigan.

No doubt his great victory was celebrated by Irish and non-Irish alike in this beautiful city by Lake Michigan and even beyond in his ancestral homeland, especially in Old Parish, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, from whence his ancestors came. Even in cities like Kilkenny, Tipperary, Galway, Kerry, and Mayo,



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from where champion hurlers and footballers came to visit, back in the 60's, raised their glasses and cried 'Slainte' when news came on television and radio. We join with all of them, wherever they may be in wishing good health and success to him and his fine family over the next four years and beyond. And even beyond when he brings the 2016 Olympic Games to Chicago. Le cumanh De (God willing).

Clare Association Honor Harry Costello

The prestigious Clare Association of Chicago recently honored well known Chicago gael Harry Costello at their annual dinner and it was a big honor deserved and awaited. The popular Limerickman who is known as "the man for all seasons" at Gaelic Park has worn many hats, all with distinction, since coming to Chicago and his countless friends throughout the U.S. gaeldom and beyond offer congratulations and best wishes.

The genial Limerickman who never seems to age started his long and faithful career with his own Chicago Limerick club many years ago where his leadership status soon became evident and recognized by other GAA clubs. As is customary with these positions one cannot always please everyone but Harry had a way of getting things done, that in his case made few rivals. And so his success was evident from the start. With the North American Board he started as a secretary and later became chairman and here again he finished as popular as ever, a feat seldom achieved. Just to prove all this Harry was elected Convention chairman this year. He is also currently secretary of the Central Division. Amazing.

As if all this was not enough for one person the ever active Limerickman is a fixture at Gaelic Park especially now since his retirement from the University of Illinois as a System Programmer. With his close friend, John Crean, he started the now very popular North American Feis and is responsible for registering over 2000 Irish dancers from all over the U.S. each year held at Gaelic Park each June. And needless to add "the man for all seasons" arranges the television of the Irish Games at Gaelic Park each year and is on the spot each Sunday morning. At the afternoon games he is a referee, linesman, or umpire. All in a day's work for Harry.

This year on July 27, 28, and the 29th Chicago will be hosting the Continental Youth Championship and, you guessed it, Harry is the chairman and Field Manager. The

ever present Limerickman has been a Chicago Gaelic Park Board of Director for the past 20 years. And in case you stay up late on Sunday nights his golden voice can be heard over the Chicago Gaelic Park radio programs from 7 PM until 9 over ECTV, 1450AM, with Mary Riordan and Mary Hackett.

Whether you are a friend or foe of Harry's you must admire his dedication to the cause of promoting the games, language, song, dance, and music of the gael. He is indeed a "man for all seasons" and is no doubt one of the many fine gael who keep our ship of state, Chicago Gaelic Park, in the words of the president of Ireland, after a visit, "One of the finest GAA centers that I have seen outside Croke Park in Dublin." High praise indeed from a lady who has been around and has no doubt seen them all.

Harry, our humble congratulations and best wishes to you for receiving this beautiful award from such a fine Irish-American organization as the Clare Association of Chicago. Beannact De ar an oibre, a cairde gael.

Ireland Recognizes Dalton Family

Mrs. K.J. Dalton, 266 Mountain Leader Trail, Salttillo, M.S. 38866-7211 writes to let our readers know that the Dalton Clan is now recognized in Dublin and Dalton's wishing to join should contact her at this address. Registration is free. Her father was the late and well known Andy Duke Dalton, a good friend of the Hennessy family for many years. The Clan celebrated and promotes Gaelic Heritage. She was delighted with the southside St. Pats Parade. Beannact De ar an oibre, a cairde gael.

U.S. GAA Boards To Get Irish Grants

U.S. GAA Boards New York and our North American Board will receive U.S. grants from Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs and the GAA's Development Board, according to a letter read recently by the New York GAA Secretary Larry McCarty. The Foreign Affairs Dept. awarded a \$300,000 grant and the GAA Development Board quickly followed, with a like amount.

This is indeed "money from Ireland" that can be used immediately to promote hurling and Gaelic football within the respective Board. No guideline apparently has been announced but no doubt they will also follow. However, it's a very thoughtful gesture especially now when 'new blood' is not coming from Ireland because of U.S. Immigration restrictions.

The old caman game is the one that badly needs some help if clubs in both Divisions are to survive. More concentrated efforts must be made to promote the game in the Juvenile arena. Hurling clubs must receive financial help not only for clubs, but also the promotion of the game in the Juvenile ranks, purchase of hurley sticks, balls, insurance, etc.

We look forward to a full report from the respective secretary's when the grants are received and the manner in which the money will be distributed. \$600,000 for each board sounds like a lot of money, but when it is distributed equally according to the need, to each affiliated club, it will be no "small fortune" but hopefully it will help promote both games. Gur a mile mait agat a cairde, I wish you had been around when the games were being reactivated back in the early 50's. But, the great gael of those days succeeded and laid a sound foundation.

Pat O'Connor Gets 97% Of Vote

In the recent Chicago Mayoral and Aldermanic Elections Alderman Pat O'Connor, popular Irish-American received 97% of the votes cast. Even though he was unopposed, that must be a record and we join with his countless friends in saying congratulations, a cara. He is floor leader for Mayor Daley in the City Council and also the dynamic Chairman of Education-two very important positions which he fills with distinction. He is also of course a staunch supporter of Irish causes that come before the Council.

Pat is the son of Pat Sr. well known Chicago gael who wore the famed green and gold sweater of the Kingdom before he emigrated to Chicago in the late forties. Here he played some brilliant football with the great St. Pat's team and was a great leader with his club and the Chicago GAA just getting started back then. He still continues to support the promotion of hurling, football, and handball and both O'Connors are staunch Mayor Daley supporters.

Condolences For P. J. O'Dea

We join with the countless friends of our own P.J. O'Dea in offering deepest sympathy and condolences in his recent bereavement, the death of a beloved brother in Clare. The late Kevin was a carpenter in England before returning to his native Clare, to live with his sister in retirement. The late Kevin was also like his brother; a staunch follower of Clare hurling and football teams. Ar Dheis De go raibhn an ianm, a cara.

We Love a Parade - St. Pat's 2007



Boudreau Family and James Sullivan enjoy the parade



Danny Doyle, (center) and friends.





Chicago St Patrick's Parade announcer, Bob Ryan and granddaughter, with 2007 Grand Marshall, Cardinal Francis George. (right) more floats and parade pictures on Columbus Dr.



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Todd Stroger

Todd's sister, Yonnie Clark, still has her job as chief administrator to the tune of \$99,000 a year for chief judge, Timothy Evans. How about the \$90,000 that John Rita gets as liason to unincorporated areas? There is a pattern of people with connections getting jobs with important sounding titles and salaries that you couldn't get in the private sector. Too bad Len O'Connor is not still alive. He could have written a great sequel to his book, Clout.

Joyce Deming

On a sad note our friend Joyce passed away unexpectedly. Joyce was



Joyce Deming dancing in October, 2006 at the Shannon Rover's Dinner Dance.

secretary to Jim Sullivan, General Chairman of Plumbers Local Union 130. Joyce was instrumental in organizing the corned beef and cabbage dinner, the St. Patrick's Day Parade, and many other events run by the Plumbers Union each year.

There was a lot more to her life. In her younger days, Joyce was a professional dancer. She danced

with Fred Astaire and Donald O'Connor. Joyce also performed with the USO troupes who put on shows for our soldiers overseas.

Bobbie Steele

Cook County government allows the president of the County Board to spend up to \$24,999 at their discretion. Seems as though President Bobbie Steele gave out at least six consulting contracts. State Senator Ricky Hendon was contracted to develop ideas for festivals, overhaul the president's office, and help revamp the Cook County Hospital system, according to a Chicago Sun-Times column by Steve Patterson.

My first question is, is Ricky Hendon qualified to do any of those things? I seem to recall that Northwestern University's Institute for Healthcare Studies recommended that the county hospitals be run by healthcare professionals, not patronage puppets. We have too many "empty suits" holding jobs at Stroger Hospital. Believe it or not John Stroger "refused" to meet with the authors of the study. God forbid the Cook County Board would do something sensible. Even though these consulting jobs are allegedly legal, they are a blatant misuse of the taxpayers' money. I would like to see some accountability for their work i.e. public reports.

Darcel Beavers

Darcel Beavers wasn't an Alderman for long! Jesse Jackson Jr's wife, Sandi, beat her. But, not to worry. Soon she will have a job with Cook County or the city of Chicago with a handsome salary. Her father will see to that.

The Kilkenny Cats

The gang from Kilkenny arrived Tuesday, March 13th. Aoife Marnell arrived at Union Station with her two friends, Jemma, and Claire, who have all been on a world tour since September 2nd. When they leave Chicago it will be onto New Zealand and Australia, followed by China. They will finish up their trip in Moscow, and return to Ireland in late August.

Aer Lingus Flight EI 125 brought the rest of them to O'Hare in the evening. Dermot Cooney, Theresa and Tommy Brennan, and their daughters Deidre and Grainne, and



The Kilkenny gang at Old St. Patrick's Church Saturday Mass and Breakfast



(l to r): Marty Healy, The Kilkenny Gang, Mr Brian Cowen, TD, Minister for Finance in the Government of Ireland, and (lower left), Tom Boyle,

Bernadette and Tom Marnell with their son, Tomás. Cliff Carlson helped me pick them up and get them settled in at my house.

Tempis Fugit, time flies when you are having fun! Day One we took a trip by train to the loop. Went up in the Sears Tower. Day Two the ladies went to the Magnificent Mile and the men met native Americans Myles Donnelly Goddard, and Star, a Chippewa Shaman, and spent a fascinating day viewing artifacts, mastadon fossils, clovis points etc., and discussing the origins of the Celts. Non-stop the cats went everywhere. Mass and breakfast at Old St. Patrick's Church. They met Senator Dick Durbin, who has relatives in Kilkenny, and Mr Brian Cowen, TD, Minister for Finance in the Government of Ireland. We marched in the downtown parade, went to the party at the Irish American Heritage Center and stopped at Romano's in Des Plaines for pizza. Sunday we took

in Millenium Park and the Field Museum. Sunday evening we were in Northbrook for my sister Eileens birthday party. Monday it was "shop til you drop" at Gurnee Mills and the

Prime Outlets in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin. Tuesday it was time to pack the bags and head for O'Hare, and Aer Lingus flight EI 124 back to Dublin. Now, a week to rest up!!



Dermot Cooney of Kilkenny, and Senator Dick Durbin at the Old St. Patrick's Church breakfast on St. Patrick's Day.

Hooliganism

Mike Houlihan



Hooliganism

By Mike Houlihan

Thank God it will be another seven years at least before St. Patrick's Day falls on a Saturday night again. Uh....wait....I guess with leap year it will only be....uh....ah....never mind, my brain is still fried from the madness of last March.

The annual St. Patrick's Day jig begins as early as late January when the Parade Committee has their corned beef and cabbage dinner at Plumber's Hall. That's like spring training for Chicago's Hibernians.

A couple weeks later is the prologue of the season when the parade Queen is elected on a Sunday afternoon in mid February. Chicago's Irish beauties are examined by a group of plumbers, politicians, and McGaffers.

When the queen is crowned around 5:30PM on a Sunday, that's the starting shot of the Paddy's day marathon, which lasted about three weeks this year. It wasn't easy, but we did it!

Knowing of the endurance I would need, I forsook the beer for the south side parade. Never again! My thirst was intense but the long ride home had me spooked. Next time I'm getting a designated driver.

And that's what I did for St. Patrick's Day, just six days later. My old pal in Galway, Mike Monaghan, is friends with The Saw Doctors and Mike got me tickets for their concert at the Vic that night.

I enlisted the aid of Mr. Richie Golz, an old pal since we were caddies at Beverly CC in the early sixties. Richie is the perfect wheelman. He's always prepared with bottled water and bucket seats. He's a member of Mensa, who once loaned me his membership card for a story I wanted to do on their Halloween party, "Mensa Undercover." My glasses were my costume.

In honor of the Paddy's Day rock concert I had donned my

green cowboy boots from the play, "Mickey Finn". That was seven years and forty pounds ago. Even my feet are fatter now, so I asked Richie to stop by my office downtown while I went upstairs and clipped my toenails in preparation for a night of stumbling.

As we drove to The Vic for the show, the streets were filled with green garlanded youths, most of them inebriated. I saw a young man caressing the neck of his best gal while she bent down and barfed on the sidewalk. I rolled down the window and chirped, "Happy St. Patrick's Day!" He cursed me as we peeled away.

IA News publisher Cliff Carlson joined us for a pre-concert drink. We walked into a joint next to 1000 Liquors on Belmont. It was wall to wall with Generation X'ers who had been boozin' all day. We had a whiskey and left for the theatre. That was the last I saw of Cliff that night.

I had an extra four tickets that I sold to a couple of black Irishmen in front of the Vic. Eddie Murphy's twins would sell them later for more, but it was quick beer money for me, so I was feelin' groovy as the security guards frisked us on the way in.

That's when we found out the seating was general admission, and the entire first floor of the Vic was one huge mosh pit of crooked Celts. Richie and I grabbed a beer and opted for the balcony seats. The crowd was a generational mix of Micks. Cliff must have been swallowed up in the soup of potato heads. I saw one guy on the edge of the mosh pit who looked to be in his seventies.

I said to Richie, "That guy's going to get lucky tonight!"

"I doubt it," chortled the Mensa man.

The Saw Doctors put on a terrific show, and the audience was filled with fans that seemed to know the lyrics of every tune. Our seats were great and only a few feet from the beer stand and men's room. Mindy the bartender told a lady who was beefing about paying four bucks for a bottle of water, "Just fill it up in the bathroom sink when you're



done, our tap water is excellent."

She says this just as I return from the loo and a chaotic scene of sink piddling. Thanks for the tip, Mindy. I'll stick to the beer.

When Elvis performed in concert women would throw their panties onstage. At the Saw Doctors show, somebody in the crowd tossed an Irish tri-color pair of boxers with a fake butt sewn on the back. The musicians held them up to show the

crowd and the place went nuts.

After the show, Richie and I waded through the beer cups in the empty mosh pit and found the drawers in question. There was a pair of red lips painted on the left cheek and the Gaelic words that capture my heart every St. Patrick's Day, "Pog Mo Thon!"

Hope you had as much fun as we did. Thanks Saw Doctors, for a great Chicago St. Patrick's Day 2007.

Maurice Herron on His New Sculpture Beside Old St. Patrick's

Friday, one day before Old St. Patrick's Church would hold its Mass and Breakfast, Cyril Regan and his band of trusty men installed a cultural gift from Galway to the city of Chicago,

It originated in an invitation from Galway City Council to submit a design for a competition for Chicago—to make a cultural gift under the Sister Cities programme. In 1997 I made the first sculpture monument in America on the theme of the Great Famine. That is located on the Cambridge Common in Cambridge, MA.

For Chicago, I decided that I would try to explore a different aspect of our Irish identity. When the emigrants landed in America they had very little material wealth but they carried with them a great culture, heritage and beliefs. These things enabled them to feel pride in their identity, and strength in their spirit and families.

I am fascinated by the history of the Gaelic clans pre-1600 when the English finally destroyed that society. It took them nearly 450 years of continuous military occupation, working to engender civil war between the clans to the point where they were so divided and weakened and open to betrayal from their own leaders that it all collapsed.

I wanted something to express something of the strangeness and otherness of the Gaelic society. The Girl

is a symbol of another place and time. Her elaborate plaited hairstyle is based on that of a young girl found buried and preserved in a bog in Ireland 3 or 4 years ago. She lived about the 8th century. She is wearing a very voluminous dress and cloak—contemporary English accounts in the 16th century describe how the Irish women wore up to seven yards of linen in their dresses.

She is standing on a plinth covered in raised curved lines. This plinth is based on a famous Celtic monument in County Galway. It is called the "Turoe Stone" and is reputedly 2000 years old.

She makes a gesture with her left hand - a blessing. A friend of mine had made a study for her Fine Art Doctorate of ancient European, pre-historic sculptures. She discovered that this gesture was as common in female images as the right hand gesture was common to the male images.

On seeing Chicago for the first time last week, I was struck with its tremendous macho, male spirit - expressed in the massive buildings and public art works. I'm very pleased that this very feminine figure now stands among the great monuments of your city.

So, the wee sculpture is a "blessing" from us in Ireland particularly to our people in America—but also to everyone else as well!
www.mauriceharron.com



Sculptor Maurice Herron (left), proudly stands beside the statue he made in Ireland. Shown here with Austin Kelly and Jack Hartman, Maurice was awestruck by Chicago's macho - male spirit, and designed his statue to be a very feminine tribute to our city from sister city, Galway, Ireland.

SHARING A PINT

By Scott Powers



photo gallery with her modeling in a dress that is about the length of her violin.

Hunt understands the business. Her looks are another tool to get

people to her ultimate goal – hearing her music.

"I don't mind that at all," said Hunt, who played competitive tennis until she was 16. "Unfortunately, that's the name of the game these days. In any part of the entertainment world, image is what sells. If it gets people interested in what I'm doing, great. I think it's great to have a young image. I think it's a nice image. It's not over the top. Some people I know in classical music like to strip naked. I don't think I'd go that far. I definitely thinking having a cool, sexy appearance is helpful."

On her first CD – Rebirth – Hunt added that new

Jane Hunt grew up next door to Ireland. She even had close Irish friends in her hometown of Manchester, England. But when it came to Irish music, she might as well as lived on the other side of the world.

Ironically, that's what it took for Hunt to fall in love with it. After a move to New York and touring with The Irish Sopranos as a violinist, Hunt discovered a passion for playing Irish music she never had touched upon before.

Hunt recently joined the Sopranos on their latest U.S. tour. In between days of performing in



Jane Hunt and Scott Powers

Chicago in early March, Hunt sat down to share a pint and talk about her blossoming violinist career, playing before Chicago's Irish community and her first released CD.

"I had no Irish background at all," said the 23-year-old Hunt of growing up in England. "It was actually when I moved to New York that I really started to feel the Irish culture and playing with The Irish Sopranos exposed to be me all those different Irish audiences."

The music was one thing, but playing it in front of an Irish crowd was what really excited Hunt. She had been practicing and performing classical music since she picked up the violin. Although she enjoyed it, Mozart's not the type of music that allows the crowd or the violinist much freedom. As a listener, you sit there and listen. As a performer, you sit there and perform.

Playing Irish songs before an Irish audience opened Hunt's eyes to a different concert experience.

"It's a lot more energetic," she said. "Classical music is energetic, but from a concert point of view the listeners are sitting back as the concert's going on. Irish music is more the ambience, the energy created, and you interact with the audience more, which is what I really enjoy about performing. When the audience is really getting into it, it's a better experience for me as a performer."

Hunt's youth and energy is something she's trying to market herself. Her web site – www.violinvenus.com – isn't just her music and bio. It also includes a

image to a classic one. On the CD cover, Hunt was superimposed into Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus* painting. Aside from a creative cover, it also fits that Hunt is being called the Violin Venus.

The CD, which is available on her web site, includes a variety of 11 songs. Her new appreciation for Irish music over the past few years was what led to its production.

"I decided I wanted to record an Irish album," Hunt said. "I was hearing all this Irish music. I thought, 'Wow, I really like this.' I just love the music so much. It doesn't matter that I'm English and I'm playing Irish music."

Her fans haven't seemed to mind either. She's especially enjoyed her handful of trips to Chicago to play at the Irish American Heritage Center and other venues around town.

"I love Chicago's Irish," she said. "I really love Chicago as a place. It definitely has a different vibe than New York. It's more friendly. New York is more aggressive."

As for the future?

"There's always the next level to get to," she said. "I feel like I need to push myself to get there. ... I want to play concerts. If I'm playing music, I'm happy. The more music I play the happier I am. At the end of the day, it's not about fame or people putting you up on a pedestal. It's about reaching out to people."

Share a comment or suggest a future column to Scott Powers by writing to him at sharinga-pint@yahoo.com.

The Pogues Return

By Scott Powers

The Pogues had changed since the last time they visited Chicago more than a decade ago.

They're older; they have families; they live in different parts of the world. Most of the band's members have even put their drinking ways behind them. Plus—a major reason for their reunion tour—they certainly can charge more for the price of admission than they once did (\$50 for a reunion show ticket).

Even Shane MacGowan, who many are surprised is still alive and turned 50 in December, is different. Yes, he's still a drunk. Yes, he's still demands things his way. Plus...

"Physically for me, he's changed a lot," said James Fearnley, who plays the accordion and has been with the band since its first days. "He's broadened in girth. Certainly, he has less teeth than he had. All that's been a gradual process of dispensing over the years. I don't think his teeth were great in 1979. He's still whip smart as he once was. Maybe a little eccentric, but that's hard to say because he's one of the most eccentric people I've come across."

Seriously, Fearnley has seen things in MacGowan during their recent reunion tours that he never saw 15 years ago.

"We played a festival in Spain a year ago," said Fearnley, who has been writing a tour blog on www.pogues.com. "The show was a rewarding one to do. We had been wondering if Shane's heart was in playing with us. His performance dispersed of that. Backstage, I put my hand on Shane's leg, patted it, and told him it was a good show. He took my hand and held it for 10 minutes and never thought about it. That's something we would never have done in the 80s. There's quite a fondness between Shane and me."

As Fearnley described it, The Pogues are a family. They've known each for nearly 30 years. They used to see each other more than they did their real families. And just like most families, they share ups and downs, laughter and arguments and possess a family member who is entirely unique.

"We had a show in Manchester on the last tour," said Fearnley, who also is a member of the Cranky George Trio with actor Dermot Mulroney in Los Angeles. "It was a big gig being my hometown. Unfortunately, Shane screwed it up. We had a word afterward. It was something about that argument that reminded me of how close we were. That we were able to do that, and it would have some effect. There's such a family thing there. You can say what's on our (bleeping) mind."

"The Pogues have been my family. I've known most of these guys longer than I've known my own parents. It's a true thing to say. The only person I dream about more than my dad is Shane MacGowan. He occupies such a large space in my own realm."

MacGowan seems to have a tendency of doing that. People can't help but be fascinated by him. Here's a man who one critic once wrote to come see if you wanted to watch someone slowly drinking himself to death. MacGowan even once said, "The British press have been giving me six months to live for the past 20 years – they must be getting pissed off interviewing me by now."

Part of his appeal is that he always has a drink in one hand, a cigarette in another and lacks most of his teeth. At the first of two Chicago shows at the Con-



gress Theatre on March 5, that image of MacGowan lived to billing. Plus, he wore a Hawaiian shirt.

So you have this Irish drunk who wears bad clothes, smokes all the time and hisses like a snake through his few teeth, but – and this is where he's most intriguing – he can create and sing beautiful music.

Going back and listening to the five re-released Pogues CDs, you remember just how great that music is. From their early days of their Irish punk in "Red Roses for Me" to "Rum, Sodomy, and the Lash" which includes pop-hit "A Pair of Brown Eyes" to "If I Should Fall from Grace with God" which you can put the entire CD on repeat to "Peace and Love" which wasn't a great album but still good to finally "Hell's Ditch" the last CD with MacGowan still in the group, The Pogues carved their own niche in Irish music, and music in general. They put something out there that wasn't similar to anything before it.

The Pogues did split up for some time. Just after "Hell's Ditch", MacGowan had enough of touring and parted ways with the band in 1991. He later formed Shane MacGowan and the Popes. In 2001, The Pogues got back together for a Christmas tour and have since made other reunion tours, including a two-week one that hit up Chicago and the East Coast in March.

Fearnley, who was interviewed just prior to the tour, wasn't concerned that MacGowan would disappoint his fans as he used to be not showing up on time or not at all. He also wasn't worried that his first shows would be awful.

"As Shane's concerned, I don't think it's a rhythm of getting into the tour," Fearnley said. "I don't think he enjoys much rhythm in his life in any case. That's just the nature of who he is. We need people who don't experience the rhythm that we do."

"People around the States have been let down by Shane not showing up on time. We wanted to make sure if we were to do it we wanted to do it properly and show the greatest respect for those are shelling out the amount of money to see us. The biggest difference between now and the 1980s and 1990s is we have mobile phones. We know where everyone is."

"I think back toward the 80s when he was going a bit a rye and trying to send us a message. Ironically for someone who was writing such beautiful songs, he's not good at expressing things verbally. It took a long time to tell us he didn't want to tour. The difference now is we're not touring as much. It's hard for him to sing those songs. A lot of those songs make him angry. I understand that now. He has an emotional commitment that I don't have. I just have to play a (bleeping) accordion. He's a 100 percent in them. ... I do think he's enjoying it now. He loves us. Without being fuzzy and warm, there's a weird need for one of another. We can't get away from one another."

For The Republic

By Chris Fogarty



THIS COLUMN specializes in information the rest of the news media ban or bury, mostly on Irish issues and in areas familiar to me. However, due to the wanton waste of our troops and treasure and the current free-fall of America's moral status internationally and due to the immense crimes that comprise current US foreign policy, let's examine things, though I lack any special knowledge. How did our nation go from nearly universal support of all that is noble such as religions that edify, our Constitution & Bill of Rights, the Geneva Conventions, the Nuremberg prohibitions, the UN, and basic American goodwill, all the way down to our current nightmare. What happened? Yes, our White House has been taken over by criminals, but how did it happen?

"A CHRISTIAN NATION" is how media opinion molders and pols often described the U.S. Increasingly in recent years we are told, especially by pols on the take from AIPAC, that we are a "Judeo-Christian" nation. But how valid is America's claim to be a Christian nation? Let's examine it.

POLS GET ELECTED by targeting our beliefs. Their political survival depends upon how accurately they discern our true beliefs, so they're good at it. Have they pegged us as truly Christian? Do their actions indicate it? If the US were a truly Christian nation would our pols be so bellicose and violative of our Constitution? Oughtn't US policies be consistent with US self-image? What happened, that the "City on a Hill" has become a stench, the most feared terrorist nation of all, the destroyer of Iraq and Lebanon, and the operator of an international torture gulag?

TO BE CHRISTIAN obviously involves obeying Christ's main message; that of agape including aiding the needy. Of current presidential contenders only out-of-mainstream Kucinich and, to a lesser extent, Edwards, address poverty. All the others address only middle class needs. But let's not blame only the pols, because they have evidently figured us out. They know that in increasingly "religious" America with so many "Christian" churches, indifference if not outright malice is promoted

toward the poor. But religion is not my focus here; we must explore how genocide became our foreign policy with the approval of seventy-one percent of Americans.

DO THOSE 71% belong in a Nuremberg Tribunal along with Bush & Co for Iraq? They were, after all, Bush's indispensable partners-in-crime; the Supreme Crime. Hillary and most other national pols excuse their earlier support by saying that they believed Bush when he said that Saddam posed an immediate, mortal threat to the US (which would have been the only lawful justification for war). But the night after the invasion fifteen thousand of us on Lake Shore Drive already knew that Bush & Co had lied about Saddam's nukes and other WMD and that the invasion was thus a crime. The fifteen thousand must have included some communists and America-haters, but those that Mary and I knew were ordinary, patriotic Americans including some nuns. The gullibility of Bush's initial believers astounded us (but I had been similarly gullible regarding Vietnam). Others turned against the Iraq war only when it began to prove unsuccessful. They deny or don't care that it is not only criminal but the Supreme Crime and includes Abu Ghraib, Guantánamo and the looting of \$billions by Bush & Co's accomplices.

71% DOWN TO 30%. Iraq war support has dropped to about 30% of the US population. The fallen-away support is almost certainly due to the following: the cost in US lives and treasure; the Bush & Co lies about WMD; Abu Ghraib; Bush & Co's treasonous outing of covert CIA WMD specialist Valerie Plame to punish her and her husband for the latter's demolition of the forgery-based lie about "Saddam's pursuit of uranium oxide from Niger;" reports from soldiers in Iraq about lack of equipment, and relatives, like Cindy Sheehan, of those killed.

BUSH'S BASE when it was still over thirty percent included the super-rich. At one of their banquets Bush spoke the following: "Some call you the haves and the have more; I call you my base." But the ones not directly benefiting from Bush's fiscal mismanagement have

since abandoned him due to the damage those policies are doing to the system. One tip-off that the super-rich are abandoning Bush is that the Repub pols who work for the super-rich have stopped supporting Bush's policies.

THE REMAINING 20% seems unsusceptible to further reduction. Why? Because they are faith-based bible-thumpers, i.e., immune to reason and evidence. They are Rapturists (see the Left Behind series of best-sellers) who believe that Israel must extend from the Nile to the Euphrates before End Days. According to these "true Christians" the bible tells them that the very existences of Palestinians in Palestine are an affront to God and are blocking fulfillment of biblical prophecy. US Rapturists went so far as to accuse Butcher Sharon of treason for evacuating Israelis from Gaza (even though he was simultaneously building some sixty Israeli settlements in Palestine's West Bank).

BUSH & CO couldn't have done it alone. Nor could they have done it without at least forty-five percent support. But, by lies and triangulation, he had seventy-one percent with him at the crucial time. While polls show that support has melted down to less than one-third of the US population, Israel, alone among the world's nations, continues to promote our Iraq war as well as new ones against Iran and Syria. While Bush & Co are the most criminal US leaders since the founding of our nation they are not our first criminal leaders. What Clinton did to Yugoslavia, especially to the Serbs, was also crime on a massive scale. Begun by the Ottomans and continued by the Nazis followed by the Soviets, the final phase that Clinton/NATO undertook, of the genocide of Serbia in its historic cradle, Kosovo, is now being completed. Kosovo's Serbian population that was once one hundred percent is now nearly zero.

LET'S NOT FORGET bin Laden's stated reasons for 9/11; 1) The US's funding and munitioning of Israel's genocide of Palestine, 2) US troops on the "sacred soil" of Saudi Arabia, and 3) the US's murderous sanctions against Iraq that had killed a half million children before 9/11. Who can forget seeing US Secretary of State Madeline Albright telling Leslie Stahl on 60 Minutes that, regarding the killing of those half a million Iraqi children, "We think it was worth it." But would we really have per-

petrated these two genocides and one perceived mortal insult if we knew that 9/11 would be the price we'd pay?

BY WHAT NONVIOLENT means can people of conscience get the US to stop funding and munitioning Israel's genocide against the Palestinians? Where is the forum for such justice? Why did our Justice Dept. harass and fine Cathy Kelly for bringing life-saving medicines to Iraq? Bush & Co repeatedly cited the sixteen US resolutions against Saddam as further justification to invade Iraq while ignoring the four times as many UN resolutions condemning Israeli crimes against Palestine. In recent years the US has vetoed all UN efforts to get justice for Palestine by peaceful means.

WHAT'S TO BE DONE? I will opine and speculate for the first time here, as follows: If the rule of law is to be reestablished in the US we must begin by prosecuting Bush (& Co for their Supreme Crime, their invasion of Iraq and munitioning of Israel's massive bombings of Lebanon last year. There is no point in having a justice system if the Supreme Crime is to go unprosecuted. Then we must prosecute the manufacturers of the cluster bombs, landmines, DU shells, napalm and other illegal weapons we shipped to Iraq and Lebanon. Then we must prosecute USAG Gonzales and his staff for writing the memos that "authorized" Bush's torture policy. We must also prosecute the actual torturers beginning with the CIA and mercenaries. The Rapturists must be put down for their efforts to engulf Earth in a "Lake of Fire" (toward which end they remain Bush & Co's ever-loyal base). They are by far the world's most dangerous cult. We must cease our crimes that inflame the world's righteous against us and begin to abide by the first sentence of our Declaration of Independence that refers to "...a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind." We must examine our local wellsprings of such official crime; the routine abuse of prisoners in our penal systems, the Chicago police department's longtime use of torture to extract confessions from innocents. We must end the dictatorship that our Executive Branch has become. We must restore the US Constitution including congress's equal role in national decision-making and its sole right to declare war. We must destroy AIPAC so that it can

never again bribe our gov't into pursuing Israel's interests over our own. If we fail to destroy AIPAC we must remove from office any pol who takes AIPAC money. We must expose the "Christian Rapturist" cults trying to bring about Armageddon. We must stand up against Big Lie operatives such as the "Swift-Boaters" who managed to make Bush's Vietnam war record of AWOL/Desertion trump in patriotism Kerry's three purple hearts and Silver Star. We must undo essentially all of Bush's initiatives, from Full Spectrum Dominance, to preemptive war, to torture, to his electronic surveillance of Americans, to his cutting off funding for wounded vets, to all of his "signing statements." We must reward honest pols and get rid of dishonest ones. We must stop shirking our duty to operate government "by the people." We must reclaim our airwaves and stop corporate "entertainment" that has so coarsened America's speech, music and behavior. We must shut down Big Lie operatives such as Fox TV and Clear Channel for deceiving the people. We must stop conflating professional sports and patriotism

DET. FRANK LAVERTY., R.I.P., of the Chicago police force, is a model for the American people. He was the first insider to do something to stop the practice of torture by the Chicago police. His heroic efforts and the threats he faced because of his truth-telling have been recorded by writer John Conroy and reported under the headline; "The Good Cop" (The Reader; Jan. 5, 07). What has happened to Chicago and America that Frank Lavery's ordinary decency was nearly unique in the Chicago police department? May the spirit of Detective Lavery inspire us all to become better Americans.

NOT IN MY NAME is a largely Jewish organization in Chicago dedicated to justice for the Palestinians. They are effective; they also demonstrate and distribute educational pamphlets in Water Tower park each Sunday from Noon to 1 p.m. Why not join them? Their very activities serve to refute in advance any broad-brush condemnations of Jewish guilt re Palestine.

WHO ARE the terrorists in the Anglo-Irish conflict? See www.terrorismireland.org

WHICH BRIT REG'T starved your relatives? See www.irishholocaust.org. Contact me at 312.664.7651 or fogarty@ix.netcom.com

From the heart

'Riverdance' returns for an encore explosion of authentic Irish music and dance

By Catey Sullivan

"At the root of all music and dance is the search for spirituality."

So asserts Bill Whelan, whose extraordinary music is at the root of "Riverdance," the lavish cross-pollination of traditional Irish music and choreography influenced by traditions spanning the globe from Ireland to Russia to Spain.

This month, the Irish step dancing spectacular returns to Chicago for a third time, with performances slated for April 3 to 15 at the Auditorium Theatre.

Since it debuted on the banks of the River Liffey in 1995, "Riverdance" has become a Celtic-themed juggernaut: The 1,300 dancers and musicians that have performed with the massive show have gone through an estimated 13,000 pairs of shoes, 10,000 costumes and 16,000 bass, guitar and fiddle strings. Performers have also consumed roughly 50,000 pounds of chocolate and 50,000 gallons of Gatorade in order to keep their energy levels high.

"I would be telling you a lie if I said I knew how big 'Riverdance' was going to get when we started it," said Whelan. "But I did know, from the first time we saw it in rehearsal, that this was something extraordinary."

"Riverdance" starts small: Before it explodes into its signature, feet-as-percussion-fueled ferocity, "Riverdance" softly mesmerizes with an ethereal invocation of haunting delicacy and

"I've heard that lot, that we've glitzed things up far too much, that 'Riverdance' is all about lights and presentation and not really about dance.

But when I ask people who say that where they saw the show, they invariably haven't seen it."

Bill Whelan, composer, creator, "Riverdance"

lonesome poignancy. At the start is the sound of clouds, of light rain falling on a river. Whelan's "Cloudsong" crescendos as it continues, as the musical, metaphorical river swells into a thunderous body of water coursing toward the sea. As the strength of the river grows, so does the number of dancers on the stage: From the lone, male dancer who represents the spirit of the land, the stage is slowly, thrillingly filled by a dance corps of nearly two dozen, the whole representing the



boundless, timeless energy and power of an endless cycle of life: Clouds feed the river, the river feeds the ocean, the ocean feeds the clouds.

The soundscape is anchored in the chamber chorus' constant refrain of "uisce breatha," a Gaelic phrase that translates to "water of life."

"There isn't a story in any traditional sense of the word with good guys and bad guys. It's a feeling," Whelan said.

"I was very much driven by the idea of the river as this reflection of our own life cycles, not just as individuals, but as a people, the Irish people, starting out on this small island, going out to much larger, far-flung places and then coming back to their roots," he added, "There's a lot in the music that has to do with rural Ireland; there are elements of desolation, loneliness and yet there is something quite spiritually uplifting about it. When you sit on the west coast or County Clare or Connemara, you may not be at the center of everything that's happening in the world, but you sense this deep, spiritual connection."

"Riverdance" isn't without its critics. Southside native Michael Flatley, the original lead male dancer in the production was famously fired from the show. The "Riverdance" co-creator went on to trash "Riverdance" vociferously in print, proclaimed himself "Lord of the Dance" and started up his own, competing shows, including "Feet of Flames."

"Riverdance" has also been criticized for tarding up a traditional dance form until the glitz eclipses the art.

"I've heard that lot, that we've glitzed things up far too much, that 'Riverdance' is all about lights and presentation and not really about dance," said Whelan. "But when I ask people who say that where they saw the show, they invariably haven't seen it."

"There are plenty of other shows that were written expressly to cash in on 'Riverdance'; I haven't seen 'Lord of the Dance' or 'Feet of Flames' so I'm not qualified to comment on what Michael's doing. But I was at one show in Austria - 'Night of the Dance' - and it was an embarrassing, cynical copy of 'Riverdance.' Just this awful rip-off of 'Riverdance.'"

"We created 'Riverdance' before Irish step dancing became this hugely popular world wide phenomenon. We weren't cashing in on or copying anything. I wrote the music from an honest, authentic standpoint, from my emotions.

"Of course we're presenting Irish dance in a theatrical way, and it's important to remember that until 'Riverdance' that never happened. Irish dance was done in a much smaller scale, the largest presentations of it were at competitions, so what we're doing is new, but it's still authentic and coming from the heart," Whelan said.

cateysullivan@comcast.net

Loreena McKennitt Live in Concert May 1, 2007 At Civic Opera House

Loreena McKennitt will begin a North America-wide tour in April. A series of 21 U.S. dates will support her Verve/Quinlan Road label debut, *An Ancient Muse*. This is her first tour since 1998 and her first album since 1997's multi-platinum *The Book of Secrets*.

An Ancient Muse, as Scripps News says, "is a literary-flavored, Celtic-oriented travelogue of the Mediterranean region of centuries ago." As McKennitt herself describes it, "This record is a little like equipping yourself with a Eurail card. It's like saying, I don't know where I'm going to on this trip. I'm just going to get on board the train, and allow each encounter to lead to the next." The album has sold over 500,000 copies worldwide to date.

In a recording career spanning two decades, her music has won worldwide critical acclaim and gold, platinum and multi-platinum awards in eighteen countries across four continents. She has won numerous awards including the Billboard International Achievement Award and two Juno Awards.



Reserved seat tickets are \$65.00 / \$49.50 / \$35.00 and will be available at the Civic Opera House box office, all Ticketmaster ticket Centers, charge by phone at 312-559-1212 or order online at Ticketmaster.com.

What: Riverdance

When: 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays*; 2 and 7:30 Wednesdays; 7:30 p.m. Thursdays; 8 p.m. Fridays; 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays; 2 p.m. Sundays April 3 through 15

*Performance on Tuesday, April 3 will begin at 8 p.m.

Where: Auditorium Theatre, 50 E. Congress Parkway, Chicago

Tickets: Are \$20 and \$70 and available at the Auditorium Theatre Box Office (50 East Congress Parkway), Broadway In Chicago Box Offices (24 W. Randolph St., 151 W. Randolph St. and 18 W. Monroe St.), through the Broadway In Chicago Ticket Line at (312) 902-1400, at all Ticketmaster ticket centers (including all Carson Pirie Scott stores, Tower Records, Hot Tix, select or online at ticketmaster.com

Riverdance's Marty Dowds:

From asthmatic kid to world champion

By Catey Sullivan

"Riverdance" lead dancer Marty Dowds came late to the party. The Donegal native didn't begin dance lessons until the ripe old age of 9, significantly older than most dancers who eventually compete on an elite level and bring home the globe's top awards in Irish dancing.

"I did get a fairly late start," he said, "My grandmother started taking me to lessons because I was suffering from asthma, and she thought the exercise would be good for me." It was. His asthma "definitely" cleared up, he said. And oh yes, by the time he was 17, Dowd had taken top prizes in the All-Ireland, and British, National and World Championship Irish dance competitions.

"I keep the trophies up in the attic at home. It's too much dusting to leave them out," he said.)

At 16, he auditioned for a touring company of Riverdance, and while he earned a callback never figured on hitting the road with the show seen by more than 19 million people in 32 countries.

"That was 1997. I was only 16, too young to sign the contract and go to work," he said, "I got shortlisted for the cast, and they said they'd call when they needed another dancer. I was kind of like, there are so many other dancers out there, and they're never going to call me. That was in March. I turned 17 in May. They called me in August. It was hard leaving home, but I was so excited I could barely wait. I flew out with the company from Dublin to Boston."

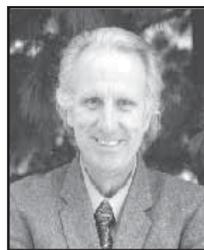
From there, he went to perform on Broadway with Riverdance for a year and half. Since, his dancing has taken him to performances on the Great Wall of China and the Kremlin in Russia. After four years in the Riverdance corps, he moved up to principal dancer.

"I go home to visit at Christmas and for a week in the summer or so. That's difficult, being away from home so much," he said. "But I had the passion for dancing from the get go. It takes a lot of drive, and a lot of mental and physical strength I've learned. There's been times when I have to go dance a show and I feel like I'm ready to fall into bed - but once that first number is started, it's all energy. It's amazing."

T radition In Review



By Bill Margeson



A really tasty trio this month. Short column, too, as Editor and Gestapo Officer, Cliff Carlson demand earlier and earlier deadlines so he can have more and more time to pursue "other interests," if you get our drift.

First is a lovely bit from Niall Vallely, Paul Meehan and Caomhin Vallely entitled, Buille. We are told "buille" is Irish for "punch" or "strike".

Well (get the moans ready here), the album is certainly buille, as it definitely packs a punch. We apologize for the foregoing, but it is this new schedule for deadlines, you see. Anyway, we have long admired Niall's concertina playing and rank him highly along with the likes of Jacqueline McCarthy, Noel Hill and Micheal O'Raghallaigh. Paul Meehan is known to many through his well-earned, steady work as a guitarist in the tradition. Caoimhin plays a lovely piano. This 10-tune, all-instrumental brill was recorded in Ireland and Scotland—the Scottish bit due, no doubt, to Capercaillie's Donald Shaw serving as the producer. We love it. There is great lift to the reels, and a truly soulful turn or two by Niall on the airs. All the tunes are original, and almost all are wonderful. Some should be instant classics. This album is clear, direct, incredibly well played and true to itself. To the bone. These are three wonderful and talented musicians, and they have a self-titled winner on their hands—the group, Buille and the album, Buille. Truly, truly terrific. Rating: 3&1/2 Harps.

The regular reader knows how many albums we have reviewed over the years from the Scottish power label, Greentrax. We have found it interesting that the only Irish group on the label is the sensational, North Cregg. Must be something about being true to their Scottish routes, but so be it. This is another label that cares about its artists, and really loves the music. The Cregg's new album is, The Roseland Barndance—no doubt named for the traditional tune of the same name. North Cregg is Christy Leahy on button accordion, Claire-Anne Lynch, vocals, Liam Flanagan on fiddle and banjo, Ciaran Coughlan on piano and Martin Leahy on guitar and drums. The genesis of the group is in Cork. No one else sounds like North Cregg. Terrific swing, a real sliabh luachra feel to the whole thing, joined by the really lovely vocals of Claire-Anne Lynch in what we believe is her second album with the band. Overall, it is the band's fourth album, and second for Greentrax. For the lover of the sliabh luachra style and swing, welcome to heaven. There are some mighty barndances and jigs—joining our favorite, Crehan's Reels, named for the great fiddler, Junior Crehan. No one plays slides like bands from Cork—and The Cregg is probably the best, as evidenced by a set of four that begins with I'd Rather Be Married Than Left. We continue to love this band, and this label. Another distinctive, creative winner from The North Cregg wheelhouse. Great, great stuff. Rating: Four Harps.

Beoga is from Northern Ireland (Antrim) and is a stunning band. They are going to be at Irish Fest this summer, and we cannot wait. The album is entitled, Mischief. The group is Liam Bradley

on piano, Niamh Dunne on vocals and fiddle, Eamon Murray on bodhran, Darrian McKee on button box and Sean 'Og Graham on button box, guitar, bouzouki and mandolin. We have been playing them regularly on the radio show since they sent us this new album. It is one of the best this year. Super vocals, a terrific staccato beat to the rhythm with a real sense of style and wit. This is a major, major band to be reckoned with. On several occasions during the early listens, we actually found ourselves laughing out loud to some of the musical inventiveness on tunes such as Jazzy Wilbur and songs like Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone. Emotional resonance in songs like Love is a Delicate Thing meets surprises like the inclusion of the old Steely Dan favorite, Dirty Work. Power and nuance, humor, talent aplenty. Get ready for a long run for Beoga. We love this group and we love this self-produced and distributed album. Rating: Four Harps.

Notes:

We were at the Concert of the Year Thursday night, March 8. The Dave Munnely Band was at The Irish American Heritage Center under the invite of the man, John Daly and his Salon Series featuring the best in Irish music. The five artists provided the greatest Irish music concert we have ever attended. Dave Munnely on box, Kieran Munnely on flute and bodhran, Tony Byrne on guitar and Paul Kelly on fiddle and mandolin were joined by Chicago's own, Kat Eggleston on vocals in a stunner of an evening. Just ask anyone smart enough to have been there. The tunes! Good Lord—then there was Kat singing her heart out and winning ours all over again. As we write this, it was five nights ago, and we are still gobsmacked and out of words. Unbelievable. We are sure John will have them back. Can't wait. Can't wait. Can't wait—BTW, Munnely Band WILL be at Irish Fest again this summer in Milwaukee.

That concert followed the appearance of Flock at Ballydoyle's in Downers Grove the preceding Tuesday night. Flautist Sarah Allen of the group is on maternity leave, so she is being filled in for by Ireland's greatest musician, Michael McGoldrick. We were proud of ourselves that, as we were introduced to McGoldrick for the first time at the concert, we neither fainted nor slobbered on his shoes. A magical evening. Flock just rolls along as one of The Big Three—Munnely, Flock and Brock-McGuire. What a great night!!!

All prayers for Tommy Makem—and we hear Paddy Reilly is much on the mend!! God bless both.

Do listen to Blarney on the Air every Monday night from 7-9 p.m. Chicago time on 90.9 fm and www.wdcb.org. We continue to try to educate Dublin's Shay Clarke about Irish music, we continue to argue, he continues to be wrong, and—hopefully—you continue to have a great time. Two solid hours of the best in Irish music. Come on. Be there.

Ta!

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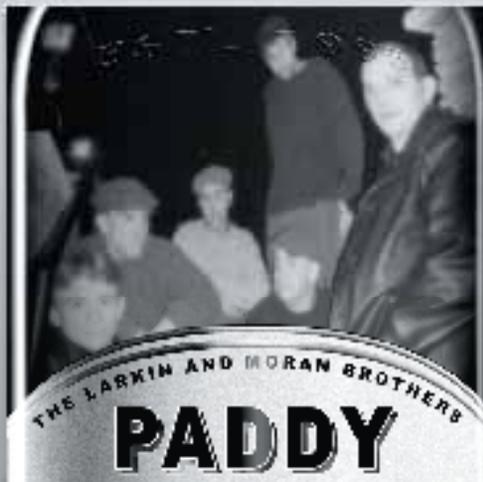
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Raised On Songs and Stories

By Shay Clarke



Thank God it's over. You know what I mean, The Paddywhackery, the Shamrockery and the most awful fake Irish accents that I have ever heard. Its getting worse every year and my patience is wearing very thin. It's making me Grumpy. I have always loved St. Patrick's Day and I am very proud that the Patron Saint of Ireland is celebrated all over the world by the Irish diaspora. . . . it is truly amazing. No other Saint even comes close to our St. Patrick when it comes to celebrating, but it has been high-jacked by the Breweries, Distillers, and the purveyors of alcohol, who push the envelope further each year. It's a great day for the Irish, but as the day goes on, it's not too pleasant to watch. It seems to have morphed into some type of drinking contest and that's certainly not what its all about. Enough said... I told you I was Grumpy.

North Texas Irish Festival March 2-4

The Dallas Irish Festival celebrated their 25th Anniversary this year and what had started as a one-night ceili in a small damp pub in 1983, with a few hundred Irish Music lovers has become a major National event, held every March at the Fair Park in Dallas. Forty bands and entertainers on nine stages, entertained about fifty thousand people on a superweekend. Cathie Ryan, The Makem Brothers, Grada, The Glengarry Bhoys, Teada and Sliabh Notes helped to make this very professional event a destination Irish Festival. Although most of the entertainment is indoors, it was springtime in Dallas and it was good to feel the sun on my face again after leaving a chilly Chicago behind me. Next year, if you need to get a serious dose of great Irish music before St. Patrick's Day... come and join us at the North Texas Irish Fest, presented by the Southwest Celtic Music Association.

West Palm Beach Irish Fest March 10-11

Glorious weather, Palm trees, and the beautiful flowerbeds of the Meyer Amphitheater and park, in beautiful downtown West Palm Beach make this Irish Festival certainly the prettiest. The Irish Cultural Institute celebrated their 20th year with a line up that had something for everybody.

Derek Warfield and his Wolfe Tones, The Prodigals and the Paddy Noonan Band thrilled thousands of snowbirds and natives alike. Noel Kingston is one of my favorite entertainers and I wish he would travel a bit more, but I suppose, that if I lived in the Sunshine State, I would be quite happy to work there too... it would be great to see Noel at some Midwest events.

I had not seen the Paddy Noonan Show for sometime and I can tell you that it's as good as it has always been. Paddy is a trooper and his guest musicians, singers and comedian were a great hit.

The Sunday morning Gaelic Mass brought a huge crowd to the park and the only drop of rain fell as we were leaving West Palm Beach on Sunday night. Thanks Sheila and keep it going.

St. Patrick's Weekend... Kitty O'Shea's

Kitty O'Shea's at the Hilton Hotel and Towers on Michigan Avenue is ground zero for Chicago's St. Patrick's festivities and that's where we set up our Blarney Fine Irish Jewelry booth for the weekend.

It had been years since I was downtown Chicago for St. Patrick's Day and I had forgotten how busy it was.

Eamon Brady and his crew were well able for the thousands of revelers who lined up, some of them for hours to be fed watered and entertained at this Irish Mecca. The entertainment was continuous with the Shannon Rovers, Jimmy Moore, Seamus O'Kane, Peter Brady, Pat Broaders, Fergal King and Breda King. It was a great show, all my favorite people in the one place. Let the good times roll.

The Hilton hotel also hosted some of the major Irish bashes, The Celtic Legal Lunch, The Irish Fellowship Dinner, and Hizz'oner Mayor Daley and his Eminence, Cardinal George were there along with many Irish politicians and all the movers and shakers. All and all, it was a great weekend.

Notes:

The Irish American Heritage Center was also packed to capacity on St. Patrick's Day and they had to refuse admission as the house was full. It seemed like a great party, my wife Traci was running the Blarney booth at the center.

I met Mary Rowley from Irish Festival Cruises several times over the last few months and she is promoting her 17th annual Irish Festival cruise to the Caribbean aboard Celebrity Cruise Line's Millennium, from January 27th to February 3rd 2008. Sail along with Tommy Makem, Mary Black, Cherish the Ladies, The Black Brothers, Dermot Henry and many more. Check it out at www.irishtours.com.

The Wind That Shakes the Barley. Should be at a cinema near you soon. It is one of the best movies to come out of Ireland in recent years. Check local listings.

The Larkin and Moran Brothers have released their new album, Paddy. I have played it, it's terrific, and I will review it next month.

Gavin Coyle's album, Three, also arrived in my mail this week and I will be playing tracks from both albums on our radio show, Blarney on the Air, in the next few weeks.

Blarney on the Air, airs Monday nights on 90.9 F.M. in the Chicagoland area and is also available on the world

wide web at www.wdcb.com.

Check out our myspace! Go to www.myspace.com/blarneyceltic and see our new festival video. My son, Conor, put it together for me recently for my trip to Ireland.

And don't forget to check our new website www.BlarneyHome.com

That's all for now folks.

Slan Leat.

Shay

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Irish Books and Plays in Review

By Frank West

Ed Foy is back. He is the fictional detective created by Declan Hughes. This fascinating character appears now in Hughes' new book *The Color of Blood* by Declan Hughes. William Morrow: Harper Collins, New York, 2007. ISBN: 9780060825492; 352 pages: \$24.95.

He first appeared last year in the first of Hughes' noir trilogy, *The Wrong Kind of Blood*. His new book is *The Color of Blood*. It is also set in Dublin: the new prosperous and modern Dublin.

Hughes' depiction of noir Dublin is strongly influenced by Dashiell Hammett's depiction of noir San Francisco. His noir city and characters are like Raymond Chandler's Los Angeles, Ken Bruen's Galway, and Dennis Lehane and Robert Parker's Boston.

Quoting from a previous review: "Noir writing is characterized by lots of dialogue; with both inner and outer monologues; and a dark... view of life."

Circumstances and events change but human nature doesn't. Ed Foy also knows that contemporary human behavior is deeply influenced by events that happened many years ago.

During the investigation, Foy gets advice about that from a



Declan Hughes

psychologist: "I think if you want to know what's going on in that family in the present, you need to be investigating the past Mr. Foy. It's not what [happened]... last week, or last year. It's what happened twenty, thirty years ago that counts."

Foy is the Irish word for spade. Think of Sam Spade (played by Humphrey Bogart) digging and probing for the truth in foggy San Francisco. Private detective Ed Foy is constantly digging for the truth.

In a previous book, Hughes says about a private detective: "... he can't relax by sitting around. He has to be prying and poking and stirring things up until, somehow, out falls the truth..."

That could have been said by Humphrey Bogart in the noir classic film *The Maltese Falcon*. But that was in 1941 and this is 2007 and it was said by Declan Hughes.

Hughes was born and raised in Dublin and lives there now. Since 1984, he has worked in Dublin theater as a director and playwright. He has written many award-winning plays and TV scripts.

I believe insight from his theater experience made Hughes aware of the dramatic moment and the telling detail. His work is

filled with memorable observations.

When a respected Dublin dentist receives photos of his daughter in the nude, he hires Ed Foy to investigate. The family of the dentist is wealthy and influential. The family's father was a respected, idolized and powerful icon of Dublin's medical elite.

The plot of *The Color of Blood* is an intricately constructed story structure of betrayal and death. The secrets of the past are revealed with great empathy for the people involved. Foy discovers again that despite great wealth, human nature doesn't change.

"To find the truth, Foy must dig deep into a dark family history involving organized crime, and shocking secrets that someone is determined to keep buried no matter what the cost."

As he pursues the investigation, Foy tellingly observes one of the major changes in Ireland: "Across the road, a mass was giving out; All Saints Day was a holy day of obligation, but that didn't carry the force it had in former times; ... none of the people streaming out of the church was under sixty; most looked eighty. Maybe the good old days were coming to an end at last."

Declan Hughes' writing is so magnetic that I completed reading the book four days after I received it. I strongly recommend *The Color of Blood* by Declan Hughes,

This quote reveals much about Irish and Irish American people. Ed Foy asks a psychologist why his clients and suspects do the things they do: "I believe it stems from... a cultural legacy in this

country, a legacy of deeprooted worthlessness that was inculcated in the individual and handed down through the generations... the English enforced the idea that being Irish was an inferior state. The Catholic Church instilled a sense of fear and shame, not just about sex, about everything, about our very existence: Work and pray, work and pray. Poverty of course, a history of poverty played its part in determining any sense we might have of our worth, or our personal identity. And the crawthumpers and bogtrotters who replaced the Brits, the pious fools and gombeens and Irish-language fanatics who told us we couldn't all expect to live in our own country, and then made sure half of us had to emigrate by their insularity and sheer bloody incompetence. All internalized by our parents and grandparents, always the same message: We're worth nothing, and we deserve less. And now... we have money, and the Church is no longer a force, and we're still hiding behind the lies... we live in... alcoholic furies of denial. 'We're grand now,' we laugh, with our legendary sense of humor. But you can't shake off all that... what is it the Catholic Church used in its teaching, 'formation'. You can't just get rid of it. It's, ah, 'part of what we are.'"

O'Connell Honored as Top 100 Educator

Dr. Richard O'Connell was picked by the Irish-America Magazine to be one of this year's Too 100 in the field of education. The purpose in honoring each recipient, according to Editor Patricia Harty is that, "In America, like nowhere else, we are proud of simple beginnings and where they can take you when you stick to the road, though the going may be tough."

Narrowly Escapes German Internment

Dr. O'Connell was born in the Bronx and grew up in Washington Heights on the Westside of Manhattan. At the beginning of the war in Europe, he left Ireland after a visit on May 10th, 1940, traveling from Limerick to South Hampton, to Le Havre to Paris as the only way back to the United States. With his Mother, Eileen (Taylor) O'Connell, and twin brother, Harry, he left Paris on May 15th, the day the Germans broke through and headed toward Brussels. The family traveled south onto Genoa to board the U.S. Washington, which was stopped on the way over and searched for arms by a German submarine. In 1942, the US Washington was sunk by a German torpedo. His passport for this peripatetic journey was signed by none other than Eamon deValera, who later became President of Ireland. Dr. O'Connell, Richard O'Connell of Limerick, Cary's Road, had six brothers who migrated to Boston and the New England area and are unknown to the author. www.dr.roconnell33.com

Dr. O'Connell Publishes Book

Motivating Kids To The Max (www.SchoolGuidanceServices.com) It is a practical and candid handbook for parents, counselors, teachers and administrators on how to motivate stu-

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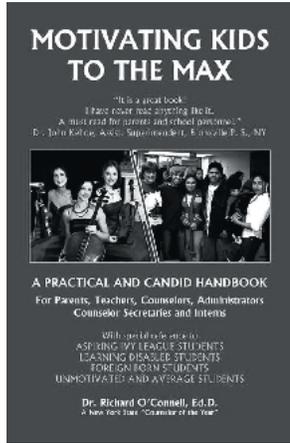
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dents to reach their potential. Warmly written and with humor, it contains strategies, techniques, approaches and anecdotes, which illustrate motivational concepts. www.School-GuidanceServices.com



For over 40 years, Dr. Richard O'Connell has held the roles of a district guidance coordinator, an assistant principal, director of guidance and counselor in various New York and New Jersey private and public schools. He is the recipient of the New York State and Nassau County's "Counselor of the Year Awards" for his innovative programs and publications; he is currently a professor at Long Island University and the College of New Rochelle, as well as doing consulting work.

Dr. O'Connell began his career teaching fifty-four students, eight subjects a day in the same classroom. He then spent two years teaching high school English before beginning his career as a guidance counselor. He has a doctorate in Educational Leadership from Nova University, two master degrees from Manhattan College in Counseling Psychology and English Literature and a bachelor of arts from The Catholic University of America.

Bread and Salt, Carl Sandburg Tribute April 13, 14, 15

By Sean Callan

Hog Butcher for the World,
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and the Nation's
Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders...

So wrote Carl Sandburg, poet of the prairie, about Chicago in 1916. This and other Sandburg poems will be featured in Bread and Salt, a performance of poetry by the Chicago Actors Workshop at the Irish American Center 4626 North Knox on April 13, 14, (7.30 pm) & 15, (3 pm) 2007. The works will be presented by veteran actors Brad Harbaugh, Brigid Duffy and Julie Daley. The action will be directed by Charles Gerace. Chicago Actors Workshop is an ensemble of professionals that brings poetry and other presentations to life.

Sandburg, a native of Illinois, wrote in a distinctive free verse style about the struggles of ordinary people. This was due in part to his life and background. He was the son of a working man, a blacksmith's helper, and Sandburg himself went out to work from the time he was 11. He became a vagabond and worked at various laboring jobs. Later, he enlisted in the army in wartime and was shipped overseas. But he did not see combat. On his return, he took



up a pen and became a successful writer. He worked as a reporter for newspapers including the Chicago Daily News. He won two Pulitzer Prizes: one for biographical prose and the other for poetry.

Sandburg's poetry is gritty, poignant and humorous and it can move even the most indifferent to tears. It remembers Anna Imroth, a factory worker who died in a fire because there was no fire escape; pays tribute to workers who were blacklisted and could not work leaving young families to suffer, as well as describing scenic vistas, summer back yards and stately buildings. Sandburg was proud

to be associated with Chicago but he retained objectivity. In comparing himself with other famous poets he once stated "Here is the difference between Dante, Milton, and me. They wrote about hell and never saw the place. I wrote about Chicago after looking the town over for years and years."

This year marks the 40th anniversary of Sandburg's death. He died on his 245 acre estate named "Connemara" in North Carolina in 1967. Following cremation, his ashes were returned to Illinois for burial. Admission to performances is \$15, payable at the door. 773-282-7035.

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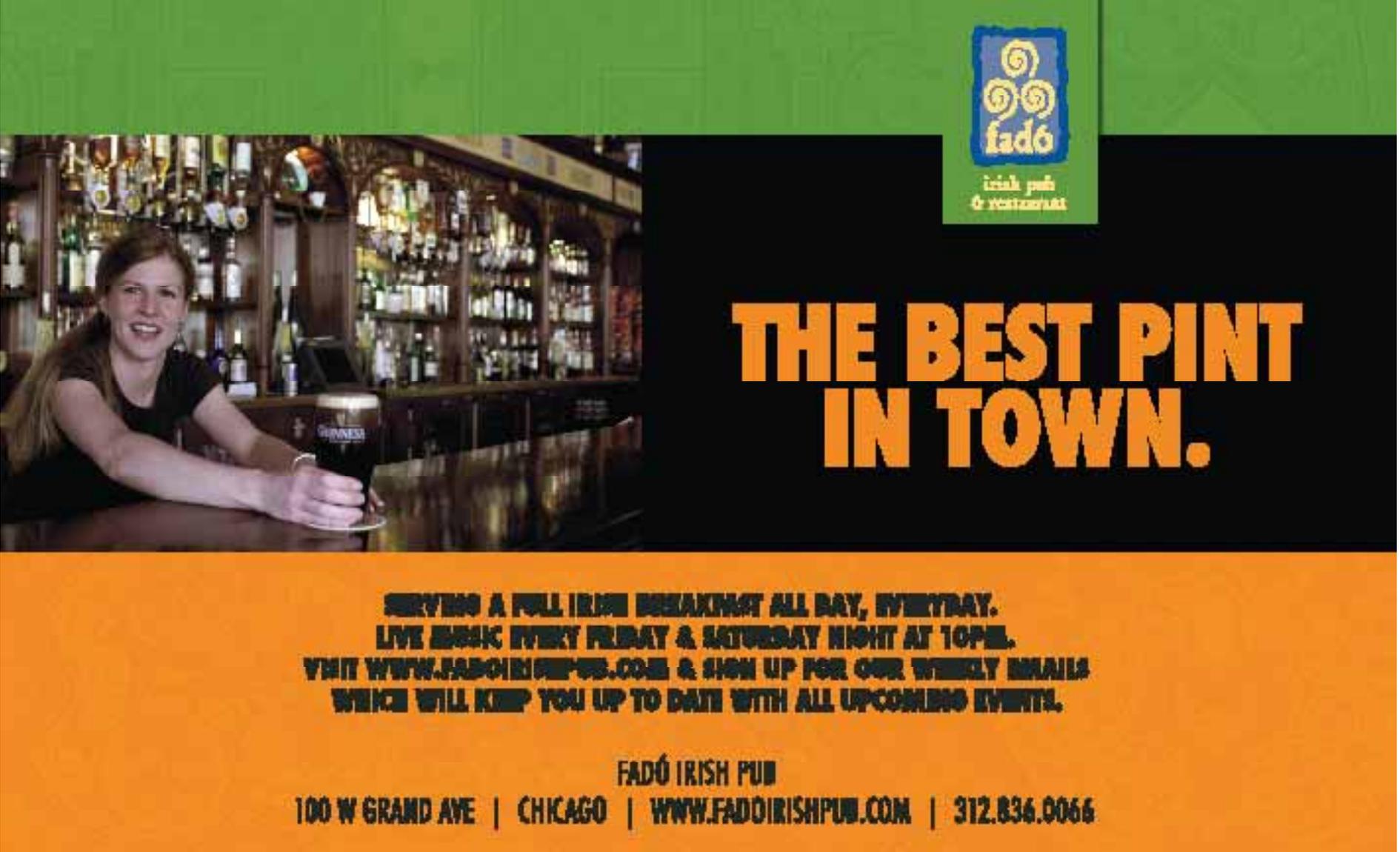
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April Events at Gaelic Park

Gaelic Park, located at 6119 West 147th Street, in Oak Forest, will host many spring events this April.

The Carraig Pub at Gaelic Park, offers an entertaining atmosphere everyday. Enjoy the energetic and free musical entertainment beginning at 9 p.m. on Friday's and 10 p.m. on Saturdays. This month hear: Donna Finn, Friday, April 6th; Mulligan Stew, Saturday, April 7th; Joe McShane, Friday, April 13th; The Ploughboys, Saturday, April 14th; Bernie Glim & Country Roads, Friday, April 20th; Jerry Eadie, Saturday, April 21st; Dan McGuinness, Saturday, April 28th. But don't just come for the music, the Carraig has daily food and drink specials including delicious BBQ ribs on Wednesdays, a fish fry on Fridays and a mouth watering corned beef and cabbage dinner special served Fridays and Saturdays. Tuesday nights come in to attain prizes and knowledge at the Carraig's Pub Quiz beginning at 8 p.m. Enter a team for a minimal entry fee. Also, every Thursday night at 7:30 p.m. bring in the whole family to hear the traditional music session given by

the Irish Music School instructors Sean Cleland and Pat Finnegan, their students, friends and families. All ages are welcome.

Enjoy good food and great dancing music at Chicago Gaelic Park, and their popular Sunday Celtic Suppers beginning at 4 p.m. and going until the music stops at 9 p.m. This month musical guests will be John Gleason on April 15th, Gerard Haughey on April 22nd and Velvet Green on April 29th, each providing the dancing music until 9 p.m. The Celtic Suppers are the perfect meeting place for large groups, and for only \$15, a buffet including soup, salad bar, main entrée, dessert, tea and coffee is served. Children are welcome; under 12 years old admission is \$8.

Please note that there will be a special Celtic Supper on Easter Sunday, April 8th with music provided by Sean O'Donnell and a special appearance by the Easter Bunny bringing along treats for the kids. A holiday buffet including baked ham and turkey will be served from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m. All of this fun entertainment and delicious food is included in the \$20 ticket price,

and \$10 for children 12 and under. Reservations are required for all Celtic Suppers.

Gaelic Park will host another popular Musical Luncheon on Wednesday, April 4th beginning at noon. Lunch will be served at 1 p.m. with dancing music provided by Sean O'Donnell until 4 p.m. For the modest cost of \$12, the musical luncheon includes an afternoon of lively entertainment and a delicious sit down lunch with soup, salad, entrée, dessert and coffee or tea. Reservations are required.

The Monthly Mass and Breakfast is on Easter Sunday, April 8th beginning at 10 a.m. A delicious Irish breakfast will be served immediately after Mass that includes bacon and sausage, soda

bread and black pudding for the cost of \$6.

Remember to listen every Sunday night from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. to a live broadcast from Gaelic Park by Harry Costelloe, Mary Hackett or Mary Riordan on WCEV 1450 am. Hear all the week's Irish news and sports direct from Ireland, and all the latest events and goings on at Gaelic Park. Call the station at (708) 687-9330 to request a song or dedication or for advertising or stream live at www.wcev1450.com, hitting "Schedule" then click on the "Surfer Network" box on the left hand side.

Visit Gaelic Park's website at www.chicago-gaelicpark.org or call (708) 687-9323 for more information on any dinner or special event or to reserve tickets.

Alasdair Fraser and Natalie Haas in Concert

Calling all Celtic music lovers! The IAHC hosts a concert with Master Scottish fiddler Alasdair Fraser and cellist Natalie Haas on April 20 at 8pm. Tickets are \$20.

Fraser's dynamic fiddling, engaging stage presence and deep understanding of Scotland's music have created international demand for his solo appearances and concerts with a variety of ensembles. He is a major force behind the resurgence of traditional Scottish fiddling in his homeland and the US, inspiring legions of listeners and learners through his recordings, annual fiddle courses and concerts.

Fraser has been featured on over 100 television and radio shows in the UK and on several nationally-broadcast programs in the US, including CBS Sunday Morning, NPR

Morning Edition, A Prairie Home Companion and The Kennedy Center Honors.

As a student at the Juilliard School in New York, Natalie Haas regularly performs throughout the US and Europe with Fraser, and is a member of American fiddler Mark O'Connor's

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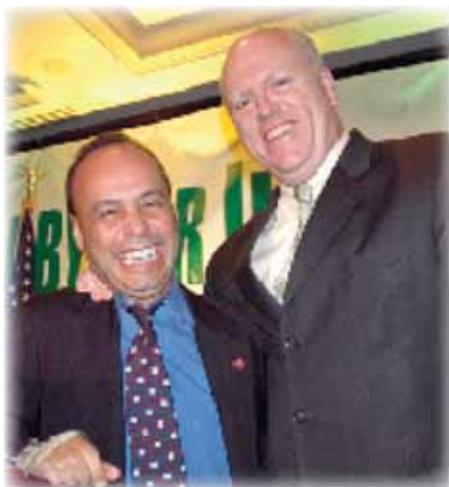
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Participants in the Irish Lobby for Immigration Reform meeting in Washington D.C. in March, 2007. Left to right: Senator Hillary Clinton, TD John Creedon from Cork, and Clodagh Murphy, Seán Crowe, TD for Dublin South West., (next page) Senator Ted Kennedy, Senator Hillary Clinton complaining about the size of her "Legalize the Irish.Org" T-shirt, Former Rep. Bruce Morrison (Morrison Visa), Congressman Luis Gutierrez of Illinois, Congressman Joseph Crowley of New York, and some of the 3,000 Irish walking the halls of Congress.



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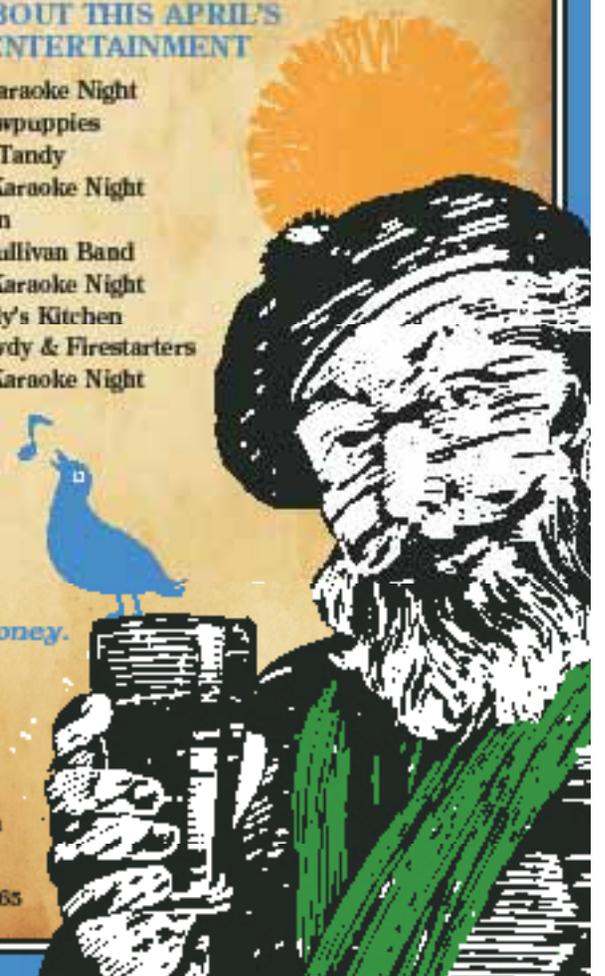
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- April 19, 2007 - Celtic Karaoke Night
- April 20, 2007 - Kennedy's Kitchen
- April 21, 2007 - R. Drawdy & Firestarters
- April 26, 2007 - Celtic Karaoke Night
- April 28, 2007 - Anois

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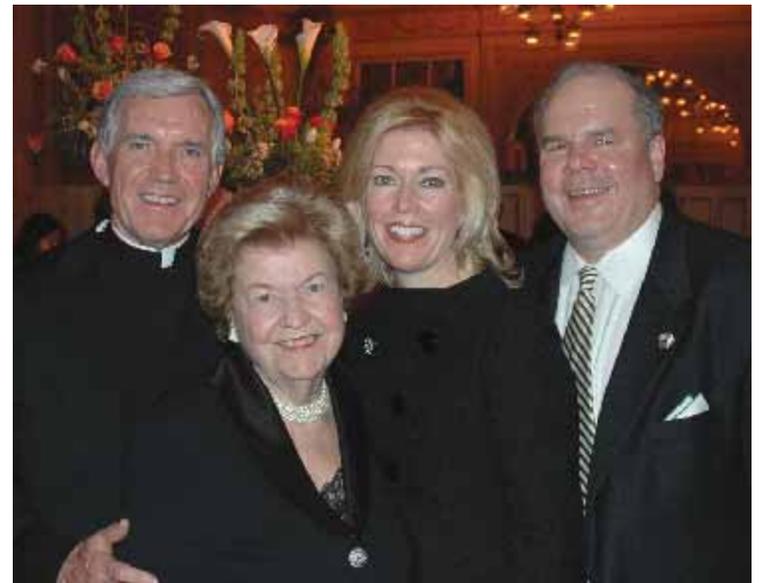
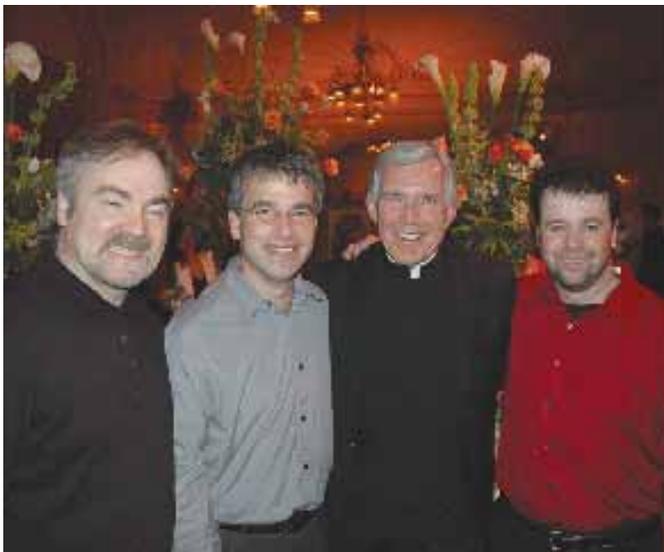
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An Immigrant's Musings

Fr. Michael Leonard



One of the I.L.I.R. posters rightly points out that under the present Immigration system the Irish ancestors of Presidents Ronald Reagan and John F. Kennedy would not have been able to legally enter the United States.

Immigration Reform "Inch By Inch"

The date is March 9 and I am on a return flight from D.C. having spent four days visiting offices on Capitol Hill, as we again press the case to members of the 110th Congress, of the urgent need to enact Comprehensive Immigration Reform.

A year ago March 10, more than 100,000 immigrants marched through Chicago's streets, making history and sowing the seeds of what was to become an enormous national push to reform the country's broken immigration system.

Last year our efforts fell short because in the words of Senator Edward Kennedy: "Politics took the place of policy." And, so here we are again with a new congress made up of elected representatives who are much more favorable to the kind of immigration reform that this country desperately needs.

Once again the Irish Lobby for Immigration Reform brought approx. 3,000 young Irishmen and women to Washington to lobby on behalf of the undocumented, regardless of their origin. One member of congress with whom I met said: "It is good to see the Irish involved in the debate which is often seen as simply a Latino issue."

People in general have strong opinions on the topic of Immigration; however, they do not always appreciate in reality how much this country depends on Immigrant labor. Census figures show, one of every six Illinois workers, or 17 percent, is foreign born. They hold more than a quarter of the doctoral degrees within the state's work force. And they fill 38 percent of factory jobs and more than a quarter of all food service positions. U.S. Department of Labor Secretary Gutierrez (at a recent hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee), speaking of the future, said, "without people to fill the jobs it creates, our economy will not continue to grow." He stated that immigrants have been an essential part of our labor force growth, accounting for half of labor force growth in the last 10 years. He noted that immigrants are taking jobs in agriculture, hospitality, and construction where employers can't find American workers.

What the majority of U.S. Citizens have consistently supported in polls over the last couple of years is a reasonable position on Immigration, namely:

1. We need to improve the security at our borders. This needs to be done in a way that is practical and humane.

2. Allow the undocumented who live among us to pay a fine, learn English, pay their taxes, undergo a background security check and wait in line to receive the opportunity to become citizens if they so wish.

3. Have stricter enforcement of our labor laws to protect the rights both of U.S. born workers and Immigrant workers.

4. Make available sufficient work visas for the real needs of America's labor market into the future. This would in effect eliminate the practice of people entering the country illegally to work.

5. Protect the due process rights of Immigrants to having their day in court before a decision is made to deny them benefits.

If you agree with these principles, which are the principles endorsed by the U.S. Catholic Bishops Conference, then, I urge you kind readers, to call, write, fax or e-mail our elected representatives in Congress. Please, ask them to support the Kennedy/McCain bill for Comprehensive Immigration reform and do so without delay.

And so, back to where I began this article. Whenever I meet my clients after a trip to D.C. I am always asked the question, how does it look in Washington? My answer now is this; I think we can get the legislation passed this year. But, it is not going to be easy. A line from one of Makim & Clancy songs comes to mind: "Inch by inch, row by row..." That is how we are making progress. We need to keep the pressure on our elected representatives to deliver what they promised before the November '06 elections and to remind them of the consequences in terms of votes next time round should they fail in their duty.

Be Prepared

What happens when we do get the legislation signed into law? One thing we know for sure, it is going to be a mammoth task to process the millions of people who will apply for benefits. That is something our organization together with C.L.I.N.I.C, The Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. are already preparing for.

Here is a list of recommendations for immigrants interested in a future legalization program:

Keep Documents That Prove:

- Identity
- Residency or Physical Presence in The USA

- History of Employment
- Good Moral Character
- Taxes

Identity

- It is crucial that the applicant can prove that s/he is who s/he claims to be.

- Obtain valid photo identification through consulate in U.S. The best ID is A PASSPORT.

- Do not go through unknown agencies who say that they can get you IDs.

- N.B. Using fraudulent documents can put you in removal i.e. deportation proceedings.

Residency & Employment Requirements

- Records from School, Hospitals, Churches etc.

- Letters from Employers.

- Keep a track of names of employers, addresses and dates of employment.

Good Moral Character

- Anyone who has been arrested or who have had encounters with law enforcement agencies needs to seek expert advice before filing any application with the government—even if their criminal defense attorney advised them that they no longer have a record.

Taxes

- Those wishing to avail of any future benefits need to have their taxes up to date.

- If not, now is the time to start and begin by paying back taxes.

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"Lines To Ponder/or Bring A Smile To Your Face"

"Don't let your worries get the best of you, remember, Moses started out as a basket case." Some people are kind, polite, and sweet-spirited -- until you try to sit in their pews.

Many folks want to serve God, but only as advisers.

It is easier to preach ten sermons than it is to live one.

The good Lord didn't create anything without a purpose, but mosquitoes come close. (So do ticks and fleas!)

When you get to your wit's end, you'll find God lives there.

People are funny; they want the front of the bus, the middle of the road, and the back of the church.

Opportunity may knock once, but temptation leans on the bell.

Quit griping about your church; if it was perfect, you couldn't belong.

The phrase that is guaranteed to wake up an audience: "And in conclusion."

If the church wants a better pastor, it only needs to pray for the one it has.

God Himself does not propose to judge a person until the person is dead. So why should we? To make a long story short, don't tell it.

Some minds are like concrete, thoroughly mixed up and permanently set. Peace starts with a smile.

We were called to be witnesses, not lawyers or judges.

Outside of traffic, there is nothing that holds this country back as much as committees. Coincidence is when God chooses to remain anonymous.

Forbidden fruits create many jams.

God loves everyone, but probably prefers "fruits of the spirit" to "religious nuts!"

God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage.

The task ahead of us is never as great as the Power behind us.

If you have any comments, questions or concerns, contact me at the office Tel. 312-337-8445. Cell 773-677-5341 or you can e-mail me at the following: siochan@catholic.org.

Shaw's Once-Banned Comedy "Mrs. Warren's Profession" Through April 22

Remy Bumppo Theatre Company concludes its 10th season with Mrs. Warren's Profession by George Bernard Shaw, through Apr. 22, 2007 in the Upstairs Mainstage at the Victory Gardens Green-

house Theater, 2257 N. Lincoln Avenue.

Censored for eight years before finally being produced in 1902, Shaw's provocative comedy illuminates the struggle for women to obtain a decent standard of living versus the choice of morally acceptable roads to that goal. Intelligent and independent, young Vivie Warren has enjoyed a secure upbringing, a Cambridge education, and a generous monthly allowance. Her world is shattered when she discovers the truth about her mother's profession which has provided her comfortable life.

When Mrs. Warren's Profession was finally allowed to be performed at a private club in London in 1902, the public erupted in outrage, condemning the play for its controversial themes. When the play was performed on the public stage in New York in 1905, police threatened to arrest everyone involved (but settled for arresting only the house manager). However, through the years the play has been increasingly praised for its candid and insightful view of the corruption under the skin of Victorian society. It is now one of the most revived Shavian plays, along with Pygmalion. Shaw insisted at



Kitty Warren (Annabel Armour) looks on as business partner George Crofts (Kevin Gudahl) proposes to Vivie Warren (Susan Shunk) in Remy Bumppo Theatre Company's production of Mrs. Warren's Profession, running through April 22nd at Victory Gardens Greenhouse, 2257 North Lincoln Avenue. Tickets: 773-871-3000 or www.remybumppo.org. Photograph by Deone Jahnke.

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Have you ever dreamed of moving to the beach or opening an Irish store? Well, this could be your chance to do both!

On March 17th 1995, without any previous business experience, Mary and John Nolan lived out their dream by opening their first Irish store in Cocoa Beach Florida. John, a native of County Wexford and Mary, an Irish American from Duluth - Minnesota, recall the day with great pride and excitement. "It was a rainy, miserable day when we cut the opening ribbon but somehow the crowds turned out to visit Cocoa Beaches first ever Irish Store".

People looked on in wonder with many asking if they were crazy to open an Irish store on Cocoa Beach. However, these questions were answered two years later when they soon outgrew their store and had to take over the empty space along side them. This doubled their store space to a total of 1600 square feet. Finally, in 1999 with four years of success behind them they uprooted and moved lock stock and barrel to the more prominent and

prestigious main street of the town.

"Looking back I think we were crazy" says John, "we had no prior business experience and we were going into it blind, but we had a belief in ourselves and a passion for what we were doing that somehow made the business a success from the start".

Not only do the Nolan's offer you a fully operational and stocked store for the asking price, but you need no prior experience if you are interested in the business. "If we find the right buyer that will take care of our store, we will offer to train them into the business and work with them for the first few months to teach them the tricks of the trade..." "We want to be sure that we leave our business in good hands and that our customers will be taken care of the way they are accustomed to for years to come".

If you have had a similar dream of owning an Irish store and would like to pursue it maybe this is the opportunity that you've been waiting for. For more information visit www.the-irish-shop.com, or call John or Mary by day at 321.784.9707

or in the evening at 321.783.7492.

Owning your very own business by the beach? This could be your dream come true! For more information please contact Mary or John Nolan at the contact details above.



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Maureen O'Looney Suffers Heart Attacks



Maureen O'Looney

Our own Maureen O'Looney suffered two heart attacks on March 28th in the early hours of the morning. She had the good sense to call an ambulance and was taken to Our Lady Of The Resurrection Hospital in Chicago.

She had 100% blockage in one artery and 40% in another. Doctors placed a stent in one artery and, as of today, she is recovering. Doctors are insisting that she do what she is told, and so far so good!

We wish her a complete recovery and look forward to seeing her back soon!

At press time today, that is all we know.

"Escape" Opening May 10, Live Bait Theater

Tango-dancing cops. Avenging Furies. Not your typical police procedural.

For the detectives of the Chicago Police Department's Special Victims Unit, an average day consists of pressure interrupted only by monotony, unending complaints, piles of paperwork, and a crotchety lieutenant watching their every move. How do these officers Escape? One dances the tango; another compulsively plans parties; yet another concerns herself with the comings and goings of a squirrel in a nearby tree. Things take a mythological turn when a crack whore lets loose an ancient curse. Suddenly, the Furies make an appearance straight out of Aeschylus. The thin blue line isn't going to stop these gals from doing their vengeful duty.

Escape, a world premiere play by Jeff Award-winning playwright Sharon Evans,

opens Thursday, May 10 at 7:00 pm at the Live Bait Theater, located at 3914 N. Clark. Closing Sunday, July 1st.

773-871-1212 www.livebaittheater.org.

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Tempest Launches Spring Tour at Ballydoyle

San Francisco Bay Area-based Celtic rockband, Tempest, has been touring and recording since the late '80s. The band is known for their high-energy mix of rock and roll and traditional Celtic music.

On Saturday, April 14, 2007, Tempest will launch their annual Spring tour at Ballydoyle Pub, 5157 Main Street, in Downers Grove at 9:00 pm with special guests, The Sandcarvers.

Signed to WEA-distributed Magna Carta Records, Tempest's releases are acclaimed worldwide. The group's latest studio CD The Double-Cross finds the band in peak form as it showcases inventive original and traditional material. For more information call 630-969-0600.

Prayer to the Blessed Virgin

(Never known to fail)
 Oh, most beautiful flower of Mt. Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. Oh, Star of the Sea, help and show me, because you are my Mother. Oh, Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth! I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succor me in this necessity. There are none that can withstand your power. Oh, show me because you are my mother. Oh, Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (3x). Holy Mother, I place this cause in your hands (3x). Holy Spirit, you who solve all problems, light all roads so I can attain my goal. You who gave me the divine gift to forgive and forget all evil against me and that in all instances in my life you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank you for all things as you confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you in Eternal Glory. Thank you for your mercy toward me and mine. The person must say this prayer three consecutive days. After 3 days, the request will be granted. This prayer must be published after the fever is granted.

IAHC Hosts Sunday Evening Music Concerts

The Irish American Heritage Center will continue its Sunday evening acoustic/folk music performances this spring.

The Second Sunday Concerts take place in the Fifth Province Lounge on the second Sunday of each month, at 7pm. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at the door.

The series continues on April 8 with emcee local favorites Kat Eggleston, Andrew and Casey Calhoun, Al Day and Michael Smith. Emcee Kat Eggleston is one of the most accomplished singers/songwriters today. Her songs touch a wide range of life's experiences with unusual clarity and authority. Most recently, she performed to rave reviews in the critically acclaimed production of The Snow Queen at the Victory Gardens Theatre.

For more information call 773-282-7035, or Gary Tuber at 847-882-9723 or visit secondssundayconcerts.com.

Irish School At IAHC

The first Irish School in the Chicago area resumes classes at the Irish American Heritage Center this spring. The school, Scoil Na Bpaisti: Children's Center for Cultural Studies, meets on Saturday mornings from 8:45am-Noon and children from ages 6-15 can participate in lessons on Irish heritage, culture, customs, language, art and music, through drama, storytelling, crafts and games.

The 2007 sessions are: Spring: April 14-June 16; Summer: July 10-August 23 on Tuesdays through Thursdays; Fall: September 29-December 1

Fees for the Saturday classes are \$45 per class for IAHC members and \$60 for non-members. Students who enroll in the Saturday classes, excluding the summer program and take any three classes; one per term, pay \$100 for members and \$150 for non-members. Discounts for families. 773-282-7035, ext. 10.



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Investment Ideas

By David Gaffney



From A.G. Edwards & Sons, Inc., Member SIPC

Be Prepared When It Comes to Life Insurance

Life insurance is an important step, and provides a means to protect your family financially in the event of an untimely death. But deciding just how much coverage you need can be a tricky issue. Unfortunately, with all the variables involved, there is no one-size-fits-all policy when it comes to life insurance. So, even if you plan ahead and establish coverage early in your working years, family circumstances change, as you welcome the addition of children, change jobs or careers, and build your savings for the future.

With this in mind, it's important to get in the habit of regularly reviewing your life insurance needs. You'll need to consider several assets, and most importantly you'll want to compare your immediate cash needs with the funds you would have available from life insurance and investments.

It has been said of death that it is the one appointment we all must keep, but for which no time is set. And while it's not something we like to dwell on, it is certainly a fact of life we will all have to deal with someday. Regrettably, this event in our own life has a great impact on others, affecting more than just us when the time comes. If you have a family or other dependents, you know how important it is to be prepared financially.

Certainly one of the most immediate expenses to be taken care of upon your death would be the cost associated with the funeral. In addition, you may have unpaid medical expenses that need to be settled, and your beneficiaries will need to be prepared for probate fees that may arise.

Your family may also face an important decision regarding where they will live. Would it be best for them to keep your current home? Or would it make sense to move to a smaller, more manageable home or even a rental property? If you think your family would sell the home, you'll need to take into account the tax consequences of doing so, in addition to planning for the new mortgage or rent.

To help in the process of preparing for immediate cash needs, you'll also need to estimate the amount needed to pay off other debts. Car loans, credit card balances, or even educational loans and other outstanding liabilities need to be considered. Hopefully by now you have started an emergency fund, and that can help with financial needs such as these. But all of these pieces need to be factored in when deciding how much insurance coverage you should have at any given time.

Once you have a clear picture of the expenses that would need to be taken care of, you can address the other side of the equation - income. Your goal in purchasing life insurance is to ensure that your dependents continue to receive a paycheck even after you're gone. Should something happen to the breadwinner of the family, experts typically estimate that families would need approximately 75 percent of current gross income.

To help evaluate your insurance needs, you should make a list of all possible income sources. Savings and investments, including such things as stocks, bonds and savings accounts, would be one source. In addition, retirement savings may also be eligible to be liquidated given the circumstances, so the value of IRA, 401(k), and other retirement products could be included in your list. All other assets that may provide income to your family - such as inheritances, rental properties, or other investments - should be considered in your calculations.

Planning ahead by assessing your life insurance needs may not be an enjoyable task, but it's certainly one of the most important. Hopefully by taking the time to do so, you can rest assured knowing your family will be provided for in the event something happens to you.

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Illinois House Passes Roadway Safety And Mandatory Insurance Act

Due in large part to the efforts of the Chicago Celts for Immigration Reform, the Illinois House passed the Roadway Safety And Mandatory Insurance Act with no room to spare. The bill needed sixty votes to pass, and there were 60 'yes' votes.

"Today is a tremendous step forward for the Irish community and the immigrant communities of Illinois in general. We Particularly want to commend Chicago Celts for Immigration Reform, Billy Lawless and

crew for exacting pressure and charm to attract even more votes onto this bill," said Mehrdad Azemun, Director of Organizing for the Illinois Coalition For Immigrant and Refugee Rights.

This bill will give people without Social Security numbers the ability to get a drivers certificate, allowing them to drive legally and safely in Illinois. There are an estimated 250,000 people in Illinois who are driving without a license for this reason.

Country Appoints Fisher to Lead New Chicago District Office

Veteran Chicago financial services executive Michael Fisher has been appointed director of new market development by Country Insurance & Financial Services and will manage its newly created Chicago district office. Fisher's hiring as director of new market development accelerates the organization's plans to offer insurance and investment products in Chicago for the first time in its 80-year history.

Country plans to open an 8,000-square-foot Chicago district office at 55 W. Monroe in June. The office will be fully staffed to

handle marketing, claims and underwriting to support its Chicago-based agents. In addition, Country will open branch offices in Beverly, Bridgeport and Clearing this year.

Fisher holds a bachelor's of science degree in administration from Bradley University, Peoria, and a master's of business administration in finance from DePaul University. He serves on a number of civic boards, including the Jesse Owens Foundation, the Community Mental Health Council and Governor's State University Foundation.

Irish President, Mary McAleese, to open Ireland Park in Toronto this summer

itravel2000.com, Canada's most comprehensive travel provider, has been chosen by the Ireland Park Foundation to provide travel services for those who wish to celebrate Irish heritage in Toronto this summer. Hundreds of people from all over the world will gather to commemorate the sacrifices made by thousands of Irish immigrants who came to Canada during the mid-19th century. 38,000 Irish arrived on the shores of Toronto in the summer of 1847 when the city had a population of a mere 20,000. Over one thousand people died in Toronto as a result of typhus. Ireland Park will not only commemorate them but will also celebrate the others who went on to help build Canada into the great country it is today. This beautiful park will open on the shores of Lake Ontario at the foot of Bathurst Quay on June 21st. The President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, will make an official visit to Toronto to mark the occasion.

Singer/composer Loreena McKennitt will headline an evening of uplifting Celtic music at Roy Thomson Hall on June 20th. McKennitt's "eclectic Celtic" music has won critical acclaim worldwide, including gold and multi-platinum sales awards in 15 countries. Also heard at this concert will be the Canadian premiere of Patrick Cassidy's "A Famine Remembrance Symphony", featuring the 140-voice Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and the Festival Orchestra, under the direction of Noel Edison. On June 21st, a gala dinner is planned as one of the first public events to be held in the Royal Ontario Museum's new "Crystal" exhibit space overlooking Bloor Street.

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Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady



Shooting Giant Quail and Other Matters

My ears have been burning these last couple of months as I found myself taken to task over

some of my remarks on the human condition. I suppose I must be doing something right. I'm greatly indebted to the reader who says that I don't have anything nice to say about anyone. Not very fair, though. I'm sure I'll think of someone I like by the end of this column. On my lack of comfort with waving large guns around he also gives me a fascinating statistic. It seems—and I have no reason to doubt him—that you are thirty-five times more likely to be injured playing badminton than in the shooting sports.

In that case I hope we never see Dick Cheney wielding a badminton racket. Definitely diving for cover would be Harry Whittington, the lawyer who was blasted in the face by him during the filming of "Once Upon a Time in Texas". Just kidding; it was during a quail hunt with Cheney, as you remember. Now I'm not well up on the thrills to be had in shooting off guns (or playing the potentially lethal game of badminton, for that matter) but I think I can grasp the difference between shooting quail and shooting fellow human beings. Quails are harmless little birds of about six inches; humans are not so harmless bipeds of about six foot. Right, I think I've got it. It's all so clear to me now: after all this was one of the guys who couldn't tell the difference between Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden. It does, however, give me an idea for ending the sorry mess we are all in with Iraq. Let's just take the harmless guns away from the soldiers and arm them with nuclear-powered badminton rackets. It may be insane, but it at least has as much merit as anything else we've tried.

Now, back to people I like... Hold on, it'll come to me in a moment. Oh, as a matter of fact the same gentleman says I DO like "those who are pierced, tattooed and dressed to offend". I asked Joeline Guinen, the charming Galway lady who inspired the comment and she replied: "I didn't realise wearing black was offensive in itself. Personally, I find blindingly patterned clothes, novelty ties and barely there skirts offensive but it doesn't make it wrong for other people to wear them." (My italics.) Way to go, Joe!

My views on the late Archbishop John Charles McQuaid also provoked strong feelings. I've replied elsewhere but by coincidence I was having a check-up with my doctor late in February. I still foster fond illusions that I'm about twenty years old so it's always a surprise to hear that somewhere along the line I moved into the Land of Prostate and Diabetes Checks. When did that happen? Still, a recent study claimed that people who are grouchy and Grinch-like may often live longer. So you'll no doubt be glad to hear that I may just live forever. But I digress: making conversation during the examination I mentioned the Archbishop as he had been involved in quite a tussle with the medical profession during the bad old days of tuberculosis. The doctor expressed quite a surprise when he learned that some people still held the 'good priest' in high esteem. Speaking of the role taken by him at that time, social critic Noel Coghlan says: "For a doctor's son and man of the cloth, McQuaid appears to have had a rather odd attitude to public health issues. Could it possibly be that Mammon rated higher than the Lord's teaching?" A full account of the period can be found in Dr. Noel Brown's fine book, "Against the Tide" (Gill & Macmillan)

That same week the actor Gabrielle Byrne—who I always find to be an entertaining and honest speaker—was being given an honorary patronage by his old alma mater, University College Dublin. He rather mischievously spoke of his preference for Trinity College and remarked on his annoyance that "a real bigot" had brought in rules that stopped Catholics going to Trinity. He said this was the doing of "a tyrant called Archbishop John McQuaid". No point in shooting the messenger on this one. I'm just quoting.

But enough of such things. And, I had hoped, enough of Bono. I was determined not to write any more on the Saviour of All Humanity as he's just too easy a target these days, especially as the company RED that he launched last January has, according to U.S. industry sources, raised less than €13m while going through €75m in marketing. Ouch! But what really caught my eye this week is that he now appears to think he grew up in 1960s Alabama. He has received an award from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and in a speech that suggests that he now inhabits some sort of Philip K. Dick parallel universe says: "I grew up in Ireland, and when I grew up, Ireland was

divided along religious lines, sectarian lines. [At this point I rang some friends who were of the same age and background but their reply goes unrecorded as they were falling about laughing.] Young people like me were parched for the vision that poured out of the pulpits of Black America. These ideas travel, you know? And they reached me, clear as any tune, lodged in my brain like a song. People like me looked across the ocean to the NAACP... "blah blah blah. WHAT?!? I think I had better take one of my happy pills, wet a towel for the forehead and have a bit of a lie down. Not before I mention a man who has gone up even further in my estimation, though. Step forward, the wonderful Donegal artist, Kevin Sharkey. He is working on a painting that will depict fashion stylist Lolo Cashman being nailed to a cross by the four U2 members. Lolo is the lady who was famously bankrupted by the band because Bono wanted his Stetson hat back. She claimed it was a gift when she worked with them but he said "no way, man" and felt a hat is worth breaking a person for. Sharkey told the "Sunday Independent" newspaper: "... I wanted her to know that not only I, but the rest of Ireland, were with her in her fight against U2. The dignity with which she held herself throughout the case was only equalled by the shamelessness of Bono and the rest of the band."

"I felt for her like a lot of Irish people who followed the case did. I think she would be surprised to know how many people are on her side." Mr. Sharkey is also donating a ten thousand euro painting to help Ms. Cashman's financial situation. In the interests of fairness I'd point out that rumour has it that bassist Adam Clayton and drummer Larry Mullin were as embarrassed by Bono's ego as the rest of the country was.

Before I run out of space I can't resist mentioning the admiration I've felt toward Oprah Winfrey for a long time now. She has a true zeal for actually getting things done, and this latest brainstorm of a Leadership School for Girls in Africa is inspired. All the girls accepted will be from households that earn beneath \$10,000—a year and already she is planning the next one, to be gender-mixed. A remarkable woman who puts her own money where her mouth is. Why hasn't someone tried to talk her into running for President?

There you go, now. Several people I like, and it's not even ten a.m. yet. How's that for mellow?

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The Irish Rover

By James McClure

You Can Go Home Again

While making the transition from television journalist in Alaska to whatever the Lord has in store back home in Chicago, I work as a security supervisor for one of the large corporations based in my hometown in Northbrook.

In the course of my weekend shift one of my first duties is to do a two-hour round through multiple buildings, checking for everything from boiler room malfunctions to employee laptops left unsecured. Everything from the dungeon to the desktops.

As I walked the corridors and weaved through the cubicles a nametag caught my eye. Ginny! Her more formal nameplate had the right first and last name. Could it possibly be my Ginny?! Not that she had ever been mine but she had earned a deep place in my heart thirty years ago. Thirty years.

The One That Got Away

As I walked away from the empty desk, I was alone in the building and in my thoughts. Was it her? I first met Ginny not far from here in a tiny bank building in downtown Northbrook. Every Sunday night a group of high school students would meet for Bible Study... studying God's word, singing songs of praise. A great group of kids among whom one quiet 16-year old caught my eye. Ginny had beautiful dark hair and deep brown eyes that were at once intelligent and filled with emotional depth.

She had a lot of sisters there and a brother or two. As we prayed in a circle or got out our Bibles and read I always counted myself lucky if I sat anywhere near her. There wasn't much time for socializing and I think she was dating someone at the time, definitely as our senior year came and went. She went to Marillac, the Catholic girls' school in Glenview and I went to then all-boys Loyola Academy in Wilmette,



so there were few if any opportunities for interaction during the week.

Her house was a large older home on five acres isolated in

the middle of development rich Willow Road, her family was the last holdout on a now major thoroughfare that cuts through the North Shore. While landscaper father and sons would hold off the offers to sell out we kids would sometime gather there for soda and chips after Bible Study.

The Memory That Never Fades

One night we were over at Ginny's when she and I ended up in the same room alone at the same time. She curled up on one end of the couch, invited me to sit down and said "So tell me, what's up with you now?" It may have been one of the first times she expressed a direct interest in me. I was stunned. She rested her head in her hand and looked at me with those deep dark eyes, totally focused on me. I can't remember what my reply was or even if I saw her again alone after that. No doubt many of the family and Sunday night worshipers rushed in to fill the gap of my stunned silence.

For whatever reason, probably because my first date with a girl wasn't until college, that moment had always stuck in my mind. Her beauty, her intellect, her seriousness, her faith had all frozen in time for me. Whatever happened to that girl? Over the years I would drive by the house and wonder about her and her family. Eventually the home was

sold and developed into a neighborhood. I didn't notice in my decades-long wondering and wanderings that there was now a street there named Virginia Lane.

There's a saying that you never forget your first girl or your first ship. It's arrogant to claim but Ginny was my first teenage crush, and I'd always wished I had worked up the courage to ask her out, or that the timing had been different.

Now What Do I Do?

One of the first things you learn in bible study is that our God is a god of second chances. But this was ridiculous. And dangerous. Women can lose a lot of sweet in thirty years. And pursuing or talking to employees is a big security firm no-no. While I pondered the dangers I made a couple of scouting missions during the next several weeks. Her back was turned once as I strode by from a distance... that was definitely her hair. One more time days later and I saw the beautiful face and thankfully she didn't see me. It was Ginny.

Finally I got the nerve up to approach her. Phone seemed the safest way. Her name came up on the phone screen as I called during a break from a company phone. My heart felt like it was going to beat right out of my chest. She answered and it was definitely her voice.

Taking a big gulp I stammered that I think I knew her. Did she once have an adult dog named Puppy and live on Willow Road and go to Sunday night bible study at a bank downtown by Northbrook's brook? Yep. Bingo. You'll have to ask her how surprised she was. Needless to say her curiosity kicked in and we agreed to meet the following week during a break. We said a quick hello when she walked by me at the employee entrance (I managed to scoot up there and loiter for a bit). "Are you sure you not thinking of my sister?" she asked. Families with lots of sisters can be tricky, but I was certain.

Even more so the following week when we finally got together for a half hour. She rested her head in hand and listened intently as I described what had happened to me over the years and how much I wondered about her. She looked the same only much more beautiful. The best part was she had never married. I made sure I found that out right away when I first called her.

Back Home in Northbrook

After confirming a fact from one of my earlier Irish American News columns her eyes lit up and said "so this is you!!!", gesturing to a folder containing a sheaf of every one of my online columns from the past year. There's a saying in the news business that the reason you appear on camera during a story is to impress your old girlfriends they made a mistake. I can't say enough about a magazine column!!

We discovered we had more than enough in common and lots of mutual interest. And I can't tell you how neat it is to combine the excitement of a new relationship with the warmth of a connection that goes back thirty years. Our first after work phone call lasted five hours.

Her high school has merged with mine now; if you go back to the main hallway of Loyola you'll find our class pictures not far from each other. On a date where we drove by the bank where we first met and that school hallway near where we said goodbye on my graduation day, I had the biggest smile as Ginny reached out and held my hand for the first time as I drove her back toward



"2007"

home. I was home again.

Jim McClure is a freelance journalist living in Northbrook, Illinois. E-mail Jim at JimMcClure71@aol.com.

Prayer To The Blessed Virgin

(Never known to fail)

Oh, most beautiful flower of Mt. Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. Oh, Star of the Sea, help me and show me, herein you are my mother. Oh, Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth! I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succor me in this necessity. There are none that can withstand your power. Oh, show me herein you are my mother. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (3x). Holy Mother, I place this cause in your hands (3x). Holy Spirit, you who solve all problems, light all roads so that I can attain my goal. You who gave me the divine gift to forgive and forget all evil against me and that in all instances in my life you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank you for all things as you confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you in Eternal Glory. Thank you for your mercy toward me and mine. The person must say this prayer 3 consecutive days. After 3 days, the request will be granted. This prayer must be published after the favor is granted.

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B Full Irish Breakfast

by Maureen Callahan



Wrap Yourself in the Friendly Galway Arms

From its scenic ocean inlets to tall, majestic hills steeped in a fiercely proud tradition of the fourteen original tribes, Galway is truly one of Ireland's most enchanting corners. We Chicagoans are lucky to be able to capture

even a glimpse of it at The Galway Arms Irish Pub, 2442 N. Clark, just north of Fullerton, where Assistant Manager Deirdre Canty redefines Irish hospitality. Besides being a classy neighborhood hangout, it's a great place to meet Europeans, many with Irish accents. All the staff are off the boat, and if you're particularly lucky, bartender Barry

Donnelly will be there to serve you a flawless pint of Guinness.

Architecturally, it is definitely one of the most interesting pubs in the greater Chicago area. Just as it's namesake Galway is one large county divided into two contrasting regions by Lough Corrib, Ireland's largest lake, the bar was once two buildings which are now joined together. The exposed brick and still-standing original fire escapes now exist under one roof-almost like a movie set-giving you an outside feel in an interior space. Dark wood paneling and Tiffany-esque lamps give this pub a classy Western Irish feel. Cozy fireplaces to chase away the winter chill and an expansive outdoor patio, make this house-like setting the perfect place to meet in any season.

The starters menu features a tasty Celtic selection of favorites such as Scottish smoked salmon served next to multigrain bread with lemon chive cream cheese and caviar. The Welsh crabcakes are homemade and served atop roasted corn salsa and red pepper sauce. If not, the emerald artichoke dip, traditional sausage rolls in puff pastry or black bean quesadillas will accompany your choice of draft Guinness, Smithwicks, Harp, Sam Adams, Hardcore Cider or one of the other twelve import and domestic bottles. There is also a varied selection of fine whiskeys and scotches featured on a separate menu.

The salad and entrée menus feature a strong offering of Irish-fused favorites, such as shepherd's pie, Jameson glazed pork chops,



sweet potato encrusted salmon, lamb shanks and fish and chips, to specify a few. Vegetarians will be happy with the selection of meatless choices such as the excellent smokey chipotle hummus, veggie burger with sun-dried tomato mayonnaise or the marinated veggie skewers over curried couscous. There is also a rather extensive salad menu, from the more traditional claddaugh Caesar to sweet chili glazed Atlantic salmon salad, there are six others in between, all of which can be topped with chicken or steak.

Finish with the Guinness Crème Brulee, custard topped with a delicate caramelized sugar. This is the first pub I've noticed to offer a European-style plate of Irish cheeses served with brown bread alongside dried cherries and apricot chutney on the dessert menu. There are a couple other delectable choices of Eli's Bailey's cheesecake or Celtic bread and butter pudding.

Come by on the weekends between 11-2 p.m. and chase away

last night's hangover with the best traditional Irish breakfast in the city. If black pudding, bacon and sausage don't suit you, there are several other attractive offerings on the brunch menu such as French toast, lox and bagels and build-your-own-omelettes. Bring the wee ones with you for a special menu featuring favorites such as mac and cheese, fish and chips, chicken fingers and quesadillas.

Anyone lucky enough to have experienced County Galway will recall its strong legacy of music and dance. Nothing less is echoed here every Sunday in the form of traditional sessions. Acoustic tunes are enjoyed on Friday and Saturday. Wednesdays will find the regulars picking their brains at trivia to benefit The Children's Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Stop by on Sunday evenings for the Gaelic Athletic Association replays, and food and drink specials during the game. The kitchen is open for late-night bites until 11 p.m. on weekdays, midnight on the weekends.

From personal experience, I recommend The Galway Arms as an excellent choice to host a party. The beautiful mahogany-trimmed yet bright room on the second level seats 75, with your own bartender. The pub may be rented in its entirety (both levels) for crowds up to 200.

Enjoy the craic at Galway Arms between 4 p.m. and 1.30 a.m. Monday-Thursday, 4 p.m. and 2 a.m. Friday, 11 a.m. and 2 a.m. Saturday and 11 a.m. and midnight on Sunday. Visit the website at www.galwayarms.com, or call 773-472-5555. Hop on CTA bus (#22 Clark, #74 Fullerton), Red Line, Fullerton stop, or Brown Line, Fullerton stop. You'll have no trouble getting a cab in this area. Slainte!

Maureen Callahan is a columnist and freelance writer living on Chicago's Gold Coast.

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A salute to the reviewing stand



Running with the Big Dogs!

Downtown St. Patrick's Day Parade



The Malone Family



Tommie Ryan and Local 399



Michael Sullivan and Downtown Parade Guest of Honor, Reverend David G.Kloak, Captain, United States Navy.



Matt Danaher and Alderman Ed Burke



Peggy and Breanne Guardiola of the Mayer School of Irish Dance at T. J. Maloney's in Merrville, Indiana

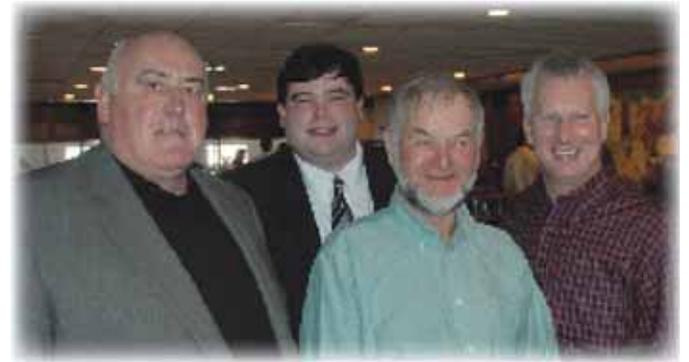
Chicago Celts for Immigration Reform Day at the Races, March, 25, 2007



Clodagh Lawless, Clodagh Murphy, and Colm Murphy



Bernie Heveran and Sean Joyce



Billy Lawless, John Normoyle, Joe Begley, and John Griffin



Gabriell M. Buckley and her son Daire Dolan



Kevin Dolan and Bill Gainer



Fr. Leonard, (2nd from left) and the gang from Johnny O'Hagan's

Mercy Home For Boys and Girls party at the Chicago Hilton



County Cork Crooner



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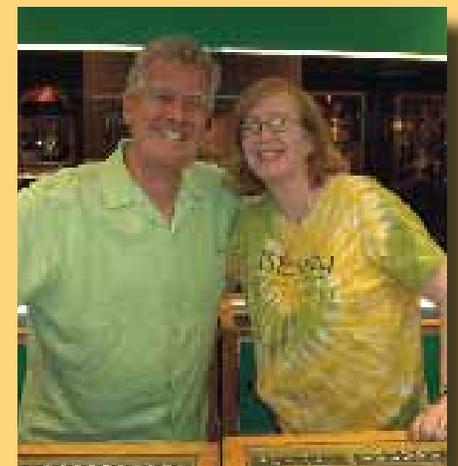
It's a family affair



Wendy and Frank



The County Cork Contingent



Shay and Traci



Themis Karnezis, Dave Shields, and Dennis Dernbach at the Celtic Lawyers Luncheon put on by the Celtic Legal Society. The luncheon honored The HOnorable Robert J. Quinn (above) as "Celt of the Year."



Marie McKown; regional marketing mgr, Midwest, Tourism Ireland, presents a free trip around Ireland to winners Ellen and Patrick Ronan at the Plunkett Furniture North Shore Designer Home and Garden Showcase. Maria Salgade (hat) was "Molly the leprechaun." The lucky couple also won two tickets to Ireland, and a free car rental! Plunkett knows how to do it right!



Catherine O'Connell's son Gavin participated in the St Baldrick's Fundraiser. He was the #1 fundraiser for the Skokie School Baldies, the 19 member team (see below) raised over \$8,500.00 for children's oncology research and treatment. Anyone that has a donation left in them can go to www.stbaldricks.org/participants/shavee_info.html?ShaveeID=5765.



Josephine Craven with Mr. Brian Cowen, TD, Minister for Finance, Ireland attending a luncheon hosted by Tourism Ireland. Mr. Cowen was the featured guest.



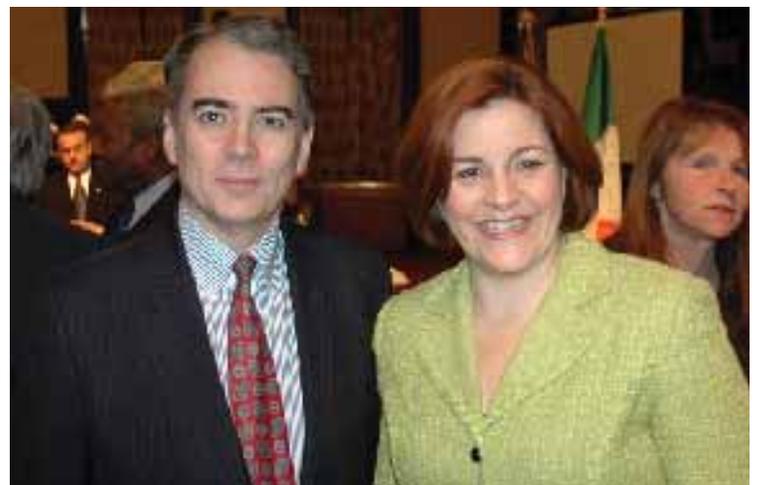
Fr. John Smyth, Mr. Brian Cowen, TD, Minister for Finance, Ireland, and Irish Consul General, Sean Farrell at the Celtic Lawyers Luncheon.



Mary Pat Flanagan, CIE Tours, Mr. Brian Cowen, TD, Minister for Finance, Ireland and Rose Weiler with SMI Tours attending a luncheon hosted by Tourism Ireland.



New York celebrated Irish Heritage and Culture at City Hall March 8, 2007. (Below l to r): Enda Kenny TD and leader of Fine Gael in Ireland, Brendan Fay, Anita Daly, Consul General of Ireland, Timothy O'Connor, Lord Mayor of Co Clare, Flan Garvey and his wife Mairead.



Simon Shorey of the Irish American Arts Awards and Christine Quinn, Speaker of New York City Council

A Word With Father Boland



The Voice of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago Administrator, Prersident and CEO Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago

Homeless No More: Dedicating A Home For Veterans

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago will celebrate its 90th Anniversary on April 10, 2007. On that date in 1917, as the United States prepared to enter World War I, lay representatives from every parish in Chicago met with Archbishop George W. Mundelein with one purpose in mind: to expand the care of the poor in every parish in the archdiocese. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, founded in 1857, would continue its heroic work of caring for the poor in the parishes. But there was a great need for a central agency to collect funds to support archdiocesan-wide works of charity, such as institutions for orphaned and abandoned children, and unmarried or deserted mothers and their children. Thus was born Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

From the very beginning of our history, Catholic Charities cared for veterans of the First World War and their families – of all faiths. And during and after every other conflict in which the United States engaged: World War II, the Korean, Vietnam and Gulf Wars, Catholic Charities has offered emergency food, clothing, rental and utility assistance, and numerous professional, compassionate services to veterans and their families throughout Cook and Lake counties.

Today, 90 years later, our country is again at war – and Catholic Charities is reaching out more than ever before to help our “most vulnerable heroes:” homeless veterans.

On April 11, 2007, Catholic Charities will proudly begin the celebration of our 90th Anniversary

year by dedicating the St. Leo Residence for Veterans and the Veterans Affairs Clinic on the campus of the former St. Leo the Great Parish on Chicago’s South Side.

His Eminence Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I., Archbishop of Chicago, will greet 141 formerly homeless veterans and bless their new home, where they will live in safety and rebuild their lives, their health and their skills until they are independent once again, enjoying the fullness of dignity that is rightfully theirs.

The St. Leo Residence, completed at the end of December, has been a fully occupied “home” since January 31, 2007, providing these 141 veterans with a safe and sober environment while they improve their ability to live independently, obtain employment and regain financial stability.

Each of these veterans, most of whom have lived on the streets, in shelters, with relatives, or in single-room-occupancy buildings, now has a private studio apartment that includes a full kitchen and bathroom. Each veteran in this beautiful transitional housing facility will be accompanied on his or her journey back to self-sufficiency by a Catholic Charities case manager who will guide and walk with him or her through helpful programs, until he is able to support himself, leave St. Leo’s and live on his own. When a veteran leaves St. Leo’s, homeless no more, another homeless veteran will take his place to start the journey to independence.

Homelessness among veterans has been called “a national tragedy.”

According to statistics, 23 percent of the homeless population are veterans, 47 percent of whom served in Vietnam. In Illinois, an estimated 18,000 homeless veterans live in the six-county Chicago metropolitan area, 8,000 in Chicago, with the greatest concentration on the South Side. In addition to hunger and homelessness, many suffer from service-related substance abuse or post-traumatic stress disorder.

This “tragedy” is why Catholic Charities eagerly accepted the invitation of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in 2002 to participate in the pilot project to house homeless veterans. We are proud to be the first completed development of five in the country, and the only one to have a clinic. The St. Leo Campus is a premier example of a successful and beneficial collaboration between Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago and three federal agencies: the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Labor and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, in order to benefit thousands of veterans in need.

Located at 7750 South Emerald Avenue, where the former St. Leo

Parish served the South Side community for 118 years, the beautiful new residence enhances the Auburn-Gresham neighborhood. The St. Leo Residence anchors an attractive campus, consisting of the adjacent Veterans Affairs Clinic that will provide medical care on its first floor for veterans in the region. The second floor will house a Veterans Resource Center, job training services, a computer lab and Department of Labor and Veterans Benefits Administration offices. A peaceful garden that honors each of the armed services and an eternal flame provide places for

reflection. The Pope John Paul II residence for very low income persons with physical disabilities and their families completes the campus.

We cannot imagine a better way to celebrate Catholic Charities’ 90 years of service to the poorest of the poor than to help veterans rebuild their lives, become “homeless no more,” and enjoy the fullness of human dignity and respect that is rightfully theirs.

For more information about the St. Leo Residence for Veterans and Veterans Campus, visit www.stleoveterans.com.



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Succession Law In Ireland

By Gwen Bowen
Part 2 (Continued from last month)

Problem #3

The will is unlike anything discussed by the deceased and there is a suspicion as to how it has been made.

This is a question as to the validity of the Will. If there was a prior will or number of prior wills all more or less the same and then a sudden change the lawyer drawing up the will should have detailed notes as to reason for the changes. Or if there is a change in lawyer the question about the prior Wills should have been asked.

Very often there are very good reasons for a change in a will within the last few years of a persons life. They may have had to go to live with a relation and may have decided to reward them or they may have been making a similar will to their souse and then changed the structure of same dramatically after their spouse's death.

However the Court is very suspicious of unexplained dramatic changes made in a persons will particularly if coupled with a change in solicitor or on the infirmity of the person making the will. If a person is very elderly and on medication or if they have been suffering from any kind of mental debility e.g. Stroke or forgetfulness they should be seen by a doctor in conjunction with making their will.

If there is any suspicion as to how the will was made the person who objects to the Will can lodge a Caveat in the Courts through their lawyer and this will put a stop on the administration of the will. The necessary enquiries can be made and if necessary proceedings can be issued. Again if there is a stateable case the Court will allow the costs. You should follow your Lawyer's advice on this.

Problem #4

You have been left a property but someone else is in occupation.

This is very common with emigrant land owners and comes as a shock to those who have relied on the "kindness of strangers" or neighbours in regard to real property in Ireland.

Your father may have emigrated to the States but always held on to the family farm or house back home. A neighbour may be looking after it but paying no rent. The agreement in regard to same may be verbal or may never even have been discussed. When the emigrant land owner passes on and the son or daughter or some other relative go to claim the land they find that the attitude may be very different.

The person in occupation may apply to be registered as a full owner gaining title from the fact that they have been in occupation without permission. They will be registered if they can show use of the land and indeed you may find that the land that the neighbour has been "minding" has been rented from him for a number of years by some other person. This can be avoided very

simply by having a note confirming that the person minding is in occupation by permission signed or a lease with a very nominal rent (even €10.00 per annum would do)

If the neighbour refuses and wants to know if his word is not good enough make your informed decision. However ask yourself why they wouldn't. You might be afraid to offend someone but the loss of the family property may bother you more in the long run.

If you have been left land and there is someone in occupation you will need to get from them an acknowledgement that the property is only occupied by them under your permission. It will quickly become evident if someone is claiming title and you will need to bring proceedings to evict the person. Again the success of this will depend on the

length of time the person has been in occupation and whether you have any independent witnesses or documents to confirm the nature of their occupation. I often speak to emigrants in the position of having the land taken from them and they cannot understand how our system allows this.

It must be understood that during the long history of emigration from Ireland many people never came back and that this system came about to rectify titles to property. To own land is a responsibility as well as a right. You wouldn't leave your wallet unattended and you shouldn't trust that someone else will look after your property.

Problem #5

The executor is refusing to Administer the will.

Again this is very common. It may be that the executor does not like the terms of the will or that he is hoping that he will gain title to the property by refusing to deal with the Estate. Or he may be aware that there is a potential for litigation in the Estate (s.117 for example) and does not extract the Grant with a view to avoiding this.

One of the more common cases is that the executor is elderly and not a beneficiary and it simply is not a matter

of priority for them.

As a beneficiary you can bring an application to compel the executor to prove the will or in the alternative to renounce his or her right to extract the Grant.

The executor has a year from the death of the testator to administer the Estate without fear of such an application being made. It can take quite some time to gather in the information necessary to make an application for a Grant of Probate or Administration and to make the necessary Revenue returns.

Most often a query from a lawyer acting for you seeking an update as to progress should keep you informed.

This is only a small section of the queries that can be raised but the main points that should be borne in mind are that there are time constraints in regard to bringing claims and that you cannot be advised for the Lawyer for the Estate.

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Horoscopes

By Theresa Castro

ARIES: Until the middle of the month of April 2007 you will shine. Jupiter and Pluto are watching your back as well. You will feel better about life than you have for a long time. Why not take your show or product public? They're sure to love it!

TAURUS: You will be in the spotlight after the middle of April. You should see some improvements promised by last month's set of eclipses. You may be in line for a promotion at work or some sort of financial boost. Just roll with it.

GEMINI: Fair Venus is rolling through your sign allowing you to be extra charming. You will not only attract admiration but you may also attract extra wealth. This couldn't happen at a better time than now.

CANCER: After midmonth in April you should have an easier time of it. The Sun and planets move beyond the discomfort point for your sign and move into better place for you as well. Your troubles should lessen and you can get on with some of your cherished projects.

LEO: You will be challenged by the planetary set up in April 2007. The Sun and Saturn will conspire to confound you. This will occur from your career and public standing sector to your

personal sector. All is not lost however. Jupiter and Pluto team up for some reinforcements in your favor.

VIRGO: The planets of April will favor you better than in past months. The fly in the ointment is the adverse planetary geometry that Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Pluto place on your sign. Don't try to pull any daring moves at this time.

LIBRA: There is a troublesome T-square among the planets that are troubling to you. The life sectors involved for you are the professional and personal areas. Someone or something not entirely under your control may be the culprit. Watch your back.

SCORPIO: The focus this month will be on the "significant other" at best or the "open adversary" at worst. Others are definitely going to play a starring role in your life this month. Expect the unexpected.

SAGITARIUS: The long-term position of Jupiter and Pluto in your sign marks a major turning point in life. This month Venus, Mars, and Uranus join together to cause a rift with the fore mentioned pair giving you some fireworks to contend with.

CAPRICORN: Soon some of you Caps could be entering into a new personal relationship or a greater commitment in an ongoing one. The planets are such that you will be busy with others in collaboration of some sort.

AQUARIUS: You have been troubled by Saturn for some time but you will have a reprieve from your trouble this month. The planets are forming a congenial aspect to your sign this month. You deserve a breather.

PISCES: Mars and Uranus are causing you quite the headache this month. Mars will move away because it is faster in motion but until then try not to be impatient with yourself or others. The combination of these two planets can bring the element of surprise into play.

IAHC Hosts Josephine Keegan



The IAHC welcomes internationally renowned composer, musician and accompanist Josephine Keegan for a concert and CD and music book launch on Thursday, April 12 at 8pm. She will be joined by musician Marty Fahey on piano and accordion. Tickets are \$15.

Keegan will launch three most recent works; Fairy Bridges, a fiddle album, The Nightingale, a piano album and her latest song latest book The Keegan Tunes, Volume 2".

Keegan was born of Irish parents in Dundee, Scotland in 1935 and moved to Ireland at age four. She studied classical piano and fiddle and won

many prizes at competitions throughout Ireland. She frequently appeared on radio and television broadcasts, including RTE and BBC.

For some time, Keegan shifted her focus to be accompanist to many Irish musicians, but returned to the fiddle and made five albums for Outlet Records on which she double-tracked her own accompaniment on piano.

In 2003, Keegan received a special award at Boston College in appreciation of her life-long dedication to Irish music and "her invaluable contribution to Irish Cultural preservation".

For more information on the Keegan launch, call the IAHC at 773-282-7035, ext. 10.



Voice of the Immigrant

By John W. Kearns, Attorney at Law



Progress On Immigration Reform In Congress

Right now, Congressional committees are actively holding hearings on immigration reform. In the first hearing on immigration policy, since the Democrats took over Congress, Cabinet-level officials told the Senate Judiciary Committee that the Bush Administration supports a comprehensive overhaul of U.S. immigration laws and a willingness to compromise on the question of granting a path to citizenship for millions of illegal immigrants. This official Administration position signals a break with conservatives who, to a large extent, controlled the Bush agenda until they were widely rejected and discredited in the last election.

The hearing follows a renewed behind-the-scenes push by the White House to get a comprehensive overhaul passed before 2008 presidential and congressional campaigning swings into high gear.

According to Senate staffers, Sen. Edward Kennedy, a Massachusetts Democrat and the leading liberal voice in Congress, and Sen. John McCain, the Arizona Republican and 2008 presidential hopeful, could reintroduce a comprehensive immigration bill as early as next week. This would likely be similar to last year's Senate bill, which they came together to cosponsor. That bill coupled tough enforcement with a guest worker program and a plan giving millions of illegal immigrants a chance to earn legal status and U.S. citizenship.

Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff told the Senate Judiciary Committee that any changes in the law should not amount to amnesty. "We cannot give those who are here illegally because they've broken the law a leg up and an advantage over those who have played by the rules," he said, bringing up another aspect of the immigration debate: what to do about the "retrogressed" priority dates for those who have applied for immigrant visas through either employment or family members, and who now must wait sometimes for many years for those green cards to become available?

Another familiar theme was sounded by Commerce Secretary

Carlos M. Gutierrez, who told the Senate Judiciary Committee that the administration's priority is to secure the nation's borders and convince the estimated 12 million illegal immigrants to "come out of the shadows."

"I'm not sure that everyone wants to be a U.S. citizen. Many just want to be able to work, and if they can work legally, one day they would like to go back home," he said. "So I don't think that citizenship is what will make them come out of the shadows." This is probably true, which is why the other side of the discussion concerns a temporary "guest worker" visa that could, if passed, more realistically reflect the economic needs of the American workplace.

In his testimony, Homeland Security Secretary Chertoff emphasized the need for tighter border security and tougher workplace enforcement measures. Praising the workplace crackdown last week in California and 16 other states, he said harsher penalties were needed to prevent workers from entering the country illegally. But under questioning by committee Chairman Leahy, Chertoff and Gutierrez conceded that, for the most part, illegal workers were not taking jobs away from Americans. Asked about the likelihood of rounding up everyone here illegally, Chertoff acknowledged that "it would be a gargantuan task to try to locate, detain and deport 12 million people."

More News On The Immigration Front

All across the country, workplace raids continued last week. In Northern California, city officials criticized the immigration (ICE) officers' use of the word "police" when arresting the immigrants. "We understand ICE has a job to do, but we don't condone the methods they use," said the city spokesperson. "Though they are federal police, we do not agree with them identifying themselves as 'police.' Local police have fostered a relationship with the community for many years and this destroys it in a knock."

Thirty-six workers were arrested at a plastics plant in Mishawaka Indiana. Several dozen were arrested in Northern California. Over 300 were arrested at a leather goods factory near Boston that then lost its Defense Department contract because of hiring illegal workers. That raid drew negative nationwide press because most of those arrested were mothers of small children, 60 of whom were then released to care for those children and another eight who were actually pregnant. The Governor of Massachusetts, Deval Patrick, came out against the way the raid was handled and called on immigration officials to reunite mothers with their children.

According to the workers, panic broke out when 300 state and federal immigration agents raided the factory on Tuesday. The Rev. Marc Fallon of Catholic Social Services said the government's claim, that the raid was organized and had the cooperation of local agencies, is not true. "This government cannot even keep track of the millions of dollars they have spent on Homeland Security. They need 300 agents to detain 350 impoverished, campesinos from rural Central and Latin America," he said.

On the other hand, we have

the news from the anti-immigrant front centers on how white supremacist groups, such as the Ku Klux Klan, are using the immigration issue to recruit new members.

More News From Congress

In other hearings news, Microsoft chairman Bill Gates, appearing before the Senate Health, Energy, Labor and Pensions Committee, repeated tech industry complaints that H-1B visa restrictions and other measures are choking off the supply of highly-skilled workers. Gates said the H-1B visa program, which deals with skilled workers, is outmoded. He advocated lifting the numerical cap imposed on the number of H-1B "specialty occupation" employment visas that can be granted each year. Applications can be submitted as early as April for approvals and employment start dates no earlier than October 1. For fiscal 2008 (starting October 1, 2007), H-1Bs are expected to run out within the first month. Last year, the 65,000 visas were gone by July.

Gates also said it makes "no sense" to require foreigners, who apply for student visas, to prove that they don't intend to remain in the country once they receive

their degrees. "Why drive them away just when this investment starts to pay off for the American economy?" Gates asked the Senate Committee.

As predicted, the immigration issue is heating up, taking center stage in the national discussion, second only to the War in Iraq, as an issue that both parties want to resolve before it becomes a campaign issue. Two weeks ago, the Dow Jones lost 400 points in a single day, but there was no panic, and the markets have since rebounded. The economy is out of the headlines again. Stay tuned to hear more about immigration reform in the coming months before the Presidential election campaign season really heats up.

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Share your soccer stories for a chance to win a trip to ANY European soccer game

By Seamus Doherty

On a balmy Irish summer afternoon in May 1988, I walked through the turnstiles at Dalymount Park in Dublin to witness my first ever Cup Final. I was eleven years old and even though the FAI Cup Final, held at the shabby Glasnevin venue, was far from the glitz and glamour of other European soccer meccas, I was excited beyond belief.

My home town team, Derry City, would battle Dundalk that day in their first ever Irish cup final appearance, and the butterflies in my stomach multiplied ten-fold as the names of my heroes – part-time soccer players from Northern Ireland's maiden city - were announced over the PA.

As I gazed in wonderment across the sea of red and white, drinking from a lukewarm soft drink in eager anticipation of the kick-off, my cup final dreams were shattered by one swift jab from a wasp's stinger. The yellow and black culprit flew off to harass the grown ups to the left of where I stood, leaving a stunned, sobbing and extremely sore kid searching for answers.

I pointed frantically to the back of my neck and as my father leaned over

to inspect the damage, the two teams made their way on to the field. My neck began to swell immediately and, after coming to the conclusion that I was allergic to the sting, I was whisked out of the stadium to the nearest hospital. As we were leaving, making our way through the crowd, I remember peering over my dad's shoulder to the field where play had just begun...

That was 19 years ago, but my memories of that day are still bitter. My beloved City were beaten 1-0 – all because, in my opinion, there was one less voice in the stadium rooting them on.

Now, as a lifelong soccer fan, this certainly is not my favorite recollection, but it is a moment that has been welded onto my memory and it has raised a laugh or two when I have told the story throughout the years.

Hopefully you have some more uplifting experiences and, if you share them with us, you could be sitting in the bleachers of the Nou Camp, Old Trafford, Anfield, or the San Siro courtesy of Carlsberg.

Carlsberg, the Official Beer of Euro 2008, in association with the

American Irish Media Group, will send you and a guest to a European game of your choosing if you submit the quirkiest, most intriguing soccer story in The Carlsberg Soccer Fan Experience Sweepstakes.

The competition, a celebration of the Euro 2008 Championship and Carlsberg's sponsorship of the Republic of Ireland team, will start in the May edition of this newspaper and will run through August, encouraging you, our readers, to write about your most memorable soccer fan experiences. Did you make an outrageous sacrifice to catch your favorite team? Did you sip a pint with Big Jack after Italia '90 or have you bumped into Frank Stapleton on a beach in Portugal? Whatever... we want to read it.

Monthly winners will be awarded a prize and will be automatically entered for a chance to win the Grand Prize of a Soccer Adventure to a European game of their choice. Since there will be plenty of cold, crisp Carlsberg to enjoy on the trip, you need to be 21 to participate in the competition. Pick up your May edition of The Irish American News for details on how to apply.

European Rugby Cup in San Francisco for "Irish Week"

Two great exponents of the European game of rugby football led a delegation from Ireland to meet with Mayor Gavin Newsom at San Francisco City Hall recently while on a tour of Northern California. The duo – Anthony Foley and Alan Quinlan of Irish rugby club, Munster, also brought the victory trophy, the

European Heineken Rugby Cup, to appreciative audiences of Irish American supporters during "Irish Week" in San Francisco and San Jose.

The American supporters' organization, Munster Rugby USA was established in 2006 as a non-profit organization, with the objective of enabling Munster rugby fans in North

America to become an integral part of the network of Munster rugby supporters across the globe. "We are delighted to welcome the Munster rugby delegation to California and we look forward to developing our relationship with Munster rugby here in the US" said Nigel Melville, President and CEO of Rugby Operations, USA Rugby.



Pictured at a special reception for the 2006 Heineken European Rugby Cup victors, Munster, in the Irish Consulate, San Francisco are (L/R), team member, Alan Quinlan, Rugby USA CEO, Nigel Melville, team coach, Declan Kidney, Irish Consul General, Émer Deane, Munster Rugby USA co-founder, John Hartnett, and team captain, Anthony Foley. The Munster Rugby group brought the 2006 Heineken European Rugby Cup to appreciative audiences of Irish American supporters in Northern California during Irish week.

Sporting Log

By Sean O. Ceallachain



Leinster Secretary, Michael Delaney, has laid it on the line for counties in Leinster and indeed the GAA itself, about the frightening possibility of major financial losses if Dublin footballers are knocked out of the championship at an early stage.

And Delaney doesn't conceal the fact that Leinster council income is now largely dependent on the continued success of one county – Dublin. He says the prospect of a Dublin football trough is "frightening" and will have "serious financial implications."

Dublin's army of support has embellished the Leinster council coffers significantly over the last two years with 65,000 plus attending five of the six games they have played in Croke Park in that period.

"The Leinster championship has lost much of its charm. The emergence of a few years ago of a couple of new Leinster champions, proved to be a false dawn – they were immediately swallowed up in the extended qualifiers by counties who had already been knocked out of their provincial championships", Delaney insists.

"Nowadays, apart from the Dublin games in Croke Park, the general public are apathetic about our games. The frightening thing about this is that if Dublin hit a trough, or go out early, it will have serious financial implications for our council" he predicts. "County Boards may not dwell too deeply on all of this, but perhaps a word of caution is now in order – if the Leinster Council income drops it will have a knock-on effect on games development and physical development support in our counties."

Delaney also admits that the Leinster hurling championship is "practically extinct" and that even the allure of the football championship is "fast diminishing."

He presents a stark warning that falling attendances as a result of apathy in the provincial championships could have stark knock-on effects for games development across Leinster.

Similar sentiments are expressed by Delaney's counterpart in Munster, Simon Moroney, who has produced alarming statistics on the decline in interest among crowds in the Munster football championship.

Delaney doesn't call for change as he paints his bleak picture. But he attributes the dilution of the provincial championships to the emphasis now

being placed on qualifier games.

He says there is no incentive for any of the counties in the province – apart from local pride – to concentrate on a Leinster title and draws a comparison with the recent Wicklow/Carlow O'Byrne Cup match that attracted a bigger crowd to Aughrim than the teams championship match last summer. What was the difference? OK – it might have something to do with the management team (Mick O'Dwyers arrival in Wicklow) but another major difference is that O'Byrne Cup is knock out.

In Leinster, Michael Delaney has also spoken against what he perceives as a softening of disciplinary measures that have come into force this year. Delaney is concerned that the new code governing discipline has actually softened penalties rather than hardened them.

"The new disciplinary code, amazingly, has drastically reduced the minimum suspensions in many instances. For example, striking with the hurley or kicking, now has a minimum penalty of four weeks compared with the previous 12 weeks. There is a distinction between 'with force' or 'with minimal force' in these infractions but this immediately puts pressure on referees and disciplinary committees. History and human nature tells us which of these descriptions will apply in both instances," he writes.

He also cites the reduction in the minimum penalty for minor physical interference with a referee from 24 weeks to 12 weeks and abusive language to a match official from eight weeks to four weeks as other causes for concern. And he reserves his greatest surprise at the extension of the clause that deals with different levels and codes and the anomalies that this has the potential to create. He writes "It now appears that players will only ever be completely suspended if they are found guilty of physical interference with, threatening or abusive conduct or threatening language towards match officials."

"It has been estimated that players could conceivably be sent off, for very serious infractions, on six successive days and yet be eligible to play in particular competitions on the seventh day. I know this is an extreme example, but it surely highlights how lenient our penalties have become" he observes.

Mike Cole—Drummers' Drummer

Chicago's northwest side is home to one of the world's most esteemed pipe band bass drummers, Mike Cole. Mike is currently the bass drummer for the Windsor, Ontario, Canada Windsor Police Pipe Band. The Windsor Police Pipe Band is one of only nine pipe bands in North America that compete at the highest level of pipe band competition, that of Grade I.

Mike has experience as a snare, tenor, and bass drummer. He has played in a combined ten World Championships in Scotland and numerous contests in North America at the Grade I and II levels. In 1998 he won the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association award for "Best Bass" in Grade II at the World Championships. In May of 2006 Mike was profiled in Piping Today, the official publication of the National Piping Centre in Glasgow, Scotland.

Mike joined the Windsor Police Pipe Band in 2005. In 2005 the band won every major contest in Grade II and won the North American Pipe Band Championship in Maxville, Ontario. A week later they placed third in the World Pipe Band Championships in Scotland. They moved to Grade I for the 2006 season, winning best drum corps and best bass at the majority of contests. Mike currently holds the title of North American Best Bass Drummer.

Mike began his pipe band career as a side drummer with the Invermich Gaelic Society Pipe Band in 1987. Prior to that Mike had been a successful kit drummer, playing drums for a living for fifteen years in the seventies and eighties. He lived in Las Vegas and traveled around the west opening for some big names (Joe Cocker, Edgar Winter and Yes). After getting married and starting a family Mike got a "real" job and left the road of touring. He was playing drums on a part-time basis in a local blues' band when the Invermich Gaelic Society performed at his church in Beverly, St. Barnabas. Mike loved the sound and joined the band.

Eventually Mike became the leading drummer of the Invermich Gaelic Society, which went on to become the University of Chicago Pipe Band. He competed with them at the World Pipe Band Championships in 1987 and was on the field when the 78th Fraser Highlanders from Toronto, Ontario were named the World Champions. By 1993 Mike had joined the

Fraser as a tenor drummer, driving to Toronto once or twice a month for practices and performances.

As time went on Mike played with other Chicago area bands, Chicago Caledonian and Midlothian Scottish. But he kept going back to Canada to

play with other top bands, including the Niagara Regional Police Pipe Band, which took second place in Grade II at the World Championships in 2001.

During his time playing in pipe bands Mike has been successful not only as a competitor, but also as an adjudicator and workshop instructor. He has taught at a number of pipe band drumming schools, most recently at the Masters of Scottish Arts' School in Seattle, Washington. The instructors at the Seattle school performed in concert at Benaroya Hall, known as the "Carnegie Hall of the West." The performers included the top pipers, drummers, fiddlers, and Scottish dancers in the world.

In January 2007 Mike competed in the Winter Storm Professional Bass Drum Contest held in Kansas City, competing against the top bass drummers in North America. Mike won the gold medal, as well as a new Premier bass drum.

Beginning in the spring Mike will be competing in the United States and Canada and the band will

be performing at Irish Fest in Dublin, Ohio at the beginning of August before traveling to Scotland to compete in the World Pipe Band Championships.

Mike is the creator of the Twisted Thistle bass drum mallet, one of the most successful bass drum mallets in competition today. His mallets have been played by six winning bass drummers in the Grade I contest at the World Championships in Scotland.

Mike is an advisor on tenor drummer.com, a website created by a drummer in Scotland to provide free advice to tenor and bass drummer throughout the world. This will be the third year that Mike will be part of that organization's summer, full day workshop during the week leading up to the World Pipe Band Championships in Glasgow on August 11.

Mike is a sixth grade mathematics teacher at Stone Scholastic Academy in Chicago. His wife, Mary Jane, is a former piper and Irish dancer, and is principal of Roosevelt Elementary School in Park Ridge. Mary Jane enjoys traveling to the various events with Mike, and he says that he would not be able to do what he does if he didn't have Mary Jane's support. The Cole's enjoy attending many Irish and Scottish events held throughout the Chicagoland area. They are members of the Irish American Heritage Center and appreciate the many events that are sponsored by the Center.



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Kinsale Mobile Launches "call4care"

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Kinsale Mobile, providing organizations with branded high value mobile communications solutions, recently announced the launch of its charitable mobile phone service. Launched under the call4care brand, this unique way of providing mobile phone service allows subscribers to raise funds and support charities, organizations, or good causes by simply using their cell phone.

The call4care services provide integrated corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs that deliver sustainable fundraising and help increase awareness and interaction with relevant community initiatives.

"In an increasingly competitive world it's hard to

develop good product differentiation based on service and price alone. Buying decisions are increasingly based on brand reputation and social responsibility" said Stuart Kelly, CEO of Kinsale Mobile. The call4care model has been working in Europe since 2004 and we are excited to bring this to the American market."

A GSM based mobile phone service, call4care utilizes T-Mobile and Cingular networks to provide excellent coverage and quality. Corporate customers who want to build integrated CSR programs via their mobile phone and data services can visit www.kinsalemobile.com or email call4care@kinsalemobile.com.



Stuart Kelly, (Center) CEO of Kinsale Mobile, and fellow employees work the booth in Washington D.C. during the Irish Lobby For Immigration Reform rally recently. If you need a mobile phone in Ireland you might want to talk to them!

CIE Tours Presents National Awards of Excellence

Ireland's Minister for Arts, Sports and Tourism, John O'Donoghue, T.D., recently announced 27 winners of the National Awards of Excellence, sponsored by CIE Tours International.

"These annual awards, now in their 17th year, recognize excellence in all aspects of Irish tourism in 12 categories, from hotels and bed and breakfasts, to entertainment venues

and tourist attractions," according to Brian W. Stack, President of CIE Tours International.

The winners of the National Awards of Excellence are chosen from an independent evaluation by CIE Tours International customers and are designed to acknowledge the high level of service and the warm welcome received by the 44,000 clients that CIE Tours International brought to Ireland in 2006. Over 25,000 detailed questionnaires were completed last year and the awards are based on these results.

The CIE Tours National Awards of Excellence for 2006 are as follows:

Special Merit Award (Tour Feature) - (3-way tie) City Tours (Derry Walking Tours); Aran Island Day Tours (Island Ferries & Hernon Tours); and Tangney Tours Killarney (Jaunting Car Tours)

Best Tour Feature - McNamara Tours Derry (Derry Walking Tour)

Special Merit Award (Visits) - (2-way tie) Ulster American Folk Park; Kilkenny Castle

Best Visit - Giant's Causeway

Special Merit Award (Dinner & Entertainment) - (3-way tie) Kate Kearney's Cottage Irish Night; Brod Tullaroan, Kilkenny; Knappogue Medieval Banquet

Best Dinner & Entertainment - Shindig, Old Jameson Distillery, Dublin

Special Merit Award (Accommodations) - Hotel Dunloe Castle, Killarney; Arbutus Hotel, Killarney; Cabra Castle Hotel, Kingscourt; The Brehon, Killarney; Radisson SAS St Helen's Hotel, Dublin; Connemara Coast Hotel, Galway; Trident Hotel, Kinsale

Best Accommodations - Jurys Hotel Croke Park, Dublin

Best Hotel Service - Dromoland Castle, Newmarket-on-Fergus

Best Breakfast - Galway Bay Hotel, Salthill

Best Dining Experience - Killeen House Hotel, Killarney

Overall Excellence - Home Stay - Farmhouse B&B: "Cradog" Kilkenny; Town & County Home B&B: "Arriviste" Waterford

Overall Excellence 3*** Hotel - Kee's Hotel & Leisure Club, Donegal

Overall Excellence 4**** Hotel - Killarney Plaza Hotel

Overall Excellence 5***** Hotel - Killarney Park Hotel

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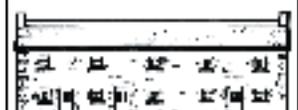


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Beyond the Abbey

BY SEAN CALLAN

Beyond the Abbey

By Sean Callan

Gosh, can it really be 44 years since a tousled-haired lad from Hibbing, Minnesota named Robert A. Zimmerman (aka Bob Dylan) warbled that “the times they are a changing” and made that song a hit? Or is the passing of time just an aberration of the seasons and calendar?

On reflection, it is clear that the time passage is no aberration and a question now is: are the changed times for the better or the worse? For the arts in Ireland, it seems that the answer must be the former. Nowadays, there is more money in Ireland and some of that is at last being directed into the arts. Sometimes it travels in nontraditional ways, such as to the performing arts from scientific organizations.

For example, the Irish Council for Bioethics is currently sponsoring an (Irish) National Playwriting Competition with a prize valued at €11,000. That is eye-popping given that most playwriting prizes even in the United States are less than \$1000 and sometimes only a fraction of that. Thus, the euro-prize is an amount that grabs the attention of even average thespian scribblers. Certainly, it is substantially more than what was offered by Dublin’s Irish Times for a James Joyce write alike contest a mere 10 years ago.

In that newspaper contest, writers were asked to pen a Joycean version of the people, places and things they might encounter while taking a modern day stroll from O’Connell Bridge in the geographic center of Dublin to Glasnevin Cemetery. Since this columnist often passed that way in his youth and was familiar with it, he decided to give the contest a go.

He concocted a colorful piece ala Leopold Bloom in Ulysses about strolling up Parnell Square and passing the Rotunda Hospital. The Rotunda is the birthplace of Ireland in various ways. It is here that the women of Ireland have delivered babies day in and out for the past 250 years. A quarter of a millennium, it might be noted, is a lot of labor. But that is not all. The Rotunda is also the place where the men of Ireland assembled on Nov 25, 1913 to establish the militant Irish Volunteers. That gathering led directly to the rising of 1916 and ultimately, the establishment in 1922 of the Irish Free State.



As walkers continue, they pass the Gate Theatre, the drawing room rival of the Abbey’s kitchen, and take in the Garden of Remembrance honoring Ireland’s fallen heroes. It is located next to the pointy-spired Finlater’s Church at the corner of Frederick Street and the Writers’ museum. After that, strollers cross over Dorset Street where Sean O’Casey once myopically labored by candlelight over his gut-wrenching masterful tragedies. Next, there is Berkely Road where walkers may pause to catch their breath at the Mater Hospital. The Mater is the principal institution established by Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy and the prototype of Mercy hospitals all over the world. After the brief respite, walkers can continue through Phibsboro’ and out the Finglas Road to the dead center of Dublin!

What this writer wrote a decade ago was good enough to win one of the legs of the contest. For his efforts, he received a book token worth £25 which he duly spent at Hodges and Figgis in Dawson Street. He was well pleased with the prize.

But times, as Dylan sang, have changed in Ireland. The equivalent of twenty five punts lacks the buying power it once had and is considered little more than small change. This is because prices for modest mews houses in downtown Dublin start at

a cool couple of million - euros not dollars - and go north from there. A lunch without wine at Patrick Guilbaud’s restaurant sets diners back more than €50 just for starters. If that is too rich for someone’s palate, the restaurant also advertises a basic €35 (without the tip) Table d’hote version. But the waiters’ body language leaves diners in no doubt that the staff does not really recommend it.

For all that, a prize of €11,000 for a play is a lot in any currency. The reason for its largesse is that the Irish Council for Bioethics wants to attract attention to its field. The plays must contain “strong bioethical content.” The Council was established by the Irish government in 2002 to address bioethical issues because there have been a lot of those in Ireland in recent years. These have included tainted blood causing HIV, problems about medical institutions improperly retaining body parts and a troubling decision by Ireland’s Supreme Court to permit the withdrawal of nutrition from a patient who had been in coma for more than 20 years.

The contest has attracted more than 120 entries from as far afield as China, the US and Brazil. Already, the adjudicators, who are from Ireland’s leading theaters, have made the first cut. They have selected ten plays as a “short list” and the winner will be announced later this Spring. This columnist has authored one of the plays included on the short list. If his play makes it to the top or, even if it does not, readers of this column will be among the first to know.

Sean Callan’s email is: irishquill@aol.com.

Flatfoot 56: Jungle of the Midwest Sea

Carl Sandburg once wrote of Chicago, “They tell me you are wicked and I believe them,” but that wasn’t necessarily a dis. The storied poet and historian subsequently breaks down a laundry list of Windy City malfeasance, only to boldly proclaim, “Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive and coarse and strong and cunning.” It’s a perspective shared by the fiery young Southsiders of Flatfoot 56, but the boys go one better than unyielding urban pride. On their second Flicker Records’ full-length *Jungle of the Midwest Sea*, a rollicking barrage of Celtic punk and hardcore roundhouses, a more universal message is clear: Where you live is who you are, so don’t blow it.

At the end of the day, Flatfoot



covers a wide swath of the punk spectrum, from impassioned to idiosyncratic, and fans have their choice of which version to embrace. For what it’s worth, the band claims that the show’s in the audience, not onstage. That’s community. That’s reciprocation. That, says Tobin, is “what punk rock is all about.”

www.flatfoot56.com

Atlanta To Host N. American Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann Convention In April

Atlanta, Georgia will be the home of this year’s North American Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann convention on April 12 through April 15, 2007. Irish-Americans and enthusiasts of Irish culture from all over the U.S. and Canada will converge on the Westin Atlanta Airport for a weekend of traditional Irish music, dancing, and many other activities.

The event is called “Ireland in Dixie – A Celebration of Irish Culture.” There will be music workshops taught by renowned world-class instructors, step dancing and set dancing (square dancing to Irish music). Other events will include Irish travel information, history of Irish music, theater, cooking, and Irish knitting. Irish music and dancing will pervade the hotel, and the entire event will be suffused with the good time and merriment which the Irish call “craic.” The highlight of the weekend will be group dances (called céilithe, pronounced “kay-lee”) and a banquet with music provided by legendary Irish musical groups Fingal and Green Fields of America featuring Mick Moloney.

Special guest Mick Moloney of Green Fields of America is an Irish musician and scholar of traditional Irish-American music. He holds a Ph.D. in Folklore and Folklife from the University of Pennsylvania and received a National Heritage Fellowship from the NEA, the highest honor a traditional artist can receive from the United States. In addition, he has performed and recorded with a variety of groups and individuals, including over 40 albums. According to Earle Hitchner of the Irish Echo, Mick’s concert is a “moving

musical feast” and “Mick Moloney’s knowledge of Irish, Irish-American, and other genres of popular, roots-oriented, and historical music runs wide and deep.”

Local Irish fiddler Mike Simpson explains why Irish music is so important to him. “I was not raised with Irish culture, and in fact only heard Irish music for the first time when I was in college. It resonated within me at some deep level, and I’ve been learning to play it ever since.” People who love Irish music have found it has universal appeal. Simpson says, “A musician with a few tunes can go practically anywhere in the world, and sit down and play those same tunes with a local musician, even if they don’t share a word of common speech... these arts bring the young and old together, bridging generations as well as miles.”

The event is sponsored by Irish Music Traditions, the Atlanta chapter of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, the Dublin-based international organization dedicated to promoting traditional Irish music, culture and arts in Ireland and abroad. Comhaltas branches can be found in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, as well as in England, Scotland, Canada, the U.S., and Australia. There are even Comhaltas branches in unlikely places such as Italy and Japan, which demonstrate the universal appeal of Irish music and culture.

Anyone with an interest in Irish music or culture is welcome to attend. You needn’t be a member of Comhaltas or be of Irish descent. www.irelandindixie.com. Online registration is okay.



Sheriff Michael Sheahan has retired as Sheriff of Cook County. Now he has more time to spend with his family and friends. Mike is continuing to work as a college football referee and occasional radio analyst. “The citizenry of Cook County has been well served by Mr. Sheahan,” said P.J. O’Dea who was proud to work for Sheriff Sheahan for over 16 years.

Ireland Network Ball Not Much Fun This Year

The fourth annual Ireland Network Black Tie Ball was held on February 24, 2007 at the Intercontinental Hotel. All guests vowed to sustain this energy through St. Patrick's Day.



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Happy Easter

